



Creating a sustainable, competitive advantage within a 'winning' football academy model in South Africa.

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Abstract

African football academies are a seriously neglected field of research but are a highly important step in the evolution of football (Scherrens, 2007). The study is motivated by the lack of research on football academy structures in particular South Africa. The primary focus of the research is on football development in South Africa, whilst it also reviews substantial literature concerning the phenomenon of elite sport development in order to explain the dynamics surrounding the football academy structure. The study identifies the relevant key components within the current football models and proposes a 'winning' model for South Africa.

The study unpacks two theoretical frameworks, in understanding the impact of competitive advantage within a football academy. Through gaining insight into the strategic models employed within the various researched academy systems, this study outlines the important resources, competencies and capabilities within a football academy.

The analysis revealed certain trends and provided the basis for the answering of the research questions. Hence the broad scope which is critical to understanding the football development phenomenon. The research aims to empower administrators and management of football clubs in South Africa with the strategic knowledge to provide a sustainable and competitive academy through player development, which can aid our national teams.

The dynamic processes involved in football development enabled a winning model for a football academy in South Africa which could provide a competitive, sustainable advantage for a football academy.

Keywords

Football; development; Academy; Sustainable competitive advantage

Declaration

I declare that his research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Definition of the problem

This research attempts to understand the role of the academy within South African football. Through unpacking the off-field business associated with local football academies in comparison to those in Europe, the study will attempt to formulate a 'winning' model for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage.

1.2 Introduction to the research problem

African football development is struggling. It is only through strong leagues and championships that African teams will be able to compete against the world on an equal footing (The official site of Phil Masinga, 2010) The FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) World Cup 2010 tournament represented an enormous opportunity to improve our administration, organisation and accountability, and to ensure that the game is developed as never before on African soil. Motivated by a desire to promote football and capitalise on its growing popularity on the African continent, the FIFA strategy led to the first ever African World Cup (Bohlmann & van Heerden; 2005).

The 2010 FIFA World Cup posed a unique opportunity for such a large scale event to have a major impact on our developing country. It offered unprecedented opportunity to explore the power of sport and build sustainable development programmes and sports organisations (Solomon, 2008). Well-structured and stable sports organisations are required to drive sport programmes in the direction that increases the likelihood of producing high calibre players. These high calibre players would be the end product of the football development programme and would capitalise on the legacy created by the world cup (Solomon, 2008).

The momentum generated from the international show piece should be diverted into something that will last for a lengthy period, far beyond 2010. It should also provide a lasting legacy for the country to develop its football at grass-roots level. It is important to develop sustainable football development programmes to ensure that the future generations of footballers are developed to graduate to the senior game.

South Africa, however, became the first host country in the 80-year history of the FIFA World Cup to be knocked out in the preliminary stages of the tournament, prompting public debate about the level of football development within our country. The post-world cup debate extends to a broad area of football matters (Dumitru, 2010) including the administration and development of the local game.

The fact that South African football has not yet reacted to the imperative need for change following the world cup experiences is fundamentally wrong (Dumitru, 2010). Indeed, with the exception of few amendments to the coaching department of the national team, there are no practical indications of a plan comprising actions to address the missing or incorrect solutions and implement advanced concepts in local football (Dumitru, 2010). Carlos Alberto Parreira arrived in South Africa in 2007 to coach the national football team and lamented about the lack of football development. Parreira has since left the country, following the national teams exit from the world cup, and the South African Football Association (SAFA) has yet to lift a finger to rectify matters (Mokoena, 2010).

Responding to press reports, Sepp Blatter stated that FIFA would be there to help South Africa make good use of the world cup legacy to develop local football after the 2010 World Cup tournament. “There’s a saying, ‘God helps those who help themselves’. So it is up to South Africa to take the legacy we have created – the infrastructure and the popularity of football – and make it work.” (Afrique Avenir, 2010). The role of the SAFA and that of the Professional Football League (PSL) clubs in South Africa is important in ensuring that the infrastructure and development to the training and playing facilities are utilised effectively in developing talent for the future of the local game and the national team. This change may require these organisations to adopt new methods or modify their strategy in order to transform and adapt to the new opportunities in the country.

Professional football is progressively developing as an economic commodity because of its immense commercial value and the revenue it generates. Top flight clubs from all over the world have become employers of both players and administrators, with some developing into limited companies, owned by shareholders and run by directors (Conn, 1999). Since the

1970s media exposure and commercial sponsorships have all contributed to turning football into big business with large volumes of capital (Conn, 1999). Football is a transforming business (Conn, 1999) requiring change and adaptation to remain at the fore of industry. One of the most consistent patterns in business is the failure of leading companies to stay on top of their industries and adapt to new opportunities or change (Bower & Christensen, 1995).

Change is becoming more discontinuous or transformational in nature. The belief has grown amongst organisational theorists that in order to be successful, organisations need to be able to assimilate or initiate dramatic shifts in their industries (Kanter, 1983; Pascale, 1990; Tushman & O'Rielly, 1997). In order to achieve this, organisations need to execute strategies that revitalise their operations by changing either the scope of their business or their competitive approach, or both (Baden-Fuller & Stopford, 1994). Through engagement of strategic renewal, development of competencies and effective utilisation of the resources, South African football and the professional football clubs could be attempting to put themselves in an advantageous position within the football industry.

The underlying assumption of much research has been that organisations need to outperform their competitors (De Heij, Vermeulen & Teunter, 2006) through strategic change or adaptation. Organisations need to undertake strategic actions in order to grow and remain viable in the long term. Football development has been identified as an important strategic component in South African football. It is the investment in football development at the grass-roots level as well as the development of a uniform playing identity that are critical issues that need to be addressed with utmost urgency (Dumitru, 2010).

1.3 Research problem

Two failures, namely the failure of South Africa (Bafana Bafana) to progress to the last 16 of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and more alarmingly the under performance of the under 17 national team in the 2010 African Youth Championship in Burkina Faso, illustrate the unquestionable magnitude of the challenges currently facing the administration of the game in this country. A wide range of critical problems has constantly undermined the development of the sport from youth to elite level, resulting in an alarming decline in the

performances of our national teams (Dumitru, 2007). Mokoena (2010) suggests that there is no shape or structure within SAFA and, as a result, South African development teams are battling and have failed to progress through to their relative world cup tournaments.

Charnas, Dumitru and Jeevanantham (2006) have objectively evaluated several inconsistencies in South African football and noted that these have resulted in an acute decline of performance competitiveness in recent years and shown that football in South Africa has been, and still is, plagued by a chronic stalemate between development and technical standards since the beginning of the modern sports era.

Head of Argentina's youth development, Professor Gerardo Salario, noted that SAFA and the PSL are two separate entities that are pulling in two different directions. According to Salario, if there is not a single structure or unity for football development, then it's like there is war (Mokoena, 2010).

According to Mokoena (2010), the common view held by the Argentine officials is that the South African football system is flawed. The AFA (Argentine Football Association) controls all the football in Argentina, including the local league, and all the development structures. All the development branches are part of the same tree. This is the same concept, which will be discussed in detail later on in chapter five, that is adopted by most, if not all, successful countries. The Royal Netherlands Football Association uses the same methods, as does the English Football Association, to mention just two.

Dumitru (2006) highlighted that football administrators were not aware that local players are a staggering 60% to 70% below the standards recorded at the level of major international competition in the most crucial aspect of performance football – technical capability. Whilst talent is understood to be predominantly innate (Reilly, Williams & Richardson, 2003), few would dispute that a soccer player's development is also influenced by his experience of the professional environment. For many developing football players, the notion of professionalism is introduced through the academy system (Richardson, Gilbourne & Littlewood, 2004). Obviously there are a large number of factors influencing youngsters as they develop within their chosen sport. This would include the aims and practices of talent

development within the academy set-up; the coaching process; funding; intangible and tangible resources; and the structure of the football club.

The role of professionalism that is successfully employed in Europe could thus highlight the need for professional football development structures in South Africa, as we strive to provide adequate playing resources to our local and national teams. Barcelona's revolutionary youth development system has led to an unprecedented commitment to revamp the methods of all training dynamics in an attempt to develop talent (Dumitru, 2010) across the footballing world. Recent reports suggest that a surge of coaches, trainers and young talented players from many parts of the world have, immediately after the FIFA World Cup in South Africa, have shown interest in finding out the 'secret' of producing exceptional players at Barcelona and other Spanish clubs (Dumitru, 2010) as a starting point to developing a structure and pipeline for producing players of talent.

With the increased level of competitiveness in football, exposure to new markets, highly attractive financial rewards offered in both local and international competitions (Dumitru, 2007), and the opportunity to develop talent, the 'game' has moved forward towards a new era, where investment in youth has become an integral component in the objectives and outlook for a national football federation. It would thus be appropriate to suggest that the only realistic and immediate answer for development is to revamp the football organisations in this country through major strategic changes (Dumitru, 2007).

Development extends beyond talented youth to sports administrators, officials and coaches. While the primary roles of these individuals may be to administrate, officiate or coach, the importance of their own personal development as well as the continued management and learning from global developments of the sporting code should be clearly understood. According to Noakes (2006), local South African coaches remain ignorant of the modern realities of what it takes to be one of the best coaches. He comments that the same applies to administrators in that they are not exposed to the workings of international organisations, and this puts into question whether there can be a sound foundation for the future success of an academy system in developing players of international pedigree.

Administrators within professional football have recognised the importance of investing in youth development in order to ensure the continuous development of elite players (Fulham FC, 2009). The explosion in the number of football academies established in Africa in the past few years and their role in the exodus of the continent's most talented footballers to European leagues is one of the biggest challenges that African football faces. Part of this challenge is to develop emerging talent to progress to the local professional teams and so provide the football leagues with greater competition and develop a stream of footballers who have the ability to play at a higher level. Ensuring that these talented footballers are developed requires effective use of resources and efficient strategic initiatives. The development of academy players could thus be considered a viable prospect for the long-term sustainability of a football club and also that of the national team.

A study on the most effective and successful models of national football organisations in the world reveals that key modern, conceptual and structural requirements have never been considered in South African football (Dumitru, 2007). Engaging in strategic actions is often perceived as a balancing act between exploration and exploitation and is believed to be an evolutionary concept with aligning the strategy of the firm with the changing environment. Developing an outlined strategy for the football club concerning the development of talent is a major challenge, whilst the intensity of the strategic action remains an integral component of gaining a competitive advantage. Carlos Alberto Parreira, former South African national football coach, highlighted the belief that "strong administration is crucial to South Africa's success on soccer fields of the world" (Morgan, 2007a). It is suspected that organisations that display the highest intensity of strategic actions will perform better than organisations that are hesitating and refraining from responding to environmental changes (De Heij et al., 2006).

Through unpacking the 'off field' business associated with the football academy, the research will attempt to gain an understanding of the organisational physiology of the organisation, and the flows and the relationships that link all parts of the football academy. Organisations (including football academies) need a competence building process that links and leverages the diverse resources that exist within the confines of the organisational structure, and the research will analyse how to go about gaining an understanding of the

'critical' competencies that are required in a football academy to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. The outcome of this will be an understanding of whether or not a unique value-creating strategy based on a unique combination of internal organisational resources and capabilities that cannot be replicated by competitors is employed in selected football academies in the attempt to provide a 'winning' formula for a football development structure in South Africa.

1.4 Research scope

Interest in effectively identifying and developing sporting talent has grown in many countries over recent years. The transformation of talented youngsters into senior world-beaters is a topic of interest for practitioners and researchers alike. Unfortunately there is a dearth of research to guide the optimisation of this process (Martindale, Collins & Daubney, 2005).

Solomon (2008) suggested that effective and sustainable development programmes need to be implemented in South Africa to nurture young talent within our country and provide adequate playing resources to our national teams. In an article relating to the future needs of South African football, Ted Dumitru (2006) expressed his view on how unstable development structures in South African football had become in terms of generating talent of international quality. Charnas et al. (2006) attribute the struggles of South African football to that of technical incapability, undeveloped youth, ignorance to professional input and national team failure.

1.5 Research motivation

African football academies are a seriously neglected field of research but are a highly important step in the evolution of football (Scherrens, 2007). The rationale behind this research is both personal and pertinent to the present South African football industry. FIFA vice-president and Union of European Football Association (UEFA) president Michel Platini, outlined that the challenge is to identify comprehensive solutions for "the future of football and football of the future". 'Football of the future' refers to the challenge related to the development of players, high quality standards of performance and advancements in sports science (Dumitru, 2007) which can be utilised to provide players of international quality. Carlos Alberto Parreira, former South African national coach, reiterated that a lack of quality

players and a small pool of football-playing youth from which talent could be sourced for the national team are South Africa's main challenges (Morgan, 2007b). This was further emphasised in Carlos Alberto Parreira's post-world cup addresses in which he said: "This world cup has to leave a positive legacy" and "As a nation we have to build; and development is absolutely important".

The comparative analysis of models of sporting talent development from different countries has implications for research and practice (Broom, 1991; Fisher, 1996); Researchers have examined youth development systems for football within a single country (Parker, 1996) and between European countries (Fisher & Dean, 1998). However, youth development systems for football across different continents have yet to be assessed (Holt, 2002). One major factor that influences all performers throughout their sporting careers is the quality and appropriateness of the coaching environment (Bloom, 1985). Unfortunately, the lack of research in this area leads us to believe that not enough is known about effective development environments or how they may be optimised in order to produce elite performers in the local and international fields.

By gaining insight into the strategic models employed within the various academy systems, this study will attempt to outline the important resources and competencies required to provide for a competitive, sustainable football academy in South Africa.

1.6 Research objectives

Player development occurs when the developing athletes are exposed to the strategic capabilities of the academy and shown how to effectively use taught skills. These skills reside in an organisation's rules, routines and procedures – that is, the style or manner in which the company makes decisions and manages its internal processes to achieve organisational objectives (Jones & Hill, 2009).

In an industry that demands immediate results, the focus on the long-term development of equity for the club is perhaps the hardest thing to accomplish. Boasting a stream of academy players who are ready for the challenge of first team action provides the club with two things:

an opportunity to grow in terms of human capital and a source of funds. Both of these are particularly important.

Identifying the effective core competencies associated with a successful football academy is pertinent to achieving a 'winning' model for an academy system in South Africa that can be adapted to Africa. A comparative research study on the current trends and models employed in South Africa and those currently used in Europe, in clubs such as Ajax Amsterdam (Holland) and FC Barcelona (Spain), attempts to provide a way forward for football development in South Africa.

Through identifying competencies, certain dynamic capabilities emerge (Jones & Hill, 2009). To determine a competitive advantage, the dynamic capabilities of the development structures must be explored. A question in the field of strategic management is how firms achieve and sustain a competitive advantage (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997). It is the concept of competitive advantage that drives business strategy (Lado, Boyd & Wright, 1992), and it is the strategic implementation of these competencies that provides for a sustainable competitive advantage which will be the focal area within this research.

The objectives of this research study is to: identify a 'winning' football academy model for South Africa through an investigation; to unpack the 'off field' business models of football academies across South Africa and Europe; and to propose a future course of action in developing and setting up a 'successful' or 'winning' football academy in South Africa that can be adapted as a model for developing talent throughout Africa. Without the necessary resources local football will not progress, and thus formulated strategies to identify adequate resources, which include professional guidance, should be a prerequisite for the development of football in South Africa.

1.7 Research aim

The aim of this research study is to gain a better understanding of the 'off field' business associated with football academies. Based on the lack of pertinent research, the need to consider and then optimise the process of developing youngsters into elite athletes seems clear.

In addition the research aims to empower administrators and managers of football clubs in South Africa with the strategic knowledge to provide a sustainable and competitive academy through player development, which can aid our national teams.

Chapter 2

This chapter presents a summary and review of the past research on football development and the role of gaining a competitive advantage within business and the business of sport. The theory provides a solid base for the subject being explored, as well as the interpretation of gaining a sustainable competitive advantage over industry rivals. Aspects of football development have been the subject of an increasing field of research (Richardson, Gilbourne, & Littlewood, 2004) This literature review provides a theoretical framework on which to formulate an understanding of an elite football academy system which is able to locate itself advantageously within the South African football industry.

2.1 Introduction to the South African soccer industry

Soccer is the most widely played sport in South Africa, with its traditional base in the African or black peoples' community. Soccer is intensely followed, and the quality of the local league keeps improving, which is a testament to the financial backing the league has secured from the major sponsors such as ABSA and SuperSport. The South African Football Association (SAFA) is a FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) affiliated body, with SAFA overseeing the national teams and the amateur game (Darby & Solberg, 2010). SAFA's main objectives are to facilitate the development of football through sustainable infrastructural and training initiatives. It aims to create an image of being a stable, progressive and innovative institution (Darby & Solberg, 2010).

However, SAFA and its aspirations have been undermined by the fact that they are a notoriously unaccomplished body (Darby & Solberg, 2010). As such, the attempts to develop a system for talent identification and development for the Premier Soccer League (PSL) football clubs has been inept and has lacked coordination (Darby & Solberg, 2010) and have thus not provided an overarching framework for the development of football talent across the country.

The PSL runs the professional game, with their main aim to promote, organise, control, administer and develop professional football in the country (Darby & Solberg, 2010). The PSL have transformed the South African league into the richest professional league in sub-

Saharan Africa. Through corporate sponsorships, the PSL has contributed to an influx of financial capital to the game, and through television sponsorships exposed the league to the continent and beyond (Darby & Solberg, 2010). It is the influx of television rights and the development of a financially stable ruling body that has enabled the professional soccer league clubs to have access to good training and playing facilities and to promote and develop the talented youth as a means of further enhancing the financial gains of the club and also their own playing resources.

SAFA and the PSL are, however, operating as two separate entities (Mokoena, 2010). The lack of a pertinent development programme for PSL football clubs as a mandate from SAFA, has allowed the PSL clubs the freedom to develop their own programmes aimed at producing potential future stars. Through the development of the elite footballers, the club is able to generate assets that improve the on-field performance of the first team and/or realise financial income through transfer fees as players produced within the academy structure may be sold off for financial gain. The selling of youth players has been regulated by FIFA, which stipulates that only players over the age of eighteen can be transferred for financial gains (FIFA). According to Paterson (2009) a professional winning club must deliver on all levels across all the business units, suggesting that football has become more than just an on-field game and that the financial rewards that can be generated through football players can be substantial. The economic benefits of football are vast according to Paterson (2009), with FIFA president Sepp Blatter recently announcing that the football business is “worth US\$300 billion a year” (*para*, 7).

2.2 The economic reality behind football development

Football has come a long way to reach the current era of professionalisation and commercialisation. It would be very difficult to deny that football clubs today do not function as commercial enterprises, promoting an often lucrative brand through which greater financial reward is gained.

‘ASPIRE Africa Football Dreams’ programme in Qatar, proclaimed itself as the “largest football talent search project in history” involving six thousand staff who screened more than 500 000 boys in seven African countries across 700 locations” (ASPIRE Africa, 2007). As

the programme director noted: “Everyone in football is aware of the significant talent that exists in Africa, and also of the challenges that can prevent this talent reaching its full potential.” (ASPIRE Africa, 2007). Amajita players Ntuthuo Radebe, Happy Simelela and Phakamani Mngadi are being groomed at the ASPIRE academy, potentially posing these players with a tough decision of country versus money. Qatar has a reputation for using money to lure athletes with exceptional talent that are willing to change their nationality and become citizens of Qatar. Ryk Neethling and Roland Schoeman, members of the South African gold winning aquatic relay team were approached to the tune of “US\$1 million per year to swim for Qatar” (Mokoena, 2010). Al Zaini, Qatar Association of Athletics Federation (QAAF) chief, intimates that the country is investing in their sport and particularly the youth as the aim is to produce competitive sports teams for the future (Mokoena, 2010)

The example set by the ASPIRE Academy clearly illustrates the economic reality surrounding world football. The financial value of a football player has become an important component in the academy mechanism, obviously determined by his performance in competition. Football clubs can diversify their income through various outlets, but talented football players are a financial investment and consequently a potential source of high revenues. A highly talented ‘home grown’ player evokes certain financial power for the football clubs through transfer fees or revenue generated from marketing.

In short, this thesis attempts to provide the reader with an insight into football academies in South Africa in comparison to those successful models in Europe, and will attempt to provide a way forward for football development in South Africa to ensure that football academies are able to develop a sustained competitive advantage in talent development within the football industry.

2.3 Talent development

Most, if not all, national governing bodies and sports councils have visions of developing talent where their concern is to ensure that their athletes can develop to, and successfully perform at, the highest senior international level. Recent research into the development of Olympic champions (Gould, Dieffenbach & Moffett, 2002) has shown that the wide range of long-term individual and institutional influences may significantly influence development and

can reach far beyond the sporting context. These influences include tangible and intangible resources that allow a company to create value. The more organisation-specific and difficult to imitate a resource is, the more likely a company is to have a distinctive competence (Jones & Hill, 2009). Practices such as recruitment, selection, training and development play an important role in determining the strengths and weaknesses of the human capital within an organisation (Kuijjer, 2007). People constitute the main asset of an organisation, and thus the playing and coaching personnel at the football club are thus a strategic resource for the football academy (Bourke, 2003).

Effective utilisation of resources, correct exploitation of the dynamic capabilities of the human capital and of the football club (Kuijjer, 2007), and continuous engagement in strategic renewal activities, should provide an organisation with a sustained competitive advantage. According to Atkinson (2001), the English Football Association and all stakeholders were consulted to devise and develop a football development strategy as a means of ensuring that development in the country progresses year on year. A sound strategic infrastructure with a company-wide context within which value creation activities take place (Jones & Hill, 2009) can ensure effective implementation of the strategy to enhance the direction of the football development programme.

Talent development is concerned with providing individuals with an appropriate environment that is conducive to learning in the hope that potential is realised (Williams & Reilly, 2000). The creation of an appropriate environment provides the strategic context for the value creation activities. Those wishing to emulate the success within an academy system have attempted to copy successful practices because the provision of the system and services is perceived to be essential in the production of 'elite' athletes (Deloitte & Touche, 2003). Even though it is generally agreed what services should be provided by an elite sport system, little is known about how sports systems should manage their elite services (Bohlke & Robinson, 2009).

During conditions of intensifying national and international competition, the only way in which a company can outstrip its rivals is by attracting and retaining a better team of employees, supervisors, managers and directors (Harper, 1987). Professional football clubs are service

enterprises engaged in the business of outperforming their opponents (Bourke, 2003) both on and off the football field, thus suggesting the importance of talent identification and development in providing South African football clubs with a steady supply of young footballers. Talent development could thus be considered a process of shifting the organisation, its employees and stakeholders and using planned and unplanned learning in order to sustain a competitive advantage (Rothwell & Kazanas, 2004).

2.4 Definition of an ‘elite’ sports system

Elite sport refers to power and performance sport which includes those sporting codes that are highly organised and competitive. In most traditional definitions, sport is regarded as a physical activity that is competitive, requires skill and exertion, and is governed by institutionalised rules (Aman, Mohamed & Omar-Fauzee, 2009).

Bohlke and Robinson (2009) describe an elite sports system as the infrastructure and practices used to identify, develop and prepare athletes for sporting success. It begins with the identification of raw talent that is transformed by a number of factors into athletes that can achieve success on an elite sports stage. Houlihan and Green (2008) outline that ‘elite’ sport systems are concerned with the systematic and strategic development of elite athletic performance. This performance is developed through an appropriate environment that is conducive to learning in the hope that potential is realised (Williams & Reilly, 2000).

In the elite sport context, the definition of sport is often confined to select competitive sports that are governed by rules and schedules and that require sophisticated and expensive facilities and equipment, the acquisition of skill, and the need for trained coaches and team participation. The goal of winning, as a major reward, dominates. Moreover, attention is directed largely towards youth (Aman et al., 2009) as young players provide the selected sport with a future in international competition.

Elite sport can be seen at the top level in the pyramid model of sport (Cousineau, 1998), with mass participation at the base representing a large number of people engaged in sport activities. This bottom tier of mass participation feeds the next level where serious sports competition is practised, and from which a few champions emerge and move to the top of

the pyramid as a country's best representatives at international games. Elite sport at the top of pyramid benefits from having a large pool of grass-roots participants at the bottom. (see Appendix 1)

International success provides incentives for those who aspire to represent their nation and it has the ability to impact on the numbers participating, especially at the junior level. Elite sport, or high-performance sport, refers to international sport, where, as Trenberth and Collins (1999) mention, the performance standards are set higher, the numbers competing are greater, there is more money available and professionalism is imperative.

Elite sport includes hard training, high performance quality and it is often a full-time job. In many senses of the word, elite sport is professional (Breivik, 2000). Modern elite sport is completely dependent upon the system of people and resources around the athlete (Breivik, 2000) to provide for a competitive advantage within the sports defined context. A competitive advantage, whatever its source, can ultimately be attributed to having valuable resources that enable a company to perform activities better than its competitors (Collis & Montgomery, 1995). When Business managers talk about strategy, the ultimate goal is being unique from competition (Grant, McKechnie, & Chinta, 2007) The retail store Marks & Spencer, for example, possess a range of resources and capabilities that demonstrably yield a competitive advantage within British retailing (Collis & Montgomery, 1995). These resources include aspects such as brand reputation and employee loyalty, whilst the supply chain and managerial hierarchy provide the organisation with the dynamic capabilities required to maintain its status as the leading player in British retail (Collis & Montgomery, 1995). Winning in the market place is the objective, whether it is winning market share or winning customers, effective strategy is about being different, reacting and responding proactively (Grant, McKechnie, & Chinta, 2007).

In sport, strategy is imperative for achieving a competitive advantage, which comes from doing things differently from competitors. Each sports team will respond differently to achieve their goals and objectives, with the role of their competencies and capabilities attempting to strengthen their position (Grant, McKechnie, & Chinta, 2007) within the 'football' industry. These resources cannot be evaluated in isolation because their value is

determined by the interplay between the market forces and, in the context of sport; the resources involved with the development of elite athletes require continual investment. System and structure development that build and maintain the resources is vital for the achievement of a sustained competitive advantage. Thus the elite athletes could be developed through a dedicated system of talent identification and development.

2.5 Sporting success within an academy system

Bohlke and Robinson (2009) outline that successful sport systems have become the focus of much investigation primarily as a consequence of two major sporting events. The first of these is the sporting success achieved by the German Democratic Republic during the 1970s and the 1980s, which showed that an organised approach towards the support of high performance sport could result in the systematic production of international athletes. The second, and perhaps more important event, was the success that the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) enjoyed in the build up to the 2000 Olympic Games. In 1994, Australia launched the Talent Search Scheme to identify and develop talent within a working time frame for the Sydney Olympics in 2000. The AIS, which opened in 1981, was intimately involved with the talent development process in the country. The development system strived to “enhance the sporting performances of Australia’s elite and potential elite athletes and teams” (The Australian Institute of Sport Web site, n.d.).

The catalyst for creating the AIS was the country’s poor performance at the Montreal Olympic Games in 1976 where one silver medal and four bronze medals were won. The government’s mission became putting the brakes on the ailing international sporting reputation of the country and developing elite sport in Australia by providing facilities and funding to sporting organisations and potential elite athletes.

A small improvement was noticed at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, the first following the opening of the AIS, where Australia achieved fourteenth place overall in medal table. At the Athens 2004 Olympics, Australia won 49 medals and came fourth in the medal tally behind the United States, China and the Russian Federation. Current and former AIS scholarship holders made up more than half of the team, winning 32 medals (10 gold, 10 silver and 12 bronze). AIS results at the Commonwealth Games have been equally spectacular. At the

2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games, AIS athletes won 110 of the 221 medals for Australia, demonstrating the importance of the AIS within Australian sport. (The Australian Institute of Sport Web site, n.d.).

Outstanding athletic results combined with skilled coaches, world-class facilities and cutting-edge sports science and sports medicine services have given the AIS its international reputation as the world's best-model for high performance athlete development. The AIS is a system that is recognised the world over for its ability to identify, develop and produce champions (The Australian Institute of Sport Web site, n.d.).

The movement towards creating a successful sporting academy set-up was based on studies of sports institutes in Europe and their success in developing elite athletes, in order to adopt a more professional approach to elite sport (The Australian Institute of Sport Web site, n.d.). Copying the perceived success of these structures is the basis upon which elite sports systems of a similar design are set up. The systemic models and structures employed can be adapted by sporting academies in their quest for a return on investment in the production of sporting personnel and thus achieve success within a sporting academy.

As most contemporary elite sport systems are made up of similar infrastructure and practices, it appears that the actual design of these systems can no longer explain differences in success. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the management and delivery of an elite sport system is now a more important factor for success than the mere existence of such a system. Thus, if sports wish to improve success, managers of elite sport systems should focus on improving the way the system is delivered in order to enhance the output of successful athletes (Bohlke & Robinson, 2009).

2.6 A youth academy

Youth academies have a mandate to develop the potential of young players for the future. The ultimate aim is to maximise the potential that comes through the academy 'door' (Holt, 2002). Holt (2002) emphasises that academies recruit players for coaching and (modified) competitive games from 8 years of age. It has been documented that the identification and development of elite-level players demands a multifaceted approach (Maguire & Pearton, 2000; Williams & Reilly, 2000), which ensures that all players with potential have the best

possible opportunity of becoming an elite athlete. Football and other sports clubs form an integral component of the community. Successful sport development within the community is dependent upon the role of the local clubs structure. National football federations can successfully implement their talent development programmes (Solomon, 2008) through these outlets, allowing a smooth transition from youth development leagues to a professional system.

Youth development is often regarded as the breeding ground for the next generation of top level athletes (Holt, 2002). Sports development is progressive. This progression needs to be guided and managed to ensure that goals are realistic and achievable, and that progression includes the accomplishment of skills, discipline and commitment. Management of the vision and goals of the academy would thus ensure that development progresses in such a way that it enables a sporting academy to compete at a higher level and continues the development programme towards a level of excellence.

Strategies within sports development have become necessary to ensure that logical and continuous development occurs. The progression and strategic implementation of the developmental programme is a function of the youth academy management, which provides the overall direction of the development institution (Solomon, 2008). We know that a long-term focus is required to become an expert (Bloom, 1985), but what seems less clear is the nature of this focus throughout development. As such, a long-term project requires effective coordination and, once operationalised, these long-term goals must direct and integrate a wide variety of important factors to ensure processes are effective in helping the youngsters achieve their potential (Martindale et al., 2005).

A clear system would provide a philosophy that coherently drives the aims and practices of talent identification development, the coaching process, funding, resources, evaluation, coaches' rewards, competition and the club structure (Martindale et al., 2005). The strategic implementation of a programme is a complex process that involves a number of potential resources, systematic planning and implementation, and a long-term vision to achieve a sustained competitive advantage.

An academy produces marketable assets, which are young professionals that improve the professional team and realise income from the transfer fees of those academy-produced players that do not establish themselves within the first team squad (Solomon, 2008). Talent identification and development will thus provide the sporting club with an opportunity to grow, either on the field in terms of competent players, or financially through the sale of marketable assets produced through the clubs academy set-up.

2.7 The football academy or ‘Centre of Excellence’

Sports have never been so heavily packaged, promoted, presented and played as commercial products as they are today (Coakley, 1998). Commercial sports are organised and played for the purpose of generating revenues as entertainment events. As a result of the commercialisation of football, more clubs are now being managed according to criteria such as profitability and the maximisation of turnover, next to their sporting performance (De Heij et al., 2006), so logically the business of football should evolve to include the integral role of the academy in developing future talent for the professional game. Capital to tap into new markets (De Heij et al., 2006) through identification and talent development remains an integral component for a football club that strives to produce the next generation of football players.

Football academies or Centres of Excellence, defined in the broadest terms, are facilities or coaching programmes designed to produce talent. A football academy is an investment programme within a particular club structure or football league, which develops and nurtures talent with the vision of using these talented players to play in the first team (Kuijjer, 2007). Football academies have long been the feature of the landscape of African football (Darby, Akindes & Kirwin, 2007).

A football academy will sign multiple players at a young age, and groom them for the professional team. Through providing them with the opportunity to develop, nurturing their progression and guiding their talent, the club are able to progress the footballing assets along a predetermined path towards the first team. Talent identification plays a crucial role in the academy system. However, a FIFA ruling has restricted clubs to recruiting locally based players only unless certain circumstances or opportunities arise, at which point the recruiting

football club would be required to pay compensation for the recruitment of the talent outside of the country borders. This compensation is pre-determined by FIFA until players reach the age of 18 (FIFA). Compensation is due for the training and education costs of the player, and is worked out according to the existing club's financial investment in the player.

2.8 Successful football academies

The common task of a football academy is to create an appropriate environment for the development of elite players (Ajax FC, 2010). Academies aspire to develop players for the first team or, at the very least, generate income through the sale of marketable assets (Richardson et al., 2004). Amsterdamsche Football Club Ajax, also called AFC Ajax or Ajax FC, is internationally known and recognised for training and developing young talent. Ajax invests heavily in the training of youngsters and is very successful in doing so. Many professionals in Dutch and international football have spent their youth development years at Ajax Football Club Youth Academy (Kuijjer, 2007).

A successful football academy makes a positive impact on the club's financial performance and the club's success on the field (Bilton, 1999). This is achievable through the success of the academy producing marketable assets of young professionals that improve the first team and realise income from the transfer fees of those academy-produced players that do not establish themselves within the first team squad. Maximising the return on investment through the production of talented youth footballers should be a directive outlined by a football club. A high quality academy increases the number of own players in the first team which would consequently decrease the costs of recruiting players. The quality of your academy is therefore not only important for the sporting results, but also for the financial results (Kuijjer, 2007).

Chelsea, Manchester United and various other top European teams have spent hundreds of millions of pounds on transfer fees for the world's best players in the hope of buying success. But the best teams in the world rely on a set of home-grown players who cost nothing to buy (Draper, 2010). The Barcelona youth academy is outperforming the rest of the world in terms of football development, as they continue to produce players of high calibre, who progress through their junior ranks to perform on the professional stage in Spain and

around the world. Ajax FC has a similar philosophy in developing their own talent with 14 out of the 29 players of their first team in the 2007/2008 season being talents from their own youth academy (Kuijjer, 2007).

Although various differences in the strategy of football academies undoubtedly exist, it is important to establish a 'winning' strategy for a football academy. Winning is not a one time or 'now and then' thing. Winning is a habit. To be a winner, a firm has to create, exploit and sustain its competitive advantage, and this has to be done consistently (Ma, 1999). A strategic 'winning' focus which includes the development of coherent working practices throughout the academy (Richardson et al., 2004) should be identified. Identification and implementation of a competitive strategy will allow for success both on and off the football field in the attempt to become a 'winner' in talent development.

In any football academy in which talent identification and development is the focus, you need to have a vision gained from the leadership of the organisation with a strong strategy linked to the goals of the football club (van Heerden, 2010). The strategy, for example, of Ajax FC is centred on its youth academy and it thus plays the most important role in determining the goals and values for the club. The Manchester City Football Academy, according to Jim Cassell, head of football development, has never been thought of as a separate entity. The development system belongs to the club and to everyone involved within the structures (Slater, 2007), ensuring that the strategy formulated by the club is directed downwards towards the development structures, and so ensuring that the goals of player development, which would enhance the football clubs goals and objectives, are met.

2.9 The four categories of African football academies

Football academies in Africa can be classified into four categories, such as academies organised and run by the club sides or national federation, Afro-European academies, private- or corporate-sponsored academies and non-affiliated, improvised academies.

2.9.1 Academies organised and run by the club sides or national federation

The first classification of a football academy is that which is organised and/or run by the African football club or African national federation (Darby et al., 2007). Orlando Pirates, a

PSL club that was established in 1937, initiated the Orlando Pirates Football Development Programme. The primary objective of the football academy is to develop talented South African youth to play in the Orlando Pirates first team and the national football squad. The programme emphasises the importance of a well-rounded individual with personal, social, academic and spiritual development to complement the football talents. Until the age of 14 years (the programme caters from boys aged twelve), technical development is fundamental. Thereafter, physical and technical development of players becomes the focus as teamwork is introduced and players become more familiar with the Orlando Pirates style of play (Orlando Pirates Development, n.d.).

The holistic development of players at the Orlando Pirates Football Development Programme is managed by specialist coaches, a medical team and skill development assessors, whilst the young players are enrolled into educational programmes at local schools (Orlando Pirates Development, n.d.).

Bidvest Wits, who launched their ambitious football academy in February 2009, are another example. The Bidvest Wits, or the 'Clever boys' as they are affectionately known because of their link to the University of the Witwatersrand, approach to the academy is simple; soccer players are athletes. The academy aims to look after the young player's skills, their bodies and their minds. The club aims to gear these players up for the tough world of professional football (Wits to launch academy, 2008).

The academy of Ivory Coast club Association Sportive des Employés de Commerce (ASEC) Mimosas is the most well-known and successful football academy in Africa. The academy was founded in 1994, and was the first structured football academy in sub-Saharan Africa (Darby et al., 2007). A common name for the academy is 'Crown jewel of African football' and offers players not just coaching but also an education. The academy is arguably the most successful football academy in Africa. Kolo Toure, Emmanuel Eboue, Salomon Kalou, Didier Zokora, Yaya Toure... the list of international stars to have emerged from ASEC Mimosas' academy is remarkable (Darby et al., 2007).

ASEC, Orlando Pirates and Bidvest Wits share similar philosophies, which are typical of football academies found throughout Europe, in that they provide young players between the ages of 13 and 17 with both a football and academic education.

2.9.2 Afro-European academies

The second classification is the Afro-European academies, which involve either a partnership between an existing academy and a European club or an arrangement whereby the European club takes a controlling interest in the club and then subsumes the club's existing youth structures and establishes new ones (Darby et al., 2007). Ajax FC was one of the first European clubs to collaborate with foreign clubs in less-developed countries tapping into new sources of playing talent (De Heij et al., 2006). Ajax FC acquired a controlling interest in Cape Town Spurs in 1999, subsequently renaming them Ajax Cape Town. This collaboration with Cape Town Spurs meant that Ajax FC could directly link into local scouting networks where players with potential talent could be available for a fraction of the cost of players in Europe (De Heij et al., 2006).

Ajax FC is internationally known and recognised for training and developing young talents. Ajax FC invests heavily in the training of youngsters and is very successful in doing so. Many professionals in Dutch and international football have spent their youth development years at Ajax FC (Kuijjer, 2007).

The partnership between an African facility and a European club has emerged to play a major role in the migration of African players to Europe. This facility is highlighted by the transfers of players such as Steven Pienaar, Daylon Claasen, Bryce Moon, Terror Fanteni, Nathan Paulse and Stanton Lewis from the Ajax Football Club Youth Academy in Cape Town to Europe. More European clubs are increasingly creating football academies or buying a share in local African clubs (Scherrens, 2007).

SuperSport United formed a partnership with Tottenham Hotspur Football Club in England that enabled both football academies to work together. It represents a mutually beneficial partnership that would see both academies gain from the partnership in terms of coaching and player exchange (Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, 2010). This partnership has

enabled Tottenham the opportunity to trial SuperSport Academy midfielder Lyle Lakay, to assess his progress and identify whether he has the ability to play in Europe. Bongani Khumalo, SuperSport's club captain, was signed by the English Premiership team, subject to a work permit being granted, with Khumalo set to join Tottenham Hotspurs during the January 2011 transfer window-period.

2.9.3 Private or corporate-sponsored academies

The third classification is private- or corporate-sponsored academies, which have well-established foundations and operate with the support and sponsorship of private individuals (Darby et al., 2007).

In 1994, Transnet sponsored a Soccer Academy initiative, which was initially sponsored by South African Breweries, as a step towards preparing the best talent for high performance football (Charnas et al., 2006). This initiative included a national performance centre in Johannesburg equipped with effective training solutions for South African youth, along with satellite centres in Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Umtata. In 1998, Transnet closed down the satellite centres and reopened a sporting school of excellence in Johannesburg under the auspices of the South African Football Association (SAFA). The school of excellence has produced a number of South African international players and numerous professionals within the local South African leagues. This school combined coaching facilities with an academic school for secondary education.

The aims of the private- or corporate-sponsored academy ventures range from being purely about producing quality players for the European market, to boosting football development within Africa at local and international levels. The Pepsi Football Academy in Lagos, Nigeria, is one of the largest and most prominent in Africa. Established in 1992, the academy currently trains around 4 000 students between the ages of 8 and 14 (Darby et al., 2007).

French footballer Patrick Viera launched an academy in Senegal called Diambars. At Diambars, and at any other subsequent Diambars academy in Africa, the policy is that 70% of the players' time is spent on education (Morgan, 2007b). Viera believes that by focusing on education, the exploitation of young players can be prevented. The purpose of a strong

focus on education is to provide for the need for something which players can depend on in the event that their goal of playing professional football does not materialise even after attending the academy (Solomon, 2008).

Even if boys are fortunate enough to secure a contract with a club, Diambars keeps close tabs on their progress, with the staff of the academy, including the professional players that support it, continuing to provide guidance and protection as an attempt to prevent players from being exploited by the 'bigger' clubs that may attempt to make a small fortune on a talented youngster, either through contract negotiations or through selling the player (Morgan, 2007b).

2.9.4 Non-affiliated, improvised academies

The final type of academy is the non-affiliated, improvised academy. These academies are set up on an ad hoc basis and involve poorly qualified staff and lack proper facilities (Darby et al., 2007). The Excel Football Development Centre in Bedfordview, Johannesburg, was set up as the development wing of Bedfordview Football Club is a non-affiliated structure. These types of academies abound throughout the continent and can be found in major cities. These young players are not affiliated to any team or federation and, as such, fall outside any legal and administrative regulations that are aimed at safeguarding young players. As a consequence, these private, non-affiliated academies expose young Africans to the greed of uncertified agents who are able to acquire recruits cheaply and sign them up on exploitative contracts (Darby et al., 2007).

2.10 Business strategy in sport - a systematic approach

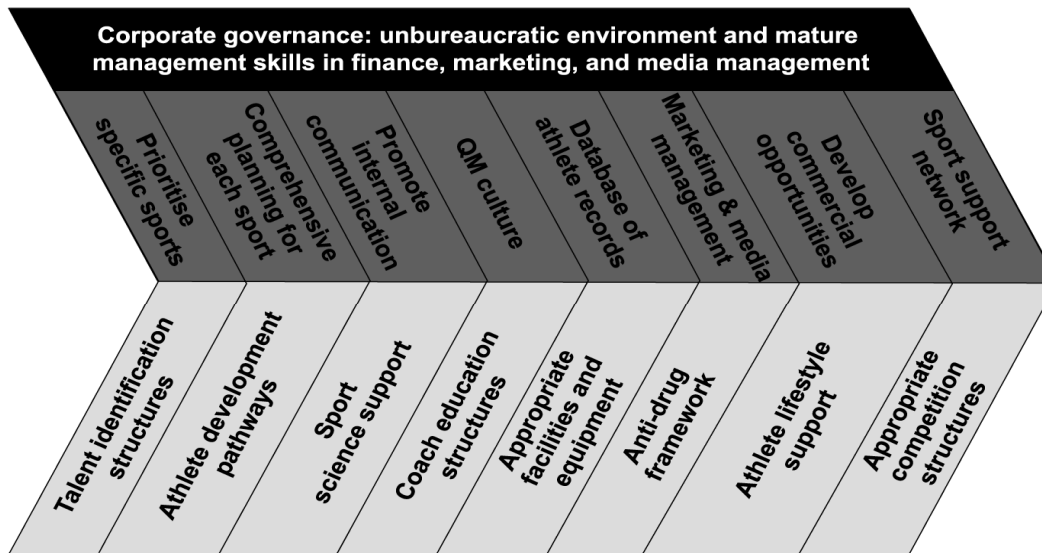
Strategy is about winning. Strategy involves choice. It involves the choice of the firm's scope (Porter, 1980) as well as the combination of its resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991; Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). It is ultimately about the choice of matching resource commitment with changing opportunities for gaining and sustaining competitive advantages (Ma, 1999).

There exists a nascent effort to explore the benefits of studying various areas of organisational studies within sport (Wolfe, Dukerich & Crown, 2001). Study within sport lends

itself well to examining competitive advantage. Gaining a competitive advantage within any industry requires a strategy through which employees are able to buy into the goals and objectives outlined by the management team. The concept of competitive advantage drives business strategy (Lado et al., 1992).

Bohlke (2006) proposed a systematic approach to elite sport, adapted from a model by Porter (1985) in an attempt to gain a competitive advantage over industry rivals. Porter's model is based on the insight that a corporate strategy should meet the opportunities and threats in the organisations external environment. Porter has identified five competitive forces that shape every industry and every market. These forces determine the intensity of competition and hence the profitability and attractiveness of an industry. Competitive strategies are often aimed at altering the firm's position in the industry against that of competitors and suppliers. Industry structure plays a central role in determining and limiting strategic action (Teece et al., 1997).

The objective of corporate strategy should be to modify these competitive forces in a way that improves the position of the organisation. Porter's model supports the analysis of the driving forces in an industry. This 'five-force' framework provides a systematic way of thinking about how competitive forces work at the industry level and how these forces determine the profitability of different industries and industry segments (Teece et al., 1997). Based on the information derived from the Five Forces Analysis, management can decide how to influence or exploit particular characteristics of their industry.



Source: Böhlke (2006): structured according to Porter (1985)

Figure 1: The adapted model of Porter's 'five' forces

The model suggests that without this systematic approach to elite sport there is little chance of consistent success (Bohlke & Robinson, 2009). The model identifies a number of constructs that need to be identified with an elite model framework or competitive environment, which can be incorporated within an academy structure.

According to Bohlke and Robinson (2009), the following aspects should be considered within an elite sporting set-up, as adapted from Porter's model. The management of these systems and services will be unpacked later in the research to help understand the strategy employed by the relevant football academies and the associated management in attempting to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage in the 'off field' business associated with football development.

2.10.1 Talent identification structures

These are the processes that allow the systematic identification of individuals with a talent for sport(s), for example the 'scouting' system that is prevalent in baseball and basketball in the USA or in football in England. The scouting system essentially provides a talent identification structure through which scouts source talent from the high school leagues and produce reports and information to college coaches on the availability of the talent. The

talent identification structures enable the players to enter a development system that provide a pathway towards achieving recognition and enable progress into the professional ranks. Giving players the opportunity to progress further enhances the potential profitability for the football club through potential transfers for their developed players.

Talent identification and development in Dutch football is often regarded as the modelling structure for European football, with has superior performance in player development, often resulting in the football clubs selling their prized assets to a number of top European teams. This enables the club to generate a substantial financial sum (Kuijjer, 2007). Barcelona has, in recent years, formulated an academy system that provides for player identification and development from the Catalan region of Spain. This system provides an opportunity for the youth to develop as players in the professional environment.

Talent identification systems and structures are not only limited to that of players. Coaches, managers and personnel who can aid or benefit the organisation should also be considered. The case of Dutch professional football illustrates an interesting point of human capital investment (Kuijjer, 2007).

Human resources constitute the main asset of an organisation, and recruitment and training determine the strengths and weaknesses of this main asset within the company. Human capital is the most valuable and important resource in the football industry. Big European clubs are willing to pay millions of Euros to attract the most promising talents and the best players (Kuijjer, 2007). The performance of companies in other businesses also depends on the human capital in the company although perhaps human capital has slightly more importance within the football industry.

2.10.2 Athlete Development Pathways

Structures and support systems allow athletes to develop their skills and abilities. According to the influential study by Appelbaum et al. (2000), the performance of individuals depends on their ability, motivation and opportunity. In other words, people perform well when they have the necessary knowledge and skills to do so, when they have the motivation to do it and when their work environment provides them the necessary opportunities. These

development pathways would include aspects of training and providing opportunities for the talent to progress along a pre-determined path.

Training is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies as a result of teaching (Kuijer, 2007). The effects of training for the young players can be clearly identified within the realm of football. Training is seen as offering skill-enhancing practices (Kuijer, 2007) to young players in a football club, allowing them to develop and progress through a development system to achieve maximum benefit for both the individual and also the club. A youth player becomes a valuable resource to a club if he manages to become a professional player. Young players that develop and make it as a professional football player can generate revenue to the club.

The presence of youngsters in the first team is essential for Ajax FC. Therefore the main purpose of the youth academy is to develop and guide young talented players towards becoming fully capable professionals for the first team. To make the academy as effective as possible, Ajax FC invests heavily in guiding and training talented players (Kuijer, 2007).

Possibly the most important reason of focusing on training is a financial one. The quality of the academy determines the number of players that will become professional players. A high-quality academy increases the number of own players in the first team and consequently decreases the costs of recruiting players (Kuijer, 2007). Determining whether training is a good investment therefore requires measuring the training's potential revenue and cost to the organisation.

2.10.3 Sport science support

In order to assess the integrity of a sport development programme, the role of scientific, pertinent, technical databases in player development must be emphasised. A solid base of scientific knowledge would be beneficial to the process of mapping and managing the progress of players. Data on players' performance, especially national team players in every category, as well as intermittent assessments and continuous outlines of support programmes for all elite players, should be documented (Solomon, 2008).

2.10.4 Coach education system

Many organisations recognise that a large part of their true value depends on intangible assets – a skilled workforce, patents and know-how, strong customer relationships, brands and unique organisational designs and processes (Nisar, 2006). Essentially the intangible assets refer to the ‘software’ of the organisation. These ‘soft’ assets give modern organisations their hard competitive edge (Ulrich & Smallwood, 2004). As Ulrich and Smallwood (2004) argue, the organisational capabilities – the collective skills, abilities and expertise of an organisation – are the outcome of investments in staffing, training, compensation, communication and other human resource areas. They represent the ways that people and resources are brought together to accomplish work.

In many companies, the most significant long-term investment is the intangible asset in training (Nisar, 2006). Providing a path for an education system for coaches enables these individuals to be at the forefront of coaching development systems and structures, which affords players the opportunity to develop and ‘learn’ best practices within the football industry. Effective training can raise performance, improve morale, and increase an organisation’s potential. A well designed training programme flows from the company’s strategic goals. These goals must be realistic and clearly stated to be successful.

Football development extends to sports administrators, officials and coaches. While their primary roles may be to administrate, officiate or coach, the importance of their personal development as well as the continued synchronisation of their sporting code with global developments should be clearly understood. According to Noakes (2006), South African local ‘coaches’ remain ignorant of the modern realities of what it takes to be one of the best coaches. He comments that the same applies to administrators in that they are not exposed to the workings of international organisations, and this puts into question whether or not there can be a sound foundation for future success. It may not be the direct exposure to the workings, but rather the successful principles and models that have successfully been developed and implemented which provides our overseas counterparts with a leading edge in terms of talent and skills development.

2.10.5 Access to facilities and equipment

Well-developed and sport-specific facilities and equipment, which allow athletes to train and improve in their chosen sport, are important. According to Kuijer (2007), heavy investments have been made by Ajax FC in the creation of a perfect training environment for their elite athletes. According to Ajax FC, these investments in high-quality facilities are necessary, as the quality of the academy determines the number of players that will make it towards becoming a professional player (Kuijer, 2007).

2.10.6 Athlete lifestyle support

Athlete lifestyle support includes services that support the non-sporting life of an athlete. These include access to funding, education opportunities and career planning. The Barcelona academy is a 'factory' for world-class footballers and it is currently at the peak of its performance. The academy aims to shape the boy's values as well as their footballing skills, and has a holistic approach reminiscent of the Jesuit Maxim: "Give me the boy and I will give you the man" (Draper, 2010).

A few miles from the FC Barcelona training ground is a delightful 18th century farmhouse known as La Masia. It was built in 1702 and currently sits rather incongruously among the constant noise and clamour of one of the busier districts of the city, (Draper, 2010). FC Barcelona converted this ornate building into a boarding house in 1979 to accommodate the older boys in the programme. From the ages of 13 to 14 the boys are able to live in La Masia, thus ensuring that the future of the football club is nurtured.

La Masia crucially allows the club to develop not just their football skills but their lifestyle and attitudes, preaching the virtues of healthy eating and early nights. Housed in bunk bed style dormitories, the boys live, sleep and eat together. They eat communally and do their homework in a spacious library. The importance of finishing their education is constantly impressed on the boys. "We train the youngsters to be good people with a healthy lifestyle and to help them be happy with their way of life," says Albert Capellas, the club's senior youth coordinator. "It's very important for us that they boys have respect for each other" (Draper, 2010).

According to Kuijer (2007), Ajax FC has made heavy investments in the creation of a perfect training environment. The youth academy is located at specially designed sport accommodation, thoughtfully called 'De Toekomst', or 'The Future'. This is accommodation with all the necessary comfort and facilities needed to create a perfect environment for the youngsters to learn. For the season 2005/2006, the costs of the youth academy were an astonishing €2.8 million (Kuijer, 2007).

Ajax FC maintains that these investments in high-quality accommodation and skilful personnel are necessary, as the quality of the academy determines the number of players that will make it to the professional level (Kuijer, 2007).

2.11 Unpacking the model

Unpacking the aspects outlined by Porter's adapted model, highlights the strategic selection of decisions and actions which determine elite sporting organisational survival and renewal. The capacity to grasp and create opportunities, both internal and external, and be able to create a sustainable competitive advantage is vital to achieving success within our ever-changing work environments.

An emphasis should be placed upon assessing internal organisational capabilities (strengths and weaknesses) and matching these with environmental opportunities and threats. Hofer and Schendel (1978) have defined distinctive competencies that make up the unique competitive position that a firm achieves through its resource deployment. Lippman and Rumelt (1982) further describe that organisation-specific resources and competencies, if utilised in the correct manner, have the potential to generate superior performance for the organisation.

Within Porter's model it would appear that the 'forces' are essential in attempting to create a winning model for a soccer academy in South Africa. However, in recent years the impact of the resource-based model for strategic implementation within an organisation has resulted in further research and identified that within each of the adapted 'forces', identified by Bohlke, there should be specific capabilities and competencies that could be utilised by the sports

organisation that would create a sustainable competitive advantage. This would suggest that a more in-depth insight into the football academy model is needed to gain a greater understanding of what it takes to create a sustainable competitive model in South Africa. The role of human capital within the organisation and the internal functioning of the organisation will also need to be looked at more closely.

The resource-based view (RBV) of the firm has emerged as a major strategic management paradigm (Berman, Down & Hill, 2002) and is a shift from Porter's 'five-force' model. According to Rollo (2002) the RBV has emerged as a popular reference framework for studies in strategy and management. It emphasises the importance of organisation-specific resources in the generation of an economic profit.

2.12 The resource-based view (RBV) of strategy

The RBV has attracted some interest within sports management (Gerrard, 2003). The RBV indicates that key human resources can be sources of competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). The RBV focuses more on the internal functioning of the organisation, looking at the characteristics and performance of the organisation. The assumption within this view is that organisations have an idiosyncratic strategic resource (Gerrard, 2003). In other words, the resources contained within the organisations are not identical, and that the resources are not perfectly mobile and therefore heterogeneous, and thus provide the basis for a strategy. The RBV approach offers a fundamentally different and more appropriate perspective on the sources of sustainable competitive advantage than Porter's 'five-force' model (Gerrard, 2003).

The RBV approach sees organisations with superior systems and structures being profitable not because they engage in strategic investments that may deter entry and raise prices above long-run costs, but because they have markedly lower costs, or offer markedly higher quality or product performance. In the RBV model, competitive advantage is viewed from the perspective of the 'distinctive competencies' that give a firm an edge over its rivals (Lado et al., 1992).

The RBV's logic is simple and compelling: better resource management provides firms with a lower cost position or distinct products relative to rivals, thereby resulting in above normal economic performance (Poppo & Weigelt, 2000). This resource planning could include aspects such as training and recruitment, and effective capital resource management.

The dominant view of corporate strategy is based on the concept of economic rent and the view of the company as a collection of capabilities (Kotelnikov, n.d.) There are many definitions used by different people in many different ways that attempt to explain what a sustainable competitive advantage is within an organisation. In attempting to understand what a competitive advantage is, we need to understand the importance of organisation assets, capabilities and competencies.

Underpinning the term 'strategy' are the capabilities of an organisation, which include the structure and the control systems that help a company achieve its goals (Jones & Hill, 2009). A capability is usually considered a bundle of assets needed to perform a business process, which is essentially composed of individual activities. An asset is anything that the firm owns or controls. An asset may be physical (plant, equipment, location, access to raw materials); human (training, experience, judgement, decision-making skills, intelligence, relationship and knowledge); or organisational (culture, formal reporting structures, control systems, informal relationships) (Kotelnikov, n.d.).

All organisations have capabilities, however, normally an organisation will focus on certain capabilities that are consistent with the organisational strategy (Jones & Hill, 2009). Core capabilities provide for a competitive advantage within an ever changing environment. Capabilities are intangible. They reside not so much in individuals as in the way individuals interact, cooperate and make decisions within the context of the organisation (Jones & Hill, 2009). Business-level strategy with the objective to create sources of sustainable competitive advantage is thus an integral component for any organisation.

In order to produce sustainable competitive advantage, the capability must:

1. Produce value – Capabilities are valuable when they enable a firm to conceive of or implement strategies that improve efficiency and effectiveness within the organisation. In

other words, to be valuable the capability must either increase efficiency, which is the inputs or the outputs for the organisation, or increase effectiveness, which essentially enables a new capability not previously held by the organisation to be exposed.

2. Be rare – Capabilities must be rare among current and potential competitors. A resource that is possessed by a large number of organisations will not be a source of competitive advantage (Kotelnikov, n.d.).

3. Imperfectly imitable (not easily imitated or substituted) – Valuable, rare resources can only be sources of competitive advantage if firms that do not possess them cannot obtain them. They must be imperfectly imitable. Imitation can be avoided through causal ambiguity (imitating firms cannot duplicate the strategy since they do not understand why it is successful in the first place) and social complexity (trust, teamwork, informal relationships, causal ambiguity where cause of effectiveness is uncertain). Reproducible capabilities are those which can be replicated by competitors, such as:
 - technical capabilities
 - financial capabilities
 - marketing capabilities
 - explicit knowledge
 - non-exclusive licence agreements(Kotelnikov, n.d.).

4. Be exploitable by the organisation (substitutability) – There must be no equivalent resources that can be exploited to implement the same strategies. Substitutability includes duplication (although no two management teams are the same, they can be strategically equivalent and produce the same or similar results) (Kotelnikov, n.d.).

The firm's most important capabilities are called competencies. A competency is an internal capability that a company performs better than other internal capabilities. A core competency is a well-performed internal capability that is central to the company's strategy, competitiveness, and profitability. A distinctive competence is a competitively valuable capability that a company performs better than its rivals. These may be the tangible or intangible resources (Kotelnikov, n.d.).

The RBV of strategy has a coherence and integrative role that places it ahead of other mechanisms of strategic decision making. It views that a competitive advantage is simply a gain that an organisation has over its competitors through specific capabilities and competencies. A competency will produce a competitive advantage provided that:

1. it produces value for the organisation
2. Its value is created in a way that cannot be easily pursued by competitors.

The RBV approach offers an emerging paradigm shift for the understanding of strategic resources within an organisation that can be deployed to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. It offers an interpretation on the internal context of the sports organisation rather than the structure of the external environment (Gerrard, 2003). Smart and Wolfe (2003) outline the relative importance of human resources and leadership in sports and emphasise these as a means of achieving a competitive advantage. In addition, they explain that focusing on the internal aspects of the organisation are important in attempting to understand the strategic capabilities required in sustaining a competitive advantage (Smart & Wolfe, 2003).

2.13 Sustainable competitive advantage within an academy

In trying to unpack a sustainable competitive advantage, it appears that 'distinctive competencies' give a firm an edge over its rivals. Sustainable is not measured in terms of calendar time and does not mean that the advantage will last forever. Sustainable suggests that the advantage lasts long enough that competitors stop trying to duplicate the strategy that creates the advantage.

According to Szymanski (2003), players and coaches can be seen as the core competencies of a football club. Through the identification and development of talent, the football club is provided with a means of actively changing the existing core competencies of the club, which become important strategic actions. The better the player or coach becomes, the more valuable they become to the football club, not just in terms of on-field performance, but also in 'off field' financial value.

Soccer in South Africa continues to suffer the status of the ‘underprivileged’ sport battling to make-do with scarce resources (Dumitru, 2006). Resources are the base elements utilised to produce products or services efficiently. Resources come from within society. In other words, they come from society and are utilised to meet society’s particular needs. According to Smit and Cronje (2002), resources can be human (people), capital (money), physical (raw materials) and informational (knowledge). Bateman and Snell (2004) also list non-financial resources that are ‘other’ people, for example networks of people, top management teams, advisory boards and partners. Resources are rarely available in abundance and so it is necessary to carefully select and combine them in the correct quantities to achieve organisational goals.

Furthermore, Dumitru (2006) outlined that the reluctance to embrace and devote resources such as capital and training has stunted the growth of South Africa soccer. Bafana Bafana coach, Pitso Mosimane, could not have summed it up better: “Football development is not only about facilities, but also about the coaches. We need to respect the youth coaches and pay them good salaries” (Mokoena, 2010). The resources of a football club and/or an academy provide the vision and direction of the academy and ultimately the football club. Through effective management of the resources held within the academy, the resources could provide the football club with a distinctive competitive advantage over industry rivals.

Resources within the football industry could be broken up into the following two categories, tangible and intangible resources:

Tangible resources:

- intellectual property
- exclusive licence agreements
- statutory monopolies.

Intangible resources:

- strong brand
- leadership
- tacit knowledge and skills

- teamwork
- organisational culture
- business processes
- partnerships.

Management is the process of working with people and resources to accomplish organisational goals (Bateman & Snell, 2004). It is a planned process with a clearly defined vision, goals and objectives. To achieve the outlined strategy, the outlined vision of the academy for a certain period of time needs to be formulated. The football academy needs to ensure that it challenges itself internally to ensure that it is always on the cutting edge of elite football development. To achieve its vision, an academy always needs to: a) show innovation, b) challenge the status quo, c) have strategic direction outlined by the leadership of the club (Bohlke, 2006). Managing this change and upholding the vision requires total commitment from all concerned within the organisation. Management is the systematic process of selecting, allocating and deploying resources. Managing through leadership entails efficiently and effectively conducting business, and relies on the fundamental principles of planning, organising, leading and controlling (Lado et al., 1992). Within any organisation, leadership must have confidence in the organisation and the resources in order for it to progress with a dynamic and ever-changing environment.

Particular academies identified earlier are not specific to a particular country and, given their diversity, it is difficult to generalise about the impact of the football academy on African football. The impact of strategic initiatives on the performance of organisations is little explored in literature. With reference to performance measurement in football it should be noted that only within the last decade have clubs started to focus on other objectives than their league position at the end of the season, and have subsequently had to consider alternative strategies (Chadwick & Clowes, 1998).

2.14 Achieving a sustainable competitive advantage

Sustainable competitive advantage is the prolonged benefit of implementing a unique value-creating strategy based on a unique combination of internal organisational resources and capabilities that cannot be replicated by competitors.

Effectively what we are discussing is that in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage we need to ensure the organisation contains:

Assets + Capabilities + Competencies = Competitive advantage

In order to obtain a sustained competitive advantage, organisations, amongst other things, need to find the most advantageous position in the industry, as outlined by Porter; require unique resources that are valuable, non-imitable and non-substitutional; should develop dynamic capabilities; and should engage in strategic renewal activities (De Heij et al., 2006).

2.15 Conclusion

Literature and past research reviews substantiate that elite sport structures need to engage in strategic renewal processes in order to develop sporting talent and also to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage over industry rivals. Capabilities and competencies of the elite football academy are central to gaining a competitive strategy. In unpacking the above, it would appear that the objectives of the business-level for any organisational strategy are thus to:

- generate sustainable competitive advantage
- develop and nurture valuable capabilities
- respond to environmental changes
- approve functional level strategies.

Underpinning these objectives for achieving a 'winning' football model, the literature highlights that in order to obtain a sustainable competitive advantage for a football academy, it::

1. would find the most advantageous position in the industry, as outlined by Porter
2. requires unique resources that are valuable, non-imitable and non-substitutional
3. should develop dynamic capabilities
4. should engage in strategic renewal activities.

(De Heij et al., 2006)

The RBV approach may provide a useful framework for understanding the role that strategic resources can play in the performance of a wide range of organisations involved in business competition, sporting competition and more general forms of environmental competition to survive (Gerrard, 2003).

This chapter has provided a summary of the literature on the elite sports structures and the role of talent development which has led to the formulation of research questions which will attempt to be answered through the methodology outlined in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3

The research explored the role of sustainable competitive advantage within an elite football development system. The research will attempt to contextualise the research aims. The research is motivated by a prevalent view that football development is the process in which support is rendered in order for people to recognise and reach their full potential. Effective and sustainable development programmes need to be implemented to nurture young talent throughout South Africa (Solomon, 2008).

The research conducted on PSL football academies will attempt to identify the important competencies which could be central to achieving a strategy towards identifying the ‘winning’ formula for an academy. This part of the thesis will attempt to contextualise the research aims.

The fundamental question underpinning the research is what is a ‘winning’ model for a football academy set-up in South Africa? As identified earlier in Chapter 2, ‘distinctive competencies’ give a firm an edge over its rivals. An important question to ask is: “Why do some organisations persistently outperform others?”

The following are the key questions drawn from the above question that the research strives to unpack:

1. How do football academies outperform their competitors?
2. What basket of talent/skills enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable?
3. What strategic aspects/systems are employed within the academy set-up to outperform the industry rivals?

Outperformance of industry rivals for an academy in South Africa would propose that a successful football academy makes a positive impact on the club’s financial performance and the club’s success on the field (Bilton, 1999). As outlined in the literature review, this would appear achievable through the success of the academy producing marketable assets of young professionals that improve the first team and/or realise income from the transfer

fees of those academy-produced players that do not establish themselves within the first-team squad.

Using the European model, for example, with superior performance in player development often results in the football clubs selling their prized assets to a number of top European teams, which enables the club to generate a substantial financial sum (Kuijjer, 2007). In trying to unpack a 'winning' model for a South African academy, the number of academy players developed that have progressed into the first team will be measured. In addition, players that are developed and sold off to other PSL or professional teams will be investigated, whilst the role and impact of the management and coaching structure will also be investigated to determine the impact of the capabilities and competencies that provide for a sustainable competitive advantage.

Chapter 4

The study is exploratory in nature and required a methodology that supported the objective of learning and discovery. As Byrne (2001) explained, qualitative methods seek to provide contextual knowledge of the phenomenon being explored. Case study methodology was utilised to obtain information from one or a few situations (Zikmund, 2003) within South African football.

4.1 Introduction to the research

Identifying competencies for a sustainable academy is significant in attempting to achieve a ‘winning’ model for a academy set-up in South Africa, which can be adapted to Africa. The ‘winning’ model aims to provide South African academies with the knowledge for creating a competitive advantage over their industry rivals. With South Africa benefiting from hosting the FIFA World Cup and the demands from the football world to see an improvement in football development, there appears to be a growing demand to find suitable structures in which to nurture emerging talent in South Africa.

This study was underpinned by research on the current trends and models employed in South African academies against those currently used in European football club academies such as Ajax FC (Holland) and FC Barcelona (Spain). The exploratory research attempted to unpack the competencies required within a successful football development academy in South Africa. Data accumulated by different methods but bearing on the same issue are part of what is called a multi-method approach (Gillham, 2001). No one kind or source of evidence is likely to be sufficient on its own, thus multiple sources of evidence, each with its own strengths and weaknesses, is a key characteristic of this case study research (Gillham, 2001).

The research project aims to empower administrators and management teams of South African professional football clubs to outperform their opponents in football development (Bourke, 2003). Playing, coaching, administrative and managerial personnel are thus an important strategic resource for football clubs (Bourke, 2003). The outperforming of opponents through the development of human capital or “grow your own” policies (Bourke,

2003) are thus considered an important component for an academy and an integral component of a professional football club.

4.2 Research methodology

Research provides information to potentially reduce uncertainty. Based on the nature of South African football and the development structures within the industry, descriptive and exploratory research were conducted to gain clearer dimensions on the ambiguous problem of football development. The information produced makes for a more informed analysis of the current practices in football development in South Africa.

Descriptive research is a study of the status of a situation and its purpose is to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon. According to Zikmund (2003), descriptive research aims to determine the answers to 'who', 'what', 'when', 'where' and 'how' questions. Its value is based on the premise that problems can be solved and practices improved through objective and thorough description (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). Descriptive research will attempt to identify aspects that are potentially lacking or compelling at managerial levels within the football club structures, and identify models that have been applied or not applied to the academy and which may aid in providing a path forward to creating sustainable model.

Exploratory research will be conducted to clarify ambiguous problems. According to Zikmund (2003), exploratory research aims to gain a clearer understanding of the dimensions of the problem. The information that is produced contributes to more informed analysis of the current practices in football development and potentially provides for a course of action. Exploratory research will assist in identifying some of the tools and management models that are available to effectively manage a football academy and provide the strategic direction in competing both on and off the football field.

There exists a nascent effort to explore the benefits of studying various areas of organisation within sport (Wolfe et al., 2001). The study of sport lends itself well to examining competitive advantage. In contrast to corporations that consider much data proprietary, sport organisations are particularly well suited to investigation with longitudinal studies as well as

single industry case studies being recommended to understand competitive advantage in sport.

4.3 Research design

A research design is the master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the required information (Zikmund, 2003). Malhotra (2007) stated that every research study needs to start with exploratory research. Research depends on the precision with which the problem has been defined, and the researcher's degree of conviction about the approach to the problem. The research will aim to show the importance of specific competencies using an academy structure. Unpacking these particular 'forces' using case study methodology will attempt to provide a winning formula for a competitive strategy for a football academy.

The research design used case study methodology with qualitative analysis to gain insight into the objectives and successful underpinnings of a football academy in South Africa. A case study is an in-depth exploration, from multiple perspectives, of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a real-life context. It is researched based, inclusive of different methods and is evidence led. The primary purpose is to generate an in-depth understanding of a specific topic or system and generate knowledge, practice or action (Simons, 2009).

Using case study research remains one of the most challenging endeavours because in a research strategy the case is used in many situations to contribute to our knowledge (Yin, 2003). A case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence – documents, interviews and observations. The essence of a case study is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions, why they were taken, how they were implemented and with what results. It is these decisions that are the major focus of a case study (Yin, 2003).

Direct observation of the events being studied and interviews with the people involved in the events is important within case study research (Yin, 2003). Observation will be used as an exploratory technique in observing directions and methods that could be appropriate in

developing a more thorough understanding on the key components within the academy. Furthermore it will be used as a supplementary technique to give an illustrative dimension (Gillham, 2001).

The analysis was conducted through formal and informal interviews with key stakeholders in the football industry, using a research question guide as an interview tool. Football academy directors, football coaches, key sponsorship managers and business owners who fund professional teams were interviewed. The interviews were conducted with persons in a position of authority and experts in the field of football development; the selection focused on those individuals who were capable of giving answers and insight into football development, whilst having a comprehensive grasp of what I am researching. The interview process used a semi-structured approach (Gillham, 2001).

The formal interviews provided insight into the strategic direction of the academy, whilst the informal interviews afforded an in-depth understanding of the academy structure and the core competencies required within an academy structure. Interviews are indispensable in case study research. The overwhelming strength of face-to-face interviews is the richness of the communication that is possible (Gillham, 2001). This informal information further contributes to the development of an overall impression of the academy phenomenon.

This decidedly focused interest in the academy set-up will enable the relationships among functions, individuals and the entity to be considered when unpacking the academy models. The results will be tentative because of the changing nature of the business of sport. A number of insights and recommendations for future activities within an academy system may be recommended to provide a 'way forward' for football identification and talent development within an academy structure. This will hopefully enhance our local 'game' and develop 'elite' performing football players who can compete on the international stage.

As Yin (2003, p. 53) states: "a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence ... Thus, any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode".

An interesting aspect to the design was to determine whether the goals and objectives of an academy are aligned with that of the professional team they are linked to and potentially to that of the European partner. This linkage further highlights the involvement of strategic management within the academy and provides for greater analysis into the competitive 'forces' within the organisation.

Robert K. Yin defined the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984). This introduction to case study research will propose the following six components used in unpacking the football academy structures in South Africa as a comparison to those in Europe:

- Determine and define the research questions
- Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques
- Prepare to collect the data
- Collect data in the field
- Evaluate and analyze the data
- Prepare the report

4.4 Methodology and rationale

The research was designed to develop explanations for talent identification and development in professional football in South Africa. According to Zikmund (2003) there are four basic research methods: surveys, experiments, secondary data studies and observations. Within this study, qualitative data was collected through informal and formal interviews of professional football managers, coaches, directors of football academies, and the administrators who work within the football academy structure. These individuals have all been or are currently involved in football development in South Africa. Field observations were also carried out in five professional youth academies in South Africa to understand more about the context of football development in 'our' country.

The qualitative research will attempt to unpack the effective core competencies of successful football academies that are pertinent to achieving a 'winning' model for an academy system in South Africa and which can thus be adapted to Africa. Current trends and models employed in South Africa and those currently used in Europe such as Ajax FC (Holland), and FC Barcelona (Spain) were researched through secondary data, interviews and exploratory investigation. The investigation will attempt to recommend models, using a strategic framework as a guide, that will provide a path forward for South African football to develop the next 'generation' of footballers that can grace the local and international playing fields. The evidence from multiple case studies is often more compelling, and therefore often regarded as being more robust (Yin, 2003).

4.4.1 Research aid

The face-to-face interaction between a researcher and a respondent offers the increased advantage of the researcher obtaining complete and precise information (Zikmund, 2003). With the variation in qualifications and scope of roles which vary according to club or institution, personal interviews, accompanied by the questionnaire as a research guide, were considered an appropriate research method in gaining the adequate feedback to formulate a model for future academies.

The research aid was designed to focus on the core competencies of a football academy, thus attempting to unpack the models employed within the development system. The first category of the research looked at the management of player development by investigating development strategies and management competencies. Further investigations into the structures that have been put into place by the executive's team or funders for the development initiative were also done. The initial focus was to gain a more thorough understanding of the specific academy.

The second category focused on the development of management, coaches and support staff. Coaching and support staff plays a critical role in the development of the players and, as so, gaining insight into the personnel who deal with the players on a daily basis is beneficial to the study. Understanding the dynamic of the core competencies allows for a

greater strategic management that could be employed in football development academies in future.

The third category identifies the administration and management components within the academy structure. The adopted strategic plan, governance procedures, operational plans and potential links to partners for means of football development are be questioned to try and unpack the strategic management that is employed in football development academies.

A provisional research tool was developed for validity of content.

4.4.2 Interview process

A personal interview is a form of direct communication in which an interviewer asks respondents questions in a one-on-one situation. This method allows for two-way communication between the interviewer and respondent (Zikmund, 2003).

The decision to use the interview process was based on the premise that information could be obtained and the identified concepts could be questioned further to gain greater clarity and more in-depth understanding. The interview process provides an opportunity for greater probing in order to fully unpack the ideas around talent identification and development. This opportunity is valuable in terms of obtaining greater clarity in a systematic manner and enables the collection of more informed data.

4.4.3 Sampling

Sampling is a process that involves any procedure using a small number of items or parts of the whole population to make conclusions regarding the population. A sample is therefore a representative subset of a larger population. The purpose of sampling is to enable researchers to receive an indication of particular characteristics transferrable to the entire population (Zikmund, 2003). Football is an interesting field to do research. Quantitative research was conducted to provide insight and understanding into the key factors identified in the research.

The relevant population for this study is all football development structures in South Africa. A population is any complete group of people, companies, hospitals, stores, students, sports federations and so forth that share common characteristics (Zikmund, 2003). The research focuses on football development structures where elite performance is the primary objective. Common to the entire sample is the occurrence of at least two scheduled football training sessions and one football game per week in a formally registered league.

For this particular study, interviewees had to have a thorough understanding of football development. It was assumed that a minimum of two years experience within the academy or an academy structure would suffice and information obtained in the data gathering process would thus be relevant and could prove to be beneficial.

Leadership, coaches and management were identified as important resources in creating a viable and sustainable football development academy.

4.4.4 Sample size

Professional football managers, coaches, directors of football academies, and the administrators who work within the football academy structure were interviewed. Interviews, both formal and informal (personal and telephonic, if unable to meet) were conducted using the research instrument as a guide to ensure that all relevant issues were addressed. The unpacking of the data provides an underpinning for the recommendation of a sustainable football academy model for South Africa.

The South African football academy sample size included the following four academies:

An academy organised and run by a club side or national federation:

- Moroko Swallows
- Santos FC

Afro-European academies:

- SuperSport United
- Bidvest Wits

The above academies were investigated against the current models employed by professional football clubs in Europe, such as FC Barcelona and Ajax FC. The selection of the above football academies was determined by the ability to gain access to the highly enclosed domain of football and that these football academies are regarded as emerging structures. The research was a collective case study, where several cases were studied to form a collective understanding of the football development in South Africa (Gillham, 2001).

4.5 Comparative findings and data analysis

Data analysis is qualitative research, identifying and capturing the data, applying analytical techniques and emerging with the findings. The research tool was used a guide within the interview process. The broad strategy identified for case study research is to collect data with an open mind (Gillham, 2001).

The interviews both informal and formal, allowed for spontaneous discussion. Within case study research, different kinds of data or different sources bearing on the same issue may commonly yield contradictory or discrepant results. The elite interview was conducted with persons in a position of authority, who were experts in the field of football development and thus people who were capable of giving answers with insight into the professional football academy environment. These individuals had a comprehensive grasp of football development and a direct impact on their respective academies. The interviews with these individuals were semi-structured. The informal information gathered contributed to the development of an overall impression of the academy phenomenon.

Participant observation, which occurred where possible, was used to identify aspects that might have been overlooked. A written record of the observation was kept. Observation was used as an exploratory technique in observing directions and methods that could be appropriate to gain insight into a 'winning' academy model. Furthermore it was used as a supplementary technique to give an illustrative dimension of the current models in use within the professional football environment in South Africa.

The findings about the academy structures attempted to identify normative patterns which could be recommended as the blue print for success. Evidence of one kind or another is important. Whether fragmentary or unrepresentative, if it occurred, it is evidence (Gillham, 2001) and provided further insight.

Institutional patterns that are responsible for the development of the young players were identified. Human resource patterns including coaching levels of education and experience were researched as a means to gain a greater understanding of the models currently in play within local South African structures. Different kinds of data or different sources bearing on the same issue commonly yield contradictory or discrepant results (Gillham, 2001) and this did not have an impact on the case research. In summary, the application of a mixed-methods approach enabled a greater understanding than pure descriptive statistics or the more abstract qualitative assessments could have provided on their own.

The chosen course of action for the research was to:

1. Define the structure of the problem
2. Study all relevant theory within the football academy industry
3. Use existing models employed in Europe as the basis for identifying models which could be utilised in the South African football context.
4. Collect data
5. Analyse the collected information and compile the results in a case study methodology.

Data analysis occurred once the completed list of interviews and observations with PSL football academies was completed.

Zikmund (2003) lists three key criteria for evaluating measurements: reliability, validity and sensitivity.

4.5.1 Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which the measures are free from error and can therefore yield consistent results. Two dimensions underlie the concept of reliability: one is repeatability and the other is internal consistency (Zikmund, 2003). Interviews were conducted using the

research tool as a guide to ensure that the same or similar questions were asked, and that the interview format remained consistent.

To enhance the reliability of the research, the various respondents were telephonically contacted and informed about the content and context of the research to ensure they understood the research question. In addition, data collection procedures, where possible, were repeated with the different football academy structures.

It was a priority that the purpose and value of the research was understood, because this limits the effects of pessimistic attitudes on the responses. The research tool had three very distinct sections and was designed create a discussion around the core competencies of a football academy.

4.5.2 Validity

Validity is the ability of the measurement instrument to measure what it is supposed to measure (Zikmund, 2003). In this research this had to occur through face-to-face interviews and interaction with key stakeholders, coaches, development directors and relevant personal within the football industry. The research strived to construct validity through consistent measures by ensuring that the interaction with the respondents occurred through an open dialogue, and that the research guideline framed the context of the discussion.

4.5.3 Sensitivity

Sensitivity refers to the accurate measure of variability in responses: this is the ability of the instrument to discriminate choices. Zikmund (2003) notes that sensitivity is applicable when changes in choices or other hypothetical constructs are under investigation.

4.6 Potential limitations to the research

The following aspects are limitations to this study:

- Only football club directors, academy directors, relevant coaches and associated business people involved with an academy were interviewed. This provided a good insight into the structure and strategies employed within an academy; however these

personnel did provide a limitation because of unavailability caused by footballing or business commitments.

- There was limited access to relevant information and some participants were unwilling to be involved in the research.
- Participants were apprehensive to disclose accurate information.

Chapter 5

This chapter deals with the results of the research conducted and covers the process and methodology that was used to unpack the professional football academy models. The qualitative research attempted to identify the talents and skills that enable an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable; to look at how football academies outperform their competitors; and identify the strategic aspects or systems that are employed which enable academies to outperform their industry rivals. These aspects are deemed pertinent to achieving a 'winning' model for an academy system in South Africa. The data accumulated through different methods, including interviews and field observations, but bearing on the same issue are part of what is called the multi-method approach to case study research (Gillham, 2001).

5.1 Case study analysis

The FC Barcelona and Ajax FC football youth academies are rated as top institutions that produce players of great skill and technique who are able to play in the best leagues in the world and become household names in the football industry. One would only need to look at the recent FIFA World Cup final in Johannesburg to understand the impact that these two football academies have had upon the football industry. Many of the players representing their nations were developed at these academies and it is a testament to these institutions that 17 of the players that featured in the final came from one of these two football academies (Tigani, 2010).

For the Netherlands, the Ajax FC academy can lay claim to producing nine of the squad players, including Wesley Sneider, Ryan Babel, Rafael van der Vaart, Eljero Elia, Klaas-Jan Huntelaar, Gregory van der Wiel, Maarten Stekelenburg, Johnny Heitinga, and Nigel de Jong. The Spanish team had a strong Catalan presence thanks to the role of the FC Barcelona academy, which produced Carlos Puyol, Xavi Hernandez, Andries Iniesta, Sergio Busquest, Gerard Pique, Victor Valdes, Pedro Gonzalez and Cesc Fabregas (Tigani, 2010).

Like organisations, some football teams are more successful than others. In businesses we analyse performance differences in terms of strategy and above normal economic

performance as indicators of competitive advantage. Within football, the players and coaches are the visible drivers of success. Whilst the human capital remains a key component within the academy system, the professional environment which surrounds these resources are integral in developing the talent and progressing the youth players towards professional football. The following table outlines the important facilities that the players and coaches are able to engage within the academy system at FC Barcelona and Ajax FC.

Table 1: Facilities at FC Barcelona and Ajax FC

Facilities	FC Barcelona	Ajax FC
Training pitches	✓	✓
Playing grounds	✓	✓
Change rooms	✓	✓
Gymnasium	✓	✓
Parking	✓	✓
Cafeteria	✓	✓
Residence for players	✓	✓
Classrooms	✓	✓

Ajax FC sources: (De Heij, Vermeulen, & Teunter, 2006); (Kormelink & Severeens, 1997); (Ajax FC, 2010); (McCormick, 2010)

FC Barcelona Sources: (Alexanco, n.d.); (Draper, 2010); (FC Barcelona, 2010); (Jonsson, 2007)

The facilities at ‘La Marisa’ and ‘De Toekomst’ (Table 1) ensure that the developments of the players are nurtured at the respective facilities, which provides greater availability to training and the development of individual football skills (Draper, 2010). According to Draper (2010), the facilities allow the club to develop not just the football skills but also their lifestyle and attitudes. Education is important with most of the boys attending class outside the academy as the clubs feels it keeps the boys grounded with life outside football (Sokolove, 2010). Classrooms within the academy are designed to allow the boys to complete homework or to study with the aid of on-site tutors.

The Dutch and Spanish model of football development provide for a holistic development of football. Technical ability is stressed and possession of the ball key to performance. Development programmes are structured from the age of 5 onwards. The smaller team

games in the younger age group encourage players to play with the football. According to Draper (2010), who interviewed Albert Capellas, Barcelona’s senior youth coordinator, in the younger age groups, the most important thing is to develop control of the ball, execute passing and understand the ‘total football’ style of play. Ajax FC use experienced coaches to develop their youth skills early in the development programme, using the TIPS model as the guiding principle (Brown, 2001). Technical skills, intelligence, personality and speed (TIPS) are developed from an early age.

Table 2: Outline of the youth structure in Europe

Youth system (age groups)	FC Barcelona	Ajax FC
Under 6 (4 players vs. 4 players)	✓	✓
Under 7 (4 players vs. 4 players)	✓	✓
Under 9 (7 players vs. 7 players)	✓	✓
Under 11 (11 players vs. 11 players)	✓	✓
Under 13 (11 players vs. 11 players)	✓	✓
Under 15 (11 players vs. 11 players)	✓	✓
Under 17 (11 players vs. 11 players)	✓	✓
Under 19 (11 players vs. 11 players)	✓	✓

Ajax FC sources: (De Heij, Vermeulen, & Teunter, 2006); (Kormelink & Severeens, 1997); (Ajax FC, 2010); (McCormick, 2010)

FC Barcelona Sources: (Alexanco, n.d.); (Draper, 2010); (FC Barcelona, 2010); (Jonsson, 2007)

Both FC Barcelona and Ajax FC have football development strategies. In the Barcelona model, there is a football development strategy which is prepared by the technical leaders of the football academy. This strategy for development concentrates upon the on-field performance of the players which focuses upon the technical, tactical and physical requirements of football. The use of experienced coaches at Ajax FC as a development strategy, allows the club to centre its resources on the development of the players, with the objective that the playing resources will increase the profile of the football club and enable them to earn significant amounts of money through transfer fees and/or marketing revenue (Brown, 2001).

Alignment with the professional team is important for player progression through the development system into the first team. It is apparent at both football clubs that player progression into the first team is encouraged. At Ajax FC, players are developed with the aim of progression into the first team and potentially to be sold off for a substantial amount to a top European team (Sokolove, 2010). Barcelona FC meanwhile, progress players through the system with the objective that they will play and enhance the first team's capability to remain and the fore of the Spanish and European competitions. The development of the players requires financial investment, which affords the clubs the opportunity to employ full time coaches, sports scientists, educators, administrators and also provide world class facilities to develop the talent.

Table 3: Academy alignment with the professional team and academy Budgets

	FC Barcelona	Ajax FC
Is the academy structure aligned with that of the professional entity?	✓	✓
Does the football academy have a budget?	✓ (+- € 6 million)	✓ (€4.5 million)

Table 4: Brief overview of the academy and the graduates in 2010-2011 season

	FC Barcelona	Ajax FC
Teams	15	18
Players	290	180
Academy Employees	110	60
No of academy graduates in first team (2010-2011 season)	10	8

Ajax FC sources: (De Heij, Vermeulen, & Teunter, 2006); (De Reikegt, 2010); (Kormelink & Severeens, 1997); (Ajax FC, 2010); (McCormick, 2010)

FC Barcelona Sources: (Alexanco, n.d.); (Draper, 2010); (FC Barcelona, 2010); (Jonsson, 2007)

The number of graduates progressing from the academy system into the professional set-up highlights to importance of the football development, and nurturing players towards professional football. These graduates are an investment for the football club to realise both sporting and financial rewards.

5.1.1 Futbol Club Barcelona

Futbol Club Barcelona is a Spanish professional football club, based in Barcelona, Spain, that plays in La Liga (the Spanish Premier Football League). Founded as Foot-Ball Club Barcelona in 1899, FC Barcelona has progressed to become one of the most successful clubs in Spanish football in terms of overall trophies, having won 20 La Liga titles, a record 25 Spanish Cups, nine Spanish Super Cups, and two League Cups. They are also one of the most successful clubs in European football, having won 10 UEFA competitions (FC Barcelona, 2010).

Inaugurated in 1966, La Masia de Can Planes, often shortened to La Masia is the name given to FC Barcelona's training facilities located near the Camp Nou in the Les Corts district of Barcelona, and is often used to generically describe the youth academy of Barcelona (FC Barcelona, 2010). The youth academy of Barcelona has 290 young players, and has been praised since 2002 as one of the best academies in the world, and being a significant factor in FC Barcelona's European success as well as the Spanish national teams' success at the 2010 FIFA World Cup (FC Barcelona, 2010).

FC Barcelona's development philosophy is to develop a footballer, whilst not focusing upon the results in the process of development. Results being defined more along the lines of the on-field results associated with winning the junior football games. This is in stark contrast to most academies where a winning mentality is instilled almost immediately (Leeder, 2009). According to Alexanco (n.d.), director of youth programmes at Barcelona football academy and who was also a player in the professional ranks for 13 years, the aim of the academy is to develop a player both socially and intellectually along parallel lines to their football development (Alexanco, n.d.).

At the Barcelona football academy there are 15 boys' teams in their development section. Within the academy, each squad has two coaches and there are 23 or 24 players in each group, which is described as an ideal number. At least half of the coaches have a UEFA Pro Licence, essentially the most respected football coaching qualification. The academy has a budget of around €6 million per year (Alexanco, n.d.).

The football coaches are involved within the decision-making and strategy for the academy, but this is usually outlined by Jose Ramon Alexanco, and these take place as round-table discussions. At these meetings training schedules and programmes are discussed as the academy continuously strives to improve, learn and develop players who could one day represent the blue and red of the famous Barcelona football jersey. The technical leaders of the club prepare the guidelines for all the training sessions from these discussions and as such the strategic direction of the development systems is outlined and a vision created which all the development coaches can 'buy' into.

These technical sessions are not only about the players, but also about the coaches and staff of the academy. The club is always trying to improve the coaches, always learning to achieve higher standards. Through analysis, education and suggestions, the coaches are able to interact and learn from the round-table discussions which aid the knowledge process from the coaching staff down to the development players (Alexanco, n.d.). The knowledge, it would appear, is deeply rooted in the FC Barcelona coaching coordination mechanisms and routines. Such effective utilisation of the organisation's knowledge is the very basis of their competitive advantage (Rollo, 2002).

Players are trained the 'Barcelona way' which utilises the same system as the first team. All the youth teams operate the same formation as that of the professionals and, as such, the development teams reflect the personality of the first team. This allows the attractive attacking brand of football to be developed in the youth as they progress through the programme. This could be regarded as a slightly contentious issue within football development as it could be suggested that the system is teaching the players to play within one system; however the Barcelona model is an adaptation of the Dutch model of football development which strives for 'total' football. Total football strives to allow ball technique to be an essential component, allowing all players to be comfortable with the playing of the ball and thus positioning is almost regarded as irrelevant in that each player should feel comfortable playing in a number of positions

An aspect completely different to South Africa is that the grass-roots phase of the Barcelona football academy is spread across a geographical sphere of Catalonia with about 30 clubs

who participate within the technical confines of the academy system. This spreading out of the system allows talent scouts to identify young talent from the region and monitor their progress before reporting them to the football club for a placement in the development centre which is based at the training centre. Scouts form an important component in the development cog of the academy and they are trained about the development process twice a year. The club ensure that the scouts are aware of the standards that the football club has put in place (Alexanco, n.d.).

Barcelona's current first team squad contains an astonishing 10 players from its illustrious academy. This figure is staggering considering that the football club is in a fortunate position to be able to spend vast sums of money on purchasing talent from across the globe. The closest team that could compete with these figures at present would be Manchester United who currently has seven players from their academy within the first team squad. (Draper, 2010)

5.1.2 Amsterdamsche Football Club Ajax

Amsterdamsche Football Club Ajax is a professional football club from Amsterdam, Netherlands. The club is historically one of the three clubs that has dominated the Dutch national football league. The club is also particularly famous for its renowned youth programme that has produced many Dutch talents over the years.

The Ajax youth academy, according to David Endt who is the first team logistics manager and who also occupies a sort of unofficial role as the club's historian, is where the heart of the club beats. "You can feel the atmosphere of what is Ajax. People from clubs around the world come to visit, and they always want to know, 'What is the secret?'" (Sokolove, 2010). De Toekomst is not where you come to hear a romantic view of sport. No one pretends that its business is other than what it is, a football talent factory (Sokolove, 2010).

When the boys start at the Ajax youth academy, they become attached to the ideal of Ajax, which has a senior team that attracts in 50 000-plus fans at its home games and still occupies a mythic place in world football because of the innovative style it established in the 1960s: a quick-passing, position-shifting offensive attack that became known as total

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football. 'Total football' is encouraged in the junior group, and it is only from the age of 16 that the technical, tactical and physical aspects are concentrated upon, which will equip the players with skills required to progress to the first team. Over time, though, the academy hardens them mentally as well as physically (Sokolove, 2010).

Sokolove (2010) went so far as to say that within the academy, the "little boys drink their tea out of Ajax cups; they sleep in Ajax pyjamas under Ajax blankets" (*para.4*) all dreaming of playing in the Eredivisie (Dutch first division). The Ajax brand has become synonymous with football development. Ajax treats its youth athletes like an investment or asset, and it profits by maximising each asset's talent and selling the asset to a bigger, richer club as the asset matures (McCormick, 2010). Youth sport is a billion dollar business, and the youth academy at Ajax is run like a business, with its approach to business influencing its approach to youth development (McCormick, 2010).

At Ajax the players all live within a 35-mile radius of Amsterdam (some of them have moved into the area to attend the academy). Ajax operates a fleet of 20 buses to pick up the boys halfway through their school day and employs 15 teachers to tutor them when they arrive at the academy. Parents pay nothing except a nominal insurance fee of €12 a year, and the club covers the rest: salaries for 24 coaches travel to tournaments, uniforms and gear for the players and all other costs associated with running a vast facility. (Sokolove, 2010).

Ajax uses scouts who scour for potential talent. These young players are then invited to the academy and enter into their development system (McCormick, 2010).

5.1.3 Learning points for South Africa on how football academies outperform their competitors?

Great footballing academies produce great players, highlighted by the impact of both Holland and Spain at this year's FIFA World Cup. The message is clear that through great football academies, great players are produced and great teams (both club and national) are formed (Tigani, 2010). In the modern football world, where money affords clubs the financial muscle to purchase players, perhaps with the many developed talents from FC Barcelona and Ajax

FC, contesting the final the focus may shift back to the role of football development (Tigani, 2010).

The following table identifies the key resources, competencies and capabilities of a football academy which allows FC Barcelona and Ajax FC to outperform their competitors in football development.

Table 5: Key resources, competencies and capabilities

Area	FC Barcelona	Ajax FC
Coaching structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2 coaches are allocated to each team. ✓ 2 coordinators are assigned to each team. ✓ Cross-over of coaches enables the coaches to learn from each other and gain knowledge about players progressing through the academy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2 coaches are allocated to each team. ✓ Knowledge sharing is key as the academy teams play the same formations as that of the professional team, meaning that coaches are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience.
Qualification of coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At least half of the coaches have a UEFA Pro Licence. (This qualification is the same as that required to coach in the professional leagues.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coaches are all Koninklijke Nederlandse Voetbalbond (KNVB) qualified. Being KNVB (Dutch football association) accredited means that all the coaches are aware of what standards are expected, whilst the Dutch football association are able to monitor the coaches' progress. ✓ Minimum level of requirement (preliminary B qualification to coach at youth level).
Coach education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coach education is a continuous process. Knowledge sharing is a key competence. ✓ Round-table discussion with coaches aids knowledge sharing and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coach education is continuous process.
Not results driven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The club develops the player and is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Age related development process

	<p>not looking for results. “We try to develop the footballer and the person, both socially and intellectually” (Alexanco, n.d.)</p> <p>✓ The Barcelona theory - superior technical skill comes victory.</p>	
Academy squad size	<p>✓ Limited to 23 or 24 players in each age group</p>	<p>✓ Limited to 23 or 24 players in each age group.</p>
Regional talent recruitment	<p>✓ The focus is on players who reside within Catalonia.</p>	<p>✓ The focus is on players with talent, who reside within the Amsterdam region.</p>
Scouting system	<p>✓ Barcelona currently employs 25 scouts who scour Catalonia for talent.</p> <p>✓ Scouts are trained twice a year on the standard, technical capability and quality expected of the young player.</p>	<p>✓ +- 60 scouts (some of these individuals are volunteers).</p>
Brand	<p>✓ FC Barcelona Brand (the Barcelona heritage and culture of producing quality player). “Whatever the age, when the kids arrive they know they have an opportunity to evolve not only as footballers but also as people.” (Alexanco, n.d.)</p>	<p>✓ Ajax FC has a reputation as a football brand for producing talent</p>
Football culture	<p>✓ Shared value system of producing talent for the first team.</p>	<p>✓ Shared value system of producing talent for the first team which could be sold to European team for economic gains.</p>
Involvement of the national federation	<p>✓ Key involvement of the Spanish Football Association.</p>	<p>✓ Youth development is the joint responsibility of the football association and the football club.</p>

Ajax FC sources: Ajax FC sources: (De Heij, Vermeulen, & Teunter, 2006); (De Reikegt, 2010); (Kormelink & Severeens, 1997); (Ajax FC, 2010); (McCormick, 2010)

FC Barcelona Sources: (Alexanco, n.d.); (Draper, 2010); (FC Barcelona, 2010); (Jonsson, 2007)

5.1.4 What basket of talent/skills enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable?

The following table outlines the basket of skills and talent that have been identified as key across both the FC Barcelona and Ajax FC football academies.

Table 6: The basket of talent/skills which enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable.

Area	FC Barcelona	Ajax FC
Knowledge	✓ Knowledge transfer is imperative within the academy.	✓ Knowledge transfer is important.
Holistic Development	✓ Development not just in football, but also physically, mentally and socially	✓ Development includes aspects other than just football
Coaching structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2 coaches are allocated to each team (6 players per coach). ✓ 2 coordinators are assigned to each team. ✓ Cross-over of coaches enables the coaches to learn from each other and gain knowledge about players progressing through the academy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2 coaches are allocated to each team. ✓ Passive knowledge sharing is important as the academy teams play the same formations as that of the professional team, meaning that coaches are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience.
Sports Science	✓ Key sports specific programmes are employed in developing the physical and nutritional aspects of player development	✓ Key sports specific programmes are employed in developing the physical and nutritional aspects of player development
Coach assessments	✓ Coaches are continuously assessed, which allows for the creation of a learning environment	✓ Coaches are continuously assessed, which allows for the creation of a learning environment

Ajax FC sources: Ajax FC sources: (De Heij, Vermeulen, & Teunter, 2006); (De Reikegt, 2010); (Kormelink & Severeens, 1997); (Ajax FC, 2010); (McCormick, 2010)

FC Barcelona Sources: (Alexanco, n.d.); (Draper, 2010); (FC Barcelona, 2010); (Jonsson, 2007)

5.1.5 What strategic aspects/systems are employed within the academy set-up to outperform the industry rivals?

The following table outlines the strategic aspects employed in the FC Barcelona and Ajax FC academy model.

Table 7: The strategic aspects employed in FC Barcelona and Ajax FC

Competitive strategy	FC Barcelona	Ajax FC
Links with the professional team	✓ Strong link with the first team.	✓ Strong link with the first team.
Leadership	✓ Leadership (vision from the top passed down to the coaches). A long-term vision for football development has been adopted.	✓ Strong leadership whom understand the long-term vision for football development.
Structure	✓ Process structure. Players are encouraged to learn through activity; coaches through the knowledge sharing environment which has been created.	✓ Process (not results) orientated programme aimed as movement of players through a development system
Training sessions	✓ 6 training sessions per week (1 game). Session duration of 2 hours	✓ 6 training sessions per week (1 or 2 games).
Qualified Coaches	✓ At least half of the coaches have a UEFA Pro Licence. (This qualification is the same as that required to coach in the professional leagues.)	✓ Coaches are all KNVB qualified. Being KNVB accredited means that all the coaches are aware of what standards are expected, whilst the Dutch football association are able to monitor the coaches' progress. ✓ Minimum level of requirement (preliminary B qualification to coach at youth level).
Coach education	✓ Coaches are encouraged to develop progress	✓ Coaches are encouraged to develop progress and advance their qualifications. Preliminary B licence, UEFA A and A courses are stressed as integral in coaching development.

Ajax FC sources: Ajax FC sources: (De Heij, Vermeulen, & Teunter, 2006); (De Reikegt, 2010); (Kormelink & Severeens, 1997); (Ajax FC, 2010); (McCormick, 2010)

FC Barcelona Sources: (Alexanco, n.d.); (Draper, 2010); (FC Barcelona, 2010); (Jonsson, 2007)

5.2 The South African football academy context

All of the responding football clubs are part of the Premier Soccer league, with two of the academies (Bidvest Wits and SuperSport United) having an affiliation with an international football club. The group of football clubs that participated in the research have a development programme that is currently in operation. The responding clubs have different age groups which they focus on in their academies, as highlighted in the table below.

Table 8: Outline of the youth structure in South Africa

Age groups	Santos FC	Bidvest Wits	Moroka Swallows	SuperSport United
Under 10	✓		✓	
Under 11	✓		✓	
Under 13	✓	✓	✓	✓ *
Under 15	✓	✓	✓	✓ *
Under 17	✓	✓	✓	✓
Development Reserve Team	✓	✓	✓	✓

Sources: (Crowie, 2010); (Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)

*The under 13 and 15 teams at SuperSport United are part of their community outreach programme and have been adopted by Attridgeville Football Club. These teams play at the Attridgeville grounds under the SuperSport Banner.

Table 9: Facilities in the South African academies

Facilities	Santos FC	Bidvest Wits	Moroka Swallows	SuperSport United
Training pitches	✓	✓	✓	✓
Playing grounds	✓	✓	✓	✓
Change rooms	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gymnasium		✓		✓
Parking	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cafeteria	✓	✓		✓

Residence for players	✓	✓		✓
Classrooms		✓		

Sources: (Crowie, 2010); (Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)

Well-developed and sport-specific facilities and equipment, which allow the football players to train and improve their skill base, are vital for the youth talent to progress. The above table highlights the current facilities that each of the youth academy structures currently maintains. It is interesting to note that only Bidvest Wits and SuperSport United have a gymnasium for their development squads, whilst only Bidvest Wits has classroom facilities onsite as their academy base.

5.3 Formulating a framework for a ‘winning’ model through research

In unpacking the four researched academies the following aspects will be researched in attempting to unpack whether an academy holds a sustainable competitive advantage and formulating a framework for a winning mode for development:

- ✓ Coach qualifications and quality of coaching in development structures
- ✓ The size of the academy (teams, players, staff)
- ✓ Player development pathways

Table 10: Academy alignment with the professional team and academy Budgets in S.A

	Santos FC	Bidvest Wits	Moroka Swallows	SuperSport United
Is the structure aligned with that of the professional entity?	✓	✓		✓
Does the football academy have a budget?	✓ (+ R 3 million)	✓ (+ R 3.2 million)	✓	✓ (R4 million)

Table 11: Brief overview of the academy and the graduates in 2010-2011 season in S.A

No of academy Teams	23	4	9	2
Players	400	83	145	38
Academy Employees (Coaches,	13	14		10

Sports scientist, physiotherapist management, Admin)				
No of academy graduates in first team squad (2010-2011 season)	5	11	9	10

Sources: (Crowie, 2010); (Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)

The above table gives a brief over view of the academy system in South Africa. It is apparent that SuperSport United, Bidvest Wits and Moroka Swallows have produced a similar amount of graduates into the first team squad. These are the players who have developed through the system and are currently under contract with the respective club during the 2010/11 season. This view would support the notion that a smaller base is beneficial in comparison to Santos FC who focus upon the quantity at academy level with the objective to develop from a larger player base.

5.3.1 Santos Football Club

Introduction to the football club

Santos Football Club, or simply Santos, is a professional South African football club based in Lansdowne, Cape Town. Established in Heideveld on the Cape Flats in 1982, it currently participates in the Premier Soccer League. The nickname of the 'people's team' reflects the affection their fan base has for the club, and the fan base comes mainly from the Cape Flats area. Achieving success on the football field and providing opportunities for talented youngsters is the primary reason for the football club's existence. (Engen Santos, The People's PSL Team, 2010)

Santos FC appears to have a holistic focus towards player development and an increasing the talent base (at the grass-roots level). The ultimate aim of the academy is to promote players into the PSL team. By increasing the talent base, the football club has a good number of players who develop through their academy. According to Crowie (2010), Santos FC currently has 23 teams with approximately 400 boys enrolled within their academy, making it one of the largest football academies in South Africa. The academy averages 17.3 players per coach at the development centre. In addition to the academy, Santos has

invested in a social outreach programme within the local community, aimed at expanding the football brand into the community, whilst also expanding the talent baseline.

Santos FC has numerous facilities at their base in Cape Town. The football club has acquired a building, which they have developed into their academy residence, and from which the players are developed both on and off the football field. In addition to football training, the club provides the academy players with an education through a partnership with a local school. Each academy team has a dedicated coach for the team and an assigned manager which looks after the team's dealings such as transport, player registrations and team management. This role is fairly diverse and is often assigned to a parent. As the teams progress through the academy, so the role of the manager becomes more important in dealing with player issues, and as such the under-17 and under-19 teams have an assigned manager who is employed by the football club.

The academy relies on the skills of certain members of the first team, who double-up on activities and roles where possible, to provide coaching, physiotherapy and sports science knowledge to relevant coaches or players. The first team coach gets involved in the training sessions with the higher age groups in particular. In addition to the involvement of the professional coaches, the professional management team often sit down with the junior section and provide direction for the development of the players. These sessions provide advice, knowledge and direction for player development. Additionally, these sessions provide the coaches with an opportunity to discuss the talent that could be given an opportunity to train with the professional team to gain experience whilst assessed according to their physical, technical and tactical ability. Essentially a player's readiness to represent the football club is assessed at the professional training sessions. This aspect of knowledge transfer is important in providing insight into the direction the first team coach wishes to move the club.

Training and development of coaches is important to the football club with Crowie (2010) suggesting that the coaches are encouraged to further their understanding of the game through coaching courses and through experience. The turnover of coaches particularly at the lower levels is fairly high and this is mostly because coaches at this level are not

professional and are also working in other fields and as such football coaching is not always their primary focus.

The following table identifies the number of qualified coaches currently employed within the Santos football academy. The SAFA accredited coaching courses are a basic football course aimed to provide knowledge to coaches who wish to be involved in football. It is interesting to note that not all coaches within the development system currently have SAFA accreditation.

Table 12: Coaching qualifications at Santos FC academy

Football coaching qualifications	SAFA 0	SAFA 1	SAFA 2	SAFA 3	FUTUREPRO	UEFA B	UEFA PRO	OTHER
Coach(es)		3	4					1

There is a definite football strategy which is linked to that of the professional team. Crowie (2010) highlighted that the role of the academy was to produce players for the first team and thus alignment with the professional set-up was imperative. According to Duncan Crowie, head of the Santos football academy, there is a football development strategy aligned to that of the professional team. Crowie maintains that the first team have an important role to play in the development of the junior teams and that the success of the first team on the field determines the success of the development section. The branding of the football club and the on-field success are further strategic aspects (along with the competencies of the club) that provide for a competitive advantage within the local leagues (Crowie, 2010).

The role of the Santos football academy is to produce talented youth capable of playing in the PSL. Offloading these players remains an important aspect of the club in generating additional revenue is not the core focus; however there has been no sale of any academy graduates within the past few years. There is a defined budget for the football academy to work with during each financial year. The role of budgets and setting the financial value for the year ahead, takes into consideration what the academy director has outlined as his vision for the talent development during the forthcoming season. This budget, however, is

minimal in comparison to Europe and could be enhanced, which would provide the academy with greater resources.

Table 13: Player development pathways into the Santos first team

Player development pathways

	Academy squad size	Number of players progressed into first team	Percentage of players promoted
2010/11 Season	24	3	12.5%
2009/10 Season	26	2	7.6%
2008/09 Season	23	2	8.6%
2007/08 Season	22	2	9%

The table above identifies the academy squad quantities and the selection of players who have progressed into the respective first team within the selected seasons.

Table 14: Player sold in the past few season (Santos FC)

	Number of players progressed into first team	Number of academy players sold	Percentage of academy players sold
2010/11 Season	3	0	0%
2009/10 Season	2	0	0%
2008/09 Season	2	0	0%
2007/08 Season	2	0	0%

The table above identifies the academy squad players who have been sold within the selected seasons.

Player development pathways provide access to the first team. It is apparent that the strategy adopted by Santos appears to produce players capable of playing in the PSL. In the past few season, no sales of academy graduates has occurred, however the football academy has sold five players from the development programme since its inception, with the most high profile player being Nasief Morris (Crowie, 2010).

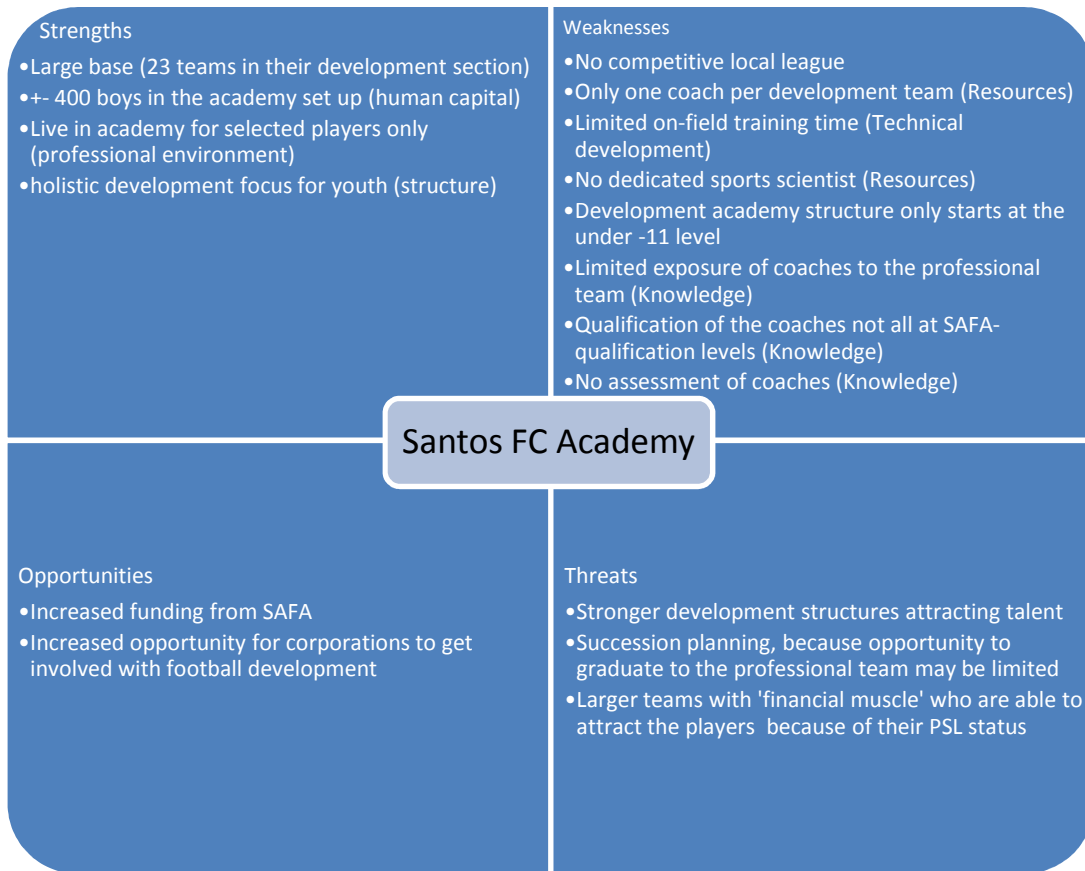


Figure 2: SWOT Analysis for Santos football academy

5.3.2 Bidvest Wits Football Club

Introduction

Wits University Football Club, known under their sponsored title as Bidvest Wits, is a South African football team founded in 1921. The team is nicknamed 'The Clever Boys' or 'The Students' because of the club's close affiliation with the University of The Witwatersrand. The club has its roots at Wits University in Johannesburg, where they play at the Bidvest Stadium on the West Campus at the University. The current training complex is located at Sturrock Park, where the playing fields are often regarded as the best playing surfaces in the country. The academy players reside in the newly-developed complex in close proximity to the training fields at Sturrock Park.

A fairly similar strategy to that of the FC Barcelona and Ajax FC model exists in the recruitment and residence of players, with the club focusing on the local players from the greater Johannesburg area (Barcelona and Ajax target players from their region). The idea behind focusing on the local region was that “we have enough local talent, at our feeder clubs, without having to look outside our geographic region” (Tinkler, 2010).

Talented players who reside outside of the outlined area are also invited to attend the academy, however the clubs feels that the support of the parents and thus the ability for the youngster to be able to go home at the weekend is of great importance and this is not possible with players from further away. Supporting the youth from the local region will increase the attractiveness of the club to its supporters. Furthermore, stimulating the youth by showing examples of players such as Rowen Fernandez, Josta Dladla, and Stanton Fredricks and who were scouted from the region that made it to professional football will increase the brand image of the football club as one which provides an opportunity for young talent to develop and emerge to the top of the local game.

Table 15: Coaching qualifications at Bidvest Wits FC academy

Football coaching qualifications	SAFA 0	SAFA 1	SAFA 2	SAFA 3	FUTUREPRO	UEFA B	UEFA PRO	OTHER
Coach(es)			4					1

Bidvest Wits football development strategy is less about quantity than that of Santos FC, but more about the quality of the players. Through identifying local talent, the football academy attempts to generate quality players that can be promoted through the football ranks and into the professional team as quickly as possible. Promoting these players along the development ‘pathway’ enables these players to rapidly become marketable assets to the football club (van Heerden, 2010). It would seem that the role of the Bidvest Wits football academy would thus be to produce talented youth capable of playing in the PSL and then offloading these players for a financial fee.

In discussion with Zac Van Heerden, exercise physiologist for the first team, he suggested that funding was put in place for football development at Bidvest Wits. This budget was very structured and provided Eric Tinkler, the Head of development, with the opportunity to invest in the youth. However, should a player be sold off to another PSL club prior to becoming a first team regular, the monies generated through transfer fees, etc. were not always reinvested back into the academy system. The monies generated were allocated to aspects of improving the first team through greater salary offerings, player transfer fees and improvement of the playing surfaces and stadium.

Table 16: Player development pathways into the Bidvest Wits first team

Player development pathways

	Academy squad size	Number of players progressed into first team	Percentage of players promoted
2010/11 Season	26	9	34.6%
2009/10 Season	24	2	8.3%

The table above identifies the academy squad quantities and the selection of players who have progressed into the respective first team within the selected seasons.

Table 17: Players sold in the past few season (Bidvest Wits FC)

	Number of players progressed into first team	Number of academy players sold	Percentage of academy players sold
2010/11 Season	9	1	11%
2009/10 Season	2	1	50%

The table above identifies the academy squad players who have been sold within the selected seasons.

Bidvest Wits ensure that the football club has complete and accurate information about the player (strengths and weaknesses and potential areas for technical progression) regularly and therefore knows when a talented player is ready for the first team. These elements are

assessed by both the academy director and the head coach of a particular age group. The benefit of this particular strategy means that there is no risk of selection of the players into the professional set up, in comparison with the mistakes as in the case with recruitment or player transfer.

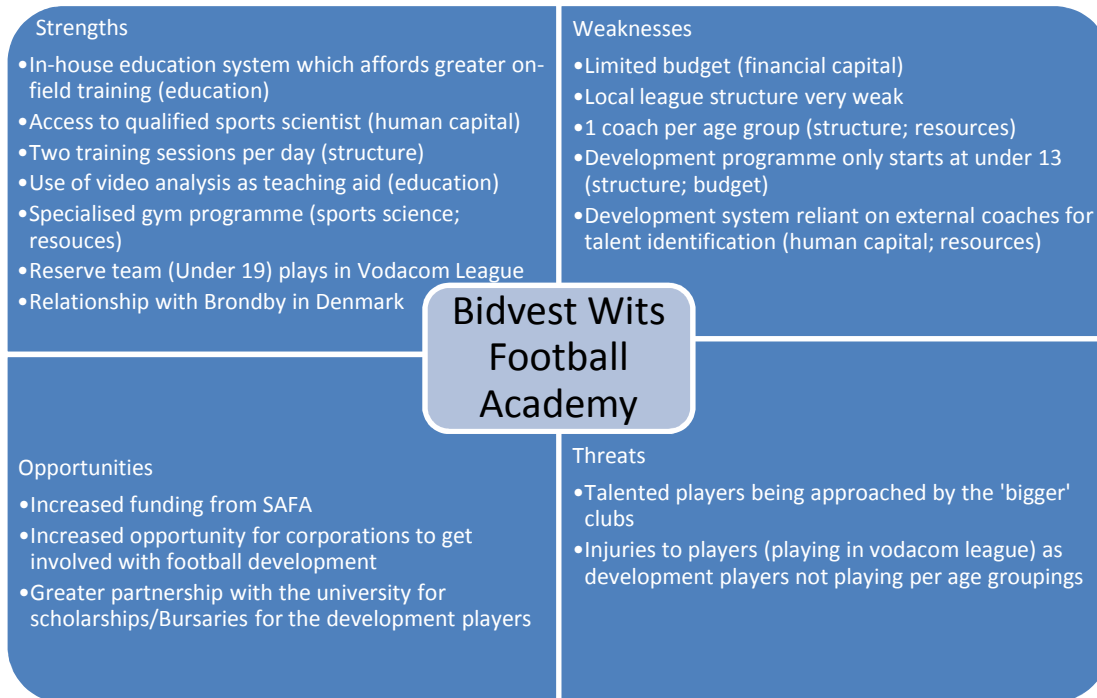


Figure 3: SWOT Analysis of Bidvest Wits football academy

5.3.3 Moroka Swallows Football Club

Moroka Swallows Football Club, or ‘the Dube Birds’, is a professional South African football club based in Soweto, Johannesburg. Formed in the 1940’s, the club became the first ever soccer team to register as a public company in 1971. The academy is a relatively new feature for the football club, who have been conducting trials in Soweto as the clubs attempts to enhance the role of football development and establish a formalised development centre, which will be able to support the first team.

A limited football development strategy was identified in the research of Moroko Swallows football academy. The recruitment of players focuses upon local players from the greater Johannesburg area as the academy does not have a residence in which to house players.

Each academy team has a dedicated coach for the team. The coaches assigned to each team are the ‘legends’ of the football club who have been brought back to the football club to promote and develop football within the local community and for the benefit of Moroko Swallows football club.

The role of the ‘legends’ has appeared to put a gulf between the players within the academy and those in the professional squad in terms of technical and physical ability. The players who “progress to the Swallow’s first team are technically, physically and tactically weaker in comparison to the other players recruited by the club” (Marques, 2010). The Moroko Swallows academy could benefit from involvement with the professional team as there appears to be an enormous gap between the playing capabilities of the players in their development system and the players in the professional set-up.

The following table identifies the number of qualified coaches currently employed within the Swallows academy. The SAFA accredited coaching courses are a basic football course aimed to provide knowledge to coaches who wish to be involved in football.

Table 18: Coaching qualifications at Moroka Swallows FC academy

	SAFA 0	SAFA 1	SAFA 2	SAFA 3	FUTUREPRO	UEFA B	UEFA PRO	OTHER
Coach(es)		3	1					

The Swallows football development strategy is less about quantity than that of Santos FC, but substantially more than those at SuperSport and Bidvest Wits. The academy attempts to generate quality players that can be promoted through the football ranks and into the professional team as quickly as possible. Promoting these players along the development ‘pathway’ enables these players to rapidly become marketable assets to the football club (van Heerden, 2010).

According to Marques (2010), Swallows currently has 9 teams with approximately 145 boys enrolled within their academy, making it one of the larger football academies in South Africa.

In addition to the academy, Swallows has invested in a social outreach programme within the local community, aimed at expanding the football brand into the community, whilst also expanding the talent baseline. By increasing the talent base, the football club has a good number of players who develop through their academy. The aim of the academy is to promote players into the PSL team.

Table 19: Player development pathways into the Moroka Swallows first team

	Academy squad size	Number of players progressed into first team	Percentage of players promoted
2010/11 Season	24	3	8.3%
2009/10 Season	25	3	4%
2008/09 Season	23	1	4.34%

The table above identifies the academy squad quantities and the selection of players who have progressed into the respective first team within the selected seasons.

Table 20: Players sold in the past few season (Swallows FC)

	Number of players progressed into first team	Number of academy players sold	Percentage of academy players sold
2010/11 Season	3	0	0%
2009/10 Season	3	0	0%
2008/09 Season	1	0	0%

The table above identifies the academy squad players who have been sold within the selected seasons.

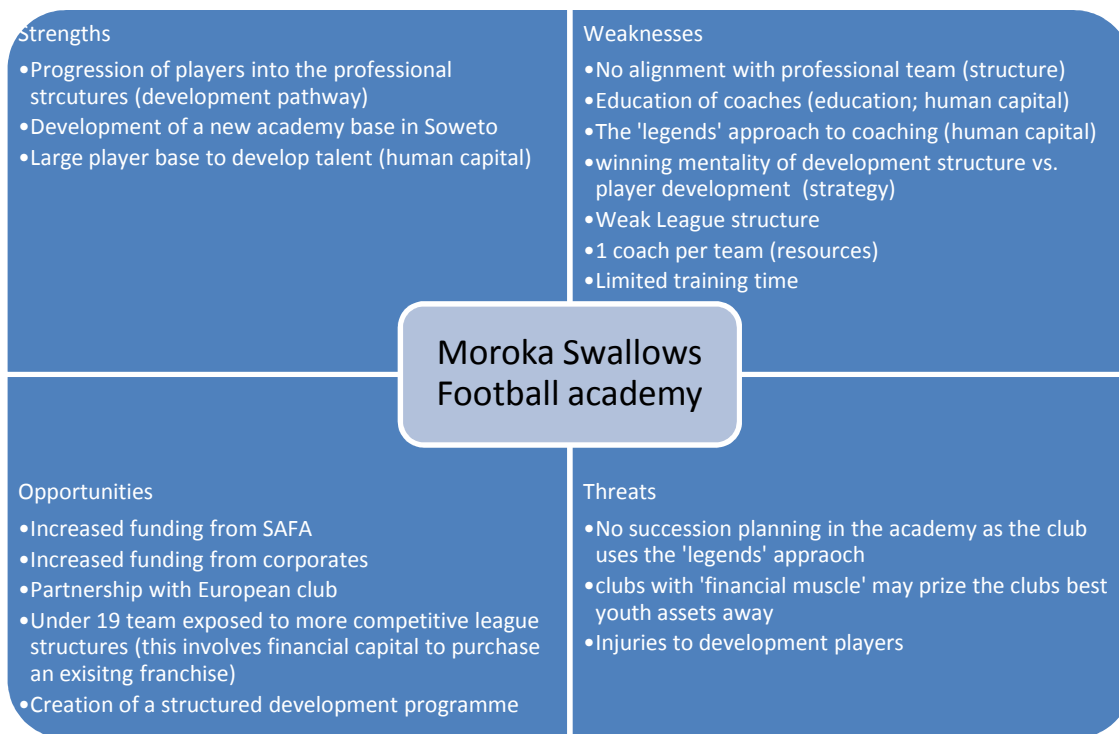


Figure 4: SWOT Analysis of Moroka Swallows football academy

5.3.4 SuperSport United

M-Net Television purchased Pretoria City FC in July 1994. The strategy behind the purchase of a soccer club by M-Net was to become involved with local soccer by buying a team which they could build into one of the better teams in the country. SuperSport United Football Club was the process of maximising brand awareness and applying sound commercial principles for the television corporation.

SuperSport United formed a partnership with Tottenham Hotspur Football club in England that enabled both football academies to work together. It represents a mutually beneficial partnership that would see both academies gain from the partnership in terms of coaching and player exchange (Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, 2010). The SuperSport Tottenham Hotspur Academy's (SSTHA) vision is to develop young South African talent to ultimately play in the PSL, in SAFA's development structures, and internationally.

The SSTHA houses the finest young talents from around the country. Young players are accommodated on a full board and lodging basis and all educational and life skills are covered in full by the SSTHA (Kopo, 2010). This housing of player’s gives SuperSport maximum control of its inputs through top class coaching, physical, social and educational objectives to achieve the club’s vision.

Table 21: Coaching qualifications at SuperSport FC academy

	SAFA 0	SAFA 1	SAFA 2	SAFA 3	FUTUREPRO	UEFA B	UEFA PRO	OTHER
Coach(es)		2	2					1

SuperSport United has a very similar strategy to that of Bidvest Wits Football Academy. Players are developed and promoted in the hope that they will have an impact within the local PSL and also abroad. SuperSport’s director of football, Stan Matthews, hopes that by 2012 “about half the first team squad would have come through our youth academy” (Greig, 2010). This will reduce costs for the club as they will pay far less in player fees than most clubs pay in today’s market, where football businesses often make big losses. With salary structures capped and the club not willing to break their policy, SuperSport’s excellent youth academy becomes priority number one for the club (Greig, 2010).

The club does try to generate sizable financial income on players through sales to the overseas market through local scouting networks. Kermit Erasmus and Kamohelo Mokotjo have both been developed within the SuperSport Academy and have graduated to play in Holland with two of the biggest teams namely Ajax FC and Feyenoord respectively. Tottenham invited SuperSport Academy midfielder Lyle Lakay for a trial at White Hart Lane to assess, whilst Bongani Khumalo, SuperSport’s club captain, has made such an impression on the White Hart Lane outfit that it has been reported that Tottenham Hotspur will pay a transfer fee of £1.7 million for him subject to Khumalo receiving a work permit to play in England.

The partnership with European teams enables the South African clubs to offer a direct route for players with talent to be exposed to European teams through training programmes and first rights for trial programmes. The strategy of player development and movement would appear to be a financially rewarding model, as the transfer fees paid by European teams are far superior to those that could be afforded by the local professional football clubs. The greater fees that are paid to the football club are invested into training and playing facilities, which help ensure that the academy remains at the forefront of football development in the country.

Table 22: Player development pathways into the SuperSport first team

	Academy squad size	Number of players progressed into first team	Percentage of players promoted
2010/11 Season	20	4	20%
2009/10 Season	18	3	16.6%
2008/09 Season	21	4	19.04%

The table above identifies the academy squad quantities and the selection of players who have progressed into the respective first team within the selected seasons.

Table 23: Players sold in the past few season (SuperSport FC)

	Number of players progressed into first team	Number of academy players sold	Percentage of academy players sold
2010/11 Season	4	1	25%
2009/10 Season	3	1	33.3%
2008/09 Season	4	0	0%

The table above identifies the academy squad players who have been sold within the selected seasons.

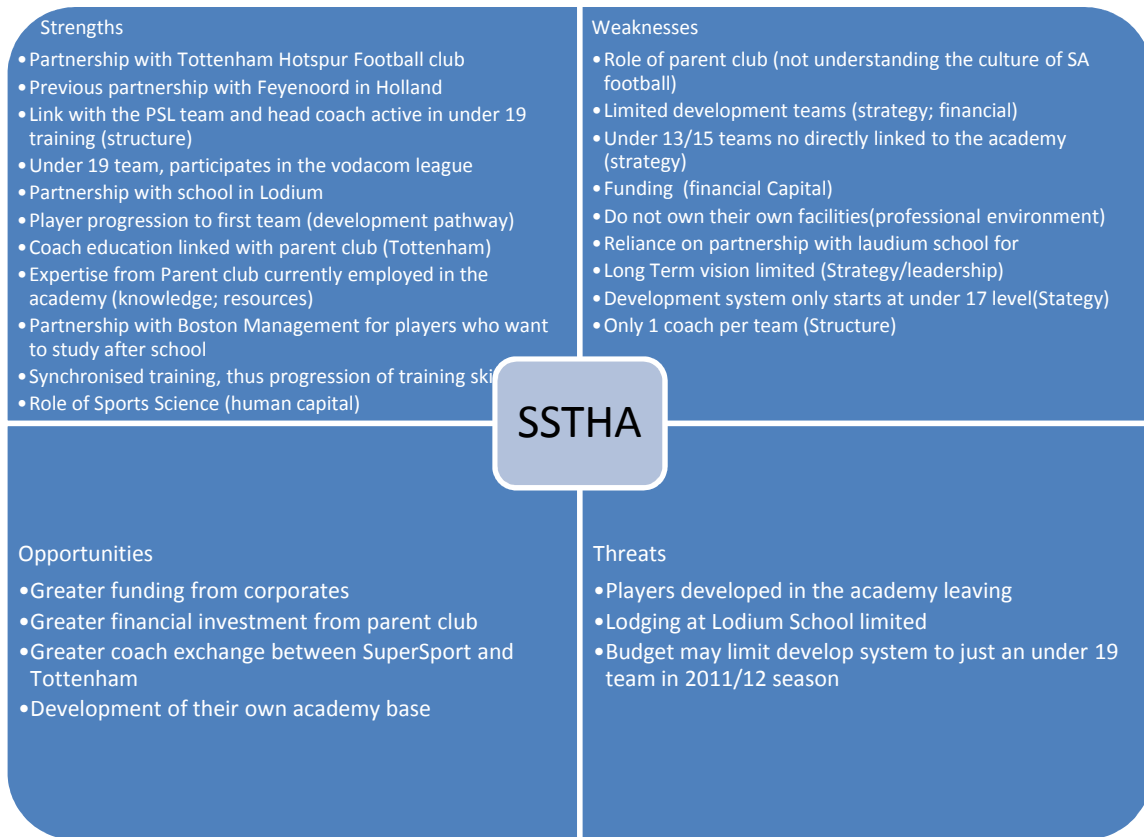


Figure 5: SWOT Analysis of SuperSport United football academy

5.4 Findings

In unpacking the research on the above football academies in South Africa, the following key components have been identified in attempting to outline whether a particular academy can outperform a competitor in the off-field business.

Table 24: Key resources, competencies and capabilities in the South African context

How do football academies outperform their competitors?

	Santos FC	Bidvest Wits	Moroka Swallows	SuperSport United
No. of players progressed to the first team	5	11	9	10
No. of development	0	1 (Tebogo Langerman to	0	1

players sold by the club		SuperSport United)		
No. of development players who have moved abroad.	0	1 (Noah Cohen)	0	1
No. of development players who have represented South Africa.	6	10	7	12
Strategy	Holistic player development, with the objective of producing players capable of playing in the PSL.	Developed through extensive research on numerous academies in England, Italy and South America.	To involve the community when the football club moves to Dobsonville.	Linked to Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, thus obtain directive from their development system. Aspects of previous partnership with Feyenoord remain.
Access to gym facilities	N/A	Individual and group gym session programmes have been developed.	N/A	Gym facilities are available at the school. Only the under-19 group has a dedicated gym programme.
Core stability programme	N/A	Programme individually tailored for each specific academy player.	N/A	

Sources: (Crowie, 2010); (Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)

*Only analysed past two seasons as the Bidvest Wits football academy has only been open since 2009, and thus only has data for the past two seasons.

Table 25: The basket of talent/skills which enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable in South Africa.

What basket of skills/talent enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable?

	Santos FC	Bidvest Wits	Moroko Swallows	SuperSport United
Qualified coaches	Coaches are all a minimum SAFA level 1 accredited.	Coaches are all a minimum SAFA level 2 accredited.	Not all the coaches are qualified. Some of the coaches have obtained their skills through their playing experience.	Coaches are all a minimum SAFA level 1 and 2 accredited with the under-19 coach also obtaining KNVB qualifications.
Education	Players are transported to schools on a daily basis. Club has partnership with local school.	Academy has an in-house teaching system. Allows more training time and reduces transportation costs.	No formal education system has been developed for the players within the academy.	Players are housed at the school, and attend school.
Number of coaches per age group	1 (2 in the under 11,13 section)	1	1	1
Coaching structure	Directives received from the first team and passed down to the youth system.	Process orientated with knowledge sharing encouraged. Cross over of coach per age group vital.	'winning mentality' vs. progressive development structure	Process orientated with knowledge sharing encouraged.

Sources: (Crowie, 2010); (Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)

Table 26: The strategic aspects employed in South African academies

What strategic aspects are employed within the academy set-up to outperform industry rivals?

	Santos FC	Bidvest Wits	Moroko Swallows	SuperSport United
Development of local links with	Links with local clubs in Cape	Links with local clubs in	n/a	Links with Balfour Park and

feeder clubs	Town	Johannesburg and surrounds		Schooling system in Pretoria
Leadership	Support development through financial investment.	Support development through financial investment. Support Long term vision of academy director.	Support development through financial investment	Support development through financial investment. Long term vision limited.
Creation of a learning environment	Knowledge passed down from the professional team into the academy.	Involvement of professional team coach in system, and knowledge sharing critical component in development academy.	Limited first team interaction, and knowledge sharing opportunities limited.	Involvement of professional team coach in system, and knowledge sharing critical component in development academy.
Age group	Under 10,11,13,15,17,19	Streamlined with Europe, i.e. Under 12,14,16,18 teams. (To aid performance against European opposition, and to ensure the youth get a full education as the development structures currently end at under-17.)	Under 10,11,13,15,17,19	Under 17, 19
Partnership with European team	n/a	Link with Brondby in Denmark	n/a	Link with Tottenham Hotspurs

Sources: (Crowie, 2010); (Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)

The strategic aspects employed across the academies are limited in comparison with those at FC Barcelona and Ajax FC.

5.5 Conclusion

South African academies appear to be lacking various assets, competencies and capabilities required to be competitive on an international level. What is noticed is that a number of strategic models are employed across the different academies, which highlights how the South African academies are pulling in differing directions that attempts to achieve their own goals and objectives. This is in comparison to that of Europe where the goals of the development of talent, is aligned to both club and country, with strategic direction and guidance provided by the relevant football association.

The results of the study are largely in agreement with certain aspects of what the literature and theory reviewed. Some of the respondents' answers did contradict popular views regarding the football development process, but overall what has become apparent is that each academy has differing ideas on how best to formulate their own strategy for football development.

Chapter 6

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research findings. The aim of the research was to gain a better understanding of the 'off field' business associated with football academies and identify a 'winning' model for a South African football academy that could create a sustainable competitive advantage over its industry rivals. Based on the lack of pertinent research, the need for consideration and then optimisation of the process of developing youngsters into elite athletes seems clear. The research attempts to empower administrators and management of football clubs in South Africa with the strategic knowledge to provide a sustainable and competitive academy through player identification and development, which can aid our national teams. Football teams operate in intensely competitive markets, where success and failure are scrutinised.

Eric Tinkler, ex-South African football player and head of the football academy at Bidvest Wits, pulls no punches when he says that there is little development in South African football. He is appalled at the current situation and feels South African football has slipped since 1996. The country is simply not producing enough quality players. "We are now applauding mediocrity and that simply is not good enough for a country with an abundance of talent" (Mokoena, 2010). "Football development in South Africa is in dire need of help" (van Heerden, 2010). There are "no structures in place" and "SAFA simply [has] no influence" as to what academies have put in place (Tinkler, 2010).

Football academies in South Africa are not functioning as well as what we expect in a country where there is an abundance of talent. According to Eric Tinkler, we need to focus on the future, and that future is the setting up of proper development structures to nurture talent (Mokoena, 2010). Tinkler states that there is talent in large quantities in South Africa (Mokoena, 2010), and that football development is a process that needs to be implemented, with a long-term vision of creating success for both the local and national teams.

6.2 Unpacking competitive advantage

The research pinpoints the role of dynamic resources as key to the competitive advantage of a football academy. These resources are the assets linked to the football academy and include the coaching structure and the immediate facilities attached to the club.

In sport, winning is everything. Because of the professionalism of sport and the fact that sport has now become an integral component in the entertainment industry, sporting success and/or failure have assumed greater focus in the public domain. When business managers talk about strategy to achieve a competitive advantage, the ultimate goal is to be apart from the competition. Winning in the market place is the objective. For sport managers, winning is the goal (Grant, Mckechnie, & Chinta, 2007). The 'winning' of a football academy outlined by both FC Barcelona and Ajax FC is the development of players into the professional system, through the provision of a development pathway.

Effective strategy in business is about being different, responding and reacting proactively. Strategy is imperative for achieving competitive advantage, and comes from doing things differently (Grant, Mckechnie, & Chinta, 2007). These include aspects of supporting creativity and innovation, promoting a cohesive culture, implementing measurable actions, and setting targets for success. Competitive strategy is the search for an advantageous position within the industry (Grant, Mckechnie, & Chinta, 2007).

6.3 The context of a football academy

The context of an organisation is the position with which the entity affords itself within the industry. The context is the association between the knowledge assets, resources, the core capabilities and the business strategy in the organisation's pursuit of a sustainable competitive advantage. Sport is a dynamic and fast-growing sector with globalisation, commercialisation and professionalisation requiring innovative investment and reconfiguration to meet the evolving sport and physical activity needs of the 21st century.

In unpacking Bohlke's model as outlined in Chapter 2 it would appear that the organisation's intrinsic strength and ability to develop its competencies independently of the outlined aspects have been given less consideration. These aspects do not only lie with the football

coaches but also with football environment in which the development system surrounds itself. In attempting to understand the objectives of the football academy, the intrinsic strengths need to be unpacked, whilst gaining a perspective on the context of the football academy is imperative in understanding the competitive nature of the industry.

According to Raina (2010), strategic competencies are increasingly difficult for top management in business to recognise, as they often misunderstand the environment, which is essentially the 'context' of the business. Understanding the context of a business is essential, because of the increasing levels of competitiveness, and the aim of organisations to create a footprint either locally or globally. What became evident in the discussion with all relevant personnel within the football academies was that the leadership of the football club seemed to play an integral role in the planning and vision of the academy; however the top management were not always "adequately aware" (Kopo, 2010) of the context within which the academy is positioned within the football industry and what is required to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.

The context of any football academy is the development of players. Ultimately producing players with talent provides any football club with a competitive advantage. Transforming these players into top football players that are able to generate economic profit for the football clubs is an integral part of the environment in which the academy is situated within the confines of the football club. Football academies are facilities or coaching programmes designed to produce talent. These programmes are an investment programme within a particular club structure that develops and nurtures talent with the vision of using these talented players to play in the first team (Kuijjer, 2007). The research, unpacked the following aspects which are integral in understanding the context for a football academy in South Africa:

- Identification of players with talent
- Development of local links
- Investment in human capital
- Buy in of leadership
- Education

- Provision of adequate facilities
- Creation of a learning environment
- Development pathways

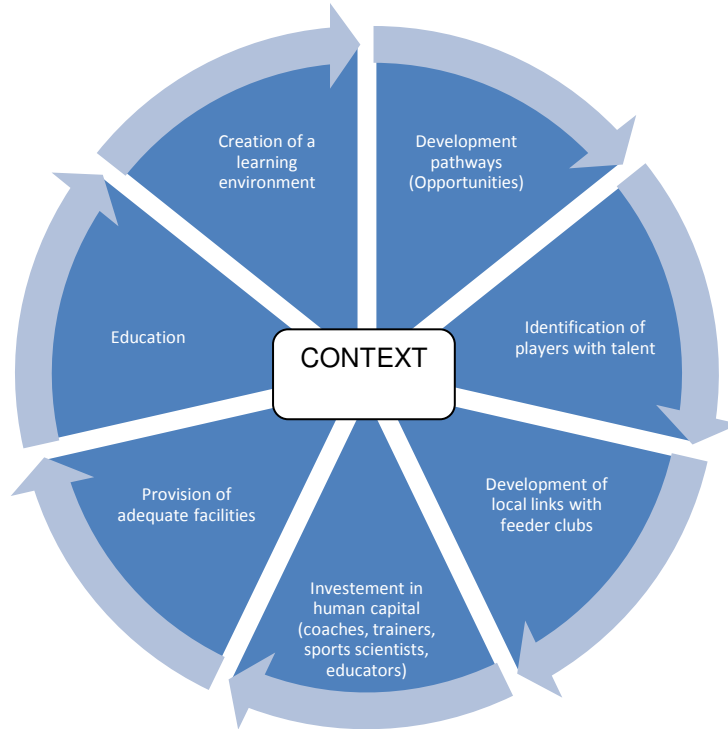


Figure 6: The context of a football academy

Sources: (Crowie, 2010); (Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)

- Identification of players with talent

At the foundation of successful development structures lies the successful selection of players who have the potential to impact the academy and, if developed effectively, will have a positive effect on the football club either through on-field performance or through financial measures should the player be sold. What became evident within the research was the influence that the football academy had in guiding the regional talents in a professional manner. The strategy adopted by Bidvest Wits is reflective of those strategies of Ajax FC and FC Barcelona that focus their talent identification networks to a “limited geographic parameter” (Tinkler, 2010). This allows for a more thorough system of regional talent to be

developed and easier implementation of programmes and structures. “Financially the local selection of players is important as transportation and relocation of the players is costly. Players are able to leave the academy at the weekend” (Tinkler, 2010) thus reducing the capital required to run the academy by housing players fulltime.

This strategy of talent identification is apparent at all the academies through yearly trials that are conducted. Moroka Swallows recently conducted trials in Soweto where “350 boys were trailed and assessed as to whether they had the necessary talent to represent the football club” (Marques, 2010). An aspect which South Africa could learn from Ajax FC or FC Barcelona would be the involvement of the scouting network, which has become an integral component in the academy system. Bidvest Wits do not employ a scout but “rely on our local partnerships with the amateur clubs in our region. In effect the coaches at these clubs become our eyes on the ground” (Tinkler, 2010). SuperSport has “one scout linked to the academy who also doubles up as the under thirteen coach” (Kopo, 2010). Santos FC utilise a scout to identify local talent that can then be assessed by the coaches at the academy.

Bidvest Wits, SuperSport and Santos FC have an alignment with the professional team, particularly in the under-19 section that provides a structure for the talent to be identified and developed. “We currently work very closely with Gavin Hunt from the professional team, who gets involved with our sessions at the under nineteen level” (Kopo, 2010) The role of the professional team and coach is an integral “component to a structure as the technical, physical and technical gap between the academy system and the PSL is vast” (Marques, 2010) not just at the clubs researched, but across the PSL. “We regularly meet with the professional set-up to discuss which players are coming through the development system and could make the grade in the professional set-up” (Crowie, 2010).

The Moroko Swallows academy could benefit from involvement with the professional team as there appears to be an enormous gap between the playing capabilities of the players in their development system and the players in the professional set-up. The players who “progress to the Swallow’s first team are technically, physically and tactically weaker in comparison to the other players recruited by the club” (Marques, 2010). This could be because of the club promoting a ‘legends’ approach to the coaching, where former players

are recruited into the development academy. This may point to a problem in the talent identification and development structures, but may also have an impact on the professional environment which should be created in an academy set-up.

- Development of local links with feeder clubs

The development of local links with regional clubs provides the academy structures with additional “eyes on the ground” (Tinkler, 2010). The role of the amateur coaches is imperative in spotting talent. “Amateur teams get compensated according to FIFA directive which stipulates a level four compensation” (Tinkler, 2010). This compensation package implemented by FIFA requires the professional set-up to pay a small fee to the feeder team should they provide the club with a player. This financial compensation sum is for their training and development to date of the talent.

Through local links with feeder clubs, the base level of the talent is greater, providing the coaches at the respective academies the opportunity to assess local talent on a far greater scale. Elite sport identified in Chapter 2, can be seen at the top level in the pyramid model of sport (Cousineau, 1998), with mass participation at the base representing a large number of people engaged in sport activities. This bottom tier of mass participation, which the amateur clubs represent, feeds the next level where serious sports competition is practised, and from which a few champions emerge and move to the top of the pyramid as a country’s best representatives at international games. Elite sport at the top of the pyramid benefits from having a large pool of grass-roots participants. The large pool of development players is evident at the Santos academy that currently has 400 boys within their development system. According to Crowie (2010) Santos currently have one of the largest academy set ups in South Africa as they attempt to identify talent who are capable of playing in the PSL.

- Investment in human capital

Continuing business model innovation through knowledge and human capital processes provides a parallel way to outperform competition (Mitchell & Coles, 2003). When management improves a club’s business model by redirecting its focus, some competitors will continue to follow the old direction. Others will be overwhelmed and confused by the approach and will neither react to the old or new business models. In any case, this is

exactly where a club wants its competitors be, out of position, and unable to respond effectively to the strategic shift in the direction of another academy or football club.

The coaches at the various South African academies have differing baskets of skills and qualifications, most of these skills were gained from playing the game of football either at an amateur level or within the professional structures in South Africa. Often these skills may be vary tactical, as evidenced at Moroko Swallows, where the ‘legends’ (previous players) are “employed to coach the development teams” (Marques, 2010). The tactical skills that these ‘legends’ possess, however, did not appear to be adequately transferred down to the development players resulting in the players that progress through the system being technically and tactically “weak” (Marques, 2010).

Eric Tinkler of Bidvest Wits highlighted that the coaches play an integral role in the development process of the youth. In essence, development extends beyond the talented youth to sports administrators, officials and coaches. While the primary roles of these individuals may be to administrate, officiate or coach, the importance of their own personal development as well as the continued management and learning from global developments of the sporting code should be clearly understood. As the Dutch and Spanish academies can testify, coaches should continue striving to progress in their coaching careers, and develop a sound knowledge base of the developing aspects of football throughout the world.

The pedigree of the coaches at Ajax FC, several of them are former players for the powerful Dutch national team, signifies quality (Sokolove, 2010). The Ajax FC coaches need to be at the fore of football development, aware of the latest trends and development aspects that may impact on the football club. In addition, these coaches need to have attended the KNVB training and obtained the necessary skills to coach at the development level. Ajax FC is a fulcrum of the worldwide football market, exporting top players to the world’s best clubs, because they take very young players and shape them (Sokolove, 2010). With the increasing globalisation of the sport, which has driven the best players to richer leagues in England, Germany, Italy and Spain, the club has become a different kind of enterprise, a talent factory. It manufactures players and then sells them, often for immense fees, on the world market. “All modern ideas on how to develop youngsters begin with Ajax” (Sokolove, 94

2010), and the role of the coach becomes an integral cog in their youth academy remaining competitive.

The qualified Dutch football coaches are also evaluated each year as to the impact that they make on the junior teams and also on their ability to transfer knowledge. This is vital as evaluation leads to greater learning, which will undoubtedly influence the academy. This evaluation process is regarded as a positive measure within the football club. No evaluation of any coaches in the South African academies takes place.

Effective utilisation of organisation knowledge is the very basis of competitive advantage (Rollo, 2002). Thus coaches should not only be evaluated, but should be encouraged to learn. Tinkler (2010) states that “I always hear people complaining about the players. I don’t think the players are to be blamed for the poor state of affairs of our football development” Tinkler further suggested that “The problem is the level of coaches, as they don’t know what they are supposed to do. Nobody is telling them what to do” (Moholoa, 2010). “The SAFA accredited coaching courses are not at the standard of the European levels” (Kopo, 2010) and our “development structures are at a disadvantage in comparison to those in Europe” (Kopo, 2010) as the understanding of coaching and development of a player is limited. Coaches in South Africa are not adequately encouraged to develop their skills base and as such our “coaching levels are extremely poor” (Marques, 2010). According to Kopo (2010) “SuperSport encourage their coaches to progress their skills and the partnership with Tottenham Hotspur has afforded the academy coaches to gain access to knowledge and coaching systems that could benefit the development process”.

Probably the most important reason of focusing on training is a financial one. The “quality of the academy determines the number of players that will make it towards becoming a professional player” (van Heerden, 2010). So, a high quality academy increases the number of own players in the first team and consequently decreases the costs of recruiting players. The quality of your academy is therefore not only important for the sporting results, but also for the financial results (Kuijjer, 2007).

According to Kuijer (2007), who studied aspects of Dutch football development, training in football is a typical example of on-the-job training. Youth players get trained in normal situations that occur in football, using the actual tools, equipment and materials that they will also use when fully trained. The kind of training now will not differ a lot from the professional situation that they will find themselves in should they graduate to the professional ranks (Kuijer, 2007). Training provides a clear signal to the current workforce that the organisation offers opportunities for advancement. In addition, the internal training provides the players with grounding on the organisation's policies and customs (Gomez-Mejia, Balkin & Cardy 2001). SuperSport United and Bidvest Wits streamline their structures to play in a similar manner to that of the professional entity. This set-up provides for a "total football" (Kopo, 2010) approach where the players are acutely aware of what aspects of their game need to be improved and developed to progress to the next level in the production pipeline.

According to Marques (2010), first team coach of Moroko Swallows, "a significant gap appears between the development players and those within the first team". This transfer of technical skills is imperative in allowing a development player to learn and grow within the game of football. According to Marques (2010), the players who progressed into the first team were not up to the technical, tactical and physical level expected within the PSL. This lack of the necessary skills requires that a lot of dedicated time and resources are spent to try and build these players to an optional level to compete in the professional leagues. The football academy can boast a number of players who have progressed into the professional structures, but very few of these players actually progress onto the playing field in the first eleven. "The football world is a hard world", that requires a lot of dedicated time and resources to develop the talent (Sokolove, 2010).

As Dumitru (2006) highlighted, football administrators are not aware that local players are a staggering 60% to 70% below the standards recorded at the level of major international competition in the most crucial aspect of performance football – technical capability.

- 'Buy in' of leadership

All stakeholders need to be acutely aware that the process of football development and creating effective, sustainable and competitive structures will undoubtedly be a long and

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bumpy road; however wisdom, courage, patience and a vision for long-term success should be encouraged. The country is filled with an abundance of talent and with sustained effort, intelligent vision, the implementation of a structured system of talent development and the correct utilisation of resources; South African football will develop and compete on an international stage. Kopo (2010) outlined that “the long term vision within South African football is a huge issue”. The clubs seek “financial rewards immediately and the coaching structures and systems are set up to reward those that achieve success in terms of winning on the field rather than in terms of producing talent for the benefit of their respective football club” (Kopo, 2010).

In discussion with Kopo (2010) at SuperSport, he intimated that the club has a directive from the top and that all the stakeholders of the football club were aware that football development is a lengthy process, however this vision often gets impaired and thus the numerous processes to produce products that are capable of playing in the PSL or indeed in Europe gets somewhat derailed. Duncan Crowie of Santos FC maintains that “football development is a lengthy process” (Crowie, 2010), which involves numerous processes to produce the products that are able to represent the football club in the PSL. Marques (2010), highlighted the importance of management in the development of the academy, and that the “football academy should become and the ‘heart beat’ of the football club”. The role of leadership at the football clubs was identified as integral within the academy, however only Bidvest Wits and SuperSport United appear to have a directive from the senior executives with regards to football development within their clubs.

A case in point regarding development and the importance of stakeholder’s investment is that of Manchester City, when the club reached the low ebbs of the third division of football. According to Jim Cassell, academy director of Manchester City “normally you would expect the money for the youth development to become tight”, however, “the board took a view that if we were going to get ourselves out of trouble we were going to do it ourselves” Slater, 2007). That was a massive vote of confidence in the academy, which resulted in 15 of the 27 players in the first team eventually making the dramatic leap back up into the English Premiership. In addition to these, the club has about seven or eight players out on loan in the championship (Slater, 2007). The football academy, according to Cassell, has never

been thought of as a separate entity. The development system belongs to the club and to everyone involved within the structures (Slater, 2007).

- Education

Education remains an integral component within an academy system. Only Bidvest Wits have classroom facilities onsite for the education of their players. The classroom facility was an area of debate for the Wits academy; however it was deemed an integral component. With the classroom being onsite, the academy coaches have greater access to the players during the day, and also gym programmes and special conditioning programmes can be implemented during the course of the day, without disrupting classroom time. The onsite time factor and the costs of transportation needed to transport the players to and from a local school has been removed which are positive aspects for the academy.

SuperSport United has a partnership with a school in Laudium who provide a certain number of beds for the players, in return for these players being enrolled in the school, and also the football club utilising the school grounds as training facilities. Santos FC have a partnership with a local school, and the players are transported from the Santos academy to the school daily. A strategic educational move from Bidvest Wits has been to change the age grouping in their academy, not only to streamline with those development centres in Europe, but also to ensure that players who enter the system are able to gain a full education, prior to either being signed by Bidvest Wits or being released from the academy. Not only football aspects, but the completing of schooling is an integral objective of the club.

- Provision of adequate facilities

The academy systems researched all contain the necessary facilities to provide a talent development programme. Bidvest Wits and SuperSport United provide access to a gymnasium for their development squads. “We believe that access to a gym is imperative in strengthening the player” (Tinkler, 2010). It must be remembered that a number of the development players come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and thus strength and core stability are key to improving the on field performance of the youth” (Tinkler, 2010). Only Bidvest Wits has classroom facilities onsite at their academy base.

The classroom facility was an area of debate for the Wits academy, however it was deemed an integral component, because with the classroom being onsite, “the academy coaches are able to have greater access to the players during the day” (Tinkler, 2010), and also “gym programmes and special conditioning programmes can be implemented during the course of the day without disrupting the classroom time” (Tinkler, 2010). In addition to the onsite time factor, reducing the costs of player transportation to a local school has been removed from the budgeting process.

SuperSport United are the only academy that do not have a set base for their academy. Currently the development structures have a partnership with a school in Laudium (Pretoria), which provides the academy with beds, meals and training facilities.

- Creation of a learning environment

Training was defined as the activity leading to skilled behaviour. It refers to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies as a result of the teaching of vocational or practical skills and knowledge that relates to specific useful skills (Kuijjer, 2007). The provision of training is not costless. Within the researched academies, each academy team had a full-time coach who would focus on the technical, tactical and physical skills and aspects of the individual players and for the preparation of the specific team. This is in contrast to the European teams, where they enrol between two and four coaches to look after a development team. These additional coaches enable the youth to gain greater access to the source of knowledge and to obtain greater learning’s through a more personal approach. This individualised attention enhances the players’ performance, ability and development, whilst they become acutely aware of the culture at the club, the values, goals and objectives.

The following table highlights the role of the coach versus the amount of players.

Table 27: Number of coaches and the amount of players within the academy.

Learning environment	Players	Coaches	Average players per coach
FC Barcelona	290	32	9 players per coach
Ajax FC	240	34	7.05 players per coach

Santos FC	400	23	17.3 per coach
Bidvest Wits	83	5	16.6 per coach
Moroka Swallows	145	6	24.16 per coach
SuperSport United	38	2	19 per coach

Sources: (Crowie, 2010); (Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)

The South African football academies appear to coach a greater amount of players in comparison to the both FC Barcelona and Ajax FC. The smaller the group of players a coach has, the more time he is able to invest in the players and consequently it allows the players a more individualised attention to technical development. This is particularly important in the younger age groups.

Determining whether training is a good investment therefore requires measuring the training's potential revenues and costs. It would appear that the players involved within the academy structure at SuperSport United have benefited from the investment made by the club, Tottenham Hotspur and previously Feyenoord into their academy. This strategy within the academy has been to "develop and guide young talented players towards becoming fully capable professionals for the first team" (Kopo, 2010). The investment into the club has afforded the club to produce a number of graduates into the professional system, whilst there have been a handful of players who have been trialled and signed by European team's. This strategy of Bidvest Wits is very similar to that of Ajax FC. Its youth academy plays the most important role in determining the goals and values. When selecting the players for the first team, the goal is to have at least 50% of players from their own youth academy. These players are familiar with the Dutch language, the Dutch football culture and more specifically the culture of Ajax FC (Kuijjer, 2007).

Developing players to play in the demanding premier league, involves rigorous development structures, thought-out processes and a long-term vision of producing talented individuals for the professional team. Essentially the role of the football coach is to build up the assets of individual players. An aspect that was particularly disturbing within the South African context was that a vast amount of coaches, who were employed by the football academy, those had

not gone through the relevant training and were not adequately skilled and prepared to coach these development squads. Improving the level and quality of coaching is an important area of focus for football development in this country. This is in contrast to Ajax FC or FC Barcelona, where the coaches are seen as an integral component of the academy process. The coaches provide a core competence to the success of the academy through leadership, specialist knowledge and people and performance management. These coaches are encouraged to develop their knowledge and skills, and to engage with other coaches to enhance their understanding of the game.

- Development pathways (opportunities)

The athlete development pathway provides an opportunity for players to develop to the professional game; however it was only two academies, namely the Bidvest Wits model and the SuperSport United model that appeared more organised to support player development. Moroko Swallows can vouch for producing a number of players from their academy system for the professional football league, however after discussions with the first team coaches, it would appear that “these players are not up to the required levels” (Marques, 2010). “They certainly have talent, but these talents need to be nurtured further, an aspect which should have been conducted in the academy system” (Marques, 2010).

Bidvest Wits and SuperSport United currently have a licence for a Vodacom League side. Both these teams use this system for a development team which “allows the players with talent the opportunity to play at a higher level” (Tinkler, 2010) than the current under-19 league structures, thus improving the players’ skill levels, but also allowing the coaches to monitor their progress. As from the 2009/2010 season, SuperSport withdrew their under-19 team from the local leagues as “the standard of play within that particular regional league was very poor” (Kopo, 2010). In addition to this, the Bidvest Wits Bid boys (under-19/development team) play against the first team weekly, as a yardstick for both the coach of the professional set-up and the development team coach. This further provides an opportunity for the development players to assess themselves against the players who are immediately above them in the ‘pecking’ order.

As the research indicates, an extensive club infrastructure is important for athlete development, and the development pathway would be enhanced through directive structures which provide a pathway for the development of talent. Those interviewed did feel strongly that the “training and delivery of the complete package of services (Sports science, diet, coaching and environment) to the developing athletes” (van Heerden, 2010) was an important contributor to success. The existence of a clear development strategy would thus need to be employed across an academy to ensure consistent progress and process.

6.3.1 How do football academies outperform their competitors?

Outperforming competitors ‘off’ the football field is essential for a football academy. This ability to outperform an opponent is dependant upon a number of key strategic inputs which were identified in the research. These inputs include:

- Combination of knowledge and resources to produce players (effective coaching and development of players). Player progression into the first team or sold for economic gains.
- Allow knowledge to flow within the organisation (get buy-in from the professional set-up and get involvement of the coaches and specialists to assist with the development programme)
- Innovation
- People and performance management (Missing in South African academies)
- Specialist knowledge (Sports Science)

A high quality academy increases the number of its own players in its club’s first team and consequently decreases the costs of recruiting players. The most important disadvantage of training is the risk of losing a trained player to a competitor. In all the researched football academies, the most talented players of the youth academy are offered contracts, which bind them to the club for a certain period of time. If another club wishes to buy this player, they have to pay a certain amount of money, which would include financial compensation as a reimbursement for the training costs.

In any corporate entity or football development strategy, you need a vision. The Ajax FC vision is to continue to be the “most successful football academy” (Ajax Cape Town Youth Academy, n.d.). Managing change and upholding a vision requires total commitment from management, leadership and those directly influencing the talent development.

We know that a long-term focus is required to become an expert (Bloom, 1985) but what seems less clear is the nature of this focus throughout development. A long-term project requires effective coordination of resources (van Heerden, 2010) and once operationalised, these long-term goals must direct and integrate a wide variety of important factors to ensure processes are effective in helping our youngsters achieve their long-term potential. Such a clear system would provide a philosophy that coherently drives the aims and practices of talent identification and development, the coaching process, funding, resources, evaluation, coach reward, competition and club structure. This complex process and the number of people and factors involved in coherent practice require systematic planning and implementation in a number of areas.

6.3.2 What basket of talent/skills enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable?

The following talent/skills have been identified as being important in the creation of SCA:

- Qualified coaches
- Education
- Coaching structure
- Knowledge

In the modern football industry in which sustainable competitive advantage is imperative, a coordinated cluster of competencies is required by those individuals involved with a football academy. It is the cluster of competencies that permit an organisation to provide products or services which enable the organisation to compete both locally and enhance their footing on a global level. It is the vision for the future of the development players, and the goals of converting a young talented trainee into a top class footballer who can perform on the

football fields of South Africa and have the potential to graduate onto a global level. As Ajax FC outlined, investing in guiding and training talented players is critical for the development of the football club. Skilful trainers with lots of training and football experience are attracted to guide the players. These trainers must be perfectly capable to develop the techniques, tactics, physical and mental aspect of the football.

According to Noakes (2006), South African coaches remain ignorant of the modern realities of what it takes to be a coach of the highest quality and to have an impact on a development system. In contrast, the view that appears apparent in South African academies, according to Jim Cassell, the boss of Manchester City's thriving academy, is that a stable team of coaches and the board's faith in them is vital for a successful youth system. You need real consistency in terms of staff; this is crucial to the success (Slater, 2007). Consistency seems to be lacking in South Africa, particularly at the junior levels where the coaches are not permanent, and combine their coaching tasks with that of a different full-time job. The coaching thus becomes a part-time component. It is only the older age groups that have full-time coaches, but in discussion with these coaches, the money that they receive is minimal to what they could generate for themselves outside of the football industry. It is the lure of professional football, personal pride and the opportunity to remain in the game that keeps these coaches within the academy structure.

The role of the coaches at both Ajax FC and FC Barcelona highlight the importance of a centralised approach to knowledge transfer (Rollo, 2002), where the coaches interact with each other at round-table discussions, where learning's and experiences are able to advance coaching ability and transfer capability to the players. The resource-based view implies that knowledge is the most important strategic asset that an organisation possesses (Rollo, 2002), and that because of the ever-changing competitive environments, organisations must assume highly competitive settings where learning and knowledge sharing and transfer should be a fundamental competency.

According to Rollo (2002), for knowledge to make a difference within a competitive environment it must be grounded within the organisation's strategic context. This implies that the centralised approach adopted by both FC Barcelona and Ajax FC provide insight into the

importance of aligning the strategic direction of the club with the resources and dynamic capabilities that the club possesses. Companies such as Cisco Systems, Ford Motors, British Telecoms and Rolls-Royce are constantly being advised that to remain competitive they must efficiently and effectively create, locate, capture and share their organisations knowledge and expertise and have the ability to bring that knowledge to impact the potential areas of limitations or opportunities (Rollo, 2002).

6.3.3 What strategic aspects/systems are employed within the academy set-up to outperform the industry rivals?

- Understand the context of the football industry and the role of the academy.
- Knowledge must be grounded within the strategic context of the academy.
- Creation of a learning environment.
- Leadership is responsible for setting a vision and establishing the strategic direction of the academy.
- Partnerships with local organisations or international football clubs.

What is evident in the research is that the development of a new generation of players that could advance the game has become somewhat derailed by some incoherent football models which dominate the technical spectrum of South African football. The models employed by the researched group highlight that different strategic models are employed by the respective football clubs in the development of their current crop of footballers within South Africa and that these models have not been influenced by the South African Football Association. This is a very divergent model to that Football Association of England model, or those employed in Spain or Holland, where the football associations have played an integral role in the playing and supporting of the development systems.

The Dutch and the Spanish are known and recognised for their attractive style of play and for their talented youngsters. The advancement of the talented youth is by means of careful planning, strategic decision-making and a sound financial backing from the management at the top of the football club. Ajax FC's success would not be possible if it did not draw from a well-organised, well-financed development programme (Sokolove, 2010).

6.4 A 'winning' model for a South African academy

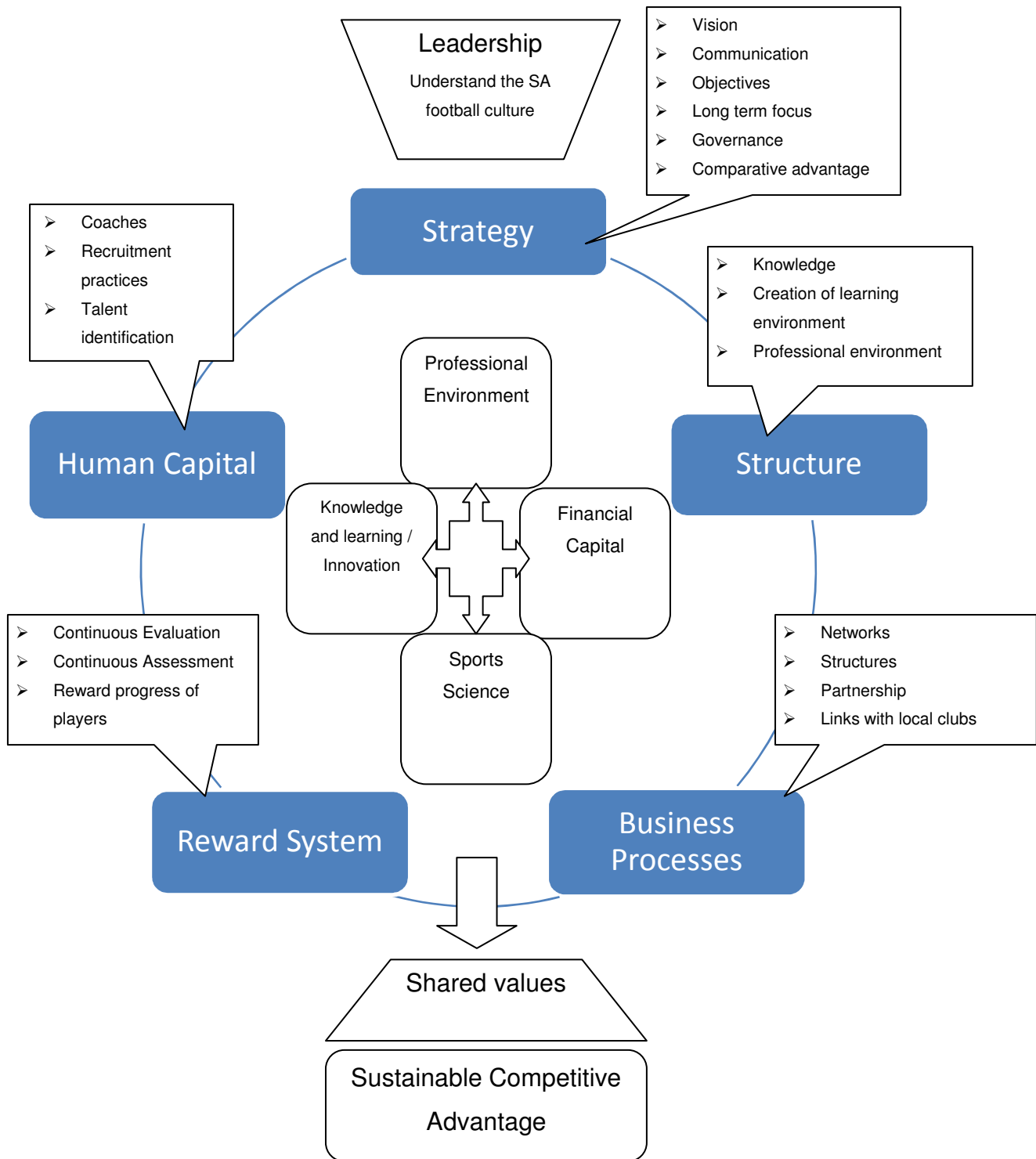


Figure 7: A 'winning' model for a South African football academy

6.4.1 Explanation of the model

Professional football clubs are investing in youth development. Developing young players may reap both sporting and financial rewards for the club, and as such the strategic inputs into the development academy are important in achieving the outlined objectives.

Development of successful football players through a production system will increase the profile of the team, and will raise potential of the club to earn money through potential marketing revenue of transfer fees. The model outlined is a continuous sphere of critical competencies and capabilities that are vital in developing a sustainable competitive advantage within South African football. These aspects should not be seen as a fixed set of static roles, rather that they should be regarded as a portfolio of dynamic processes.

Effective utilisation of resources, correct exploitation of the dynamic capabilities and continuous engagement in strategic renewal activities (Kuijer, 2007) should provide an organisation with a sustained competitive advantage.

Leadership

Good strategic leadership requires a clear and compelling vision and being able to communicate this vision (Jones & Hill, 2009) across the football academy. Strong leaders demonstrate commitment, motivation and have the ability to empower the valuable resources (Jones & Hill, 2009) within the football academy to grow and progress the vision, outlined goals and objective for football development. Understanding that a long term focus is required to become an expert (Bloom, 1985) is essential in the provision of a clear vision and the development of objectives for the academy. A long term vision of football which has been described as a potential area of concern will need to be adopted in providing the necessary structures for development.

Strategy

Strategy is about winning. Strategy involves choice. It involves the choice of the firm's scope (Porter, 1980) as well as the combination of its resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991; Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). It is ultimately about the choice of matching resource commitment with changing opportunities for gaining and sustaining competitive advantages (Ma, 1999). The existence of a clear development strategy would need to be employed across the academy to ensure consistent progress and process and the identification of a

shared value system. A long term strategy should be implemented. This strategy particularly in South Africa should strive to form a partnership with a European team. This will provide financial capital into the academy, provide access for player transfers to Europe, aid in coach education and will enhance the development systems as the parent club will also provide knowledge and direction which is lacking in the researched academies that do not have international links.

Structure

Structures and support systems allow athletes to develop their skills and abilities. The structure and the control systems help an organisation achieve its goals (Jones and Hill, 2009). Coaches, managers and personnel whom can aid or benefit the organization should also be considered within the development system employed within the football club. This would ensure that these personnel are at the fore of youth football, and perceptive to the latest trends and developments in football. Ensuring that the coaching units are progressive and determined to learn, will ensure that the club is aware of the latest models and systems which could aid in talent development.

Alignment with the professional team, particularly in the under nineteen section will provide a formalised structure for the talent to be identified and developed and assessed against those currently in the PSL. The creation of a development pathway which provides an opportunity for players to develop to the professional game is an essential component of the academy and vital to achieving a 'winning' strategy.

Business Processes

Ensuring a football academy is able to operate effectively and efficiently is through an outlined business process, tailored for the functional activities deemed essential to the football programme. This cross cutting function is vital in the delivery (Jones & Hill, 2009) of the development programme, and ensures that all units within the football academy are streamlined towards a common goal of player development. The process should promote a high quality programme aimed at the progression of talented individuals in the process of development both on and off the football field, ensuring that the youth players develop not just as players but as education people who are socially and intellectually astute.

Evaluation and Reward system

Coaches should not only be evaluated, but should be encouraged to learn. Evaluation of the coaches creates a progressive learning environment, where cross cutting themes of activities and skills may be identified, which will aid in the development system. It is imperative that on the field 'winning' at all costs is not the outlined objective, and that coaches should put their personal agenda's on the side in the pursuit of the common developmental goals. Rather technical, tactical and physical skills should be repeatedly enhanced to promote and develop football players capable of playing in the PSL and overseas. 'Winning' should be seen as the result of producing a graduate from the academy system into the professional team.

Human Capital

Human capital is the most valuable and important resource in the soccer industry (Kuijer, 2007). Continuing business model innovation through knowledge and human capital processes provides a parallel way to outperform competition (Mitchell & Coles, 2003). Coaches play an integral role in the development process of the youth. As evident in Europe, qualified coaches should be critical; a further input could include coaching resources who have skills such as a Physical Education degree/diploma. These individuals should have a sound understanding of sport and physical development, and could enhance the football skills through other sporting channels than merely kicking a football (An example could be the importance of spatial awareness that may be taught through dance). In addition these graduates are acutely aware of the importance of training and sports science and could provide valuable input into the development programme.

Central to the model and cutting across the football academy are the following:

Creation of a professional environment

"Young players benefit from a structured and coherent development approach" (van Heerden, 2010). Football clubs should provide an internal performance environment that both maintains and attracts the necessary talent that if developed in a coherent and progressive manner will benefit the senior team. The creation of an appropriate environment

provides the strategic context for the value creation activities within the football academy. Well-developed and sport specific facilities which allow the footballers the opportunity to train and improve in their chosen sport is important. Aspects for consideration should include the a gymnasium, all weather training pitch, a swimming pool for injury recuperation and players recovery, and residence for players.

Sport's Science

Managing the football development assets through an aggressive application of sports science is imperative. Sports Science is a very under utilised skill in the football development system in South Africa. According to van Heerden (2010) football coaches in South Africa do not necessarily buy into the concepts of sports science. Football is the most widely played sport in South Africa, with its traditional base in the black community. As evident in the research the majority of the development players within the academy systems originate from poor surroundings, and thus are poorly developed, lacking aspects such as core stability and strength. This lack of pertinent qualities required to be a professional football player, stresses the importance for sports science on the progression of the physical and nutritional aspects of the youth player.

Ajax FC keeps a detailed dossier on each player from the moment he enters the youth academy. (Sokolove, 2010) Diet suggestions are made and special exercise programs are started. This professional environment is lacking at an academy such as Moroko Swallows, however it is a strategy that has been adopted by Bidvest Wits and Supersport, through the role of their exercise physiologist who plays an active role in the development of the players. According to Zac Van Heerden, 2010, Sports Science is a relatively new area of speciality in football development in South Africa, and is slowly being introduced as a means of enhancing the performance of the youth in their development and progression towards the professional ranks.

Financial Capital

Capital invested into the development programme is vital in achieving the goals and objectives of the development programme. A return of capital invested is determined by the strategies adopted (Jones & Hill, 2009) by the football academy. The reluctance to embrace

and devote resources such as capital and training has stunted the growth of South Africa football. Capital investment is imperative in the ability of the football academy to not only attract the best talent, but also to attract the best resources capable of developing the youth into profitable assets in the professional industry. This capital invested should enable all the academy staff to be employed on a 'full time' basis, whilst all the academy players should be catered for in-house. Further capital investment into infrastructure is vital to ensuring that South African football developed along similar lines to the rest of the world. Creation of partnerships with European teams or organisations may negate some of the financial capital considerations.

Knowledge and learning

Knowledge is imperative in providing a competitive advantage for a football academy. Through improving relationships with the professional team, the knowledge of 'what it takes' should to be transcended through the academy system and the coaches. Round table discussion on football development matters should be conducted regularly to ensure that knowledge gained is knowledge shared. In addition cross unit (team) learning should occur, in which coaches should be aware of the talent immediately above and below in the development system. Through cross unit learning, coaches are able to provide valuable input and advice to the team coach, whilst also learning and developing themselves as a coach through interaction and observation of training sessions of football games.

The identified competencies and capabilities of the 'winning' model are essential in the development of a competitive football academy. These competencies will need to be tailored for each football club, taking into consideration the culture of South African football and the football club as a 'development' brand; no two clubs are alike, either as a result of financial capital or the resources that are employed. This model provides insight into the key aspects which once implemented with support from the leadership of the football club, should enable the football academy to gain a sustainable competitive advantage over industry rivals.

Innovation

In many ways innovation is the source of competitive advantage, as innovation can improve quality, reduce costs. All coaching staff should be innovative and respond to the changing

environmental conditions both on and off the field. Innovation may include changing or developing aspects that will enhance player development. This innovation is not solely dependant on the human capital within the academy, but also the executives. Financial capital as evident in the research appears to be a constraint in the development process, thus innovation could be key to generating a greater financial investment.

6.4 Conclusion

A youth academy attempts to provide a high number of talented players with an opportunity towards becoming a professional soccer player either for the local league or to be sold onto a European club. Through focusing on the youth players and their development, instead of using recruitment as the main way of strengthening your human capital has a couple of advantages for the local football academies. The development of academy players could thus be considered a viable prospect for the long-term sustainability of a football club and also that of the national team. Utilisation of the above model may provide an insight into a number of critical assets, competencies and capabilities that may influence football development.

Chapter 7

This chapter contains a summary of the conclusions obtained and measured against the objectives of the research. This chapter also includes areas for further research and gives recommendations for identifying a 'winning' football academy model for South Africa.

In unpacking the resource-based view on human capital, it became evident that key human resources can be sources of competitive advantage. The human capital of a firm and the complex interrelationships between a firm's human resources and its other resources are enormously valuable to the firm. Training and recruitment were identified as important practices in determining the strength of the human capital in a company.

Furthermore, having a training academy of exceptional quality can lead to international attention and appreciation. The example of Ajax FC illustrated that the ability to succeed in the development of talented players creates a positive and successful image of the football club. Ajax FC and FC Barcelona are recognised as being two of the best training organisations in the world of football. Creating a positive brand image through the production of the playing assets has positive financial consequences through sponsoring, marketing and potential sales. More importantly, because of this positive image, more talented players are willing to play for your club, leading to an even higher level of quality within a training academy.

Possibly the most important reason for focusing on training and development is financial capital. The quality of the academy determines the number of players that will make it to the professional leagues. A high quality academy increases the number of own players in the first team and consequently decreases the costs of recruiting players.

7.1.1 Football development in an academy structure

It appears evident in the research conducted that the following implications have impacted football development in South Africa. These are:

- Football continues to suffer from being an underprivileged sport, as outlined by (Charnas et al., 2006). Football has an incredible following in terms of participation but yet continues to suffer from small corporate sponsorships. An increase in sponsorship will afford academies the ability to invest greater funding into the development systems. Funding seems to be the constraint on a number of projects within the academy.
- Football needs advanced sports science information and input from industry experts. The role of sports science is under utilised in South Africa for a number of reasons. These include “coaches here don’t buy into the concepts of sports science, and if they do, it is only partially at best” (van Heerden, 2010). Furthermore, “a lack of budgeting and difficulty in gaining access to facilities such as gym or equipment are further reasons why sports science is underutilised” (van Heerden, 2010). The majority of our youth come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and as such the role of sports science in progressing the physical aspects of these talented players is vital. Core stability, strength and nutrition will remain an area of concern, as long as sports science is neglected.
- Improvement of coaches’ education is hugely important. Whilst talent is understood to be predominantly innate (Reilly et al., 2003), few would dispute that a soccer player’s development is also influenced by his experience of the professional environment. Current Bafana Bafana coach Pitso Mosimane could not have summed it up better: “Football development is not only about facilities. We need to respect the youth coaches and pay them good salaries” (Mokoena, 2010). Coaches play an integral role in the professional environment and are essential to producing talent.
- Progressive leadership is needed at club level to ensure that management is committed to technical improvements, and has an understanding that football development is a long-term investment.
- The academy needs to provide a more systematic process of progression from junior ranks into the senior (professional game) that involves the senior coaches and players in the club to better aid development.
- Knowledge is important in creating a sustainable competitive advantage. It is imperative that knowledge sharing is conducted across the academy, through coach

round-table discussions, observations, training and assessment of coaches and the systems employed.

7.1.2 Football development for SAFA

In discussion with the relevant football academies and unpacking the literature which highlights the active role of the Dutch and Spanish Football associations, the following could be considered by SAFA in attempting to improve football development in South Africa.

- Improvement of facilities, including the playing surfaces.
- Improvement into the technical sector of the South African Football Association, which oversees the development of the game in the country.
- South African should develop a high performance set-up in the country. The performance centre is a vital tool for improving and monitoring the performance standards, and also provides a functioning mechanism of converting national potential into talented football players who are able to cope and excel on an international stage.
- Increased participation in football is important. As highlighted earlier in the research, through increasing the grass-roots levels of football players, greater levels of talent discovery will occur.

7.2 Future research

- The research has focused upon the academies involved in the PSL. Further research could be conducted in the Mvela League and the Vodacom league to identify whether development systems are in place and whether these academies are competitive.
- Research could also be conducted on SAFA as to what strategic involvement they should be implementing (as evident in the Dutch and Spanish models, the respective football associations play an integral role in development at club level).
- Football in South Africa has been identified as the elite sport within this particular research. Further research could evolve into other sporting codes in their particular academies attempt to achieve SCA.

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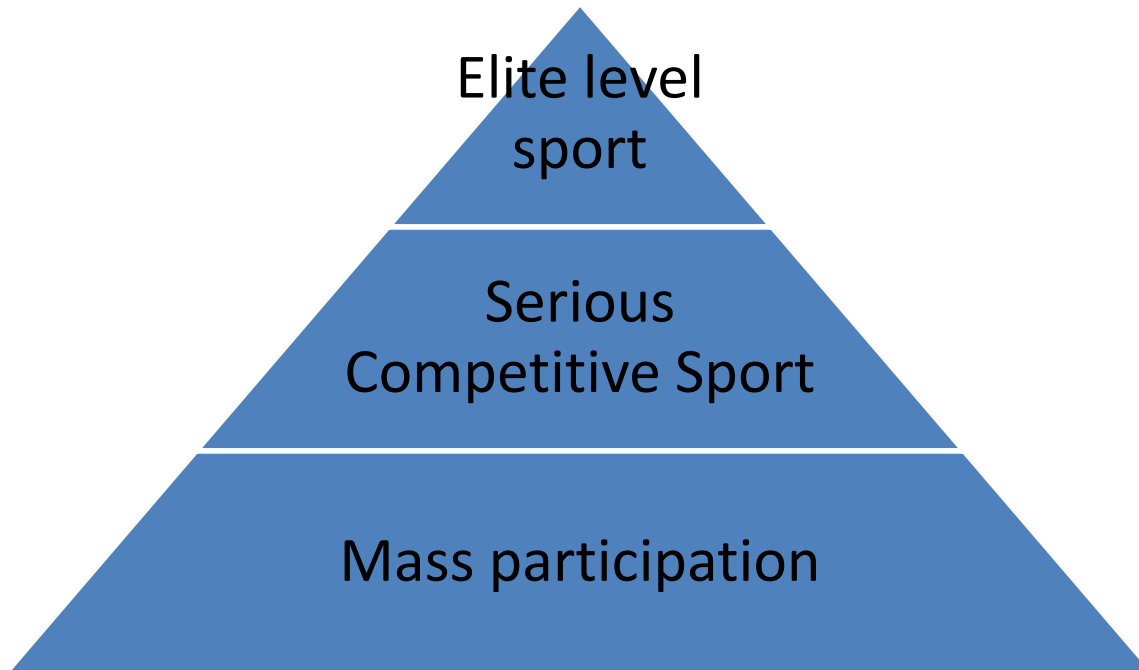
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Appendix 1

Top level in the pyramid model of sport (Cousineau, 1998)



Appendix 2 - List of figures

Figure 1: The adapted model of Porters 'five' forces

Figure 2: SWOT Analysis for Santos football academy

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Table 6: The basket of talent/skills which enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable.

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Table 24: Key resources, competencies and capabilities in the South African context

Table 25: The basket of talent/skills which enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable in South Africa.

Table 26: The strategic aspects employed in South African academies

Table 27: Number of coaches and the amount of players within the academy.

Appendix 4 – Research Guide

Academy Name:	
Person Interviewed:	
Date of Interview:	
Venue:	

1. Gain Understanding of the context of the Academy

- For how long has your development programme been in operation?

0 (less than 1 year)	1-3 years	3-6 years	7-9 years	10 years (or more)
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- Which of the following age groups does the academy cater for?
 - Under 11 years
 - Under 12 years
 - Under 13 years
 - Under 14 years
 - Under 15 years
 - Under 16 years
 - Under 17 years
 - Under 18 years
 - Under 19 years
 - 20 years or older

Approximately how many players do you have in the age groups that currently form part of your academy?

Age	Number of Development players
○ Under 11 years	
○ Under 12 years	
○ Under 13 years	



<input type="radio"/> Under 14 years	
<input type="radio"/> Under 15 years	
<input type="radio"/> Under 16 years	
<input type="radio"/> Under 17 years	
<input type="radio"/> Under 18 years	
<input type="radio"/> Under 19 years	
<input type="radio"/> 20 years or older	

Is the academy linked to any of the following?

Type of organisation	
Primary or secondary institution	
Tertiary institution	
International football federation	
National football federation (SAFA)	
Premier Soccer league Club	
International football club	
Other soccer club	
Business Organisations	
NPO's or charities	

Facilities at the Academy

	No	Yes
Training pitches		
Playing grounds		
Change rooms		
Parking		
Cafeteria/Tuck-shop		
Residence for players		
Residence for coaches/staff		

4. How do football academies outperform their competitors?

1. To what extent does your development programme provide a pathway forward in career progression into professional football?

2. Players that develop from your academy into a professional team?

3. Players developed from the academy that are sold 'off'
4. How many of your players in your development programme have been selected for the following teams within the last 5 years?

5. If your football development programme is linked to a professional club, is the academy structure aligned with that of the professional entity?

6. Does the academy have a formal budgeting process?

5. What basket of talent/skills enables an academy to be successful, competitive and sustainable?

1. Which of the following roles are active functions within your development programme?

Position	No	Yes	No. in position
Coach(es)			
Goalkeeper coach(es)			
Team Managers			
Support staff			
Physiotherapist			
Sports scientist/Exercise Physiologist			

Welfare worker			
Education officer/Teacher(s)			
Administrators			
Management			
Club Executives/representatives			
First team Coach (if academy linked to professional team)			
Club owners/leaders			

Qualification of coaches

	SAFA 0	SAFA 1	SAFA 2	SAFA 3	FUTUREPRO	UEFA B	UEFA PRO	OTHER
Coach(es)								

6. What strategic aspects/systems are employed within the academy set-up to outperform the industry rivals?

1. Is there a documented structure for your academy?
2. Has the model been adapted from a benchmarking component (i.e. using structures put into place in academies such as Ajax Amsterdam?)
3. Has your football development programme got a strategy?
4. If your football development programme is linked to a professional club, is the academy structure aligned with that of the professional entity?
5. Does the academy have a formal budgeting process?

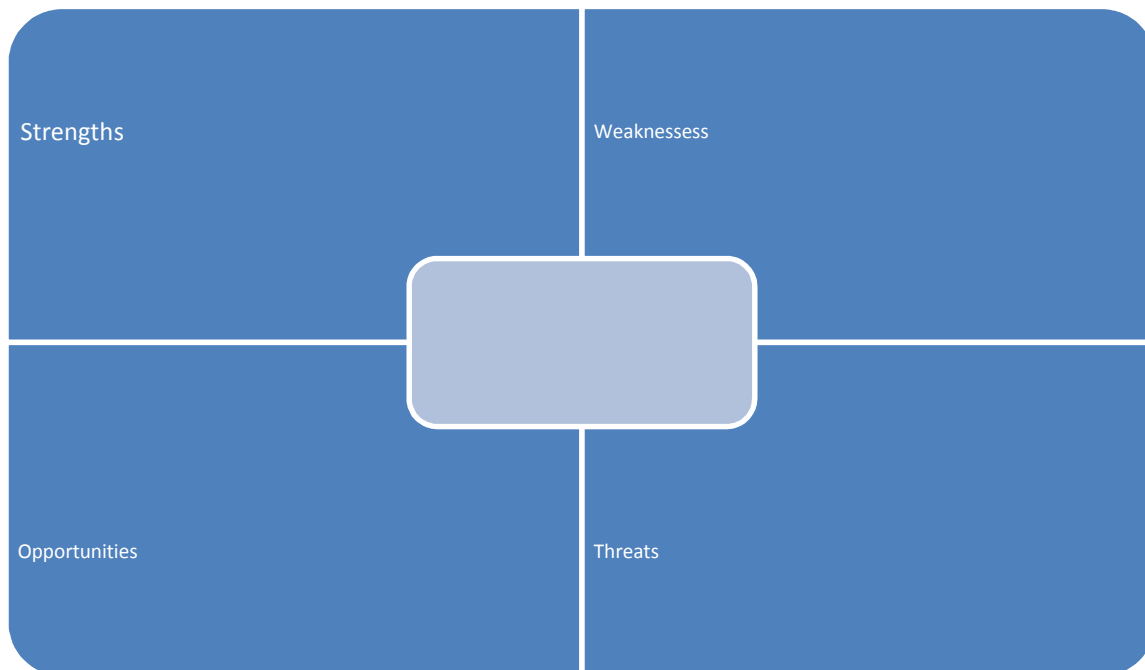
6. Does your academy have a formal talent identification structure for players?

7. Human Capital

8. The role of leadership

9. Business process (links with partners)

SWOT ANALYSIS



Comments:

Appendix 5 - Research Data

Area Specific	Quote
Identification of players with talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “limited geographic parameter” (Tinkler, 2010). • “component to a structure as the technical, physical and technical gap between the academy system and the PSL is vast” (Marques, 2010) • “progress to the Swallow’s first team are technically, physically and tactically weaker in comparison to the other players recruited by the club” (Marques, 2010). • “We regularly meet with the professional set-up to discuss which players are coming through the development system and could make the grade in the professional set-up” (Crowie, 2010). • According to Marques (2010), first team coach of Moroko Swallows, “a significant gap appears between the development players and those within the first team”.
Development of local links with feeder clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “rely on our local partnerships with the amateur clubs in our region. In effect the coaches at these clubs become our eyes on the ground” (Tinkler, 2010) • additional “eyes on the ground” (Tinkler, 2010) • “Amateur teams get compensated according to FIFA directive which stipulates a level four compensation” (Tinkler, 2010). • “we have enough local talent, at our feeder clubs, without having to look outside our geographic region” (Tinkler, 2010).
Investment of human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where “350 boys were trailed and assessed as to whether they had the necessary talent to represent the football club” (Marques, 2010). • “one scout linked to the academy who also doubles up as the under thirteen coach” • ‘legends’ (previous players) are “employed to coach the development teams” (Marques, 2010). • Eric Tinkler of Bidvest Wits highlighted that the coaches play an integral role in the development process of the youth. • Tinkler (2010) states that “I always hear people complaining about the players. I don’t think the players are to be blamed for the poor state of affairs of our football development” • “The SAFA accredited coaching courses are not at the standard of the European levels” (Kopo, 2010) • According to Kopo (2010) “SuperSport encourage their coaches to progress their skills and the

	<p>partnership with Tottenham Hotspur has afforded the academy coaches to gain access to knowledge and coaching systems that could benefit the development process”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Financially the local selection of players is important as transportation and relocation of the players is costly. • Players are able to leave the academy at the weekend” (Tinkler, 2010) • “The problem is the level of coaches, as they don’t know what they are supposed to do. Nobody is telling them what to do” (Moholoa, 2010).
Adequate facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • . “We believe that access to a gym is imperative in strengthening the player” (Tinkler, 2010). • It must be remembered that a number of the development players come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and thus strength and core stability are key to improving the on field performance of the youth” (Tinkler, 2010). • , “the academy coaches are able to have greater access to the players during the day” (Tinkler, 2010) • “gym programmes and special conditioning programmes can be implemented during the course of the day without disrupting the classroom time” (Tinkler, 2010). • “training and delivery of the complete package of services (Sports science, diet, coaching and environment) to the developing athletes” (van Heerden, 2010) was an important contributor to success. • According to van Heerden (2010) football coaches in South Africa do not necessarily buy into the concepts of sports science.
Learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tinkler (2010) states that “I always hear people complaining about the players. I don’t think the players are to be blamed for the poor state of affairs of our football development” • “The SAFA accredited coaching courses are not at the standard of the European levels” (Kopo, 2010) • “development structures are at a disadvantage in comparison to those in Europe” (Kopo, 2010) • “total football” (Kopo, 2010) • “develop and guide young talented players towards becoming fully capable professionals for the first

<p>Development pathway</p>	<p>team” (Kopo, 2010).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We currently work very closely with Gavin Hunt from the professional team, who gets involved with our sessions at the under nineteen level” (Kopo, 2010) • The “quality of the academy determines the number of players that will make it towards becoming a professional player” (van Heerden, 2010). • “these players are not up to the required levels” (Marques, 2010). • “They certainly have talent, but these talents need to be nurtured further, an aspect which should have been conducted in the academy system” (Marques, 2010). • “allows the players with talent the opportunity to play at a higher level” (Tinkler, 2010) than the current unde-19 league structures, thus improving the players’ skill levels, but also allowing the coaches to monitor their progress. • “the standard of play within that particular regional league was very poor” (Kopo, 2010). • “training and delivery of the complete package of services (Sports science, diet, coaching and environment) to the developing athletes” (van Heerden, 2010) was an important contributor to success. • According to Zac Van Heerden, 2010, Sports Science is a relatively new area of speciality in football development in South Africa, and is slowly being introduced as a means of enhancing the performance of the youth in their development and progression towards the professional ranks. • According to Duncan Crowie, head of the Santos football academy, there is a football development strategy aligned to that of the professional team. • Crowie maintains that the first team have an important role to play in the development of the junior teams and that the success of the first team on the field determines the success of the development section.
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Appendix 6 - Key Area's outlined for an academy in SA

Formulation of model for SA

Area	Club/Interviewee
Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA Culture • Communication 	(Kopo, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010); (Crowie, 2010)
Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision • Objectives • Long term focus 	(Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010); ;(Crowie, 2010)
Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Learning environment • Process Driven 	(Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010); (Crowie, 2010)
Business Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships • Networks • Local links 	(Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010); (Crowie, 2010)
Reward System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment • Reward progress 	(Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010); (Crowie, 2010)
Human capital <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches • Training • Talent 	(Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010) ; (Crowie, 2010)
Professional Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities • Education • Coaches • Management 	(Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010); (Crowie, 2010)
Financial capital <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAFA • Corporates 	(Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010); (Crowie, 2010)
Sports science	(Kopo, 2010); (Marques, 2010); (Tinkler, 2010)
Knowledge and learning	(Tinkler, 2010) (Crowie, 2010)



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing• Communication• Assessments	
Innovation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New ways of doing things	(Tinkler, 2010)

