

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE
PERFORMANCE OF AFRICAN NATIONS IN
THE 2012 LONDON OLYMPICS**

Francis Ndum OJIE

Ph.D. Thesis

2015

An Investigation of the Performance of African Nations in the 2012 London Olympics

Francis Ndum OJIE

Salford Business School
University of Salford, Manchester, UK

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, October 2015

Table of Contents

List of Figures	vi
List of Tables.....	vii
List of Abbreviations and Terms.....	viii
Acknowledgement.....	x
Dedication	xii
Declaration	xiii
Abstract	xiv
CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH OVERVIEW	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research questions	5
1.3 Research aim	5
1.4 Research objectives	5
1.5 Research scope	6
1.6 Research design.....	7
1.7 Contribution to knowledge.....	9
1.8 Structure of the thesis.....	10
1.9 Chapter summary	13
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Sports development and policy	14
2.2.1 Elite sports development (ESD)	16
2.2.2 Emergence of ESD	17
2.2.3 The Olympics as a mega sporting event and an elite sport	19
2.3 Africa in the Olympics	21
2.3.1 Measuring the performance and success of countries in Olympic Games ..	22
2.3.2 Medal tables/medal wins	23
2.3.3 Challenges of sports performance and success in the Olympics	25
2.3.4 Improving performance and success	27
2.4 Introducing a project management perspective.....	29

2.4.1 Issues and challenges critical to performance and success from a PM perspective	31
2.5 Integrating project management theories and sports development	40
2.5.1 Overview of key issues from the literature.....	43
2.6 Chapter summary	46
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	48
3.1 Introduction	48
3.2 Background to research philosophy	48
3.2.1 Philosophical assumptions.....	49
3.3 Research paradigm	50
3.3.1 Positivism	51
3.3.1.1 Realism	53
3.3.2 Interpretivism.....	55
3.3.3 Critical Theory.....	58
3.4 Justification of the study philosophy.....	60
3.5 Research design.....	62
3.5.1 Approach - deductive, inductive and abductive	64
3.5.2 Qualitative and quantitative.....	65
3.5.2.1 Nature of research	66
3.6 Research strategy.....	67
3.6.1 Case study.....	69
3.6.1.1 Number of case studies	71
3.6.1.2 Justification of case study choices	72
3.6.1.3 Sampling techniques	72
3.6.1.4 Sampling technique employed.....	74
3.7 Developing the research implementation and data for the study	76
3.7.1 Phase 3.....	78
3.7.1.1 Stage 1 - Pre-interview questionnaire	80
3.7.1.2 Stage 2 and 3 - interviews	83
3.7.2 Phase 4.....	90
3.8 Validation, verification and reliability	92
3.8.1 Triangulation	95
3.9 Data analysis	96

3.9.1 Approach to analysis	96
3.9.1.1 Thematic analysis.....	98
3.10 Ethical approval.....	101
3.11 Chapter summary	102
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS.....	104
4.1 Introduction	104
4.2 Questionnaire data.....	105
4.3 Category One - Findings from first set of interviews.....	106
4.3.1 Background questions.....	107
4.3.2 Success/failure and the London Olympics	107
4.3.3 Performance.....	110
4.4 Category Two - Findings from second phase of interviews.....	115
4.4.1 Findings: A02 (Togo)	116
4.4.1.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games.....	116
4.4.1.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges	117
4.4.1.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance	122
4.4.2 Findings: B02 (Kenya)	123
4.4.2.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games.....	123
4.4.2.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges	124
4.4.2.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance	129
4.4.3 Findings: D02 (Swaziland).....	130
4.4.3.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games.....	130
4.4.3.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges	132
4.4.3.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance	136
4.4.4 Findings: F02 (South-Africa)	137
4.4.4.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games.....	137
4.4.4.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges	138
4.4.4.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance	143
4.4.5 Findings: I02 (Ethiopia).....	144
4.4.5.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games.....	144
4.4.5.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges	145
4.4.5.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance	147
4.4.6 Findings: J02 (Tanzania)	147

4.4.6.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games.....	147
4.4.6.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges	148
4.4.6.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance	151
4.5 Category Three - Findings from interviews with case study countries.....	155
4.5.1 Case study 1: Nigeria.....	156
Country background.....	156
4.5.1.1 Findings: C02 (NOC President/Secretary General)	156
4.5.1.2 Findings: C03-1 (Coach).....	166
4.5.1.3 Findings: C03-2 (Athlete)	173
4.5.2 Case study 2: Zimbabwe.....	177
Country background.....	177
4.5.2.1 Findings: E02 (NOC President/Secretary General)	178
4.5.2.2 Findings: E03-1 (Coach).....	183
4.5.2.3 Findings: E03-2 (Athlete)	188
4.5.3 Case study 3: Egypt	192
Country background.....	192
4.5.3.1 Findings: G02 (NOC President/Secretary General).....	193
4.5.3.2 Findings: G03-1 (Coach)	196
4.5.3.3 Findings: G03-2 (Athlete).....	200
4.6 Chapter summary	202
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	203
5.1 Introduction	203
5.2 Addressing the research questions	203
5.2.1 Research question I (measuring performance)	203
5.2.2 Research question II (achievements in London 2012)	206
5.2.3 Research question III (issues and challenges)	210
5.2.3.1 Sport policy issues	211
5.2.3.2 Project management issues	217
5.2.4 Research question IV (addressing issues and challenges).....	225
5.3 Chapter summary	230
CHAPTER SIX: FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT AND VERIFICATION .	231
6.1 Introduction	231
6.2 The need for the proposed framework	231

6.3 Verification and validation objectives	232
6.4 Verification and validation process	233
6.5 Framework validation results.....	235
6.6 Framework implications	236
6.7 Framework implementation and barriers	237
6.8 Chapter summary	237
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	239
Overview	239
7.1 Review of performance of African nations in London 2012 Olympics	239
7.2 Reflection on the research process	242
7.3 Review of research contributions	244
7.4 Recommendations to the industry	246
7.5 Limitation and recommendation for further research	247
7.6 Evolution of the research and personal reflections	249
REFERENCES	252
APPENDICES	275

List of Figures

	Title of figure	Page
Figure 1	Research design and implementation process of the study	7
Figure 2	Structure of the thesis (designed by researcher)	12
Figure 3	The research ‘onion’	63
Figure 4	The researcher’s customised research ‘onion’	64
Figure 5	Framework for improving Olympic performance and success of African nations	227

List of Tables

	Title of table	Page
Table 1	Medal performance of African countries in Olympic Games in the new millennium	2
Table 2	Pinto and Prescott's ten success factors	34
Table 3	CSFs identified in PM literature	36
Table 4	Improvements across the sporting landscape of England	39
Table 5	A comparison of the three research philosophies discussed in the study	51
Table 6	Differences between deduction, induction and abduction	65
Table 7	Relevant situations for different research strategies	68
Table 8	Research phases and stages	78
Table 9	Interview participants and code names 1	87
Table 10	Interview participants and code names 2	92
Table 11	Medal performance of African countries in Olympic Games highlighting case study countries	207
Table 12	Issues and challenges of sport performance in African countries	210
Table 13	Framework for improving Olympic performance and success of African nations	228
Table 14	Framework components showing level of importance	235

List of Abbreviations and Terms

ANOCA	Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa
APM	Association for Project Management
APMBOK	Association for Project Management Body of Knowledge
AR	Assurance Region
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BOS	Bristol Online Survey
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSF	Critical Success Factors
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sports
DEA	Data Envelopment Analysis
DMUs	Decision-Making Units
DPA	Data Protection Agreement
ESD	Elite Sports Development
FIFA	Federation of International Football Association
GB	Great Britain
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IOC	International Olympic Committee
KWIC	Key Words in Context
LOCOG	London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games
NOC	National Olympic Committee
PE	Physical Education

PM	Project Management
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
PMI	Project Management Institute
SASCOC	South Africa Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee
SOCGA	Swaziland Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association
TID	Talent Identification and Development
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
ZSG	Zero Sum Gains

Acknowledgement

Firstly, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Almighty God for keeping me alive in good health and giving me the grace to finish this journey. I am totally indebted to Him for the wisdom, knowledge and understanding given to me to complete my Ph.D. study (Prov 2:6).

I would like to thank my supervisor Chris Procter for his unwavering support throughout the four years of this journey. He provided the needed guidance, encouragement, inspiration and motivation, without which, I wouldn't have been able to produce this thesis. I wish to thank my second supervisor, Dr Kevin Kane for being available as a second pair of eyes on my work, and for his constructive input particularly in the last hard days of writing up leading to submission. I wish to acknowledge Prof Charles Egbu, Prof John Davies, Dr Sudi Sharifi, Dr Marie Griffiths, Dr Yiannis Polychronakis, Dr Peter Williams and Dr Mhorag Goff, for sharing their knowledge and experiences with me. I would particularly acknowledge their generosity in spending time with me at meetings to discuss my work despite their very busy schedules: Thank you.

I am blessed and grateful for the boundless love and support of my family who remained there for me during thick and thin. To my parents, Elder Abuo Francis Ojie and Deaconess Veronica Abuo Ojie for the financial provision for me to undertake the PhD programme. To my siblings: Theresa, James and John for their unending love and encouragements especially during the low points of my journey: Thank you.

I would like to specially acknowledge the emotional and sacrificial support of my best friend, Kalaine Braide. She was always there to cheer me on, especially in my darkest moments. Her particular interest in my research topic often led her to offer great ideas and also act as a sounding board for my ideas: Thank you babe!

I wish to thank friends and loved ones who understood when I was so busy with my research that I barely saw or spoke to them. They even showed interest in discussing my research when I had nothing else to talk about. I wish to particularly thank Dr and Mrs Braide, Mr and Mrs Udoh, Chief and Mrs Otu, Mr and Mrs Owhe, Pastor and Mrs Okodoa, Mr Akpe John Otu and Dr Kanadi Jagafa.

Finally, I wish to thank the participants of my research and their respective countries and National Olympic Committees (NOCs), for their support and willingness to participate in the study. I wish to particularly thank Mr Robert Mutsauki and the management of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) for their support in providing me with access to the African NOCs.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Elder Abuo Francis Ojie and Deaconess Veronica Abuo Ojie. You have raised me up to be the man I have become. You have made invaluable sacrifices to see me attain the greatest possible heights in life. This was your dream for me and I am grateful to God for keeping you alive to see it become reality.

Declaration

I certify that the work is that of the author alone and has not been previously submitted, in part or in whole, to qualify for any other academic award. The content of the thesis is a product of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research programme, and, any published or unpublished materials used in this thesis is duly referenced.

Signed:

Francis Ojie
October 2015

Abstract

The performance and success of the African nations in the 2012 London Olympic Games was considered to be poor and well below expectation, taking into account the number of African countries that participated in the Games and the size of their teams. Generally, the continent has recorded minimal success in the Olympics as a result of repeated poor performances evident in the small number of medals won, low positions on medal tables and the inability to achieve other performance objectives. This research explored the performance and success of African nations in the 2012 London Olympics in light of literature from both sports science and project management. It investigated the views of key stakeholders on the measurement criteria for success of these countries, their actual achievements in the Games and the issues and challenges that impeded their performance and success. The results derived from the research findings were used to propose a framework for improving the performance and success of African countries in the Olympics, with a view that the proposed framework could also be useful in the context of other major sporting tournaments.

The philosophical paradigm upon which this study was rooted is interpretivism. Owing to the inductive nature of the study, the researcher adopted a qualitative research design, which supported a cyclic collection and analysis of data. The method of data collection was primarily through interviews conducted with the participants who were NOC executives, athletes and coaches from the African countries.

The findings from this study indicated that, apart from socio-economic factors, the poor performance of African countries in Olympic Games is also linked to sport policy issues and an absence of key project management critical success factors (CSFs) in the development of elite sports in these countries. The contribution of this study to the body of knowledge is therefore evident in a) the provision of valuable insight into the performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympic Games, with an identification of targets set and challenges faced b) the proposition of a framework which integrates project management CSFs with sport policies and procedures to improve the performance and success of African nations in the Olympics and c) the provision of theoretical benchmarks for subsequent studies in the area of sport performance and success, as well as recommendations to the industry on strategies for improving elite sports performance in major sporting tournaments.

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

Historically, the Olympic Games are believed to have started in 776BC in ancient Greece, and are today considered to be the world's most popular sporting event (Lins *et al.*, 2003). With over 200 countries now participating in the Olympics, scholars today consider the Games as a medium for participating countries to achieve wider societal objectives such as globalisation and regeneration of national identity (Roche, 2000; Nauright, 2004), infrastructural development (Coates and Humphreys, 1999), tourism and international exposure (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2002) and increased foreign investment (Kearns and Philo, 1993; Rogerson, 1999). With these objectives in mind, the need for countries, not just to participate, but also to perform well in the Olympics, has become increasingly important.

Though the participation of some African countries like South Africa and Egypt in modern Olympic Games can be traced as far back as 1904 and 1912 respectively, the participation of African countries in the Olympics took full swing in the 60's and 70's when most countries in colonial Africa gained their independence and joined the Olympic movement, having recognised National Olympic Committees (NOCs) (MacIntosh *et al.*, 1993; Ali, 1976). An NOC is the national arm of the worldwide Olympic movement, which is recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Every country is represented in the Olympics through their NOC.

With 53 African countries now participating in the Olympics, the issue of performance of these countries in recent years has been brought to review following the comparatively poor performance of the continent as a whole in the Games. Olympic medal statistics generally show African countries to be at the bottom end of medal charts (Johnson and Ali, 2004), a phenomenon that has reoccurred in most editions of the Games. To put things into perspective, table 1 is used to show the African medal performance in the Olympics in the new millennium.

Table 1: Medal performance of African countries in Olympic Games in the new millennium

No	Country	Sydney 2000			Athens 2004			Beijing 2008			London 2012		
		G	S	B	G	S	B	G	S	B	G	S	B
1	South Africa	0	2	3	1	3	2	0	1	0	3	2	1
2	Kenya	2	3	2	1	4	2	6	4	4	2	4	5
3	Ethiopia	4	1	3	2	3	2	4	1	2	3	1	3
4	Tunisia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	1	1	1
5	Algeria	1	1	3	-	-	-	0	1	1	1	0	0
6	Uganda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0
7	Egypt	-	-	-	1	1	3	0	0	1	0	2	0
8	Botswana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	0
9	Gabon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	0
10	Morocco	0	1	4	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
11	Nigeria	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	-	-	-
12	Zimbabwe	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	3	0	-	-	-
13	Togo	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	1	-	-	-
14	Cameroun	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
15	Sudan	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	0	-	-	-
16	Mozambique	1	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total by medal category (Obtainable)	9	11	15	9	13	12	13	13	13	11	12	11
		300	300	327	301	300	326	302	303	353	302	304	356
	Total by Olympic edition (Obtainable)	35			34			39			34		
		927			927			958			962		

Source: Compiled from Olympic medal results published by the BBC

From the performance table above, it can be seen that only 8 African countries were able to win medals in the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the 2004 Athens Olympics respectively. Furthermore, while there was a slight upsurge in this number in the 2008 Beijing Olympics with 12 African countries winning medals, only 10 countries from Africa were able to win medals in the 2012 London Olympics. Though 53 African NOCs have represented their countries in each of these Games, the table shows that only a total of 16 countries have won medals in all editions of the Games since the new millennium. Measuring these statistics against the number of medals obtainable at each of the Olympic editions shown in the table above, it can be seen that the number of medals won by African countries are very few. For example, Nigeria, which is currently Africa's largest economy, has only won a cumulative of 9 medals (4 silver and 5 bronze) since the 2000 Sydney Olympics to date. This underachievement was further exacerbated in the 2012 London Olympics where they finished without winning any medal.

Although there are suggestions within literature, as is discussed later on in the thesis, which uphold that the view of success and failure is relative to the various stakeholders involved, the emphasis on Olympic performance of countries is on winning medals (Lozano *et al.*, 2002) as is also the position of this thesis. However, drawing from project management literature on success and failure, the researcher explored other views on measuring Olympic success of countries in order to give depths to the discussion. An understanding of this aided in the investigation of the factors that were responsible for poor performance of African countries in Olympics as was carried out in this study. The introduction of a project management theme to the investigation with emphasis on the aspect of project delivery stems from the researcher's background, which is in the project management discipline, as well as the need to adopt a robust approach in conducting the investigation.

This study evaluated performance from the African perspective, within the context of the increasing global interest in mega sporting events such as the Olympics – an area where little research had been conducted. Studies have portrayed events such as the Olympics as drivers of globalisation (Roche, 2000), and from an African perspective, a catalyst for image enhancement, nation and identity building, publicity, and poverty reduction (Matheson and Baade, 2004). In recent times, the spotlight has turned to Africa and other developing countries as hosts to a number of mega sporting

events. Examples of these were the 2010 World Cup, hosted by South Africa; 2010 Commonwealth Games, hosted by India; 2012 UEFA Football Championship hosted by Poland and Ukraine etc. Even though this is the case, Cornelissen (2004) argued that there was still a distinct lack of analysis of mega-events in the context of the developing world. The author maintained that, since the majority of mega-events are hosted by industrialised states, discourse and research on the processes and impacts of these events tend to be framed around the economic and political circumstances characterised to the developed world. This therefore gave rise to the need for more research from the point of view of developing countries (Pillay and Bass, 2009). Thus, an investigation into the performance of African countries in the London 2012 Olympics was an appropriate opportunity to carry out such research.

Generally, medal results in the Olympics have shown fewer medals won by African countries in comparison to the number won by countries from other continents. Bernard and Busse, (2004), Johnson and Ali, (2004) and Forrest *et al.* (2010) have suggested that the performance of countries in the Olympics is affected by factors such as a country's social and cultural resources, GDP, population and other resources. However, Luiz and Fadal (2011) call for a more holistic approach to be adopted in evaluating performance rather than a reliance on just economic metrics. To this end, this research sought to discuss the performance and success of African countries in the Olympics, with the application of a project management theme to the discussions, in order to provide another perspective to the debate on analysing Olympic performance.

The London 2012 Olympics provided a good opportunity to analyse the performance and success of African countries in international sporting events. The selection of the London 2012 Olympics as the context for the study was born from the generally poor performance recorded by African countries at the Games in comparison to other Olympic editions. The researcher's proximity to London at the time of the study, as well as the opportunity to physically witness the Games in real time, was also a motivation for its selection as the context to explore the phenomenon in more depth. Furthermore, the growing international participation and an increasing stakeholder involvement in the Olympics in recent years (Kapareliotis *et al.*, 2010) gave rise to the need to investigate the participation of the various stakeholders involved in order

to provide a broader review of the Games (Bourne and Walker, 2008, Mitchell *et al.*, 1997, Kaplanidou and Karadakis, 2010).

1.2 Research questions

The overall research question was: “What are the issues that influenced the performance of African nations in the London Olympics?” In order to answer the research question, the following sub-questions were proposed and required investigation:

- I. How do African National Olympic Committees measure their performance and success in the Olympic Games?
- II. To what extent did the targets set by African NOCs for their participation in the 2012 London Olympics reflect their achievement in the Games?
- III. Using a project management perspective, what were the issues and challenges that accounted for the poor performance of African countries in the London Olympic Games?
- IV. Are there any measures in place that address the issues limiting the performance of African countries in the Olympics?

1.3 Research aim

The aim of this research was to investigate the performance of African nations in the 2012 London Olympics and to propose a framework for improving their performance and success in future Olympic Games. The resulting framework comprised of strategies and practices that contribute to African nations addressing issues of performance in other major international sport tournaments.

1.4 Research objectives

To help achieve the aim of the research, the main objectives of the study were to:

- 1) Review challenges and strategies for improving sports performance of African nations in the Olympic Games;
- 2) Identify the targets set by African nations for the 2012 London Olympics and the extent to which such targets were achieved;

- 3) Conduct and analyse research with key NOC stakeholder groups from African nations on the issues that resulted in the poor performance of Africa in the 2012 London Olympic Games;
- 4) Determine how project management critical success factors (CSFs) can be used to meet the needs of key NOC stakeholders;
- 5) Propose a framework which integrates project management critical success factors (CSFs), sport policies and procedures.

1.5 Research scope

The study concentrated on performance in the Olympics purely from an African perspective by taking into account the views of African Olympic stakeholders, which includes; NOC representatives, coaches and athletes. Though there are other stakeholder groups within Africa involved in the Olympics, the stakeholder groups listed above were considered to be the most directly linked groups to the phenomenon being studied. The researcher used the 2012 London Olympics as the backdrop for implementing the study and also to provide a scope. Other Olympic editions were considered to be outside the scope of this research and were therefore excluded from the study. As this research is inductive in nature and involved an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon, it is therefore considered a qualitative study.

Owing to the limitations involved in carrying out the study with participants from all the fifty-three NOCs representing the African countries, and also in an attempt to undertake an in-depth exploration, the main focus of the study analysis was on three African NOCs (Nigeria, Egypt and Zimbabwe) that participated in the 2012 London Olympics. Although some useful data was obtained from other countries that participated in the Games, which are also presented in the findings chapter of this thesis, the rationale behind the selection of the three case countries was a bid to secure more depth from the findings. The next section further explains the design of the research. However, a more elaborate discussion on the research approach is carried out in chapter four of the thesis.

1.6 Research design

The research design is developed to address the research questions highlighted in section 1.2 and the research objectives listed in section 1.4. The research was carried out in five phases as illustrated in figure 1:

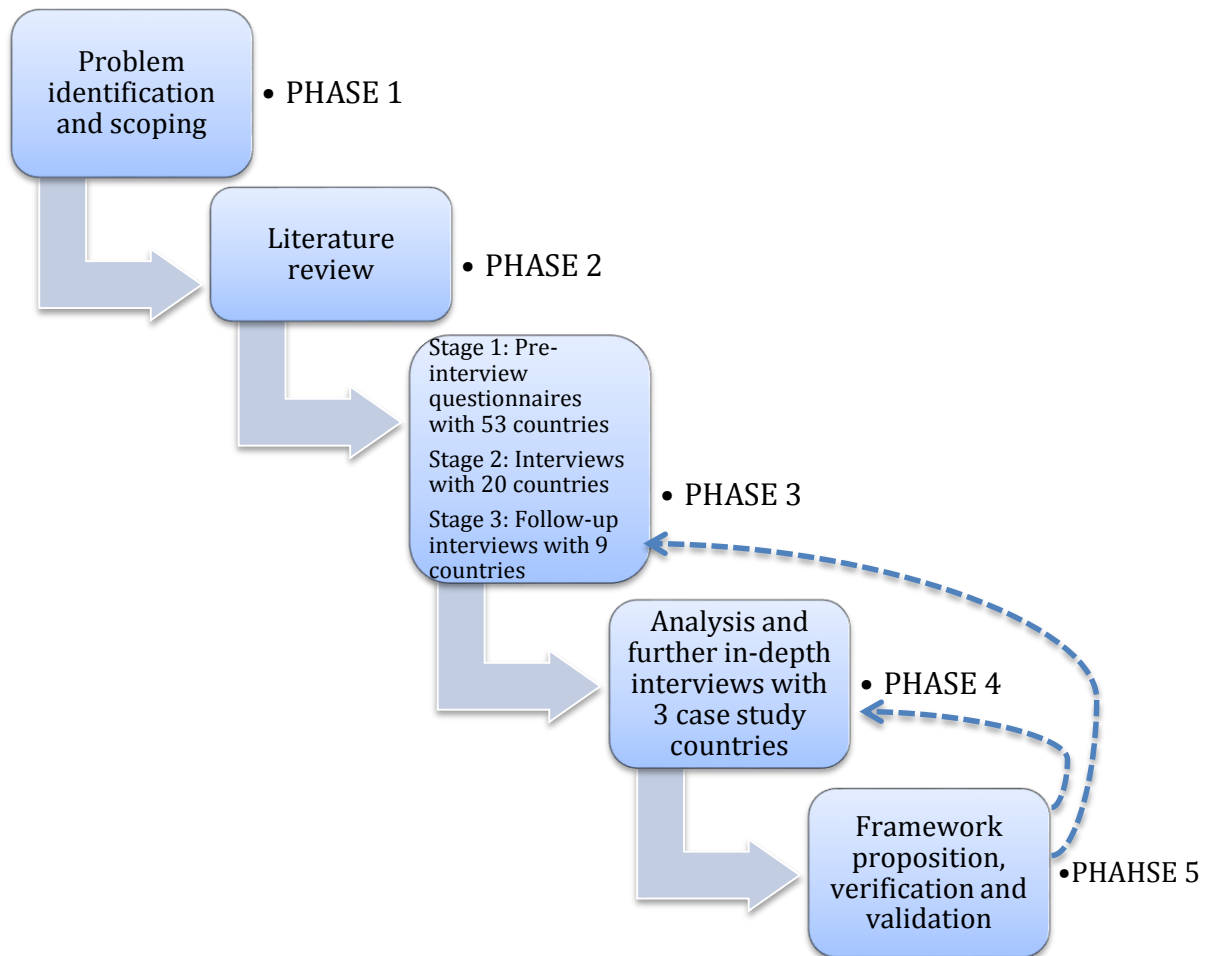


Figure 1: Research design and implementation process of the study

Phase 1 was the foundational phase of the study that brought about the discovery of the research problem. This phase involved preliminary investigations carried out by the researcher to identify the gap in knowledge relating to the issue of poor performance of African countries in the Olympic Games. The information derived from phase 1 was also used to map out the scope upon which the study was conducted in order to achieve its objectives. Phase 2 began with a review of literature relating to sports policy and development, with a focus on elite sports. The literature review is then narrowed down to focus on the Olympics as an elite sport, using project

management critical success factors (CSFs) to discuss the performance and success of countries in the Games and the challenges thereof. Phase 3 investigated the participation and performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympics. This investigation was carried out in three stages with a reduced number of countries at every stage. Phase 4 used a case study strategy involving three case study countries drawn from phase 2 for the purpose of triangulating the data obtained for verification purposes and also to add depth to the study findings. Phase 5 proposed a framework capturing project management critical success factors (CSFs), sport policy and procedures that could be used to improve the performance of African countries in the Olympics, with a view that this framework may also be useful in the context of other major international sporting tournaments. The process of verifying and validating the framework was embedded in phase 3 to 5 as represented by the dotted arrows on figure 1. Figure 1 shows the implementation process of the study.

The first research question sought to examine the secondary data on participation and performance of African countries in the Olympics. Existing literature on sports performance as gathered in phase 2 suggested that variables such as, population, financial capacity, GDP and an appropriate climate are determinants of a country's performance. However, a further review of literature revealed that resource utilisation was an insufficient approach in assessing sports performance in Africa and as such, there was need to explore other non-economic factors that are capable of affecting sports performance. This summed up phase 2 of the study.

The information derived from phase 2 was used as a start point for phase 3, addressing research question 2 and 3. More specifically, the data derived from phase 2 influenced the formation of interview questions used in phase 3 and phase 4. Phase 3 was broken down and carried out in three stages. The first stage involved the use of a pre-interview questionnaire administered to all the 53 African NOCs/countries that participated in the 2012 London Olympics to identify key issues in the study and also, to secure the willingness of the research participants to take part in interviews. The second stage of the implementation process involved interviews with 20 NOCs/countries who agreed to take part in the study. The third stage involved a follow-up interview with 9 NOCs/countries. Breaking down this process led to the identification of the case study countries, which was the starting point for phase 4.

Finally, research question 4 sought to give an account of sport performance of Africa in the London 2012 Olympics, the key issues that affected their performance and the measures that are in place to address such issues, if any. To achieve this, phase 4 therefore involved an analysis of interview data from 3 case study NOCs/countries to provide a more in-depth investigation into the issues identified in phase 3.

Chapter four provides a more detailed explanation on the methodological choices made by the researcher in implementing the study and the rationale behind the choices made.

1.7 Contribution to knowledge

The distinct lack of sufficient research that addresses the issue of poor performance of African countries in international sporting tournaments formed the basis of this study. These poor performances have been particularly noticeable in the Olympic Games, where medal results have consistently shown fewer medals won by African countries in comparison to countries from other continents. This phenomenon was again brought to view following the generally poor performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympics in comparison to other Olympic editions. Cornelissen (2004) and Luiz and Fadal (2011) highlight the lack of research in the area of sport performance and in particular, the lack of in-depth analysis of the issues that account for the poor performance of African countries, especially in the Olympics. Therefore, using the 2012 London Olympics as a focus for investigating the issues that influenced the performance of African nations in the Olympics, this study made a number of significant contributions to the body of knowledge.

Firstly, this study provided valuable insight into the performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympic Games, with a review of their targets and achievements at the Games as well as the challenges encountered. Given the lack of in-depth qualitative research that presents and interprets the performance of African countries in Olympics, this research has to a large extent bridged this gap in knowledge, as it is one of the few studies to retrospectively analyse the performance of African countries in the Olympics to provide a clearer understanding of the key issues.

Secondly, with most of the available frameworks for sports performance improvement focused on socio-economic variables, a major contribution from this study was a

proposed framework that integrated sport policies and procedures with project management critical success factors (CSFs) to improve the performance and success of African nations in Olympic Games. The framework may also be useful in the context of other major international sport tournaments. Although researchers such as Bernard and Busse, (2004) and Forrest *et al.* (2010) have argued that the performance of countries in the Olympics is affected by factors such as a country's social and cultural resources, GDP, population and other resources, Luiz and Fadal (2011) called for a more holistic approach to be adopted in evaluating performance rather than a reliance on just economic metrics. Thus, the contribution from this research was to provide another 'slice to the pie' in the debate on improving sporting performance. The evidence of this in the study can be seen with the introduction of project management CSFs to discuss performance improvement and success.

Thirdly, the study provides theoretical benchmarks for subsequent studies in the area of sport performance and success, as well as recommendations to the industry and NOCs on strategies for improving sport performance.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters specifically designed to address the research aim and objectives. The first chapter, which is an introduction to the research, provides an overview of the research, pointing out the research questions, aim, objectives, scope, contributions that were made from the study and the structure of the research.

The second chapter presents a review of the existing literature related to the study, with a focus on sports development and policy and project management. Discussions in this chapter were narrowed down to more specific topics, which discuss elite sports development, Africa in the 2012 London Olympics, performance and success, and the introduction of a project management perspective to the study. A summary of the key issues from the literature review was also presented.

The third chapter of this report, which is the methodology chapter, discusses the choice of interpretivism as the philosophical paradigm underpinning this research, after careful consideration of other alternative paradigms. The chapter further discusses the methodological choices made by the researcher in carrying out the

study. Justifications are provided for the use of a qualitative research design and a case study research strategy.

The fourth chapter presents the study findings and a summary of the key issues identified from the findings. This chapter also carries out an elaborate analysis of the study findings

The fifth chapter discusses the key themes that were derived from the analysis, in light of the literature reviewed in order to aid the development of the framework proposed in the study.

The sixth chapter discusses the development and verification of the proposed framework.

Chapter seven, which is the last chapter of the thesis, presents conclusions and recommendations from the study for future research. Figure 2 shows the structure of the study.

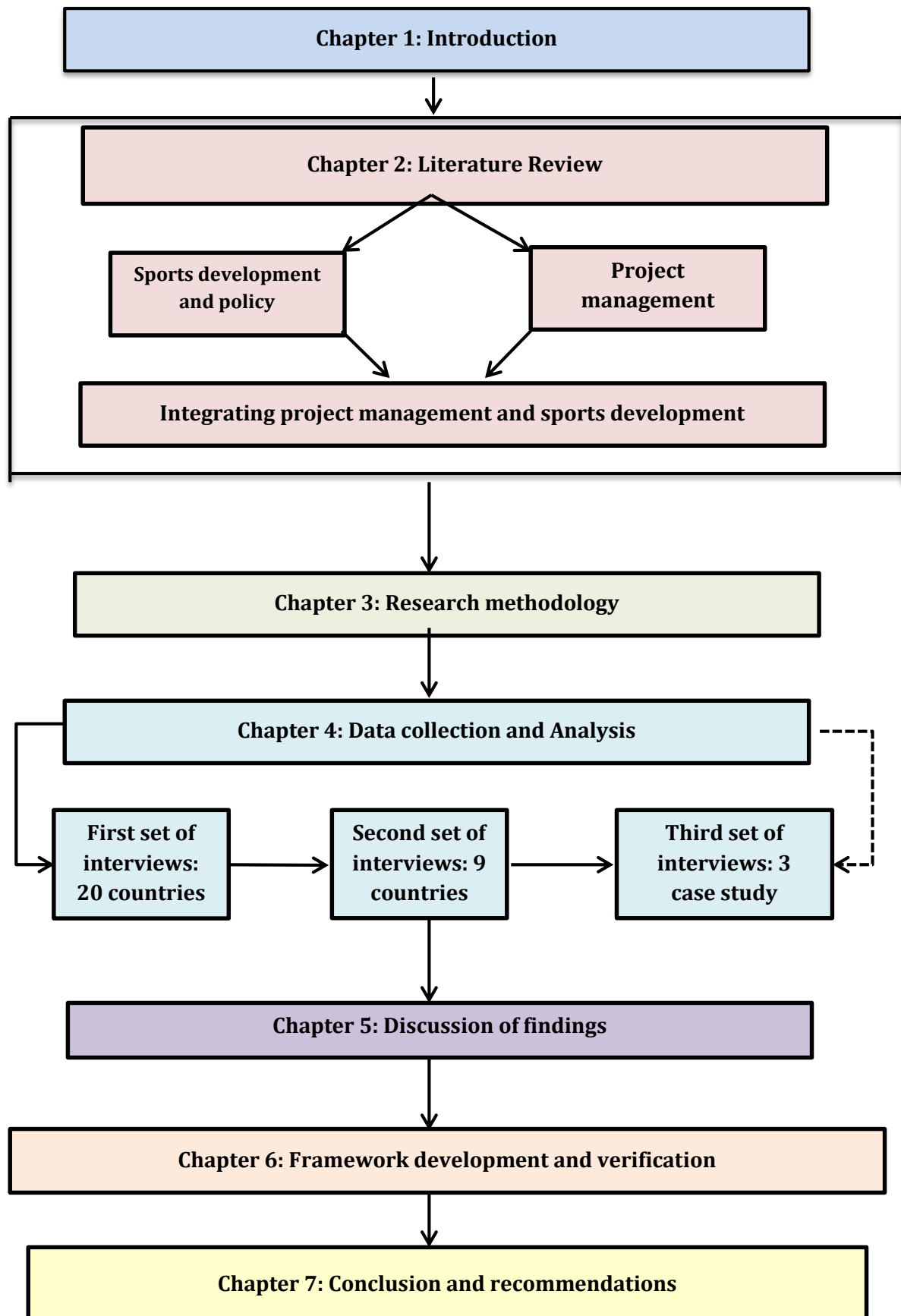


Figure 2: Structure of the thesis (designed by researcher)

1.9 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided an introduction to the thesis. The focus was to highlight the key research issues, including the aim and objectives. The main purpose of the research was to identify the issues that accounted for the underperformance of African countries in the Olympics, using the 2012 London Olympics as the context for the study. The following chapter identifies factors identified in the literature associated with such underperformance. This forms the foundation for subsequent data collectio

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher provided a background to the study, highlighting the study purpose and revealing the key issues and gaps within the research area that needed to be addressed as were identified from preliminary search. As a sequel to this, this chapter presents a review of existing and relevant literature in relation to the study, with the purpose of addressing the research issues highlighted in the previous chapter. Discussions in the review are carried out under four broad headings; sports policy; overview of Africa in the Olympics; the introduction of a project management perspective and; the integration of sports perspective and project management. In line with the aim of the study which is to investigate the performance of African nations in the 2012 London Olympics and to propose a framework for improving their future performance and success, the discussion on sports performance and success is to a large extent carried out within the context of sports policy and project management literature with emphasis on project delivery. The purpose of applying a project management theme to the discussion is to provide robustness in the literature review and to put the researcher in a better position to identify and analyse the key issues impacting on the Olympic performance of African countries as is seen in the research findings and analysis chapters of this study. The literature review provides an analytical understanding of the purpose for the research and a theoretical foundation to carry out this study. Finally, a summary of the key issues and theories from the literature is discussed.

2.2 Sports development and policy

Shehu (2010) describes sports as a standardised system of competition between athletes - a phenomenon considered to originate from the West and transmitted to non-Western societies through various channels and processes such as colonialism, cultural imperialism and globalization, among others (Hargreaves, 1994; Guttmann, 1994; Maguire 1999). However, the development of sports and sport policies form an integral part of wider government policies in most societies today. In fact, Bergsgard *et al.* (2007) suggest that it is difficult to define and draw a boundary between the scope of sport policy and other policy areas, especially as governments and policy

makers have become more willing to adopt sport as a means of achieving a wider range of different policy objectives (Bloyce and Smith, 2010).

The term ‘sports development’ is considered ubiquitous as it is interpreted in several ways by different institutions. Some of these interpretations involve (but not limited to) the use of the term to refer to public service, a professional rationale, a measure of change in social policy and a form of engagement in sport (Hylton and Bramham, 2008). According to Houlihan and White (2002), ‘sports development is at best a series of overlapping policy objectives and associated processes’. Despite the various interpretations accorded to the meaning of sports development, Hylton and Bramham (2008) maintain that a common attribute of the term is that it embraces all levels of sport participation and, increasingly, physical activity. Furthermore, the use of the term gives birth to a deluge of shared meanings, initiatives, personnel and social structures. The most common of these, according to Hylton and Bramham (2008) are:

- i. the structures and pathways within each sport that allow participants to perform and progress at all levels from initiation to excellence;
- ii. the more casual forms of sport that, taken in aggregation, might be termed community or recreation sport; and
- iii. initiative-led forms of participation with specific social or educational objectives.

Therefore, sports development encapsulates the activities and the processes, procedures, policies and personnel that are needed to both facilitate and deliver sport participation.

The past couple of decades have witnessed an expansion of government interest in sport across several countries such as China, Canada, Germany, Singapore, Poland, Norway and the United Kingdom (UK), with an increase in public policies and activities relating to sport development (De Bosscher *et al.*, 2008; Green and Houlihan, 2005; Houlihan and Green, 2008). From a broader spectrum, researchers such as Houlihan (1997) and Green and Collins (2008) have suggested that the expansion of government interest in sport in recent times is as a result of the inextricable link that exists between sport and a diverse range of other significant policy matters such as health care, education, community development, social inclusion and elite sports development and success. Furthermore, government interest

in sport today is demonstrated in a wide range of ways such as increased levels of funding, state regulatory activity (licensing of sport clubs, licensing of coaches, doping control and regulation of sale of broadcasting rights for sporting events etc), increasing number of cities bidding to host international sporting events and growing international commitment from countries and their national sporting organisations to support the World Anti-Doping Code (Houlihan, 2005).

Though the researcher here agrees that it is difficult, if not impossible, to isolate the scope of sport policy from other policy areas (Bergsgard *et al.*, 2007), it is outside the scope of this literature review to give a detailed account of the policy making process or the various sport policy ‘models’ as relates to other public policy areas (Hylton and Bramham (2008) provide an in-depth look into this). For the purpose of providing scope, the view of sports policy in this review is restricted to elite sports development, particularly the Olympic Games, as this is the focal point of this research.

2.2.1 Elite sports development (ESD)

A prominent subject in the debate on sport development and policy is the development of elite sports. The evolution of state-sponsored, elite sports development (ESD) ‘systems’ has now largely formed an integral part of the sport policy in many countries around the world today, particularly since the 1960s and 1970s (Bloyce and Smith, 2010). This, according to Newland and Kellett (2012) is born from the fact that a growing number of countries now consider elite sporting success, especially in the international front, as a gateway to achieving wider socio-economic objectives that may not necessarily be sports related (Houlihan and Green, 2008). To this end, governments are expressing more direct interest in the development of elite sports by making significant financial investments, with the aim of enhancing international sporting success, especially in Olympic sports (Bloyce and Smith, 2010). In justifying such investments, Oakley and Green (2001) are of the view that elite sporting success can only be attained through a strategic investment in elite sport hence the increased institutionalisation of elite sport systems today as highlighted by De Bosscher *et al.* (2009).

In the wake of a growing global interest for countries to achieve international sporting success, there has been an interchange of ideas both within and outside the research environment regarding ESD systems and how these systems influence Olympic

success. Most significant is the desire to solve the mystery behind why certain countries succeed in international competitions and others do not. Though the area of elite sport policies as it influences international success remains under-researched, researchers such as Green and Collins (2008), Jackson and Haigh (2008) and Green (2005) all argue that elite sport policies and systems play a significant role in determining the success of countries in international competitions such as the Olympics, against the popular view that sporting success is mainly influenced by macro-level factors (Johnson and Ali, 2002; Bernard and Buss, 2004; Churilov and Flitman, 2006). However, despite establishing the significance of elite sport policies to achieving success, De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) argue that it is still unclear the extent to which elite sport policies can actually influence the success of countries at major international competitions. Their argument is based on the premise that, while there are a variety of studies which demonstrate that macro-level factors such as the wealth and population of countries 'explain' over 50% of sporting successes, statistical relationships are difficult to determine at the meso-level (at the level of sport policies) and the development of theory is still at a young stage. Despite this view, Bloyce and Smith (2010) uphold that a greater understanding of sport policies and the way in which they are implemented would further enhance the physical dimensions of sport, which play a highly significant role in determining success. This gives room for more research in this area to add weight to the argument on the impact of sport policies on success.

2.2.2 Emergence of ESD

In order to gain an insight into the impact of sports policy implementation on sports performance and success, it is important to look at the emergence of ESD systems from a global point of view, and to analyse how the attributes of such systems have become more widespread. According to Bloyce and Smith (2010), the global transmission of modern achievement sport, mainly from the West, is as a result of an increase in the social significance of sporting performance across a large number of countries and has consequently enhanced the spread of particular types of elite sports (such as soccer) and global sporting competitions (such as the Olympic Games). One of the processes, according to Waddington and Smith (2009), believed to have contributed to the increasing social significance of elite sport on the global front is the de-amateurisation of sport. This involved sport performers moving away from the

view of sports as merely a source of intrinsic pleasure towards viewing it more competitively, with greater emphasis placed on winning (Bloyce and Smith, 2010).

Beamish and Ritchie (2006) have noted that, since the inception of the Olympics, there has been an increasing tendency for the sporting goods industries, media corporations and other commercially minded institutions to become significantly involved in organising the Games. The authors argue that these developments in the evolution of sports have ‘played significant roles in shaping contemporary world-class, high-performance sport and created the enormous impetus behind the quest for pushing human athletic performance to increasingly rarefied heights’ (Beamish and Ritchie, 2006:67). Commercialisation and politicisation of sports is believed to have significantly influenced the emergence of elite sport. The commercialisation of sports is a phenomenon that was substantially developed in the 1940s and has remained in trend since then, increasing the pressure on athletes to compete in sports mainly because of the financial gains that are at stake (Bloyce and Smith, 2010). Waddington and Smith (2009) link this to the increasing politicisation of sport, whereby governments consider huge investments in providing the best sporting infrastructure for developing and supporting world-class athletes, to be the gateway to sporting success.

From a broader point of view, the emergence of elite sport has also made a significant impact on the willingness shown by governments and other sporting institutions to commit huge amount of resources to organise mega-sporting events (Beamish and Ritchie, 2006). Mega sporting events are usually sporting competitions or tournaments that have an international status and significance (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006). Some practical examples of such mega sporting projects are the Olympic Games, the FIFA Soccer World Cup, the rugby world cup, and motorsports events. Some of the regional events in this category include The Commonwealth Games, The All Africa Games, The Pan-American Games and The Asian Games (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). These sporting events are also popularly referred to as mega projects (Karadakis *et al.*, 2010). In providing a description of the magnitude of mega sporting projects, Koppenjan (2005) describes them as multibillion-dollar investment projects, usually commissioned by governments and delivered by private enterprise. Clegg *et al.* (2002) also characterise these types of projects as being complex, uncertain, politically sensitive and involving a large number of partners. Furthermore,

Yang *et al.* (2011) also argue that another attribute of mega sporting projects is the enormity of the task of planning and executing such projects, which always requires a punctilious approach applied throughout the life of the project. In this study however, the particular mega sporting event being examined is the Olympics.

2.2.3 The Olympics as a mega sporting event and an elite sport

- **Olympics as mega sporting event**

The restriction of the discussion of elite sport in this literature review to the Olympic Games is a deliberate attempt by the researcher to carry out the research within the contextual boundaries as highlighted in the study aim and objectives. The Olympics today is considered to be arguably the biggest sporting event in the world and this has attracted a lot of interest from both researchers and practitioners alike, to explore the various components of this event. Like other mega sporting events, the Olympic Games have been and still remain a vital means in the orientation of national economies and societies towards an international coexistence (Roche, 2000). As such, the Olympics in recent years is seen not just as a sporting event, but more a driving force for globalisation (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). Mittelman, (1995) typifies globalisation as a process involving an enhanced interaction and closer integration of the world economies and politics, and conceptually, it is suggested that high profile mega events such as the Olympic Games are one of the most popular ways of enhancing such interaction between nations (Cornelissen, 2004).

Within the frame of globalisation, the Olympics are considered to hold numerous values to its stakeholders. First, owing to the high profile nature of the Games, the extensive media coverage of the event often avails a significant degree of international exposure to the participating nations, particularly the host nation (Gratton and Preuss, 2008). Thus, many participating countries consider the Olympics as not only an avenue to showcase the sporting abilities of their elite athletes, but also an opportunity to advertise their country's socio-cultural identity as leverage for both short and long term economic gains (Roche, 2000; Horne and Manzenreiter, 2002; Nauright, 2004). Putting it in different words, Tomlinson (2010) describes the Olympics as a showpiece to project a country's identity and modernity internationally. Matheson and Baade (2004) refer to the Games as a catalyst for national image enhancement. To further expound this view, Herstein and Berger

(2013) consider the Olympics as an avenue for developing countries to announce their global emergence to the world, and an opportunity for their developed counterparts to rebrand themselves in order to reinforce a global position. These views therefore strongly suggest that, in the back of the minds of countries participating in the Olympics, there exists the desire to use their participation to refresh and rebrand their national image internationally. For the host country, the Olympic Games are often believed to possess significant economic benefits drawn from revenue generated as a result of the huge public and private sector investment and, especially revenue from advertising and media (Alegi, 2001 and Waitt, 2001). Though some researchers, critical of this view, argue that the huge financial implication of hosting the event sometimes outweighs the accruable benefits (Zimbalist, 2010 and Rowe and McKay, 2012), advocates of Olympic events maintain that hosting the Games remain a vital medium for regenerating the host city (Herstein and Berger, 2013). It is also argued that hosting the Olympics can serve as a channel for achieving other wider societal objectives in areas such as infrastructural development and improvement (Hiller, 2000), tourism and foreign investment (Owen, 2002), health care (Bauman *et al.*, 2014), employment creation (Waitt, 2001) and poverty reduction (Matheson and Baade, 2004), to mention a few. For other participating countries, Jackson and Haigh (2008) suggest that their involvement and success in the Games provides opportunities for achieving other political milestones, especially in the area of foreign policy.

- **Olympics as an elite sport**

One of the primary attributes of elite sport is its competitive element. Though the subject of elite sport development is now more popularly discussed within the context of politics and sports policy as emerging research in this field would suggest, the fact still remains that sports, especially elite sports, is primarily a competitive activity between athletes displaying high level performances for the ultimate prize of success (Shehu, 2000).

From an elite sport perspective, the Olympic Games are considered the height of an athlete's career and the outcome most elite athletes strive to achieve (Debois *et al.*, 2012). The journey to becoming an elite athlete with Olympic experience is usually very competitive, as athletes need to demonstrate a certain level of sporting

excellence to be considered worthy of representing their countries, especially on the world stage (Green, 2009). Owing to the ever-increasing importance attached to the Olympic Games and the need for athletes to perform well and win medals, countries now adopt systematic approaches for identifying and developing athletes with the potential of succeeding in major competitions. In some instances, countries run comprehensive programmes to support talent identification and development (Vaeyens *et al.*, 2008), provide support for the athlete through the transition phases of their careers (Debois *et al.*, 2012) as well as offer post-career support to the athletes (De Bosscher *et al.*, 2009). For upcoming athletes, the thought of representing their country in an Olympic Games often starts as an imagination, but slowly turns into becoming their main objective and indeed, a reality, following the athlete's development and improved performance. Though Debois *et al.* (2012) suggest that participation alone does not often provide complete satisfaction to the aspirations of elite athletes as they primarily strive to win a medal or at least a place in the finals, Peachey *et al.* (2014) argues that, apart from the aspiration of athletes to win medals, they also achieve satisfaction from their participation, especially where there is an avenue for gaining world learning, skill development and the opportunity to travel. Irrespective of the difference in views expressed by researchers on the factors that motivate elite sport participation, one agreed conclusion is that elite athletes consider their involvement in the Olympics as a significant milestone in their sporting careers that gives them a feeling of achievement and self-worth (Green, 2009; Newland and Kellett, 2012; Debois *et al.*, 2012 and Peachey *et al.*, 2014).

2.3 Africa in the Olympics

The Olympics, considered to be the biggest sporting event in the world, currently draw on participation from countries across regions of the world. In the 2012 London Olympics, 204 countries participated with a total of over 10,000 athletes competing in 300 events. Lins *et al.* (2003) suggest that the growing number of participants in the Olympics has made the Games more competitive and has increased the desire among participants to achieve success. Also, due to the growing international participation and increasing stakeholder involvement in the Olympics, the researcher through a review of other studies (Karadakis *et al.*, 2010, Bourne and Walker, 2008, Mitchell *et al.*, 1997) believes it has become more crucial now than ever to look into ways of addressing issues leading to poor performance of African countries in the Games.

The history of Africa in the Olympics started with the participation of South Africa in 1904 and later Egypt in 1912 (Ali, 1976). However, African participation in modern day Olympics started effectively in the 1960s and 1970s with the independence of most of the African countries, subsequently becoming part of the Olympic movement (MacIntosh *et al.*, 1993). Though considered to be a sporting event, most of the African countries that joined the Olympic movement did so with the intention of using the Games to gain access to the international community, and to also achieve wider societal objectives following their independence (Ali, 1976). Researchers today still sympathetic to this view argue that the Olympic is not just a sporting event, but more a driving force for economic growth (Malfas *et al.*, 2004), infrastructural development (Coates and Humphreys, 1999), globalisation and regeneration of national identity (Roche, 2000; Nauright 2004) and tourism and international exposure (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2002).

According to International Olympic Committee (IOC) statistics, there are 54 African countries that are part of the Olympic movement with recognised National Olympic Committees (NOCs). 53 of these countries took part in the 2012 London Olympics, making up approximately a quarter of the total number of countries currently participating in the Olympic Games. Despite this large representation of Africa in the Olympics, Johnson and Ali (2004) argue that the level of success being achieved in terms of medal wins, is not commensurate to the number of African countries participating in the Games, a phenomenon which is brought about as a result of reoccurring poor performance from the region as a whole (Forrest *et al.*, 2010). This has therefore attracted a lot of interest both from within and outside the research community to explore the reasons behind this trend. Luiz and Fadal (2011) suggests that there is still a wide gap in knowledge about the issues responsible for the poor performance of African countries in the Olympics, and lack of adequate analysis to proffer solutions accordingly.

2.3.1 Measuring the performance and success of countries in Olympic Games

The debate on measuring success is a common one in academic research that has cut across various disciplines for many decades now (Elig and Frieze, 1979; Reifenberg, 1986; Linberg, 1999; Petter *et al.*; 2008 and Tasiemski and Bauerfeind, 2013). Several researchers have made plausible attempts in trying to define success, or at least to develop some sort of framework to measure success. Though some of such

attempts have been made in contexts different from sports, the principles proposed can be applied to the context of sports and can lead to a better understanding of sports success (De Bosscher *et al.*, 2009 and Barkoukis *et al.*, 2014).

The performance and success of countries in the Olympic Games can be measured from different perspectives. As such, several researchers including Li *et al.* (2008), Wu *et al.* (2009) and Zhang *et al.* (2009) all acknowledge the difficulty in applying the same model or approach of performance measurement across all nations participating in the Olympics. Bloyce and Smith (2010) point out that this can be partly due to the difference reflected in sport policies and agendas of participating nations, and also perhaps, due to the uneven distribution of resources possessed by participating countries (Bernard and Busse, 2004) which can give an indication of performance outcomes. Consequently, countries place different values in benchmarking their success in the Games. For example, a country like China with huge resources may consider winning 10 medals in the Olympic Games a disappointing outcome, while a country like Ethiopia with little resources may consider winning the same number of medals a huge success. This difference in value is also attached to the category of medals won (Li *et al.*, 2008). For example, while a country like the USA with a more robust sport policy may consider it a huge disappointment to win only 10 gold medals, countries like Nigeria or Egypt with a less defined sport policy may consider it an outstanding outcome to win the same number of gold medals. Furthermore, some other countries may consider it a huge success to win at least a medal in the Olympic Games regardless of the type of medal. Examples of this were Botswana and Gabon winning their first-ever Olympic medals in the 2012 London Olympics. Though both countries had each won one medal, it was considered as a huge achievement and a national record irrespective of the medal category. These examples further highlight the difficulty with using a uniform approach to measure the performance of nations in Olympics. However, it is still of importance for this review to discuss some of the perspectives presented by various researchers in the debate on measuring Olympic performance.

2.3.2 Medal tables/medal wins

The use of medal tables is perhaps the most popular way of evaluating the performance of nations in the Olympic Games. While it should be noted that competition in the Games is among athletes rather than countries (Churilov and

Flitman, 2006), it has become common practice for the media to show medals won of every country usually in a table form highlighting the number of gold, silver and bronze medals won by each country. Although it is the general consensus that the gold medals are of more value than the silver medals and the silver medals more than the bronze, sometimes ranking of countries on the medal table is done using a computation of the non-weighted sum of medals for each country (Lozano *et al.*, 2002). Although it is true that an official ranking system has never been published by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) (Li *et al.*, 2008), and that the IOC does not recognise the Olympic medal table as an order of merit (De Bosscher *et al.*, 2008), much research has been conducted with emphasis on the number of medals won, in an attempt to assess the performance of nations in the Games. A commonly adopted performance estimation approach within this school of thought is regression analysis utilising various sets of socio-economic components as independent variables (Grimes *et al.*, 1974 and Kiviaho and Makela, 1978). A more recent approach known as the neural network approach is proposed by Condon *et al.* (1999). Again, this approach utilises certain independent variables as input such as the size of a country, demographics (birth and death rates, population, life expectancy etc) and economic data (national product, value of imports and exports, electric capacity and production, etc), while the output variables are medal points (Lozano *et al.*, 2002).

Another commonly adopted approach when using medals in measuring Olympic performance of nations is the data envelopment analysis (DEA). DEA, proposed by Charnes *et al.* (1978), adopts linear programming techniques to develop a relative efficiency measure for peer decision-making units (DMUs) using multiple inputs and outputs (Li *et al.*, 2008). In using this approach to evaluate Olympic performance and success, the DMUs represent the participating nations while the output is defined as the number of the various categories of medals. The input on the other hand represents factors such as population, GDP per capita and other country-specific socio-economic characteristics of the participating countries, as also demonstrated in Lozano *et al.*'s (2002) assurance region (AR) DEA model. The AR constraints in Lozano *et al.* (2002) DEA model are designed to demonstrate the relative degree of importance of gold medals to silver medals and silver medals to bronze medals. Another study on evaluating Olympic performance of nations using the DEA model is that of Lins *et al.* (2003). The authors developed a Zero Sum Gains (ZSG) DEA

model which assumes that the sum of outputs (total number of medals) is constant. In another study on using DEA models in measuring Olympic performance, Churilov and Flitman (2006) conducted a two-stage analysis of the actual achievements of the different Olympic participants using DEA and self-organising maps. The idea behind using maps is for the purpose of grouping nations with similar profiles into clusters. Generally, DEA models used in Olympic performance evaluation are developed on the premise that a country's ability to win medals relates to its available resources (Lins *et al.*, 2003).

2.3.3 Challenges of sports performance and success in the Olympics

Researchers such as Bernard and Busse (2004) and Churilov and Flitman (2006) have suggested that the poor performance or lack of success of African countries in the Olympics is born from factors which relate to the social, financial and population capacities of these countries. However, Luiz and Fadal (2011) argue that such conclusions are limited in scope due to lack of consistency. For example, findings from the research conducted by Tcha and Pershin (2003) suggest that geophysical and climatic conditions account for the success of some countries in certain sports. Though this concept is used to explain the success of Kenya in the marathon running discipline, Bernard and Busse (2004) point out that there is a lack of consensus in the relationship between geographic variables and sporting success, as not every country with similar geographic conditions as Kenya succeeds. Again, while Johnson and Ali (2004) argue that countries with relatively larger populations are more likely to succeed due to the opportunity of having a wider pool of athletes to compete, with the costs of training, facilities and infrastructure effectively shared across the population (Rathke and Woitek, 2008), researchers such as Condon *et al.*, (1999) and Hoffmann *et al.* (2002) maintain that population size is an insufficient variable to measure sporting success in the Olympics. India is an example to justify this view, as it is relatively unsuccessful in the Olympics medal-wise despite its large population.

Researchers like Johnson and Ali (2004), Humphreys and Ruseski (2009) and Forrest *et al.* (2010) argue that the evaluation of a country's sporting success should be done in relation to its economic resources. As such, the authors propose that medal achievement for countries in the Olympics should be gauged according to a country's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. In evaluating the performance of some African countries in the 2012 London Olympics using this criteria, countries such as

Kenya, Ethiopia, Gabon, Botswana and Uganda, with relatively low GDPs, were able to win medals, while a country like Nigeria with more resources and currently Africa's biggest economy on the basis of GDP, did not win any medal at the Games. This discrepancy between predicted achievement and actual achievement, based on a given level of resources, exposes the inconsistency and inefficiency associated with resources utilisation as a means of evaluating sports performance.

The general assertion from studies that consider economic resources to be the basis for sports success is that, countries such as Australia, United Kingdom, USA and Canada are more successful in sports and are at an advantage in their performance due to the level of economic resources that they possess. However, this theory is limited in scope as fails to offer explanations as to why certain poor countries are still able to successfully compete and challenge for medals despite their lack of such resources, or why some rich countries do badly. For example, Ethiopia and Kenya still do very well in middle and long distance races, Cameroun in football and Angola in basketball. Whereas on the other hand, countries such as Nigeria, Egypt and South Africa, with a better endowment of economic resources in Africa, perform relatively poorly.

Though the argument suggesting the use of finance, population, GDP and other economic variables as important considerations for sports success is a valid one, there is still a need to consider and explore other factors, too. For example, Hamilton (2000) suggests that talented individuals within a community are steered towards the direction of popular local sports, as a result of local traditions. In furtherance of this view, Cote *et al.* (2006) also holds that the place of birth of an individual and the advantages of being born in a given region, influences sports performance. A practical case of this school of thought can be drawn from India's active involvement and good performance in cricket rather than athletics, which also explains their consistent underperformance in multi-sport Games. Another practical case of how local traditions encourage particular sports can be drawn from Kenya and their achievements in distance races.

Cote *et al.* (2006) also reveal that an athlete's development and performance can also be influenced by factors such as, the availability of parental support, organisational support, research institutes, experienced coaches and access to standard training facilities. De Bosscher *et al.* (2006) extend this list to include other factors such as the

structure, systems, policies and politics of sports organizations. Luiz and Fadal (2011) in their study further identify variables like education and corruption to be significant in influencing sports performance.

With a lack of success by various studies to arrive at a consensus on the factors that impact on the performance of African countries in the Olympics, the need for more research has become more significant. Following the insufficiency derived from the use of macro-economic variables to justify the performance and success of countries in the Olympics, Luiz and Fadal (2011) call for a more holistic means of evaluation. Furthermore, Forrest *et al.* (2010) admit that, while most academic discourse in this area is geared towards making predictions for upcoming Olympic Games, a retrospective look at the causes of poor performance is lacking.

2.3.4 Improving performance and success

The effort by the IOC to make recent Olympic Games a truly global event is reflected in the large number of countries now involved and the increasing number of athletes now competing in the Games - an increase from 241 athletes from just 14 countries that participated in the Athens Olympic in 1896, to over 10,000 athletes from over 200 countries that took part in the 2012 London Olympics. In view of this upsurge in participation, the Olympics Games have become more competitive with medals becoming relatively more difficult to win. Furthermore, De Bosscher *et al.* (2008) points out that the IOC's intention to cap the number of events in future Games at around 300 thereby making the supply of medals (success) essentially fixed, will result in increased competition as more nations now participate and win medals. As such, Shibli (2003) notes that the "market" will have to adjust by increasing the "price of success". With this in mind, it has become pertinent for nations to strategically explore ways of developing and improving the performance of their elite athletes in order to increase their chances of achieving and maintaining success in Games (Green and Houlihan, 2005; De Bosscher *et al.*, 2008). De Bosscher (2007) further highlights that for nations to "produce" successful elite athletes, there needs to be a strategic planning process in place, part of which must be the evaluation of achieved results (outputs).

Though the overall performance from African countries in the Olympics as is reflected in their medal achievements is considered to be poor (as shown in table 1), a

few African countries have consistently recorded more success in the Games than others, irrespective of financial and domestic differences. In exploring this trend, Hamilton (2000) points out that countries that excel in the Olympics do so through strategically allocating their resources to certain sports where they have developed a comparative advantage. To expound this view further, Tcha (2004) reveals that some countries are focusing their attention and resources on medal-intensive individual sports such as gymnastics and swimming, rather than team driven sports. This is because there is a chance of winning more medals in individual sports than in team sports, in a multi-sport event such as the Olympic. In other words, athletes competing in individual sports may win a number of medals, whereas a single team competing in team sports can only win one medal. With this knowledge, some countries, by strategically channelling their resources towards individual sports, have been able to increase their chances of better performances and medal success in the Olympic Games (Novikov and Maksimenko, 1972; Hamilton, 2000; and Tcha, 2004).

Another area of interest to efficiency theorists in the discussion on strategies of improving sports performance of countries is the design of their sport systems. This school of thought upholds that organisations that adopt the most efficient design in their sport system perform better than those that do not. According to Green (2004), French, Canadian, Australian and British sporting systems were forced into an overhaul as a result of poor performances and failures at previous Olympic Games. Green's (2004) review of the British sport policy exposed concerns of fragmentation, structural disorganisation and internal conflict leading to sporting failures, which necessitated an organisational reformation of the entire system. The proposals that emerged from this were gauged against Australia's centralised sporting institute, as well as their development of an elite sport programme. This emphasises the need to examine a sporting production function with a view to knowing how inputs into sports can be transformed into output, represented by medals in Olympics (Luiz and Fadal, 2011).

From a review of studies conducted by Oakley and Green (2001) and De Bosscher *et al.* (2009), the researcher has identified key factors critical to international sporting success. These factors are summarised as follows:

1. *Financial support (a. financial support for elite sport b. financial support for national sport organisations)*
2. *A clear understanding about the role of different agencies and their effective communication network that maintains the system.*
3. *Simplicity of administration through common sporting and political boundaries.*
4. *Well-structured competitive programs with on-going (inter)national exposure.*
5. *Comprehensive planning for each sport's needs.*
6. *Allocation of resources on a small number of sports, identifying those that have a real chance of success.*
7. *Provision of sports services to create an excellent culture.*
8. *Understanding and recognition that developing excellence has costs and requires appropriate funding*
9. *Organisation and structure of sport policies*
10. *Sport participation*
11. *Talent identification and development*
12. *Athletic career and post career support*
13. *Well-developed and specific facilities for elite athletes.*
14. *Coaching provision and coach development*
15. *Scientific research*

The factors listed above were considered by the authors (Oakley and Green, 2001; De Bosscher *et al.*, 2009) to be crucial for countries and their sports organisations to achieve international success. As such, the summary list of these factors shown above was taken into consideration by the researcher in this study as a guide to developing the interview questions and discussions held with the research participants in the later phase of this study (interview questions attached as appendix G).

2.4 Introducing a project management perspective

Although the discussion on the use of medals to measure Olympic success remains dominant within sports literature, the use of other approaches to measure the performance and success of nations in the Games is a possibility that can be explored further. For example, De Bosscher *et al.* (2008) states, “...it is quite possible for Performance Directors in individual sports to make considerable progress in

developing a sport without this progress being translated into medals in elite competition”. This statement provides an opportunity to introduce other measures of evaluating Olympic performance of nations in order to give a better reflection of their overall performance.

One popular way of evaluating success in project management is through a project’s set objectives (Cooke-Davies, 2002). Baccarini (1999) consider the objectives of a project to generally represent the project’s intended outcome, which may be achievable within the short, medium or long term of the life cycle of the project. De Wit (1988) also argues that the degree to which these objectives have been met reflects the project’s success or failure. In a similar fashion to projects, it is traditional for nations participating in the Olympics to set their targets (objectives) of what outcomes they intend to achieve in the Games prior to their participation. Usually, the objectives of nations in participating in international sporting events such as the Olympics are often developed in line with their overall sports policy and will differ from one nation to another (Green and Collins, 2008), and achieving these objectives could be considered as success by some stakeholders. For example, De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) express the view that it is a valid approach to measure a country’s performance in the Olympics in light of the overall impact it makes to a country’s sport policy, regardless of whether such performance translates to medal wins or not. For instance, against the political rhetoric surrounding suggestions that a nation’s physical activity levels can be increased following the putting together of a ‘successful’ Olympic team (Coalter, 2004), many nations today, especially those hosting the Games, now include this as part of their policy objectives and usually anticipate that their constant participation in the Olympics will lead to an increase in physical activity levels across the nation. Achieving this objective is not necessarily measured by medal wins. Some examples of countries that, apart from their desire to win more medals, have the vision of promoting a nation-wide participation in sport and physical activities through Olympic participation are Australia (Green and Collins, 2008), United Kingdom (Green, 2009), Canada (Bloyce and Smith, 2010) and the USA (Newland and Kellett, 2012). Although Bloyce and Smith (2010) acknowledge that the development of an effective and robust sport policy is a product of a long-term strategic planning process, Jugdev and Muller (2005) argue that achieving short-term objectives is what translates into overall success.

One of the dimensions of measuring the performance and success of a project as suggested in the study conducted by Kuen *et al.* (2009) is to measure it against the impact on the organisation which could be in the form of improved organisational performance and decision making process at organisational level, or the project's ability to prepare the organisation for the future. This view also supports a previous study carried out by Tukel and Rom (2001) who agree that the metrics for measuring project success have expanded beyond the traditional measures of time, budget and quality to include other considerations such as clients, stakeholders and the project's legacy impact on the organisation. In relating this view to sports performance and success, many nations use their performance in the Olympic Games as a backdrop to build up for future Games. Apart from winning medals, Churilov and Flitman (2000) agree that the experiences and learning gained by athletes in participating in the Olympics puts them in a better position to achieve better results in the future. Similarly, coaches, performance directors and sport administrators are better informed in making improved decisions through their experiences and any lessons learnt from their participation and performance and that of their athletes in previous competitions (De Bosscher *et al.*, 2008; De Bosscher *et al.*, 2009 and Peachey *et al.*, 2014).

While the propositions on the use of non-medal based measures in evaluating success are plausible, the primary desire of countries participating in the Olympic Games is to win medals. As such, although the literature from a PM perspective, has discussed other possible approaches to view and evaluate Olympic performance, the view of medals as a parameter for success remains central to this research as will become evident from the research findings discussed later in the thesis. The next section again adopts a PM perspective to explore the issues and challenges critical to performance and success of projects and to identify the overlap, if any, to issues of performance and success in Olympic Games.

2.4.1 Issues and challenges critical to performance and success from a PM perspective

The approach to adopt in evaluating the issues and challenges critical to success will largely depend on the nature of objectives to be achieved. To provide guidance with managing the discrete packages of work, the Association for Project Management in their Body of Knowledge classifies the nature of objectives into three domains: project, programme and portfolio (P3) management (APMBoK, 2012). The rationale

behind this classification lies in the premise that the way work is managed depends upon the scale, significance and complexity of the work including a wide variety of other factors. According to the APMBok (2012), project management is “*the application of processes, methods, knowledge, skills and experience to achieve the project objectives*”, while programme management is “*the coordinated management of projects and change management activities to achieve beneficial change*”. Portfolio management on the other hand is “*the selection, prioritisation and control of an organisation’s projects and programmes in line with its strategic objectives and capacity to deliver. The goal is to balance change initiatives and business-as-usual while optimising return on investment*” (APMBok, 2012). In other words, work of a lesser scale and complexity, leading to an output, characterises a project. A programme however, combines projects with change management to deliver benefits, while a combination of projects and programmes designed to achieve strategic objectives typifies a portfolio.

The idea of preparing a country’s Olympic contingent to participate in the Olympic Games is an objective that can be viewed from the perspective of project and programme management. It is a task very similar in many ways to managing a project, and carrying this out with the aim of achieving wider national sport policy objectives is a phenomenon similar to programme management. A look at some PM definitions of a project and a programme puts this similarity into perspective:

First, a project, according to the Project Management Institute’s 2013 Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) is, “*...a temporary group activity designed to produce a unique product or service...Temporary in that it has a defined beginning and end in time, and therefore defined scope and resources...Unique in that it is not a routine operation, but a specific set of operations designed to accomplish a singular goal*”. Another definition of a project states that a project is “*...an endeavour in which human, (or machine), material and financial resources are organised in a novel way, to undertake a unique scope of work, of given specification, within constraints of cost and time, so as to deliver beneficial change defined by quantitative and qualitative objectives*” (Turner, 1993).

On the other hand, a programme according to the PMBOK (1996) is defined as “*a group of related projects managed in a co-ordinated way*”. The UK Association for

Project Management's Body of Knowledge (APM BoK) considers it as "*a collection of projects related to some common objective*" (APM, 2000, p. 15). Consequently, programme management is considered to be "...the integration and management of a group of related projects with the intent of achieving benefits that would not be realised if they were managed independently" (Lycett *et al.*, 2004).

Applying these definitions in the context of this study would suggest that a country's participation in the Olympics could be viewed as a single project within the overall programme of the national sports policy and development of that country. Though there is a scarcity of theoretical analysis within literature that evaluates the participation and performance of nations in international sporting events in the light of project management and programme management, the adoption of a 'programme – project' approach in sports policy and development is becoming more practical in many countries today (Green and Collins, 2008). Some examples of countries with robust sports development programmes include USA, UK, Australia, Canada and China (Green and Houlihan, 2005, De Bosscher *et al.*, 2008; Newland and Kellett, 2012). It becomes logical therefore, to explore some of the PM issues and challenges or in other words, critical success factors, in programme and project management and to compare these to the challenges faced by countries participating in international sports, particularly the Olympics, in order to provide a more in-depth qualitative analysis on the subject, as this comparison is currently lacking within the literature.

Several researchers such as Pinto (1986), Kerzner (1987), Pinto and Prescott (1988), Cook-Davies (2002) and Muller and Turner (2005) have attempted to develop models that highlight certain ingredients capable of influencing the outcome of a project, otherwise referred to as critical success factors (CSFs). Researchers such as Kuen *et al.* (2009) believe that, if addressed, CSFs can improve the likelihood of successful implementation of a project, but if not taken seriously, might lead to the failure of the project. The most popular empirical studies on CSFs in project success are those carried out by Pinto, co-authoring with Slevin (Pinto and Slevin, 1988), Prescott (Pinto and Prescott, 1988), Covin (Pinto and Covin, 1989), and Mantel (Pinto and Mantel, 1990). Table 2 shows ten CSFs identified by Pinto and Prescott

Table 2: Pinto and Prescott's ten success factors

Critical Success Factor (CSF)	Definition
<i>Project Mission</i>	Initial clarity of goals and general directions
<i>Top Management Support</i>	Willingness of top management to provide the necessary resources and authority/power for project success
<i>Project Schedule/Plan</i>	A detailed specification of the individual action steps required for project implementation
<i>Client Consultation</i>	Communication, consultation, and action listening to all impacted parties
<i>Personnel</i>	Recruitment, selection, and training of the necessary personnel for the project team
<i>Technical Tasks</i>	Availability of the required technology and expertise to accomplish the specific technical action steps
<i>Client Acceptance</i>	The act of “selling” the final project to its ultimate intended users
<i>Monitoring and feedback</i>	Timely provision of comprehensive control information at each stage in the implementation process
<i>Communication</i>	The provision of an appropriate network and necessary data to all key actors in the project implementation
<i>Trouble-Shooting</i>	Ability to handle unexpected crises and deviations from plan

Source: Pinto and Prescott (1988) and Belout and Gauvreau (2004).

Although the authors (Pinto and Prescott, 1988) acknowledge that “...*it is possible, and indeed likely, that the relative impact or emphasis of the various critical factors on project success are subject to change at different points in the project*”, their study however provides empirical justifications for the various critical success factors identified and highlights their relative importance at different phases of the project’s life cycle. While Pinto and Prescott’s (1988) list of ten success factors is very popular and quite widely cited in project management literature, emerging research suggests that this list is inconclusive as there are other factors that are critical to a project’s outcome. Table 3 shows a brief summary of an extended list of critical success factors for project success highlighted in PM literature. The table also shows the different studies within the literature that have recognised each of these factors as being critical to success in order to give an indication of which factors are more popular.

Table 3 CSFs identified in PM literature

Critical Success Factors	Literature Sources #																	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Project mission/common goal/direction					+					+		+		+		+	+	6
Project requirement and objectives		+	+			+	+						+			+		6
Project plan	+	+	+	+			+						+			+	+	8
Commitment to planning and control					+							+			+			3
Project strategy									+				+					2
Realistic expectations							+						+	+		+	+	5
Smaller project milestones													+					1
Top management support		+		+	+		+	+	+				+				+	8
Personnel/teamwork		+	+		+		+	+	+		+		+	+	+		+	11
On-site project manager			+															1
Executive commitment					+			+										2
Goal commitment of project team			+															1
Adequate funding			+	+		+			+									4
Trouble-shooting/risk					+	+	+							+				4

management																		
Technical tasks ability			+		+	+	+											4
Communication			+	+	+		+					+						5
Performance monitoring and feedback	+	+	+	+	+		+							+	+			8
Environment							+											1
Ownership													+	+	+			3
Logistics requirements				+														1
Client involvement and acceptance	+			+	+	+	+			+			+					7
Duration and project size								+						+				2
Urgency of project							+	+										2
Corporate understanding							+	+										2
High-quality Processes									+							+		2
Politics						+												1
Selection criteria for project manager role					+			+							+			3
Leadership style of project manager					+			+							+			3

Source: (1) Sayles and Chandler (1971); (2) Martin (1976); (3) Baker *et al.* (1983); (4) Cleland and King (1983); (5) Pinto (1986); (6) Morris and Hough (1987); (7) Pinto and Slevin (1988); (8) Wateridge (1995); (9) Cooper and Kleinschmidt (1995); (10) Belassi and Tukel (1996); (11) Belout (1998); (12) Clarke (1999); (13) Johnson *et al.* (2001); (14) Cooke-Davies (2002); (15) Muller and Turner (2005); (16) Zwikael and Globerson (2006); (17) Kuen *et al.* (2009).

Although the studies on CSFs shown in table 3 are mainly products of project management research, a few studies on sport performance have identified some of these factors as critical to performance and success in sports. For instance, De Bosscher (2007) and Bloyce and Smith (2010) acknowledge that the lack of a strategic planning process can often have a negative impact on the performance of elite athletes, thereby minimising chances of achieving success in major competitions. Also, Oakley and Green (2001), in their framework for sports performance improvement, highlight the need for countries participating in international competitions to have a comprehensive plan for each sport's needs. The importance of strategic planning in Olympic sports today is taking priority in the development of sport policy. In Great Britain for example, the ambition to achieve and maintain international sporting success and the increasing stabilisation of sports policy was fortified in 2002 with the Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) publishing the 'Game plan' – *"...a wide-ranging sport strategy that reiterated the commitment to elite success, set out an ambitious aim of increasing grassroots participation for health benefits...and clearly articulated a strong message that a results-driven and evidence-based approach to the achievement of strategic aims was now essential"* (Green, 2009; DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002; Coalter, 2007). Drawing up a strategic plan such as this also creates an awareness of the increasing competitive abilities of other nations at elite level (Houlihan and Green, 2008; De Bosscher *et al.*, 2008).

Another CSF that is also identified as capable of impacting on sport performance and success of countries is the lack of a clear 'project' mission, which denotes a lack of vision and clarity of sport policy (Green and Collins, 2008). The absence of a clear policy vision makes planning difficult, if not impossible, and often results in setting of unrealistic goals and targets (Green, 2009), and makes it difficult for a country to identify its actual sporting objectives, which result in unachievable objectives being drawn (Bloyce and Smith, 2010). The need to have a clear policy vision has been strongly exemplified by most countries that have achieved Olympic success in recent times. For instance, Great Britain, one of the most recent adopters of this principle, has witnessed tremendous improvements across their overall sporting landscape as a result of reforms to their sports policy and systems following poor sporting performance and failures at the Olympic Games, as illustrated in table 4.

Table 4: Improvements across the sporting landscape of England

	1997	2007	Vision for 2017
School sport and PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No centrally coordinated school sport system Poor school-club links In 2002 an estimated 25% of 5 - 16s were doing 2 hours of PE and sport each week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 86% of 5 – 16s doing 2 hours of PE and sport each week 3000 Community Sports Coaches 450 School Sport Partnerships 90 competition managers Over 3200 Secondary School Sport Coordinators and over 18,000 primary link teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A world-leading system for school sport and PE All 5 – 16s offered 5 hours of school sport and PE each week All 16 – 19s offered 3 hours of sport each week Competition and coaching at the heart of the school sport system
Community Sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited targeted investment No organisation with clear remit for school sport and PE Little or no system of coaching linked to schools £32 million annual funding to sport England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. 400 Specialist Sports Colleges Over £1.5 billion invested over last 5 years Youth Sport Trust established as the lead organisation for school sport and PE Performance targets underpin the system 	
Elite sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dilapidated sports facilities No organisation with clear remit for community Sport Fragmented and undervalued coaching system 36th in 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games medal table; 4th in Paralympic Games Funding of £70.7 million Emerging elite facilities network – United Kingdom Sports Institute UK Sport created as the lead organisation for elite sport Limited systematic approach to elite coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over £125 million annual exchequer funding to Sport England 4000 facilities built or renovated Over £1 billion of investment in facilities since 2001 Sport England now the lead organisation for Community sport – and the link between school and elite levels County Sports Partnerships and local delivery networks for sport established at regional and local levels Performance targets established for participation rates 10th in 2004 Athens Olympic Games medal table; 2nd in Paralympic Games Funding of £216.4 million UKSI network operational in all 4 home countries Sport Coach UK established as lead coaching organisation Performance targets drive the quest for medals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A world-leading community sport system, continuing to increase participation year on year Significantly reduced drop off at 16 years High quality clubs encouraging talent development World-leading coaching infrastructure Ultimate goal for 4th place in 2012 London Olympic Games medal table (remarkably finished 3rd) and 2nd in Paralympic Games (finished 3rd) and sustaining that to 2016 Over £400 million available for London 2012 Olympic cycle A legacy of world-leading elite sport infrastructure including high quality coaching

Source: Green, (2009); Green and Houlihan (2005); DCMS (2008b); Sport England (2008a, 2008c).

The table shows the progress being made across three policy areas - a. school sport and PE b. community sport and c. elite sport. This progress is shown over different periods of time, with a clear vision and projection of future progress expected to be made in these policy areas. For example, in the area of elite sport, Great Britain ranked 36th in the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games medal table and 4th in the Paralympic Games as shown in the 1997 timeline. By the 2007 timeline, these performances had improved dramatically as the country finished 10th in the 2004 Athens Olympic Games medal table and 2nd in the Paralympic Games. The vision and future projections for the 2017 timeline was to reach 4th place in the 2012 London Olympic Games medal table and 2nd in Paralympic Games, and sustaining that performance through to 2016. However, quite remarkably, Team GB finished 3rd in the 2012 Olympics, one place ahead of its projections. Again in the area of coaching for example, there was limited systematic approach to elite coaching in 1997. However, by 2007, this had improved with the establishment of Sport Coach UK as lead coaching organisation. The country's vision for 2017 is to possess a legacy of world-leading elite sport infrastructure including high quality coaching. Progress is also seen in the areas of funding and investment, sports facilities, talent identification and development, and the building of sport systems, particularly in schools and colleges. The progress made by Great Britain over the years, and their projections for the future as illustrated in the table, suggests that having a clear sport policy vision can positively improve the sporting landscape of a country and can lead to improved Olympic performances of countries, particularly the African countries.

2.5 Integrating project management theories and sports development

Although the project management discipline and research into it is still developing (Besner and Hobbs, 2006; Thomas and Mullaly, 2007), the emergence of this field of study into limelight and the development of its theories has been expeditious. Researchers such as Frame, (1995), Morris *et al.* (2000) and Lenfle (2012) have suggested that the fast pace of growth of project management is as a result of the increasing demand and adoption of its theories across a wider range of sectors, countries and application areas. The evolution of project management theory, particularly from the 1950s which is considered to be the modern project management era, has led to significant changes to the view and practice of project management. One of such changes is witnessed in the dramatic change of the discipline to

accommodate a divergence in emerging philosophies and management processes across a broader spectrum of development, including the development of sports policy. Studies carried out by Maylor (2001), Lewis *et al.* (2002) and Morris, (2013) have already examined the changes in the evolution of the discipline in great detail, therefore it is not the intention of this thesis to delve into this topic. However, the discussion of the application of project management theory for the purpose of this study centres on its application to, and impact on, sports performance and success.

After reviewing some of the poor performance or failures of countries in sports, it can be suggested that the ‘achilles heel’ for developing countries in their performance in major international sporting tournaments often originates from poor management and a lack of clarity of sports goals. Although a study conducted by Fortune *et al.* (2011) reveals a significant increase in the use PM methodologies and tools from 2002 to 2011, for developing countries, especially those from Africa, the popularity of PM methodologies within sports organisations and structures is less inherent (Bloyce and Smith, 2010; Mir and Pinnington, 2013). With an increasing number of studies linking success to the application of PM methodologies and tools, it is logical to argue that the adoption and application of the same methodologies and tools to sports development will increase sports performance and success. As such, one can claim that there is a direct relationship between project management and sports performance.

The use of critical success factors (CSFs) and key performance indicators (KPIs) are popular tools used to evaluate success and performance. CSFs are defined as the critical areas whose high performance or success is crucial to deciding success (Rockart, 1979). Furthermore, success factors according to the Association for Project Management’s Body of Knowledge (2012) are “*management practices that, when implemented, will increase the likelihood of success of a project, programme or portfolio*”. In other words, this are the steps needed to succeed. KPIs, on the other hand, are measures by which actual achievement is measured (Mir and Pinnington, 2013). In other words, these are the tools used to measure performance.

From a project delivery perspective researchers such as Shenhar *et al.* (2001) believe that success can be claimed when a project meets the satisfaction of all its stakeholders - a view that has become increasingly popular within the discipline

(Parent and Deephouse, 2007; Bourne and Walker, 2008 and Kirsi, 2011). A similar ideology is expressed in measuring sports success by Vella *et al.* (2013) as they suggest that team success in sports can be assessed through a collective appraisal by all parties involved. The implication of this view is that the decision on success lies in the hands of the stakeholders involved, and may differ from one stakeholder to another (Japsen and Eskerod, 2009). A stakeholder in this context is referred to as any person or group capable of influencing, or who are influenced by the outcome of a project (Freeman, 1984). The stakeholders of a project could be categorised as primary or secondary, depending on their level of influence on the day-to-day activities of the project, or how directly or indirectly they are affected by the outcome of the project (Kearins and Pavlovich, 2002). Stakeholders could also be internal or external to the project (Frooman, 1999). Using the NOC as an example, athletes and their coaches are internal stakeholders to the NOC while kit suppliers and other vendors are external stakeholders.

Also from a project management viewpoint, Cooke-Davies (2002) proposes that the success of a project can be measured against the project's set objectives. Again, this parameter can be applied in measuring sport success. For example, Shibli *et al.* (2013), using the Olympics as context, argue that though medal table rankings and medal wins are the most common measures for gauging performance and success in the Olympic Games, and given the fact that only a minority of countries are medal winners, it is possible to adopt alternative measures of success based on set objectives of countries and athletes in order to contextualise performance. The authors further propose that some valid measures of success in Olympic Games based on objectives include: qualification of athletes to take part in the Games; '*a season's best performance; a personal best performance; a national record; and progression to the second or subsequent rounds of competition*' (Shibli *et al.*, 2013). In fact, some countries consider it a measure of success to qualify a large number of athletes to participate in the Olympics, especially as studies conducted by Kuper and Starken (2003 a and b) reveal that the number of athletes in the Games per country can indicate success.

In an attempt to provide a more robust definition of success from a project management context, Linberg (1999) developed a framework for defining project failure based on project completion or project cancellation. Linberg's (1999)

framework suggests that a project could still be a failure if the product did not meet quality expectations even though the project had been completed, and a cancelled project could also be classified a failure if no learning could be applied to the next project. A key element of success as highlighted in this framework is derivable learning. In other words, the author argues that a project can still be considered successful even though it had been cancelled or failed to meet its intended objectives, provided some learning had been derived which can be applied to a future project. In the light of Linberg's framework, a similar argument from a sports context is presented by Peachey *et al.* (2014) who also maintains that, even though no medals are won in an Olympic event, performance satisfaction in relation to success can still be achieved by elite athletes, provided there is an opportunity of gaining learning and experience that could be useful in subsequent competitions. Though this school of thought is still yet to gain popularity within sports literature, its increasing prominence and acceptance within project management discourse indicates the validity of the use of learning as an acceptable means of evaluating success (Jugdev and Muller, 2005; Kuen *et al.*, 2009 and Jessen, 2011). However, the application of Linberg's (1999) framework on defining success in the context of sport performance evaluation remains secondary to this research as will be discovered later on in the research findings.

The aforementioned arguments on measuring sport success, particularly in the Olympics, buttress the fact that, though the link between the use of medal tables/medal wins and success is inextricable in evaluating the performance of countries in Olympic Games, there are other significant viable ways of measuring success other than the use of medals. The sub-section below attempts to explore the various alternatives in measuring the performance and success of countries in the Olympic Games.

2.5.1 Overview of key issues from the literature

A number of broad conclusions can be inferred from the literature reviewed. These conclusions provide an appropriate context to the aim and objectives of the research elucidated in Chapter One. The conclusions, which highlight the emerging issues, themes, and theories, also form the building blocks for the framework development in this study. The literature review discusses sports performance and success from the point of view of sports development and policy, and project management. The review

highlights claims regarding the increased institutionalisation of elite sports development (ESD) systems. The increased adoption of ESD systems is more apparent in developed societies (Bloyce and Smith, 2010), however, there is not much evidence of this among African nations. Thus, the foundational issue for the African nations is the absence of clearly defined ESD systems, and this has been one of the main criticisms linked to the poor performance and success of African nations in elite sports. Studies conducted by Oakley and Green (2001) and De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) demonstrate that elite sport success can only be achieved through a strategic investment and institutionalisation of elite sport systems.

As observed from the literature reviewed, the debate on performance and success remains central to discussions on ESD; and not just because of the desire to showcase the sporting abilities and excellence of athletes but because it is now considered a gateway to achieving other wider socio-economic objectives (Houlihan and Green, 2008). The Olympic Games are seen to be the most ideal opportunity for many countries and their athletes to achieve these objectives. As such, the topic of elite sport performance and success is more defined in the context of the Olympic Games, hence the increasing interest in exploring the underlying issues responsible for poor performance and strategies for increasing success. As a result, several studies have been undertaken (Bernard and Buss, 2004; Johnson and Ali, 2004; Forrest *et al.*, 2010; Luiz and Fazal, 2011) to examine the topic of sport success. Unfortunately, most of such studies have been conducted within the context of developed societies and as a result, the findings tend to prove more useful to the developed countries leaving the developing ones at a disadvantaged position. Thus, the need for more research from the point of view of developing countries has become more apparent, especially with the poor success rate of the majority of developing countries in major sport tournaments.

Measuring sport success has proven to be a controversial issue as shown in the literature review. This is due to the diversity of views expressed by several researchers (Bernard and Busse, 2004; Li *et al.*, 2008; Wu *et al.*, 2009; Zhang *et al.*, 2009) on the topic. Views from project management studies were also looked at to shed more light on the debate. The standout views were those expressed by Linberg (1999) and Peachey *et al.* (2014), which suggest that success could be viewed from the availability of an opportunity to gain learning that could be applied to subsequent

projects. However, the limitation of this approach is that, measuring success on the basis of derivable learning alone is incomplete and does not give a true reflection of reality, until such learning has actually been applied and produced positive results.

As revealed in the literature, the most popular metric for measuring Olympic success is the use of medal results. Medal wins and position on medal tables is seen to be the most acceptable view of success in the Olympics. This is because the use of medals provides a less complex interpretation of Olympic performance and success in comparison to other non-medal based approaches discussed in the literature. Most of the available research has been conducted deductively using pre-determined variables to predict medal wins (Grimes *et al.*, 1974; Kiviahho and Makela, 1978; Charnes *et al.*, 1978; Condon *et al.*, 1999; Lozano *et al.*, 2002; Lins *et al.*, 2003; Flitman, 2006; Li *et al.*, 2008). However, the limitation with using approaches from this school of thought is that it does not allow the opportunity to discover any new variable that could emerge, as variables used as input are pre-determined. Therefore, for this study, the researcher adopted an inductive approach to see what new variables, if any, arise from the investigation of the performance of the African countries in the 2012 London Olympics.

A number of propositions were made in the literature on strategies for improving performance and success of countries in the Olympics. De Bosscher (2007) highlights the need for countries to have a strategic planning process in place in order to “produce” successful elite athletes. Also, with the huge investment required to achieve Olympic success (Shibli, 2003) and the limited amount of resources available, developing countries may need to redirect their focus to specific sports where they have developed a comparative advantage. Both Hamilton (2000) and Tcha (2004) have expressed this view. Furthermore, Green (2004) proposes the adoption of more efficient designs to sport systems of countries, void of fragmentation, structural disorganisation and internal conflict. A more inclusive summary of strategies for improving Olympic success is derived from the propositions of Oakley and Green (2001) and De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) highlighted in the literature review. The propositions made by the authors are explored further in this study within the context of the African nations. Apart from using the propositions made in these studies (De Bosscher, 2007; Hamilton, 2000; Tcha, 2004; Green, 2004; Oakley and Green, 2001; De Bosscher *et al.*, 2009) as the basis for the interview questions developed for this

study (see appendix G), these are also taken as a guide for the framework development carried out in this study.

From the literature review, it is clear that there is a direct relationship between project management and sports performance and success. However, it can be observed that the application of project management strategies to sports, especially in developing countries, is lacking and under-researched. Therefore, for the purpose of achieving the research aim and objectives, the researcher explores this phenomenon further through the primary data collected. To achieve this, the critical success factors (CSFs) highlighted in the literature review were used to guide discussions with the study participants during data collection.

2.6 Chapter summary

The focus of the study on the Olympic Games as the elite sporting event under review provided the necessary boundaries to discuss more specific issues in existing literature relating to sport performance and success, with a view to addressing the research questions. To better understand the factors accounting for the performance of African countries in the Olympics, it was considered important to first and foremost define the concept of ‘success’ in Olympics, in order to be able to benchmark the performance of countries. Although it was revealed from the literature search that there is no consensus between studies carried out within sports literature that specifically and deliberately attempt to define success, it was still possible to provide an in-depth discussion on the subject, drawing from concepts of success from project management literature – an approach which is absent in literature but can be further developed.

The literature review revealed that there was a huge gap in knowledge and a lack of analysis on the issues responsible for the poor performance of African countries (Shehu, 2000; Bernard and Buss, 2004; Forrest *et al.*, 2010; Luiz and Fazal, 2011). Insight was also provided into some strategies proposed by other studies for addressing the issue of poor sport performance, which the researcher explores further through the primary data.

It was established that a country’s economic resources e.g. finance, GDP, population etc. play an important role in determining Olympic success. However, further review

of literature showed that the use of only economic metrics was an insufficient approach to measuring success. Furthermore, through the analysis of sport success from a project delivery perspective, it was discovered in the literature that there are other critical success factors that can affect performance of countries in the Olympics. Examples of such factors are strategic planning, clear policy/project mission, realistic expectations etc. (see table 5 for full list of CSFs).

The discussion on measuring sports performance and success of nations in the Olympics has touched on factors that are not directly medal related, however, the use of medal tables and other medal related references remain central to the analysis of the study findings carried out later in the thesis (Chapter five). The reason for exploring other non-medal based measures of success is to put the views of the study participants (presented in chapter five) into perspective, as well as to demonstrate an awareness of available literature on the subject by providing a robust discussion. However, for the purpose of this study, and to ensure simplicity in the analysis of the study findings, performance and success are measured against the ultimate goal of countries in the Olympics, which is to win medals. The data analysis reflects this position.

Lastly, the literature review provided an overview of the key issues and fundamental theories that form the building blocks of this study. The data from the literature review puts the researcher in a better position to carry out further exploration on the subject in the subsequent phases, particularly in the framework proposition phase. The next chapter looks at the philosophical and methodological underpinnings to the study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the philosophical considerations made by the researcher and also seeks to justify the research methodology adopted for the study. Primarily, three main research philosophies are explored, and a discussion presented of how the interpretivist paradigm forms the bedrock for this research. The chapter begins with a section that provides a background to the research philosophy, and a discussion on the assumptions made by the researcher in choosing a philosophical paradigm for the research. It then explores the research design, with considerations made on research strategy and the methods utilised in the study. Brief discussions are also carried out on the data analysis tools used and the ethical approval process for the research and implementation process. The chapter concludes with a summary on the adopted approach for the study.

3.2 Background to research philosophy

In developing a philosophical perspective, Burrell and Morgan (1979) state that the researcher is required to make several assumptions concerning two dimensions: the nature of society and the nature of science. These assumptions, according to Saunders *et al.* (2007), form the basis for the research strategy, and the methods selected as part of the strategy.

Holden and Lynch (2004) maintain that the sociological dimension involves a choice between two views of society: regulatory or radical change, suggesting that society's evolvement is seen as either arising from the status quo or from what can be. They further argue that, in a regulatory view of society, the researcher assumes that society evolves rationally, is unified and cohesive. On the other hand, however, Burrell and Morgan (1979) underpin that the sociology of radical change views society to be in constant conflict as there is a continuous tussle by humans to free themselves from the domination of societal structures. These contrasts in views form the basis for the distinct, and often antithetically opposing, ideologies in developing a philosophical perspective when conducting research. However, Holden and Lynch (2004) postulate that a rational view of society is the basis of modernism whereas a radical change perspective underlies post-modernism.

The nature of science as the second dimension borders on the premise of an objective or a subjective approach to research (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). Authors such as Morgan and Smircich (1980), and Hussey and Hussey (1997) consider the objectivist approach to social research to have emerged from the natural sciences and subjectivism a product of a continuous debate by critics that both the natural sciences and the social sciences are disparate. Though objectivism and subjectivism are labelled differently in literature (for instance, Easterby-Smith *et al.* (1991) describes them as positivism and phenomenology while Hughes and Sharrock (1997) describes them as positivism and interpretive alternative), Holden and Lynch (2004) highlight that these two major philosophical approaches are delineated by several core assumptions concerning ontology, epistemology, human nature, and methodology.

3.2.1 Philosophical assumptions

Ontology as explained by Mertens (1998) is the nature of reality, that is, what things, if any, have existence or whether reality is “the product of one’s mind” (Burrell and Morgan 1979: p.1). Crotty (1998) simply states, “Ontology is a study of being” (p.10). Morgan and Smircich (1980) believe that all other philosophical assumptions are predicated by the researcher’s view of reality, in other words, ontology is viewed as the cornerstone to all other assumptions (Holden and Lynch, 2004). Epistemology, however, is concerned with the study of the nature of knowledge (Mertens, 1998), that is, as Hughes and Sharrock (1997) puts it, “How is it possible, if it is, for us to gain knowledge of the world?” (p.5). Epistemology, according to Maynard (1994), deals with “providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate” (p.10). The epistemological assumption of research therefore borders around the nature, validity, and limits of inquiry within the research being carried out (Rosenau, 1992). The third assumption, human nature, explores the researcher’s perception on whether or not man is the controller or the controlled (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The final assumption is that methodology is the available and suitable means for the researcher to use in order to explore a social phenomena (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Methodology, according to Crotty (1998), is the “strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes” (p.3). Guba and Lincoln (1994) see it as a series of steps required to discover what is believed to be

discoverable. This further translates to the research methods, which are the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data (Crotty, 1998). Methods are more systematically established ways of obtaining data in order to achieve research aim.

In view of the above discussion, Holden and Lynch (2004) argue that, regardless of the researcher's sociological persuasion, the fact that the assumptions on ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology are complementary of each other remain inevitable. In other words, the researcher's view of ontology shapes their epistemological persuasion, which further affects their perception of human nature and consequent choice of methodology, logically followed by the assumptions already made by the researcher (Walliman, 2006). This suggests that there is the need for the researcher to carefully reflect on his or her ontological and epistemological beliefs concerning the phenomena to be explored before aligning to a particular philosophical stance.

3.3 Research paradigm

The past few decades have seen constant debate on research philosophies and paradigms as they affect social science research. However, there is a generally agreed notion that the choice of a philosophical paradigm is informed by an understanding of the ontological boundaries for what can be known, the epistemological boundaries of knowledge, and the methodological boundaries for gathering the data needed to obtain such knowledge (O'Donoghue, 2007). Several researchers such as Guba and Lincoln (1994), Niglas (2001), Mertens (2005) and Lather (2006), have developed tables and diagrams to graphically explain the various philosophical paradigms in social science research, and how the researcher's ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions impact on these paradigms. This approach has also been used here and details from those studies are employed to form a collective summary of the research paradigms as can be seen in table 5, to provide a visual understanding of the main research paradigms being explored in this study.

For the purpose of further exploration in this study, the subsequent sections looks at the three common research philosophies as highlighted in table 5. These include; positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. The choice of this classification stems from the underlying research epistemology highlighted by Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991) as these paradigms are considered to be the bedrock of other paradigms such

as, feminism, post-positivism, phenomenology and constructivism (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Wardlow, 1989; Hussey and Hussey, 1997; and Oates, 2006).

Table 5: A comparison of the three research philosophies discussed in this study

	Positivism	Interpretivism	Critical Theory
Ontology: the researcher's view of the nature of reality or being	External, objective and independence of social actors	Socially constructed, subjective, may change, multiple	An assumption of an apprehensible 'reality' shaped by political, social, economic, cultural, ethnic and gender-based forces that have metamorphosed over time into social structures that appear to be real or natural.
Epistemology: the researcher's view regarding what constitutes acceptable	Only observable phenomena can provide credible data, facts. Focus on causality and law-like generalisations, reducing phenomena to simplest elements	Subjective meanings and social phenomena. Focus upon the details of situation, a reality behind these details, subjective meanings motivating actions	The researcher is not separated from what is known, and this, consequently influences inquiry.
Methodology: the researcher's tool-kit for discovering what is believed to be discoverable	Experimental research Experimental/manipulative, verification of hypothesis	Case study, Grounded theory, Ethnography, Hermeneutical/dialectical	Dialogic/dialectical Action research
Methods/data collection: techniques most often used	Highly structured, large samples, measurement, quantitative (surveys), but can use qualitative	Small samples, in-depth investigations, qualitative (Interviews and observation)	Focus groups, Document analysis and narrative

Source: Adapted from Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Lather (2006).

3.3.1 Positivism

Positivism, which is the paradigm commonly used in the natural sciences, assumes that independent facts about a single apprehensible reality are quantitatively measured by science (Healy and Perry, 2000). This means that, the data and its analysis are value-free and data do not change because they are being observed (Krauss, 2005).

From a broader perspective, the position held by a positivist assumes that the aim of epistemology is to describe observable and measurable phenomena, as the knowledge of anything beyond that is considered impossible (Trochim, 2000). As a result, while researchers within other paradigms acknowledge that they have to be involved in real-world life to a good extent in order to understand and better express its emergent properties and features, positivist researchers detach themselves from the world they study (Healy and Perry, 2000).

Several authors have defined positivism over the years. For example, Burrell and Morgan (1979) consider it to be a paradigm that searches for regularities and causal relationships between constituent elements or data, in an attempt to explain or predict reality in the social environment. A similar point of view is shared by Gill and Johnson (2010) as they maintain that a positivist would prefer to collect data about an observable reality, searching for regularities and causal relationships in order to create law-like generalisations. Kolakowski (1972) points out the following four point doctrine embraced by positivism: (1) the rule of phenomenalism, which maintains that there is only experience and that every other abstraction whether “matter” or “spirit” has to be rejected; (2) the rule of nominalism – which maintains that words, generalizations, abstractions, etc. are linguistic phenomena and do not give new insight into the world; (3) the separation of facts from values; and (4) the unity of the scientific method. In view of the various classification of positivism offered by authors, Al Zeera (2001) points out that the most obvious epistemological contrast between positivism and other research paradigms is that, while the former is significantly driven by objectivity and the belief that it is practical for an observer to be exteriorised from the reality being studied, remaining detached from it and uninvolved with it, the latter contends that both the inquirer and inquired are interlocked, thereby making the findings of the investigation a literal creation of the inquiry process. In other words, the anti-positivist school of thought subscribes to the notion that, both the knower and the known are co-created during the inquiry (Krauss, 2005).

For a positivist, the production of credible data is achieved only through an observable phenomena, and as such, generating a research strategy for the collection of these data begins with the use of existing theory in developing hypotheses (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). In other words, a positivist researcher starts off by developing

a hypothesis for the research and then attempts to prove or refute the hypothesis. The research process for the positivist researcher is often more precise and straightforward in comparison with interpretivist research because, while the positivist simply tries to prove or refute hypotheses made from law-like generalisations or theories, the interpretivist is posed with a greater challenge of understanding the complex nature of the social world with human beings as social actors (Holden and Lynch, 2004; Krauss, 2005 and Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

From a positivist standpoint truth is considered to be objective and discoverable, and science, which is simply sticking to what can be observed and measured, is seen as the way to get at truth, to understand the world well enough in order for it to be predicted and controlled (Krauss, 2005). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state that “there is a reality out there to be studied, captured and understood. In view of this, Oates (2006) considers reality, which is supported by an existing reality, to be the source and proof of truth. Thus, truth is verified by facts and facts are verified by evidence; therefore, if there is no proof then it is not real. Consequently, this means that when a researcher finds truth, such truth remains isolated and solitary until the researcher finds further proof of an existing reality before such reality can be defined.

3.3.1.1 Realism

Another philosophical paradigm that has an element of positivism is realism (Healy and Perry, 2000). Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest that realism entails the existence of apprehendable reality structured by unchangeable natural laws and mechanisms. Other terms have been used in different literature to refer to realism. For example, Hunt (1991) refers to it as critical realism, Denzin and Lincoln (1994) refer to it as postpositivism while Manicas and Secord (1982) call it neopositivism. However, Healy and Perry (2000) maintain that, despite the similarities between positivism and realism, the distinguishing factor is that, while the former concerns a single, concrete reality, the latter concerns multiple perceptions about a single, mind-independent reality.

Kim (2003) highlights the need for a positivist researcher to adopt empirical methods for the verification process as these methods are objective and do not influence the phenomenon under investigation. In other words, the methodology adopted in this paradigm should ensure that data is objectively analysed and free from individual

bias. Experimental and manipulative methodology is suggested, allowing the use of empirical test methods. This method according to Kim (2003) can produce and test rational structures of scientific investigations. Furthermore, Mertens (2005) acknowledges the predominance of quantitative methods in the positivist paradigm. The need to propose hypotheses in efforts to generate predictions often necessitates the use of orderly and highly systematic methods, especially as such predictions need to be tested under controlled conditions (Oates, 2006). This process, according to Kim (2003), creates knowledge, as it “constitutes an accurate description of reality, becomes accepted as truth through this rigorous empirical verification process” (p.12).

Despite the plausibility of the positivist paradigm at first sight, one of the limitations of this approach is its disregard for contextual influence. Thus, some variables from the context capable of influencing the research may be missing (Kim, 2003). Another downside of this paradigm is the tendency for truth to be limited, as positivism is often driven by replication (Gill and Johnson, 2010), quantifiable observation (Saunders *et al.*, 2012) and “probabilistic inferences of the truth’ (Kim, 2003, p.12). Also, owing to the often subjective nature of social science, an attempt to employ an objective paradigm such as positivism in measuring the phenomenon being investigated in this study (the performance of African countries in the Olympics) may prove impractical. Gage (1989) states that “human affairs cannot be studied with scientific methods used to study the natural world” (p.4). Generally speaking, positivism assumes that, like in the natural sciences, social phenomena can be measured. Arguably, achieving this would be almost impossible in social sciences, as variables such as experience, politics and cultural values cannot be overlooked in data analysis.

A key attribute of the positivist approach is the ability to generate predictions (Oates, 2006). This, however, does not form part of the aim of this study. The focus of this research was to retrospectively investigate the performance of African countries at the London 2012 Olympics and to propose a framework for improving their performance and success in future Olympic Games, not to make predictions about what these performances would be in the future. Also, as mentioned earlier, another important element of positivism is the need for the inquirer to be exteriorised from the reality being studied (Al Zeera, 2001). However, this would not have been possible in this

research as the researcher hails from Nigeria, which is one of the underperforming African countries in the Olympics, and has, prior to carrying out this research, been conversant with the country's challenges in winning medals in the Olympics. As a result of this awareness, the researcher was considered to possess background knowledge of the phenomenon under study and in order to be better equipped to analyse the views of the participants. As such, the positivist paradigm was not considered appropriate for this research.

3.3.2 Interpretivism

Unlike positivism, the interpretivist researcher considers truth to be subjective. Walsham (1993) argues that from an interpretivist standpoint, the knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human actors. This means that "our theories concerning reality are ways of making sense of the world, and shared meanings are a form of intersubjectivity rather than objectivity" (Walsham, 2006). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), interpretive research is "guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood, and studied" (p.22). Furthermore, Weber (2004) upholds that "our perceptions about the world are inextricably bound to a stream of experience we have had throughout our lives". In other words, interpretivism can be seen as a world of lived experiences where there is an intersection between the researcher's perception of meaning and contextual action.

Interpretive research assumes that knowledge of reality is gained only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, documents, tools, and other artefacts (Klein and Myers, 1999). Rather than pre-define dependent variables, Kaplan and Maxwell (1994) maintain that interpretive research focuses on the complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges. From a broader perspective, an understanding of phenomena in an interpretive research is achieved through the meaning people assign to them (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991; Deetz 1996).

Contrary to views expressed by positivist researchers that exteriorises the researcher from the reality being studied, Weber (2004) maintains that the researcher and the reality being studied are inseparable in the interpretivist paradigm. In other words, the epistemological boundaries of this paradigm are made up of a person's lived

experiences. As shown in table 5, knowledge is gained in interpretivism primarily through focusing on the details of a situation, the reality behind these details, and an interpretation of the reality within the context of the situation. Knowledge therefore consists of “multiple sets of interpretations that are part of the social and cultural context in which it occurs” (Kim, 2003, p.13).

The interpretivist researcher simply seeks to know the reasons why something happens by paying attention to the small details (social or cultural) within the context of the study that may be capable of influencing the researcher’s reflection, understanding and interpretation of the phenomenon.

In contrast to the assumption made by positivists that only a single truth exists about a reality, interpretivists argue that the complex nature of reality gives rise to multiple interpretations of single events (Cohen and Manion, 1994). As such, truth for the interpretivist is multiple as no “phenomena would occur in the same way in different places and times” (Gage, 1989, p.5). Kim (2003) points out that the complexity of interpretive research is further enhanced by its receptiveness to a multiplicity of influences especially since research findings are context based. Saunders *et al.* (2012) state that “rich insights into this complex world are lost if such complexity is reduced entirely to a series of law-like generalisations” (p.137) as may be seen in positivist research.

As highlighted by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), interpretivists consider action and meaning construction to be the focal point of research as it provides a clear understanding of the phenomenon being studied. In order to gain meaning, it is imperative for an interactive process to be established between the researcher and the research participants (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, with the view of the research aim in mind, this implies that the researcher here was also making meaning with the views expressed by the research participants. Furthermore, it was important for this research to secure an understanding of the factors that accounted for the poor performance of the African countries through the views of the participants.

An understanding of human experiences is a vital aspect of the interpretivist paradigm (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Lather, 2006). These experiences are a combination of the researcher’s personal experiences and those of the research participants. Though it is

argued that the interpretive researcher has to adopt an empathetic stance (Crotty, 1998), it is essential to “enter the social world of our research subjects and understand their world from their point of view” (Saunders *et al.*, 2012, p.137). This means understanding the participants, their attitudes and values (MacKenzie and Knipe, 2006). This information will enhance the selection of a suitable methodology and methods for the research, as well as produce a rich and unique interpretation of the phenomenon being studied.

Predominantly, qualitative research methods are used to carry out interpretive research (Boland, 1991; Walsham, 1993) as can be seen in table 5. However, authors such as MacKenzie and Knipe (2006) and Weber (2004), maintain that quantitative methods can also be utilised. Bearing in mind that the key factor in conducting interpretive research is to understand phenomena through meanings we make (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991), it is important to select research methods that are flexible enough to record many variables from the various perspectives of the participants.

Critical of the interpretivist approach to research, Kim (2003) points out that bias into the research conclusions could arise due to the researcher’s views being reflected in the research. Also, Klein and Myers (1999) highlight that the researcher’s interaction with the participants is capable of altering the views shared by the participants as the participants may change their horizons by the appropriation of concepts used by other parties interacting with them that may be unknown to the researcher. These biases and values by both the researcher and the participants can flaw the research process as experiences, socio-cultural background, views and perceptions are likely to influence the way the researcher views a situation which could further result in a lack of credibility of the research findings. However, Walsham (2005) maintains that interpretive research can still be critical and credible. To address the risks associated with conducting interpretive research, Weber (2004) states that criteria can be applied for evaluating knowledge claims to ensure an empirical enquiry is attainable. Assessing the research credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability can achieve this.

Considering the fundamental values and attributes underpinning interpretivism as have been elaborated in this section, the interpretivist research paradigm is the most

suitable approach for conducting this research. Investigating the performance of African countries in the London 2012 Olympics with the purpose of developing a deeper understanding of the factors that led to their performance in order to propose a framework for improvement provided a boundary for the study, and interacting with the NOC representatives provided the platform for obtaining the research findings. To support this assumption, Wardlow (1989) states that the researcher is able to secure a more holistic understanding of a phenomenon, through considerations taken from the voices of the research participants. Furthermore, the choice of interpretivism as the philosophical paradigm for this research provides the flexibility for the researcher to explore other issues that could arise from the research findings, which may not have been within the original boundaries of the research.

The flexible nature of interpretive research suggests that research within this paradigm is continuous, as changes to original research aims and objectives or the formation of new aims and objectives are inevitable (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991 and Walker, 1997). The researcher in the course of this study has experienced the impact of such changes to research aim and objectives. The researcher had set out to investigate the views of the African countries concerning the project management of the 2012 London Olympics, however, due to the discovery of a more crucial theme within the findings obtained which had to do with the poor performance of African countries at the Games, the researcher had to change the focus of the study to address this issue. This change resulted in changes being made to the research aim, objectives and methodology.

3.3.3 Critical Theory

In this paradigm, knowledge is considered to be historically conditioned and truth is considered to be subjective and justifiable by the socio-political environment (Held, 1980). For the critical theorist, the perceptions of society are influenced by political and economic factors. Gage (1989) stresses the importance of power in this school of thought as it gives rise to a structured social class within society where the people determine change of social structures. As Kincheloe and McLaren (2011) put it, critical theory is particularly concerned with “issues of power and justice and the ways that the economy; matters of race, class, and gender; ideologies; discourses; education; religion and other social institutions; and cultural dynamics interact to

construct a social system”. Though Kim (2003) points out that the responsibility for social change and the adoption of a social position lies with the researcher in this paradigm, the ideology of critical theory in a research context is not to determine how we see the world, but to help us devise questions and strategies for changing it (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). Considering these attributes, truth from a critical theorist standpoint is also seen as multiple as in the case of the interpretivist, because of the various social stratifications that may exist within society (Kim, 2003).

Reality for the critical theorist researcher is often value-oriented. An investigation of context through the values expressed by the researcher remains central to research enquiries. From the critical theorist’s point of view, the primary aim of research is a drive towards a transformation of society through addressing issues of marginalisation and inequality relating to race, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation and any other social grouping within society (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). A change in this situation is believed to result in a better transformation of the research participants since enquiry and politics go hand-in-hand.

The critical theorist focuses on bringing about change in the world and the key question being ‘what can be done to change the status quo’. Therefore, it becomes the researcher’s responsibility to figure out the best way of making changes in the society within the context of the study. This can be done through analysing the competing power interests between individuals and groups within a society – identifying who loses and who gains in particular situations (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). A researcher studying animals in the wild and trying to identify and understand the power differences and relationships within wildlife in order to help the animals co-exist better can exemplify this. Epistemologically in this paradigm, the onus lies with the researcher to systematically investigate the phenomenon by reflecting on the socio-political context, and creating an awareness of this in society in order to bring about change.

Critical theorists often argue that researchers employing positivist and interpretivist approaches to research only “engage in mere technical work, more or less, with the details of education and teaching while neglecting the social system that determined the basically exploitative and unjust nature of education in capitalist society” (Gage, 1989, p.9). This implies that research in the critical theory paradigm does not only

involve an understanding of conflict and probable oppression, but also involves a genuine drive to bring about change (Crotty, 1998). The fundamental idea behind this paradigm is to effect societal change. The critical theorist researcher seeks “an understanding of our society and its institutions, through which the individual can and will decide to act upon injustices of our society in order to change them” (Wardlow, 1989, p.4). With this in mind, the application of the critical theorist approach to this research is impracticable, as the research does not aim to investigate any form of societal injustice, or to instigate any change in the society within the context of the research.

The research methodology associated with the critical theory paradigm is generally qualitative, usually dialogical and dialectical in nature. Some of the data collection methods include focus groups and document analysis as shown in Table 5.

Researchers less sympathetic to the critical theorist paradigm challenge the adoption of this approach to research as its main aim is not just on knowledge production. For example, Kim (2003) points out that the critical theorist “advocates a process of research that yields social change rather than pure knowledge generation” (p.13). However, Kincheloe and McLaren (2011) acknowledge the importance of values and beliefs as ingredients of empirical enquiry, which is what the critical theorist paradigm offers. Wardlow (1989) further highlights that socio-political awareness yields knowledge, which in turn promotes change. While the researcher here subscribes to the view that an awareness and understanding of values and beliefs can enhance knowledge, it is also acknowledged that the key focus of the critical theorist research paradigm is on power relations (Crotty, 1998), and this does not form the basis for this research. With this in mind, critical theory is not considered an appropriate paradigm for this research.

3.4 Justification of the study philosophy

Despite the difference in approach of the various research philosophies to research, a common attribute shared is the fact that they all relate to the enhancement of knowledge (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Gage (1989) points out that philosophical differences should not result in philosophical conflict, as each approach has its own advantage, and in itself develops knowledge. Connell and Nord (1996) posit that the debate on the correct philosophical position will remain moot for many years to come

because we do "...not know how to discover a correct position on the existence of, let alone the nature of, reality" (p.1). Similarly, Hughes and Sharrock (1997) admit that they are unable to produce any guideline to a suitable philosophical approach as they argue that; "since the nature of philosophy, and its relationship to other forms of knowledge, is itself a major matter of philosophical dispute, there is, of course, no real basis for us to advocate any one view on these matters as the unequivocally correct conception of the relationship between philosophy and social research" (p.13)

Though it is difficult to say which research paradigm is right or wrong, the choice of a philosophical stance must remain central to, and compatible with, the research question to be answered. This will also inform the choice of the methodology and methods to employ in order to achieve the research aim. To achieve this, however, a review of various research philosophies as shown in this section remains important. Holden and Lynch (2004) state that:

A philosophical review can have a dual effect on the researcher: (1) it may open their mind to other possibilities, therefore, enriching their own research abilities, and (2) it can enhance their confidence in the appropriateness of their methodology to the research problem which, in turn, enhances confidence in the research results.

Considering the various ideologies of the respective research paradigms, it can be assumed that the study conclusions will vary. For this research, however, the intention is to "look at how the people perceive their world (individually or as groups) and try to understand the phenomena through the meanings and values that the people assign to them" (Oates, 2006, p.292). Thus, with the focus of this study centred on identifying, and developing a deeper understanding of the issues affecting the performance of African countries in the Olympics using the views of their NOC representatives in the London 2012 Olympics, the interpretivist research paradigm was deemed the most relevant approach to help in achieving this. The researcher acknowledged the difficulty with the adoption of this philosophy, as it required frequent refinement to be made to the research goals and objectives due to its openness to new possibilities. However, the occurrence of this added depth to the study, and the ability to adjust to such changes, improved the research skills of the researcher. The subsequent sections discuss the methodological approach employed in

carrying out the research. This is done with a close-up view of the philosophical considerations available to carrying out social enquiries as have been discussed.

3.5 Research design

In gaining a full understanding of a research design, inference is drawn from the concept of the research onion. Figure 3, known as the research ‘onion’, developed by Saunders *et al.* (2012) shows the various aspects of the research process represented by the layers of the onion. Central to any research is the question of how data is to be collected and analysed in order to solve a problem or answer the research question(s). This is the innermost layer and centre of the research ‘onion’. In getting to this centre point however, Crotty (1998) emphasizes the need to justify the choices made in order for the research to be valid. This implies that the outer layers of the onion are equally as important, and there is the need to understand and explain them rather than just peel and get rid of them (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

The outermost layer of the research ‘onion’ in Figure 3 shows a selection of research philosophies. The choice of what philosophical stance to adopt forms an embodiment for the entire research, hence the reason why the philosophy layer is represented by the outermost layer of the ‘onion’. The next layer represents the research approach. This represents the deductive, inductive and abductive nature of the research. This layer is important as it guides the researcher’s selection of an appropriate research methodology. The methodological choice is represented in the next layer while the layer that follows shows the various research strategies available to the researcher. The next layer shows the time horizon for the research while the innermost layer represents the collection and analysis of data, which will then answer the research question(s). However, the journey to this layer is determined by the choices the researcher makes in the outer layers.

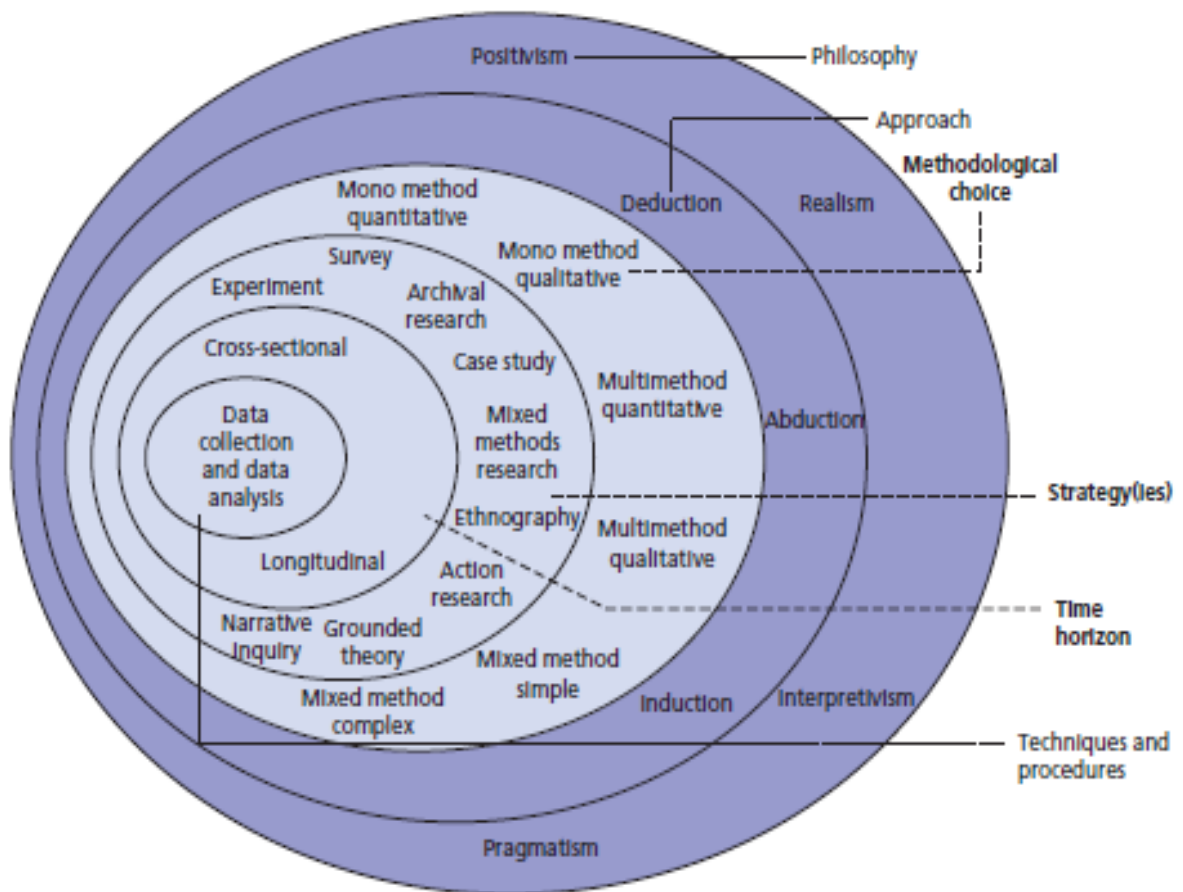


Figure 3: The research ‘onion’

Source: Saunders *et al.* (2012:160)

The concept of the research onion is used here by the researcher to describe the research design for this study. Owing to the nature of the study and intended objectives to be addressed, the researcher adopted an interpretivist approach in carrying out the study as already elucidated in the previous section. Walsham (2006) upholds that this approach provides a critical basis for carrying out analysis in conducting studies such as this, however, the researcher also explored other philosophical perspectives such as positivism and critical theory (Kolakowski, 1972; Walker, 1997; Kim, 2003; Moon and Moon, 2004; Gajendran *et al.*, 2011) to gain a broader insight and to justify the methodological approach being adopted for this study.

A research design can be viewed as the general plan of how the researcher intends to go about answering the research question(s) (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Burns and Grove (2003) consider it to be “a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control

over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings” (p.195). The research design also “provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman, 2008).

The research design for this study is represented by the researcher’s customised research onion shown in Figure 4 showing the philosophical and methodological considerations made by the researcher. The justification of the adopted philosophical paradigm for this study has been addressed in the previous section. Therefore the subsequent sections discuss the methodological choices.

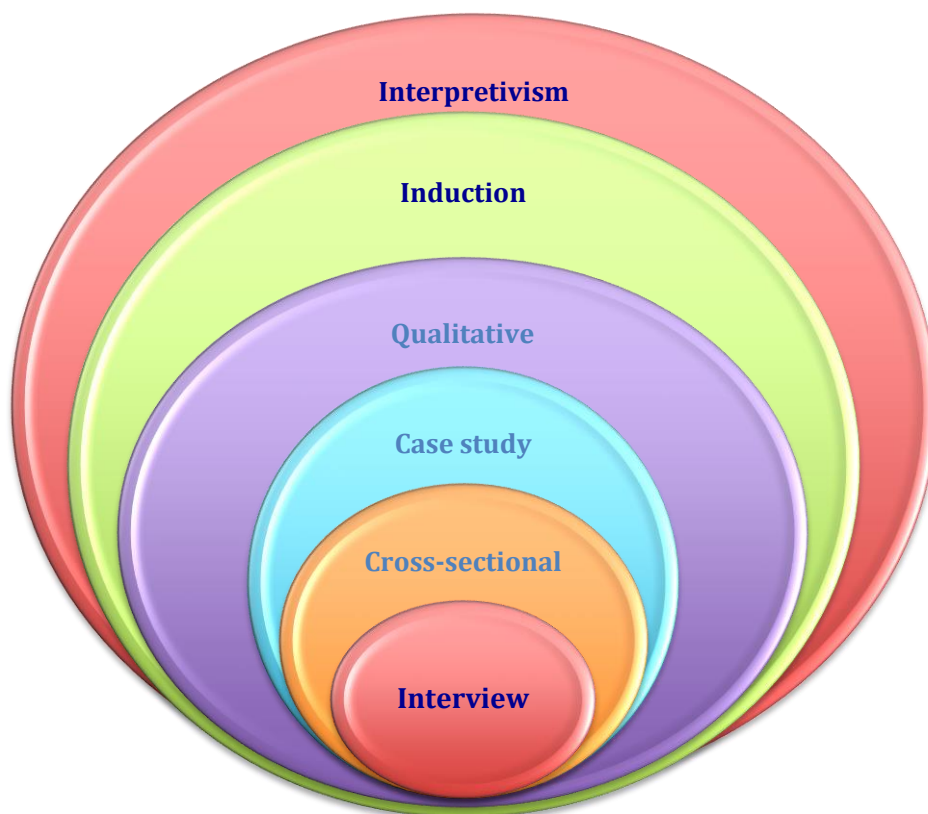


Figure 4: The researcher’s customised research ‘onion’

3.5.1 Approach - deductive, inductive and abductive

In distinguishing between a deductive, inductive and abductive approach of data analysis, Yin (2009) infers that a deductive approach utilises theoretical propositions and existing theory to devise a framework to help organise and direct data analysis, while an inductive approach commences with the collection of data before exploring them to identify which themes or issues are to be followed up or concentrated on (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Yin, 2009). Abduction on the other hand, starts with an observation of a fact, and then followed by the creation of a plausible

theory to explain the fact being observed. The table below provides a distinction between these approaches.

Table 6: Differences between deduction, Induction and Abduction

	Deduction	Induction	Abduction
Logic	In a deductive inference, when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true	In an inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions	In an abductive inference, known premises are used to generate testable conclusions
Generalisability	Generalising from the general to the specific	Generalising from the specific to the general	Generalising from the interactions between the specific and the general
Use of data	Data collection is used to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection and so forth
Theory	Theory falsification or verification	Theory generation and building	Theory generation or modification; incorporating existing theory where appropriate, to build new theory or modify existing theory

Source: Saunders *et al.* (2012: 144)

This research inclined to an inductive approach to carry out this study. This is reflected by the various phases of data collection shown in chapter five. The characteristic of this approach is evident in this study as the first set of data collected in the first set of interviews conducted led to the identification of themes and other issues which were addressed in the third phase of the interviews and the subsequent interviews carried out with the three case study countries.

3.5.2 Qualitative and quantitative

The research design for carrying out a study may be qualitative, quantitative or a combination of both (otherwise known as multiple methods). In differentiating

quantitative research from qualitative research, Saunders *et al.* (2012) proposes a distinction between numeric data (numbers) and non-numeric data (words, images, video clips etc.). For example, the quantitative research design is often synonymised to any data collection technique (i.e. a questionnaire) or analysis procedure (i.e. statistics or graphs) that uses or produces numerical data, while the qualitative research design is often synonymised to any data collection technique (i.e. an interview) or analysis procedure (i.e. categorising data) that uses or produces non-numeric data (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). From a broader perspective, the quantitative and qualitative research designs can also be distinguished based on their associations to philosophical assumptions, research strategies and approaches. For example, Mertens (2005) identifies the quantitative design to be associated with the positivist philosophical paradigm, with its research strategies mainly associated with survey and experiment (Oates, 2006), while Boland (1991) and Walsham (1993) identify the qualitative design to be associated with the interpretivist philosophical paradigm, with case study research, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and narrative research as some of its principal research strategies (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991).

3.5.2.1 Nature of research

In choosing a research design, it is important to reflect on the nature of the research aim and objectives in an attempt to determine if the research is an exploratory, descriptive or explanatory study. Saunders *et al.* (2012) point out that, “the way in which you ask your research question will inevitably involve you in exploratory, descriptive or explanatory research leading to an answer that is either descriptive, descriptive and explanatory, or explanatory” (p.170). An exploratory study can be described as a means of discovering what is happening and gaining insights about a subject of interest through asking open questions (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). In situations where the researcher is unsure of the precise nature of the research problem, an exploratory study is considered particularly essential as it seeks to clarify or give a better understanding of a problem. Exploratory research could be conducted through a number of ways such as: a search of the literature; interviewing ‘experts’ in the subject; conducting in-depth individual interviews or conducting focus group interviews (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). A descriptive study however, seeks to secure an accurate profile of events, persons or situations, while an explanatory study seeks to establish casual relationships between variables – studying a problem or a situation in

order to explain the relationships between variables (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Following the aforementioned characteristics of research, this research can be seen as an exploratory study, especially as it aimed to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon studied.

Primarily, a qualitative research design was employed for collecting and analysing the data for the study. While some researchers such as Gajendran *et al.* (2011) argue for the use of more quantitative approaches in data analysis and others are more sympathetic to qualitative research methods (Walsham, 2006, Klein and Myers, 1999), Bryman (2006) and Moon and Moon (2004) are more inclined to the adoption of a mixed methodology which they believe gives a richer presentation and interpretation of data. However, the researcher's choice to subscribe to the views of researchers using qualitative methods for the purpose of this research stems from the need to get an in-depth insight into the views of the representatives of the African NOCs concerning their performances in the 2012 London Olympics and the factors that led to such performances. With this in mind, it was considered pertinent for the researcher to adopt a flexible approach which gave the research participants the freedom to express their views on the subject as best as they could and a qualitative approach was the most appropriate way of achieving this.

3.6 Research strategy

A strategy, from a general perspective, is a method or a plan of action for achieving a specific goal or result. A research strategy is therefore defined as “a plan of how a researcher will go about answering her or his research question” (Saunders *et al.*, 2012, p.173). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) consider it to be the methodological link between the philosophy and the subsequent choice of methods employed to collect and analyse data. Though the number of possible research strategies is brought about by the different research traditions, the following are five alternative strategies:

- Experiment
- Survey
- Archival analysis
- History
- Case study

Similar to academic discourse on which philosophical paradigms or research approaches are superior or inferior to another, there is often debate on the choice of research strategies. However, Saunders *et al.* (2012) argue that, rather than comparing and attaching labels of importance to the different research strategies, the key point in choosing a research strategy is ensuring that “you achieve a reasonable level of coherence throughout your research design which will enable you to answer your particular research question(s) and meet your objectives” (p.173). Consequently, the research question(s) to be answered informs the choice of a strategy. To further demonstrate this, Yin (2009) proposes some situations that may lead to the choice of the research strategies listed above, as indicated in Table 6:

Table 7: Relevant situations for different research strategies

Strategy	Form of Research Question	Requires control over behavioural events	Focuses on contemporary events
Experiment	How, Why	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, What, Where, How many, How much	No	Yes
Archival Analysis	Who, What, Where, How many, How much	No	Yes/No
History	How, Why	No	No
Case study	How, Why	No	Yes

Source: Yin (2009:8)

In determining the appropriate strategy for this study, the researcher took into consideration the following statement by Saunders *et al.* (2012, p.173):

“Your choice of research strategy will therefore be guided by your research question(s) and objectives, the coherence with which these link to your philosophy, research approach and purpose, and also to more pragmatic concerns including the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time and other resources you have available, and access to potential participants and to other sources of data”.

In view of the above propositions by Yin (2009) and Saunders *et al.* (2012), on making a choice on the research strategy to adopt for the study, the researcher again reflected on the overall research question, which was to find out the ‘*issues that influenced the performance of African nations in the London Olympics*’. After careful consideration of the research aim and objectives as have been highlighted in chapter one, and in a bid to secure depth in the study findings, the researcher adopted the case study strategy as it was the most suitable approach to conduct the study. The next section discusses the case study strategy in more detail and provides justifications as to why it was considered the most suitable approach for this study.

3.6.1 Case study

The research strategy being used for the research is the case study. The aim of adopting a case study approach is to describe or explore patterns or events in an in-depth manner (Edralin, 2000). Baxter and Jack (2008) further uphold that the case study approach involves an “in-depth investigation of a single individual, group, or event to explore causation in order to identify underlying principles”. Unlike the experimental strategy where contextual variables are highly controlled; and the survey strategy where the understanding of context is limited by the number of variables for which data can be collected (Saunders *et al.*, 2012); the case study strategy provides a richer understanding of context and processes of the research as no restrictions or behavioural control of events are required (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). A case study is defined as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p.13). The focus of this study on investigating the performance of African nations in the Olympic Games brings to light Yin’s definition of a case study, as this study was an empirical inquiry about a case (African nations) within the phenomenon being investigated (performance in the London 2012 Olympics). Creswell *et al.* (2007) point out that the unit of analysis in a case study can be an event, program, activity, or more than one individual, within a bounded system (Stake, 2005). As such, this research made use of the views of the representatives of the African NOCs such as athletes, coaches and sports administrators, as the unit of analysis to investigate the performance of the African nations that participated in the London 2012 Olympics. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), a case study adopts the use of multiple data

sources to examine a case in great detail or depth in order to arrive at responses that address the research question(s). The purpose of using multiple data sources provides the researcher with a more elaborate comprehension of the study facts, as well as identifying other critical areas, which may be looked into more elaborately in any future research.

The case study approach like any other research strategies has its challenges. Yin (2003) acknowledges that one of the main criticisms of the case study approach is that it provides little basis for scientific generalisation. Another criticism of the case study approach is that it takes a considerable length of time to execute and often produces too many documents (Edralin, 2000). However, despite some of the criticisms of the case study approach, Yin (2003) argues that the ability for contemporary phenomenon to be thoroughly examined in an “in-depth manner” using the case study strategy remains a compelling advantage.

The reason for adopting the case study strategy for this research stems from its adoption and verification by other researchers (Andranovich *et al.*, 2001, Ritchie *et al.*, 2009, Zhou and Ap, 2009) who have used it to carry out similar studies on the Olympics. Morse and Field (1995) highlight that a case study approach provides a better insight and an in-depth understanding of an issue or a unique case. Yin (2003) further supports this view as he maintains that a case study research builds an in-depth, contextual understanding of the case. This was a primary objective of this study – to build an in-depth understanding of the issues that resulted in the poor performance of African nations in the London 2012 Olympics.

Though some researchers (Hill *et al.*, 2005, Hill *et al.*, 1997, Merriam, 1998) generally advocate a qualitative approach to case study research, Creswell *et al.* (2007) suggest that the case study researcher today may not necessarily stick to this approach and may adopt other texts and approaches. For instance, Yin (2003) inclines to both qualitative and quantitative approaches to the use of case studies. As part of the qualitative approach used for this study, the researcher employed the use of a pre-interview questionnaire as will be discussed in section 4.4. The essence of the questionnaire however, was not to obtain quantitatively analysable data, but to be used simply as a tool to gain preliminary information about the research participants in order to set the scene for the interviews.

3.6.1.1 Number of case studies

A case study can either involve a single case or multiple cases. Though there is no set rule on the number of cases that could be studied in a case study strategy (Perry, 1998), using a smaller number of cases can provide a greater opportunity for securing depth in data collection and analysis (Voss *et al.*, 2002). Voss *et al.* (2002) also point out that, while a single case study is likely to offer more depth in understanding the phenomenon being investigated, its limitation lies in the generalisability of the findings derived from it. Furthermore, the authors argue that there is likelihood for a single case study to lead to study biases arising from the misjudging or misrepresenting of a single event, and the tendency to easily exaggerate data. However, Yin (2003) suggests that observer bias can be guarded against if multiple cases are used.

In choosing the cases to be studied, Yin (2003) upholds that researchers must ensure that each chosen case either:

- i) Predicts similar results (literal replication); or
- ii) Predicts contrasting results but for predictable reasons (theoretical replication).

Owing to the nature of this research, this study adopts a multiple case study approach in order to address the research goals. The resolve to make use of a multiple case study strategy was not pre-conceived by the researcher at the commencement of the study but was brought about by the need to gather more in-depth data during the data collection phase of the study (represented by phase 3 and 4 of the study). Although earlier stages of data collection involving 20 countries and 9 countries respectively, produced a substantial amount of data which also forms part of the study findings presented in Chapter four of the thesis, there was a need to verify the data obtained, as well as add more depths to the findings. This meant that a further round of data collection was necessary, and a more practical approach for carrying this out was through the adoption of a multiple case study strategy involving a smaller number of countries. This resulted in the selection of three case study countries from the initial set of countries that had participated in the previous data collection phase. Section 3.7, which discusses the implementation process of the study, sheds more light as to the adoption of the multiple case study strategy. The case study countries selected

included: Nigeria, Egypt and Zimbabwe. The next sub-section discusses the rationale behind the selection of these cases and the sampling technique utilised.

3.6.1.2 Justification of case study choices

Yin (2003) raises the issue of scepticism on the researcher's ability to undertake research on the basis of a single case study. He points out that, "The criticism may turn into scepticism about the ability to do empirical work in a single case study". To avoid such scepticism, Yin (2003) proposes the use of multiple cases in order to strengthen research results by pattern-matching replication, thereby increasing confidence and reliability in the robustness of the research. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to choose the right number of cases if the desired output is to be achieved from the research. In an effort to guard against this 'scepticism' and also to ensure the robustness of the research, the researcher found it appropriate to make use of three case studies.

The selection of the case(s) to be studied is not carried out at random but with purpose, in that, the particular person, site, community, process, program, or other bounded system to be investigated is selected because of the researcher's interest in the characteristics it portrays (Merriam, 2002: 179). Cohen *et al.* (2000: 182) highlight that "case studies strive to portray 'what it is like' to be in a particular situation, to catch the close-up reality and 'thick description' of participants' lived experiences of, thought about, and feelings for, a situation".

3.6.1.3 Sampling techniques

Easterby *et al.* (2003) describes sampling as the process of examining parts of a population using only a representative number in order to gain an understanding of certain attributes or features of that population. Thus, it is expected that any knowledge gained through this means can only reflect an estimate of the attributes of the entire population. However, the extent of accuracy of such estimate is dependent upon the sample size, mode of selection, and the level of variability within the population. It is worthy of note that a key objective of using samples is to provide all the relevant data needed for addressing the original research issue. The usefulness of samples in research according to Saunders *et al.* (2012) is most evident in situations where:

- *It would be impractical for you to survey the entire population;*
- *Your budget constraints prevent you from surveying the entire population;*
- *Your time constraints prevent you from surveying the entire population.*

Sampling techniques can be divided into two types: i) probability or representative sampling and ii) non-probability sampling. With the former, the probability, or chance, for the selection of each case from the population is known and is often equal for all cases, whereas with the latter, the probability, or chance for the selection of each case from the overall population is unknown (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). With probability sampling, it is possible to address research questions and objectives that require the statistical estimation of the attributes of the population from the sample, hence why it is more suitable for experiment and survey research strategies. However, with non-probability sampling, it is impossible to address research questions and objectives using statistical inferences about the attributes of the population. As such, generalisability using non-probability sampling, though still achievable, is not on statistical grounds.

The sampling techniques within probability sampling as identified by Saunders *et al.* (2012) include: random sampling; systematic sampling; stratified sampling; and cluster sampling. The idea of the random sampling technique is to randomly select the sample from the sampling frame using a random number table. In this technique, numbering the cases and randomly selecting cases using random numbers gives each case the chance of being selected. Systematic sampling on the other hand involves the selection of samples (cases) at regular intervals using the sampling fraction to determine the selection frequency. Stratified sampling involves dividing the study population into a number of useful and significant subsets (strata) based on a number of characteristics, and then drawing a random sample from each of the subset (strata). Similar to stratified sampling is cluster sampling as it involves dividing the population into distinct groups (clusters) prior to sampling (Barnett, 2002). However with cluster sampling, the sampling frame is made up of the full list of clusters as opposed to a full list of individual cases within the population (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). A development of the cluster sampling technique is multi-stage sampling, which involves modification of a cluster sample by adding another sampling stage involving some sort of random sampling. This technique can be useful in overcoming challenges

linked with constructing a sample frame for a dispersed population or a large geographical area.

Sampling techniques within non-probability sampling are: quota sampling; volunteer sampling; haphazard sampling; and purposive sampling. Barnett (2002) describes quota sampling as a type of stratified sample whereby the cases selected within a strata are completely non-random, but derived on the basis that the sample will represent the population as the sample variability for various quota variables is considered the same as that in the population. In volunteer sampling, the participants are volunteered to take part in the research as opposed to being selected. Haphazard sampling is a technique where sample cases are selected without any specific principles or guidelines of organisation as it relates to the research question (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). A common form of this approach is “convenience sampling” or “availability sampling” where cases are haphazardly selected as a result of being most convenient or easily available (Silverman, 2002; Saunders, 2012). Lastly, purposive sampling technique requires the researcher to use their own judgement in selecting cases that will best enable them answer the research question(s) and to address the research objectives (Saunders *et al.*, 2012; Patton, 2002). Purposive sampling in case study research is used when selecting cases of specific interest to the researcher or cases that are particularly informative (Neuman, 2005). Patton (2002) recalls that the aim of purposive sampling is not to achieve statistical representation of the total population, as is the case in probability sampling, but is based on the need to select information-rich cases and is dependent on the research question(s) and objectives. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) recommend purposive sampling for qualitative research.

3.6.1.4 Sampling technique employed

In view of the forgoing discussions in the previous section on the various sampling techniques, the researcher chose the purposive sampling technique to identify the cases in this study. The core principle of this sampling technique is selecting information-rich cases. Taking into consideration the aim of the study, which was to investigate the poor performance of African nations in the 2012 London Olympics, it was critical to select African nations that represented poor performance in the Games. Furthermore, it was important to select nations with sufficiently diverse characteristics to allow the maximum possible variation in the data obtained – this type of purposive sampling is known as “heterogeneous sampling” (Patton, 2002) or

“maximum variation sampling” (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The researcher also ensured that it was convenient and possible to gain access to the selected cases (Nigeria, Egypt and Zimbabwe), as the opportunity to obtain appropriate and sensitive data are subject to these grounds (Silverman, 2002). It is worthy of note, however, that the process of securing access to the case study countries was expedited for the researcher as preliminary work had already been done with some of the representatives from the case study countries. Section 3.7 elaborates on the implementation process of the study.

The judgements made by the researcher in selecting the cases were based on the following:

- *Similarity*: These countries are similar in the following regard:
 - a) *Region/membership* – All the countries selected are from Africa and have National Olympic Committees (NOCs) recognised by the IOC. All three countries are also members of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA)
 - b) *Olympic participation* – The three countries had been long-standing participants in the Olympics with at least 30 years of participation each. All three countries also participated in the 2012 London Olympics.
 - c) *Medal wins* – All countries selected had won medals at one time or the other in their Olympic history.
 - d) *Performance* – All three countries performed poorly and below expectation in the 2012 London Olympics (Egypt won just two silver medals, while Nigeria and Zimbabwe did not win any medals in the Games). All three countries also had poor performance records in previous Olympic Games as shown in table 1..
 - e) *Funding* – All the countries selected were primarily funded by their respective governments to participate in Olympic Games.
- *Differences*: The case study countries differ from each other in the following aspects:

- a) *Location* – All three countries are located in different regions within Africa i.e. Egypt from the north, Nigeria from the west and Zimbabwe from the south.
- b) *Representation in the 2012 London Olympics* – All three countries had different sizes of representation in the London Olympics – Egypt had 119 athletes competing in 20 sports, Nigeria had 53 athletes competing in 8 sports and Zimbabwe had 7 athletes competing in 4 sports.
- *Permission*: Permission was sought and obtained by the researcher to carry out the study with these three case study countries.

Though the researcher did not travel to all three case study countries due to financial and time constraints, reasonable access was gained to the research participants from the countries not visited through the use of communication channels such as telephone conversations, video conferencing, email and other web based communication platforms.

3.7 Developing the research implementation and data for the study

In designing the implementation plan for the study, the researcher made reflections on the ‘Grounded Theory’ strategy. Saunders *et al.* (2012) state that grounded theory “refers to a theory that is grounded in or developed inductively from a set of data”. This involves the researcher simultaneously collecting and analysing data, and through this, developing analytical codes as they emanate from the data to allow the reorganising of these data into categories. Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed the grounded theory strategy as a process of analysing, interpreting and explaining the meanings constructed by social actors to decipher their daily experiences in particular situations (Charmaz, 2006; Suddaby, 2006). Thus, the aim of the grounded theory strategy according to Glaser and Strauss (1967) is to identify or develop theory grounded in the data generated from the accounts of social actors (study participants). The selection of cases is a vital aspect of this strategy. Saunders *et al.* (2012) recall that the selection of new cases (e.g. new participants) for further data collection is informed by the data analysis and the categories or themes being developed. The authors note that the purpose of sampling within this strategy therefore, is not to achieve representativeness, but to pursue theoretical lines of enquiry otherwise referred to as theoretical sampling, which is continuous within the study until

theoretical saturation is reached. This happens when the collection of data no longer reveals any new components that are useful to a category, where such categories have become properly developed and understood and where the relationships that exist between categories have been verified (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Saunders *et al.* (2012) note that the use of these elements of grounded theory means that the process of collecting and analysing data becomes more focused, bringing about the generation of a theoretical explanation that is contextually based (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007).

Although some of the elements of this strategy are evident in this research (i.e. the cyclic collection of data evident in the various phases and stages in the study, as well as the inclusion of new participants to the study for further data collection), the researcher does not claim to have built the foundation of the study on the core principles of the grounded theory strategy as elucidated by Glaser and Strauss (1967). However, the reflection on the grounded theory strategy as it concerned this research was purely to inform the implementation process and data analysis stages of the study.

Conducting qualitative research often offers the researcher the opportunity to explore an array of implementation options for carrying out the research. In view of the research design and framework proposed in this study, the implementation process for the study was conducted in five phases as pointed out in chapter one. The first phase was the problem identification and scoping phase which saw the study evolve from an investigation into the success of the project management of the 2012 London Olympics, to an investigation into the performance of African nations at the Games (evolution of the research is discussed in section 7.6). The identification of the research problem, mapping out of research questions, aim and objectives, were carried out in this phase. The second phase was a review of literature on the participation and performance of African countries in the Olympics. This phase was used as a foundation for the third and fourth phases of the study, which was primarily for fieldwork. The last phase of the study was the framework development phase. Phase 1 and 2 of the study were implemented in chapters one and two of the thesis respectively. Table 8 shows the implementation phases and stages of the research.

Table 8: Research phases and stages

Study Phase	Stage/Activity	Number of Countries
Phase 1	Problem identification and scoping	-
Phase 2	Literature review	-
Phase 3	Stage 1: Pre-interview Questionnaire	53
	Stage 2: First set of interviews	20
	Stage 3: Second set of interviews	9
Phase 4	Analysis and further in-depth interviews with 3 case study countries	3
Phase 5	Framework proposition, verification and validation	3

3.7.1 Phase 3

Phase 3 of the study is broken down into three stages as shown in Table 8, for the purpose of providing clarity about how the study evolved. Stage 1 discusses the use of a pre-interview questionnaire administered to the NOCs from all the African countries that participated in the London Olympics. Stage 2 discusses the use of semi-structured interviews to obtain data from the research participants. Stage 3 discusses the follow-up interviews conducted with the research participants..

The research implementation process for phase 3 of this study commenced with the gathering of information about the various National Olympic Committees from Africa participating in the 2012 London Olympics, and their representatives who were to participate in the study. It was also important to obtain such views from NOC representatives who were physically present during the Olympics. In order to achieve

this, the researcher attended a summit held by the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) held in London during the Olympic Games in July 2012 to establish initial face-to-face contact with some of the participants. The researcher had the opportunity to speak with some of the NOC representatives and secured their verbal consent to participate in the study.

Following the ANOCA summit in London and the conclusion of the Olympics, the researcher sent out email invitations to the various African NOCs formally requesting their participation in the study and also explaining the purpose of the study, as well as the aim and objectives. A sample of the invitation letter that was sent out to the research participants is included in the report as appendix B.

The researcher used the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) as the access point to the NOCs. ANOCA is the regional arm of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), which operates under the auspices of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to unite all the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) from Africa. ANOCA currently has its headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria, where the researcher originally hails from. Taking advantage of this, the researcher visited the ANOCA headquarters in Abuja to secure their commitment in providing access to the NOCs, which they agreed to. In a further attempt to secure access, the researcher made several trips to London to meet with representatives of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG), and had direct communication with the NOC continental manager for Africa who was in charge of all the NOCs from Africa in the London 2012 Olympics. LOCOG, through their NOC continental manager for Africa, also provided the researcher with access to the NOCs.

The researcher, though fully aware of the challenge in obtaining the views of all the African NOCs participating in the London Olympics, attempted to contact and involve all the 53 NOCs. However, only NOCs who were willing to participate were included in this phase of the study.

Owing to the lack of response to emails sent out by the researcher to obtain preliminary data from the study participants and to set up interviews, the researcher designed a questionnaire (appendix E) to aid the process of gathering such data. The use of research questionnaires is discussed briefly in the section below. However, it should be noted that the questionnaire used in this study was solely for the purpose of

obtaining preliminary data from the participants and setting up interviews, and not for carrying out quantitative analysis.

3.7.1.1 Stage 1 - Pre-interview questionnaire

Though traditionally some researchers advocate the use of questionnaires primarily for quantitative research, Yin (2003) points out that the case study researcher often has a wide array of approaches available to carry out case study research, which may include the use of both questionnaires and interviews. A similar view is also shared by other researchers such as Creswell *et al.* (2007), John-Steiner and Mahn (1996), Wang and Hannafin (2005) and Baxter and Jack (2008), who suggest that investigators within case study research can collect and integrate quantitative survey data with other qualitative approaches. However, the aim of the researcher here was not to combine quantitative methods with qualitative methods of data collection and analysis (also known as mixed methods), but was to employ the use of a questionnaire primarily to gather preliminary data about the participants, and to secure their willingness to participate in the interviews. The interviews were the main source of data for the research.

An online questionnaire created by the researcher using the Bristol Online Survey (BOS) was administered to the participants. Creating and administering the questionnaires online was considered to be the most convenient way of carrying this out due to constraints posed by distance between the researcher and the respondents, cost implications associated with printing and posting questionnaires, and the limited time available to complete this phase of the research. This method makes it easy to obtain responses and also to have automated data, which minimises research effort and time.

As noted by Bouchard (1976), the development of a questionnaire, like any other measuring instrument in the social sciences, requires a great deal of work before it is ready for field use. A list of some considerations to be made when formulating questions and responses in a questionnaire was highlighted by Bryman (2008) and Kumar (2005), which the researcher kept in mind when developing the pre-interview questionnaire for the study. For instance, it was important for the questionnaire to be worded in a clear and simple language without the use of any technical jargon. There was also the need to avoid ambiguous questions as different respondents could

interpret them differently. This also meant that questions and choice of answers needed to be clear and concise. Furthermore, there was a need for the researcher to ensure that no questions were asked based on assumptions. For example, a question such as 'how does your performance in the London 2012 Olympics compare to your previous Olympic performance' assumes that the respondent had been involved in previous Olympics. The researcher had to pay careful attention to these factors during the pilot phase of the questionnaire before the actual launch.

One of the aims of using the questionnaire was to help the researcher gain an understanding about the background of the participants and the NOCs they represented. Questions were asked concerning the role of the participants within their country's NOC and their job description. This was to ensure that the participants were able to express the views of their country's NOCs. The questionnaire also sought to ascertain the level of involvement the participants had in the planning and preparation of their country's NOC for the London 2012 Olympics and what specific roles they played. The purpose of this was to further validate the views provided by the participants. Also, importantly, the questionnaire was aimed at establishing the interview preferences for the participants in order to help the researcher plan and schedule follow-up interviews. The questionnaire also helped the researcher identify what needed to be explored in the interviews.

A test-run of the questionnaire was conducted by the researcher among non-participants of the study, most of who were other PhD students at the University of Salford. The purpose of conducting the pilot was to test the effectiveness of the questionnaire in achieving its aim, thereby testing the adequacy of the instrument. The pilot process also provided the opportunity for the researcher to know the average time it would take the participants to complete the questionnaire in the actual survey.

Furthermore, the pilot was carried out to enhance the structural validity of the questionnaire as feedback provided by the pilot team helped the researcher in identifying any difficult or ambiguous questions/statements in the questionnaire. This gave the researcher the chance to add, delete, re-word or re-scale response options for questions, and to ensure the questionnaire instructions were clear and concise enough for the participants.

Though most of the participants were quite happy with the structure of the questionnaire, a few comments were raised around the response options for some of the questions. For example, there was a question in the interview preference section that required the participants to select their preferred contact method for the interview from the options provided in the questionnaire. Following feedback from the pilot, the researcher rephrased this question to allow participants to indicate their own preferred contact method rather than select from options provided in the questionnaire, as these may not have been extensive enough. Also, there was a question (Section 3 of the questionnaire) that required the participants to compare the project management of the London 2012 Olympics with the last four Olympics held in Beijing, Athens, Sydney and Atlanta. This question was later removed completely as the feedback from the pilot suggested that not all the participants involved in the London Olympics would have been involved in previous Olympic Games, and also because there was no direct link to the research objectives. The participants in the pilot took around 15 minutes on average to complete the questionnaire and this time was advised to the actual participants as the estimated completion time for the survey.

Those involved in the pilot expressed their satisfaction with completing the questionnaire online, as there were no technical difficulties experienced. The researcher also ensured that there were no challenges in accessing the responses on the BOS website, and all the options for analysing the responses functioned appropriately. The pilot process took one week to complete and the actual survey was launched shortly after this, one sent to each of the 53 African NOCs.

The advantages in using a pre-interview questionnaire included:

- the questionnaire was considered a quick and inexpensive means of gathering preliminary data from the participants;
- using the questionnaire, it was possible to gather data from participants in a widely spread geographical population;
- the questionnaire provided a good first hand background about the participants and the NOCs they represent; and
- the questionnaire was an ‘icebreaker’ in the relationship built between the researcher and the participant as they became more comfortable and willing to take part in interviews subsequently.

Some disadvantages in the use of the pre-interview questionnaire were identified as:

- participants had to be literate to respond to the questionnaire;
- access to the internet was needed as the questionnaire was dispatched online; and
- using the questionnaire required respondents to answer questions without any help from the researcher. In addressing this, the researcher ensured that questions were simple and clear enough for the respondents. This was achieved through the pilot carried out before the actual launch of the questionnaire.

3.7.1.2 Stage 2 and 3 - interviews

A research interview can be regarded as a data collection technique that involves the use of a set of pre-planned questions to gather information orally. Saunders *et al.* (2012) describes the process as “*a purposeful conversation between two or more people, requiring the interviewer to establish rapport, to ask concise and unambiguous questions, to which the interviewee is willing to respond, and to listen attentively*”. According to Shneiderman and Plaisant (2005), interviews are a productive way of data generation as they provide the interviewer with the opportunity to specifically focus on the areas of concern that could lead to more constructive suggestions that could be further explored. Apart from the usefulness of interviews as a tool used to gather valid and reliable data that are relevant to research question(s) and objectives as pointed out by Saunders *et al.* (2012), Genise (2002) and Shneiderman and Plaisant (2005) point to other advantageous attributes of using interviews as a data collection tool;

- i. Specific and constructive suggestions can be derived from direct contact with participants;
- ii. They enhance the collection of detailed information;
- iii. Rich and detailed data can be gathered with fewer participants involved.

Other advantages of the interview method peculiar to this study included:

- by focusing on Olympic performance issues, most of the data obtained from the African nations proved immensely useful in this study; and

- the interview provided the researcher the opportunity to assure the participants of confidentiality and protection, since sensitive and in-depth information was being obtained.

The disadvantages of this method included:

- it was time consuming to carry out interviews;
- in this study, scheduling of interviews proved to be difficult as most of the participants were extremely busy and were located overseas and shared different time zones with the researcher; and
- a few of the interviewees were slightly anxious during interviews as their responses were being recorded.

Interviews can be highly structured and formalised, utilising standardised questions, or they can be unstructured with informal conversations. However, there are intermediate positions between these two spectrums, depending on the level of structure and formality (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Interviews within this category are known as semi-structured interviews. Therefore, according to Bouchard (1976) and Saunders *et al.* (2012), interviews can be categorised into three types which are; structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured or in-depth interviews, which can be done with individuals or a focus group.

- *Structured interviews*: A structured interview requires the respondent to reply to a predetermined, identical or ‘standardised’ set of questions using a specified set of responses. This type of interview shares similar attributes with a questionnaire as it is generally used to obtain quantifiable data and can be referred to as a ‘quantitative research interview’. They also provide less flexibility to the interviewee to provide other views not included in the response set.
- *Semi-structured interview*: in the semi-structured interview, the discussion is centred on a list of themes and questions developed by the researcher but with the content of the response open for the respondent, and may vary from interview to interview. The flexible structure of this type of interview allows the researcher the ability to welcome, during the interview process, the introduction of new themes or issues raised by the interviewee, which are

considered useful to the research. Using semi-structured interviews could also give generate serendipitous findings.

- *Unstructured or in-depth interviews:* An unstructured interview neither specifies the question nor the desired response. They are considered informal and are primarily used as a tool for an in depth exploration into a general area which may be of interest to the researcher. The general idea behind the use of unstructured interviews is to give the interviewee the opportunity to feel at ease and to freely express their views in a non-directive manner.

It is worthy of note however, that the interview approach to adopt is determined by the responses desired and the study design.

Although a discussion on the various types of interview above adds to the researcher's general understanding of the nature of research interviews, a clear consideration on the type of interview to be used must be made (Robson, 2011). The interview type adopted in this research was the semi-structured interview.

3.7.1.2.1 Semi-structured interview

The reasons for the adoption of a semi-structured interview for this study was first; to collect in depth data in a manner that allowed the respondents the freedom to relay vital information within the research context, in a comfortable and unrestrictive manner, and secondly and more specifically, to capture the views of the NOC representatives on the performance of their respective countries in the 2012 London Olympics in as much detail as possible.

The researcher started by asking some preliminary questions before the commencement of the interview. This was aimed at obtaining a demographic background of the participant within the NOC they represented. These questions included the following:

- What NOC do you represent?
- How long have you been a part of your NOC?
- What is your position in your NOC?
- Were you involved in your NOC's participation in the 2012 London Olympics?

The above set of questions was then followed by the main interview questions that were directly related to the subject under study. The researcher employed the framework propositions of Oakley and Green (2001) and De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) on sports performance improvement identified from the literature, to serve as a guide in developing the interview questions. The researcher also used the CSFs identified from PM literature, as a guideline for directing interview discussions with the participants. The interview gave the researcher the opportunity to secure important and valuable information from key individuals in the respective NOCs, gain an in-depth understanding of the problem and draw meaningful conclusions to the research. The key individuals to be interviewed were identified and considered appropriate to participate as a result on their high involvement with their NOC and the role they played in the build up to the 2012 London Olympics. Their skills and “expert” knowledge about issues relating to performance of their NOC in the Olympics was another consideration made by the researcher in selecting the interviewees. The following section shows the interviewee categories.

3.7.1.2.2 Interview participants

Generally, the interview participants in phase 3 of the study comprised of individuals that were in the senior administrative hierarchy of their respective NOCs. These include presidents, vice presidents, secretary-generals and assistant secretary-generals. However, to maintain anonymity of the interviewees, the exact positions of the representatives from the NOCs that participated are not mentioned in the research findings.

The entire interview process in this phase of the study was carried out in two parts. The reason for doing this was because the responses from the participants in the first set of interviews did not provide sufficient depth on the subject. As such, there was a need for another set of interviews to address this issue. The first set of interviews, which form Stage 2 of phase 3, had been conducted with a total of twenty countries. Nine of these participated in the follow up interviews (stage 3 of phase 3).

The participants are coded within the research to ensure anonymity. For example, the code name used to represent the participant from NOC ‘A’ (Togo) is ‘A01’ in the first set of the interviews and ‘A02’ in the second set of interview. Table 9 is used to show a clearer picture of this representation

Table 9: Interview participants and code names 1

NOC	Country	Referred in findings from 1st interview as	Referred in findings from 2nd Interview as
A	Togo	A01	A02
B	Kenya	B01	B02
C	Nigeria	C01	C02
D	Swaziland	D01	D02
E	Zimbabwe	E01	E02
F	South-Africa	F01	F02
G	Egypt	G01	G02
H	Botswana	H01	-
I	Ethiopia	I01	I02
J	Tanzania	J01	J02
K	Somalia	K01	-
L	Lesotho	L01	-
M	Ghana	M01	-
N	Mauritius	N01	-
O	Cameroun	O01	-
P	Sudan	P01	-
Q	Algeria	Q01	-
R	Gabon	R01	-
S	Uganda	S01	-
T	Cote D'Ivoire	T01	-
Sub-Total of interviews		20	9
Total		29 Interviews conducted	

3.7.1.2.3 Time and location of the interviews

As it was impracticable for the researcher to travel to the various countries of the participants to conduct interviews, and with the challenge of getting the participants to agree to do this electronically due to the lack of the necessary technology in the regions where participants were located, the researcher had to look into other options. Consequently, the researcher, through information obtained from a contact in ANOCA, was told of ANOCA's annual conference, which held in Abidjan in the

Republic of Cote d'Ivoire in July 2013, organised for all the heads of African NOCs who were the study participants. On getting this information, the researcher attended the conference in Abidjan as this proved to be the best and only opportunity to conduct face-to-face interviews with the participants. This set of interviews (Stage 2 of Phase 3) was conducted with the research participants in Abidjan during the period of the ANOCA conference. On average, the interviews in this stage lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes.

The follow up interviews, which constituted Stage 3 of Phase 3, were conducted using Skype and telephone interviews as all the participants were back in their respective countries. As there was no other practical opportunity for the researcher to conduct these interviews face-to-face, the resolve to use telephone and Skype (where possible) was reached due to the distance between the researcher and the participants at the time of the interview. However, interviews in this phase were easier to set up, as the participants had become familiar with the researcher and the topic being investigated. Nine participants were involved in this phase, out of the twenty participants that took part in the first set of interviews. Generally, interview times were agreed based on the convenience and suitability for the interviewees. However, there was a need to reschedule interview appointments with a couple of the participants due to situations beyond their control. Each interview conducted in this phase typically lasted between one hour-thirty minutes to two hours. The period of the second phase of interviews was between September 2013 and February 2014.

3.7.1.2.4 Interview process

In compiling the interview questions, the researcher kept in mind that the questions were only to guide the course of the interview and that the order in which questions had been pre-arranged could be disrupted within the context of the study, based on the direction the interview was going. In order to gain more depth from the responses of the interviewee, the researcher asked other questions so as to ensure that the research questions and objectives were fully addressed.

While the first set of interviews were conducted during the period of the ANOCA conference, the second set of interviews were conducted with both researcher and participants being in the comfort of their homes or offices in order to minimise any disruption during interviews. The researcher started each interview by explaining the

purpose of the study, as well as the recording procedure, to the participants. The researcher further explained the confidentiality and anonymity statements to the participants, and explained to them their right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving prior notice. The researcher then allowed sufficient time for the interviewee to read through and sign the consent forms, if they were happy to carry on with the interview. The researcher ensured that everything was clear to the interviewee before the commencement of the interview. This was done to again minimise any possible disruptions once interviews had commenced. The researcher made use of an Olympus digital voice recorder with microphone to record the interviews. The voice recorder was positioned in a way where it did not inconvenience the participants or interfere with the signal when interview was conducted using telephone or Skype. Though most of the participants didn't have any issues with recording of the interviews, two of the participants did not want to be recorded but were ok for the researcher to take notes during the interview. In dealing with the situations, the researcher made bullet points of the issues discussed during these interviews and rewrote them neatly in a sensible form once the interview was over.

During the conduct of an interview, Oates (2006) points out the need for the researcher to be neutral, receptive, punctual, polite and professional. With this in mind, the researcher allowed sufficient time before the start of an interview to set up any necessary technology that was to be used and to make sure all note pads and pens were in place to take down notes. The researcher also ensured that mobile phones or any other devices with sound were switched off or put on silent to avoid any distractions from them. Furthermore, the researcher dressed in a moderately smart fashion for the interviews and maintained politeness throughout the interview. The researcher also maintained neutrality in reacting to the views of the interviewee during the interview process and did not advance his views on those of the interviewee.

The researcher attempted to use the Express Scribe Transcription Software and Foot Pedal controller to carry out transcription. This effort proved abortive as the software did not seem to be user-friendly when used on a MacBook computer, which was what the researcher used. Therefore, interview recordings were transferred to the

researcher's computer and transcribed directly from the computer using the simple play back option.

3.7.2 Phase 4

Phase 4 of the study focused on obtaining further data from three case study countries drawn from the countries discussed in phase 3. The purpose of conducting this phase with a smaller number of NOCs was to enable the researcher to gain more depth into the issues of performance already identified in the previous phases of the study and also to validate the findings from phase 3. In contrast to phase 3 of the study, phase 4 aimed at obtaining data from different stakeholder groups within the NOCs of these countries. Whilst the data from phase 3 had primarily been obtained from chief executives of the NOCs, the data in phase 4 was obtained from other stakeholder groups such as the coaches and the athletes. The need to obtain data from different groups was to avail the researcher the opportunity of sampling various perspectives of views expressed by the study participants. This was also important in order to minimise study biases that can arise from obtaining data from a single group of participants (Yin, 2003).

The implementation process for phase 4 commenced with identifying which countries were appropriate to secure further data from. This brought about the selection of Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Egypt as the case study countries to serve this purpose (the purposive sampling technique was used for this selection) The researcher, through the athletes information page on the BBC website for the 2012 London Olympics, was able to get a comprehensive list of the names of all the athletes that participated in the Olympics, their sport categories and their countries. Through this information, the researcher then searched for further contact details for the athletes from the case study countries using social media channels such as Facebook and LinkedIn. This yielded a positive result as some of the athletes responded and indicated their willingness to take part in the study. The athletes who agreed to participate also provided contact details of their coaches who they thought might also be interested in taking part in the study. The researcher, through this, was able to establish contact with some of the coaches who eventually took part in the study.

Owing to the level of response from the athletes and coaches who were willing to participate in the study, the researcher resolved to conduct interviews with one

athletes and one coach from each of the case study countries. Following this resolve, the athletes and coaches who were to participate were contacted in order to agree on convenient times and means of interviews. As it was impossible for the researcher to travel to the different countries where the athletes and coaches were based to conduct face-to-face interviews due to time and cost constraints, it became necessary to arrange for the interviews to be conducted electronically. Telephone and Skype channels were used.

As in the case of the phase 3 interviews, the participants were provided with a brief synopsis of the research and focus areas where interview questions were to be drawn from, prior to the interview. This was to allow them ample time and opportunity to familiarise themselves with the subject being investigated. The semi-structured interview approach was again adopted in this phase to provide guidance during interview conversations, but most importantly, to give the interviewees the freedom to express their views in the best possible manner they found to be convenient. In order to ensure uniformity and consistency in the interview process in the study, the researcher made sure that the interviews conducted in this phase were guided by the same interview principles and practices used in conducting the interviews in phase 3. This included practices such as, ensuring that interview dates and times were convenient for both the interviewer and interviewee, ensuring that the location of both the interviewer and interviewee during the time of interviews were carefully chosen to minimise noise or other disruptions, ensuring that the confidentiality and anonymity statements, and recording procedure were read out to interviewees before commencement of interviews, and ensuring that the consent form was read, understood and signed by the interviewee before the interview was conducted. The interviews in this phase lasted one hour-thirty minutes on average.

The researcher again made use of an Olympus digital voice recorder with microphone to record the interviews. Interview recordings were further transferred to the researcher's computer and transcribed directly from the computer again using the simple play back option.

In presenting the findings from the interviews conducted in phase 4, the researcher made use of code names for the participants in order to ensure anonymity. In coming up with code names, the researcher took into consideration the code names used in

phase 3. For example, the code name for the participant from NOC ‘C’ (Nigeria) in phase 3 was ‘C01’ in stage 1 interview and ‘C02’ in stage 2 interview; therefore the code names for the participants from NOC ‘C’ in phase 4 are ‘C03-1’ and ‘C03-2’. Table 10 shows the code names for the participants in phase 4.

Table 10: Interview participants and code names 2

NOC	Country	Coach – referred in findings from interview as	Athlete – referred in findings from interview as
C	Nigeria	C03-1	C03-2
E	Zimbabwe	E03-1	E03-2
G	Egypt	G03-1	G03-2

3.8 Validation, verification and reliability

Patton (2002) points out that the importance of validity, verification and reliability in qualitative research cannot be overlooked as they aid the researcher in analysing data and ensuring that the study results are credible. Polit and Hungler (1995: 656) consider validity to be “the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure”. Validity generally concerns the integrity of the research. Reliability on the other hand, concerns the reputability of the study results. Bryman (2012) opines that “the term is commonly used in relation to the question whether the measures that are devised for concepts in the social sciences are consistent”. In distinguishing between reliability and validity, Cavana *et al.* (2001) posit that, while the former is concerned with consistency and stability in measurements, the latter is concerned with whether the right concept is being measured by the researcher.

Yin (2008) and Bryman (2008) identify four ways of scrutinising the quality of qualitative empirical social research. They include: reliability, internal validity, external validity and construct validity.

- Reliability: this has to do with the credibility of the study findings. Reliability is considered to be “the degree of consistency or dependability with which an

instrument measures the attribute it is designed to measure” (Polit and Hungler, 1995: 651). In other words, reliability entails the requirement that the same study results should be achieved if the study is to be repeated by a different researcher. To put it more succinctly, Gummesson (1988: 146) explains that reliability seeks to answer the question: “If the investigation had been carried out by someone other than the author, using his methods, would the same results have been obtained?”

- Internal validity: Research is deemed to be valid if the proposed outcomes are met. Therefore, De Vaus (2001) considers internal validity to be the extent to which accurate conclusions can be drawn from the study results given the composition of the study design. Yin (2003) and Alvesson (2003) propose that, depending on the study setup, stronger internal validity can be gained with fewer alternatives. As such, it is important for the research design to be structured in such a way that reduces uncertainties in the study. De Vaus (2001) admits that, though it is impractical to completely eliminate study ambiguities in social research, it is certainly possible to minimise them.
- External validity: Blichfeldt and Andersen (2006) describe this quality test to focus on the generalisability of the study results beyond the study. In testing for external validity through generalising study findings, it is crucial to take into consideration factors such as; the type of research, the sample being studied, the confidence level placed on the theories and constructs being developed, and the degree to which these factors can be generalised. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), external validity is determining if the study conclusions possess any larger import, or if the study findings are generalizable with earlier theory. In furtherance to this view, Minichiello *et al.* (1990) maintain that generalising study findings in a qualitative empirical study is made to the theory rather than the study population. To ensure external validity in this research and to enhance replication and theoretical generalizability, data was obtained from participants in 20 countries, but more specifically, from three stakeholder groups (NOC presidents, coaches and athletes) within three case study countries.
- Construct validity: This is concerned with linking the collection of data to research questions in order to expose and minimise subjectivity (De Vaus,

2001). Investigator subjectivity is almost unavoidable in qualitative empirical research making it difficult to test construct validity. However, Diefenbach (2009) suggests that one of the ways to mitigate against this is by the use of multiple sources of evidence, otherwise referred to as data triangulation (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2004). The collection of data from different participant groups in this study was also a deliberate attempt at mitigating against subjectivity.

Validity and reliability were achieved in this study through an assessment of the plausibility and credibility of already existing knowledge on some of the performance issues identified by the research participants. The discussions on sports performance and success from other literature sources carried out in the literature review chapter provided the validity and reliability in this study.

The verification took place between phase 3 and 4 of the study following interpretation and analysis of data; this involved presenting the key issues raised by participants in the first stage of interviews (Phase 3, stage 2) to participants in the second stage of interviews (phase 3, stage 3) in order to verify the issues that were evolving. The first stage of interviews was done with twenty countries and the verification stage was done with nine countries. The main purpose of the verification process was to ensure that the data being generated and the resulting framework were not being influenced by the researcher's own view, thus distancing the researcher from the reality in question. After a more detailed outline of the main issues that accounted for the poor performance of African nations in the London 2012 Olympics from the verification stage, the validation stage involved presenting the key issues on performance in view of the proposed model for addressing these issues, to different stakeholders. This group of stakeholders comprised of representatives from three countries and an independent representative from the African National Olympic Committee Association (ANOCA). The validation was achieved through a further set of interviews (phase 4). Furthermore, research rigour was achieved in this study through a focus on validation and verification; this involved thinking theoretically, methodological coherence, the researcher's responsiveness during the fieldwork, sampling procedures and data analysis.

3.8.1 Triangulation

Triangulation simply involves the use of several measures and methods of an empirical phenomenon to ‘overcome problems of bias and validity’ in social research (Scandura and Williams, 2000; Blaikie, 2000). Triangulation according to Brannen (2004: 314) is also seen as the use of data results from one data set to corroborate results from another. Triangulation is brought about by the ethical necessity to confirm the validity and reliability of study results, and this can be achieved in case study research through the utilisation of multiple data sources (Yin, 2003).

From Creswell’s (2003) viewpoint, the purpose of triangulation is to compare data in order to ascertain if it corroborates and as such, validates the research findings. Triangulation is therefore considered to be an important way of improving the credibility of qualitative research findings. Bearing in mind that every method adopted by a researcher has its own strengths and weaknesses, triangulation can be used as a means of increasing reliability by minimising systematic error, through the adoption of a strategy where the researcher uses multiple sources of data.

Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2004) identify four different types of triangulation which are as follows:

- i. *Theoretical triangulation*: This involves the use of models from one discipline to explain occurrences in another discipline.
- ii. *Data triangulation*: This is referred to the collection of data from different sources over different periods of time.
- iii. *Methodological triangulation*: This involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.
- iv. *Triangulation by the investigator*: This refers to the collection of data by different people on a given situation with the aim of comparing the results obtained.

In view of the above discussion and for the purpose of this research work, data triangulation had to do with cross-referencing the data obtained from semi-structured interviews conducted with research participants in phase 3 of the study, with interview data obtained from the participants from the three case study countries in phase 4 of the study. In other words, the data from phase 3 of the study was obtained primarily from the administrative heads of the NOCs that took part in the study, and

cross-referenced against the data obtained from coaches and athletes from the three case study countries in phase 4.

3.9 Data analysis

Analysing qualitative data involves the researcher attempting to make sense of the views expressed by the research participants on the phenomenon being studied, bearing in mind that such views may be subjective and socially constructed. Yin (2003) and Saunders *et al.* (2012) suggest that the researcher carrying out one or more of the following sums up this process:

- i. Summarising some parts of the data in order to condense them.
- ii. Grouping data according to themes by categorising them in order to make sense of the data.
- iii. Linking data categories in a manner that provides the researcher with a structure(s) to answer the research questions.

Data analysis is an important aspect of qualitative research and is central to the interpretive philosophical paradigm. Owing to the nature of qualitative research, the data obtained are non-standardised, complex in nature and likely to be in large volumes (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). In comparison to the ‘thin’ abstractions or description primarily generated from quantitative data, qualitative data brings about ‘thick’ or ‘thorough’ abstraction or deductions (Dey, 1993; Brekhus *et al.*, 2005).

3.9.1 Approach to analysis

While Yin (2009) agrees that the application of a standardised approach to analyse qualitative data is far-fetched, Saunders *et al.*, (2012) points out that the approach being used is determined by the deductive, inductive or abductive nature of the research. While there is no rigidity in the analytical approach to be adopted in analysing qualitative data, Saunders *et al.* (2012) again point out that the focal objectives in carrying out such analysis are to:

1. *comprehend often large and disparate amounts of qualitative data;*
2. *integrate related data drawn from different transcripts and notes;*
3. *identify key themes or patterns from them for further exploration;*
4. *develop and/or test theories based on these apparent patterns or relationships;*

5. *draw and verify conclusions.*

De Vaus (2001) points out that the main objective of data analysis is to treat all evidence fairly in order to develop persuasive and analytic conclusions, and also to create supernumerary interpretations.

To break the data analysis process down, the researcher subscribes to the proposition of Saunders *et al.*, (2012) to carry out data analysis in the following stages:

1. *Categorising*

The first stage involves the classification of data into analysable categories, to which meaningful ‘bits’ and ‘chunks’ of original data can be attached subsequently. Identifying these categories is guided by the research purpose, based on the aim and objectives. Thus the data collected in this study from the semi-structured interview conducted was classified into three categories namely:

- i. African nations participation in the Olympics.
- ii. Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges.
- iii. Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

2. *‘Unitising’ data*

This stage involves the researcher attaching relevant ‘bits’ or ‘chunks’ or ‘units’ of data to the above categories that have been identified. Here, the research considers the unit of data to be relevant words, sentences, paragraphs or other chunks of textual data that fit into the categories listed above.

3. *Recognising relationships and developing categories*

This stage represents the entire process of the data analysis as it involves the generation of categories and reorganising data accordingly. Yin (2009) considers this stage of data analysis very crucial as it involves a continuous search for key themes, patterns or relationships in the reorganised data.

4. *Developing testable propositions*

According to Dey (1993), ‘the association of one variable with another is not sufficient ground for inferring a causal or any other connection between them’. As

such, this stage requires the researcher to develop testable propositions in seeking to reveal patterns and recognising relationships between categories within the data. Testing propositions that emerge inductively from the data involves seeking negative examples and alternative explanations that contrasts with the relationship or pattern being tested. While this is different from statistical hypothesis testing as in quantitative analysis, Miles and Huberman (1994) uphold that testing propositions identified helps the research in formulating valid conclusions and developing an explanatory theory, no matter how simple the theory is.

3.9.1.1 Thematic analysis

In view of Yin's (2003) proposition, the analysis for this study was carried out through a discussion of the key themes identified from the interview transcripts. This type of analysis is also referred to as thematic analysis. Thematic analysis according to Braun and Clarke (2006) is "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (or themes) within data" in qualitative research. It is seen as a categorising strategy for qualitative data as it involves the researcher reviewing the data collected and making notes in order to sort it into categories. The simple and flexible nature of this analytic strategy helped the researcher transit the analysis from a broad interpretation of the data to identifying patterns and developing themes, which provided a richer interpretation and understanding of the data collected in this study. Thematic analysis also helped bring the researcher closer to the data as a deeper appreciation of the data content was developed.

Furthermore, Boyatzis (1998) points out that thematic analysis is a process of "encoding qualitative information" This implies that the researcher can develop 'codes', phrases or words that help to label the sections of the data. Codes can be developed in different sizes or shapes depending on the research question to be answered and the methodology adopted. Boyatzis (1998) further explains that a set of codes may refer to "a list of themes, a complex model with themes, indicators, and qualifications that are causally related; or something in between these two forms". Therefore, the analysis carried out in this research was a discussion of the themes developed from the data presented in chapter five.

- **Techniques used for theme identification**

The variation in methods for analysing research data makes it difficult, if not impossible, to apply a universal concept in theme identification, particularly in qualitative research. Typically, themes are induced from empirical data – from sounds, images and texts (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). But even with a fixed set of open-ended questions, Dey (1993) notes that it is impossible for the researcher to anticipate all the themes that develop prior to analysing the data. This means that, although the researcher could expect to find certain themes from the data, some themes could arise from the data unexpectedly and if analysed, could lead to useful findings.

Ryan and Bernard (2003) note that there is no ‘right or wrong’ approach for identifying themes from the data. Tesch (1990) also recalls that the choice of a technique for theme identification is relative, as individual researchers have different recipes for arriving at a set of themes. The process of identifying the key themes in the data from this study commenced in earnest with the transcribing of interview recordings. Having the sole responsibility of conducting the interviews and subsequently transcribing them, helped the researcher become more familiar with the key issues that were developing from the data. Ryan and Bernard (2003) argue that the researcher’s involvement in handling the data is always helpful for finding themes. Once the interviews had all been transcribed, the researcher then started to paw through the written texts, underlining key phrases and marking up the key issues that had been raised with different coloured markers – one colour to a new issue, making it easier to revisit the issues subsequently. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggest reading over the transcribed text at least twice, which the researcher did, to ensure a full awareness of the key issues. Sandelowski (1995) further observes that proofreading the written texts and simply marking key phrases is a good first step towards identifying and analysing themes. To apply a more systematic approach in identifying the themes discussed in this study, the researcher adopted a combination of the following three techniques suggested by Ryan and Bernard (2003):

- I. Repetitions: These are mainly topics within the data that “occur and reoccur” (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975) or are “recurring regularities (Guba, 1978). D’ Andrade (1991) argues that “anyone who has listened to long stretches of

talk...knows how frequently people circle through the same network of ideas”. For instance, in the interviews conducted with the NOC Presidents/Secretary Generals, it was found that the participants repeatedly made references to ideas associated with specific issues such as sponsorships, funding, planning, among other issues. Thus, the researcher concluded that these ideas were important themes in the performance of the participants’ countries at the Games. In a similar fashion to that adopted by Strauss (1992), the researcher in showing the relationship between these ideas, wrote the concepts on a piece of paper and used lines to connect them with the participants’ verbatim expressions – the more the same concept occurred in the text, the more likely it was a theme. This process was replicated with all the interviews carried out.

- II. Similarities and differences: This technique involves looking for similarities and differences by making systematic comparisons across units of data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to it as the “constant comparison method”. In applying this technique to this research, the researcher compared pairs of expressions from the various research participants in order to establish the differences or similarities between these expressions. The abstract similarities and differences generated from this process formed the data themes. For example, the issue of funding was a common issue pointed out by different participants to have had an impact on their country’s performance. A comparison of expressions by the participants showed that the points they were making regarding this issue were very similar. Therefore the researcher considered the issue to be a theme.
- III. Word lists and key words in context (KWIC): The word list and the KWIC technique simply involves an observation of the words used by the participants. To generate word lists, Ryan and Bernard (2003) note that researchers first identify all the unique words in a text and then count the number of times each occurs. This word-counting technique helped the researcher condense the data to allow concentration on the core points raised by the participants (Tesch, 1990). One risk of using word lists and counts is that words can be taken out of their original context. However, the researcher, fully aware of this risk adopted the KWIC approach to prevent this risk. This approach ensured that each key word or phrase identified were systematically searched within the text to make sure that all instances of it’s appearance in

the text had similar contexts. Using this technique, themes were identified by simply sorting the examples into piles of similar meanings.

It is worthy of mention that there are some computer programs that can be used to identify and organise research data in a quicker fashion. An example of this is NVivo. However, the researcher's reluctance in using this tool was a conscious move to maintain control over the data analysis process at all times, rather than face the risks, limitations and uncertainties posed by the use of technology. Although the techniques adopted to identify the themes in this study proved laborious to execute, the researcher believes that the meticulous combination of these techniques increases the reliability and validity of the findings that have emerged from the data.

3.10 Ethical approval

Prior to commencing the fieldwork for the study, the researcher wrote to all fifty-three African countries that participated in the 2012 London Olympics, through their NOCs, to officially secure their willingness for the researcher to conduct interviews with their representatives for which consent was granted. A brief synopsis of the research, which included the purpose of the study, aim and objectives, was also sent to the various NOCs in order to provide them with the study context. Carrying out this procedure was a necessary requirement of the ethics committee of the University of Salford before the researcher could embark on field studies. Following the securing of approval from the NOCs, an application for ethical approval for the research work was then submitted to the ethical approval committee of the University of Salford, and approval obtained for the commencement of fieldwork (a copy of the ethical approval letter from the University is attached to the report as appendix A). The importance of ethical approval is to ensure that both the participants and their rights are protected.

The researcher prepared three sets of documents to be used during the fieldwork. These included the information sheet, the data protection agreement and the letter of informed consent. The information sheet provided a background of the study, highlighting the research purpose, procedures to be followed and the rationale behind the selection of the research participants. The data protection agreement (DPA) document was designed with statements to re-assure the study participants of the safety of the data they provided and the use of such data solely for academic

purposes. The DPA document also included statements describing the secure manner in which the data collected was to be stored in order to guarantee anonymity and confidentiality (A copy of the DPA document provided to the research participants is attached to the report as appendix D). The letter of informed consent was issued to each participant to indicate their willingness to voluntarily participate in the study by signing and dating the letter. The design of the consent letter included statements, which clearly spelt out that their participation in the study was voluntary, and that they had the right to withdraw from participating at any time without any sanction, or need to provide a reason for their withdrawal. According to Burns and Grove (2011), including the clause on voluntary withdrawal is aimed at protecting the participants right to self-determination. Also, the letter of informed consent specified explicitly to the notice of the participants, that the interviews conducted would be tape-recorded. A copy of the letter of informed consent is attached to the report as appendix C.

Burns and Grove (2011) opine that total anonymity within qualitative research is impractical, as the researcher remains aware of the research participants. However, in order to increase anonymity, interview transcription was done solely by the researcher. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that code names are used to refer to the participants during the transcription process and in the thesis, rather than their real names. The aim of pseudonymising the names of the participants was to maintain anonymity throughout the process, to ensure that the identities of the participants and interview records were protected.

3.11 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the general overview of the philosophical and methodological choices made in this research. The interpretivist research paradigm was discussed as the philosophical foundation for the study. Explanations and justifications were provided for the choice of a qualitative research design to undertake the study. A discussion on research strategy showed the reasons for the use of a multiple case study approach, which was primarily born from the need to obtain more in-depth data from a smaller number of countries that participated in the study. The implementation process for the research was also discussed in detail as the researcher talked about the cyclic collection of data that made up the study phases and stages. The chapter further discussed the data collection methods, which, though

involving the use of a pre-interview questionnaire, was primarily done through the use of semi-structured interviews. Also, the chapter provided insight on the data analysis approach used in the study. Finally, the chapter discussed the ethical issues with the study and also provided an account of the ethical approval process. The next chapter presents the research findings and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. With the main source of data collection being interviews, and in an attempt to make meaning from the data collected, the researcher draws from the comments made by the study participants using the transcripts of the recorded interviews (a copy of interview transcript from one of the interviews conducted is attached as appendix F; however, full transcripts are available as an electronic appendix). The comments are presented in the form of quotations made by the research participants, taken in verbatim from the interview transcripts, which relate to the interview questions asked by the researcher in order to address the aim of the study. These quotations also highlight a verbal description of the trends, themes and patterns within the data, which are discussed in order to provide answers to the research questions of the study.

The findings and discussions are presented in four categories. First, a brief discussion is carried out on the questionnaire data obtained from the fifty-three African countries/NOCs who were initially invited to participate in the study.

The second category presents the findings from the first set of interviews conducted with the NOC representatives from twenty countries/NOCs to secure initial thoughts on the outcome of the London 2012 Olympics. Due to the generic and broad nature of the discussions held in this category of interviews, some of the views expressed by the participants did not have any direct link to the issue of performance. This is then followed with discussions on the findings.

The third category, which represents the follow-up interviews to the first set of interviews conducted, presents and discusses the findings on the performance of African countries at the Olympics and also an in-depth discussion on the factors that led to these performances, which is the focus of the study. Interviews in this phase were conducted with representatives from nine countries/NOCs. Though the interview discussions in this category also had conversations around other issues that were not directly linked with the issue of performance, such as, the success of the project management of the London Olympic Games and the participants' thoughts on the potential of Africa hosting the Olympic Games, the emphasis of the findings

presented are on interview excerpts relating to the subject of performance. The change in focus of the study from investigating the project management of the 2012 London Olympic Games, to investigating the performance of African countries at the Games meant that interview discussions about the former were less relevant in addressing the research question on the latter. The evolution of the study is discussed in more detail in section 7.6.

The last category presents findings from the semi-structured interviews carried out with the research participants from the three case study countries. Discussions here are on more specific issues and themes identified in the data that relate to the research questions framework. The findings from this category were primarily for the purpose of verifying and validating the data obtained from the second category and also to help identify new themes and patterns. The sub-sections in this section present discussions on the views of representatives from the case study countries on: the meaning of success in light of the literature review from the study; their targets set for the London 2012 in view of the discussions in the literature review; their actual achievement/performance in the Games; key issues on poor performance identified in the data (both project management related and economic related issues) in the light of the literature review; suggested strategies in the data to help improve future performance in comparison to the strategies proposed in the literature.

4.2 Questionnaire data

The idea behind the use of a questionnaire in this study was primarily to gather preliminary data about the potential study participants and to secure their willingness to be interviewed. The interviews were the main source of data for the research.

At the time of developing the questionnaire, the aim of the study had been to obtain the views of the African NOCs concerning the organization and project management of the 2012 London Olympics. The questionnaire was therefore designed as such. Although the focus of the research was shifted, as is common with interpretive studies (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991 and Walker, 1997), from the project management of the Olympic Games to exploring the performance of African countries, the data obtained from the questionnaires still proved useful as it helped to identify the countries willing to participate in the study, as well as provide an indication of some of the issues to be followed up.

The findings from the questionnaires identified twenty African NOCs who were willing to take part in the study. The questionnaire findings also revealed the appropriate individuals within the NOCs who were in a position to express views that represented those of their country's NOC. Questions asked in the questionnaire about the role of the participants within their country's NOC and their job description generally revealed that the participants at this stage of the research had been mainly chief executive officers of their NOCs such as presidents and secretary-generals. The findings also revealed that these individuals had all played vital roles in the planning and preparation of their country's NOCs for the 2012 London Olympics. This further validated the views presented knowing that the participants were in a position to provide accurate accounts of their country's involvement in the Games. Furthermore, the data obtained from the questionnaires provided specific contact details for the participants such as telephone numbers and email addresses, as well as an indication of the preferred contact methods and suitable times for the participants to be contacted. This information proved very useful to the researcher especially in planning future correspondence and scheduling of interviews with the participants, which was the next phase of the data collection process. It also raised issues of performance which were further explored.

4.3 Category One - Findings from first set of interviews

The purpose of this category of interviews was to gain a broad picture of the view of the NOCs, through their representatives, concerning the overall outcome of their participation in the London Olympic Games. The interview questions were semi-structured in order to give the participants the opportunity to express their views in the best possible way. The interview discussions were broken down into three headings for easy analysis. First were discussions about the participant, their NOC and their role within the NOC. This was aimed at establishing the suitability of the participants to speak on behalf of their NOCs. Secondly were discussions around the participants' view on the success/failure of the London Olympic Games. It should be noted that at this stage of interviews, the main focus of the research had been to establish, through the views of the participants, whether the Olympic Games had been successful or not, hence the need for the discussions in this category. The last set of discussions was around the performances of the participants' NOCs in the Olympics,

which eventually accounts for the change in the research focus towards the issue of performance of the African countries at the Games.

4.3.1 Background questions

The findings from this section generally revealed that all the research participants were in the upper echelon of their respective NOCs and had been fully involved in the preparation and build up of their NOCs to the Games. The participants, at the time the interviews were conducted, were serving as Presidents, Secretary-Generals or Assistant Secretary-Generals. Some of the participants also doubled-up in other capacities for their teams at the Games. Examples of this were participants B01, E01 and H01 who were also acting as team managers of their NOCs at the London Olympics. Generally speaking, most of the interviewees had been long serving members of their NOCs that had been involved in other Olympic Games before the London Olympics. The participants, while answering the questions, demonstrated they were fully aware of the affairs of their NOCs as a result of their long-standing service. A more detailed background of the participants is provided on the transcribed interview manuscripts attached as an appendix.

4.3.2 Success/failure and the London Olympics

When asked about their thoughts on the project management of the Olympics and whether it had been successful or not, the majority of the participants felt that the Games had been successfully hosted. In commenting on this, K01 said:

“...I participated in the Sydney 2000 Olympics and in comparison, London 2012 was successful in regards to organisation, transportation including travelling from my home country as well as issuing visas, and the general execution of the Games. We in our NOC thought the whole thing was a success”.

This view was also shared by E01 who acknowledged the success of the Games with the following words:

“...Everything was well laid out. The organisers played their part very well. I cannot pick out one area where I think was not properly taken care of. For our NOC, we didn’t experience any challenges caused by the organisers that

impinged on the way we performed. I think the Games were excellent...well done London!"

However, despite acknowledging the effectiveness of the organisation of the Games, E01 was quick to take a different stand from K01 on comparing the London Olympics with other Olympic Games. In doing so, the participant stated that:

"...I personally do not think you can compare two different cities i.e. was Beijing better than London? Will London be better than Rio? This is because every nation is unique in their own way. So what you want is the standard of competition, the service and facilities to be the same, but in terms of showcasing, atmosphere and what have you, I think you need to take each one as individual, as the nations are themselves different. But standards should remain the same".

A similar view was also shared by J01 when asked to express his satisfaction with the way the London Olympics had been managed. The participant made the following comment:

"To be honest, I was very happy. There was a big change. I am not comparing it with Beijing or Athens or Sydney, but I am telling you they are a lot of changes. From the time we arrived at the airport, there were no hassles, problems or anything like that. When you go to bus or train stations, the transportation was excellent. In the main stadium the security was excellent, we were really satisfied on that one".

Also speaking positively on the outcome of the Games, H01 expressed his satisfaction with the way the Games had been organised, managed and delivered by LOCOG:

"On the whole, we were quite satisfied with the delivery of the Games in London because they communicated effectively well ahead of time, all the things they intended to implement and stayed true to their word. In a lot of instances they adhered to whatever guidelines and conditions they set. So, in that respect, one would not take anything away from them but to congratulate them for having done so well".

T01 and N01 agreed with the other participants who maintained that the Games had been successfully organised and managed. Commenting on this, N01 said:

“I have not seen any Olympics organised as well as the London Olympics...maybe Beijing did well too, but I think overall, London was better. It was very peaceful too. If our NOC had won a medal, that would have been the icing on the cake for us and it would have gone down our history books, but unfortunately, our performance wasn’t good enough to earn us a medal”.

Also commending the organisers of the London Olympics, P01 expressed complete satisfaction with the way the Games had been managed, adding that LOCOG had maintained effective communication with his country’s NOC throughout the period of the Games:

“We were very pleased with the organisation of the Games. Our NOC and LOCOG had a very good relationship...there was good communication too so we didn’t experience any problems at all. Our main objective in our NOC was to participate and to represent our country, which we did successfully. Though we didn’t win any medal and are disappointed not to have done so, we’re still happy we have gained some useful experience, which we can take into the next Olympics. So for London, on a scale of 1 – 5, I will definitely give the project management of London 2012 a 5 rating”.*

In providing the thoughts of his NOC concerning the Games, R01 revealed that their NOC had been pleased with the overall outcome of the Games, especially because they had won their first ever Olympic medal in the London Olympics. The participant made the following comments:

“London was very exciting for all of us in the NOC. Everybody, including our athletes, were looking forward to it with high spirit and I’m sure we were all not disappointed with the show that was put up. We in our NOC, the athletes and the staff, all feel very delighted to have been part of the greatest Olympic Games in history. To have won our first ever Olympic medal (in Taekwondo) was unbelievable. Even if it was only a silver medal, we know we have made history in London and memories of our time there will be forever cherished.

We were definitely satisfied with the way everything was done and the outcome of our participation”.

Furthermore, participants like D01, A01 and K01 expressed views which attributed the success of the 2012 London Olympic Games to factors such as planning, human resources, good communication, hospitality, funding and volunteering. Although a few participants (I01, M01, A01, O01 and L01) had raised minor issues experienced by their NOCs in areas such as lack of sufficient language translators, transportation and volunteering, the majority maintained that the Games had been well organised and was hugely successful.

4.3.3 Performance

Despite the uniformity in the views of majority of the NOCs acknowledging that the Games had generally been well organised and managed, a recurring issue that was raised by all the NOCs was their poor performance at the Games evident in the few number of medals won. Though satisfied with the project management of the Games, most of the NOCs gave the impression that their definition of a successful Olympic Games was not complete if their NOC had performed poorly in the Games.

Only 10 countries out of the 53 African countries that participated in the London 2012 Olympics won medals at the Games, with two of these countries being first-time medal winners at the Olympics. The total number of medals won by African countries was 34. Though this statistic hasn't been significantly different for Africa in the Olympics since the new millennium begun in 2000 with the Sydney Games, some of the participants expressed that their performance in the London Olympics had been poorer than that of the Beijing Olympics in 2008, especially because some of the bigger African countries expected to win medals in London did not do so.

In emphasising this point, giving his thoughts on the success of the Games, B01 made the following comment:

“I will say that as far as we are concerned as...our expectations were quite high and as a team we did not live to that expectation. There was a general feeling we performed very poorly especially compared to how we performed in Beijing in 2008. But I realised it was not only about our team...most of the African countries also performed below expectation”.

This comment was re-echoed by J01 who said:

“...In the last Olympic Games, the performance of Africans was quite poor compared to how it was in Beijing and the reason for this is that the competition is getting greater and greater and higher and higher so if we do not receive any sponsorship we will be at the bottom all the time”.

When asked to clarify why he didn't consider the London Olympics to be successful, J01 again responded from a performance perspective pointing out that the reason for this was;

“...Because firstly, we did not get any medals and most of our athletes in the middle and longer distances didn't get to the final round or the semi-finals. It is only in the marathon where two...athletes finished as part of the top fifty”.

On the issue of poor performance, Q01 expressed displeasure with the way his country's NOC had performed in the London Olympics. Winning only one gold medal in the Games, Q01 maintained that this had been one of the country's poorest Olympic competitions:

“We won only one medal in London and for a country of our standard and experience in the Olympics, this was a very poor outcome. We won two medals in Beijing, which wasn't so good, but was better than one. Our performance in Olympics is something we take very seriously and we are now back on the drawing board to try and figure out ways of making sure this doesn't happen again in 2016 when we go to Brazil”.

Another NOC representative that felt disappointed with his country's performance in the London Olympics, despite winning one medal (first gold medal since 1972) was S01:

“We are pleased to have won a gold medal on London 2012, considering that the performance from African countries was generally very poor. But from a bigger picture, you can see that we still have a long way to go when you compare our performance to those of other athletes we compete against from other countries. We still have a lot to learn in this part of the world”.

The feeling of disappointment was again expressed by L01 who made the following remarks:

Of course we are very disappointed we didn't win any medal at the Games. We are not pleased with the way we performed in the Games. We still have a lot to learn and we believe things will be more positive next time".

Some NOC representatives such as A01, C01, D01 and K01 claimed that despite not winning any medals at the London Olympics, their participation at the Games meant success to them because they had gained experience and had learnt valuable lessons, which they would not have otherwise achieved without participating.

Going by the responses from this section of questions, which suggested that the big issue for most of these NOCs was not on the project management of the London Olympics, but on their poor performance at the Games, it was necessary to conduct further investigation with a narrowed focus on the performances of these countries at the Games, as well as the issues that led to such performances. Also, it was important to get some more insight on how the NOCs measured success in order to better understand their performance at the Games.

Summary of discussion from first phase

Following the responses obtained from the questionnaires, a total of twenty countries, through their NOC representatives, consented to taking part in the interview phase of the study. The focus of the interview with the twenty NOC representatives had been primarily to address the initial research issue, which was to obtain the views of the African NOCs concerning their participation and overall outcome of the 2012 London Olympics Games. Thus, the interview questions were broken down into three categories. The first set of questions were background related questions about the participant, the NOC they represent and their role within the NOC, in order to ensure they were suitable to speak on behalf of their NOC. The next set of questions sought to find out the respective views of the NOCs, through their representatives, concerning the outcome of the London Olympic Games as a project, with a view to establishing whether it had been a success or not. The last set of questions centred on the performances of the participants' NOCs/countries in the Olympic Games.

- **Background of participants**

From the findings, it was discovered that, as at the time interviews were conducted, the participants were mostly chief executive officers (CEO) of their respective National Olympic Committees such as Presidents, Secretary-Generals and Assistant Secretary-Generals. This suggested that the participants were in an a strong position to possess valid information about their country's NOC, especially as it concerned the London 2012 Olympics, which they had all been involved in. To further prove that they were in suitable positions to speak on behalf of their NOC, participants such as B01, E01 and H01 revealed that they had played the role of chef-de-mission for their NOCs for the London Olympics, placing on them the responsibility of overseeing the country's entire delegation at the Games. Other participants such as D01, J01, L01 and O01 doubled-up as team managers for their NOCs with the key task of managing and coordinating their countries' Olympic teams during the Games.

From the findings, it was also revealed that the majority of the participants had been long serving members of their NOCs and had each been involved in the planning and coordination of their respective countries in at least two Olympic tournaments. This further suggested that the participants possessed valid knowledge of the key issues within their NOC considered to be relevant to the study, which was an advantage to the researcher. The long-standing status of the participants in their various NOCs allowed them to demonstrate a full awareness of the affairs of their NOC in answering interview questions. The interview transcript attached in the appendix shows a more detailed background of the participants.

Although the participants in the first phase of interviews had been mainly CEOs of their NOCs, it is important to point out again that other participant groups were included in the later phase of the interviews to provide a richer content to the data obtained. This is discussed further in section 4.5.

- **Outcome of the London Olympics - success/failure**

In providing their thoughts on whether the 2012 London Olympics had been successful or not, the majority of the participants agreed that the Games had been successfully hosted. The participants generally attributed the success of the Games to factors such as good organization and planning, adequate funding, human resources,

volunteers, effective communication, good transport systems and good hospitality. Some of these factors have also been identified in the literature as relevant to the success of project. Examples of these include factors such as, planning (Johnson *et al.*, 2001), adequate funding (Zwikael and Globerson, 2006), communication (Turner, 1993) and personnel/human resource (Belout and Gauvreau, 2004). Although the extent to which these factors influenced the outcome of the Games wasn't investigated further as it was outside the scope of the research, their reoccurrence in the data conforms to existing literature, which suggests that these factors are critical to project success.

Despite the majority of the participant maintaining that the London Olympics project had been successfully managed, a few of the participants took an opposing standpoint. Participants like I01, M01, A01, O01 and L01 all had poor experiences with certain areas of the organisation of the Games such as transportation, volunteers and language interpretation. From the views expressed by the participants about these experiences, it was evident that their opinions about the outcome of the Olympic Games were hugely influenced by these poor experiences.

- **Performance**

A more prominent theme that seemed to have occurred the most from this phase of interviews was the poor performance of the African countries at the London Olympic Games. Though the focus of the interviews had been on project management of the Games, the participants were more concerned about the poor performance of their country's NOCs at the Games and were more willing to speak about this. Most of the participants admitted that their definition of success of an Olympic event was incomplete without taking into account the performance of their country at that event. As such, while the participants agreed that the 2012 London Olympics had been a successful project, they were reluctant to admit it was not an absolute success from the point of view of their NOCs due to the poor performances of their countries at the Games. These performances, according to participants, were reflected in the limited number of medals won by their countries. To put things into perspective, only 10 countries out of the 53 African countries that participated in the London 2012 Olympics won medals at the Games, with two of these countries being first-time

medal winners at the Olympics. The total number of medals won by African countries was 34.

The issue of poor performance of African countries in the Olympics was highlighted in the literature review by Johnson and Ali (2004), Bernard and Busse (2004) and Forrest *et al.* (2010). The re-emergence of this issue in the findings from this phase of interviews suggested that there was need to explore the issue more critically to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon. This change in focus resulted in the re-adjustment of the research question, aim and objects, and also brought about the need for the researcher to conduct a new phase of interviews with the participants in order to investigate the factors that influenced their performances at the Games. The refocusing of the study priorities based on the findings from this phase of the research further illustrates the characteristics of the interpretive research paradigm already enunciated in Chapter three. This has to do with the inevitability of change(s) in an interpretive study and the formation of new research aims and objectives as such change(s) occur (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991; Walker, 1997 and Kim, 2003).

The next section presents and discusses the findings from the second phase of interviews with the participants as a follow-up to the first interview phase. The aim of conducting the follow-up was to critically investigate the issue of poor performance in the Games and to attempt to identify the factors that accounted for it.

4.4 Category Two - Findings from second phase of interviews

Interviews conducted in this category were done with one NOC representative each from nine countries. These were the countries that agreed to grant follow-up interviews, out of the twenty countries that previously participated. This section presents the findings from the interviews conducted. However, it should be pointed out that the second phase interview findings from the case study countries are presented in category three along with the data from phase 3 in order to enhance clarity in the presentation of the findings.

After the completion of the first phase of interviews, it was clear that the key concern for the interviewees was the poor performance of their NOCs at the London 2012 Olympics rather than their satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the project management of

the Games. As a result of this, there was need to conduct another round of interviews to investigate in more detail, the causes of such performances.

The sub-sections that follow present the findings from the interviews conducted with the representatives from six of the nine NOCs that participated in the study (findings obtained from the participants from the remaining three NOCs that also form the case study countries are presented in section 4.5). Each sub-section starts with a brief overview of the country's participation in Olympic Games. This is then followed by other views relating to performance at the Games. The names of the participants are excluded from the findings presented in order to maintain anonymity.

4.4.1 Findings: A02 (Togo)

This section presents the findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with participant A02. The section begins with a brief overview on the country's participation in the Olympics and is then followed by the interview findings.

4.4.1.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

The NOC was created in 1963 but was officially recognised by the IOC in 1965. However, its first participation in the Olympic Games was in 1972, while its first and only medal won was a bronze in canoeing at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. When asked to speak about their participation in the Olympic Games, A02 had said:

“...We were very delighted to win our first ever medal in Beijing and we are also proud to be on the medal table alongside other great countries. There are still many other countries that have not won any medals before in the Olympic so we are very privileged not to be in that category anymore. Of course we can still do better and there's always room for improvement. We have to continue trying our best in our little way. Since 1972 to date, we have only missed the Olympic twice (1976 and 1980) and our experience is building up. So for us, participation is very important”.

The response revealed that participation in every edition of the Olympics is a major objective for the NOC (hence the reason it has endeavoured to participate in every Olympic Games since it made its debut appearance in 1972, apart from 1976 and 1980).

4.4.1.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

In order to understand the extent of the performance of their countries at the London Olympics, the participants were first asked to explain the objectives set by their respective NOCs prior to the London Olympics, in order to set the tune for the discussion on how much of these objectives were achieved and the issues that led to this. Speaking on the objectives set by his NOC for the London, A02 pointed out that;

“...Our main aim was to participate. In London we had 10 athletes participating and 10 officials so the total number of our delegation was 20. When you compare that to the delegation of other countries we were a very small number. So we kept our expectations very simple. We were very motivated after winning our first medal in Beijing so our goal was to be on the medal table again and possibly strive to win more than one medal this time. We didn’t have many athletes so the expectations were not too high. We were also looking forward to learning as much as we could because learning is an important part of our NOC’s philosophy. So primarily we had only three objectives before we went to London – (1) to participate (2) to win and (3) to learn, and of course, to enjoy ourselves in one of the world’s biggest fiestas”.

Providing some insight on how much of these objectives were achieved, A02 noted only two out of the three objectives were met which included participating in the Games and learning from it:

“...To be honest, we were quite disappointed not to have won any medals. We were really looking to push from our achievement in the last Olympics (Beijing) because the zeal was there, but unfortunately we came back with nothing medal wise. These competitions (the Olympics) get tougher and tougher because, the same way you think you want to strive to improve is the same way other countries are thinking and making efforts to also improve. So the bar is always raised in every edition. It feels a bit like we have to start from scratch now and it is really disappointing because, to think that we have been competing in the Olympics for quite some time now and we have only won just one medal, is not good enough...”

Giving an account of the reasons for the country’s poor performance at the London Olympics, and in the Olympic Games in general, A02 pointed out that this was down

to a number of internal and external factors. The participant stressed that one of the internal concerns was the lack of effective and efficient sport structures in the country. A02 described sports structures as “*the institutions that really support the identification and development of sport talents*”. This point was elaborated on in the following statements:

“...You don’t just wake up one morning and decide to compete in the Olympics. There has to be some sort of developmental history of one’s talent and to achieve this, you need to have the appropriate institutions in place. In developed countries, you find a lot of sport clubs and academies that encourage the development of young talents. These are the people that eventually end up competing and winning medals at Olympics. We don’t have these sort of institutions in place and even on rare occasions where there are, they are ineffective and not usually properly managed. That’s why you see that the athletes from here often find it difficult competing with other athletes from more developed countries who have had the opportunity to receive more training and support over the years. We usually lack the cutting-edge when competing, and again, I’m almost certain this is also the case with most of the other African countries. We have a lot of young talents in our country with great potential to be Olympic medalists, but we lack the right environment to help them maximize their potential and this makes competing very difficult, especially competing at the highest level (the Olympics). As a result of this (the lack of the right environment), the last two decades or so have seen a massive outflux of young sporting talents from the country in search of greener pastures abroad and this is slowly becoming an issue of great concern. And you see these talents representing other countries and doing very well. The question then becomes; will our performance have been better if we had these people competing for us? I’d say the answer is yes”.

The second challenge as identified by the participant was the issue of inadequate funding. It was noted that the limited funds received by the NOC from the government always made planning for the Olympics very difficult. A02 expressed this in the following words:

“The government funds our participation in Olympics with little or no support coming from elsewhere. This is a big challenge because the financial support from the government is very limited. Without funds, you can’t build standard training facilities or even afford to train the athletes abroad. Sometimes you are even cautious of qualifying too many athletes because you’re not sure if you can prepare them well enough given the resources available, considering the standard of preparation other teams get. There is not a lot done by the private sector. Sponsorship is very limited. We sometimes benefit from IOC projects, but again, this is very limited. The issue of inadequate funding contributes to our poor performance in the Olympics”.

From the above comments, it is clear that the lack of private sector support and sponsorship is another challenge preventing the NOC from maximising its full potential.

The participant also pointed out that the poor standard of training facilities for the athletes was another factor that minimised the performance of the NOC at the London Olympics. A02 further stressed that the country lacked the required sporting infrastructure to meet the standards of what is available in developed countries, which often makes competition against athletes from such countries very difficult. This factor was linked to the issue of insufficient financial power earlier raised by the participant. Furthermore, A02 noted that despite the government’s inability to build new sporting facilities, the existing facilities are not properly maintained. This was expressed in the following statement:

“...We don’t know how to maintain the facilities we have properly. We may not be able to build new stadiums or new swimming pools etc, but how well have we been able to manage and maintain the few ones we have? There are never really any proper legacy arrangements in place when we build these things, and I hold the government accountable for this”.

Another internal issue raised by A02 to be accountable for the country’s poor performance is the issue of corruption and mis-management of funds. The participant pointed this to be a big problem in the country and made the following statement to buttress this point:

“...Believe it or not, this also accounts for the performance of the athletes when we go on international assignments. The funds are never released to us on time and even when they finally come, we end up getting only a small fraction of what was approved in the budget and published in the newspapers. No accountability whatsoever. In June this year for example, the government decided to suspend grants to sport federations for reasons I believe to be politically instigated, in an attempt to divert these funds for personal use. How can we move forward with this sort of behaviour? So you can see that we are the cause of some of the problems we are having and not until we change our mentality, things are likely to stay the same. Yes we need international support, but if we don't manage it properly when it comes, of what good is it?”

Speaking on the external challenge faced by the NOC, A02 attributed this to the lack of sponsorship and the limited support received from international organisations and multi-national companies. It was argued that the level of sponsorship received by African countries was very little compared to other developed parts of the world, which was claimed to be unfair, considering the number of good talents Africa has. The participant further maintained that if the country had the same sponsorship opportunities as other countries do, performance would have been better. To support this argument, the following example was given:

“...Take Team GB for example; they are funded solely by the British Olympic Association (BOA), whose main source of revenue is from commercial sponsorship. And when you look at it carefully, you see that the companies sponsoring them (Team GB) are not necessarily British companies...companies such as BMW, Adidas, Nissan and so on. Not to talk of the sponsorship they get from the numerous indigenous companies who are also multinational in their status. And this is the same for most of the other developed countries who are Olympic power blocks today. So you see that with the level of commercial sponsorship countries like these receive, they may not even have need for government support. But with us in Togo and in Africa in general (because these are the issues we talk about in our meetings), the situation is the complete opposite...the government is the main source of

funding while you'll consider yourself very lucky to benefit from any form of commercial sponsorship”.

In a further argument, A02 made the following comments:

“...To see that some of these multinational companies have their biggest markets in Africa and yet not a lot of sponsorship is coming from them beats my imagination. Believe it or not, having the support and sponsorship of the big brands helps increase the confidence of the NOC and the athletes, and directly or indirectly, this could increase your chances of winning medals. So the issue of poor international sponsorship is a big one for us. It is very limited. Football is a bit better, but we want this to be replicated in other Olympic sports”.

Furthermore, the participants were asked to clarify if the way the Games were organised and managed had anything to do with their poor performance at the Games. Speaking on this, A02 said:

“...I don't think the way the project was managed affected our performance in any way. It had nothing to do with the hosts. Their job was to host the Olympics and they did that really well. We didn't suffer any setback in our NOC because of something that was not done right by the hosts”.

When asked if the IOC or any of its decisions affected their performance in any way, A02 responded in the negative, saying that the IOC or its decisions had no direct impact on the NOC's poor performance in the London Olympics. It was noted from a broader point of view however, that the IOC was not doing enough to give equal opportunities to all NOCs, especially those from less developed countries. In elaborating on this point, A02 revealed that Olympic Solidarity, which is an initiative by the IOC to support poorer NOCs in enhancing sports development in their countries, had not benefited them. The participant pointed out that the Olympic Solidarity initiative to assist NOCs in need was flawed due to the following unanswered questions:

“...who decides what countries need such assistance? What is the level of assistance that is given...is it enough to make such countries compete and win

medals on the bigger stage? Has anything really changed? As long as these questions are unanswered, then nothing different has happened”.

Furthermore, A02 argued that the decentralisation process of this assistance by the IOC to continental associations had not helped to remedy the situation. When asked to clarify on this point, the participant made the following comment:

“The purpose of decentralising the process is to give freedom to the continental associations, in our case ANOCA, to decide how to allocate these resources according to the particular needs of the NOCs which is a good idea. But this is not often the case. These resources, left in the hands of the continental association (ANOCA), are not evenly distributed among countries that need them. There is a lot of politics and corruption that go with it. So perhaps, I think the IOC should reconsider this or at least ensure that it is the countries that have the greatest needs that actually benefit from these aids”.

4.4.1.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

On addressing the challenges faced by his NOC, which led to poor performance as mentioned earlier, the participant was asked to highlight the measures that need to be taken to improve things. Speaking on the issue of sponsorship that was raised, A02 noted that for sponsors to come to the country, the government needs to do its bit by making the country attractive enough to international sponsors. It was implied that the government would need to position itself strategically, either in the area of culture and tourism or in trade so as to attract the international community.

On the issue of funding for the NOC, A02 stressed that there is a need to get the private sector involved as the government being the sole sponsor of the NOC minimises the potential of growth and expansion, which was argued only the private sector can bring.

Early and effective planning was another measure pointed out by A02 necessary to improve performance in the future:

“...The government must start to make long-term plans in the sports industry. We shouldn’t always adopt a ‘fire brigade’ approach when its time to go for the Olympics which is what we do all the time. The planning and the preparation must be on-going whether or not an Olympics is imminent”.

Furthermore, A02 emphasised the need for government to rebuild and renovate the sporting facilities across the country as they are all in a dilapidated state. The participant pointed out that the government must be:

“...prepared to invest in sports because sports can be used as a medium to sort out a number of other issues in society. Sports enhances peaceful co-existence in the society, sports can enhance healthy living, sports impact other areas such as tourism, culture etc. So the government must start to see it as a crucial aspect of the economy rather than a liability”.

On the issue of corruption, A02 acknowledged that it was a wider societal issue, which, if tackled, could also benefit the sports sector of the country.

In summary, A02 noted that if all the above issues were addressed, it would create the right environment for the athletes to maximise their potentials:

“We need to create the right environment that will allow our talented sports men and women thrive at home. If we have things done properly with the right support, they won’t have their eyes elsewhere. It is because things are not done properly that is why it is very easy for an athlete to turn his or her back against their country to compete elsewhere (this is very common in football today). If all these things are in place, then there is a level playing field for everybody which I don’t think is the case at the moment. This is the same for many African countries. The performance in our continent is generally poor and we need to start asking some serious questions. Not until serious holistic steps are taken as a continent to address these issues, the status quo is unlikely to change anytime soon”.

4.4.2 Findings: B02 (Kenya)

This section presents the findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with participant B02. A brief background about the country’s Olympic participation is presented, which is then followed by the interview finding.

4.4.2.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

The country’s NOC was formed in 1955 and first participated in the Olympic Games in 1956. Its first medal at the Games was a bronze medal won in 1964. However, in the following edition of the Games in 1968, they won a total of nine medals including

three gold medals. This was considered a big achievement for the country and was thought to be the foundation for better things to come. In expressing this, B02 said:

“...That was a great thing for our country because our country was still at a fragile state after we gained our independence in 1963. We saw this as opportunity to increase our stability politically. So to compete in the Olympics meant a great deal to us...not to talk of winning such number of medals. And to think that we have always participated in every Olympics since then (apart from 1976 and 1980) and have always won medals in each one of them is a big achievement, which we are very pleased about. Not many countries can boast of that, certainly not many from Africa...We have won a total of more than 80 medals in all Olympic Games we have been in...maybe more than any other African country, and I say this with every sense of humility”.

Despite the sense of achievement expressed by B02, it was still acknowledged that the NOC still had a lot to do and there was still a need to improve. The participant noted that its NOC's achievement was not quite good enough when looked at from a broader perspective, rather than only from a regional level. B02 expressed this point giving the following scenario:

“...We are not there yet and nowhere close. We still want to do better. We want to do well in other sports other than in athletic events. From a bigger picture, when you compare our medal tally in all Olympics we have been in, to that of maybe a country like USA or China in just the London 2012 Olympics, you find out that they won more medals in just that one edition than we have done in a combined effort from 11 editions. Or if you want to look at it from a different angle, what they can achieve in one year in terms of medals, it has taken us almost 50 years to achieve it. So you can see that we are still playing catch up in many ways. We still have a long way to go, not just in Kenya but also in Africa as a whole. We certainly are not where we should be as a continent in many areas and unfortunately, sports is one of those areas”.

4.4.2.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

In order to capture the participant's view on the extent of the poor performance of the NOC at the London Olympics, a brief insight on the NOC's objectives for London 2012 was given by B02. Though the participant wasn't willing to go into details, it

was revealed that the NOC had very high expectations from the London, especially following their performance at the previous Games:

“...We had our best ever Olympic performance in Beijing in 2008 winning 14 medals in total and finishing 13th on the overall medal table. Even at that, we still thought we didn’t do so well. We often judge our performance in the Olympics in a very stringent manner because we always have the belief that we can do better. We certainly expected to do better in London than we did in Beijing in our medal tally and on the table. We had 6 gold medals in Beijing so our target was to exceed that number and also finish at least in the top-10 category on the overall medal table. To us, being in the Olympics is certainly more than just making an appearance. We want to go there and leave a mark. It costs us a lot to be in the Olympics so the only way we can justify the expenses is by winning. Our delegation to London was our largest ever with around 47 athletes. So we really hoped to exceed our performance in the previous Games”.

B02 also noted that the NOC’s expectation from the organisers of the Games was very high. It was pointed out that in terms of the standard of organisation and the general execution of the Games, they expected nothing short of the standards from the previous Olympics hosted in Beijing. Furthermore, B02 highlighted that:

“In general, we were very optimistic about the Games and we had really hoped to make a statement with our performance in the Games”.

When asked to comment on how much of their expectations were realised at the London Olympics, B02 responded in the negative. The participants expressed a complete displeasure with their NOC’s performance at the Games with the followings words:

“I must admit that as far as we are concerned, we did not meet our expectation, period! We fell short in many ways. Some might look at our performance and say we did not do too badly, but from the point of view of our NOC, Team Kenya did not live up to our expectation in London”.

To put his NOC’s poor performance at the London Olympics into perspective, B02 gave the following explanation:

“...We won a total of 11 medals in London, 3 medals less than what we won in Beijing. We only had 2 gold medals, 4 gold medals short of what we had in Beijing finishing 28th on the medal table, dropping 15 places from our position at the Beijing Olympics. So you can see that it was a backward step rather than a forward movement. We are quite disappointed that we could not at least do as well as we did the last time. Although, from a continental perspective, we were the most successful African country at the London Olympics, we always prefer to do better on a world stage. Besides, being the most successful African country at the Games was because the general performance of Africa as a whole was very poor this time around. Most African countries generally performed below expectation”.

With a better understanding of the extent of his NOC's performance at the London 2012 Olympics, B02 was then asked to point out the challenges encountered by his NOC before or during the Games, that might have affected their performance at the Olympics. In responding to this, the participants noted that the challenges faced by their NOC as regards participation in the Olympics could be classified as short-term challenges, which are often easier to solve, or long-term challenges, which are more difficult to address because they are linked to other variables in society not necessarily related to sports or the Olympics. B02 pointed out however that, *“long-term or short-term, these challenges often lead to poor performance and can be very costly”*.

Speaking more specifically on the challenges, B02 identified planning as one of the major challenges faced by their NOC. It was noted that preparation for the Olympics often commenced late which results in a *“last minute rush”*. On this matter, B02 pointed a finger at the government as being responsible:

“...The government usually releases the funds for the NOC very late. This affects the planning process, and if the planning process is poor then of course execution will also be poor. Take for example in London, we made late plans to get all our athletes to practice and prepare together which made some of the athletes make their own decision and arrangement to practice by themselves. As a result, some of them ended up arriving London really late....some 2 days before their actual competition. This did not allow

sufficient time to acclimatize to weather conditions and to get settled into the right frame of mind in preparation for their race. This had a serious negative impact on our performance and has cost us greatly. This is not the first time this is happening (poor planning leading to late arrival of athletes to the Games) but its high time serious steps are taken to address this issue”.

B02 also raised the issue of the poor state of sports infrastructure and facilities in the country as expressed the following statement:

“...Things are in a bad shape when you compare with our rivals in other parts of the world. For us to be able to compete effectively, we must have up to standard facilities and infrastructure. The fact that some of the athletes are still able to compete and win things is mainly because of their own will power and not because they are training in standard facilities. It doesn't always work that way because sometimes your will power can only take you so far, you need other variables to also work in your favour in order to win. We should have some of these facilities in our country and shouldn't only have to enjoy them when we travel for international competitions. Our athletes sometimes have to train abroad and in some cases, the government funds this. But if we have these facilities, then they won't have to go somewhere else...But this has been a major hindrance to our performance for a long time now”.

Poor funding was another challenge raised as a cause of poor performance. B02 explained that the government, through the sports ministry, is the main sponsor of the NOC and provides the funds for their participation in the Olympics. The participant noted however that the funds provided by government were not enough, and also described the manner in which such funds were disbursed as ‘bureaucratic’ which needed to be reassessed. Though it was agreed that there were other demanding areas of the economy that needed more urgent government attention other than sports, B02 still maintained that, if things were properly managed in other areas of the economy, more could be done in the area of sports:

“The funds coming in from the government are just not enough. When you put together the cost of sending the various national teams for qualification events outside the country and setting up training camps for others, bearing in mind that these guys are incurring expenses on travel, accommodation, feeding,

equipment and coaching on a daily basis for the duration of time they are there for, you realize that the cost is enormous. And we are not even talking about the cost of the actual Games yet. This is just prior to the Games. We can only prepare with the funds we have available to us. More so, these funds are never released in good time to enable us start preparations”.

Another issue highlighted by B02 was the lack of qualified people to properly run the affairs of sports in the country. The participant described the subject as very delicate and was hesitant to go into much detail. However, it was admitted that the country’s sports administration needed to have ‘technocrats’ running it, a situation argued, was the main cause of the backwardness in sports in Africa as a whole. B02 had this to say about sports administration in Africa:

“It is full of politics and corruption. Not until we start to get people who are capable of running the affairs of sports and not people who want to be there because of selfish gains, then things will never change”.

The last point put forward by B02 was the lack of sponsors for the NOC from the private sector and other international organisations and companies. Though it was acknowledged that recent years had seen the private sector starting to get involved in sports, B02 maintained that there was a need for more private sector investment and sponsorship of sports in the country. The following comments were made on this subject:

“...For instance prior to London 2012, we signed a sponsorship deal with the American company, Procter and Gamble worth almost \$200,000. The bulk of this sum was agreed to go towards the development of our youth sports initiatives while the rest went towards our preparation for the Olympics. Considering that not much comes from the government, funds like this go a long way in making a difference. The private sector is starting to get involved in our sports but we want to see more in terms of investment and sponsorship.

Again, it was important to establish if the way the Games had been organised affected their performance. In response to this, B02 exonerated LOCOG and the way they managed the Olympics, from having anything to do with their NOC’s poor performance at the Games:

“We take full responsibility for our performance in the London Olympics. LOCOG are not to be held accountable for our performance. I think they did everything within their available parameters and there was nothing more we could have asked for. We had everything we needed from the organisers so they didn’t have any role to play in our poor performance at the Games. We need to put our house in order and not apportion blame”.

B02 also maintained that the challenges faced by its NOC during the Games were due to internal issues and neither the IOC nor any of its decisions had a part to play in it. Commenting on this, the participant said:

“The IOC did not make any decisions that impacted on us or on our performance. Hopefully we have learnt from our mistakes in London and will get another chance in Rio to make up for them. Qualifying for the Olympics is not always easy for us, especially since we have to do this using the ‘A’ standards. Our standards are so high because we are ranked with big nations such as Britain, USA, Germany and Russia. This sometimes puts us under pressure but we are able to cope with this, in fact, such pressure motivates us to work even harder”.

4.4.2.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

Speaking on necessary steps to address some of the challenges faced by their NOC in their participation and performance in the Olympic Games, B02 pointed out that the solutions were straightforward and could be drawn from the issues raised earlier. Speaking more specifically on the issue of poor planning, B02 made the following remarks:

“The issue of planning is very central to everything we do. If the government plans well and effectively, they can see to it that the sports sector and the NOC gets the funds it needs without it necessarily impacting on the other sectors of the economy. Even with little, effective planning can help you achieve a lot. Also, once government is able to sort out its priorities, then it should be communicated effectively to all the parties involved. Things shouldn’t be kept till the last minute. This has always caused us a lot of problems in the past”.

B02 also stressed the importance of the need for funds to be released in good time by the government so as to allow the NOC to make proper plans towards participating in the Olympics.

Further to the issue of timely releasing of funds, B02 also emphasised the need for more funds to be made available to the NOC. The participant noted this in the following statement:

“...The government needs to make more funds available to the NOC. Considering that our main source of funding is from the government, this can be very limiting because these funds are just never enough and that is why more private sector involvement is crucial and could make the difference. Apart from making more funds available, such funds should also be made available in good time and not a few months to the Games”.

Also, on the issue of the poor state of sports infrastructure and facilities, B02 directed his comment to the country’s government, maintaining that it was the government’s responsibility to reverse the status quo. The participant’s claims were thus:

“...The government should make an effort in restoring some of the sporting facilities we have, if it cannot build new ones. Again, regardless of the cost implication, this is something that can be achieved with effective planning. We are becoming a recognizable force in Olympics today, especially in the area of track and field. But when you look at the state of the country’s sporting infrastructure, you see that we don’t quite live up to that status and this is very embarrassing. So the government needs to figure out a way to fix this, even if it needs to partner with other NGOs to achieve this”.

4.4.3 Findings: D02 (Swaziland)

This section presents the findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with the participant from Swaziland. The section commences with a brief overview of the country’s participation in Olympic Games, which is then followed by the findings obtained from the investigation.

4.4.3.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

Swaziland’s history in the Olympics goes as far back as 1968 when it gained independence, with the establishment of the Commonwealth Games Association

which was later transformed to the Swaziland Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (SOCGA). However, the country's first participation in the Olympics was in the 1972 Munich summer Games after it had become officially recognised as members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Speaking on the displeasure with the country's NOC's poor representation in the Olympics, D02 made the following statements:

"We had only two athletes represent us in our first Olympic appearance in Munich and since then our main aim has always been to increase our participation. In London we only had three athletes representing our country, In Beijing in 2008 we had four and I think in Athens 2004 we had three or so. The highest number of athletes that have ever represented us in an Olympic Games is 11 and that was in the 80's. So you can see that we haven't really fared too well considering where we started".

On a positive note however, D02 maintained that the country's consistency in participating in the Olympics was a sign of growth. These were her remarks:

"...We are a very small country like you know, so you don't expect the size of our participation or level of success in the Olympic Games to equal that of maybe South Africa or Nigeria or Egypt. These countries have bigger capacities than us and have even been competing longer than we have so it wont be fair to measure our success as a country or as an NOC, with the same standards. Despite the constraint in the size of our participation in recent times, London 2012 was our ninth appearance in the Summer Olympics since our first appearance and we deserve credit for this. We have been at every single Olympic Games since 1972 (except in Montreal 1976 and Moscow 1980 due to the African and the United States boycott). This is a massive achievement to us and we want to be able to, at least participate in every Olympics to stand a chance of winning a medal. We have never won any medal before in the Olympics but it is only when you participate you stand a chance of winning".

4.4.3.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

It was again pertinent to know what the goals and objectives of the NOC were for the London Olympics to secure a better understanding of their level of performance at the Games, and their view of success. When asked about this, D02 had this to say:

“...Our main goal is to qualify our athletes to participate. Our philosophy is that ‘you only stand the chance of winning a race when you’re competing in it’. So we always try to be present at the Olympics. Since we know we cant afford to send athletes in all the disciplines, we only try to have representation in our strong areas which are in track and field and in swimming. For London, we only managed to qualify our athletes by wild card entries but that did not mean we weren’t going with the intention of winning medals. Of course you saw one of our athletes in Swimming, Luke Hall, who also competed in Beijing in 2008, finish 4th in his heat. So despite the means in which we qualified, we still put in the hard work...the athletes did too, to try and get results in London, and we were not very far off from achieving that”.

The participant also revealed that the NOC had hoped to at least win a medal in the London Olympic Games, particularly in the swimming category. Furthermore, the participant revealed that another of its NOC’s expectation from the London Olympics was for its athletes to have the opportunity of gaining sporting experience in a vibrant atmosphere. D02 made the following statements:

“...For us, it was about the exposure and availing the athletes the opportunity to gain the experience in a more competitive environment with world-class facilities. So experience was another thing we were hoping to achieve in London. Our delegation to London was quite small so we tried to keep our objectives as realistic as possible. We wanted to at least win a medal because we have never won any before. We had hopes in the swimming category. Apart from our medal hopes, we expected a vibrant atmosphere in London. We wanted to see a very smooth Olympic Games. We wanted to see that everything was up to standard...the planning, the execution, everything! Because for us, we saw it as an opportunity to see and learn how things are to be done right. This has been one of the biggest challenges in Africa...doing things right! So it is very important to travel out and see these things for

yourself and there couldn't have been a better opportunity to do this than in an Olympics”.

Speaking conclusively on the aim of the NOC in participating in the Olympics, D02 pointed out that the key thing for their NOC was to participate and to represent their country. While it was agreed that it is also important to win medals, D02 maintained that they were somewhat content with constantly participating in the Games as it avails them the opportunity to present the image of the country to the rest of the world. Her comments were as follows:

“...Swaziland is a country of less than 1.5 million people and participating in the Olympics is a big thing for us. I'm not saying we don't desire to win medals, but the key thing for us is the fact that we participate at these events. It sells the name of our country. Marching with our flag alongside many other countries of World on the opening ceremony of the Olympics is a thing of pride and it is a good medium to inform the international community about our country. You don't get such a platform if you don't qualify to be in the Olympics. We were fortunate to get the wildcard entries to be in London (A wildcard entry is a chance given to a country or athlete to compete in a particular sports despite failure to qualify through the normal qualification standards) but we were still optimistic about flying the flag of our country high in the Games. It's always a thing of pride to be in the Olympics”.

The participant was then asked to provide some depth as to how much of its NOC's objectives were achieved in the London Olympics. In responding to this, D02 said this:

“For us as an NOC, we kept our expectations very simple realistic. We only had three athletes competing in the Games so our hope on winning anything was on them. We thought we had a chance of winning a medal, especially in swimming. To have come back with nothing means we still have a lot to do. Like I mentioned earlier, we were hoping to break the jinx of not winning any medal ever in the Olympics. Well, I guess it wasn't meant to be in London”.

On a brighter note, D02 claimed all its other objectives were achieved apart from their poor performance in the Games, which led to their inability to win any medals. This was expressed in following comments:

“The atmosphere was great! I have never experienced such an exciting Olympics as I did in London. Though we didn’t win anything, we saw our participation as an achievement because nobody can take away the experience we have gained. For the athletes, being in London and competing alongside other great athletes from all over the world, using world-class facilities, in a world-class environment was a massive boost to their athletic careers. So these are intangible achievements that you cannot take from us. When you talk about performance in the Olympics, people always seem to get carried away talking about the tangible benefits such as the medals, but the intangible benefits such as the lessons you learn are also equally very important. These are sometimes lesson you can apply to everyday life. So talking about meeting our expectation, we didn’t win any medals...yes, but we know we have presented our country to world. We take pride in our participation and we know that someday the medal will surely come. Who saw Gabon or Botswana winning a medal in London? So we believe everybody has a chance of winning”.

The participant was asked to highlight some of the challenges that led to this outcome. In responding, the participants, like most of the other participants in the study, identified funding as one of its major challenges. This was what D02 had to say:

“The big issue we have is the lack of financial power. It all comes down to funding at the end of the day. No matter how many talents your country may have, if you haven’t got the funding part, there is only so much you can achieve. If you don’t have the funds to build up standard and world-class facilities for your athletes to use, how do you expect to get world-class performances from the athletes? The government funds our participation in the Olympics and Commonwealth Games and this funding is very limited. Our country like every other country has its priorities. There are other equally important areas of the economy that require urgent government attention such

as health-care, unemployment and so on. We can only work with what we have”.

Though D02 acknowledged that funds made available to the NOC were limited, the participant also revealed that some of the issues responsible for this are lack of effective management, widespread corruption in society, mis-management of funds and a lack of accountability by the government. The following remarks were made to support this view:

“...I still believe that we can achieve more if things are properly managed. The issues of effective management, accountability and corruption are very big issues in this part of the world (Africa). The government is responsible for distributing these resources. For example, if \$50 is allocated to preparing the athletes for the Olympics, you may end up receiving only half of that and no one will explain where the other half has disappeared to. There’s never any accountability. So, yes we know there are other priorities, yes we know that the resources are limited, but how well have we utilized the little we have?”

Another issue that was raised is the issue of poor planning. The participant suggested that one of the main causes of poor performance in the Olympics was poor planning. D02 noted that plans within the NOC are often left late and are usually short term plans rather than long term. This point was buttressed in the following comments:

“...Nobody thinks about the future. All we think of is today. Look at countries that do well in the Olympics, they think well ahead and they make their plans accordingly. Have we started to make plans about Rio (2016) or even the Olympics after that (Tokyo, 2020)? But you’ll be surprised that there are some countries that have planned as far ahead as the 2028 Olympics even though the host city is yet to be known. We only tend to see planning as booking the accommodation, transportation and that kind of stuff and that’s why we (the government) don’t take things seriously. But the real planning to participate involves things like, putting the sporting infrastructure and facilities in place that meet the standards of what is out there, grooming the athletes, identifying new talents through development programmes...these things take a long time to achieve and without the right planning you cannot achieve this. We really don’t have these structures in place and that’s why things are often done last

minute. When this is the case, then you don't have the justification to fault the athletes. They can only perform when they have the right environment and support".

In an attempt to probe further on the causes of the NOC's poor performance in the London Olympics, the participant was asked if the project management of the London Olympic Games and their relationship with LOCOG had any impact on the performance of their NOC. In responding to this, D02 admitted that there were no concerns whatsoever as expressed in the following statements:

"In terms of our performance, I don't think that had anything to do with the project management of the Games or LOCOG...they were excellent...Our inability to win medals was not as a result of the project management of the Games but as a result of the points I mentioned earlier. We had the necessary support we needed from LOCOG and there was nothing more to ask for".

Furthermore, the participant was again asked if the IOC or any of its decisions affected the performance of their NOC. D02 responded in the negative. However, this was what the participant had to say:

"...I think the IOC can look into giving smaller countries the opportunity to have more athletes participating across a wider variety of sports. You stand a better chance of winning when you have more athletes participating. The wildcard system is a good thing because we benefited from it in London, but more can be done to give the smaller countries equal opportunities to compete".

4.4.3.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

In this section of questions, the participant was asked to highlight the measures necessary to address the issues raised, which led to the poor performance of their NOC in the Olympics. D02, in responding to this, noted that the solutions to the issues raised all bothered around effective planning. Her comments on this were as follows:

"The key thing is planning. We must start to think ahead like other countries do. It is only when you think ahead that you have the vision. You've got to have the vision! Planning ahead brings about the building of infrastructure

and the facilities needed to train athletes. For instance, as a result of this awareness of the importance of planning for competitions, the government has now decided on putting in 20m pools in some parts of the country. Because in order to be able to compete in these events, you need to train in facilities of the same standard as what you compete in. Think about it this way, if you have the facilities at home in your country, the athletes won't need to go elsewhere to train, which also has its own cost implication. Sometimes these athletes end up staying abroad and competing for other countries. This is the main cause of the talent drain in sports today. The environment must be right and how do you make it right...by having the right infrastructure and support system. Planning also brings about putting the right institutions in place to, first of all identify these talents, then develop them. So for me, having the vision and planning ahead are the key things we must imbibe in order to turn the table around”.

4.4.4 Findings: F02 (South-Africa)

The findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with the participant from South Africa are presented in this section. The section starts with a brief background on the country's Olympic participation.

4.4.4.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

South Africa's first participation in the Olympic Games was in 1904. Since making their debut appearance at the Olympics, the country had its athletes compete in every Summer Olympic Games until 1960. However, in 1962, South Africa was barred from participating in the Olympic Games owing to the policy of apartheid. The nation re-joined the Olympic movement after negotiations had commenced in 1990 to put an end to apartheid. This led to the formation and official recognition of the country's NOC, known as the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC), in 1991. South Africa made a return to the Olympic Games in 1992 in Barcelona winning two medals in that event. To date (date of publication of this research), the nation's athletes have won a total of 76 medals in the Olympics, including medals won in the 2012 London Olympics, and the highest medal-producing sports have been athletics, boxing and swimming. In commenting on South Africa's overall involvement in the Olympics, F02 had this to say:

“...You can tell from history that we are one of the oldest Olympic participants from Africa and this is something we are very pleased about. Our country has been through a lot of difficult times in the past, with the painful experiences and memories of apartheid, which brought South Africa to the limelight...for a negative reason of course. But despite all these, South Africans have remained positive and united as one people, and to a huge extent, sports have played and still plays a major role in making this possible. And that is why we take the Olympics very seriously. We invest heavily in sports in our country because we appreciate the importance of sports to our co-existence as a people, and the benefits it brings to our national development, not to mention the advantages it brings for the country on the international front. The Olympics forms an integral part of our sports agenda here in South Africa, and you can see the proof of this from the total number of medals we have won, which I’m sure is better than any other country from Africa. Even though we are proud of this, we admit that we are not quite there yet if you compare our performance to those of other countries like Great Britain, the United States or even Canada. So there’s still a lot of work to be done. We just don’t want to be making an impact regionally, we want to make a global impact and to do this we must push ourselves to the limit. For a country with such vast Olympic experience as South Africa, you really expect us to do better than we are at the moment but we are not. And this is really of great concern to our NOC. That’s why we are constantly looking for ways to improve. We’ve raised the bar for every of our athlete and we are investing heavily in them as well to ensure that they deliver. So overall, the future looks bright for South Africa in the Olympics”.

4.4.4.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

Focusing on the London 2012 Olympics, the participant was asked to highlight the goals and objectives set out by the country’s NOC prior to the London Olympics to provide the researcher with an understanding of the country’s performance in the Games. F02 in his response made clear of the following:

“...After our disappointing outing in the Beijing Olympics in 2008 where we finished 70th on the medal table with just one medal, our goal for London was to bounce back from that. We successfully hosted the World Cup in 2010 and

this was a big boost for us in our preparation to take part in the Olympics...it felt like the whole world would be looking out for team South Africa in London. This made us push ourselves really hard in our preparations for the London Olympics and we were aiming to finish at least top 10 on the medal table. We knew this was very ambitious but we also knew it was not impossible. From a more realistic perspective, we had hoped to surpass our biggest ever medal haul of 10 medals in an Olympic event. Over the years, our strong areas have been in swimming and in athletics, but we were hoping we could win medals from other disciplines too, which we did, but not as much as we had anticipated. We had a large delegation of over 130 athletes in the London Olympics, so we really had high hopes for a good number of medals. To have only won six medals was rather disappointing for the entire team South Africa. And also, I think the entire continent was looking up to South Africa to make a huge impact in London, not just for us, but also for the entire region. So we feel quite let down by our performance at the Olympics and we also feel we have let the continent down”.

In view of the above response, the participant was further asked to elaborate on the extent to which the nation’s objectives were achieved in the London Olympics through their NOC. In responding to this, F01 revealed that the NOC’s objectives in the London Olympics were not completely achieved. The participant made this known with the following comments:

“...Even though we eventually didn’t do too bad in London, at least compared to our last outing or when you compare us to other African countries, our goals were still not reached. We finished 23rd on the medal table and were the best performing African country at the London Olympics. And even though this was a lot better than where we finished at Beijing, it was still not within the top 10. We were pleased to have won a gold medal in Rowing which was our first ever Rowing Olympic medal and a bronze in Canoeing because these are new disciplines to us, so on that side of things we were happy. That said, even though statistically, the London 2012 Olympics was one of our best Olympic outings and certainly our best since Barcelona 1992, we still feel our performances in the Olympic Games are not yet where we want them to be. Our performance in the Olympics can only be assessed by the number of

medals won, and at the moment, we have not really impressed. We need to re-examine this situation, which is what we are doing at the moment, and take the necessary steps to ensure that things improve”.

With a better understanding of the participant’s thoughts concerning his country’s London Olympics performance, the researcher asked the participant to highlight the issues which led to his country’s performance at the London Olympics. In his response, F02 revealed that one of the biggest challenges that hindered the country’s performance at the Games was in the area of funding and mis-management of funds. The following statements support his view:

“...The issue of funding, or should I say, the misappropriation of funds meant for the NOC and for our athletes, is a very big problem for our NOC. We usually get our funding from the government, the national lottery and from private sponsorships, but this never seems to be enough because by the time the money gets to the NOC or the athletes it is way less than what it should be. There is no transparency in the system at all. It is really bad to the point that sometimes, the athletes are told to contribute to funding their own trip to the Olympics. Where would you see stuff like this happen in a developed country? Take our preparation for the London Olympics as an example, the Department of Sports and Recreation allocated R31 million, the National Lottery made R70 million available while an estimated R45 million was provided by the public sector. Now one would expect that with all these funds, we should have all our needs catered for. But it’s a shame to say that this wasn’t the case. Because these monies were all channelled through the government, we didn’t receive all of it. And this was a very big hindrance to our preparation plans, which certainly had a negative impact on the athletes. In fact, for the athletes to go to London and still perform the way they did was a big credit to them. The athletes train so hard to represent their country, most of them even get so many enticing offers from other countries to transfer their allegiance to them, but they decide to stay with their home country. These good gestures by the athletes to be sporting ambassadors for their country must not be compromised, not even by lack of funds because it will certainly have a negative impact on our chances of winning any medals”.

Another issue raised by the participant, which was linked to the previous point made on the issue of funding, was the issue of inadequate support for the athletes. F02 in speaking on the subject said:

“The athletes could make use of more support from all stakeholders involved, which at the moment I’m afraid to say, is not the case. As a former athlete myself, I know how frustrating it can be for an athlete to be told that there are no funds available to purchase sporting equipment or kits, or for health checks and things like that. That can be very demoralising. And as an NOC, our efforts to remedy the situation is limited if we are not getting the co-operation from the Department of Sport and the sports federations. I strongly believe that we have the sporting talents in our country, as well as the resources to develop them. And if these resources can be properly managed then we stand a better chance of making a more significant impact in the Olympics”.

Still speaking on the challenges that impacted the country’s performance at the London Olympics, F02 raised the issue of poor sports administration in the country, which was described as a more secondary issue. The following comments were made on this point:

“...Poor sports administration in our country has also played a role in hindering us from attaining our full potential in the Olympics. As an administrator myself, my team and I inherited a lot of mess when we came onboard. This is always the case when you have people serving as administrators, with no passion or clear vision of making a positive impact that will leave a lasting legacy. All they do is take every opportunity to enrich their pockets and syphon funds meant for the development of sports towards their own personal gains. I guess what I’m trying to say is that, corruption and lack of accountability by our sport administrators is also costing us medals in Olympics. This might seem like a more secondary issue, but believe me, if we can tackle corruption, then we are building a foundation that will lead to other positive changes that will take place in our sports sector. These changes always need to start from the top. And this is why, at the NOC level, since I came onboard, we have maintained a zero-tolerance for any form of corruption. We take the issue of corruption as serious as we take the issue of

doping. But again, this needs to be the case across board, not just at NOC level, but also at the government level and at the sports federation level too”.

Another issue that was raised by the F02 was that of sponsorship. Though it was admitted that the NOC had received a fair support from private sponsors, the participant noted that it was important for the private sector to get more involved in sponsoring the NOC and the athletes. This view was expressed in the comments below:

“...I must say we have been quite fortunate by the level of private sector sponsorship we receive in comparison to our counterparts in other African countries. Despite this, there is still a lot expected from the private sector. The issue of sport sponsorship is a very big one for Africa as a whole. If African countries receive a quarter of the level of sponsorship countries from Europe or Asia or the USA receives, then the issue of our poor performance would have been a different story all together. We need sponsors in our continent...both from the private sector and from the international community. Most of the African countries have very pressing issues of more priority than sport and the governments must address those issues first. So it's very difficult to rely on government funding because it is always very limited. Sponsors need to step in. Bear in mind that sponsoring Olympic teams is also beneficial to the sponsors themselves. This will boost their brands on an international stage and so on. Sports generally in Africa is experiencing real growth at the moment, and sponsors and investors should see it as an opportunity to be part of this growth because they too can achieve a lot for their businesses in doing so”.

The participant was asked to clarify if their performance in the Olympic Games had been impacted by the way the Olympic project had been managed, or if their NOC's relationship with LOCOG had affected their performance in the Games. Speaking on this, F02 said:

“...As for our NOC and the way we performed in the Games, it certainly had nothing to do with the way the Olympic project was managed. LOCOG did their job very well. The task of hosting the biggest sporting fiesta in the world is not an easy one and any country that does it successfully deserves to be

applauded. We hosted the World Cup in 2010, which wasn't an easy task. So I can appreciate the effort put in by everyone in London to make the Olympics a success".

Furthermore, the participant was asked to clarify if the IOC or any of its decisions had affected their performance in the Games. The response from F02 suggested that there was no impact from the IOC on their performance:

"...We can't point fingers at the IOC for the way we performed. We had our destiny in our own hands, and whatever we achieved or didn't achieve in London, was down to our own internal preparation. Of course they are certain things we as an NOC expect from the Olympic movement or the IOC, which I wouldn't like to go into the details now, but we want to take full responsibility for our performance in the Olympics and not point accusing fingers to the IOC".

4.4.4.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

In this section, the participant was asked of his views on the steps to be taken to address the challenges that were raised, which had been responsible for the country's performance in the London Olympic Games. In responding to this, F02 made clear the following:

"...first, funds need to be managed more effectively and transparently too, because without proper management of funds, then we can never achieve the targets that we set. With the resources we have, we shouldn't be in a position where we can't afford to cater for the essential needs of our athletes. There must be transparency in the way funds are disbursed and also accountability. The sports department should be transparent in their dealings. The sports men and women in our country are always often prepared to make sacrifices for the country, but when the people posed with the responsibility of providing the needed support aren't doing their jobs properly, it can be very discouraging. On the issue of corruption, measures must be put in place across every sport organisation in the country to ensure that corrupt practices are taken very seriously. Nobody should be above the law. The law must have its course on any one caught.

Furthermore, F02 maintained the view that it was necessary for the country to carry out a sensitisation on the need for sponsors to invest in sports in Africa. It was suggested that this would be a step in the right direction for sports development in the continent as a whole. To highlight this point, the participants made the comments below:

“There is need to carry out a sensitization to inform sponsors of the benefits of investing in sports in our country and in Africa as a whole. The media is a good channel to do this. We must promote our country positively to attract sponsors. Because bear in mind that sponsors also want to know how they will benefit if they decide to sponsor. So I think this is another area we need to take very seriously, not just us, but other African countries too”.

4.4.5 Findings: I02 (Ethiopia)

The findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with the participant from Ethiopia are presented in this section. The section begins with an overview of the country’s participation in the Olympic Games, which is then followed by the findings from the study.

4.4.5.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

Ethiopia’s National Olympic Committee was founded in 1948, however, the NOC gained recognition by the IOC in 1954. Following the IOC’s recognition of the Ethiopian NOC, Ethiopia made its first appearance in the Olympic Games in 1956. Since making its debut participation in the Olympics, Ethiopia has participated in every Olympic Games till date, except for the 1976, 1984 and 1988 Games. Ethiopians main sports discipline in the Olympics has been in athletics, particularly in the middle and long distance races. To date, Ethiopian athletes have won a total of 69 medals in all Olympic Games since the country’s first appearance in 1956. All these medals have been in athletics.

Commenting on Ethiopia’s overall participation in the Olympics, I02 said:

“We are very happy with the level of our involvement in the Olympics. We have always tried to maintain consistency and improvement in our performances in Olympic Games. I’m sure you can tell from our medal results that we are doing our best to win medals, despite the little resources we have

within our means to do this. We are dominant forces in the long distance races where we put our concentration in and we always get good results in this area. A medal is a medal...gold, silver or bronze, no matter which area it is won in. We know we don't have the resources to develop athletes in other areas that is why we concentrate on athletics. Of course we want to participate in other sports like swimming or football or boxing or tennis, but what are our chances of winning any medals from these sports? We will introduce other sports gradually like we have started to do...for example in London, we made our debut in the swimming category, which we hope to continue to develop on. But our main concentration is still on athletics".

4.4.5.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

The participant in this section was asked to give an account of the country's goals and targets for the London Olympics, which had been set prior to the Games. Speaking about this, I02 said:

"We had a total number of 36 athletes representing us in London. Our main goal was to do well in the Olympics and win medals to show for our performance. We wanted to improve on our performance after the last Olympics and win more medals than we did in Beijing. We won 7 medals in Beijing, including 4 gold. We also wanted to break our Olympic record on the most number of medals we have won in a particular Game, which is 8, including 4 gold medals as well. Concentrating mainly on athletics gives us a very good focus in our preparations. We planned to finish higher on the medal table than we did in Beijing where we finished 18th. Our plan was also to finish higher than Kenya, because they were ranked higher than us in Beijing. We had two athletes representing us in swimming. This was our first time to compete in swimming so we were very excited about that too. We didn't expect too much from them because its our first time, but were hoping to learn from that experience too. On the whole, we were looking forward to a very successful outing in London".

In expressing views on the extent to which their NOC's objectives for the London Olympics were reached, I02 revealed that, though they had expected to perform better

in the Games, they were not totally disappointed with the outcome. In expressing this view, I02 said:

“We did not meet all our performance objectives but we were not too far off so we are quite happy. But of course, we also want to be better. We got 3 gold, 1 silver and 3 bronze medals. We also finished 24th on the medal table, one place below South Africa who were the best performers from Africa, so that made us the second-best. We finished above Kenya also. Though we dropped on our ranking from 18 to 24, we are still very happy with the outcome. The performance generally from Africa was very poor this time. The big countries like Nigeria, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco all performed below expectation, so for us to have stepped up is something we are very happy about. We want to build on this and do better when we go to Rio”.

The participant was then asked to clarify if there were any challenges that could have accounted for their performance in the Games. Though I02 was generally positive about their performance in the Games, it was pointed out that funding, scholarships and sponsorships for athletes were lacking in order to be able to support and develop new and upcoming athletes. Speaking on this;

“We need more funds and support from government and other agencies to be able to run our programmes effectively. We have some elite athletes already, but we also want to be able to run sporting programmes that will help us identify and develop new talents. Scholarships are also very important to support the upcoming athletes. This is our main area of concern. We want the government to invest more in sports development. Like I said, we would like to expand our competition into other sports apart from athletics and we can only do this if we have the means”.

Commenting on whether their performance in the London Olympics Games had been impacted by the way the Olympics project had been managed by LOCOG, I02 said:

“Actually, our NOC was very happy concerning the organisation. We knew where to find what, what to do with our athletes, how to find the venues, how we could organise different things and stuff like that. This had nothing to do with our performance”.

Also commenting on whether the IOC or any of its decisions had affected their performance at the Games, I02 said:

“...The IOC or its decisions did not impact on our performance, apart from the fact that we want more support from them to help us provide our athletes with more scholarships and development opportunities”.

4.4.5.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

This section sought to obtain the views of the participants on how to address the issues of funding, sponsorship and scholarships which were raised earlier as part of the factors that hindered her countries performance in the London Olympics. In commenting on this, I02 said:

“We need the government to invest more in sports development in our country. Sports is a very important aspect of the society. It encourages healthy living and can be used to promote peace among our people. Also, engaging people in sports, especially young people, will keep them away from getting involved in crime or other negative social vices. When you look at the population of our country, you see that we are over populated with almost 90 million people. The unemployment rate is very high too. The government can use sports to balance some of these lapses if proper investments are made. Surely, the government alone cannot provide the funds we need that is why we are also soliciting support from other channels like the private sector and other international bodies”.

4.4.6 Findings: J02 (Tanzania)

This section presents the findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with the participant from Tanzania. A brief background about the country's participation in Olympics is presented, which is then followed by the findings from the study.

4.4.6.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

The first participation of Tanzania in the Olympic Games was in 1964 after they had gained independence. The country, to date, has participated in every summer Olympic since its debut appearance, excluding the boycotted Games in 1976. Tanzania's NOC was created and officially recognized by the IOC in 1968. Athletics have been the

main sport for Tanzania in the Olympics over the years. However, in recent times, the country has begun to diversify its participation into other sports such as swimming. Regardless of this diversification, the nation's Olympic team still remains small. Tanzania has only won two medals in its Olympic history (two silver medals in athletics won in the 1980 Olympics in Moscow). In commenting on his country's participation in the Olympic Games, J02 said:

"...Tanzania has come a long way in the Olympics. We may not have achieved the success other countries like South Africa or Kenya have achieved in the Olympics, but we are proud of our own achievements. At least we are in the Olympic records as medal winners because we won two silver medals in 1980. And I am proud to be one of those medal winners with my performance, which was a world record performance. Though we must not continue to live on our past glory, we are happy to have made history for our country. Overall, Africa as a whole hasn't done so well in the Olympic Games because we can see from the number of medals we get. So it is important to look at this situation very critically to find out why we are not doing so well, which is why I really support your research. We should do more studies like yours to help us identify ways in which we can improve our performance in the Olympic Games".

4.4.6.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

The first question in this section required the participant to highlight the goals and objectives that had been set by their NOC for the London Olympics to enable the researcher to assess the level of their performance. In commenting on this, J02 made note of the following:

"... We had a very small Olympic team in London with only seven athletes. This was our smallest delegation since Sydney 2000. We were competing in athletics, boxing and swimming. For us, we wanted to at least break the medal jinx we have had since the last time we won in 1980. But like we all know, these competitions get tougher and tougher, and the only way to keep up with the chase is by making sure that you are up to date with the advancements that occur in the sport disciplines that you are involved in. These advancements can be in the area of infrastructure, equipment, dieting, health care and so on.

If these things are not in place, then regardless of the objectives you set for an Olympic Games, reality must surely set in when you eventually go to the Games, as you'll see other countries and athletes who are more prepared and ready than you are. These are the countries that eventually win medals in Olympics”.

J02 also quickly added that the NOC had been disappointed by their performance in the London Olympics, as they were unable to win any medals. Despite not winning any medals, J02 expressed displeasure as most of their athletes didn't get through to the semi-finals or finals in their respective disciplines:

“We did not win a single medal. We had our athletes in the middle and longer distance races who did not even get to the semi-finals”.

The participant was then asked to identify the factors that led to the poor performance of his NOC at the London Olympics. In responding to this, J02 pointed out that the factors responsible for their poor performance in London are long-term issues, which need to be addressed before a significant change can be experienced. Speaking more specifically, J02 identified lack of sponsorship as the biggest challenge the country was facing which also impacted on their performance in the Olympics. The participant pointed this out in the following statements:

“...No matter how well prepared you are...training the athletes and so on, without sponsors you cannot achieve much. It is only the big countries that mostly have sponsors and most of the small countries that have got nothing to sell, don't get sponsors. And if you do not have anything to sell or market, you haven't really got the option of getting sponsorship and this is where the problem lies. Some of the NOCs of certain countries do not really receive anything from the government and one cannot prepare to compete in the Games without having any sort of funds from the government or sponsors. For instance in Great Britain, they spent more than 4.4 billion pounds to prepare their team since they won the bid in Singapore. That is a lot of money and without any assistance from sponsors or the government, African will keep trailing behind. In the up-coming 2016 Games, if our government will not help in the area of finance and help develop the athletes, there is no way we can rise or perform better”.

Away from the issue of sponsorship, J02 also noted that the government needed to invest more in sports development in the country. It was pointed out that there was a lack of standard sporting facilities and infrastructure in the country, which has hindered their overall performance:

“...The government needs to invest in sports in our country. At the moment, we don’t have the necessary facilities or infrastructure to help our athletes develop that competitive edge. And without this competitive edge, you don’t stand a chance. The truth of the matter is that many African countries that participated in the London Olympics did not have that competitive edge to compete at the highest level”.

J02 also pointed out that another issue that affected the performance of the athletes in the London Olympics was the fact that their preparation process was not very effective because the athletes also engage in other forms of employment other than athletics. The participant referred to the situation as an ‘*unavoidable distraction*’ for the athletes, as they need take up employments in other works of life in order to make ends meet. J02 in speaking about this said:

“...The government cannot afford to keep the athletes on a full time basis so we only tend to assemble them nearer the time for competitions. As such, the athletes need to gain employment elsewhere in order to be able to fend for themselves and their families and you can’t blame them for that. But in more developed countries, they have the resources to be able to ensure that their athletes are full time athletes such that, whether or not there is any competition, the athletes keep training and developing themselves. And this is why you cannot compare the quality of athletes they produce and what we produce in Africa. It all bounces back to the issue of funding and sponsorship that I raised earlier. If we could afford it, then we would make sure our athletes get all the support they need to be able to perform on the big stage. It is simple, if you invest in sports and in your athletes, you’ll get good results”.

In giving his final views on the challenges that accounted for the poor performance of his country in the London Olympics, J02 said that late and poor preparations was another issue. The participant expressed this view with the following comments:

“...To be honest, our preparations were carried out very late and in a haphazard manner. This was because we did not get the right support from the government to be able to plan properly. And this definitely cost us medals in London. We depend on government and you know, anything done through government is usually very slow and bureaucratic. This is why we are asking the government to subsidize the national sport federations in the country to allow development of facilities and the athletes. Sports will thrive better in the hands of the private sector”.

Speaking on whether their performance in the London Olympics had been impacted by the way the Games had been organized by LOCOG, J02 said:

“There was no negative impact of this on our performance...I don't reckon I saw anything I felt should have been done better concerning the Olympic Games in London”.

Also, the participant was asked if the IOC or any of its decisions had impacted his country's performance at the Olympics. In responding to this, J02 said:

“The IOC needs to provide more support to smaller NOCs in order to help them achieve their goals. The situation is hopeless if the small NOCs are left to rely solely on their governments for support and funding. The goals of the Olympic movement must be achieved all round, especially in poorer and less developed regions of the world. The IOC should work more towards this direction. It is trying its best at the moment but I think it can do more”.

4.4.6.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

The participant was asked of his views on the way to address the issues raised, which accounted for the poor performance of his country at the London Olympics. commenting on this, J02 said:

“The solution to the problems in my opinion all lies with the availability of resources and funds. We need the government, private sector and other sponsors to invest in sports in our country. That is where the solution is. With investment in sports you can plan, you can develop athletes, you can acquire standard sporting equipments and put up the needed infrastructure. You can do almost everything, and of course, you can win medals”.

Summary of discussion from second phase

Further to the first phase of interviews and in view of the new dimension the study had taken to now focus on performance, there was a need to conduct a new phase of interviews with the research participants to discuss issues of performance at the London Games. Although the researcher had attempted to involve all the participants that initially took part in the first interview phase, only participants from nine NOCs were willing to grant follow-up interviews. This however, worked out to the advantage of the researcher, as conducting the interviews with participants from a fewer number of countries created the opportunity to gather more in-depth data. The findings from this section are discussed under three headings. First are overview/background discussions around the participation of the nine countries in Olympic Games. Secondly, discussions around the performance of the countries in the London 2012 Olympics and the challenges encountered are presented. Thirdly, the views of the participants on the strategies for addressing the challenges encountered are discussed.

- **Participation in Olympic Games**

All the nine countries had previously participated in the Olympics prior to the London 2012 Olympics and all have NOCs that are officially recognised by the IOC. From the group of countries involved in this phase of the study, Togo had been the last country to get involved in an Olympic Games, appearing for the first time in the 1972 Olympics. The oldest participating countries according to the findings are South Africa and Egypt making their debut appearances in 1904 and 1912 respectively. Although the performance of African countries in the Olympics has raised debate between stakeholders especially as it concerns medal wins, most African countries generally take pride in their participation in the Games as they consider it to be a medium to achieve other national goals. For example, the findings from the interviews revealed that participants like A02, D02, F02 and J02 are of the view that, apart from the desire to perform well in the Olympics, participating consistently in the Games is an achievement in itself as it brings about other national benefits. Some of the benefits mentioned by participants, which they believed were not necessarily performance driven, include political stability, national unity and co-existence, national development, globalization and national image building/enhancement. The

participants were also of the view that the built up experiences gained from constant participation is a benefit which will eventually lead to better future performances. This finding is in line with the views of researchers such as Mittelman (1995), Roche (2000) and Malfas *et al.*, (2004) who also consider participation in the Olympics to be a medium for countries to enhance their national image in order to increase their socio-economic advantages, whilst driving for globalisation.

From the findings, it was revealed that most of the NOCs that took part in this phase of interviews considered their participation in the Olympics a key objective of their NOC and achieving this objective often brought about a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction. To some of the NOCs, their main aim was to increase the number of athletes participating in comparison to their representation in previous Games. Although it wasn't established in the findings how much the NOCs desire to participate in Olympic Games weighed over their desire to perform well, the findings suggest that, as well as being disturbed about their performances, the NOCs appeared to be satisfied with their frequent participation in the Games.

- **Performance in Olympic Games**

The issue of performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympics was brought to a more detailed review in this phase of interviews following their poor performances at the Games. The findings from the interviews revealed that most of the participants were generally dissatisfied with the performance and medal results of their countries. A total of fifty-three African countries competed in the London Olympics. However, only ten countries managed to get at least one medal while the majority (forty-three countries) finished without any. A total of 34 medals were won between the ten countries, which included two first-time winners (Gabon and Botswana). Although these statistics may not appear to be completely dreary for countries like South Africa, Kenya and Ethiopia who won the most African medals at the London Games and have also maintained some sort of consistency in their Olympic performance for Africa over the years, the consequences however, are borne by a greater percentage of African countries who have struggled to earn medal results. Thus, from a broader point of view, the poor performances of African countries in the Olympics, evident in medal results from London 2012, has kept them as under-achievers in the Games in comparison to their counterparts from other continents.

This view also aligns with those of Johnson and Ali (2004) who maintain that comparatively, African countries have remained at the bottom end of medal charts as a result of reoccurring poor performances.

From the nine countries represented in this phase of interviews (including the three case study countries), only B02, F02, I02 and G02 were medal winners at the London Olympics. The general suggestion from the responses provided by the participants is a sense of disappointment in the outcome of Games in terms of medal results when measured against set targets. Representatives from the countries who won medals at the Games also shared this view. Though it was not the direct intention of this study to determine whether the targets set by the African countries for the London 2012 Olympics had been realistic or not, it is worthy of mention that the post-mortem carried out by some of the participants' NOCs to examine the reasons behind their poor performance at the Games reveal that some of their targets might have been unrealistic. This view was expressed by B02, F02 and J02. The importance of setting realistic targets is highlighted by Green (2009) as pointed out in the literature review. A further discussion on the implications of unrealistic targets is carried out in the next section using the case study countries as reference points.

In giving their views on the factors that had impacted the performances of their countries at the London Olympic Games, the participants pointed to a number of issues, some of which had also been identified in the literature. Although some of the factors identified had been peculiar to certain countries, most of the key issues and challenges highlighted had been encountered by the majority of the participating countries. Examples of some of these factors include the issue of funding, planning/poor preparations, lack of sports facilities and infrastructure. Other factors pointed out include lack of sponsorship/private sector investment, mis-management of resources, poor sports administration, corruption, politics, lack of sport development programmes/project management among others. These issues were further explored with the case study countries in order to analyse in more depth the extent to which their performances were impacted by these factors. Furthermore, these findings provided the platform to apply the project management approach in discussing the data from the case study countries.

- **Addressing the challenges/improving performance**

Taking into consideration the responses from the participants, the researcher believes that the key issues to have been accountable for the poor performances of the respective countries in Olympics are mainly centred on poor organisation and lack of effective management of sport systems, which has had a knock-on effect on the way and manner in which preparations for this event is carried out. This view is also expressed in the literature by Green (2004) who argues that organisations with the most efficient design in their sport systems tend to perform better than those with less efficient sport systems. Breaking down the issue of an inefficient system is what the participants believe to have translated to other specific issues such as poor sports administration, absence of a talent identification and development programme, poor planning and preparations for competitions, inadequate funding, lack of standard sports training facilities and so on. Luiz and Fadal (2011) uphold that addressing these sporting issues bring about positive changes in sports development, which eventually translates to the success achieved in mega sporting events, for example, winning medals in the Olympic Games.

A more comprehensive discussion of the strategies for addressing the challenges of poor performance of African countries is carried out with the three case study countries in the light of the literature review. The essence of doing so is to examine the practicality of the identified strategies also using the views of other stakeholder groups (coaches and athletes) from a small number of countries in order to secure greater depth and to validate the proposed framework.

4.5 Category Three - Findings from interviews with case study countries

The findings from interviews conducted with the study participants from Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Egypt are presented in this section. The participant groups interviewed from these cases include NOC Presidents/Secretary Generals, coaches and athletes. The researcher decided to speak to members of different stakeholder groups (coaches and athletes) from those in the previous category, in a bid to secure some more depth from the findings and to enable triangulation of results. Doing this with all the nine countries involved in the previous phase of the study was a daunting task given the allotted time for the completion of the study. As such, there was a need to select a few countries for this purpose, hence the selection of the three case study countries.

Though the interviews conducted with NOC Presidents/Secretary Generals from these case study countries had been done in phase 2 of the study (C02, E02 and G02 respectively), other interviews with the coaches and athletes were conducted as a follow-up in order to validate the views expressed by the first group of participants. The findings from each of the case studies are presented below

4.5.1 Case study 1: Nigeria

Country background

Nigeria, formally recognised as the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was a British colony, which became independent of colonial rule on the 1 October 1960 with Abuja now its current capital city. The Country is located in the western part of Africa, bordering the Gulf of Guinea, between Benin and Cameroon. It is also bordered by Chad and Niger. Nigeria's natural resources include natural gas, petroleum, coal, iron ore, tin, limestone and zinc, among others. The country represents the most populous country in Africa with an estimated population of 174.5 million with a population growth rate of 2.54% (CIA, 2013). Nigeria is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups, with over 500 indigenous languages with English as the country's official language. The main religious practices are Christianity, Islam and indigenous beliefs. Nigeria is a member of numerous international organisations, including the IOC which it officially joined in 1951. Nigeria's oil sector provides 95% of its foreign exchange earnings and about 80% of its budgetary revenues. The country's overdependence on oil has resulted in a less diversified economy. Also, factors such as corruption and mismanagement, political instability, ethnic and religious tensions, inadequate infrastructure, unemployment and poor macroeconomic management, have contributed to the slow growth of the country's economy.

4.5.1.1 Findings: C02 (NOC President/Secretary General)

This section presents the findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with participant C02. The section starts with a brief overview of the country's Olympic participation.

4.5.1.1.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

The country first appeared in the Olympics in 1952 hosted in Helsinki, and have been in every other Games since then, apart from the 1976 summer Olympics boycott. The participant took pride in the fact that his country had made such a consistent

appearance at the Olympic Games but accepted, however, that they had not done so well in terms of medals won. This dissatisfaction was expressed in the following statistics:

“...Since our first participation in 1952, our first medal only came 12 years later when we won a bronze in Tokyo in 1964. Our first ever gold was gotten in 1996 in Atlanta...over 30 years later. We won 2 gold medals in that edition. So far, we have only won just over 20 medals in total in the Olympics so you can argue that we have not quite maximized our potential. Some of our strongest sports have been in boxing, athletics and football and we can always get better”.

4.5.1.1.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

The participant was asked to provide insight on the goals, objectives and expectations set by its NOC for the London Olympics prior to the Games. Again, this question was designed to understand the level of performance of the NOC at the Games when measured against their set targets. In response to this, C02 mentioned that, a major focus of the NOC was to qualify as many athletes as possible for different sports in order to increase their chances of winning medals. However, it was pointed out that it was important to only qualify for sports they were familiar with, and stood a chance of winning a medal in. These were some of the participant's comments:

“There's no point in getting involved in competitions when you haven't got the right capacity to compete in. We had 53 athletes participating in London and to get all of them qualified was a big achievement for us. So the expectations were very high. The obvious goal for every NOC is for all their athletes to win medals in the Olympics”.

C02 highlighted that the goal of the NOC was for all its athletes to win medals. However, speaking more realistically on the medal target, the participant had this to say:

“...Realistically, however, we know not every athlete will win a medal...otherwise it won't be a competition any more. From the point of view of our NOC, our target medal-wise was to surpass the number of medals we won in Atlanta 1996 where we won 6 medals (2 gold, 1 silver and 3

bronze)...the highest number of medals we have ever won in an Olympic Games. So to have come back home with nothing was very disappointing for us. We were aiming for 11 gold medals but unfortunately this was not achieved”.

Apart from medals, C02 noted that one of the NOC’s goals for the London 2012 Olympics was to create an awareness of their country to the rest of the world. Commenting on this, C02 revealed that a house was secured in London to showcase the country’s art, culture, tourism, food and entertainment for the period of the Games. The participant explained that:

“The purpose of this was to sell the image of Nigeria positively to the outside world, to promote our culture and to encourage trade between Nigeria and other countries. There wouldn’t have been a better opportunity to do this than a place where you have people from over 250 countries in one place at the same time (During the London 2012 Olympics). This was one of our main objectives which, I must say, we achieved”.

Also speaking on the country’s aims and objectives drawn out for the London Olympics, C02 pointed out that it was using the Olympics and indeed, sports in general, to enhance its economic and political status. On this subject, C02 gave some insight on the country’s goals, and the role of sports and the Olympics in achieving them:

“...We have a vision in Nigeria of becoming one of the top 20 economies in the world by the year 2020 and we want to use sports as one of the driving force of that vision because we believe sports has the capability and capacity of helping us achieve this if managed well. And the only platform you can discuss sports capacity of a country is at the Olympic Games. This is not football issue (it’s not FIFA), its not basketball issue (it’s not a FIBA world issue). It is the whole sports package together and the question is where do you belong as a country? And where you belong can be translated to your political and economic capacity because your sports capacity has placed you up there. So you can use sports to show your economic and political capacity. At the end of the Beijing Games we were number 67 on the medal table and yet we have the vision to be among the top 20 countries by the year 2020. So

you see we need a minimum of two Olympic Games to achieve this. One of our objectives for London therefore, was to see what efforts we could make to bring down the medal tally. Our aim was to at least jump to like 40 or 30 and this was our driving force. Your position on the medal table is what matters at the end of the day”.

With the researcher’s better understanding of the NOC’s goals for the London Olympics, the participant was then asked to comment on how much of these objectives had been achieved by the end of the Games. Commenting first from a negative point of view, C02 expressed the disappointment of his NOC not to have won any medals at the Games. It was described as one of the country’s poorest performance in the Olympic Games. However, speaking more positively, the participant made the following remarks:

“...For us as an NOC, the memories and experience from London are those that will linger for a very long time to come. You learn out of lessons, especially we in Nigeria that did not come back with any medal. We choose to see it as a very big lesson, instead of pitching blames here and there. It’s a collective failure from head to toe. But I’m happy that we are repositioning. Such big failures ‘bring you back to the table’ and we have seen the effect of it”.

C02 also maintained that another positive from the Olympic was the fact that they had a large participation of athletes at the Games. Though the participant again acknowledged that it was disappointing that none of the athletes had won any medals, it was argued that having a large participation in the Olympic Games also helps showcase your country to the rest of the world.

C02 also recounted the country’s debut performance in Slalom Canoeing as another positive achievement from the London Olympics. The participant’s comments on this were as follows:

“...We made our official Olympic debut in Slalom Canoeing in London and to us this was a big achievement and something we were looking forward to. To be honest, we weren’t expecting to win any medal from this but participating,

to us, was a big achievement in itself. So you can look at these things from different angles”.

Another achieved expectation as pointed out by C02 was that of showcasing the country's commercial, industrial and cultural image during the Games. Expressing views on this, C02 said:

“...Our extra effort in providing the Nigeria House in London for Nigerians to showcase their commercial and industrial talents was something we were able to achieve through the Bank of Industry. So it wasn't all gloom. Achieving this was also key to our participation in London. For us, the economic, commercial and cultural aspects were handled very well...This was the first time ever a Nigerian house was opened in an Olympic village, in an Olympic town. So that goes a long way to show that we have really taken advantage of the situation. It is not always about the medals, but the other intangible things (economic, commercial, cultural and social aspects) matter a lot too. And I think these things are sometimes underplayed. When we talk about Olympics, everybody only thinks...medals. We must think beyond this”.

Following the expression of disappointment with the poor performance of their NOC in the Olympics, C02 was then asked to highlight the challenges that led to this. In responding to this, C02 took the view that the Olympics, being the highest sporting competition in world, requires athletes to be trained using world-class facilities in order to be able to compete. This, the participant pointed out was not the case in their preparations:

“...From the athletes' point of view, Nigeria, up until now, has not reached a stable facility development process...because we're talking of going for world-class tournaments. A world-class tournament would also have a world-class facility. Here you are training under a sub-standard facility and then you want to compete with other athletes that have got all the first class facilities, first class coaches, first class environment, first class feeding? Because all have to come together. So, the challenges are enormous in terms of the athletics”.

Another challenge said to have accounted for poor performance was the issue of late preparations, which was said to have been a reoccurring issue from previous Olympic

Games. C02 stressed that this factor links to a number of other factors, which then can collectively result to the failure of an NOC in reaching its set targets in the Olympic Games. C02 provided the following analysis:

“...Ordinarily, you cannot produce a world-beater within a few years or within a few days. If you’re talking of a world beater, you have to have a development programme for that world beater... and it takes, initially his talent, then developing his talent, then provide the road map for him and all that. So all these are really not on ground and that makes preparation difficult. Look at most of the countries that performed well...some of them have sports development programmes building up to events like this (the Olympics) for over 15 to 20 years before such events. Some of them start to teach these sports even from the elementary schools. So, for you who are trying to groom and prepare athletes within 2 or 3 years, how can you compete with other athletes who have been better prepared? But how do you set up these development programmes without the necessary support in terms of funding and sponsorship. And sometimes even if you have the funds, the vision might not be there because the government of the day might not consider these things to be priority (Since all the support for now is primarily from government). There may be more pressing needs in the country and it depends on where sport is on that scale of preference. Government would rather use 500 million dollars to set up a power generation project or water supply project than maybe building a world-class swimming pool to groom swimmers, or a track and field facility to prepare athletes, or a world class gymnasium or even setting up a sports programme. So these are the issues. You can see that the more stable economies that can afford these things perform better in Olympics and this is not by chance...because the more you invest in something, the greater your chances of a positive outcome. So for countries that have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars (some even millions) in sports and in preparing their athletes for the Olympics, you expect them to have a greater return on medals”.

Also raised was the issue of funding. This was considered to be at the centre of all the challenges faced by the NOC. C02 pointed out that, the government being the sole financiers of sports development in the country, makes it an even more challenging

endeavour for the NOC to participate in the Olympics, let alone being successful in it. To explain this further, C02 said:

“...Government, up till now, are the 100% supporters and providers for sports development in our country. And once it’s all in the government’s hands then definitely it has to follow some due processes in terms of budgetary. For instance, you cannot say your programme is in 2011 and you budget in 2009. And this kind of project is a project that requires preparation...5 years or more in advance. It’s a long-term project and you must provide funds for it. But the government doesn’t operate like that. The government operates budget on a yearly basis. Of course you can have a road map that shows, within the five years you will need x amount of Naira, so you share it into 4 years before the fifth year when the Games are due to take place, and this can be done! And that is what we are advocating for because there must be funds for preparing the athletes for the Olympics. Immediately after the Olympic Games are over, you should start preparing for the next one...from day one! or from the time the bid gets won, like in the case of Team GB. Such preparations would also take into consideration the ages of the athletes...so that you don’t take old and tired athletes, you groom new ones that will match the times. ...And can go through training even electronically because these days, a lot of these things are done electronically. So, the issue of funding is very, very important”.

C02 also attributed the poor performance of the NOC at the London Olympic Games to the lack of investment in the athletes by the government. The participant blamed the government for not providing a supportive environment that enhances the development of the athletes. The following remarks were made on the subject:

“...Countries that have won medals have invested heavily on their athletes. This is a very big challenge. For instance some of the athletes who won medals at the Commonwealth Games, which might be the second biggest sporting event to the Olympics, you would expect them to win something in the Olympics. But this wasn’t possible due to lack of the right support by the government when compared to their counterparts in other countries who performed better. Look at how many Nigerians who were part of Team GB for example, though some of them have lived abroad for some time now, they have

the choice to represent Nigeria but they choose to represent Britain. Now you won't blame them for this because there is the likelihood that they may get better support from representing the bigger countries...and you see this a lot in football, basketball and so on. Many sports people today naturalize to represent other countries where they think they have better opportunities. But if they get the right support and opportunities from their home countries, do you think they'll go elsewhere? So this is another issue to look at".

In providing thoughts on the project management of the London Olympic Games in relation to the country's performance, C02 commended the organisers of the Games and insisted that they had nothing to do with his country's performance. The participant was further asked if the IOC or any of its decisions affected their performance at the Games. Responding to this, C02 noted that the IOC decisions did not directly impact on the performance of the NOC. Instead, the participant acknowledged the support provided to the NOC by the IOC with the following comments:

"The IOC tries in their own way to provide support to the NOC in getting their athletes ready for the Games. For example, we secured funds from the IOC to provide scholarships to 10 of our athletes (In weight-lifting, Taekwondo, boxing, wrestling and athletics) that will support them with the sum of \$1000 each every month for one year before the Olympic Games in London, and any additional travel costs to meet with specialists abroad. We monitored them. Some of them were in the USA, some were in England, some were in Cuba and some were in Nigeria. These funds go a long way in helping us prepare better, especially since we barely receive enough support from the public and private sectors".

Though C02 commended the IOC for the support it provides to the NOCs, it was also suggested that this aid should be granted to the smaller and less wealthy NOCs in order to boost their chances of competing fairly with their more developed and wealthy counterparts. The participant expressed this view in the following statements:

"I don't know how the IOC grants are disbursed across various NOCs but I suspect that the bigger and even more developed countries may receive more. The truth of the matter is, the more athletes you have participating in the

Olympics, the greater your medal hopes. Team GB for instance had over 500 athletes who participated in the London Olympics, not to mention China or the US. Now, how do you compare countries like that to Nigeria who only had 53 athletes, or even a country like Togo who had 10 athletes? So, I think some of the decisions of the IOC should be geared towards supporting the smaller and the less richer countries in developing their athletes to be ready to compete. Otherwise this thing is going to be a 'one horse race' for many years to come. It is possible that some of the IOC grants go to some of these countries (the big countries) who might not even need it. Do you think it is a coincidence that countries like China, America, Britain, Germany...France, Japan...Russia, do so well in the Olympics on a constant basis? It is because of the support and development strategy that they have in place for sports, which is also supported to a large extent by the partnership they have with the IOC. So, I think some of these things should be re-visited”.

4.5.1.1.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

Following the challenges earlier raised by C02 as accounting for the poor performance of their NOC at the London Olympics, the participant was asked to share thoughts on how these challenges could be addressed, moving forward. In responding to this, C02 emphasized the need for the country to adopt a more long-term approach to sports development rather than only paying attention to sports when in the face of competition. This point was made with the statement below:

“...We must start to view sports in our country as a long-term activity and make it a more cultural thing rather than something we pay attention to only when we have tournaments around the corner. Once we can have this mind-set, everything else will reflect this...in the way we prepare for competitions, in the level of monetary investment and even in the way we maintain our training facilities - because this is also very important”.

Secondly, C02 proposed the introduction and encouragement of sports at grassroots level. The participant made the following comments on this point:

“...Sports should be encouraged and supported from the grassroots and then we can build up from there. If you encourage sports to be played from the primary school stages and maybe open up youth clubs for different sporting

activities and provide the right support, you'll find out that you can identify young talents and help them through the journey to become professional athletes. When they become old you already have new ones coming up through the same process. So it's a circle. This is why we have now launched the 'rhythm and play' programme that I told you about earlier on, to get young people participating in sports. Though it might take some time for us to see the dividends, but we must at least start from somewhere".

Thirdly, C02 highlighted the importance for the private sector to be well involved in sports in the country in order for success to be achieved in competitions. It was noted that there was need to have *"more private sector driven investments in sports rather than being reliant on the government system which is known for its bureaucratic tendencies"*.

Furthermore, C02 made the following remarks on this point:

"...The Nigeria Olympic Committee of course is not government funded but more like an NGO so we also have our challenges of funds again because of the private sector. And again because of the strategic positioning of the NOC itself, it has to have what we call 'economic autonomy'. You attain this by partnering with the private sector. This was one of the reasons why we partnered with the Bank of Industry to look at the London Olympics beyond sports, which is part of our marketing strategy in the NOC. To see that our participation in the Olympics is not only about sports but also to project Nigeria positively (in terms of culture, tourism etc.) in London where there were people from over 250 countries present...so therefore, what I'm saying here is that you need to have strong partners in the business of sports to help you achieve this...Once the private sector is the driving force, then you're more sure of success. I also want to use the medium of your research to point out that the issue of sponsorship is a big challenge in sports generally in Africa and not until we get the private sector investing in sports....sponsoring athletes and so on, the situation is likely to be the same for a long time to come. That is why we have started to partner with organisations such as the Bank of Industry, Youdees Integrated Services Limited (YISL) etc".

Finally, the need for quick release of funds by government was also highlighted as another step that could make a significant change in the performance of the NOC in Olympic competitions. C02 expressed this view in the following statements:

“...The funds coming from government for the NOC to prepare for competitions such as this (the Olympics) must be released in good time. A lot of advance planning and preparation goes into getting the athletes ready for the Games. No matter how talented an athlete may be, if he or she does not get the right support in terms of preparation, you cannot get the right result. Last minute preparation can cost you medals. It can also have a negative impact on the athletes themselves, psychologically. So, since the government for now is still the main source of funding for the NOC, they should endeavour to make sure that the funds for international competitions are released in good enough time to enhance smooth preparations”.

4.5.1.2 Findings: C03-1 (Coach)

This section presents the findings from the semi-structured interview conducted with coach C03-1. The section starts with the presentation of the participant’s account of the country’s participation and performance in the 2012 London Olympics.

4.5.1.2.1 Participation and performance in London 2012 Olympics

Providing views as one of the country’s coaches at the London Olympics, C03-1 made the following initial remarks concerning preparation, target performance and expectations prior to the Games:

“...The ultimate goal for any country or athlete participating in the Olympics is to be able to win medals. Therefore all efforts from the parties involved...the government, the NOC, the sponsors, the coaching staff, the athletes and even the general public must be channelled towards this ultimate course. But the problem with this is that, it is very difficult to get everybody on the same page, at least I can say that about my country. It is very easy to set targets and expectations and all that kind of stuff...but your targets are of no good if the level of all-round preparation are not up to what is required to help you achieve those targets. For example, for London 2012, the NOC was given a target to win at least 11 gold medals. But how can you achieve this without the right foundation or support systems, which, at least for now in our

country, is the responsibility of the government to provide...the same people who set us these ridiculous targets? ”.

Speaking more specifically on medal expectations, it was revealed that there had been high hopes for at least three athletes from the athletes coached by C03-1 to win medals in the London Olympics. The participant made the following remarks:

“...Though I was very careful not to put too much pressure on my athletes, I was really hopeful that at least three of them would do well and win medals. I could see the hard work, dedication and commitment they showed in training and preparing for the Games. The expectations were also high for our relay teams to do well. But sometimes, there are other factors that actually determine your performance on the track...and I know this because I have been an Olympic athlete and medallist before. Nevertheless, our target was for all the athletes to advance in the rounds into the knockout stages to at least put them in positions to be able to compete for medals”.

The participant was asked to share views on the performance of the country as a whole in the London Olympics, in light of the set targets and expectations. In commenting on this, C03-1 said:

“...Like I said before, the key thing in Olympics is to win medals and that’s why it’s a sporting competition. So evaluating our performance from that point of view, I will say we did not meet our targets because no medals were won. It was a really poor outing because this was the first time since 1988 that we had participated in the Olympics without winning a single medal. The performance of our athletes were also poor at the Games because, contrary to our target that our athletes should at least qualify from the group stages, only three groups of athletes made it into the final rounds of their respective events...the women sprint relay team, the triple jumper Tosin Oke and the weightlifter Felix Ekpo. So when you judge from the statistics considering we had about 53 athletes in the Olympics competing in 8 sports, spread across over 35 events and yet we were only able to reach the final rounds in only 3 events let alone win any medals from them, you will agree it wasn’t a very good overall performance”.

In view of the points made by C02 claiming that the country had achieved other targets set for the London Olympics in the area of enhanced economic and political status, C03-1 held a different opinion about this claim and had this to say:

“...I think one of the biggest problems, not just in Nigeria but in the world of sports in general, is that there is always a constant attempt to try and merge sports and politics together. The two do not mix. Sports should be seen as a fair competition on the field of play and not a competition of economies or a tussle for political status between countries. Sports should bring nations together and give them the opportunity of celebrating their best athletes. So I disagree with the point that, we achieved economic and political goals because this should not be the main objective of competing in an Olympic tournament. Only the politicians would say such things”.

Also speaking on the claim made by C02 that some useful lessons had been learnt from the disappointing performance at the Olympics, C03-1 said:

“...Yes I agree that we have learnt some lessons but the question for me is that, when are we going to start implementing some of the useful lessons we have learnt? We know what the issues are and not until we start taking practical steps to address them then the situation concerning our performance will remain the same”.

4.5.1.2.2 Issues and challenges on performance in the 2012 London Olympics

With a clear understanding of the participant's view on the extent of the country's performance at the Olympic Games, the participant was asked to give an account of the issues thought to have been responsible for the country's poor performance at the Games. In response to this, C03-1 pointed out the following:

“...There are several issues that needs to be addressed in our country before we can consider ourselves battle ready to compete with the world's best. The first thing is the fact that we as a country must have a vision that we all believe in and are ready to work together to put everything necessary towards achieving. I struggle to see that vision, and I certainly struggle to see us all working together as one to achieve it, if any”.

Speaking more specifically on the issues, C03-1 noted that the issue of planning and late preparations had a major influence on the country's performance at the Games:

“...Planning plays a huge role in determining success in any endeavour of life. As the saying goes ‘if you fail to plan, you plan to fail’. And its not just planning, but planning effectively and strategically. Prior to the London Olympics, I didn’t think team Nigeria was well equipped enough because of the way things had been done haphazardly. And this all starts from the top of the chain to the bottom. The resources needed for each sport’s needs weren’t made available in sufficient time to enable us to prepare effectively. The whole system was very bureaucratic and things only started to move a few months to the Games. Budgets weren’t released on time and there was no way we could start anything without the necessary mobilization. Some of the athletes did not arrive at camp for training until around March for a competition which was meant to start in July. Now, bearing in mind that most countries that competed in the 2012 London Olympics started training for it the day the last Olympic Games ended in Beijing in 2008....some started even earlier, how then can you stand a chance with only 4 months of preparation? I have been a coach to the athletic team since 1996 and I can tell you that the general attitude towards planning is very discouraging. You won’t blame the athletes because they only work with what is available. I think it is the responsibility of the government of the day and the sports administrators who are in charge to sort this out. Once it can be tackled from the top, then everyone else can do what is expected of them”.

Secondly, C03-1 pointed out that another issue that had led to the underperformance of the country at the Olympics was that of effective communication between the various parties that had been involved with the country's preparations for the Games. The participant made the following remarks concerning this point:

“...I think there were too many groups involved with no clear distinction of roles or responsibilities. The presidency was involved, the ministry of sports, the sports commission, the sport federations, the NOC and so on. And most of the time, their roles often overlapped. There were just too many agencies and this made planning really slow and difficult. There is no need for such a

complicated system. Simple administrative systems go a long way to ensure that things are done effectively especially when it comes to planning, and it is only when things are done effectively that good performance can be demanded from the athletes”.

Another issue raised by the participant to have accounted for poor performance is that the country lacked systems that enabled the identification, development and monitoring of athletes. C03-1 pointed this out in support of the point raised by C02 of the country’s lack of sports development programmes in the grassroots. In expressing this view, C03-1 said:

“...It is time to go back to the trenches because I believe we can find potential athletes who could end up being better than the likes of Falilat and Mary Onyali. For a great country such as ours with a population of over 160 million, I’m sure we have the human resources to produce world-beaters and Olympic champions. We definitely have the talent, we just have to locate them and develop their potentials. At the moment, we lack the necessary mechanism in place to help us identify these new talents. That is why we keep recycling the old and tired ones. The whole process has been politicized. Things are not done on merit anymore. Otherwise I believe that if we go to the grassroots, we will find athletes, who with the right training and support, can win us medals”.

C03-1 raised the issue of the lack of standard training facilities for the athletes to train with as another factor that impeded the country’s performance. This view had also been shared by C02 in his interview. C03-1 in expressing this view said:

“...The world of sports has changed drastically from what it used to be back in my days as an athlete. Technology has made training facilities more sophisticated than they were and there is no doubt that this enhances performance. When you look at the countries that tend to do very well at the Games, you realize that their athletes have the opportunity of training in modern and world-class facilities. We lack such an environment here in our country. There is no way you can train with sub-standard facilities and expect to go and do well when you make use of standard facilities. The stadiums we have are dilapidating along with all the facilities they have due to a poor

maintenance culture. So we end up spending so much to go and train our athletes abroad due to lack of these facilities. How many can we really train considering the very limited funds to do so? Training the athletes abroad does not even give us enough time to stay together and train as a team because the athletes are all training differently in different parts of the world. So these are some of the issues that need to be looked into”.

Speaking conclusively on the issues that affected the country’s performance at the Olympic Games, C03-1 again highlighted the issue of funding and sponsorship, which had also been raised by C02 in his interview. It was noted that the lack of enough funds and sponsorship was a big limitation to the desired achievements at the Olympic Games. C03-1 made the following remarks:

“...It all comes down to funding. Success in the Olympic Games comes with its own cost implications. Countries that do very well often invest heavily to get there. In our case, the funds are barely enough to do anything. I don’t think that the government as the main sponsors of our Olympic participation, provide us with enough of what we need to enable us perform to our expectation. There is a lot of mis-management and corruption in the system, which I would not like to go into details about. But if only the little resources we have can be properly allocated and managed, then we stand a better chance of gaining more. That is why the private sector needs to get involved by way of sponsorship. Things are more effective with private sector involvement. When you look at successful countries like USA, Great Britain and Canada, the private sector is in the driving seat. This is what we must replicate in Nigeria”.

4.5.1.2.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

In view of the issues raised, C03-1 made the following suggestions to address the issues:

“...First of all, we must ensure that the country has a clear vision of what it hopes to achieve from sports in general. Then this vision must be well communicated to every party involved to ensure that we are all fully aware of the goals, and are all committed to this one course. Once this is done, our orientation to the way we do things will become better in all areas”.

C03-1 also pointed out that effective planning and early preparation for Olympic Games is crucial to the improvement of performance. The participant expressed this point in the following words:

“...I cannot over-emphasize the need to start preparations early. We shouldn't leave it until the last minute. There's nothing stopping us from projecting ahead and planning for the Olympics to be held in 2020 or even 2024. That is what great countries do. We must change our 'fire-brigade' attitude towards Olympic preparations because it will continue to cost us medals. To give you an example, it's already 2014 and we haven't even started making any serious preparations towards the 2016 Olympics in Rio. Whereas, other countries who mean business, are already in the heat of their preparations. So these are some of the things that need to change”.

On the issue of the lack of effective communication between the parties involved in the preparation of the country for Olympics, C03-1 made the following suggestion:

“...There shouldn't be too many agencies involved in sports administration. It makes effective communication difficult and makes the system very bureaucratic. This also causes a lot of interference in the set plans of the NOC. Matters on the track and field should be left to the hands of coaches and the technical staff and not politicians. We should be given the freedom to do our job without fear or favour”.

Furthermore, C03-1 also supported the view of C02 proposing that, the establishment of sports development programmes, especially in the grassroots, will provide an opportunity to identify a new crop of athletes that could help improve the country's performance in the Olympics. The participant made the following statements to support this view:

“...We need to set up sport programmes across every nook and cranny in the country. We must go to the primary schools and possibly introduce the study of some of the Olympic sports into our curriculum. Knowledge, they say is power. So we must start to teach our young ones from a very tender age and that is how you prepare for the future. By so doing, you keep the cycle going. It is like food production...you plant, you water and nurture, and then you

harvest, and then you repeat the same process all over again. Also, the government must ensure that the right environment is created to support the growth of young talents. Facilities must be available; opportunities must be created for them to get exposure and so on”.

Lastly on the issue of funding and sponsorship, C03-1 proposed that the way forward was for the private sector to get involved:

“...The only way we can solve the problem of lack of funds is by bringing the private sector into the picture. It’s all about sponsorship. The private sector needs to be sensitised on the need to invest in the sporting sector. Things shouldn’t be left in the hands of government any longer. I strongly believe we have the talent in our country. We are blessed but we just need the right people to invest in us in order to bring out the best in us. The level of support countries like USA Australia and Canada have, reflects their performance in world sports. And this is mostly down to good sponsorships from the private sector. This is what is needed in Africa for us to have a competitive edge”.

4.5.1.3 Findings: C03-2 (Athlete)

This section presents the findings from the semi-structured interview conducted with participant C03-2.

4.5.1.3.1 Participation and performance in London 2012 Olympics

Sharing views as one of the country’s athletes at the London Olympics, C03-2 gave the following insight on the team’s preparation and targets for the Games:

“...Participating in the 2012 Olympics in London was very special to me personally because it was my debut appearance in Olympics. I had represented my country in the All-African Games, the World Championship and the Commonwealth Games, but never in Olympics. So I was extremely excited about participating in London. My personal goal for the Games was to qualify from the Heat stage into the final stages and hopefully win a medal. I also knew I had to beat my best performance of 13.14 in the 100m hurdles if I was going to stand a chance of winning a medal. I was motivated from my performance at the 2011 All-Africa Games where I came 1st in the 100m hurdles. And of course, I wanted to make my country proud at the Olympics”.

Speaking on whether preparations had been done with the rest of the team of athletes and if there had been any general targets set for her by the NOC, C03-2 revealed that most of the preparation had been done individually and the expectation set by the NOC was for her to qualify from the Heat. The participant made the following remarks:

“...I’ve come to realize as an athlete for Nigeria that what you need the most is self-motivation and hard work. I had to be a step ahead with my preparations because they didn’t have a proper calendar or plan for our preparations. I had to make my own personal arrangements for my training. What made it more difficult in my case was the fact that it was an individual sport. I stayed back in the US to have my own training...it worked out better for me. I only joined up with the rest of the team some months to the Games which shouldn’t be the ideal scenario...but there was no other option”.

Speaking on the issue of poor performance at the Games, C03-2 admitted that personal performance and that of the entire team fell below expectation, which brought about the lack of medals. The participant expressed this view by saying:

“...It is not just that we didn’t win medals, our performance at the Games were really poor. Certainly for me, I was highly disappointed for not making it past the first Heat with a time of 13.56. This wasn’t as good as my performance at the All-Africa Games. It was a poor outing for Team Nigeria as a whole. I wouldn’t blame the athletes because I know how much effort we put in, but sometimes when you don’t get the needed support to boost your performance on the track, then things can go wrong. I’m hoping we have learnt some useful lessons in regards to preparations because that’s the most important thing”.

4.5.1.3.2 Issues and challenges on performance in the 2012 London Olympics

The participant, in sharing views on the issues thought to be responsible for the country’s poor performance in the Games, pointed out that the issue of poor preparations had been the main factor that impacted on their performance. This was expressed in the following comments:

“...I have been a professional athlete in the United States for quite some time now, starting in my days as hurdler for the University of Houston where I’m now back there as coach...and by the way, we had three athletes from the University of Houston who competed for Team USA at the London Olympics. I know the level of preparation these guys make and when I compare it to what we do back home, the difference is certainly clear that we don’t do enough. And I think this is down to poor organization. There should be a specific plan for each sport and the athletes competing in those sports, and this should be done from day one. In my little experience representing my country, I’ve noticed that we always try to assemble things at the last minute and it never goes right”.

Another point that was raised by C03-2 was lack of long-term support for the athletes. The participant stated that the country did not have an atmosphere where athletes can thrive or improve on their abilities. In expressing this view, C03-2 said:

“...There are a lot of talented sportsmen and women in Nigeria, but it is sad to see how their dreams die due to lack of support systems that will help them develop their talents. There are no opportunities to gain exposure, the sports facilities are in a poor state, no mentorship programs for young athletes, no access to first-class coaching and training facilities, no sponsorships or funding, no effective healthcare services for the athletes, no wellbeing and lifestyle support for the athletes and their families...the lapses are too numerous to mention. This is the reason why most athletes go elsewhere in search of greener pastures because the sporting environment back home is not conducive enough. These things must first be addressed before we can start talking of improving our performance because they all have a role to play. Most of my other colleagues who represented Nigeria at the London Olympics have other jobs that they do back home in order to be able to support themselves and their families. Ideally, this shouldn’t be so because they are supposed to focus their time and attention on being athletes, which is a career by itself. But they have their attention divided with other things, which prevents them from maximizing their athletic abilities. If you are going to be a successful athlete, you must dedicate all your time and energy to working at it

and not being distracted doing something else. But unfortunately, this isn't the case back home and this is why our performances are the way they are".

C03-2 also raised the issue of education as another challenge that needed to be addressed. It was highlighted that education plays an important role in the development of the athletes, which in turn could be reflected in their performance. In making this point, C03-2 said:

"...The role of education in modern day sports cannot be overlooked. It is not just enough to have a talent, but you need to know everything there is to know about your talent in order to be able to use it maximally. Athletes should not be considered to be people who couldn't make it through school. That was a mentality of the past. Our athletes back home need to be encouraged and supported to get educated at least in a similar area to what they are doing. I've been fortunate to obtain a bachelor's degree in kinesiology-exercise for Health professions with a minor in psychology. I also have a Masters degree in physical education-motor behaviour, with specialty in injury prevention and rehabilitation. Obtaining these qualifications have added value to my athletic career and have also impacted positively on my performance. I have done very well in previous tournaments. It was just in London that I didn't do so well...I must have been overwhelmed with it being my first time in the Olympics, but I'm sure the next one will be better".

4.5.1.3.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

Commenting on the strategies that can be adopted to improve performance based on the challenges highlighted, C03-2 pointed out that early preparations and a well-laid out plan for every sports needs must be put in place if better performances are to be achieved in the Olympic and other international competitions. The participant noted this by saying:

"...We must learn to start our preparations early. There must also be a well mapped out plan for every sport's needs. We must adopt certain practices which we see other successful countries use in terms of how we prepare for international competitions. We should have a training calendar with strict adherence. The government and those responsible must provide what is needed in order to meet our targets, and this must be provided on time too.

Organization and coordination are very crucial. We should have a common training camp as a team and not to be left alone to sort ourselves out individually because working together with other athletes also brings motivation”.

C03-2 also proposed a total transformation of the sporting system in the country to enhance the development, growth and support of athletes throughout their sporting careers and in life after sports. The participant expressed this view by saying:

“...We must make the environment conducive and convenient for athletes. To this, there needs to be a complete transformation of the sporting system in the country. Athletics needs to be seen as a career and the athletes need to be provided with the right support in all the areas I mentioned before...education, training, standard sports facilities, coaching, mentoring, sponsorships, healthcare and general wellbeing. We must create an environment where all these things are present before we can get the best from our athletes. Even after the career of an athlete is over, there should still be some support provided to help them adjust to life after sports”.

4.5.2 Case study 2: Zimbabwe

Country background

Zimbabwe, another former British colony, is a southern African country located between South Africa and Zambia. It is also bordered by Botswana and Mozambique. Zimbabwe became an independent country in 1980 following its first free elections held in 1979 and since then, operates a parliamentary democratic system of government. The country’s capital city is Harare and has an estimated population of 13.1 million (CIA, 2013). Zimbabwe’s official language is English, however, there is still a presence of other languages. Some of the country’s natural resources include coal, chromium ore, gold, iron ore, copper and tin. Though Zimbabwe has recorded some economic growth of 5% to 9% in recent years between 2010 and 2012, the country still faces quite a number of difficult economic problems such as underemployment, policy uncertainty, infrastructure and regulatory deficiencies, a large external debt burden and on-going indigenisation pressure.

4.5.2.1 Findings: E02 (NOC President/Secretary General)

This section presents the findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with the participant E02 from Zimbabwe. The section starts with a brief background about the country's participation in the Olympics, which is then followed by the findings obtained from the investigation.

4.5.2.1.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

Zimbabwe's National Olympic Committee was created in 1934 and had coordinated the country's (then known as Rhodesia) pre-independence participation in the Olympics. However, the NOC was recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1980, and the country's first official participation was in the Olympic Games in the same year following the gaining of national independence. Since the NOC's first participation in 1980, it has won a total of eight Olympic medals, including 3 gold, 4 silver and a bronze. Giving her views on the country's overall participation in the Olympic Games, E02 had this to say:

"I wouldn't say we have made substantial progress at all. You may say we have won 8 medals in the Olympics since our first participation, but when you look at the fact that we have won them across two disciplines, it tells you the progress is not all round. As a matter of fact, out of those 8 medals, we only won one in field hockey and the other seven in swimming. Interestingly, all the 7 medals won in swimming have been won by just one athlete, Kirsty Coventry. This shows that it has almost been a one horse race in our Olympic participation over the years and have not yet been able to replicate our success in swimming to other disciplines. Not until we are able to do this can I say we are successful in Olympics".

Though some of the participants interviewed took pride in their NOCs' consistency in participating in the Olympic Games, E02 maintained a different view by making the following remarks:

"...Of what good is your participation when there is nothing to show for it? The beauty of being in the Olympics is going there to challenge for medals not going there just to make up numbers. The mentality of 'it just ok to participate' is what has made us in this part of the world (Africa) remain

backward in the world front. If we don't seek to participate with the intention of making a significant impact then there's really no point".

4.5.2.1.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

To secure a clear understanding of Zimbabwe's performance in the London Olympics, there was a need to gain an insight into the NOC's goals and objectives prior to the Games. E02, in responding to this, said:

"...Well, we had quite a small delegation of only seven athletes in London, competing in four sports so the objectives for us were straight forward...to win medals. That was our overall goal. We had one of the most successful Olympic athletes (Kirsty Coventry) in our team who was also our flag bearer, and this was also a boost to our confidence that we could go to London and win but unfortunately we didn't".

Shedding some light on how much of their objectives were achieved in London, E02 expressed disappointment of the fact that no medals had been won. This was what the participant had to say:

"...our main goal was to win medals and this wasn't achieved. We have had a fairly good medal run in swimming in recent years and this was the first time since 2000 we failed to win a medal. So we feel quite disappointed not to have won any. The situation would have been much more different if we had more athletes competing because I believe you stand a better chance of achieving results in Olympics with the more athletes you have. So it's simple, we didn't meet up our goals as an NOC because there were no medals to show for it".

Following the views of disappointment expressed by E02 with the performance of their NOC at the Games, the researcher followed this up with a question on the challenges that had accounted for this poor performance. In responding to this, the participant made the following remarks:

"I'll look at it from a very holistic perspective because there is the event, and then the reason why we are at the event which is really the athletes, and I think for Zimbabwe, that would always be a point that we are very concerned with i.e. the support that you get in order to be able to qualify as athletes to participate in the Games - because without the athletes participating, there

are no Games. So for us, I think that is always the biggest challenge and I think all organisers do a fantastic job at putting the scholarships in place but it is one of the issues that has come up. Scholarships should be there for a longer period but we do tend to rely a lot on a very menial amount of money when preparation for an Olympic Games is very much a long-term thing, so I think our policy sticks to ensuring that athletes qualify. We are now moving away from getting wild card entries and taking athletes just because they have been given an opportunity. So, you want to qualify more athletes, the potential is there, but it is the resources to ensure that they are given time and support well ahead of time in order to be able to participate successfully”.

Another challenge highlighted by E02 was the lack of insufficient funding and private sector sponsorship. The participant noted that the financial support received by the NOC from the government was simply not enough to sustain the full agenda of the NOC in preparing athletes to effectively compete in the Olympics. E02 further suggested that the private sector through companies rarely invests in sports activities in the country due to a lack of incentives from such investments. To buttress this view, E02 made the following comments:

“A phenomenon for small NOC's is that you rely totally on IOC funding which is program specific so, even the travel, the subsidies are IOC specific so that's what you tend to rely on. Very little support is gotten from within our country because sports culture and sponsorship are not very well understood or appreciated. Also, they are no incentives for companies to support sporting activities, so they feel like why should they get involved?”

The participant also pointed out the issue of lack of standard sporting infrastructure to effectively prepare athletes and linked this to the lack of sufficient resources. It was noted that there was also a lack of a good support structure in place for the athletes. These views were expressed in the comments below:

“...I look forward to a time when we can comfortably and conveniently train our own athletes at home with our own facilities but this is a long way off because we haven't got the infrastructure in place. It is nowhere near the standard of what we see abroad. And without this, it is difficult to have an effective support structure for the athletes. This is why, as a quick fix, athletes

get sent abroad to train. But the truth is that, this quick fix of training athletes abroad costs NOCs, especially those from Africa, more over a long period of time”.

Still speaking on the challenges faced by the NOC, E02 pointed out that another factor impeding on the performance of its NOC was in the area of research, an area which the participant said, was widely neglected in most of Africa as a whole. Though it was noted that this was a rather broad factor, the participant argued that conducting research is capable of exposing loopholes, which if addressed, can result in a significant improvement in Olympic performance of any NOC. The following remarks were made in view of this:

“...We do not have the culture of conducting research...not in many of the African countries. But even the few ones that do carry out research, there is also the question of - does your research help in what you are planning or what your projects are? The way they do research is, they sit there, gather dust and that's it...base line surveys, all sort of things are done but it doesn't lend information to whatever projects you are trying to drive. So, there might have to be a session where you educate people, you go ahead to say you need to first, find out and then develop your projects and activities based on your findings. In Zimbabwe for instance, the classic example I will give you is we believe that with the few resources we have we must channel them in specific directions where we have the greatest potential and we did a very basic survey and we came up with a strategy that we were directing our resources specifically to athletics, swimming and tennis, and over the three year period we were trying to do that, we realised we had a problem with one of the disciplines when we were given resources. We were probably not dealing with the base line problems which were development and equipment, there are some things we could not deal with because we had not researched enough. The bottom is where the problem is. So, we need to start from the bottom...do we have enough tennis sports? Do we have players? Do they have rackets? Do they have balls? Are they interested in tennis? There is a lot that needs to be done, working up from the base and then upward. Hence, I believe there is need for an educational process. You will have to tell people why there is a need to research and what difference it will make, and cite examples and case

studies. We constantly refer to Jamaica and say what do they do right? Why do they wake up one morning and decide they are going to change their mindset? What changed their focus and their direction? I would say time. We do not have patience. We want to see results NOW! Everything is now, now, now. So, all those things are what we need to educate people on, but I believe some of this education needs to start from a lot lower down for example in schools”.

Furthermore, the participant was asked if the project management of the London Olympic Games and their relationship with LOCOG had any impact on the performance of their NOC. In responding to this, E02 noted that there was no direct impact of the organisation of the Games with their NOC’s performance. The participant highlighted that there were no serious concerns in terms of logistics between LOCOG and their NOC.

Again, the participant was asked if the IOC or its decisions affected their performance at the London Olympic Games in any way. In responding to this, E02 noted that the IOC did not impact on their performance in any way. The participant acknowledged the support which the NOC receives from the IOC but emphasised not the need for the NOC to look towards getting support elsewhere as they could continue to rely on IOC funding.

4.5.2.1.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

The last question in this interview sought the views of the participant on the measures thought to be necessary to address the challenges earlier raised which led to the poor performance of their NOC in the Olympics. E02 made the following comments in response to this:

“...We need a paradigm shift. What it is I just feel there is so much we can do but we just don't quite know how to go about it, so we do need people talking to us to enable us change that mindset. We also, even as sports administrators need to change our own mindset because if we don't look in to it from that perspective, we are not going to make a difference and I'm sad to say, if you listen to some of the contributions being brought forward at our national and regional summits, and some of the comments made, you can see we have got a problem, a big problem! We set expectations and you will hear the zones

saying we must have twenty medals. It was twelve by twelve i.e. twelve medals by 2012, now it is sixteen by sixteen i.e. sixteen medals by 2016. On what do you base such projections? Is it just because the number sounds good? So we have a lot to do. The mindset for me is the key. When you have people working with the right attitude and mindset then you can achieve anything you want to achieve. Even if you get all the funding in the world, without people who have the right mindset then you are still likely to achieve nothing”.

4.5.2.2 Findings: E03-1 (Coach)

The findings from the interview conducted with coach E03-1 are presented in this section. The section highlights the country’s participation and performance in the 2012 London Olympic Games from the study participant’s point of view, which covers events that occurred prior, during and after the Games.

4.5.2.2.1 Participation and performance in London 2012 Olympics

Reacting to the general participation of Zimbabwe in the London Olympics, E03-1 made the following remarks regarding the country’s preparation for the Games:

“...To be honest, there was not much of an organised approach applied to our preparations for the Games. Having the opportunity to have worked with other athletes from overseas in the past...from more affluent nations, and comparing it to what is obtainable in this part of the world, it is quite clear that the level of preparations are largely dissimilar. And this is primarily due to the lack of funds available to carry out such preparations for big tournaments like the Olympics. There isn’t any hype about the Olympics in Zimbabwe, especially when compared to what you would find overseas or in somewhere like Canada where I come from for instance...its nowhere close. And I think that also reflects on the level of preparations made. Its not often a large delegation taken to the Games...we’re talking a contingent of around 7 or 8 athletes. So usually preparations are done on a very small scale and are focused on the athletes that competing. In very numerous occasions, these athletes with the support of their personal coaches, would have to draw up their individual training programmes rather than wait endlessly for the government or the NOC to come up with a detailed training programme, which they hardly ever do”.

Commenting on their objectives and expectations for the London Olympics, E03-1 expressed views suggesting that, although the ultimate aim of the NOC was to compete for medals at the Games, there was a lack of clarity of objectives for the Games. In presenting this view, the participant said:

“...As a group, I don’t think we had a well defined ambition for London. When you talk about winning medals in Olympic Games, you need to have a road map with clear steps on how you intend to achieve this. It is this road map that informs you on what your expectations are or should be, and I think this was lacking in our prep for the Games. Winning a medal is only a final output of the steps you take, but the steps you take to get this result are the most important aspects of the whole journey and this is how you measure your achievements...For my athlete, I was more focused on getting her gain from the exposure and experience of competing alongside great athletes from other parts of the world which also helps her personal development and confidence as an athlete...So in all honesty, our target wasn’t to win a medal in London, but to use it as a platform to build up for the next Games in Rio where we are more hopeful of winning something, and I believe we achieved that”.

In commenting on the performance of Zimbabwe and other African countries at the London Games, E03-1 expressed the following views:

“...There was certainly a feeling of disappointment about the overall performance of our team and I believe this was also the case for many other African countries. The story is always sweeter if you win a medal but we didn’t hence the disappointing feeling. That said, let’s not forget that in the Olympics, you compete against the best of the bests in the world, with athletes who get 100% all-round support in terms of funding, training, medical care and all that kind of stuff. So to come up against such people, especially with our type of preparatory background, presents it own challenges. All the hopes of winning a medal in the Games had been on Kirsty who is a 7-time Olympic medal winner and a fantastic athlete. But unfortunately it wasn’t to be in London. So you find out that, sadly, Olympic success for this country has been based solely on individual brilliance and this needs to change before any

meaningful progress can be made...This phenomenon isn't too different from other nations in Africa".

In sharing views on whether Zimbabwe's participation in the 2012 London Olympics had made any socio-economic impact on the country and whether such impact could be used as a way of measuring their performance and success in the Games, E03-1 had this to say:

"I am not in the best position to comment on this but if you ask me, I think sports should be sports and politics should be politics! We shouldn't fuse both. Because as a sports purist, I think when you do that, it defeats the whole purpose of the course and it divides the attention of everybody including the athletes, coaches and even organisers. The whole thing gets too messy. I think it does more damage than good, but this is my own opinion anyway".

4.5.2.2.2 Issues and challenges on performance in the 2012 London Olympics

When asked to highlight some of the issues believed to have accounted for the country's poor performance in the Olympics, E03-1 revealed that the general sports culture in the country was deficient as a result of lack of the financial capacity to sustain it. Although it was acknowledged that the country is relatively poor and had more pressing challenges than funding sports and specifically the Olympics, the participant noted that their participation and performance in the Games was to a large extent impacted by this factor. In expressing this view, E03-1 said:

"...The issue of funding is always there. But this is made worse when there is a lack of interest shown by those at the top and this can be quite frustrating for the athletes and their coaches. At the moment, there is quite a lackadaisical attitude towards sports in this part of the world and this also breeds other issues. And I think that needs to change first. But I don't disagree that funding is quite critical to all of these".

Speaking on other issues which were believed to have affected their performance in the Games, E03-1 noted that there had been a lack of a clear national agenda for the Games which made it difficult to set clear goals and objectives. The following statements were made to express this view:

“...Like I mentioned earlier, we didn’t have a road map which clearly pointed out what our mission was nor how we planned on achieving it. This is not something you draw up a few months or years to the Games. The winners do this many years in advance before the Olympics. In fact, most successful countries plan ahead over several Olympic Games. This definitely reflects on the way you preparations are carried out. It was obvious in our preparation that we didn’t have a clear agenda or game plan trying to put things together only a few months to the Games”.

E03-1 also highlighted the issue of lack of modern training facilities and sporting infrastructure as having an impact on their overall performance in London. The participant expressed this view thus:

“...Clearly, the training facilities and environment available are nowhere near close to what you will find in developed societies and this for me is a major setback. For example, my athlete and I faced stiff challenges in the build up to the Games particularly in finding a training site for our rowing. The training ground we had initially used which was a dam in the north of Harare was affected by a severe drought that plagued the area causing the water levels to shrink by over half its size. We then moved our training to another larger dam, which we discovered was heavily infested with crocodiles and hippos. So we’d had to plan our practice outside the feeding hours of the crocs as well as hire a professional hunter to be on the lookout from my boat just in case we were attacked by these wild animals. Not to mention the fact that we had to train in a borrowed boat, or camp out in hostels, or scrap meals together where we could. As a coach, it’s very difficult to prepare your athlete in these sort of extenuatingly dangerous and life threatening circumstances. So to have them compete and win against other athletes who have it all going right for them is indeed a big ask in all fairness”.

Another issue pointed out by the participant was that of the absence of an effective system in place to manage sports development and implementation. In expressing this view E03-1 said:

“...Apart from the issue of funding, there seem to be a broader issue which relates to the inexistence of a system where athletic talents are identified,

trained and developed into elite athletes. That's what you find overseas. This is something that may be more policy based, but I think it needs to be addressed as well. Because this is what gives you continuity, otherwise what happens is...once a breed of good athletes is over you struggle to replace them".

In a further comment on the issues and challenges thought to have impacted on their performance, E03-1 made mention of factors such as communication, lack of application of strategy and the over involvement of government to have also contributed to the poor outcome of the country's participation in the Games. This view was expressed in the following comment:

"...I think the government were too bureaucratic in the way they tried to get things done. There wasn't a hint of strategy in our organisation. These days you can't do things haphazardly and expect to get away with it...not with the way the world has evolved. We're talking about the Olympics here...the world's largest sporting event. So for a country participating for instance, you have the athletes, coaches, the technical staff, the medics including physios and so on, the team chefs, those responsible for sorting out accommodation, those responsible for liaising with the Games organisers and host of other people working behind the scene. So it's a very complex web. So the big question is, 'how do you effectively manage all these people?' because everyone needs to work together for results to be achieved. There needs to be clear delegation of tasks, clear communication between all parties and so on...you pretty much manage it like a project. And I think this is what those successful countries do better than us".

4.5.2.2.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

In providing views on the measures that could be applied to improve future performance of the country, E03-1 noted that a change in orientation on the way sport matters were being handled in the country was essential. The participant added that such change could be in the form of a review of sport policy in the country. This point was expressed thus:

"...First, I think the whole idea of sports in the country should be taken more seriously. The government should come up with a more comprehensive game

plan or policy on sports advancement, which will spell out the missing elements that I mentioned earlier. Doing this will be a good starting point for all other changes to follow. This is the foundation”.

In addressing the issue of funding, E03-1 highlighted the need to bring in more private sector participation through sponsorships. This view was expressed thus:

“...Its simple, get the private sector on board! Let the government do less and let sponsors do more”.

Another step needed in improving future Olympic performances as noted by the participant was the putting in place of grass-root programmes that encouraged the identification and developments of new talents. This view was expressed in the following words:

“...I think once you have a well laid out sport policy, it will address this issue. There should be a nation-wide initiative that makes it possible to identify young talents and to help them achieve their dreams of becoming elite athletes. This is healthy for the overall development of sports in the country”.

Finally, E03-1 emphasised the importance of adopting a programme-project approach in planning and preparing for the Olympics. The participant made the following remarks in expressing this view:

“...You have to be strategic about your planning and preparations. Set up specifically tailored programmes for each sport. This might not necessarily be programmes designed to provide immediate results but certainly with time, you reap the benefits as long as such programmes remain effectively managed. Get the right people on board to manage them. Set realistic and achievable short term goals and build up from there. Certainly if we start to treat each Olympic Games as a project of its own under the auspices of a bigger developmental programme then I believe we can make remarkable progress”.

4.5.2.3 Findings: E03-2 (Athlete)

This section presents the findings from the semi-structured interview conducted with participant E03-2. The aim of this interview was to gain a different perspective of the

research issues as well as verify and validate findings obtained from the other two participants from this case study.

4.5.2.3.1 Participation and performance in London 2012 Olympics

In commenting on the general preparation of the country for the Olympics, E03-2 seemed not to have been very involved in the collective preparation of the country's Olympic team for the London Games and knew very little of any specific steps taken in this direction. The following remarks were made concerning this:

"...I don't think we had any organised training timetable, collectively or individually, in preparation for the Games. Even if there was, I wasn't aware of it neither did I participate in it. I had all my preparations done abroad with my personal coach. I met up with the rest of the guys a few weeks to the Games".

Speaking on whether there had been any set targets by her NOC for the Games and if this had been well communicated to the athletes, E03-2 responded in the negative suggesting that there hadn't been a detailed outline of the specific targets for their participation in the Games. It was further revealed that the country's hopes of winning any medals at the tournament had largely depended on the participant's personal performance. The following remarks were made to buttress this point:

"We definitely wanted to do well in London but there were no clear goals communicated to us. I knew what I wanted to achieve as a person, and I'm sure the other athletes all had their individual goals and expectations, but as a team I didn't get the feeling that there was a strong conviction of what we wanted to achieve or what our NOC wanted to achieve. I knew everyone was looking up to me. It's humbling to know that the entire country looks up to you, and I really wanted to live up to that expectation and to make everybody proud. But at the same time that feeling puts you under pressure and could affect your performance".

Giving an insight on personal goals and objectives for the Games, E03-2 said:

"...Having tasted Olympic glory in the past, for which I feel very privileged and grateful to God for, I was hoping to replicate my performance in the previous Olympic Games and win some medals for my country in London but

unfortunately, that didn't happen. I also wanted to break my record...I always try to break my personal best record in every competition. It gives me a sense of achievement, but that again wasn't to be so in all it wasn't the best of events for me and the country in general".

4.5.2.3.2 Issues and challenges on performance in the 2012 London Olympics

In pointing out some key issues that were thought to have affected their performance in the London Olympics, E03-2 agreed with both E03 and E03-1 that funding had been a major setback for the country in achieving its full potential in the Games. The participant made the following remarks to express this view:

"...In Zimbabwe, we don't have the financial power to fund the elaborate preparations that we should make for a major sporting event such as Olympics. For big and wealthy countries like the United States, Canada, China, the UK, it's an ideal world for athletes but it's not an ideal world back home in Zimbabwe. This is a major challenge for an elite athlete".

The participant also tied the issue of funding to a number of other challenges such as planning and effective preparations, lack of training facilities and support programmes for athletes. The other two participants from this case country had also pointed out some of these factors. In expressing this view, E03-2 noted that:

"...A lot of things depend on funding. Without the available funds, it is difficult to plan, or prepare effectively, or provide the necessary infrastructure to help the athletes train, or even support the athletes with things like health care, dieting and general lifestyle support to the standard of what their colleagues in other parts of the world are getting. Its really unachievable without adequate funding. And not every athlete in Zimbabwe can afford to pay for their own training abroad so I believe this is a big issue for us".

Furthermore, E03-2 pointed out that another issue that needs to be looked into is the exposure, enlightenment and education of the athletes in the country in order to bring them up to speed with current advances in their respective sports disciplines and in the world of sports in general. This point was expressed thus:

"...The world of sports today has become more advanced than it was maybe 10 or 20 years ago. There are a lot of improvements being made in the area of

research and technology on a day-to-day basis...most of which are off the field. So for an athlete, it is very important to keep up with these changes and the way to do that is by being educated, enlightened and gaining exposure at every opportunity you find. Having informed knowledge about your sport puts you at an advantage as an athlete. At the moment, these sort of opportunities are not available for our athletes in Zimbabwe”.

4.5.2.3.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

In suggesting ways of improving future performance in the Olympics, E03-2 again noted that one of the key issues to be addressed was the issue of funding. The participant advised that the government needed to devise a way of generating more financial support for the Olympic participation and for sports in general. One of the ways proposed was through attracting investors from the private sector, a view which was also expressed by other participants in the study. In expressing this, E03-2 said:

“...Once you are able to get the funding aspect sorted, it becomes easier to tackle other challenges. The government should make room for financial investors from the private sector and other multinational corporations to come and invest in the country’s sporting industry. This can be in form of sponsorships, scholarship programmes and so on. But first, the government must make the environment conducive and attractive enough for anybody coming to invest. If this can be achieved, then it’ll make a whole lot of difference”.

E03-2 also suggested that there was a need to commence early preparations for the Games as well as the need for the athletes to spend time together to bond before the Games as it is believed this would lift team spirit and also have a positive impact on their performance during the Games. The participant made the following remarks to express this view:

“...We must also learn to start our preparations on time and not wait until the last minute as is often the case. It is also important for all of us to spend a reasonable amount of time together before proceeding for the Games. I believe this helps us bond together and improves our team spirit. Its also good for our confidence and performance”.

4.5.3 Case study 3: Egypt

Country background

Egypt is a northern African country bordered by the Gaza Strip, Israel, Libya and Sudan, and is regarded as one of the world's great civilizations. The country's capital is Cairo. The history of Egypt is traced as far back as 3200 B.C., with several dynasties including the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Byzantines, ruling over Egypt at different points in time. The Arabs introduced Islam and the Arabic language in the 7th century and they also ruled for the next six centuries thereafter. Subsequent events in the 19th century, such as, the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869 resulting in Egypt being an important world transportation hub, led to the seizure of Egypt's government by Britain in 1882 in an ostensible attempt for Britain to protect its investment. However, in 1922, Egypt secured partial independence from Britain and subsequently acquired complete sovereignty in 1952. Egypt has a rapidly growing population estimated at 85.2 million (July 2013), the largest population in the Arab world. The country's natural resources include petroleum, iron ore, natural gas, limestone, phosphates and zinc among others. However, some of its main exports are crude oil and petroleum products, textiles, cotton and metal products. In return, Egypt's main imports are machinery and equipment, chemicals, fuels, foodstuffs and wood products. Over the years, Egypt's economy had been highly centralised around the fertile Nile valley, where most of its economic activities take place. Though recent regimes have pursued aggressive economic reforms towards attracting foreign investment and facilitating GDP growth in an attempt to diversify the economy, and despite the relatively high levels of economic growth achieved through those efforts, a high level of public discontentment could still be perceived, as general living conditions for the average Egyptian remain poor. The unrest, which erupted in January 2011, further exacerbated the situation as the Egyptian Government was forced to backtrack on its effort towards economic reforms, increasing social spending to address public dissatisfaction. However, the country's political uncertainty has accounted for a significantly slow growth rate of the economy and reduced government revenue, and economic growth is likely to remain slow for a number of years to come. The knock-on effect of this has mostly impacted on the country's manufacturing, tourism and construction sectors of the economy.

4.5.3.1 Findings: G02 (NOC President/Secretary General)

This section presents the study findings from the second semi-structured interview conducted with participant G02 from Egypt, beginning with a brief background about the country's Olympic participation.

4.5.3.1.1 Brief overview of participation in the Olympic Games

Egypt's first participation at the Olympic Games was in 1912 in Stockholm following the creation of its National Olympic Committee in 1910. Egypt has had its athletes compete in every Olympic edition since 1912, apart from the 1932 and 1980 Olympics. However, Egyptian athletes have only managed to win a total of 26 medals in all Olympic editions including the London 2012 Olympics, with weightlifting producing the highest number of medals for the country. In describing the country's participation at the Olympics, G02 made the following comments:

"...We have been there (in the Olympics) for almost a century now, maybe one of the oldest countries from Africa, if not the oldest. Our level of involvement in the Olympic movement in general has been very positive. We are very active in the Olympics because the Olympics has a huge influence in our national sports agenda and sports development in Egypt".

Though proud of their country's consistency and legacy in the Olympic Games, G02 acknowledged that they have been under-achievers in the Games as evident in their poor medal count per Olympics, as well as their overall poor performance in the Games. In expressing this view, G02 said:

"We know we have not really lived up to expectation in terms of our performance. We have won a number of Olympic medals, but maybe not as much to meet the status of our country, especially as long standing participants in the Games. Egypt is a very big country in Africa and maybe one of the most developed. We have good infrastructure and resources that can match with some of the countries in Europe. Considering the results from our participation in the Olympics, we feel disappointed we have not really lived up to expectation. It is very important to win medals in Olympics because this is the way to justify the resources invested in participating in the Games because this is very expensive. So if you don't win anything then it's a waste".

4.5.3.1.2 Performance in the London 2012 Olympics and challenges

The participant was asked to give some insight on the goals and objectives set by his country's NOC for the 2012 London Olympics before the Games. Details of these were intended to provide the researcher with a better picture of the extent of the country's performance at the Games based on their set objectives. Responding to this, G02 said:

"...The last time we were in London for the Olympics in 1948, we recorded our best ever Olympic performance till date, winning 2 golds, 2 silvers and 1 bronze and we finished 16th on the medal table. This has been our best performance and we saw London 2012 as another good opportunity to break this record. The Olympics are all about breaking records. This may not have to be records set by other countries or athletes, but also records set by your own country and athletes. Also, because we didn't perform very well in Beijing, coming home with only 1 bronze medal, we were very determined to do better in London. We participate in different sports in the Olympics and we have a lot of athletes that compete in these sports so we always very hopeful to win something. Of course, we are very disappointed that we didn't do as well as we expected".

Further commenting on his NOC's disappointment with the performance of their athletes at the Games and the overall performance of African countries, G02 said:

"...It is very disappointing when you put in so much effort towards something and the results that follow are negative. We also try to prepare our athletes very well before the Olympics so it is not good for our NOC that we did not do very well. We only won two silver medals and finished 58th on the medal table. Maybe if these were gold medals, we can finish higher. We are grateful to our athletes that won us these medals but at the same time, we know we did not do so well. The overall performance was very poor for Africa this time. This is no excuse for our poor performance, but I think the issue of poor performance needs to be addressed from a regional perspective".

Following the expression of dissatisfaction with the performance of their country at the London Olympic Games, the participant was asked to highlight some of the challenges encountered by their NOC in the build up to the Olympics and during the

Games which may have impacted on their performance at the Games. Though the participant wasn't willing to speak much on the subject, the few comments made suggested that there had been a few issues with preparations prior to Games and some challenges encountered during the Games:

"...I don't want to speak too much about this, but I think the important thing is that we now know our mistakes and will work to correct them next time. We experienced some set backs in our preparations for London and we hope to address them by planning better and in advance for the next Olympics. In London, we had two of our athletes disqualified for turning up late for their events due to a misinterpretation of the schedule times, plus a few other problems that we faced".

The participant also revealed that other factors relating to political instability in the country contributed to their overall performance at the Olympic Games. G02 expressed this view in the following statement:

"...Don't forget also that there was serious political crises in our country in 2011 before the Olympics, which also negatively affected our preparation for London. Because of the political instability at that time, a lot of things were brought to a standstill".

In clarifying as to whether their performance in the London Olympics had been impacted by the way the Games had been organised by LOCOG, G02 pointed out that there was no direct link between the organisation of the Games and their country's performance. This view was expressed in the following statements:

"We don't blame anybody for our performance in London. Of course we encountered one or two problems like the disqualification of some of our athletes, which could have been avoided. But the mistake was from our side not LOCOG. The Games were well organised, we were just unlucky not to win enough medals".

Also, in responding to the question on whether the IOC or any of its decisions impacted on their performance at the Games, G02 said:

“The IOC and our NOC enjoy a good relationship. They did not affect our performance in any way. We don’t have any problem with IOC”.

4.5.3.1.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

The final question from the interview sought to secure the views of the participant on the intended measures to be adopted by his country’s NOC to address the issues considered to have been accountable for their poor performance in the Olympics. Though not a lot had been revealed by G02 in his earlier comments on the issues that led to his country’s poor performance at the London Olympics, the participant maintained that the country’s political stability was crucial to any improvement measures that are to be taken. G02 made the following comments to express this view:

“...Politically, we have had a difficult period in our country recently, and without political stability, every other aspect of the society will suffer including sports. So before we can achieve anything meaningful, we must first of all make sure that things are stable on the home front. Because, it is only when you have a stable government that you can plan for the future. Of course, things are getting back to normal now so we are sure we can properly set our targets right now and carry out the necessary steps to help us achieve them”.

4.5.3.2 Findings: G03-1 (Coach)

This section presents findings from the interview conducted with coach G03-1. The section gives an account of the country’s participation and performance in the 2012 London Olympic Games from the participant’s point of view. The section primarily looks at the performance, challenges faced and the possible ways of addressing such challenges in the future.

4.5.3.2.1 Participation and performance in London 2012 Olympics

Speaking on the preparations that were made for the Games, particularly the preparation of his team, G03-1 noted that things did not go smoothly as a number of factors impeded their preparations. The participant made the following statements to express this point:

“...Our preparation was very difficult because of a number of reasons but mainly due to the security concerns in the country especially before the Olympics. There were security tensions, which resulted in the deaths of over 80 people in a local league match. For this reason the Egyptian league was cancelled and the domestic cup was also cancelled. Football was completely stopped! This made it impossible for us to check out for new players. It was also hard to play any friendly match in Egypt in preparation for the tournament, which meant we had to travel out to play and this was physically challenging for my team. One of the things that helped was the fact that I had already worked with most of my players for almost three years before the Olympics”.

Responding to the question on what the team objectives were, G03-1 revealed that their focus had been primarily for the team to do well and advance to the final stages of the competition and to try and win a medal for the country:

“...We had almost 120 athletes in London and of course we wanted to make possible that many of our athletes win medals and to increase our position in the medal ranking, but my main goal was in football and to help the national under-23 team do well in the Olympics and this was my assignment. I don't bother with assignments of other coaches and their athletes. Our goal was also to use the Olympics as a bedrock for our preparations for the 2014 World Cup held in Brazil”.

In evaluating the performance of the team in the Games and the overall performance of Team Egypt in the London Olympic Games, G03-1 admitted that, although it was disappointing to have been knocked out of the tournament, there was a sense of achievement with the team's performance especially for making it out of the group stage into the quarter-finals. The participant made the following remarks about this:

“I was disappointed that we were eliminated from the competition but I was very happy with my players because we showed great character and our ability despite not having the best of preparations...We had to play Brazil in our first game in the group stage which was a very big hurdle and we narrowly almost got some points there coming from 3 goals down to lose at 3-2...The other two games in the group stage were also very difficult but we

were able to get some points to make it through to the quarterfinals... We lost in the quarterfinals to Japan... Don't forget that this was the first time our football team was playing in the Olympic Games since 1992. Also, we didn't have any league football in our country for at least nine months before the Games, which put the players at a disadvantage competitively... It was also a poor tournament for the other athletes because Team Egypt could only win two medals".

4.5.3.2.2 Issues and challenges on performance in the 2012 London Olympics

In highlighting some of the issues believed to have impacted on the team's performance at the Games, G03-1 pointed out that there was the issue of poor preparations as a result of late arrival of funds from the government, which was also pointed out, was a common issue in other African countries. The participant expressed this view through the following remarks:

"...A lot of countries in Africa including ours rely on government funding which unfortunately only comes sometimes just before the team is sent out for the Games not beforehand or in between the four-year period, which is the preparatory time. For instance, for an improvement to be made by the African countries in the next Olympics in Rio, have funds already been released by their governments to get the athletes prepared or they are going to be released in 2016 just for the team to travel to the event and then what? Those are some of the challenges we face in our country and as a continent".

G03-1 also noted that the security issue leading to the suspension of league activities in the country prior to the Games played a huge part in impeding preparations. The problem, which the participant believed was politically instigated, made it challenging for the team to attain competitive fitness levels before the Games. This view thus:

"...We did not have any league for nine months... It affected the players' competitive shape. I believe the violence and deaths that led to this is all because of the political instability in the country. This really affected our preparations".

Speaking more broadly on the challenges encountered, G03-1 briefly highlighted the issue of investing in the development of sports in Egypt and in other African countries. The participant pointed this out in the following statements:

“...It's the level of sports development and investment in sports. Even in terms of preparation, investment ought to be made. Even if you have a large number of athletes if they are not well prepared then there is really no point. The level of sports development in Africa unfortunately, is generally very low and there are a few countries you can speak on. It's a little bit better in Egypt but in other parts of Africa it is very bad”.

Finally, G03-1 raised the issue of inconsistency in plans and programmes by the Government, the NOC and other sport governing bodies. The participant believed that the frequent changes to visions, policies, plans and programmes, including changes made in administrative structures could hamper the progress of the team:

“...We need to have long term plans and programmes which we must see through by allowing the experts to carry out this job from start to finish. When we change governments for example, this means the vision changes...this means policies will change...this means our sport programmes will change...this means plans will change...this means the people carrying out this tasks will change and this will have a big negative change on performance. We have seen this happen many times before in our country and this is not good for our sports”.

4.5.3.2.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

G03-1 spoke briefly on some of the measures believed to be essential in improving future Olympic performance of their country in view of the issues raised. First, the participant stressed the importance of early release of funds and early commencement of preparations:

“...We should have the necessary funds disbursed early enough to enable adequate preparations and arrangement to be made. It is always a big distraction to have to worry about these things when it is close to the time”.

Speaking on the issue of security and political stability, G03-1 stated that it was impossible for the situation on the political front not to have an impact on sports, and

the prevailing political issues in the country needed to be resolved or at least brought to a minimum before sports and sports performance in the country as a whole could improve. The participant expressed this point in the following comment:

“...Obviously we as coaches or the athletes don’t have any control over what happens in the political scene, but definitely the happenings and the decisions made by the politicians can have consequences on sports as we see from the events that took place before the Games. So it is very important to maintain peace politically in order to make the environment conducive for sporting activities to take place”.

Lastly, G03-1 emphasised the need to maintain long term sporting initiatives in the country to enhance effective sports development:

“...It is very important to set long term goals and follow them to the end. So for example, even if there is a change of government, the new government will remain committed to those goals...One thing that helped me very well in London was because I had been with the players a long time before the Games so I was used to them and they also understood my philosophy very well. But if I was replaced before the Games, the team will have the challenge of adapting to a new coach and his philosophy, which is not very easy to do, and this would have caused bigger problems. So consistency and continuity is very important in sports in all areas of our sports in Egypt”

4.5.3.3 Findings: G03-2 (Athlete)

The findings from the semi-structured interview conducted with participant G03-2 are presented in this section. The interview sought to gain another view on the subject from the point of view of another participant in the study.

4.5.3.3.1 Participation and performance in London 2012 Olympics

Giving account of the preparations made by their country for the Games, G03-2 admitted not to have known a lot about the general agenda of the NOC in terms of preparations. The participant made the following comments in this regard:

“...I don’t know so much about plan of NOC. My coach called me and I talk to him directly”.

When asked if the objectives set for their team for the Olympics had been well communicated, G03-2 gave the following reply:

“...This is first time I represent my country in Olympics so I’m very happy and we try our best but we didn’t win any medal. This was the main thing for us...to win”.

4.5.3.3.2 Issues and challenges on performance in the 2012 London Olympics

Asked to point out some of the key issues believed to have resulted in the poor performance of their team and the overall poor performance of Egypt in the Games, G03-2 gave responses in line with responses provided by G03-1 suggesting a lack of effective preparations for the Games. The participant expressed this view through the following comments:

“...We don’t play many matches together as team. Almost all the players play in Egyptian league but maybe two or three play in Europe. When they stop Egyptian league then it affect everybody because we can’t play. This affect our preparation”.

Although G03-2 had been quite conservative in the views provided, comments were made which suggested that there had been some issues with the sporting kits used by the athletes in the London Games. The following comments were made to suggest this:

“...Our kits not very good. Tear very quick...maybe fake but I don’t know and is not help us”

When asked if the participant knew of any other challenges within the NOC that was accountable for the country’s poor performance at the Games, G03-2 simply replied:

“No”

4.5.3.3.3 Strategies for addressing challenges/improving performance

When asked to suggest ways of improving their performance in the future, G03-2 only made comments relating to the football team and was reluctant to speak more broadly about other sports:

“...Next time we try to start early to play together because this help us to understand each other very well. We also try to play a lot of friendly match before the main tournament to helps us prepare”.

Although G03-2 had been reluctant to give away much in the interview, perhaps as a result of the difficulty in communicating in English, some of the views provided verified and validated the views of the other study participants from his country

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter presented and analysed the study findings from the data obtained mainly through the thirty-three semi-structured interviews conducted with the study participants in phase 3 and 4 of the study. The findings from the interviews generally revealed that, there was a general dissatisfaction among the participants with the way their countries had performed in the 2012 London Olympic Games, admitting that their performance had been poor and had not met the targeted expectation. In terms of measuring performance, the findings also revealed that the African countries measured their performance mainly by using medal charts and other NOC set objectives.

Following on from this finding, the data also suggested that a number of factors had been responsible for the poor performance of these African countries at the London 2012 Olympics, a number of which had been project management critical success factors (CSFs) discussed in the literature review chapter. In addressing the issues and challenges in sport performance, the findings revealed that the core areas to be focused on were in the areas of sport policy, project delivery and the socio-economic state of African nations.

On the basis of the findings and analysis from this chapter, the next chapter (chapter six) discusses the key issues raised and proposes a framework for improving the performance and success of African nations in Olympic Games.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The researcher in the previous chapter presented and analysed the data obtained primarily through interviews conducted with the study participants. The data had been presented in the form of quotations extracted from transcripts of interviews with the participants, highlighting the key issues relating to the research questions. The first research question sought to find out how the African National Olympic Committees measured their performance and success in the Olympic Games, while the second research question looked at the extent to which the targets set by the African NOCs for their participation in 2012 London Olympics reflected their achievement in the Games. The third question sought to identify the issues that accounted for the poor performance of the African countries at the Games. The final research question attempted to find out if there were any existing measures addressing the issues of poor performance of African countries in the Olympics. Consequently, this chapter seeks to address these issues through sub-sections that provide arguments making use of the evidence from the third and fourth phases of the study, discussing them in the light of the literature review carried out. Through the discussions from this section, a framework for the improvement of performance of African countries in the Olympics is proposed.

5.2 Addressing the research questions

5.2.1 Research question I (measuring performance)

How do African National Olympic Committees measure their performance and success in the Olympic Games?

In addressing this question, the findings collated from the interviews with the research participants suggest that the performance and success of African countries is primarily measured against three aspects: 1) number of medal wins/position on medal table; 2) the set objectives of the country's National Olympic Committee and 3) the socio-economic impact of a country's participation and performance on its global image. The sections that follow discuss each of these aspects in the light of the literature review carried out.

- **Medal wins/medal tables**

All the study participants acknowledged that there was a genuine intention by their respective countries' NOCs to win at least a medal at the London Olympic Games. The significance of winning medals and finishing high on the overall medal table as expressed by the participants, further underscores views expressed by researchers such as Lins *et al.* (2003) and Li *et al.* (2008) suggesting the use of medals and medal tables as perhaps the most important approach in benchmarking the performance and success of countries in the Games. Although, Li *et al.* (2008) also acknowledges the fact that the IOC has never published an official ranking system, and does not recognize the Olympic medal table as an order of merit (De Bosscher *et al.*, 2008), the views of the study participants suggests otherwise as they consider medal wins to be crucial to Olympic success. The emphasis on the need to win medals was highlighted by representatives from all three categories of participants in the study (NOC presidents, athletes and coaches) as shown in some of the quotes presented earlier.

Participants emphasised the value of medals won. Some of the participants expressed the desire of their countries to win more gold medals than silver and bronze. They acknowledged that winning more gold medals over silver, and silver medals over bronze determines their position on the medal table, as such, their target was to aim for medals with more value. Participants who expressed this view from the case study countries include, C02 and G02. This finding aligns with the research of Lozano *et al.* (2002), which demonstrates the relative degree of importance of gold medals to silver medals and silver medals to bronze medals. Interestingly, however, the majority of the study participants including C03-2, E02, E03-1, E03-2, G03-1 and G03-2 were not specific as to the type of medal most desired, as they simply wanted to win a medal regardless of the medal value. For example, in the first phase of interviews conducted, the findings showed that participants like H01 and R01 whose countries were first time medal winners in the Olympics, expressed content and a sense of great achievement with the outcome of the London 2012 Olympics as their respective countries had won their first ever medal in the history of the Games. Although the two medals won between the countries had each been in the silver medal category, it was still considered to be a huge success by the pair. This finding therefore suggests that there is need for further exploration into research such as Lozano *et al.*'s (2002),

particularly from an African context, to investigate the significance of medal weights or values as a valid output for measuring performance, especially as the findings here show that the African countries attach less importance to the category of the medals won.

- **NOC objectives**

Although the general consensus from the findings shows that the use of medals is the most popular approach for benchmarking success, there was an indication that performance and success could also be assessed through the set objectives of a country's NOC. Project management studies conducted by De Wit (1988), Baccarini (1999) and Cooke-Davies (2002) identify the use of objectives as an important metric for measuring success. The responses from the study participants suggest that, whilst it was important to win medals during the 2012 London Olympics, there were other important objectives for their NOCs to achieve at the Games. These include objectives such as ensuring that more athletes are qualified to compete in the Games, breaking existing national records in qualification in the rounds and breaking/setting new personal best records by the athletes. Some of the participants also considered their participation in the Games as an indication of success as they aimed to acquire experience and learning which they believe could help their performances in the future. Although some of the quotes drawn from statements made by the participants suggest that the achievement of specific milestones could be an indication of improvement in the performances of their countries in the Olympics, they however agree that the ultimate goal for their Olympic participation is to win medals, which is what truly defines their success in the Games.

- **Socio-economic impact**

From the findings, it was also revealed that, apart from medals and NOC objectives, another possible way of looking at success in the Olympics is to evaluate a country's participation in the Games based on the resultant socio-economic impacts on its global image. Research carried out by Roche (2000) and Malfas *et al.* (2004) revealed that, apart from the intention of countries to win medals in Olympics, they consider it of great importance to use their participation in the Games as a medium to enhance their national image at the global scene in a quest to boost socio-economic

advantages. This can be done through a showcase of a country's art, culture, tourism, food and entertainment during the period of the Games. Although a couple of the participants shared this view, the claim that the socio-economic benefits derived by a country as a result of their Olympics participation gives an indication of success was not a popular view expressed by the participants in this study. The participants generally maintained that the desire to win medals was of utmost priority to them and their NOCs.

5.2.2 Research question II (achievements in London 2012)

To what extent did the targets set by African NOCs for their participation in the 2012 London Olympics reflect their achievement in the Games?

In addressing this question, the researcher needed to have some knowledge of what the key objectives were for the countries prior to the London Olympics. This information was sought through the interviews conducted with representatives from the NOCs that took part in the study. It was observed from the findings that accounts provided by the participants on their set targets for the London Olympics and their actual achievement differed between the three categories of participants i.e. the NOC Presidents/Secretary Generals, the coaches and the athletes. Similar to project management theories which uphold that the success and failure of projects are perceived differently by the various stakeholders involved (Parent and Deephouse, 2007; Bourne and Walker, 2008; Leopkey and Parent, 2009; Kirsi, 2011), the disparity in views of the research participants in this study about the achievements of their countries in the Olympics also shows this project management school of thought to be applicable in sports. The views of the participants are discussed below according to the categories of participants to enhance clarity in the discussions.

- **NOC Presidents/Secretary Generals' point of view**

This group of participants primarily comprised of administrative heads of their respective NOCs. In responding to questions asked concerning their targets set for the 2012 London Olympic Games, the participants all expressed desires to win medals and finish higher on the medal tables compared to the spots they finished on in previous Games. However, all the participants expressed disappointment in this regards as they hadn't won the desired number of medals and had finished, in most cases, worse than in previous Games. Table 11 shows a statistical representation of

the performance of African countries in recent Olympic Games highlighting the case study countries.

Despite the wide representation of Africa in the Olympics, the findings from this study concerning the achievements of African countries in the 2012 London Olympics aligns with research findings from Johnson and Ali's (2004) study, which upholds that the level of achievement of African countries in the Olympics as regards medal wins is incommensurate to the number of participating African countries. This also reaffirms the views of Forrest *et al.* (2010), which suggests that African countries are under-performers in the Olympic Games.

Table 11: Medal performance of African countries in Olympic Games highlighting case study countries

No	Country	Sydney 2000			Athens 2004			Beijing 2008			London 2012		
		G	S	B	G	S	B	G	S	B	G	S	B
1	South Africa	0	2	3	1	3	2	0	1	0	3	2	1
2	Kenya	2	3	2	1	4	2	6	4	4	2	4	5
3	Ethiopia	4	1	3	2	3	2	4	1	2	3	1	3
4	Tunisia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	1	1	1
5	Algeria	1	1	3	-	-	-	0	1	1	1	0	0
6	Uganda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0
7	Egypt	-	-	-	1	1	3	0	0	1	0	2	0
8	Botswana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	0
9	Gabon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	0
10	Morocco	0	1	4	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
11	Nigeria	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	-	-	-
12	Zimbabwe	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	3	0	-	-	-
13	Togo	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	1	-	-	-
14	Cameroun	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
15	Sudan	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	0	-	-	-
16	Mozambique	1	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total by medal category	9	11	15	9	13	12	13	13	13	11	12	11
	Total by Olympic edition	35			34			39			34		

Source: Compiled from Olympic medal results published by the BBC.

In discussing the achievements of their countries, the participants also highlighted other intangible goals believed to have been achieved in London that could not be measured as in the case of medals. Their claims to have made other achievements at the Games centred on the wider socio-economic impacts that their participation in the Games had on their countries. Some of the intangible achievements claimed by the participants to have been derived from the Games were in the areas of trade/commerce, tourism and culture. Ali (1976) argued that most countries use the Olympics as an access point to the international community and as a tool used to achieve wider societal objectives. Further research sympathetic to this view argues that, in contrast to a monotonous characterisation of the Olympics as merely a sporting event, it is more of a driving force for economic growth (Malfas *et al.*, 2004), tourism and international exposure (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2002), globalization and regeneration of national identity (Roche, 2000; Nauright 2004) and infrastructural development. The findings from this study as exemplified by the quotes above, indicate that a few of the African countries share this view. However, it was not ascertained if this objective was more important for the NOCs of such countries, than winning medals at the Olympic Games.

- **Coaches' point of view**

The coaches took a slightly different view from the participants in administrative positions in evaluating the achievements of their countries in the Games. According to this category of participants, their perception of achievement in Olympics lies in the performance and success of the athletes in the Games, which in most cases they said, is measured by medals. They expressed strong disagreements with the views of the administrative participants suggesting the use of sports to achieve politically driven socio-economic goals. However, similar to the views expressed by participants in administrative positions, participants in this category also claimed to have achieved other intangible successes from participating in the London Olympics such as learning, gaining experience and using the Games as a platform to prepare for future tournaments. The participants argued that the learning and experiences gained had put them in a position to perform better in the future. The consideration of learning as a valid measure of success is a view that has been elaborated in project management literature by researchers such as Linberg (1999), Jugdev and Muller (2005), Kuen *et*

al. (2009) and Jessen (2011). Studies in the area of sport performance such as those carried out by Churilov and Flitman (2006), De Bosscher *et al.* (2008), De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) and Peachey *et al.* (2014) have also indicated the potential of using learning and experience as a measure of sports success if such learning and experience are duly applied in future competitions and results are derived. The findings here further add weight to the adoption of learning as a metric for measuring sport success of countries in Olympic Games. However, the emphasis according to the findings further suggest that application of such learning is vital to any possible improvements in performance of countries.

Athletes' point of view

From the perspective of the athletes, the achievements of their countries in the 2012 London Olympics were primarily measured against accomplishments of the athletes as relates to medal wins, qualification into subsequent stages of the competitions and breaking of records. In addition to winning medals, Shibli *et al.* (2013) also acknowledges that an athlete's achievement in the Games can also be in the form of 'a season's best performance; a personal best performance; a national record; and progression to the second or subsequent rounds of competition'. It was discovered from the responses of the participants in this category that the desire of the athletes to achieve in the Games was mostly driven by the need for self-actualisation and fulfilment.

According to the findings generated from interviews with the participants from this category, it is evident that there was a general expression of disappointment and dissatisfaction with both individual and collective performances of the athletes in the 2012 London Olympics. Apart from not being able to win medals, the participants also expressed disappointment with not advancing further in the competition. Some of the participants also revealed that they did not achieve their goals of breaking their own personal bests which they had set in previous tournaments. On a positive note however, the responses of the participants here showed that they had gained valuable lessons and experiences which they believe to be useful in preparing for future Olympic Games. This view also validates the views of the other participant groups (E03 and E03-1) concerning the achievement of learning and experience from the London Games.

Although the views of the study participants indicate that most of the African countries did not have very clearly defined objectives for the Games, it is clear that the poor performance of their countries was a cause for worry to the participants and outweighed any positives claimed to have been derived from the Games.

5.2.3 Research question III (issues and challenges)

Using a project management perspective, what are the issues and challenges that accounted for the poor performance of African countries in the London Olympic Games?

The application of a project management perspective to identify the issues leading to the poor performance of the African countries involved reviewing the responses of the participants in the interviews and comparing to key PM critical success factors (CSF) as discussed in the literature. Having grouped the findings into themes, it was discovered that some of the themes identified were not project management related. The themes were grouped into two: i) themes relating to sports policy issues and ii) themes relating to project management issues as shown in table 12 (see section 3.9.1.1 for techniques used to identify themes).

Table 12: Issues and challenges of sport performance in African countries

	Sport policy issues	Project Management issues
1.	Lack of effective sport policy	Lack of funding/sponsorship
2.	Neglect and underdevelopment of sports	Unclear vision, goals and objectives/unrealistic expectations
3.	Lack of sponsorships/private sector investment in sports	Poor planning/preparations
4.	Lack of standard training facilities/sports infrastructure	Government/top management support
5.	Lack of athlete support systems	Lack of sports development programmes/effective project management
6.	Grassroots sports underdevelopment	Project strategy
7.	Poor sports administration	Technical tasks
8.	Corruption and mismanagement of resources	Communication
9.	Political instability	Teamwork/personnel
10.	Lack of education of athletes	Performance evaluation/Research

Each of the points in table 12 is now discussed in detail.

5.2.3.1 Sport policy issues

5.2.3.1.1 Lack of effective sport policy

In the findings, the participants raised concerns regarding issues in their performance thought to be policy based. The issue of sport policy as revealed by the participants is a foundational problem that has a knock-on effect on sport performance of national teams and elite athletes in international sporting events. According to the participants, their description of a lack of an effective sport policy framework in their countries portrayed a scenario of minimal, or in some cases, total absence of a comprehensive policy enacted, as part of broader government initiatives, leading to the all-round development of sports. The implication of the prevalence of this phenomenon in view of the responses given by the participants is that, in order of priority, sports is placed relatively low in the agenda of government, in comparison to other policies. This position of government in the participants' view is believed to have a negative impact on other important aspects of sports such as funding, building of sporting infrastructure, planning, preparations etc. These impacts are usually more significant when it involves participation in major sporting events such as the Olympics.

Although the participants acknowledged that their countries experience other pressing socio-economic challenges which sometimes make it difficult to effectively address sporting needs, they still believe that sports policy is as important as any other public policy which deserves ample attention, especially as sports can be used as a means to address other social needs of the community. This view is not far fetched as the past couple of decades have witnessed an expansion of government interest in sport across several countries that have been successful in the Olympics such as China, Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom (De Bosscher *et al.*, 2008; Houlihan and Green, 2008; Green and Houlihan, 2005). To add weight to this view, Houlihan (1997) and Green and Collins (2008) also recall that the expansion of government interest in sport in recent times is as a result of the inextricable link that exists between sport and a diverse range of other significant policy matters such as health care, education, community development, social inclusion and elite sports development and success. As governments and policy makers have become more willing to adopt sport as a means of achieving a wider range of different policy objectives (Bloyce and Smith,

2010), it makes it more difficult now to define and draw a boundary between the scope of sport policy and other policy areas (Bergsgard, 2007).

Therefore, according to the findings, it is clear that the participants were of the view that a change in the sporting landscape of their countries towards the enactment and implementation of effective sport policies would have made a change to their performance in the London Olympics as this would have positively impacted other areas of their preparations and participation in the Games.

5.2.3.1.2 Neglect and underdevelopment of sports sector

Another issue that arose from the interviews suggested a significant neglect and underdevelopment of the sports sector of most of the African countries. The concept of sports development can be sometimes difficult to define. However, Hylton and Bramham (2008) suggest that a common attribute of the term is that it embraces all levels of sport participation and physical activity. As such, sports development encapsulates the activities and processes, procedures, policies and personnel that are needed to both facilitate and deliver sport participation. The issue of sports underdevelopment is closely linked to the issue of sport policy already discussed, especially as both terms are discussed together in sport literature. In fact, Houlihan and White (2002) consider sport development to be ‘at best a series of overlapping policy objectives and associated processes’.

In comparison to developed nations, it was the view of the participants that sports development in African countries had not reached high enough capacities to create conducive environments for elite sports to thrive. Although the participants understood that a major factor for this were down to socio-economic determinants such as GDP, population and other resources as have been pointed out by Bernard and Busse (2004), they maintained that the neglect and unwillingness of their governments to make a shift in policy interest in favour of sports further exacerbates the problem.

5.2.3.1.3 Lack of sponsorships/private sector investment in sports

It was discovered that the issue of sponsorships and involvement of the private sector was a huge problem for the African countries. The participants revealed that the lack of sponsorship for teams and individual athletes played a negative part in the build up of their countries for the Games, which in turn had a resultant impact on their output

in terms of performance and winning medals. It was observed from the findings that the governments of African countries are the main sponsors and funders of sports development and Olympic participation of their NOCs, and even in countries where support was received from non-government institutions, it was on a small scale. The findings further revealed that, as a result of the government being the main source of funding, in most cases, the sole sponsors of sports development, the funds allocated to sport are often very limited to effectively execute set objectives, as a result of rationing such funds to solve other equally pressing demands in within the society. A further complication to this as was discovered in the findings was the late release of funds allocated to sports by governments.

The participants hold the view that the position of government as sole funders of NOC's participation in Olympics, mainly due to the absence of private sector involvement in sports through sponsorship, is the main cause of funding related issues. Although the issue of sponsorships and private sector involvement in sports in African countries is not popular in sports literature, the findings from this study discovers this to be a huge problem for African countries, especially in their preparations and preparation of their athletes for big sporting events such as the Olympics.

5.2.3.1.4 Lack of standard training facilities/sports infrastructure

The availability of standard training facilities and sporting infrastructure remains a huge challenge for most African countries as discovered from the findings. Shibli *et al.* (2013) notes that training facilities and sports infrastructure are vital ingredients of an elite sport system. Also, De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) in their design of a theoretical model for policy development identified 'training facilities' as one of the nine pillars of sports policy factors influencing international success in sports. However, it was discovered from the findings that most of the African countries lacked the necessary training facilities and infrastructure for their athletes to adequately prepare for Olympic Games, a reality believed to be tantamount to sporting failure as previous studies discussed in the literature.

On the occasions where the participants admitted to the existence of sporting infrastructure in their countries, it was quickly followed by views suggesting that such infrastructure were below standard in comparison to facilities used in the Games or

those used by other athletes in developed societies. This finding shows that the unavailability of standard training facilities and sports infrastructure can impede the performance and success of countries in the Olympics. However, researchers like Forrest *et al.* (2010) argue that the provision of these factors, particularly for elite sports, is dependent on a country's economic resources.

5.2.3.1.5 Lack of athlete support systems

The participants pointed out issues relating to the lack of support systems for elite athletes in their countries. Oakley and Green (2001) recall that elite sporting success can be attained through a strategic investment and institutionalisation of elite sport systems. These systems encompass all the necessary support needed by elite athletes both during and after their athletic careers that allow them to perform optimally in their respective sport. Cote *et al.* (2006) suggest that such support can range from factors like availability of parental support, organizational support, research institutes, experienced coaches and access to standard training facilities. De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) also point out the importance of having in place systems that provide athletic and post career support for elite athletes. According to the findings from their study, they argued that, in providing these systems, it is imperative to take the following key points into consideration:

- i. *The individual living circumstances of the athletes are good so that they can concentrate on their sport fulltime*
- ii. *There is coordinated support programme for elite athletes*
- iii. *Athletes can make use of a high level of coaches*
- iv. *Athletes can receive post career support and are adequately prepared for life after their sports career*

According to the findings from this study, it was discovered that the above mentioned factors highlighted by Cote *et al.* (2006) and De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) were seriously lacking in the African countries prior to the 2012 London Olympics and this, according to the study participants, affected their performance output in the Games.

5.2.3.1.6 Grassroots sports underdevelopment

The participants raised concerns relating to the poor state of grassroots/community sports in their countries, which makes talent identification and development difficult.

Although this issue was secondary in the discussion of performance in the 2012 London Olympics, the participants emphasised that over a long period of time, the inability to promote grassroots sports in communities, leading to the discovery and development of people with athletic potential, will in the long run diminish the chances of success in major sporting events such as the Olympics.

The importance of grassroots participation in sports as a strategic means for increasing chances of sports success has been highlighted in studies conducted by Coalter (2007) and Green (2009). The study findings here reveal that this element of sports development in African countries is deficient. It was clear from the views of the participants that their countries did not have effective structures, especially in the grassroots that enhanced talent identification. The participants believed that their countries had people with the potential of competing and winning medals for them if only such people could be discovered and developed.

5.2.3.1.7 Poor sports administration

This is another issue relating to sport performance that was highlighted in the findings. Some of the participants raised concerns suggesting that the administration of sporting affairs in their countries were being poorly managed. The participants attributed the issue to the lack of qualified people with the administrative know-how of running the affairs of sports. For example, the following statements were taken from stage 3 interviews with some of the participants to highlight the problem:

“...Not until we start to get people who are capable of running the affairs of sports and not people who want to be there because of selfish gains, then things will never change”. (B02)

“...Poor sports administration in our country has also played a role in hindering us from attaining our full potential in the Olympics. As an administrator myself, my team and I inherited a lot of mess when we came onboard. This is always the case when you have people serving as administrators, with no passion or clear vision of making a positive impact that will leave a lasting legacy”. (F02)

It was also revealed that the sports departments and other sports governing bodies of some of the countries were too numerous which made communication and effective administration very difficult, as revealed in this statement:

“...There shouldn't be too many agencies involved in sports administration. It makes effective communication difficult and makes the system very bureaucratic. This also causes a lot of interference in the set plans of the NOC. Matters on the track and field should be left to the hands of coaches and the technical staff and not politicians. We should be given the freedom to do our job without fear or favour”. (C03-1)

5.2.3.1.8 Corruption and mismanagement of resources

The participants also pointed out the existence of corruption and mismanagement of resources in their country's sports sectors, which they linked to the issue of poor sports administration already discussed. The findings reflected the views of the participants suggesting the existence of corruption in sport departments. Although the issue of corruption and mismanagement of resources was a sensitive topic for some of the participants to speak about, deductions made from their statements showed that, with a little more prudence in the way available resources were being managed, it would have been possible to maximise the opportunity to provide more training infrastructure, equipment, training and other essential services necessary to increase chances of winning medals. The statement below exemplifies this finding:

“...There is a lot of mis-management and corruption in the system, which I would not like to go into details about. But if only the little resources we have can be properly allocated and managed, then we stand a better chance of gaining more” (C03-1)

5.2.3.1.9 Political instability

The issue of uncertainty in politics was one of the issues raised by some participants to have contributed to their country's underachievement at the 2012 London Olympics. The participants revealed that the prevalence of political crises resulting in violence, and in some cases deaths, meant that the environment was not conducive to their athletes to undertaking effective training and preparations for the Games:

“...Don’t forget also that there was a serious political crisis in our country in 2011 before the Olympics, which also negatively affected our preparation for London”. (G02)

“...We did not have any league for nine months...It affected the players’ competitive shape. I believe the violence and deaths that led to this is all because of the political instability in the country. This really affected our preparations”. (G03-1)

The issue of political instability is a common phenomenon in quite a number of African countries and has significantly accounted for the slow growth rate of their economies and reduced government revenue (Gyimah-Brempong and Traynor, 1999; Kieh, 2009). However, to further exacerbate the situation, the findings from this study show that the impact of political instability is also felt in sports participation and can also lead to underperformance.

5.2.3.1.10 Lack of education of athletes

Interestingly, some of the participants pointed to the lack of education, exposure and enlightenment of some of their athletes as playing its part in the overall achievement in Olympics. Although this was a more remote cause of underperformance at the 2012 London Olympics, the participants emphasised that lack of education and exposure deprived their athletes the opportunity of keeping up with the fast growing pace of today’s world, especially in the area of technological advancements in their given sport disciplines. The participants noted that, in comparison to developed countries where athletes have accessibility to scholarship opportunities to acquire education and other academic knowledge, the opportunities for African athletes to obtain such learning in their countries were very limited if not nonexistent. The education of athletes is not a common topic in sports literature on performance; however, according to the findings from this study, it is shown that this is an issue that needs to be given more attention, especially in African countries.

5.2.3.2 Project management issues

5.2.3.2.1 Lack of funding/sponsorship

The issue of inadequate funding and sponsorship was one that reoccurred in almost every interview in both phase 2 and 3 of the study and was discovered to be a big

impediment for African countries in their effective participation in Olympic Games. Oakley and Green (2001) recall that developing sports excellence comes with its costs and requires appropriate funding. This explains the increased levels of funding invested into sports in developed countries, particularly those with recognisable success in Olympics (Houlihan, 2005).

From a project management perspective, the importance of adequate funding to the successful completion of projects cannot be overemphasized. The summary of PM literature on critical success factors presented in table 3 shows that studies conducted by Baker *et al.* (1983), Cleland and King (1983), Morris and Hough (1987) and Cooper and Kleinschmidt (1995) all consider adequate funding to be one of the critical success factors of a project. To further underscore the significance of this factor, Zwikaël and Globerson (2006) maintain that the lack of adequate spending in projects can lead to failure or incompleteness of projects.

Similarly, the need to adequately fund sporting endeavours is exemplified by westernised societies. For example, a DCMS report suggests that the funding of sport development in England saw a rise from £70.7 million in 1997 to £216.4 million in 2007 with over £1.5 billion invested in facilities during this period. (DCMS, 2008b; Sport England, 2008a, 2008c). Although part of this funding had been done through government taxes, most of it had been raised through private sector investments and sponsorships. However, owing to the lack of sponsorships and private sector investment in African sports as already revealed in this study, the burden of funding and sponsoring sports rests on the shoulders of the government. This makes it difficult to effectively fund sports due to a long list of other policy commitments. The findings in this study show this factor to be a major cause of underperformance of African countries in the Olympics that needs to be somehow addressed for positive performance improvements to be made.

5.2.3.2.2 Unclear vision, goals and objectives/unrealistic expectations

The clarity of a project mission is identified by Pinto and Prescott (1988) as a critical factor for a project's success. According to the authors, a project's mission must present clarity of goals and general directions, as well as precisely spell out objectives (Pinto and Prescott, 1988; PMI, 2008). These objectives must be well defined in scope so as to enhance awareness of the project's desired goals (Parke-Shields *et al.*,

2010). Such goals, according to Jang and Lee (1998), must take into consideration the interest of the client, with the understanding and agreement of all the stakeholders involved (Clarke, 1999). Furthermore, Belout and Gauvreau (2004) stress that it is important to establish the boundaries and priorities of the project in mapping out its objectives, and that these must be clearly communicated to all parties involved. According to Clarke (1999) and Yeo (2002), having clearly defined objectives from the outset of a project makes it easy to eventually measure success accurately.

The findings from this study indicate that most of the African countries lacked clarity in their set goals and objectives for the 2012 London Olympics. Though their ultimate aim for the Games was to win medals, the views of the participants pointed to the fact that there were no clearly defined steps on how to achieve this goal, which also made it difficult to measure their success as was also discovered from the findings.

It was also found out that the targets set by some countries for the Games were unrealistic and unachievable according to the views of the study participants. Green (2009) indicates that unrealistic goals and targets are often a product of an unclear policy vision. Bloyce and Smith (2010) also rightly indicate that the inability of a country to identify its key sporting objectives results in the setting up of unrealistic and unachievable objectives. This phenomenon was the case with some of the African countries investigated in this study and the participants linked it to the broad issue of performance. Therefore, the researcher believes that if objectives set by African countries in their participation in Olympics are clearly defined and made realistic, with milestones to measure progress, the achievement of medal success can improve over time.

5.2.3.2.3 Poor planning/preparations

The planning phase is considered to be crucial in project delivery. Creating a project plan according to Atterzadeh and Hock (2003) is a fundamental aspect in undertaking a project following the project's initiation, and Clarke (1999) considers a detailed project plan to be a key factor for success. This process also involves creating the project's activities and grouping them into small and manageable milestones (PMI, 2008). However, Clarke (1999) points out that effective planning requires a good level of detail about the project and its intended goals. The importance of long term

strategic planning in sports is emphasised by De Bosscher *et al.* (2008) who argue that the process of planning is rudimentary to the success of nations in Olympics.

The participants raised concerns with the planning and preparation made by their countries for the London Olympics. It was clear from the findings that there was a lack of detail in the planning process of the African countries, especially when compared to the level of preparations made by developed countries. The participants revealed that some of the preparations had been made at the last minute, in some cases a few months prior to the Games. Participants felt that the lack of effective planning and timely preparations impacted on their countries' performances in the Olympics and their resulting medal output. The issue of poor planning and preparations of African countries was discovered from the findings to be a reoccurring one, as the participants recalled that it had been experienced in previous Olympic Games. Thus, it is expected that if this issue can be addressed in the future, it will bring about a positive improvement in the performance of these countries and also increase their rate of success in the Games.

5.2.3.2.4 Government/top management support

It was discovered from the findings that the issue of lack of the right level of support from government was a contributory factor to the underperformance of the countries. The importance of receiving support from top management is underscored by Pinto and Prescott (1988) who describe top management support as the willingness to provide the necessary resources and authority/power for project success. Johnson *et al.* (2001) and Kuen *et al.* (2009) identify this factor to be critical to the success of a project. However, the findings from this study showed that this element was lacking in some of the countries.

5.2.3.2.5 Lack of sports development programmes/effective project management

A programme as defined in the literature is “a group of related projects managed in a co-ordinated way” (PMBOK, 1996). The application of this approach to sports policy development has proved to be a useful tool for countries like Australia, UK, USA and China that possess a more robust sports policy structure. (Green and Collins, 2008). However, the findings from this study exposed the lack of sports development programmes run in most African countries. Some of the participants noted that their countries did not have strategically planned out programmes, either for individual

sports or at a general sport policy level, designed to bring about long term improvements to performance in mega sporting events like Olympics or a general improvement in sport development. According to the participants, one of the goals of such programmes could be to promote community and grass-root sports with the aim of identifying young potential athletes:

“...Ordinarily, you cannot produce a world-beater within a few years or within a few days. If you’re talking of a world beater, you have to have a development programme for that world beater... and it takes, initially his talent, then developing his talent, then provide the road map for him and all that. So all these are really not on ground and that makes preparation difficult. Look at most of the countries that performed well...some of them have sports development programmes building up to events like this (the Olympics) for over 15 to 20 years before such events. Some of them start to teach these sports even from the elementary schools. So, for you who are trying to groom and prepare athletes within 2 or 3 years, how can you compete with other athletes who have been better prepared?” (C02)

“...We need to set up sport programmes across every nook and cranny in the country. We must go to the primary schools and possibly introduce the study of some of the Olympic sports into our curriculum. Knowledge, they say is power”. (C03-1)

“....Set up specifically tailored programmes for each sport. This might not necessarily be programmes designed to provide immediate results but certainly with time, you reap the benefits as long as such programmes remain effectively managed. Get the right people on board to manage them”. (E03-1)

The issue of lack of sports development programmes as a factor influencing performance of countries in Olympics is not a popular topic in the literature. However, according to the discovery from this study, the issue proves to be critical to the performance of African countries in the Games.

5.2.3.2.6 Project strategy

The participants raised concerns regarding the application of strategy in the build up to London Olympics. It was discovered from the findings that some of the countries

did not have a systematic approach or direction in their preparations for the Games. The importance of applying strategy in preparations for Olympic participation ensures that a methodical approach is adopted towards the drive for Olympic success. The application of strategy can also be in form of policy implementation, which impacts overall sports development in a country. An example of an application of such strategy in sports was seen in England in 2002 with the DCMS publishing the ‘Game plan’ - “...a wide-ranging sport strategy that reiterated the commitment to elite success, set out an ambitious aim of increasing grassroots participation for health benefits...and clearly articulated a strong message that a results-driven and evidence-based approach to the achievement of strategic aims was now essential” (Green, 2009; DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002; Coalter, 2007).

Project management researchers such as Cooper and Kleinschmidt (1995) and Johnson *et al.* (2001) consider the application of strategy to be critical to a project’s success. As such, it is argued in this study that the application of strategy by African countries to sports development, particularly in elite sports such as the Olympics can have a positive impact on performance leading to success. In further highlighting the importance of the application of strategy, Houlihan and Green (2008) maintain that drawing up a strategic plan also creates an awareness of the increasing competitive abilities of other nations at elite level.

5.2.3.2.7 Technical tasks

Pinto and Prescott (1988) consider the issue of technical tasks in projects to relate to the unavailability of the required technology and expertise to accomplish the specific action steps in the project. Other researchers such as Baker *et al.* (1983), Pinto (1986) and Morris and Hough (1987) have also identified the accomplishment of technical tasks as a critical factor to the success of any project.

Although the issue of accomplishing technical tasks is not explicitly listed in sports literature as a driver of performance or success, researchers such as De Bosscher *et al.* (2009) have stressed the need for expertise in the training and development of elite athletes if international sporting success is to be achieved. Such expertise according to their study can come in the form of provision of trained and experienced coaches in the respective sports. It was gathered from the findings as expressed by the study participants, that some of the African countries did not have trained coaches with the

required expertise to effectively prepare their athletes. It was also discovered that most of the countries lacked the technological capacity to cater for the training needs of their athletes. This meant that some of the athletes had to conduct their training abroad where such expertise and technology was available. However, doing this had cost implications, which were beyond the reach of majority of the African countries and athletes that took part in the London Games. As a result, they had to make do with the local coaches and training available which, from the findings, were not up to competitive standards. This therefore suggests that there is a need to address this issue in the build up to future Olympic Games if the performance and success levels of African countries are to be improved.

5.2.3.2.8 Communication

The participants raised issues concerning a lack of effective communication among the stakeholders within their NOCs. The importance of effective communication is brought to view by project management researchers such as Clarke (1999), Belout and Gauvreau (2004) and Zwikael and Globerson (2006), who consider it a critical factor for project success. In ensuring the effectiveness of communication in a project, Pinto and Prescott (1988) note that it is important to provide an appropriate network where necessary data is distributed to all key actors in the project implementation. Doing this involves gathering, documenting and distributing information relating to the project's performance, as well as adopting a suitable approach to carry out the distribution (PMI, 2008).

The need for an effective communication network has also been identified in sports literature to be crucial for countries and their sports organisations in their pursuit of international sporting success (Oakley and Green, 2001; Luiz and Fazdal, 2011). However, findings from this study reveal that this ingredient was lacking in a number of the African countries. Parke-Shields *et al.* (2010) report that effective communication drives the achievement of set objectives through the identification of problems or the promotion of creative ideas to aid in problem solving. Another benefit of effective communication as identified by Attarzadeh and Hock (2003), is that it helps in avoiding vague descriptions through the provision of vivid details, thus eliminating or minimizing mistakes (Clarke, 1999). Pereira *et al.* (2008) also consider communication and feedback to be important ingredients for success. It is clear from the findings that, despite the emphasis made by several researchers on the importance

of effective communication, sports organisations in African countries still fall short of this critical factor, especially in their preparations for international sporting events like the Olympics Games.

5.2.3.2.9 Teamwork/personnel

From a project management perspective, another issue identified from the findings to have limited the performance of African countries at the London Games centred on personnel and teamwork within sport organisations. Personnel management involves managing the human resources available to a project. Project management researchers such as Pinto and Prescott (1988) and Belout and Gauvreau (2004) break down this process to involve the recruitment, selection, and training of the necessary personnel for the project team. The authors also consider this element to be critical to the success of a project. The importance of effective teamwork and personnel management is also highlighted by findings from this study. Although the issue of teamwork and personnel management is discussed more in project management literature than in sports literature, the findings here suggest that is also important to effectively manage the human resource aspect of sports in order to maximise performance output.

5.2.3.2.10 Performance evaluation/Research

The participants raised concerns relating to the lack of a comprehensive approach to evaluating or monitoring the performance of their countries. Although this issue was secondary in the context of the London 2012 Olympics, the study participants claim that the lack of a systematic approach to monitoring and feedback contributes to underperformance in the long-run as there is nothing to give an indication of the actual level of their performance, which makes it difficult to identify areas where improvements and changes are needed. The importance of performance evaluation in project management is highlighted by researchers such as Cooke-Davies (2002) and Muller and Turner (2005) who consider this factor critical to project success.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that there was a lack of research on ways to improve performance. The participants noted that research plays a huge role in the quest for ways to improve the performances of their countries at the Olympic Games. However, they expressed views suggesting that there is little or no research being carried out to

effectively investigate the causes of poor performance from a retrospective perspective, which is a gap this research is attempting to bridge.

5.2.4 Research question IV (addressing issues and challenges)

Are there any measures in place that address the issues limiting the performance of African countries in the Olympics?

Following the identification of the key issues that impeded the performance of the African countries at the London Olympic Games, it was imperative to inquire from the participants if there were any specific measures that had been put in place to address the issues raised. From the responses gathered, there was no evidence provided by the participants of detailed action plans been taken by their countries to mitigate against the reoccurrence of these issues in future Games. This therefore suggests that, although the African countries are aware of the key issues affecting their performance in the Olympic Games, not enough is being done to change the status quo.

The participants were however, able to make suggestions as to the key areas where change was needed in order to improve the performances of their countries and to increase their chances of success in the Olympics. One of the main areas, and perhaps the most core area to be addressed as suggested by the participants is the area of sports policy. They propose that a reprioritisation of policy objectives by the government in favour of sport development or a complete review of existing sport policy in order to enhance elite sport development. A prioritisation of policy in favour of sports is expected to make significant improvements in the areas of funding, talent identification and development (TID), personnel and the institutionalisation of support structures. To further support this point, Bloyce and Smith (2010) suggest that nations that have achieved Olympic success have typically been recipients of substantial assistance in funding and policy direction from central government.

Apart from the areas of funding and policy, it was noted from the literature that one of the strategies for improving sport performance and success was through a strategic planning process, part of which must involve the evaluation of achieved results (De Bosscher *et al.* (2008). The findings from this study as represented in the views of the participants, also shows that strategic planning is crucial to sport performance improvement. Beamish and Ritchie (2006) recall that the world of high performance

sport today has been significantly shaped through strategic planning and coordination. Such planning must translate into the development of structured sport programmes and TID systems. Abbott and Collins (2002) consider effective TID system to be crucial to sustaining international sports success.

Using theoretical principles from project management on critical success factors (CSF), and applying these principles to the investigation conducted in this study, it is discovered that the issues accounting for poor performance of African countries in Olympics are categorised into two: i) sports policy issues and ii) project management issues. The themes within these categories, which have already been discussed, form the components of the proposed framework for improving the performance and success of African countries in the Olympic Games. Figure 5 shows the proposed framework while table 13 define the various components of the framework.

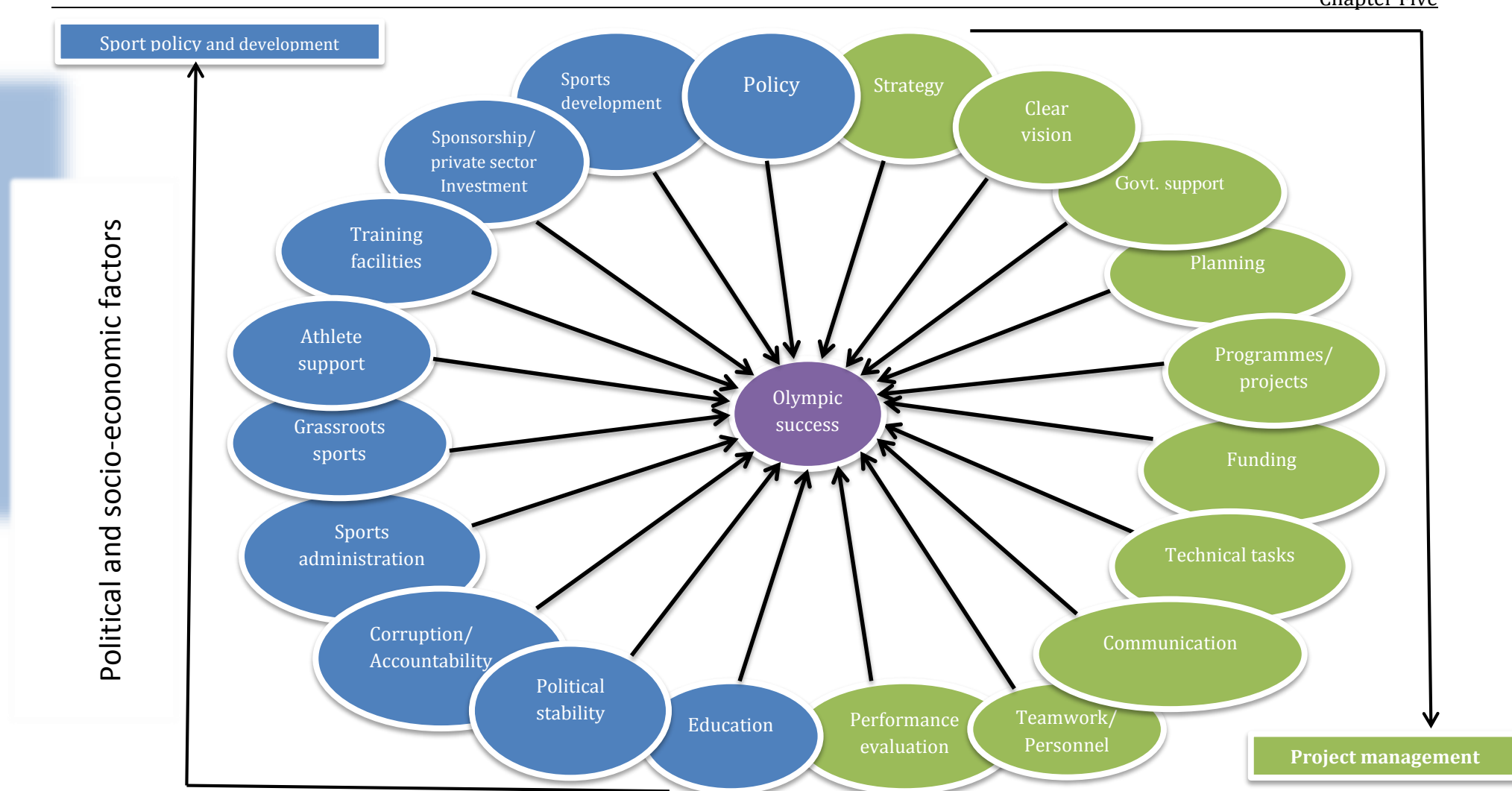


Figure 5: Framework for improving Olympic performance and success of African nations

Table 13: Framework for improving Olympic performance and success of African nations

Sport policy factors	Definition in the context of the study
Effective sport policy	Clear and comprehensive policy objectives drawn and implemented by government leading to the prioritisation of sports development
Sports development	Promoting activities and processes, procedures, policies and personnel needed to facilitate and encourage all levels of sport participation and physical activity
Sponsorship and private sector investment	Promoting partnerships with non-governmental organisations and other private sector institutions to invest in sports development and to be co-sponsors of elite sports participation, particularly the Olympics
Training facilities and sports infrastructure	The availability and maintenance of high standard national and regional elite sport centres and facilities where athletes can get unrestricted access at any time to train under good conditions
Athlete support systems	An environment where athletes can obtain general well-being support during and after their sport careers. This support can range from parental guidance, organisational support, access to high level coaching and training facilities, financial support, medical support, good living conditions, post-career support programmes etc.
Grassroots sports development	The promotion of physical and sporting activities in regional and local communities across the national landscape, through physical education (PE) and extra curricular sport activities, leading to the identification and development of young individuals with sport talents
Effective sports administration	The availability of qualified individuals with the experience and administrative know-how to co-ordinate the affairs of sports
Corruption/accountability	Existence of regulatory mediums and institutions to check money laundering and inappropriate utilisation of resources. Frequent auditing of financial records

Political instability	Existence of political certainty and national security and an environment where sport activities are not impeded by happenings on the political front
Education and sensitisation of athletes	Opportunities for athletes to receive academic education and other necessary sensitisation around their sport disciplines in line with international standards, through the provision of scholarships
Project management critical success factors (CSFs)	Definition in the context of the study
Funding and sponsorships	Availability of sufficient financial capacity through sponsorships to effectively fund sports development and availability of adequate funding for sports organisations to support elite sports, particularly Olympic participation
Clarity of vision, goals and objectives/setting realistic target	Initial clarity of NOC goals and general directions for their Olympic participation. Also, well defined objectives with realistic and achievable targets for each Olympic Games
Effective planning and scheduling/ early commencement of Olympic preparations	Early development of a detailed preparation plan specifying individual action steps required by the NOC and their athletes in the build up to the Olympics. This process also involves creating the project's activities and grouping them into small and manageable milestones
Government support (top management support)	The willingness of government to provide the necessary resources and authority/power to facilitate Olympic preparations
Developing sports programmes and initiating manageable projects within these programmes with notable milestones	Development of specifically tailored long-term programmes, particularly in the area of talent identification and development, and elite sport, for each sport's needs, and implementing such programmes through smaller projects managed and coordinated by well trained project managers
Application of project strategy	Adopting strategic approaches in the preparations for Olympic Games. This approach can be initiated and driven by the project management or the project team and aimed at achieving specific results. Strategies can also be applied to the development of sport policies

Provision of resources to accomplish technical tasks	The availability of the required technology and expertise to accomplish specific action steps in the preparations for Olympics. This would also include having trained coaches, expert medical personnel as well as having all the equipment and necessary technology they require to carry out their duties effectively
Effective communication	Provision of a channel where necessary data is distributed to all key actors and feedback is encouraged
Teamwork and personnel management	This involves the recruitment, selection and training of the necessary personnel and promoting team work in sport organisations
Performance evaluation and feedback/Research	Development of a systematic approach to regularly monitor performance and a timely provision of comprehensive feedback. This also involves the conducting of regular research on ways to improve on performance

5.3 Chapter summary

This chapter, through the literature reviewed in the study, has discussed the research findings in light of the research questions. The discussions were carried out based on the evidence from the second, third and fourth phases of the study. Through these discussions, a framework for the improvement of performance of African countries in the Olympics was proposed, including discussions of the main themes from the findings that formed the individual components of the framework. The proposed framework was an integration of sport policies and procedures with project management critical success factors (CSFs) to improve performance and success in Olympics. The next chapter discusses the development and verification of the framework.

CHAPTER SIX: FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT AND VERIFICATION

6.1 Introduction

The focus on the verification and validation of the framework is to ensure it is practical and suitable for application. As discussed in the previous chapter, the proposed framework is a product of the discussions carried out with the research participants on the key issues accounting for the poor performance of their countries in the Olympics. As such, the proposed framework is a direct response to these issues. This chapter presents the process, objectives and results of the framework development. Verification and validation was an important exercise to ensure that the developed framework was free from bias and was not constructed based on only the reports from a single group of participants.

6.2 The need for the proposed framework

In developing a framework, Fellows and Liu (1997) propose that, the reality being modelled by the framework should be captured as closely and as practically as possible to include the necessary elements of such reality, remaining cheap to construct and easy to apply. Researchers such as Coxhead and Davis (1992) suggest that using a framework in complex situations helps managers in providing a common and logical structure to use in decision making, as well as imposing consistency and reducing risks. The resulting framework from this research was used to address the overall research question and the aim posed in the study.

The framework pictorializes the main factors that influence the success of African nations in the Olympics and highlights how issues of performance can be addressed. The framework was developed through a qualitative analysis of the key issues of sport performance of African countries identified from the study. As discussed in the data analysis chapter, increasing the chances of African nations to be more successful in the Olympics is likely dependent on the critical review of a number of identifiable factors. These factors were found to be within two categories: sport policies and procedures, and project management CSFs (shown in table 13).

Revelations from the data findings and analysis demonstrated that there had been a general dissatisfaction among stakeholders with the way that the African nations

performed in the 2012 London Olympics as was evident in the small number of medals won and their failure to meet target expectations. It was also discovered that there was an increased desire among the African nations and their NOCs to improve their performance in elite sports, particularly the Olympics, in order to boost their success rates. Furthermore, the participants also suggested that the challenge of building a competitive edge, or at least a level playing ground, with the developed countries participating in the Olympics was not only due to the poor socio-economic state of most African nations, but also the ineffectiveness of sport policy and absence of critical success factors in project delivery. Therefore, in addressing these issues, it was necessary to propose a framework that would:

1. highlight the requirements for improved Olympic performance;
2. establish how project management critical success factors (CSFs) can be integrated with sport policy and procedures to help improve sport performance and success; and
3. help countries and their NOCs to be more competent in managing their elite sport structures.

From the presentation of findings and analysis carried out in the previous chapter, a lot was learned about the issues affecting sport performance from a broader sense. However, the discussions carried out in this chapter provided the researcher with the platform to propose a framework for addressing these issues. The proposed framework (shown in figure 5) is the final product of several refinements, following the various interview stages with several countries and stakeholder groups.

6.3 Verification and validation objectives

The purpose of verification and validation in this study, apart from helping to fulfil the research objectives, was to achieve the following objectives:

1. To scrutinise all information gathered and used throughout all the stages of this study.
2. To ensure the suitability of the proposed framework for the African countries who remain the direct beneficiaries of this study.
3. To validate the real life applicability of the proposed framework.
4. To assess the generic applicability of the framework to other sporting contexts apart from the Olympics.

5. To verify the purpose of the framework.
6. To ensure that the issues and themes which formed the framework components were void of researcher bias.
7. To verify the case study countries used (Nigeria, Egypt and Zimbabwe).

6.4 Verification and validation process

Owing to several constraints such as time, cost and limited access to the participating countries and their representatives in the study, verification and validation had to be embedded within the cyclic collection and analysis of data in phase 3 and 4 of the study. In other words, whilst the researcher sought to learn about new issues with a new group of participants, issues that had been raised by a previous group of participants were concurrently being verified and validated with the new group. The verification was carried out in phase 3 of the study while validation was done in phase 4 as described below.

Verification

In carrying out the verification, all the preliminary findings gathered from the first set of interviews with twenty countries were presented to the representatives of the nine countries that took part in the verification process. The participants were mainly Presidents and Secretary-Generals of NOCs. The verification employed the use of semi-structured interviews to collect the data from the participants owing to the qualitative nature of the findings that were obtained in the previous stage of interviews. It was impossible to categorise all the issues at this stage as new variables were still emerging. However, there was a general consensus among the participants at this stage that the variables emerging were indicative of the issues that accounted for the poor performance of the African nations in the 2012 London Olympics, thus achieving verification of the study results. At the conclusion of the verification exercise, the researcher was then able to group the key issues that emerged into sport policies and procedures; and critical success factors.

Validation

This process involved presenting the key issues which formed the components of the proposed framework, to a different group of stakeholders from within the three case study countries. This group of stakeholders comprised of an athlete and a coach from

each of the case study countries. Furthermore, validation was done with an independent stakeholder who was a representative of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA). ANOCA is the regional arm of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), which operates under the auspices of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to unite the African NOCs. Therefore involving them in the validation exercise provided more depth in the process and also further enhanced the reliability of the study findings.

The validation was done through semi-structured interviews with the participants to ascertain the level of agreement on each component of the framework, which had now been grouped into more specific categories. Due to the varied nature of the responses received on the views of the participants regarding the issues presented, it was difficult to measure the exact level of importance of the variables identified. However, analysis of the participants' views suggested that, while it was agreed that all the identified variables had an impact on the performance of the African nations, some of the variables had a more significant impact than others. As such, following discussions of the respective factors, the researcher simply categorised them into primary and secondary factors as described below.

Primary factors (P) – factors considered by the participants to be crucial to Olympic performance success.

Secondary factors (S) – factors considered important to Olympic performance success but of a lesser significance when compared to the primary factors.

The categorisation of the framework components by the participants is shown in table 14.

Table 14: Framework components showing level of importance

	Sport policy and procedures	Importance	Critical success factors (CSFs)	Importance
1	Policy	P	Funding	P
2	Sports development	P	Clear vision	P
3	Sponsorships/private sector investment	P	Planning	P
4	Training facilities	P	Government support	P
5	Athlete support	P	Programmes/projects	P
6	Grassroots sports		Strategy	P
7	Sports administration	P	Technical tasks	P
8	Corruption/accountability	P	Communication	S
9	Political stability	S	Teamwork/personnel	S
10	Education	S	Performance evaluation	P

6.5 Framework validation results

The results from the validation interviews carried out with the participants suggested that the issue of sport performance and success of African nations in the Olympics was indeed tied to a range of policy and project delivery issues. There was a general consensus among the participants that the majority of the components highlighted in the framework are of primary significance and also encompass the core areas where redress is needed in order to improve the performance of African nations in the Olympics. The participants agreed on the relevance of the framework in addressing performance issues in other major international sporting tournaments. As argued in this study, the participants also recognised that, apart from policy and socio-economic challenges, there is an absence of the application of vital PM CSFs in the preparations

of the African countries for Olympic participation, and in the general management of their sport systems. It was therefore not a surprise that the key factors that emerged from the verification process were sorted and grouped into these two categories. However, the components in these groups were considered to be interconnected and relevant to performance improvement.

The participants agreed that while the components of the framework were individually important and useful, real desire and willingness must be shown by the African countries and their NOCs to fully implement the framework. Furthermore, it was expressed that the full implementation of the framework would require would require significant changes to policy, a huge financial investment and the total commitment of governments to bring about the positive changes derivable from the framework. Interestingly, the discussions showed that the participants acknowledged the increasing need for the adoption of more systematic approaches in dealing with the issue of sport performance and success. In expressing this opinion, the participants suggested that the framework provided a generic application and provided a basis for gaining a clear understanding and awareness of the performance needs of African countries, and how these needs can be addressed. They also affirmed that the proposed framework provides a backdrop for further research on improving sport performance. The results of the verification and validation exercise suggest that there is a need for researchers in sport management to advance beyond a generic discussion of sport performance towards a more focused and detailed elucidation of improvement strategies and techniques, particularly from the point of view of developing countries.

6.6 Framework implications

Although it was also discovered, through the views of the participants, that there were currently no conscious steps being taken by their countries, as suggested in the framework, to improve their performance in future Games, they affirmed that the implementation of the measures proposed in the framework would make positive significant changes in their future Olympic performance. Contrary to popular belief that the success of countries in major international sporting tournaments is solely based on the socio-economic wherewithal of such countries, the findings from this study show this conclusion to be incomplete as there are other significant factors from a project delivery perspective. Therefore, the integration of sport policy techniques

with PM CSFs as proposed in the framework developed in this study, provides a more holistic approach for addressing performance and issues rather than a sheer reliance on only socio-economic metrics. The framework proposed in this study has implications for governments and NOCs, particularly those from African countries and other developing countries who are keen on improving their performance and success in elite sports. The application of the framework would require sport policy reviews and changes, as well as the willingness of governments to make significant investments to sports development. It is important to state that utilising the proposed framework would not bring about an instant transformation of African countries into high performing countries in Olympic sports; however, it does identify a collection of twenty key policy and critical success factors, which need consideration. From the above, it is apparent that improving the performance of African countries in the Olympics requires an integration of sport policies and procedures with project delivery techniques and practices.

6.7 Framework implementation and barriers

Following discussions from the framework verification and validation, the researcher acknowledges that there may be certain barriers to the effective implementation of the framework. Some of these include:

- Cost implication of implementing the framework;
- The willingness of governments to fully commit to the framework implementation;
- The bureaucratic and lengthy process of policy reviews and changes
- Expertise and training required to implement the framework
- The potential lack of the capacity to sustain the framework for a long term.

Despite the barriers highlighted, the participants of the study believed that implementing the framework could be achievable for majority of the African countries, or at least provide useful insights into the core issues of performance.

6.8 Chapter summary

The chapter discussed the verification and validation process in the framework development, including the results obtained from these exercises. The purpose of the verification and validation was to ensure that the data generated from the study and

the proposed framework were complete, reliable, valuable, adequate and practical. The proposed framework is expected to provide African governments and their NOCs with insight and awareness of strategies for improving Olympic performance of their countries. As revealed in the verification and validation process, the participants were confident that the African countries had the capacity to adopt and implement the proposed framework. The next chapter, which concludes the study, provides a reflection on the research process, a review of the research contributions, recommendations to the industry, suggestions for further research work and personal reflections of the researcher.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

The aim of the research had been to investigate the performance of African nations in the 2012 London Olympics and, as a result, propose a framework for improving their performance and success in future Olympic Games. The resulting framework was to comprise of strategies and practices that contribute to African nations addressing issues of performance in other major international sport tournaments. The objectives of the research were developed in Chapter one to aid in achieving the research aim. The preceding chapter discussed the findings of the research in light of the research objectives and the literature. This chapter summarises the key findings from the research and draws conclusions from these. The summary reviews the issues concerning the performance of African nations in the London 2012 Olympic Games, and the measures that can be adopted to address these issues as reflected in the framework proposed in Chapter five. This chapter also reflects on the study design and research processes adopted in the research. The chapter then reviews the contributions of the research and makes recommendations to industry, as well as highlighting the study limitations and the areas to consider for future research. Lastly, the chapter highlights the evolution of the research and personal reflections of the researcher.

7.1 Review of performance of African nations in London 2012 Olympics

Ali (1976) recalls that, even though African nations like South Africa and Egypt can trace their history in modern Olympic Games to the beginning of the 20th century, the active participation of most African countries in the Olympics only started in the 1960s and 1970s. Although some studies have argued that the objectives for the participation of countries in Olympics is to use the Games as a medium to satisfy needs such as, globalisation and regeneration of national identity (Roche, 2000; Nauright, 2004), tourism (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2002), and other socio-economic gains, Johnson and Ali (2004) note that the ultimate goal for countries participating in the Games is to achieve sporting success. However, Lins *et al.* (2003) point out that the Olympic Games have become more competitive as a result of the growing number

of countries and athletes now participating, and the desire among participants to achieve success has also increased as a result of this, making the price for success and failure more costly. The consequences of this are evident in the long-term underachievement of African countries in the Games following consistent poor performances. Thus, it has become more necessary than ever to look into issues accounting for poor performance in the Olympic Games, particularly from the point of view of developing countries, as was the case in this study. Furthermore, the need for a study such as this is justified as it provides valuable insight on how best to create an environment for countries to perform better and increase their chances of achieving Olympic success.

The study set out to investigate the performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympics and to adopt a project management and sports management perspectives in identifying the issues concerning their performance. The main output from this research is the development of a framework for the key issues to be addressed in order to improve performance and success of African countries in the Games. The use of the interpretivist research paradigm as the philosophical foundation for the research has aided the achievement of this output. Exploring the performance of African countries in the Olympics through the views of key stakeholders such as NOC presidents/secretary generals, athletes and coaches, provides first hand insight into the main issues and challenges being faced. Also, obtaining the views of these categories of stakeholders provides validity to the study findings, as these stakeholder groups are most likely to be directly impacted by the implementation of the strategies proposed in the study findings. Furthermore, narrowing down the investigation from a large number of countries to three case study countries has provided depth in the research findings obtained. The discussions of the four research questions in Chapter five have assisted in achieving this aim.

Although researchers such as Wu *et al.* (2009) and Zhang *et al.* (2009) had criticised the use of a single metric, i.e. medals alone, in measuring the achievement of countries in the Olympic Games, it was found that the most popular way used by African countries in measuring their performance in the Olympics was through the number of medals won or their final position on the overall medal table. As all the study participants expressed this view, it is safe to assume that the use of medals as a measuring yardstick for Olympic success of African countries is a valid approach. It

is also worthy of mention that the study findings revealed that the participating countries and their athletes had set other objectives for the London Olympic Games apart from winning medals. This view, though supported by project management theory posited by researchers such as De Wit (1988) and Baccarini (1999) which uphold that a project's success or failure is reflected by the extent to which its objectives are met, did not dilute the overall goal of the African NOCs which was to win medals. Consequently, therefore, the concept of measuring the performance and success of countries in the Games using a measuring tool such as medals/medal tables cannot be overlooked.

The outcome of the 2012 London Olympic Games for Africa as demonstrated in this study shows that the trend of underperformance of African countries in the Olympic Games has maintained a status quo. A total of 34 medals (11 gold, 12 silver and 11 bronze) from a possible 962 medals (302 gold, 304 silver and 356 gold), was won between ten African countries out of a total number of fifty-three African countries that took part in the Games (BBC reports). These statistics alongside the study revelations, which showed an overall dissatisfaction of the participants with the medal achievements of their respective countries, validates studies conducted by Johnson and Ali (2004) and Forrest *et al.* (2010) considering African countries to be underperforming in Olympic Games. Although some of the participants claimed to have achieved success in achieving other set objectives in areas such as gaining exposure, learning and experience, as well as fostering other socio-economic gains, the feeling of disappointment and underachievement remained overwhelmingly strong among the African countries, especially as their performances in previous Olympic Games have also been poor. Luiz and Fadal (2011) recalled that there was a wide gap in knowledge about the issues responsible for the poor performance of African countries in the Olympics, and this research, though significantly bridging this gap, also demonstrates this view. Thus, it can be concluded that the issue of poor performance of African countries in Olympics is a reoccurring phenomenon that needs to be analysed more critically in order to identify ways of mitigating its reoccurrence in future Olympic Games.

7.2 Reflection on the research process

The purpose of the research was to address the research question, which is “what are the issues that influenced the performance of African nations in the London Olympics?” From this research question, four sub-questions were carved out as part of the research aim to investigate the performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympics and to explore ways in which these performances may be improved in future Olympic Games.

The foundation of the research was the interpretivist research paradigm. The choice of interpretivism for the study was informed by the exploratory nature of the research aimed at understanding the participants’ perspective on the underperformance of African nations in the Olympics. Klein and Myers (1999) point out that knowledge of reality in interpretive research is gained only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, documents, tools, and other artifacts. In other words, understanding of phenomena in an interpretive study is achieved through the meaning people assign to them (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991; Deetz, 1996). Therefore, it had been the conscious intention of the researcher throughout the study to pay careful attention to the views of the study participants, particularly during the data collection phase of the study, and to seek clarity where necessary in order to be able to interpret those views in the best possible way without any misrepresentations. The interpretive paradigm allowed the researcher to investigate the issue of poor performance of African countries within the context of the London 2012 Olympics and to study how this had impacted on the key players who were also the research participants. Although the initial aim of the study had been to obtain the views of the African countries concerning the project management of the London 2012 Olympics, preliminary findings obtained from the study participants had suggested that the issue of poor performance of African countries in the Games was a bigger issue to address, and as such, there was a need for a redirection of the research focus. Through the flexibility afforded by the interpretivist research paradigm, the researcher was able to explore this new issue of underperformance, making relevant changes to the study design as suggested by Klein and Myers (1999) and Oates (2006). Kaplan and Maxwell (1994) recall that interpretive research focuses on the complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges. This statement also accounts for the cyclic

collection of data explained in section 3.7 (Chapter three) which was brought about by the research's attempt to make sense of the issues as they emerged from the study.

A qualitative design was used to carry out the study. Walsham (1993) considers qualitative design to be associated with the interpretivist philosophical paradigm and hence its adoption in this study. More specifically, the use of a qualitative design was born from the exploratory nature of the research. Saunders *et al.* (2012) describe an exploratory study as a means of discovering what is happening and gaining insights about a subject of interest through asking open questions. Thus, the researcher's ability to secure in-depth insight into the views of the study participants concerning their countries' performances at the London Olympics was made possible through the freedom and flexibility provided by the qualitative design of the study. This meant that the participants could express these views without any restrictions, as may have been the case with the adoption of other research designs.

The study adopted a multiple case study strategy (three case study countries) as a means to secure depth from early findings obtained, as well as to allow the inclusion of more stakeholders to the study to enable triangulation and validation of data. The choice of this strategy was guided by the following statement by Saunders *et al.* (2012, p.173):

“Your choice of research strategy will therefore be guided by your research question(s) and objectives, the coherence with which these link to your philosophy, research approach and purpose, and also to more pragmatic concerns including the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time and other resources you have available, and access to potential participants and to other sources of data”.

With the research question attempting to find out the ‘*issues facing the performance of African nations in the Olympics*’, the adoption of a case study strategy stemmed from the need to build an in-depth, contextual understanding of this phenomenon. In using multiple cases, the researcher's motives were guided by Yin's (2003) work, which suggests that the selection of cases can be done with the intention of predicting similar results, as was the case with the findings from the case study countries. Furthermore, the use of multiple cases for this study strengthened the research results

through pattern-matching replication, thereby increasing confidence and reliability in the robustness of the research.

The primary method used in the study for data collection was interviews. In view of the research design adopted for the study, it was important for the researcher to adopt a data collection tool that was flexible enough to allow the study participants to present their views in the best possible way. The choice of a semi-structured interview approach was drawn from the need to allow the NOC representatives to relay vital information within the context of the research, in a comfortable and unrestrictive manner.

7.3 Review of research contributions

In concluding an interpretivist study, Walsham (2006) argues that it is crucial to focus on the contributions claimed. In doing this, he suggests four useful ways of measuring research contributions of interpretivist work.

First, Walsham (2006) notes that there is need to identify the target audience who are likely to benefit from the research contributions of an interpretive study. It is expected that the findings from the study and the developed framework are valuable for sports organisations, particularly African NOCs, who are keen on improving their performance and success rates in the Olympic Games. The findings from the study also provide useful insight to public policy makers from African countries on the impact of sport policy on the performance of their countries in the Olympics, and may stimulate discussions that will lead to policy reviews. Other possible audiences for this thesis are researchers who are interested in Olympic sport performance of countries, and project management researchers who have an interest in studying success in sport.

Secondly, Walsham (2006) emphasises the need to explain any contributions derived from the study, which have been made to the body of literature. The discussions that have emanated from this research enrich the body of knowledge on sports performance of countries in the Olympics from the context of developing countries, particularly from Africa, where there has, up till now, been a distinct lack of analysis of the key issues accounting for poor performance. Specifically, the retrospective investigation of the performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympics

and the identification of the issues concerned has led to the development of a performance improvement framework. This has added to the literature on elite sports development, especially in the context of the Olympics. Furthermore, the application of a project management perspective provides a new dimension in the debate on performance indicators in Olympic sport success. Up on till now, the majority of the studies conducted on the subject have been based on socio-economic indicators. This research has demonstrated the relevance of project management literature to measuring sports performance and success, thus bringing about a fusion of project management and sports management.

Walsham (2006) also states the need to be clear on the claim of the study in interpretivist research. In applying this principle to this research, it is safe to declare that the study produced a framework spelling out the key issues that need to be addressed to bring about an improvement in the performance of African countries in the Olympics. This framework was informed by the perspectives and experiences of the research participants who were directly affected by the phenomenon (poor performance in Olympics). According to Oates (2006), the intention of interpretivist research is to *“look at how the people perceive their world (individually or as groups) and try to understand the phenomena through the meanings and values that the people assign to them”*. As such, the development of the framework in this study is a product of the meanings and values obtained from the research participants concerning the issue of poor performance.

Lastly, Walsham (2006) notes that it is important to explain how the research could be used by others. This study has brought about several findings. It was discovered that the medal totals and medal tables are the most popular ways used by African countries in measuring their performance in Olympic Games. The study also provided insight into the extent of the performance of African countries in the 2012 London Olympics and how much of their objectives for the Games were achieved. Furthermore, the study, through the adoption of a project management perspective, revealed the key issues which accounted for the poor performances, as well as suggesting measures to address these issues. In view of the above contributions, it is suggested that sports administrators, particularly from NOCs, can use the findings from this study to explore the possibility of developing specifically tailored performance improvement frameworks for their individual NOCs. Sport policy

makers could also adopt the findings from the study to guide their development of new policies or review existing ones, especially as it concerns elite sports and Olympic participation. Also, researchers and practitioners who wish to explore this area further can use the findings from this study, particularly the framework developed in chapter six, as both a theoretical and practical point of reference.

7.4 Recommendations to the industry

In view of the analysis of the study findings, a number of recommendations can be formulated for government of countries and their National Olympic Committees (NOCs), particularly those from developing countries, which must be addressed if their poor performance and success rate in the Olympics are to be improved. These are:

- The increasing desire for Olympic success by participating countries is making the tournament more competitive, thereby making the price for success more costly. For developing countries, the task of achieving success is now more gigantic than ever given the uneven distribution of resources between competing countries. As such, there is need for developing countries, particularly those from Africa, to start thinking more clearly and more systematically about performance issues and the causes, as the findings from this study indicated that this was an inherent challenge. An informed awareness, recognition and knowledge of performance issues in Olympics would enhance the application of more appropriate measures in addressing these issues. In achieving this, the NOCs will need to integrate thinking and best practice in relation to the application of project management critical success factors (CSFs), sport policies and procedures. Adopting the framework proposed in this study will prove useful.
- To enhance the potential for developing countries to perform better in the Olympics, their governments, through their sports ministries and commissions, should show more commitment in helping their NOCs achieve their objectives both short-term and long-term. The willingness and readiness of the governments to invest their resources on sport projects, programmes and portfolios must remain uncompromised. In order to achieve this, sports structures must be set up or restructured as project management entities if

recommendations are to be effectively implemented. Bringing on-board the right people with the right know-how should be of utmost priority for the governments. Also, emphasis should be laid on training, modernising and enhancing the skills and managerial abilities of the existing human resources in these setups.

- Although it is acknowledged from discussions in this research that developing countries have limited resources to enable them to cope with the enormous investment needed to effectively prepare for the Olympics, it was discovered that the issue of corruption exacerbates this problem. This issue was conspicuous among the African countries investigated in this study. Therefore, it is recommended that the governments of these countries should take conscious steps to ensure that existing laws on corruption and codes of conduct for public officers, especially those in the sport sectors, must be strengthened. Measures must also be put in place to appropriately prosecute any public officer found wanting. Generally, these governments will need to intensify efforts aimed at eradicating corrupt practices within sports systems and the wider society.

7.5 Limitation and recommendation for further research

It should be pointed out that this is not a general study on the performance of every country participating in the Olympic Games but rather a study of, and development of a framework for developing countries, particularly those from Africa, to build upon in order to improve their Olympic performances in the future. The researcher acknowledges that there are a host of other issues that can influence the performance of countries in Olympic sports such as a country's GDP, population, geographical location or even natural resources. However, it was outside the focus of this study to consider these factors, but future studies on Olympic performance of African countries could take them into consideration.

It was revealed from the findings that a few of the African countries considered their participation in the Olympics a key objective of their NOC and achieving this objective often brought about a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction. It wasn't established in the findings how much the NOCs' desire to participate in the Olympic Games weighed over their desire to perform well. Exploring this view further was

outside the scope of this research but is likely to be a critical issue that should be explored further in future research.

Although it was revealed from the findings that some countries had been more ambitious in setting their targets than others, the general consensus of underperformance among the African countries suggests a critical need for more analysis into the factors responsible for such poor performances with considerations made to the targets set by these countries. This had not been the direct focus of this research, and as such, provides an opportunity for subsequent research in this direction.

The study sought to understand the performance of countries purely from an African perspective. However, it will be intriguing to know the outcome if a similar study was conducted from the perspective of another continent, for example, investigating the Olympic performance of South American countries. Also, as the study participant groups had been made up of only NOC presidents/secretary generals, coaches and athletes, another avenue for future research will be to conduct a similar study using the views of other Olympic stakeholders, for example, policy makers, sponsors, sport federations or other sport agencies.

The findings revealed that some of the African countries considered it a priority to use the Olympics as a means to achieve other socio-political goals. However, it was not ascertained if this objective was more important for the African countries than winning medals at the Olympic Games, nor was the success of this measured. As such, this provides an opportunity for further research in this area to determine if a reprioritisation of objectives will improve the performance and success of African countries in the Games.

The findings from the study were gathered from the participants' views mainly from their countries' performances in the 2012 London Olympics, which was the context of the study. However, it will be interesting to carryout another similar study from the context of another edition of the Games, for example, investigating the performance of African countries in the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Although the study had attempted to include all 53 African NOCs that participated in the 2012 London Olympics, it was logistically impossible for the researcher to

achieve this given the timeframe for the completion of the study. This led to the investigation of the views, first from 20 countries, which was then reduced to 9 countries, and subsequently, 3 case study countries. This study limitation leaves a gap for future studies on sport performance of countries to consider the possibility of involving a larger number of countries in order to gain a broader picture of the emerging issues.

From the foregoing discussion, the recommendations for further research are summarised as follows:

- inclusion/combination of more variables to measure performance and explore issues and challenges faced;
- investigating performance from perspective of countries in a different region e.g. South America;
- inclusion of more countries in the analysis;
- carrying out a similar investigation using a different context i.e. investigating the performance of African countries in the 2016 Rio Olympics;
- inclusion of more or different stakeholder groups e.g. sponsors, sport governing bodies etc.;
- potential to use a different research strategy to carry out a similar study e.g. action research.

7.6 Evolution of the research and personal reflections

The focus of the research on the performance of African nations in the 2012 London Olympics originated from an attempt to examine the outcome of the London Olympics project by securing the views of the project stakeholders. The researcher had initially set out to evaluate the success of the Olympics by analysing the views of the African NOCs, and the theoretical drive to do that stemmed from the desire to contribute to project management discourse on project success and failure as have been enunciated by several researchers (discussed in the literature review chapter). The research question at the time was *‘how do the National Olympic Committees from Africa view the overall outcome of the London 2012 Olympic Games?’* The research objective had been to establish, through the views of the African NOCs, whether the London Olympics project had been successful or not. The literature review for the study had centred around project success/failure, with emphasis on the outcome of the

London Olympics project. In an attempt to answer the initial research question, the researcher set out to interview the NOC presidents/Secretary Generals of all fifty-three NOCs from Africa who participated in the London Olympics. These groups of people were to constitute the research participants. Before these interviews were conducted, the researcher made use of a pre-interview questionnaire (discussed in chapter three) to secure background information on the research participants. It is worthy of mention however, that at this stage of the research, the questions in the questionnaire and those in the interview had been designed and structured primarily to suit the research question at the time.

Though fifty-three NOCs had been approached to take part in the study, only twenty NOCs agreed at this stage of the study to participate. In furtherance to this, the researcher conducted interviews with the NOC representatives from these countries (discussed in chapter three). The findings from the interviews conducted (discussed in chapter four) revealed that the participants were generally pleased with the project outcome of the 2012 London Olympics project and they considered the project to have been a success. However, the findings also revealed that, though the Olympics had been considered successful, the general performance of the countries that the research participants represented was poor at the Games, and this was considered by the participants to be of great concern. Thus, while the original aim of the study had been to find out what the participants (African countries) thought about the case (London Olympics), the main issue revealed in the findings was what the case had to say about the participants. Owing to the interpretive nature of the study therefore, there was a need for the researcher to carry out a further exploration into the area of performance of countries in the Olympic, an aspect which had not been in the original master plan of the study, and to seek to find out the factors that influenced such performance. In order to achieve this, a further review of literature had to be carried out and another round of interviews conducted with the participants (discussed in chapter three and four) to address the new and more significant issues that were raised in the first study.

The implication of the new findings therefore meant that the researcher had to make changes to the initial research question, aim and objectives. Though this also meant that the researcher had to go through the rigour of restructuring the entire research to fit the new issues being addressed, the process of implementing these changes

produced a learning curve for the researcher in carrying out interpretive research. Furthermore, the research journey and the changes that were made are indicative of the interpretive research philosophy (discussed in chapter three) which is the philosophical paradigm binding this study.

The research journey has been one of many twists and turns, but through it all, the researcher is confident to claim learning of valuable skills in the art of conducting research, especially in an unpredictable environment where changes to research variables are always inevitable. One of such skills is the ability to apply critical thinking in analysing complex issues. The researcher strongly believes that the skills acquired through this process, as well as the knowledge gained from conducting this study, can be applied to the researcher's future, and has contributed to the researcher's overall intellectual growth. This worthwhile experience in carrying out this study is one that the researcher will cherish for a lifetime.

REFERENCES

- AALTONEN, K. and SIVONEN, R. 2009. Response strategies to stakeholder pressures in global projects. *International Journal of Project Management*, 27, 131-141.
- ABBOTT, A. and COLLINS, D. 2002. A theoretical and empirical analysis of a "state of the art" talent identification model. *High Ability Studies*, 13, 157 - 178.
- ALI, R. 1976. *Africa at the Olympics*. London, Africa Books.
- ALVESSON, M. 2003. Beyond neopositivists, romantics, and localists: a reflexive approach to interviews in organisational research. *Academy of Management Review*, 28 (1), 13 - 33.
- AL ZEERA, Z. 2001. Wholeness and holiness in education: An Islamic perspective. Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic Thought.
- ANDRANOVICH, G., BURBANK, M. J. and HEYING, C. H. 2001. Olympic Cities: Lessons Learned from Mega-Event Politics. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 23, 113-131.
- ASSOCIATION FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT (APM). 2000. *Body of knowledge* (4th ed.). High Wycombe: APM.
- ASSOCIATION FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT (APM). 2012. *Body of knowledge* (6th ed.). Buckinghamshire: APM.
- ATKINSON, R. 1999. Project management: cost, time and quality, two best guesses and a phenomenon, its time to accept other success criteria. *International Journal of Project Management*, 17, 337-342.
- ATTARZADEH, I. and HOCK, O. 2003. Project management practices: success versus failure. In *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Information Technology*, 1, 1 - 8. 26th - 28th August 2008, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- BACCARINI, D. 1999. The Logical Framework Method for Defining Project Success. *Project Management Journal*, 30, 25.
- BAKER, B. N., MURPHY, D. C. and FISHER, D. 1983. Factors affecting project success. In *Project Management Handbook*, edited by D. I. Cleland and W. R. King, 2nd ed., 902 - 919, 1969, New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

- BARKOUKIS, V., LAZARUS, L. and TSORBATZOUUDIS, H. 2014. Beliefs about the causes of success in sports and susceptibility for doping use in adolescent athletes. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 32 (3), 212 - 219.
- BARNETT, V. 2002. *Sample Survey Principles and Methods* (3rd edn). Chichester: Wiley.
- BARRITT, I. 1986. Human science and the human image. *Phenomenology and Pedagogy*, 4, 14 - 21.
- BAUMAN, A., BELLEW, B. and CRAIG, C. 2014. Did the 2000 Sydney Olympics increase physical activity among adult Australians? *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 10, 1136.
- BAXTER, P. and JACK, S. 2008. Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13 (4), 544 - 559.
- BEAMISH, R. and RITCHIE, I. 2006. *Fastest, Highest, Strongest: A Critique of High-Performance Sport*. London, Routledge.
- BELASSI W. and TUKEL, O. I. 1996. A new framework for determining critical success/failure factors in projects. *International Journal of Project Management*, 14 (1), 28 - 45.
- BELOUT, A. 1998. Effects of human resource management on project effectiveness and success: Toward a new conceptual framework. *International Journal of Project Management*, 16 (1), 21 - 26.
- BELOUT, A. and GAUVREAU, C. 2004. Factors influencing project success: the impact of human resources management. *International Journal of Project Management*, 22, 1 - 11.
- BERGSGARD, N. A., HOULIHAN, B., MANGSET, P., NODLAND, S. I. and ROMMETVELDT, H. 2007. *Sport Policy. A comparative analysis of stability and change*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- BERNARD, A.B. and BUSSE, M.R. 2004. Who wins the Olympic Games: economic resources and medal totals. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 86 (1), 413-511.
- BESNER, C. and HOBBS, B. 2006. The perceived value and potential contribution of project management practices to project success. *Project Management Journal*, 37 (3), 37 - 48.
- BLAIKIE, N. 2000. *Designing Social Research*. Oxford: Blackwell.

- BLICHFELDT, B. S. and ANDERSEN, J. R. 2006. Creating a Wider Audience for Action Research: Learning from Case-Study Research. *Journal of Research Practice*, 2 (1), D2
- BLOYCE, D. and SMITH, A. 2010. *Sport policy and development - an introduction*. London, Routledge.
- BOGDAN, R. and BIKLEN, S. K. 1982. *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- BOGDAN, R. and TAYLOR, S. J. 1975. *Introduction to qualitative research methods*. New York: John Wiley.
- BOLAND, R. J. (Jr.) 1991. "Information System Use as a Hermeneutic Process". In *Information Systems Research: Contemporary Approaches and Emergent Traditions*, H-E. Nissen, H.K. Klein, R. A. Hirscheim (Eds.). NorthHolland, Amsterdam, 439 - 464.
- BOUCHARD, T. J. 1976. Field research methods: Interviewing, questionnaires, participant observation, systematic observation, unobtrusive measures. *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology*, 363-413.
- BOURNE, L. and WALKER, D. H. T. 2008. Project relationship management and the Stakeholder Circle™. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, 1, 125-130.
- BOYATZIS, R. E. 1998. *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. London, Thousand Oaks.
- BRANNEN, J. 2004. *Working qualitatively and quantitatively*. In C. Seale, G. Gobo, J. F. Gubrium and D. Silverman (eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice*. London: Sage.
- BRAUN, V. and CLARKE, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), 77 - 101.
- BREKHUS, W. H., GALLIHER, J. F. and GUBRIUM, J. F. 2005. 'The need for thin description'. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11 (6), 861 - 79.
- BRENT RITCHIE, J. and AITKEN, C. E. 1984. Assessing the impacts of the 1988 Olympic Winter Games: the research program and initial results. *Journal of Travel Research*, 22, 17.
- BROWN, A. and ADAMS, J. 2000. Measuring the effect of project management on construction outputs: a new approach. *International Journal of Project Management*, 18, 327 - 335.

- BRYMAN, A. 2006. Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: how is it done? *Qualitative research*, 6, 97-113.
- BRYMAN, A. 2008. Why do researchers integrate/combine/mesh/blend/mix/merge/fuse quantitative and qualitative research. *Advances in mixed methods research*, 87-100.
- BRYMAN, A. 2012. *Social research methods*, 4th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BRYMAN, A. and BELL, E. 2003. *Business Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BRYANT, A. and CHARMAZ, K. 2007. *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*. London: Sage.
- BURKE, R. 2003. *Project Management: Planning and Control Techniques*, 4th Edition. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley and Sons.
- BURNS, N. and GROVE, S. K. 2003. *Understanding Nursing Research*, 3rd Edition. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company.
- BURNS, N. and GROVE, S. K. 2011. *Understanding Nursing Research: Building an Evidence-Based Practice*, 5th Edition. Maryland Heights: Elsevier Saunders.
- BURRELL, G. and MORGAN, G. 1979. *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life*. London: Heinemann.
- CAVANA, R. Y., DELAHAYE, B. L. and SEKARAN, U. 2001. *Applied Business Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*. Qld., Australia: Wiley.
- CHAN, A. P. C. and CHAN, A. P. L. 2004. Key performance indicators for measuring construction success. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 11 (2), 203 - 221.
- CHARMAZ, K. 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory*. London: Sage.
- CHARNES, A., COOPER, W. and RHODES, E. 1978. Measuring the efficiency of decision-making units. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 2, 429 - 444.
- CHURILOV, L. and FLITMAN, A. 2006. Towards fair ranking of Olympic achievements: the case of Sydney 2000. *Computers and Operations Research*, 33 (7), 2057 - 82.
- CIA, 2013. Central Intelligence Agency: The World Factbook. Retrieved in December 2013 from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/to.html>

- CLARKE, A. 1999. A practical use of key success factors to improve the effectiveness of project management. *International Journal of Project Management*, 17 (3), 139 - 145.
- CLEGG, S., PITISIS, T., RURA-POLLEY, T. and MAROOSSEZKY, M. 2002. Governmentality matters: designing an alliance culture of interorganisational collaboration for managing projects. *Organization Studies*, 23, 317-338.
- CLELAND, D. I. and KING, W. R. 1983. *Systems analysis and project management*. New York, McGraw Hill.
- COALTER, F. 2004. Stuck in the blocks?: a sustainable sporting legacy. In: Green, M. 2009. Podium or participation? Analysing policy priorities under changing modes of sport governance in the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Sport Policy*, 1 (2), 121 - 144.
- COALTER, F. 2007. *A wider role for sport: who's keeping the score?* London: Routledge.
- COATES, D. and HUMPHREYS, B. 1999. The growth effects of sport franchises, stadia and arenas. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 16, 601 - 24
- COHEN, L. and MANION, L. 1994. *Research Methods in Education*, 4th Edition. London: Routledge.
- COHEN, L., MANION, L. and MORRISON, K. 2000. *Research methods in education*. New Your: Routledge
- COLLIS, J. and HUSSEY, R. 2009. *Business Research: A practical guide for undergraduate and and postgraduate students*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- CONDON, E., GOLDEN, B.L. and WASIL, A.E. 1999. Predicting the success of nations at the summer Olympics using neural networks. *Computers and Operations Research*, 26 (13), 1243 - 1265.
- CONNELL, A. F. and NORD, W. R. 1996. "The bloodless coup: The infiltration of organization science by uncertainty and values". *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 32 (4), 407 - 427.
- COOKE-DAVIES, T. 2002. The "real" success factors on projects. *International Journal of Project Management*, 20, 185-190.
- COOPER, R. G. and KLEINSCHMIDT, E. J. 1995. Benchmarking the firm's critical success factors in new product development. *J. Prod. Innov. Manag.*, 12, 374 - 391.

- CORBIN, J. and STRAUSS, A. 2008. *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- CORNELISSEN, S. 2004. Sport mega-events in Africa: processes, impacts and prospects. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning and Development*, 1, 39-55.
- COTE, J., MACDONALD, D. J., BAKER, J. and ABERNETHY, B. 2006. When "where" is more important than "when": birthplace and birthdate effects on the achievement of sporting expertise. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 24 (10), 1065 - 73.
- COXHEAD, H. and DAVIS, J. 1992. New Development: A Review of the Literature. *Henley Management College Working Paper*.
- CRESWELL, J. W. 1998. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- CRESWELL, J. W. 2007. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*, Sage Publications, Inc.
- CRESWELL, J. W., HANSON, W. E., CLARK, V. L. P. and MORALES, A. 2007. Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. *Counseling Psychologist*, 35, 236.
- CROTTY, M. 1998. *The Foundations of Social Research*. London: Sage.
- D'ANDRADE, R. 1991. The identification of schemas in naturalistic data. In *Person schemas and maladaptive interpersonal patterns*, edited by M. J. Horowitz, 279 - 301. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- DAVIS, J. and THORNLEY, A. 2010. Urban regeneration for the London 2012 Olympics: Issues of land acquisition and legacy. *City, Culture and Society*, 1, 89-98.
- DE BOSSCHER, V. 2007. *Sports policy factors leading to international sporting success*. Published Doctoral thesis, Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Brussel: Vubpress.
- DE BOSSCHER, V., HEYNDELS, B., DE KNOP, P., VAN BOTTENBURG, M. and SHIBLI, S. 2008. The paradox of measuring success of nations in elite sport. *Belgian Journal of Geography*, 2, 217 - 234.
- DE BOSSCHER, V., DE KNOP, P., VAN BOTTENBURG, M. and SHIBLI, S. 2006. A conceptual framework for analysing sports policy factors leading to international sporting success. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 6 (2), 185 - 215.

- DE BOSSCHER, V., DE KNOP, P., VAN BOTTENBURG, M. and SHIBLI, S. BINGHAM, J. 2009. Explaining international sporting success: An international comparison of elite sport systems and policies in six countries. *Sport Management Review*, 12, 113 - 136.
- DEETZ, S. 1996. Describing differences in approaches to organisation science: Rethinking Burrell and Morgan and their legacy. *Organization Science*, 7, 191 - 207.
- DENZIN, N. K. and LINCOLN, Y. S. 1998. *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. London: editor's Sage Publications
- DENZIN, N. K. and LINCOLN, Y. S. 2005. Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd Edition. California: Sage.
- DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT (DCMS). 2008b. *Playing to win: a new era for sport*. London: DCMS.
- DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT (DCMS)/STRATEGY UNIT. 2002. *Game plan: a strategy for delivering government's sport and physical activity objectives*. London: DCMS/SU.
- DE VAUS, D. A. 2001. *Research Design in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- DE WIT, A. 1988. Measurement of project success. *International Journal of Project Management*, 6, 164-170.
- DEY, I. 1993. *Qualitative Data Analysis*. London, Routledge.
- DIEFENBACH, T. 2009. *Management and the Dominance of Managers*. London: Routledge.
- DODD, S. and SATHASIVAM, V. Year. Mega-project management: A case study of the London Olympic Games 2012. In: UK Academy for Information Systems Conference Proceedings, 2010. Paper 19.
- EASTERBY-SMITH, M., RICHARD, T. and ANDY, L. 2003. *Management Research: An introduction*. London: Sage.
- EASTERBY-SMITH, M., THORPE, R. and LOWE, A. 1991. *Management Research: An Introduction*. London: Sage.
- EASTERBY-SMITH, M., THORP, R. and LOWE, A. 2004. *Management Research: An Introduction*. 2nd edition. London: Sage.
- EDRALIN, D. 2000. *Business research: concepts and applications*. De La Salle University Press: Manila

- EISENHARDT, K. M. and GRAEBNER, M. E. 2007. 'Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges', *Academy of Management Journal*, 50 (1), 25 - 32.
- ELIG, T. and FRIEZE, I. 1979. Measuring causal attribution for success and failure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37 (4), 621 - 634.
- FELLOWS, R. and LIU, A. 1997. *Research Methods in Construction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Limited.
- FLYVBJERG, B., BRUZELIUS, N. and ROTHENGATTER, W. 2003. *Megaprojects and risk. An anatomy of ambition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- FORREST, D., SANZ, I. and TENA, J.D. 2010. Forecasting national team medal totals at the summer Olympic Games. *International Journal of Forecasting*, 26 (3), 576 - 588.
- FORTUNE, J., WHITE, D., JUGDEV, K. and WALKER, D. 2011. Looking again at current practice in project management. *International Journal of Project Management*, 4 (4), 553 - 572.
- FRAME, D. 1995. *Managing projects in organisations. Second ed.* Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- FREEMAN, E. 1984. *Strategic Management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston: Pitman.
- FROOMAN, J. 1999. Stakeholder influence strategies. *Academy of management review*, 191-205.
- GAGE, N. L. 1989. The Paradigm Wars and Their Aftermath: A "Historical" Sketch of Research on Teaching Since 1989. *Educational Research*, 18 (7), 4 - 10.
- GAJENDRAN, T., BREWER, G., RUNESON, G. and DAINITY, A. 2011. Research Methodologies for Studying the Informal Aspects of Construction Project Organisations. *Management and Innovation for a Sustainable Built Environment*, 20 - 23.
- GARDINER, P. D. and STEWART, K. 2000. Revisiting the golden triangle of cost, time and quality: the role of NPV in project control, success and failure. *International Journal of Project Management*, 18, 251-256.
- GENISE, P. 2002. Usability Evaluation: Methods and Techniques. Technical Paper. University of Texas.
- GILL, J. and JOHNSON, P. 2010. *Research Methods for Managers, 4th Edition*. London: Sage.

- GLASER, B. and STRAUSS, A. 1967. *The discovery of Grounded Theory*. Chicago IL: Aldine.
- GLASS, R. 1999. Evolving a new theory of project success. *Communications of the ACM*.
- GOLD, J. R. and GOLD, M. M. 2008. Olympic cities: regeneration, city rebranding and changing urban agendas. *Geography Compass*, 2, 300-318.
- GRATTON, C. and PREUSS, H. 2008. Maximizing Olympic impacts by building up legacies. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 25, 1922-1938.
- GRAY, C. 1981. *Analysis of the preliminary element of building production costs*. M Phil thesis, University of Reading, UK.
- GREEN, M. 2004. Changing policy priorities for sport in England: the emergence of elite sport development as a key policy concern. *Leisure Studies*, 23 (4), 365 - 83.
- GREEN, M. 2009. Podium or participation? Analysing policy priorities under changing modes of sport governance in the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Sport Policy*, 1 (2), 121 - 144.
- GREEN, M. and COLLINS, S. 2008. Policy, politics and path dependency: sport development in Australia and Finland. *Sport Management Review*, 11, 225 - 251.
- GREEN, M. and HOULIHAN, B. 2005. *Elite sport development: policy learning and political priorities*. London: Routledge.
- GREEN, M. and OAKLEY, B. 2001. Elite sport development systems and playing to win: uniformity and diversity in international approaches. *Leisure Studies*, 20 (4), 247 - 67.
- GRIMES, A., KELLY, W. and RUBIN, P. 1974. A socioeconomic model of national olympic performance. *Social Science Quarterly*, 55, 777 - 783.
- GUBA, E. G. 1978. *Toward a methodology of naturalistic inquiry in educational evaluation*. Monograph 8. Los Angeles: UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation.
- GUBA, E. G. and LINCOLN, Y. S. 1994. Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research. In Devin, N and Lincoln, Y (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- GUMMESSON, E. 1988. *Qualitative methods in management research*. Lund, Norway: Studentlitteratur, Chartwell-Bratt.

- GURSOY, D. and KENDALL, K. 2006. Hosting mega events: Modeling locals' support. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33, 603-623.
- GYIMAH-BREMPPONG, K. and TRAYNOR, T. L. 1999. Political instability, investment and economic growth in sub-saharan Africa. *Journal of African Economies*, 8 (1), 52 - 86.
- HAIGH, N. and GRIFFITHS, A. 2009. The natural environment as a primary stakeholder: the case of climate change. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 18, 347-359.
- HAMILTON, B. 2000. East African running dominance: what is behind it? *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 34 (5), 391 - 4.
- HEALY, M. and PERRY, C. 2000. Comprehensive criteria to judge validity and reliability of qualitative research within the realism paradigm. *Qualitative Market Research - An International Journal*, 3 (3), 118 - 126.
- HELD, D. 1980. Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas. University of California Press.
- HERSTEIN, R. and BERGER, R. 2013. Hosting the Olympics: a city's make-or-break impression. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 34 (5), 54 - 59.
- HILL, C. E., KNOX, S., THOMPSON, B. J., WILLIAMS, E. N., HESS, S. A. and LADANY, N. 2005. Consensual Qualitative Research: An Update. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 196.
- HILL, C. E., THOMPSON, B. J. and WILLIAMS, E. N. 1997. A guide to conducting consensual qualitative research. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 25, 517-572.
- HOFFMANN, R., GING, L.C and RAMASAMY, B. 2002. The socio-economic determinants of international soccer performance. *Journal of Applied Economics*, 5 (2), 253 - 72.
- HOLDEN, M. T. and LYNCH, P. 2004. Choosing the Appropriate Methodology: Understanding Research Philosophy. *The Marketing Review*, 4, 397 - 409.
- HORNE, J. and MANZENREITER, W. 2002. *Japan, Korea and the 2002 World Cup*. London and New York, Routledge.
- HORNE, J. and MANZENREITER, W. 2006. An introduction to the sociology of sports mega-events. *The Sociological Review*, 54 (S2), 1 - 24.
- HOULIHAN, B. and GREEN, M., eds, 2008. *Comparative elite sport development: systems, structures and public policy*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

- HOULIHAN, B. and WHITE, A. 2002. *The politics of sports development: Development of sport or development through sport?*, London: Routledge.
- HSIEH, H. F. and SHANNON, S. E. 2005. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research*, 15, 1277-1288.
- HUGHES, J. and SHARROCK, W. 1997. *The Philosophy of Social Research*, 3rd Edition. Essex: Pearson.
- HUMPHREYS, B. R and RUSESKI, J. E. 2009. "Estimates of the dimensions of the sports market in the US". *International Journal of Sports Finance*, 4 (2), 94 - 113.
- HUNT, S. 1991. *Modern marketing theory*. Cincinnati, OH: Southwestern.
- HUSSEY, J. and HUSSEY, R. 1997. *Business Research: A practical Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- HYLTON, K. and BRAMHAM, P. 2008. *Sports Development: Policy, Process and Practice*, 2nd edn, London: Routledge.
- JANG, Y. and LEE, J. 1998. Factors influencing the success of management consulting projects. *International Journal of Project Management*, 16 (2), 67 - 72.
- JENNINGS, W. and LODGE, M. Year. Governing mega-events: tools of security risk management for the London 2012 Olympic Games and FIFA 2006 World Cup in Germany. In, 2009.
- JEPSEN, A. L. and ESKEROD, P. 2009. Stakeholder analysis in projects: Challenges in using current guidelines in the real world. *International Journal of Project Management*, 27, 335-343.
- JESSEN, S. A. 2011. The impact on project success of using technology in modern project planning and control. *IEEE*, 801-805.
- JOHNSON, D.K. and ALI, A. 2004. A tale of two seasons: participation and medal counts at the summer and winter Olympic Games. *Social Science Quarterly*, 85 (4), 974 - 93.
- JOHNSON, J., KAREN, D., BOUCHER, K. C. and ROBINSON, J. 2001. Collaborating on project success. *Software Magazine*, February/March.
- JOHN-STEINER, V. and MAHN, H. 1996. Sociocultural approaches to learning and development: A Vygotskian framework. *Educational Psychologist*, 31 (3/4), 191 - 206.

- JUGDEV, K. and MULLER, R. 2005. A retrospective look at our evolving understanding of project success. *Project Management Journal*, 36, 19-31.
- KALER, J. 2002. Morality and strategy in stakeholder identification. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 39, 91-100.
- KAPARELIOTIS, I., PANOPOULOS, A. and PANIGYRAKIS, G. G. 2010. The influence of the Olympic Games on Beijing consumers' perceptions of their city tourism development. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 22, 90-100.
- KAPLAN, B. and MAXWELL, J. A. 1994. Qualitative Research Methods for Evaluating Computer Information Systems. In J. G. Anderson, C. E. Aydin, and S. J. Jay (Eds.), *Evaluating health care information systems, methods and applications* (45 - 68). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- KAPLANIDOU, K. and KARADAKIS, K. 2010. Understanding the legacies of a host Olympic city: the case of the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 19, 110-117.
- KARADAKIS, K., KAPLANIDOU, K. and KARLIS, G. 2010. Event leveraging of mega sport events: a SWOT analysis approach. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 1, 170-185.
- KAVETSOS, G. 2011. The impact of the London Olympics announcement on property prices. *Urban Studies*.
- KEARINS, K. and PAVLOVICH, K. 2002. The role of stakeholders in Sydney's Green Games. *Corporate social responsibility and environmental management*, 9, 157-169.
- KEARNS, G. and PHILO, C. 1993. *Selling Places: The City as Cultural Capital, Past and Present*. New York, Pergamon Press.
- KERZNER, H. 1987. In search of excellence in project management. *J. Systems Manage*, 38 (2), 30 - 40.
- KIEH, G. K. 2009. The state and political instability in Africa. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 25 (1), 1 - 25.
- KIM, S. 2003. Research paradigms in organisational learning and performance: Competing modes of inquiry. *Information Technology, Learning and Performance Journal*, 21 (1), 9 - 18.
- KINCHELOE, J. L. and MCLAREN, P. 2011. Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research. *Bold Visions in Educational Research*, 32, 285 - 326.

- KIRSI, A. 2011. Project stakeholder analysis as an environmental interpretation process. *International Journal of Project Management*, 29, 165-183.
- KIVIAHO, P. and MAKELA, P. 1978. Olympic success: a sum of non-material and material factors. *Int Rev Sport Sociol*, 2, 5 - 17.
- KLEIN, H. K. and MYERS, M. D. 1999. A set of principles for conducting and evaluating interpretive field studies in information systems. *MIS quarterly*, 67-93.
- KOLAKOWSKI, L. 1972. Positivist science. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books.
- KOPPENJAN, J. 2005. The Formation of public private partnerships: lessons from nine transport infrastructure projects in The Netherlands. *Public Administration*, 83, 135-157.
- KRAUSS, S. E. 2005. Research Paradigms and Meaning Making: A primer. The Qualitative Report, 10 (4) 758 - 770.
- KUEN, C. W., ZAILANI, S. and FERNANDO, Y. 2009. Critical factors influencing the project success amongst manufacturing companies in Malaysia. *African Journal of Business Management*, 3, 016-027.
- KUMAR, R. 2005. Research Methodology. A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners, 2nd Edition. London: Sage.
- KUPER, G. and STERKEN, E. 2003a. Olympic participation and performance since 1896. In: De Bosscher, V., Heyndels, B., De Knop, P., Van Bottenburg, M. and Shibli, S. 2008. The paradox of measuring success of nations in elite sport. *Sports Geography*, 2, 217 - 234.
- KUPER, G. and STERKEN, E. 2003b. The Olympic Winter Games: Participation and Performance. In: De Bosscher, V., Heyndels, B., De Knop, P., Van Bottenburg, M. and Shibli, S. 2008. The paradox of measuring success of nations in elite sport. *Sports Geography*, 2, 217 - 234.
- LATHER, P. 2006. Paradigm Proliferation as a good thing to think with: teaching research in education as a wild profusion. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 19 (1), 35 - 57.
- LEEDY, P. and ORMROD, J. 2005. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, London, Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.
- LENFLE, S. 2012. *Proceeding in the dark. Innovation, project management and the making of the atomic bomb* (CRG working paper (008-01)).

- LEOPKEY, B. and PARENT, M. M. 2009. Risk Management Strategies by Stakeholders in Canadian Major Sporting Events. *Event Management*, 13, 153-170.
- LEWIS, M. L., WELSH, M. A., DEHLER, G. E. and GREEN, S. G. 2002. Product Development Tensions: Exploring Contrasting Styles of Project Management. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45 (3), 546 - 64.
- LI, Y., LIANG, L., CHEN, Y. and MORITA, H. 2008. Models for measuring and benchmarking olympics achievements. *Omega*, 36 (6), 933 - 940.
- LINBERG, K. R. 1999. Software developer perceptions about software project failure: a case study. *Journal of Systems and Software*, 49, 177-192.
- LINS, M.P.E., GOMES, E.G., SOARES DE MELLO JCCB, SOARES DE MELLO AJR. 2003. Olympic ranking based on a zero sum gains DEA model. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 148, 312 - 22.
- LOZANO, S., VILLA, G., GUERRERO, F. and CORTES, P. 2002. Measuring the performance of nations at the summer Olympics using data envelopment analysis. *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, 53 (5), 501 - 511.
- LUIZ, J. M. and FADAL, R. 2011. An economic analysis of sports performance in Africa. *International Journal of Social Economics*, 38 (10), 869 - 883.
- LYCETT, M., RASSAU, A. and DANSON, J. 2004. Programme management: a critical review. *International Journal of Project Management*, 22 (4), 289 - 299.
- MACKENZIE, N. and KNIPE, S. 2006. Research Dilemmas: Paradigms, Methods and Methodology. *Issues in Educational Research*, 16 (2), 193 - 205.
- MACLINTOSH, D., CANTELON, H. and MCDEMOTT, L. 1993. The IOC and South Africa: A Lesson in Transnational Relations. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 28 (4), 373 - 393.
- MALFAS, M., THEODORAKI, E. and HOULIHAN, B. 2004. Impacts of the Olympic Games as mega-events. *Municipal Engineer* 157, 209-220.
- MANICAS, P. and SECORD, P. 1982. Implications for psychology of the new philosophy of science. *American Psychologist*, 38, 390 - 413.
- MARREWIJK, A. V. 2005. Strategies of cooperation, commitment and control in a megaproject. *M@n@gement*, 4, 89-104.

- MARREWIJK, A. V., CLEGG, S., PITISIS, T. and VEENSWIJK, M. 2008. Managing public-private megaprojects: Paradoxes, complexity and project design. *International Journal of Project Management*, 29, 258-267.
- MARTIN, C. C. 1976. *Project Management*. New York, Amaco.
- MATHESON, V. A. and BAADE, R. A. 2004. Mega sporting events in developing nations: Playing the way to prosperity? *South African Journal of Economics*, 72, 1085-1096.
- MAYLOR, H. 2001. Beyond the Gantt chart: project management moving on. *European Management Journal*, 19 (1), 92 - 100.
- MAYNARD, M. 1994. Methods, practice and epistemology: The debate about feminism and research in Maynard, M. and Purvis, J. (eds) (1994) *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- MCCARTHY, M., RAVELLI, R. J. and SINCLAIR-WILLIAMS, M. 2010. Health impact assessment of the 2012 London Olympic transport plans. *The European Journal of Public Health*, 20, 619-624.
- MCMILLAN, J. H. and SCHUMACHER, S. 2001. *Research in education: A conceptual introduction*. 5th edition. New York: Longman.
- MERRIAM, S. B. 1998. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education. Revised and Expanded from "Case Study Research in Education"*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- MERRIAM, S. B. 2002. *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- MERTENS, D. M. 2005. *Research Methods in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- MILES, M. B. and HUBERMAN, A. M. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- MINGERS, J. 2001. Combining IS research methods: towards a pluralist methodology. *Information systems research*, 12, 240-259.
- MINICHIELLO, V., ARONI, R., TIMEWELL, E. and ALEXANDER, L. 1990. *In-depth interviewing: Researching people*. Melbourne: Longman.
- MIR, F. A. and PINNINGTON, A. H. 2014. Exploring the value of project management: Linking Project Management Performance and Project success. *International Journal of Project Management*, 32 (2), 202 - 217.

- MITCHELL, R. K., AGLE, B. R. and WOOD, D. J. 1997. Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: Defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Academy of management review*, 853-886.
- MITTELMAN, J. 1995. Rethinking the international division of labour in the context of globalisation. *Third World Quarterly*, 16 (2), 273 - 275.
- MOON, J. and MOON, S. 2004. The Case for Mixed Methodology Research: A review of literature and methods. Retrieved July, 20, 2010.
- MORGAN, G. and SMIRCICH, L. 1980. "The Case of Qualitative Research". *Academy of Management Review*, 5, 491 - 500.
- MORRIS, P. 2013. Reconstructing Project Management Reprised: A Knowledge Perspective. *Project Management Journal*, 44 (5), 6 - 23.
- MORRIS, P. W. G. and HOUGH, G. H. 1987. *The anatomy of major projects*. New York, Wiley and Sons.
- MORRIS, P. W. G., PATEL, M. B., and WEARNE, S. H. 2000. Researching into revising the APM Project Body of Knowledge. *International Journal of Project Management*, 18 (3), 155 - 64.
- MORSE, J. M. and FIELD, P. A. 1995. *Qualitative research methods for health professionals* Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.
- MULLER, R. and JUGDEV, K. 2012. Critical success factors in projects, Pinto, Slevin and Prescott-the elucidation of project success. *International Journal of Project Management*, 5 (4), 757 - 775.
- MULLER, R. and TURNER, J. R. 2005. The project manager's leadership style as a success factor on projects: A literature review. *Project Management Journal*, 36 (2), 49 - 61.
- NAURIGHT. 2004. Global Games: Culture, Political Economy and Sport in the Globalised World of the 21st Century. *Third World Quarterly*, 25 (7), 1325 - 1336.
- NEUMAN, W. L. 2005. *Social Research Methods* (6th edn). London: Pearson.
- NEWLAND, B. and KELLETT, P. 2012. Exploring new models of elite sport delivery: the case of triathlon in the USA and Australia. *Managing Leisure*, 17, 170 - 181.
- NIGLAS, K. 2001. Paradigms and Methodology in Educational Research. Paper presented at the European Conference on Educational Research, Lille. Retrieved from <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00001840.htm>

- NOVIKOV, A. D. and MAKSIMENKO, A. M. 1972. The influence of selected socio-economic factors on the level of sports achievement in various countries. *International Review of Sport Sociology*, 7, 27 - 40.
- OAKLEY, B. and GREEN, M. 2001. Still playing the game at arm's length? The selective re-investment in British sport, 1995 - 2000. *Managing Leisure*, 6 (2), 74 - 94.
- OATES, B. J. 2006. *Researching Information Systems and Computing*. London: Sage.
- O'DONOGHUE, T. 2007. *Planning your Qualitative Research Project: An Introduction to Interpretivist Research in Education*. Oxon: Routledge.
- OISEN, R. P. 1971. Can project management be defined? *Project Management Quarterly*, 2, 12 - 14.
- OLANDER, S. 2007. Stakeholder impact analysis in construction project management. *Construction management and economics*, 25, 277-287.
- ORLIKOWSKI, W. J. and BAROUDI, J. J. 1991. Studying Information Technology in Organizations: Research approaches and assumptions. *Information Systems Research*, 2(1), 1 - 28.
- PARENT, M. M. and DEEPHOUSE, D. L. 2007. A case study of stakeholder identification and prioritization by managers. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 75, 1-23.
- PARKE-SHIELDS, K. E., BEISE, C. and QUAN, J. 2010. Do project managers practice what they preach, and does it matter to project success? *International Journal of Project Management*, 28 (7), 650 - 662.
- PATTON, M. Q. 2002. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd edition. Newbury Park: Sage.
- PEACHEY, J. W., CUNNINGHAM, G., LYRAS, A., COHEN, A. and BRUENING, J. 2014. Exploring participant motivations to take part in an elite, multinational, sport-for-development event. *Event Management*, 18 (2), 153 - 168.
- PELLEGRINELLI, S., PARTINGTON, D., HEMINGWAY, C., MOHDZAIN, Z. and SHAH, M. 2007. The importance of context in programme management: An empirical review of programme practices. *International Journal of Project Management*, 25 (1), 41 - 55.

- PEREIRA, J., CERPA, N., VERNER, J., RIVAS, M. and PROCACCINO, J. D. 2008. What do software practitioners really think about project success: A cross-cultural comparison. *Journal of systems and software*, 81 (6), 897 - 907.
- PERRY, C. 1998. A structured approach to presenting theses. *Australian Marketing Journal*, 6 (1), 63 - 86.
- PETTER, S., DELONE, W. and MCLEAN, E. 2008. Measuring information systems success: models, dimensions, measures, and interrelationships. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 17, 236 - 263.
- PILLAY, U. and BASS, O. 2009. Mega-events as a response to poverty reduction: The 2010 World Cup and urban development. Pillay, Udesch/Tomlinson, Richard/Bass, Orli (Hg.): *Development and dreams. The urban legacy of the 2010 Football World Cup*. Cape Town: HSRC, 76-95.
- POLIT, D. F. and HUNGLER, B. P. 1995. *Nursing Research: Principles and methods*. 5th edition. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams and Willkins.
- PINTO, J. K. 1986. *Project Implementation: A determination of its critical success factors, moderators, and their relative importance across the project life cycle* (Doctorate dissertation, University of Pittsburg, 1986).
- PINTO, J. K. and COVIN, J. G. 1989. Critical factors in project management implementation a comparison of construction and R and D projects. *Technovation*, 9, 49 - 62.
- PINTO, J. K. and MANTEL, S. J. 1990 The causes of project failure. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 37 (4), 269 - 276.
- PINTO, J. K. and PRESCOTT, J. E. 1988. Variations in critical success factors over the stages in the project life cycle. *Journal of Management*, 14 (1), 5 - 18.
- PINTO, J. K. and SLEVIN, D. P. 1988. Critical success factors across the project life cycle. *Project Management Journal*, 19 (3), 67 - 75.
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (PMI). 1996. *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK)*.
- PROJECT MANAGHEMENT INSTITUTE (PMI). 2008. *A guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) 4th Edition*.
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (PMI). 2013. *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) 5th Edition*.
- RATHKE, A. and WOITEK, U. 2008. Economics and the summer Olympics: an efficiency analysis. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 9 (5), 520 - 37.

- REIFENBERG, R. 1986. The self-serving bias and the use of objective and subjective methods for measuring success and failure. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 126 (5), 627 - 631.
- REMENYI, D., WILLIAMS, B., MONEY, A. and SWARTZ, E. 1998. *Doing Research in Business and Management: An Introduction to Process and Method*. London: Sage.
- RITCHIE, B. W., SHIPWAY, R. and CLEEVE, B. 2009. Resident perceptions of mega-sporting events: a non-host city perspective of the 2012 London Olympic Games. *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 14, 143-167.
- ROBSON, C. 2011. *Real World Research*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley and Sons.
- ROCHE, M. 2000. *Mega-events and modernity*. London, Routledge.
- ROCKART, J. F. 1979. "Chief Executives Define Their Own Data Needs". *Harvard Business Review*, p.85.
- ROGERSON, C. 1999. Place marketing for local economic development in South Africa. *South African Geographical Journal*, 81 (1), 32 - 43.
- ROLOFF, J. 2008. Learning from multi-stakeholder networks: issue-focussed stakeholder management. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 82, 233-250.
- ROSENAU, R. 1992. *Post-modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions*. Princeton.
- ROWE, D. and MCKAY, J. 2012. *Watching the Olympics: politics, power and representation*. London, Routledge.
- RYAN, G. W. and BERNARD, H. R. Techniques to identify themes. *Field Methods*, 15 (1), 85 - 109.
- SANDELOWSKI, M. 1995. Qualitative analysis: What it is and how to begin. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 18, 371 - 375.
- SAUNDERS, M. N. K. 2012. 'Choosing research participants', in G. Symons and C. Cassell (eds) *The Practice of Qualitative Organizational Research: Core Methods and Current Challenges*. London: Sage 37 - 55.
- SAUNDERS, M., LEWIS, P. and THORNHILL, A. 2007. *Research Methods for Business Students, 4th edition*, London, Prentice Hall.
- SAUNDERS, M., LEWIS, P. and THORNHILL, A. 2012. *Research Methods for Business Students, 6th edition*, London, Prentice Hall.
- SAYLES, L. R. and CHANDLER, M. K. 1971. *Managing large systems*. New York, Harper and Row.

- SCANDURA, T. A. and WILLIAMS, E. A. 2000. Research methodology in management: current practices, trends, and implications for the future. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43 (6), 1248 - 64.
- SHENHAR, J., DVIR, D., LEVY, O. and MALTZ, C. 2001. Project Success: A Multidimensional Strategic Concept. *Long Range Planning*, 34, 699-725.
- SHIBLI, S. 2003. *Analysing performance at the Olympic Games: Beyond the final medal table. Paper presented at the 11th Congress of the European Association for Sport Management*, Stockholm, Sweden.
- SHIBLI, S., DE BOSSCHER, V., VAN BOTTENBURG, M. and WESTERBEEK, H. 2013. Measuring performance and success in elite sports. *Managing High Performance Sport*, 30 - 45.
- SHNEIDERMAN, B. and PLAISANT, C. 2005. Designing the user interface: Strategies for effective human-computer interaction. New York: Addison-Wesley.
- SILVERMAN, D. 2002. *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage Publications.
- SPORT ENGLAND. 2008a. *Annual report 2007/08*. London: Sport England.
- SPORT ENGLAND. 2008c. Sport England strategy 2008 - 2011. London: Sport England.
- STAKE, R. E. 2005. Qualitative case studies. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 3, 443-466.
- STRAUSS, A. and CORBIN J. 1990. *Basics of qualitative research: grounded theory procedures and research*. CA: Sage.
- STRAUSS, C. 1992. What makes Tony run? Schemas as motive reconsideration. In *Human motives and cultural models*, edited by D'Andrade R. and Strauss C., 191 - 224. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- SUDDABY, R. 2006. 'Fom the editors: What grounded theory is not', *Academy of Management Journal*, 49 (4), 633 - 642.
- TASIEWSKI, T. and BAUERFEIND, J. 2013. Subjective assessment of sports success in wheelchair rugby - proposal of a new research tool. *Human Movement*, 14 (2), 123 - 128.
- TCHA, M. 2004. The color of medals: an economic analysis of the Eastern and Western blocs' performance in the Olympics. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 5 (4), 311 - 28.

- TCHA, M. and PERSHIN, V. 2003. Reconsidering performance at the summer Olympics and revealed comparative advantage. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 4 (3), 216 - 39.
- TESCH, R. 1990. *Qualitative research: Analysis types and software tools*. New York: Falmer.
- THOMAS, J. and MULLALY, M. 2007. Understanding the value of project management: first steps on an international investigation in search of value. *Project Management Journal*, 38 (3), 74 - 89.
- TOMLINSON, R. 2010. Whose Accolades? An Alternative Perspective on Motivations for Hosting the Olympics. *Urban Forum*, 21 (2), 139 - 152.
- TROCHIM, W. M. 2000. The research methods knowledge base. Retrieved from <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/> (Accessed 10 August 2013).
- TUKEL, O. I. and ROM, W. O. 2001. An empirical investigation of project evaluation criteria. *International Journal of Operations and Production Management*, 21 (3), 400 - 409.
- TURNER, R. 1993. *Handbook of Project-Based Management*. In: Burke, R. 2003. Project Management: Planning and Control Techniques, 4th Edition. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley and Sons.
- UNITED NATIONS DATABASE. 2009. Retrieved from <http://data.un.org> (Accessed 1 November 2013).
- VELLA, A., OADES, L. and CROWE, T. 2013. The relationship between coach leadership, the coach-athlete relationship, team success, and the positive developmental experiences of adolescent soccer players. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 18 (5), 549 - 561.
- VOSS, C., TSIKRIKTSIS, N. and FROHLICH, M. 2002. Case research in operations management. *International Journal of Operations and Production Management*, 22 (2), 195 - 219.
- WALKER, D. H. T. 1997. Choosing an appropriate research methodology. *Construction management and economics*, 15, 149-159.
- WALLIMAN, N. 2006. *Social Research Methods*. London: Sage.
- WALSHAM, G. 1993. *Interpreting Information Systems in Organizations*. Chichester: Wiley.
- WALSHAM, G. 1995a. The emergence of Interpretivism in IS research. *Information Systems Research*, 6 (4), 376 - 394.

- WALSHAM, G. 2006. Doing interpretive research. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 15, 320-330.
- WALTON, H., LONGO, A. and DAWSON, P. 2008. A contingent valuation of the 2012 London Olympic Games. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 9, 304-317.
- WANG, F. and HANNAFIN, M. 2005. Design-based research and technology-enhanced learning environments. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 53 (4), 5 - 23.
- WANG, X. and HUANG, J. 2006. The relationships between key stakeholders' project performance and project success: Perceptions of Chinese construction supervising engineers. *International Journal of Project Management*, 24, 253-260.
- WARDLOW, G. 1989. Alternative Mode of Inquiry for Agricultural Education. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 30 (4), 2 - 7.
- WATERIDGE, J. F. 1995. IT projects: A basis for success. *International Journal of Project Management*, 13 (3), 169 - 172.
- WEBER, R. 2004. The Rhetoric of Positivism Versus Interpretivism: A personal View. *MIS Quarterly and The Society for Information Management*, 28 (1).
- WU, J., ZHOU, Z. and LIANG, L. 2009. Measuring the performance of nations at the Beijing summer olympics using an integer-valued DEA model. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 11, 549 - 566.
- YANG, L.-R., HUANG, C.-F. and WU, K.-S. 2011. The association among project manager's leadership style, teamwork and project success. *International Journal of Project Management*, 29, 258-267.
- YEO, K. T. 2002. Critical failure factors in information system projects. *International Journal of Project Management*, 20 (3), 241 - 246.
- YIN, R. K. 1994. Discovering the future of the case study method in evaluation research. *Evaluation Practice*, 15, 283-90.
- YIN, R. K. 2003. Case Study Research: Design and Methods, volume 5 of Applied Social Research Methods Series. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, USA.
- YIN, R. K. 2009. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 4th edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- ZWIKAEEL, O. and GLOBERSON, S. 2006. From critical success factors to critical success processes. *International Journal of Production Research*, 44 (17), 3433 - 3449.

- ZHAI, L., XIN, Y. and CHENG, C. 2009. Understanding the value of project management from a stakeholder's perspective: Case study of mega-project management. *Project Management Journal*, 40, 99-109.
- ZHANG, D., LI, X., MENG, W. and LIU, W. 2009. Measuring the performance of nations at the Olympic Games using DEA models with different preferences. *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, 60, 983 - 990.
- ZHOU, Y. and AP, J. 2009. Residents' perceptions towards the impacts of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. *Journal of Travel Research*, 48, 78.
- ZHOU, Y. J. 2007. Government and residents' perceptions towards the impacts of a mega event: The Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.
- ZIMBALIST, A. 2010. Is it worth it? *Finance and Development*, 47 (1), 8 - 11.
- ZWIKAEL, O. and GLOBERSON, S. 2006. From Critical Success Factors to Critical Success Processes. *International Journal of Production Research*, 44, 3433-3449.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical approval letter



College of Arts and Social Sciences
Room 626
Maxwell Building
The Crescent
Salford, M5 4WT
Tel: 0161 295 5876

12 November 2012

Francis Ojie
University of Salford

Dear Francis

Re: Ethical Approval Application – CASS1100038

I am pleased to inform you that based on the information provided, the Research Ethics Panel have no objections on ethical grounds to your project.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Woodman

On Behalf of CASS Research Ethics Panel

Appendix B: Sample invitation letter to research participants

PhD research on the London 2012 Olympic

Ojie, Francis Ndum (PG)

Thu 25/10/2012 14:22

To:

nocngr@yahoo.com;

The President/Secretary General

Nigeria Olympic Committee Inc.

Dear Sir/Madam

Request for your participation in my PhD research

I am a PhD researcher in Project Management at the University of Salford in Manchester and my research is concerned with the project management of the London 2012 Olympics for which i seek your participation.

Primarily, my research is a post-Olympic analysis which seeks to obtain the views of representatives from African NOCs on the success of the London 2012 Olympics as a mega sporting project. Following several other studies being conducted to account for the views of other stakeholders in the London Olympics, I thought it was also necessary to obtain the views of stakeholders from Africa (the NOCs) who are also a major stakeholder in the Olympics. Looking at project success in Olympics from an African perspective is a view which is often neglected in modern day research and the purpose of my study is to bridge this gap in knowledge. Also, through the lessons learnt from the London Olympics, my research hopes to expose some project management lessons for Africa in hosting mega sporting projects, as we also hope to host an edition of the Olympics in the near future.

As I will be in the data collection phase of my study shortly, I will like to contact you again during this period to conduct an interview with you in order to obtain your views about the London Olympics. Prior to this time, I will also be happy to send you a full synopsis of my work and would be grateful if you could give me some advice from your experience as a successful sports administrator.

I would also be grateful if you could introduce me to NOC representatives from other countries who might also be willing to participate in the study.

Many thanks for your assistance as I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Francis Ojie

PhD Researcher, Salford Business School

BSc (Hons), MSc

Room 517, Maxwell Building

University of Salford, Manchester

M5 4WT

United Kingdom

f.n.ojie@edu.salford.ac.uk

Appendix C: Letter of informed consent

**An analysis of the Views of National Olympic Committees (NOCs) from African Nations
Concerning the London 2012 Olympics Project**

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I (Name) -----

of _____ City/Country/NOC

Hereby state that the researcher has explained to me the purpose of the research and has informed me of the type of questions I will be invited to answer, and that I have voluntarily agreed to participate.

I also willingly agree to be interviewed and to have the interview tape-recorded for purposes of undertaking this research.

Finally, I am aware of my right to withdraw from the study at any time without sanction and that no reason for withdrawal or non-participation is required.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Data protection agreement

An analysis of the Views of National Olympic Committees (NOCs) from African Nations Concerning the London 2012 Olympics Project

Data Protection Agreement

By participating in this interview you hereby acknowledge and agree that:

- 1) The data made available to the researcher are for academic purposes only.
- 2) The data collected will be kept on laptop and secondary disk storage, indefinitely by the main researcher and their supervisor at the University of Salford. Such information may be re-analysed for future publications.
- 3) Research data and information will be anonymised and kept confidential. Codes will be used to refer to participants and their organisations in any publication.
- 4) Any document or information given verbally which may be made available to the researcher will be treated in accordance with the NOC's policy on the protection of confidential information and with Data Protection requirements.

Appendix E: Pre-interview questionnaire

An analysis of the Views of National Olympic Committees (NOCs) from African Nations Concerning the London 2012 Olympics Project

Questionnaire

Note that once you have clicked on the CONTINUE button your answers are submitted and you cannot return to review or amend that page.

Background Questions

1. What is the name of the NOC you represent? (If you are not a member of an NOC please state the name of the organisation you represent)

2. What is your role within your NOC/organisation?

More Info

☐

President

☐

Secretary General

☐

Chef de Mission for London 2012 Olympics

☐

Other (*please specify*):

3. How long have you worked in your NOC/organisation?

4. Briefly highlight your key job responsibilities within your NOC/organisation

Participation in the London 2012 Olympics

5. Did you attend the London 2012 Olympics?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. How involved were you in the planning and preparation of your NOC/organisation for the London Olympics?

☐

Highly involved

☐

Partially involved

☐

Not involved

7. What specific roles did you perform for your NOC/organisation in relation to the London 2012 Olympics?

The project management of the London 2012 Olympics - Success/Failure

8. From your NOC's/organisation's perspective, how effective do you consider the project management of the London 2012 Olympic Games?


- ☐ Very ineffective
- ☐ Ineffective
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Very effective

9. Based on your response to question 8 above, please indicate what you thought were the strengths of the project management of the Games.

More Info

10. Based on your response to question 8, please indicate what you thought were the weaknesses of the project management of the Games.

More Info

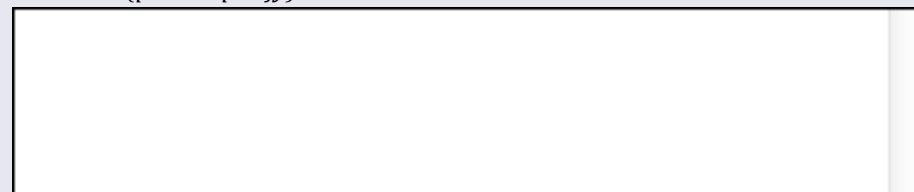


The Olympics and Africa

11. Do you think hosting the Olympics is a realistic aspiration for Africa? (Please comment on your answer in the box below)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

☐ Other (*please specify*):



12. Briefly highlight the major challenges Africa may face in hosting the Olympics.



13. In view of the London 2012 Olympics, briefly highlight some project management lessons for Africa if it were to host the Olympics.



14. Are there any particular African countries which you think have the potential of hosting the Olympics?

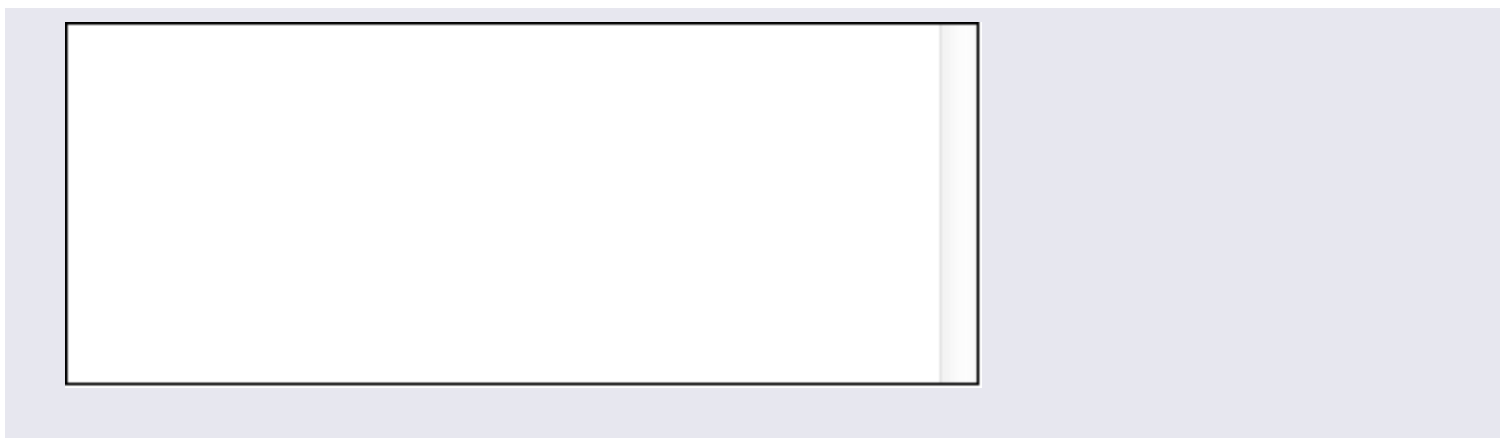


Interview preference

15. Will you be available to grant a follow-on interview on your responses in this survey?

☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Please provide your preferred contact details including Skype or Messenger IDs.



Appendix F: Sample interview transcript from third phase of interviews

Country: NIGERIA (B01)

Date of Interview: 29/10/13

Method of Interview: Skype (recorded on phone)

*Interviewee Name: ******

*Interviewee Title: ******

Brief Background information about Interviewee and NOC:** The interviewee became the ** of the Nigeria NOC in 2010 and led the NOC to the 2012 London Olympics. The interview was conducted as a post-Olympic follow up to the NOC's participation in the Olympics with a view of identifying the key issues that accounted for the performance of Nigeria at the Games. As ***** of the NOC, the interviewee's views represent those of the NOC and their account of the Olympic is solely from the point of view of the Nigerian NOC. Prior to this interview, Initial contact had been made between the interviewer and the interviewee. They had met in Abuja, London (during the Olympics) and Abidjan respectively, and have had informal discussions about the subject that are not recorded as part of this interview. However, such views may be referenced in the Thesis. The use of Skype was considered most convenient by both parties due to the distance between them at the time of interview (Interviewer was in Manchester and Interviewee was in Nigeria).*

Q: How would you describe your participation in previous Olympics prior to London 2012?

A: Well, we haven't performed too badly in the past but we always strive to be better. Our first appearance in the Olympics was in Helsinki in 1952 and we have participated in every other Olympic since then. That, to us is a big achievement in itself. That said, medal wise, we are not where we want to be. Since our first participation in 1952, our first medal only came 12 years later when we won a bronze in Tokyo in 1964. Our first ever gold was gotten in 1996 in Atlanta...over 30years later. We won 2 gold medals in that edition. So far, we have only won just over 20 medals in total in the Olympics so you can argue that we have not quite maximized

our potential. Some of our strongest sports have been in boxing, athletics and football and we can always get better.

Q: What were some of your goals/objectives/expectations for the London 2012 Olympics?

A: As in previous editions of the Olympics, we always strive to do our best in preparing for the Games and qualifying for as many events as possible so as to increase our medal chances. Of course we aim to qualify for events we think we stand a chance to win. There's no point in getting involved in competitions when you haven't got the right capacity to compete in. We had 53 athletes participating in London and to get all of them qualified was a big achievement for us. So the expectations were very high. The obvious goal for every NOC is for all their athletes to win medals in the Olympics. You don't qualify the athletes and tell them not to go there to win medals. So, yes, we always want our athletes to go and win medals. Realistically, however, we know not every athlete will win a medal...otherwise it won't be a competition any more. From the point of view of our NOC, our target medal-wise was to surpass the number of medals we won in Atlanta 1996 where we won 6 medals (2 gold, 1 silver and 3 bronze)...the highest number of medals we have ever won in an Olympic Games. So to have come back home with nothing was very disappointing for us. We were aiming for 11 gold medals but unfortunately this was not achieved.

We secured the Nigeria house in London (paid for by the bank of industry) for the purpose of the Games. The purpose of this was to sell the image of Nigeria positively to the outside world, to promote our culture and to encourage trade between Nigeria and other countries. There wouldn't have been a better opportunity to do this than a place where you have people from over 250 countries in one place at the same time (During the London 2012 Olympics). This was one of our main objectives.

Also, we have a vision in Nigeria of becoming one of the top 20 economies in the world by the year 2020 and we want to use sports as one of the driving force of that vision because we believe sports has the capability and capacity of helping us achieve this if managed well. And the only platform you can discuss sports capacity of a country is at the Olympic Games. This is not football issue (it's not FIFA), its not basketball issue (it's not a FIBA world issue). It is the whole sports package together

and the question is where do you belong as a country? And where you belong can be translated to your political and economic capacity because your sports capacity has placed you up there. Beijing is a typical example of this (nobody can host the Olympics as they have done it...not even in the next 50 years). So you can use sports to show your economic and political capacity. At the end of the Beijing Games we were number 67 on the medal table and yet we have the vision to be among the top 20 countries by the year 2020. So you see we need a minimum of two Olympic Games to achieve this. One of our objectives for London therefore, was to see what efforts we could make to bring down the medal tally. Our aim was to at least jump to like 40 or 30 and this was our driving force. Your position on the medal table is what matters at the end of the day. Our inability to qualify for the football games in the Olympics was disappointing but a medal is a medal regardless of which sports it came from. We made our official Olympic debut in Slalom canoeing in London and to us this was a big achievement and something we were looking forward to. To be honest, we weren't expecting to win any medal from this but participating, to us, was a big achievement in itself. So you can look at these things from different angles.

Q: How much of your expectations were met?

A: Like I said earlier, one of the positives for us was the fact that we were able to qualify a good number of athletes across a variety of sports. That to us was something.

From the point of view of the hosts, they did everything within their powers to make the Games a success. Initially after the Beijing Olympics in 2008, with the size of Beijing itself and all the space they had to do whatever they wanted to do and with the standards, everybody felt that London was a small place so there was bound to be a lot of logistics problem, especially transportation and other things. But I must say here that all the fears we had then were properly handled. The organization was quite wonderful and was almost error-free and I cannot think of any specific area or aspect that was not managed well...security, transportation, the volunteer package was excellent. I cannot single out an area that was not properly managed. My only fear prior to the Games like I mentioned earlier was transportation and fortunately, that was handled very well. I must also congratulate the chairman of LOCOG, Sebastian Coe, maybe I'm being sentimental because we attended the same university that is

Loughborough University. They did excellently well in delivering the project. Also, most of the pre-training centres provided were up to standard. Nigeria did their pre-training camp in Surrey and we had access to those facilities because it had all been pre-arranged. Also, the exceptional support given by the spectators to Team GB was extreme and this also propelled them to achieving the huge success that they recorded, and even surpassing their target of medals.

For us as an NOC, the memories and experience from London are those that will linger for a very long time to come. You learn out of lessons, especially we in Nigeria that did not come back with any medal. We choose to see it as a very big lesson, instead of peaching blames here and there. It's a collective failure from head to toe. But I'm happy that we are repositioning. Such big failures 'bring you back to the table' and we have seen the effect of it. Because one thing about the Olympics is that, such large Games give you the opportunity to showcase your country. And what do you showcase your country with? How do you say that you have arrived or that you have emerged? This is by the size of your participation and the earnings. We had just over 50 athletes but came back with nothing. So yes, this was disappointing. However, like I said, we don't want to see this as a complete failure because we have learnt one or two lessons from this. So we are using this as a platform to fix a lot of things that we have not been doing correctly. A lot of lessons came out of this, especially...with the Paralympics we did very well, which means if enough energy, effort is put into the abled bodied too it means we can succeed with the talents we have.

We in the National Olympic committee are very humbled to say that we met all the requirements in terms of the timelines...all the athletes were there at the time they were supposed to, there were no hitches or shortfalls between our NOC and the Organizing committee for the Games so we are proud of this. Also, our extra effort in providing the Nigeria House in London for Nigerians to showcase their commercial and industrial talents was something we were able to achieve through the Bank of Industry. So it wasn't all gloom. Achieving this was also key to our participation in London. For us, the economic, commercial and cultural aspects were handled very well, it was only the medals that did not come. This was the first time ever a Nigeria house was open in an Olympic village, in an Olympic town. So that goes a long way to show that we have really taken advantage of the situation. It is not always about the medals, but the other intangible things (economic, commercial, cultural and social

aspects) matter a lot too. And I think these things are sometimes underplayed. When we talk about Olympics, everybody only thinks...medals. We must think beyond this.

Q: What are some of the challenges that affected your performance in the 2012 London Olympic Games?

A: ...well, lets look at the challenges of participating in an Olympic Games...first, you know the Olympic Games is talking about the highest sporting competition in the world. From the athletes' point of view, Nigeria, up until now, has not reached a stable facility development process...because we're talking of going for world-class tournaments. A world-class tournament would also have a world-class facility. Here you are training under a sub-standard facility and then you want to compete with other athletes that have got all the first class facilities, first class coaches, first class environment, first class feeding? Because all have to come together. So, the challenges are enormous in terms of the athletics.

Also, late preparation was another factor. Ordinarily, you cannot produce a world-beater within a few years or within a few days. If you're talking of a world beater, you have to have a development programme for that world beater... and it takes, initially his talent, then developing his talent, then provide the road map for him and all that. So all these are really not on ground and that makes preparation difficult. Look at most of the countries that performed well...some of them have sports development programmes building up to events like this (the Olympics) for over 15 to 20 years before such events. Some of them start to teach these sports even from the elementary schools. So, for you who are trying to groom and prepare athletes within 2 or 3 years, how can you compete with other athletes who have been better prepared? But how do you set up these development programmes without the necessary support in terms of funding and sponsorship. And sometimes even if you have the funds, the vision might not be there because the government of the day might not consider these things to be priority (Since all the support for now is primarily from government). There may be more pressing needs in the country and it depends on where sport is on that scale of preference. Government would rather use 500 million dollars to set up a power generation project or water supply project than maybe building a world-class swimming pool to groom swimmers, or a track and field facility to prepare athletes, or a world class gymnasium or even setting up a sports programme. So these are the

issues. You can see that the more stable economies that can afford these things perform better in Olympics and this is not by chance...because the more you invest in something, the greater your chances of a positive outcome. So for countries that have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars (some even millions) in sports and in preparing their athletes for the Olympics, you expect them to have a greater return on medals.

Again, funding. Government, up till now, are the 100% supporters and providers for sports development in our country. And once its all in the government's hands then definitely it has to follow some due processes in terms of budgetary. For instance, you cannot say your programme is in 2011 and you budget in 2009. And this kind of project is a project that requires preparation...5 years or more in advance. It's a long-term project and you must provide funds for it. But the government doesn't operate like that. The government operates budget on a yearly basis. Of course you can have a road map that shows, within the five years you will need x amount of Naira, so you share it into 4 years before the fifth year when the Games are due to take place, and this can be done! And that is what we are advocating for because there must be funds for preparing the athletes for the Olympics. Immediately after the Olympic Games are over, you should start preparing for the next one...from day one! or from the time the bid gets won, like in the case of Team GB. Such preparations would also take into consideration the ages of the athletes...so that you don't take old and tired athletes, you groom new ones that will match the times. ...And can go through training even electronically because these days, a lot of these things are done electronically. So, the issue of funding is very, very important.

And the solution for the issue of funding is first, we must bring in the private sector into sports development in our country...sponsorship and development strategy. Because, I don't think we have any real private sector investment in sports in our country. Everything is government and quasi-government. Take for example, all the league football clubs that we have in this country all belong to the government and state governments (including those with very high value in terms of support, followership, political mileage and the rest...and revenue) also tennis for example, if you like play tennis 'from now till thine kingdom come' if you say they should pay, nobody will look at you. So if those kinds of sports are still government sustained then we're not there yet.

Lack of investment in the athletes by the government was another issue that led to poor performance. Countries that have won medals have invested heavily on their athletes. This is a very big challenge. For instance some of the athletes who won medals at the Commonwealth Games which might be the second biggest sporting event to the Olympics, you would expect them to win something in the Olympics. But this wasn't possible due to lack of the right support by the government when compared to their counterparts in other countries who performed better. Look at how many Nigerians who were part of Team GB for example, though some of them have lived abroad for some time now, they have the choice to represent Nigeria but they choose to represent Britain. Now you won't blame them for this because there is the likelihood that they may get better support from representing the bigger countries...and you see this a lot in football, basketball and so on. Many sports people today naturalize to represent other countries where they think they have better opportunities. But if they get the right support and opportunities from their home countries, do you think they'll go elsewhere? So this is another issue to look at.

Q: How did the project management of the London Olympics and your relationship with LOCOG affect the performance of your NOC?

A: We tried our best to meet all the timelines provided by LOCOG. We secured all the tickets we needed, we secured some accommodations, some training centres etc. within the time allowed by LOCOG. And we only managed to do this because the private sector got involved. If we were to wait for the government to bring these monies then we wouldn't have been at the Olympics at all because the Olympic Games were in 2012 and the budget for us to be there was in the budget for the same year which wasn't even implemented before the Games. So as for the project management of the Games and LOCOG, I don't think they were any major concerns for our NOC. The communication between LOCOG and our NOC was great. We had had all our athletes and officials accredited on time, the drivers provided to take us around during the Games were quite efficient. Ticketing was great too...we managed to secure all the tickets we wanted. The training facilities and venues were top class. Overall, we had all the necessary support that was required from LOCOG that could have made a difference in our performance positively, but like I mentioned before, the issues we had were internal.

Q: Did the IOC or any of its decisions affect your performance in any way?

A: The IOC tries in their own way to provide support to the NOC in getting their athletes ready for the Games. For example, we secured funds from the IOC to provide scholarships to 10 of our athletes (In weight-lifting, Taekwondo, boxing, wrestling and athletics) that will support them with the sum of \$1000 each every month for one year before the Olympic Games in London, and any additional travel costs to meet with specialists abroad. We monitored them. Some of them were in the USA, some were in England, some were in CUBA and some were in Nigeria. These funds go a long way in helping us prepare better, especially since we barely receive enough support from the public and private sectors. I don't know how the IOC grants are disbursed across various NOCs but I suspect that the bigger and even more developed countries may receive more. The truth of the matter is, the more athletes you have participating in the Olympics, the greater your medal hopes. Team GB for instance had over 500 athletes who participated in the London Olympics, not to mention China or the US. Now how do you compare countries like that to Nigeria who only had 53 athletes, or even a country like Togo who had 10 athletes? So, I think some of the decisions of the IOC should be geared towards supporting the smaller and the less richer countries in developing their athletes to be ready to compete. Otherwise this thing is going to be a 'one horse race' for many years to come. It is possible that some of the IOC grants go to some of these countries (the big countries) who might not even need it. Do you think it is a coincidence that countries like China, America, Britain, Germany...France, Japan...Russia, do so well in the Olympics on a constant basis? It is because of the support and development strategy that they have in place for sports, which is also supported to a large extent by the partnership they have with the IOC. So, I think some of these things should be re-visited.

Q: How does your performance at the London Olympics affect your view on the Overall success of the project management of the Games?

A: They are different views to success. First, from our NOC point of view, we measure the success of any Olympic Games against the objectives we set out to achieve prior to the Games. Then secondly, and perhaps more secondary, we look at success from the point of view of the organisers (host), and if they have been able to

deliver a Games that is flawless or to a good extent, error-free. As an NOC, you have very little or no control over what the organisers do, but it only becomes a big issue if their actions have directly impacted or affected your performance in the Games. Other stakeholders may see success at the Olympics differently, but we tend to look at it from our own performance and not so much from the host's, unless like I said, if their failure to do something right has caused you any medals.

We will not take anything away from the project management of the London Olympics. It was a huge success as far as we are concerned. However, our poor performance, medal-wise, was due to more internal factors like I mentioned earlier on. Even though we didn't come back home with any medals, we still choose to see the Olympics as a success because of the invaluable lessons we have learnt and the experience we have gained. Also, in the other areas like I mentioned, our success in setting up the Nigeria house right at the heart of the Games was another huge success for us because it helped showcase us to the world. Of course we are disappointed about our performance and we now know our shortcomings but it doesn't change the fact that the Games were successfully planned, organized and managed.

Q: Moving forward, how do you plan on addressing the issues that led to the performance of your NOC at the London Olympics?

A: The solutions are quite clear and obvious in my opinion. First, we must start to view sports in our country as a long-term activity and make it a more cultural thing rather than something we pay attention to only when we have tournaments around the corner. Once we can have this mind-set, everything else will reflect this...in the way we prepare for competitions, in the level of monetary investment and even in the way we maintain our training facilities - because this is also very important. Secondly, sports should be encouraged and supported from the grassroots and then we can build up from there. If you encourage sports to be played from the primary school stages and maybe open up youth clubs for different sporting activities and provide the right support, you'll find out that you can identify young talents and help them through the journey to become professional athletes. When they become old you already have new ones coming up through the same process. So it's a circle. This is why we have now launched the 'rhythm and play' programme that I told you about earlier on, to get young people participating in sports. Though it might take some time for us to see the

dividends, but we must at least start from somewhere. Also, a more private sector driven investments in sports rather than reliant on the government system which is known for its bureaucratic tendencies. Once the private sector is the driving force, then you're more sure of success. I also want to use the medium of your research to point out that the issue of sponsorship is a big challenge in sports generally in Africa and not until we get the private sector investing in sports...sponsoring athletes and so on, the situation is likely to be the same for a long time to come. That is why we have started to partner with organisations such as the bank of industry, Youdees Integrated Services Limited (YISL) etc. Finally, the funds coming from government for the NOC to prepare for competitions such as this (the Olympics) must be released in good time. A lot of advance planning and preparation goes into getting the athletes ready for the Games. No matter how talented an athlete may be, if he or she does not get the right support in terms of preparation, you cannot get the right result. Last minute preparation can cost you medals. It can also have a negative impact on the athletes themselves psychologically. So, since the government for now is still the main source of funding for the NOC, they should endeavour to make sure that the funds for international competitions are released in good enough time to enhance smooth preparations.

Appendix G: Semi-structured interview questions to participants in phase 4 of the study

Background:

This research is part of a PhD study investigating the performance of African nations in the 2012 London Olympics. The key objectives of the research focus on highlighting what factors account for the poor Olympic performance of African nations, in order to identify ways of improving their performance and success.

1. Brief background:

- (i) what NOC do you represent?
- (ii) how long have you been part of your NOC?
- (iii) what is your position in your NOC?
- (iv) were you involved in your NOC's participation in the 2012 London Olympics?

2. What does success in the Olympics represent to you and your NOC?

- (i) how important is it for you and your NOC to win medals, is success measured on this?
- (ii) what other goals do you aim to achieve other than win medal?
- (iii) what were the specific expectations and target performance of your NOC for the 2012 London Olympics?

3. How do you assess your performance and that of your NOC at the London Olympics?

4. What was the level of planning and preparation put in place by your country/NOC for the London Olympics and how does this compare to other countries e.g. USA, China, Great Britain etc.?

- (i) when did you/your NOC commence preparations for the London Olympic Games?
- (i) how much impact did your preparations have on the outcome of your performance and that of your NOC at the Games?

5. What were the key issues and challenges that impacted on your performance in the 2012 London Olympics?

6. Were there any lessons learnt from your participation in the London Olympics that could improve your performance in future Games?
7. What is the most crucial factor that affects your capacity and that of your NOC to win medals in the Olympics?
8. What steps should be taken by your country/NOC to address the issues affecting Olympic performance?
9. How committed has your country's government been in recent time to address the issue of poor performance and success in Olympics? Are there any specific measures put in place that you are aware of?
10. How efficient do you think the sport structures in your country are and how have they enhanced (or exacerbated) your performance in the Olympics?
11. Do you think focusing on a few number of sports will increase your efficiency and optimize your chances of winning medals?
12. Comment on how the following factors may or may not be relevant for improving the performance and success of your NOC/country in the Olympics:
 - adequate funding
 - sponsorship
 - increased government support
 - organization and structure of sport policies
 - simplicity of sports administration
 - clear goals and objectives
 - strategic and comprehensive planning for each sport's needs
 - clarity of roles of the different sport agencies
 - talent identification and development programmes
 - well-structured competitive programs with on-going (inter)national exposure
 - athlete career and post career support
 - research
 - coaching provision and coach development
 - well developed and specific facilities for elite athletes
 - effective communication

- eradicating corruption

13. How convinced are you that your country/NOC will take practical steps to address the issue of poor Olympic performance and success?

14. What do you consider to be the first step to be taken towards improving performance?

Appendix H: Miscellaneous interview transcript from evolution stage of the research

Country: ANOCA

Date of Interview: 12/11/13

Method of Interview: Skype (recorded on phone)

Interviewee Name: *****

Interviewee Title: *****

Brief Background information about Interviewee and NOC: *The interviewee represents ANOCA, the body that unites the 53 NOCs from Africa. ANOCA also forms one of the five continental associations that make up the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), supervised by the IOC to develop, promote and protect the values of the Olympic Movement in their respective continents. It was considered necessary to secure the views of ANOCA on the research for the purpose of verifying and validating some of the views provided by the NOCs. In this interview, the interviewee provides insight on the participation of African NOCs at the London Olympic games with the aim of identifying the key issues that accounted for performance, and how these issues impact on their view of success in the London Olympics. As a key member of ANOCA, the interviewee's views represent those of ANOCA and their account of the Olympic is solely from the point of view of ANOCA. Initial contact had been made between the interviewer and the interviewee. They had met in Abuja, London (during the Olympics) and Abidjan respectively, and have had informal discussions about the subject that are not recorded as part of this interview. However, such views may be referenced in the Thesis. The use of Skype was considered most convenient by both parties due to the distance between them at the time of interview (Interviewer was in Manchester and Interviewee was in Nigeria).*

Q: From ANOCA's perspective, what was the general thought of the London 2012 Olympics? After the event, I believe you all must have gotten back together and exchanged your views in terms of how well Africa as a whole performed, whether or not you enjoyed the Olympics and things of that sort.

They're two sides to look at it, in terms of participation and then organisation. They are both interlinked because if things are not organised properly, the NOC's as well as the athletes end up being affected in the long run so there are standards and processes that had to be met. That is why the IOC, those in charge of monitoring the games made sure all the things are well done. For the game to eventually be a success it is not only based on organisation it also has to do with other stakeholders. For instance, if timing is not responded to you face challenges in the area of organisation, logistics and so on. Therefore, when we refer to the London 2012 Olympics being a success we have to consider all the underlying factors. From ANOCA's point of view we are

looking at the African NOCs ie how they were affected. Did we have all the African NOC's in attendance, what was the size of the delegation? **These are some of the concerns we raised afterwards. The evaluation is captured particularly from a participation and performance point of view. When you compare our (Africa) performance with the other continents who are our counterparts you see how much we are lagging behind. I can tell you right now in terms of medals that the thirty-four medals we have in total as a continent can be compared to that of the country France who got that same number of medals. So, how can a continent perform the same as a country? However, that does not make the games as a whole unsuccessful because there are countries that got medals even for the first time like Botswana and Gabon so for them that was a great success as they had never gotten any medals before then. But there are also countries that got medals in past Olympic games, Beijing 2008 for example, and did not get any in the London games e.g Cameroon, Togo, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. Kenya as well did better in Beijing than London but it is not the fault of the general organisers, it has to do with the NOC's themselves, how did they prepare their team?

Q: Generally speaking, what would you say is the cause of the lack of that competitive edge when comparing the performance of African countries to that of countries from the other continents?

It's the level of sports development and investment in sports. Even in terms of preparation, investment ought to be made. Even if you have a large number of athletes if they are not well prepared then there is really no point. The level of sports development in Africa unfortunately, is generally very low and there are a few countries you can speak on. There is the issue of inconsistency...a lot of countries rely on government funding which unfortunately only comes sometimes just before the team is sent out for the games not before hand or in between the four-year period, which is the preparatory time. For instance, for an improvement to be made by the African countries in the next Olympics in Rio, have funds already been released by their governments to get the athletes prepared or they are going to be released in 2016 just for the team to travel to the event and then what? Those are some of the challenges we face as a continent. So in terms of measuring the success of the games, participation, performance and organisation are the areas that I think are important to consider. Before going for the games, communication is vital because if it is poor and people do not receive the information they require then the games cannot be a success

and problems will ensue. Transport, accommodation, venue arrangements and all that are essential in the total success of the games as well. They are certain standards expected because there were other Olympic games before this over the years, so as the years go on, the host country needs to measure up to and surpass whatever its predecessor must have achieved. Accreditation, transportation and areas where hitches could be encountered are considered and sorted out thoroughly.

Q: Talking a bit more on specifics of the organisation, some of the NOC's raised concerns about some of the drivers getting them lost and not being too familiar with some venues. Also, some of the volunteers not being able to provide enough information on directions, etc. was that something you encountered as well?

It is actually. Quite a lot of the drivers relied on the sat nave and in-built GPS systems in their cars and unfortunately it failed on a number of occasions. That said, I would not say it is peculiar to London because that has happened before in the other games as well and bear in mind some of these volunteers may not reside in the town. The fact that the Olympics village was fairly new was possibly the reason why it might not have been available on the GPS so, the systems needed to have been updated. On a positive side, the tube was excellent so people could access the venue via other modes of transportation and it was a lot quicker because with the cars, we sometimes got stuck in traffic. The roads were congested quite often. The issue of getting lost by the drivers was definitely an issue a lot of people felt rather inconvenienced by but when evaluating, it can only be a major hitch or inconvenience when there was no other means of getting to the venue or the other alternative was futile as well. Just to digress a little, the security company that took up the responsibility of the games at was empowered with the army because at some point, the crowd proved overwhelming but the end result was to provide security and that was achieved so will it now be seen as a lack of success because the security company did not end up being the sole providers of security? Some people might refer to it as minor glitch but the fact that they had a plan B readily available and the purpose ended up being fulfilled is all that matters in my opinion. What is of importance is that the shortcomings did not affect the participation and/or performance in the games negatively in the end.

Q: Can you recall any other areas where concerns arose as raised by the NOCs in the London games?

I can only confirm what they (NOCs) raised concerning the volunteers. I can remember trying to go past certain places and getting told by a volunteer that I

couldn't and I asked for an alternative way of getting to a particular venue but they were not able to assist. They just insist on not letting you pass but nothing further to help you. In the games village, it looked well organised. However, I did not stay there during the time so I would not be able to give a detailed report on how and if things functioned properly and whether or not the facilities worked. One of the advantages at London was the fact that we all communicated in English, nevertheless, that could have been an issue for Franco-phone countries.

Q: A number of the NOCs interviewed mentioned there were not sufficient translators so that must have been a challenge for them.

Yes.

Q: Another issue that was raised by some of the NOC's was that the training facilities, some of them claim not to have had access to the training facilities for their athletes. Did that come up in the discussion with the NOC's post the Olympics?

No, I did not hear of such an issue but it could have happened because sometimes there is usually a bit of confusion at the beginning before things are sorted out so it is possible. Again, it is not unusual and that is why the people in charge of heading or supervising the teams need to be competent and responsible. If they are inexperienced they will struggle with a couple of things because they are not well aware of how things work. Someone who is capable is required to handle the team if not there will be deficiency and the information may be provided but they will still struggle. They need to know where to get necessary information they need, attend division head meetings every morning where issues are addressed and if such meetings are missed it becomes difficult. It is key for NOC's to appoint the right people and have that done in good time. There is also a chef division meeting held in the host countries for chefs to inspect venues and all that and go through the whole process of what will be going on during the games so all this must be known by the appointed chef.

Q: Does ANOCA have any grip on the NOC's in terms of making sure they are keeping up to standard?

We play an advisory role. There was a presentation for instance that was made by ANOCA in September 2011 when we had a forum where all the NOC's were present and the expectations were very well highlighted. It pointed out the accepted standard ANOCA expects all NOC's to imbibe.

Q: So, from what I can gather so far it is generally safe to say the London 2012 Olympics went very well?

Yes it is. It met the expectations of ANOCA.

Q: Moving forward to Rio, do you have any specific expectation coming from London to Rio or do you expect the same level of organisation, planning?

Those areas where I previously mentioned, it is expected that they improve. After the games in London, there was a questionnaire sent out to NOC's and collected by the evaluation committee for the Olympics they are the ones who will work alongside Rio and use the feedback to improve on planning of the 2016 games. The challenge is always to live up to expectations so we will definitely like to see Rio do better than London.

Q: From your point of view and from your experience in previous Olympic games, what do you think was particularly responsible for such a successful Olympics in London?

One of the most important things in any given organisation is the human resource i.e. they have got to have the right people in position to carry out the work then, they further the process. Without the right people, struggle is inevitable. They definitely got it right with the human resources. Also, they have got experience in leagues and championships and believe it or not that counts. If you have never hosted any event of that nature, you are most likely going to face difficulties but if you have got experience even in individual sport then the issue of financial and infrastructural resources, the funds need to be released in good time. Sponsorship was massive too. All these factors form the capacity. The capacity was there and they were able to deliver.

Q: Is hosting the Olympics a realistic aspiration for Africa?

They are very few countries that can host the Olympics in Africa. Possibly, South Africa, Morocco, I'm not quite certain about Egypt giving their instability at the moment, but they are very few though. Because of the high standards required. I would say it has a lot to do with capacity and resources. Before the IOC can give Africa the chance as well they are criterion we will need to meet up with to convince them without a doubt that we are well able. One of the challenges as well, is the number of disciplines involved in the Olympics. With the World cup it was just one

discipline-football. Whereas, there are twenty-eight disciplines in the Olympics. The equipment and facilities needed must be available or built. With the struggling economies it seems reckless to channel your funds towards such luxury. Even in Rio, they were protesting against the World cup being hosted there because a better part of their nation is suffering in a dwindling economy. The issue of priority should be the focus. Is it at the top of Africa's priority list to host the Olympics?

Q: For an Africa country to host the Olympics, do you think the economic risks involved will outweigh the benefits of hosting?

It's interesting you mentioned that. Risk is a major issue in terms of the assessment. So, the IOC if they are looking at allowing a developing country host the Olympics, there is a big risk involved. It will require a lot of convincing that there is no risk or minimum level.

A lot of people say the Olympics and especially if you look at research in area of economics or world economics people always try to overrate the advantages of the Olympics. They say all sorts of things like how it's going to bring money to the economy, improve tourism, and things of that sort. Well, the truth is those advantages definitely exist but there is a price you know, at what cost? Because even in terms of investment as an individual if you want to invest, you can only do so within your means. So, in as much as those benefits are there you can only get them on certain conditions. You must have a certain amount of funds on ground for you to access these other benefits otherwise, it could have been so easy for every and anyone to go for it. Hence, what deters any country from hosting is not because they do not desire the benefits but because they cannot afford to access them. By so doing, they strive for other things that are within their means. It has to be gradual, for instance Nigeria did well in hosting the FIFA World Youth Championship in 1999 and South Africa with the World cup in 2010. We need to show credibility as well in order to be taken seriously. South Africa pulled out from a bid voluntarily as they decided it could be suicidal. So, irrespective of the benefits other matters should be weighed thoroughly because these benefits are after a period it is not as though they are immediate.

Q: Are there some African countries that may already have what it takes (facilities, financial capacity and technical know-how) to host the Olympics on ground?

There may be areas that need to be developed and facilities that need to be put in place but South Africa and Morocco at the moment have in my opinion what it takes to host the Olympics successfully in the near future.

Q: What are your thoughts on a multi-city bid by African cities to host the Olympics in attempt to share the financial burden as well as the benefits that may come from this?

If the cities are from different countries it defeats the aim and structure of what already exists in the Olympics framework. It shows the capacity to host is inexistent so why try to force it by all means and I doubt the IOC will see to such a thing happening. Different cities in the same country stand a better chance and it is more manageable. e.g. Johannesburg and Cape town. People will want to stay with their teams. Imagine if some of the events were to be in another country say Marrakech, and Cape Town commuting between the different cities and other risks that pose will make it difficult to manage and organise. Also, looking at the larger picture, you still need the necessary infrastructure and logistics for this to work, such as effective transport links (functioning airports, railways etc) between cities, effective communication channels, constant electricity supply and so on. It is more difficult to manage these things when it involves different cities in different countries. There's a lot of planning and logistics that is involved. A multi-city hosting might be possible in the Western countries because they already have these facilities on ground but in Africa it is going to be difficult to do this.

According to the charter, any country is free to bid for the games and cannot be stopped by the IOC. Therefore, it goes a long way to show that it is plausibly self-evaluation that hinders these countries from bidding. They consider the requirements and halt, they realise that it may be considered later on but not right now. I was going to take you to a lower level and say any NOC can also host the International Olympic Committee session, it does not need to be hosted by a country that is hosting the Olympic games. So far in the whole of Africa, it is only South Africa that has done that. They are stringent requirements and when these countries consider them, they don't bother. At the time when I was the Secretary General of my country's NOC, I considered it and as small as the IOC event was, we were not capable of meeting the

requirements involved. I already knew even if we bid, we didn't stand a chance. You have to demonstrate a decent level of capacity. At the end of the day, it's majorly not about hosting but doing the little you are opportune to do at a lower level properly then people are convinced that you are capable and you as a country are confident. Some of the major issues we have like power outage, how can you possibly have power through out the Olympics when you cannot successfully have power on a particular street constantly for just a day for your people. How will you manage to provide for your visitors all through the time of the event? So, if the IOC inquires of basic necessities as this and it is absent it will end up in a refusal to host. They will expect that those are primary things that we ought to have because in developed countries things we see as privileges are what they take for granted. Thus, when you have an overview, you realise that even if there are facilities in existence, they do not meet up to the requirements. Aside that, after the games what becomes of these facilities? Even if you end up getting the resources to have these requirements available what happens to the maintenance thereafter? A case in hand is South Africa, after the World cup the facilities there; is it generating revenue or is it just lying fallow? Has it become a liability or does it still remain an asset?