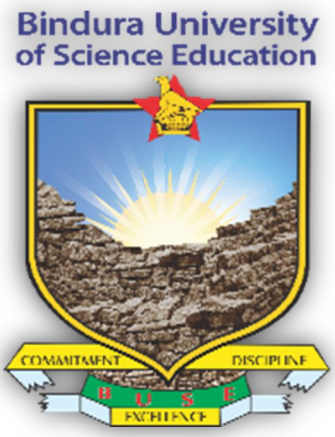


FACULTY OF SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCES

School-Club Partnership and Talent Development Structures in Bindura Youth Football

By

GRATITUDE.T. MAJASI

B222596B

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT

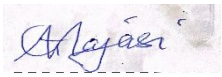
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS IN SPORT SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT

YEAR: 2026

PROJECT RELEASE FORM

I, Gratitude Majasi, am a student in the Bachelor of Science Honours in Sport Science and Management programme in the Department of Sports and Exercise Science at Bindura University of Science Education. I declare that the project titled "School-Club Partnership and Talent Development Structures in Bindura Youth Football" was completed in partial fulfilment of the requirements for SSM400. It was completed under supervision in 2026. I give the University permission to keep the project in its library and institutional repository for academic and research use. I also declare that the work is original and has not been submitted to another institution for any qualification except where acknowledgement has been made.

Student Signature: 

Date: **09/10/2026**

Supervisor's Name: **R.MUNHAMO**

Supervisor's Signature: 

Date: _____

DECLARATION FORM

I, Gratitude Majasi, am a student in the Bachelor of Science Honours in Sport Science and Management programme at Bindura University of Science Education. I declare that the project titled "School-Club Partnership and Talent Development Structures in Bindura Youth Football" is my own work. It was completed under supervision in partial fulfilment of the requirements for SSM400 in 2026. The project has not been submitted to any other institution for a diploma, degree or other qualification. All sources used in the study have been acknowledged.

Student Signature:  ----------

Supervisor's Name: **R.MUNHAMO** ----------

Supervisor's Signature: 

Date: ----------

APPROVAL FORM

This project, titled “School-Club Partnership and Talent Development Structures in Bindura Youth Football,” was submitted by Gratitude Majasi, a Bachelor of Science Honours in Sport Science and Management student at Bindura University of Science Education. It has been examined and approved as meeting the requirements of SSM400. The project is approved for submission in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Science Honours in Sport Science and Management degree.

Name of Supervisor: Ms. R Munhamo **Signature:**  **Date: 10/09/26**

Name of Chairperson: Dr.L.T.Charumbira **Signature:**  **Date: 10-09-2026**

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my family for their support and encouragement throughout my studies. I also thank God Almighty for the strength and patience that helped me complete it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely thank my supervisor for her guidance, criticism and support during this research. Her advice helped me to improve the study. I also thank the lecturers at Bindura University of Science Education for the knowledge and skills they shared during my programme.

I am grateful to my family and friends for their encouragement and patience. Above all, I thank God Almighty for giving me the strength and wisdom to complete this work.

ABSTRACT

This study explored how school–club partnerships could strengthen talent development structures in Bindura youth football. A qualitative case-study design was adopted to obtain an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perspectives of stakeholders involved in youth football development. The study population comprised school football coaches, club coaches, sports directors and physical education teachers, club administrators, and youth football players aged between 13 and 18 years. Purposive sampling was used to select participants with relevant experience and involvement in youth football development. A total of 22 participants took part in the study, with the final sample guided by data saturation. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The data were analyzed thematically using the six-phase approach of Braun and Clarke, with NVivo used to support coding, organization and comparison of the data. The findings revealed that talent identification and player development were largely informal and poorly coordinated. Limited funding, inadequate facilities and equipment, transport difficulties, limited competition opportunities and a shortage of qualified coaches constrained talent development. Although schools and clubs provided some opportunities for training, competition and skill development, their initiatives operated largely independently. Participants identified written partnership agreements, regular communication, joint scouting and training, shared resources, player monitoring and clear referral pathways as important mechanisms for strengthening collaboration. The study concludes that structured school–club partnerships could improve talent identification, coordination and player progression. It recommends joint planning, resource sharing and systematic mechanisms for tracking talented players from school football into club and higher-level development programmes.

Keywords: school–club partnerships, talent identification, talent development, youth football, athlete progression

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HEA Holistic Ecological Approach

LTAD Long-Term Athlete Development

NVivo Qualitative data-analysis software

PE Physical Education

TD Talent Development

TID Talent Identification

ZIFA Zimbabwe Football Association

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out the context for the study. It describes the main problems affecting youth football talent development in Bindura and considers why links between schools and club's matter. It covers the background, problem statement, significance, research questions and objectives. The chapter also states the delimitations and gives an outline of the dissertation.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Football is one of the most widely played sports among young people in Zimbabwe, with school-based football providing an important entry point into organized sport. For many school-going children, activities organized through NASH and NAPH provide their first structured football experience and create opportunities for talented players to be identified. However, the pathway from school football to organized club programmes remains challenging, particularly where formal systems for identification, referral and continued development are limited. Research on youth football development shows that talent identification is more effective when it is viewed as a continuous process rather than a one-off selection exercise, with players requiring sustained opportunities for training, competition and monitoring (Reeves et al., 2018; Bjørndal & Gjesdal, 2020; Atubah et al., 2024). In Zimbabwe, ZIFA (2023) also identifies grassroots football development and effective player pathways as important areas for strengthening the country's football development system.

School football is vibrant in Mashonaland Central Province, with NASH events bringing schools together from Bindura, Shamva, Guruve, Mt Darwin, Muzarabani and Centenary districts. Skilled players are regularly identified during school competitions. However, coaches, sports directors, administrators and football officials report that many promising players do not transition from school football into organized club programmes. Factors frequently cited by coaches, sports coordinators and football leaders include inadequate support, insufficient club linkages and a lack of training and development opportunities. In Bindura District, for example, there are multiple

community and private secondary schools, including Chipadze High School, Bindura High School and Trojan Mine Secondary School, that participate in school-based football initiatives. Several community-based teams also exist to provide training opportunities for youth players, and these teams compete in local football leagues. However, the effectiveness of existing talent identification and development practices has yet to be assessed and confirmed.

In the Bindura context, coaches and school sports coordinators frequently report that they observe talented players during school competitions but subsequently lose contact with them. Very few schools appear to have formal processes that facilitate the referral of talented players to clubs or the monitoring of their progress thereafter. Often, progression depends on a player's personal connections or chance, leaving talented players without clear guidance after leaving school. Consequently, player dropout is common, either because players are unable to meet the costs associated with playing football, struggle to balance football with academic demands, face challenges with transport or equipment, have limited competition opportunities, or lack adequate home-based support. Schools and clubs, operating independently of each other, often struggle to acquire resources such as appropriate pitches, equipment, suitably qualified coaches and funding. Separate efforts to support youth player development may therefore occur across schools and clubs, even though both pursue the similar goal of player progression and retention. This can lead to inefficient allocation of resources, duplicated efforts, inconsistent training quality and gaps in player development.

Research from other countries indicates the benefits of school–club collaboration in talent identification, scouting, monitoring and retention of young players (Bjørndal & Gjesdal, 2020; Aalberg & Sæther, 2016). However, there is limited evidence on how such partnerships operate within Zimbabwean youth football, particularly at the district level. This study therefore focuses on how school–club partnerships could strengthen talent identification, development and progression pathways in Bindura youth football.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

School sport is one way to allow talented players to access higher levels of competition and an effective talent development pathway relies on schools, clubs, coaches, parents and governing

bodies having mechanisms to identify and develop players throughout their young lives. In developing countries such as Zimbabwe, the transition for gifted schoolboy players into organised clubs, as well as elite levels of play, is weak. This breakdown in transition has been voiced by Coaches, School Sports Coordinators and club administrators in Bindura.

Players can show flashes of brilliance during NASH football and inter-school fixtures but are not continued after leaving school while club officials express difficulties in recruiting promising young players to their structures, despite local clubs being established in the region with development programs.

The existing club records along with accounts from various stake holders, have made it evident that player dropout is a significant challenge that has been correlated with the lack of linkages between schools and clubs, ineffective monitoring of player progression, Financial constraints, academic responsibilities, transportation issues and parental lack of support, consequently promising players discovered through school tournaments rarely make the jump into structured club development as they slip through the cracks in the fragmented local development structures with limited linkage between the two institutions which do overlap on many of the same objectives. While much research has been published on how school–club partnership contributes to the advancement and support of gifted individuals through effective sharing of resources, no systematic investigation into these partnerships and the contributing factors hindering such collaboration in Bindura has been carried out. The overall result of this lack of systematic understanding on how the school – club relationship works or the factors restricting them, leaves the Bindura stakeholders without an obvious pathway on how to strengthen school-club links and enhance player development; the present study aims to provide just that understanding, by exploring existing frameworks and potential approaches

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Practical Significance

The results can be pretty useful for schools, clubs, coaches, and young players in Bindura. They could act as a roadmap for activities: joint planning for scouting, training, and player development. Closer working relations might give players more continuous support and the chance to move up the ladder more frequently.

Policy Significance

This research could prove useful for sports administrators, education departments, local government agencies and football associations. It gives local data about the barriers to youth football development. Such data can be used for formulating grassroots programs, refining coach education and structuring school-club collaborations.

Theoretical Significance

This research contributes the Zimbabwean side to the discussion on school-club partnerships and talent development. The paper looks at how the interplay between different institutional actors can affect scouting, player development and progression in an environment where resources are scarce. Besides, the study might be a launch pad for subsequent investigations into sport development and talent management.

Significance to Future Researchers

The investigators coming after could think of this research as a foundation piece for their studies related to youth football, school-club partnerships, and talent identification. If nothing else, it could prompt one to draw up comparisons of the situation in Zimbabwe with that in other football developing contexts.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.5.1 Main Research Question

What potential do school-club partnerships hold in enhancing talent development systems in Bindura youth football?

1.5.2 Subsidiary Research Questions

1. What are the existing issues with the talent identification and talent development structures in Bindura youth football?

2. What are the factors that lead to poor talent development systems in Bindura youth football?

3. To what extent do the existing school and football club programs provide support for talent development and progression pathways?

4. In what ways can school-club partnerships lead to improved coordination and athlete progression pathways in Bindura youth football?

5. What school-club partnership strategies can be used for reinforcing talent development systems in Bindura?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.6.1 Main Objective

To examine how school–club partnerships could strengthen talent development systems in Bindura youth football.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine weaknesses in talent identification and talent development structures in Bindura youth football.
2. To identify factors contributing to ineffective talent development systems in Bindura youth football.
3. To assess the effectiveness of existing school and football club initiatives in supporting talent development and progression pathways.
4. To explore how school–club partnerships could improve coordination and athlete progression pathways in Bindura youth football.
5. To identify school–club partnership strategies that can strengthen talent development systems in Bindura youth football.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research was situated in Bindura District of Mashonaland Central Province, the participants comprising players aged 13-18, coaches, sports directors, sport coordinators, physical education

teachers and club officials that work in the area of player development and it involved all components of player talent development, including talent Identification, player Development, Player pathways and school-club partnerships. It used qualitative case study research to explore the experiences of the stakeholders. This area was chosen due to the vigorous engagement by clubs and schools with young football players and this district presents a context which would assist in the exploration of the partnership challenges.

1.8 STUDY OUTLINE

The dissertation was organised into five chapters.

- Chapter One introduces the issue, explains why it matters and sets out the questions, objectives and scope of the study.
- Chapter Two reviews research on youth football development, talent identification and school-club partnerships. It also discusses the theoretical and empirical ideas used in the study.
- Chapter Three explains the design, participants, sampling, data collection and analysis.
- Chapter Four presents the results and discusses them in relation to the research questions, objectives and literature.
- Chapter Five summarises the findings and gives conclusions, recommendations and directions for further research.

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter described the football-development problem in Bindura and the possible role of school-club partnerships. It set out the background, problem statement, significance, questions, objectives and study boundaries. Chapter Two reviews research and theory on youth football development and collaboration between institutions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Developing the talent of youth football player in some African contexts faces huge problems as regards facility, fund, planned pathway etc. Contemporary thought has moved from an individual talent paradigm to one concerned with player development, the organisation of development settings, and the functioning of collaborating organisations. In this chapter, some key ideas and a number of recent researches that underpin the partnership between schools and clubs for the development of young footballers will be considered.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

This section defines the concepts used in the study and shows how they relate to one another.

2.2.1 School–Club Partnership

A partnership is something between school and sport club, that it supports young athletes (Aalberg and Sæther 2016). A partnership can look as shared coaches, time for playing, use of school facilities or a combined transfer arrangement. Partnership between club and school may find optimal balance between football requirements and the needs of the school education.

Bjorndal and Gjesdal (2020) differentiate between partnerships that have primarily been established as practical partnerships and those which have primarily been established based on a common philosophy for athlete development.

Useful partnerships are based on the use of resources and cooperation, not just between organizations, but on the shared visions for developing the young player (Aalberg and Sther 2016; Bjrndal and Gjesdal 2020). Successful partnership also requires shared goals, dialogue, and collaborative planning, and it can be disastrous if a new school partner joins without any guarantee that the new club offers a development to match those at other club partners (Li et al. 2025). In the present study, a partnership between a school and a sport club means the arrangement, through a school and a club to work on common sport values and player recruitment, talent progression and player academic and sport development**.**

2.2.2 Talent Identification

Talent identification is the process of identifying players who might have potential to play at a high level in the future (Reeves et al., 2018). Previous theories saw talent as a static and innate quality. Technical, physical, psychological and environmental aspects are taken into account in more recent work. Talent is thus seen as a process which unfolds over time and in a specific context.

Even in many African environments, such as Zimbabwe, the coach's principal way of determining who is a player is still through watching a game. Less frequently used are physical testing, psychological assessment and regular development records (Atubah et al., 2024). Reeves et al. (2018) consider identification as a process that takes place over a long term. Atubah et al. (2024) cites the continued use of short-term performance in the development of systems. This is in marked contrast to the prevailing theories.

Players who are unable to compete in organised games may not be picked through match selection. It can also be biased towards early-maturing players and neglect the frustrating disparity in player maturity (Dimundo et al., 2023). Talent identification should be done over time. Schools, clubs and stakeholders must fairly identify, follow and support players.

2.2.3 Talent Development

Unlike talent identification, talent development is a different process. Identification spots potential. Development involves the longer-term support of a player's development. It involves technical skill, tactical understanding, fitness and psychosocial development in a supportive environment (Book et al., 2021). This process is influenced by training quality, motivation, environmental support, and opportunities (Susanto et al., 2023; Zawi et al., 2022).

In older models, emphasis was more on the individual ability. New models have more importance on the player's surroundings. Organised training and athlete enrichment is highlighted by Book et al. (2021). Susanto et al. (2023) call for social and environmental support. The setting the player is training in is as important as the ability of the player.

There is more to a talent system than a selection process. Young players require consistent coaching, development and support from others. Schools and clubs are key components of that world in youth football.

2.2.4 Conceptual Integration

The school–club partnership, talent identification and talent development are viewed in this study as integral components of a single youth football development system. Talent identification helps to identify players with potential, while talent development creates the conditions necessary for that potential to be nurtured over time (Reeves et al., 2018; Atubah et al., 2024). Communication, collaboration and resource sharing between schools and clubs can be facilitated through effective partnerships (Aalberg & Sæther, 2016; Bjørndal & Gjesdal, 2020).

Young players receive regular contact, discipline and educational support from schools, while clubs can provide specialist coaching, competitive opportunities and pathways for further football development. Schools and clubs may not individually possess all the resources required for comprehensive player development, making collaboration important for creating more sustainable opportunities for young players (Book et al., 2021; Bjørndal & Gjesdal, 2020; Li et al., 2025). Effective partnerships should therefore support not only player recruitment but also continuous monitoring, development and progression.

Just a simple agreement isn't necessarily best for player development. According to Li et al. (2025), when growth and administration are more emphasized than athlete support, a partnership can become weak. Constructive relationships must reinforce scouting, player monitoring and development of players, not just establish relationships on paper.

The study is based on an assumption that partnership, identification and developing are coordinated to improve youth football. Increased collaboration between schools and clubs should facilitate identification of players, their development and their progression.

2.2.5 Athlete Progression Pathways

Athlete Progression Pathways are the trajectories that players take from entering into the game to becoming more accomplished. During the journey they develop technical skills, tactical skills, physical skills, psychological and social skills (Bailey & Collins, 2013). A viable pathway provides appropriate opportunities and assistance to players throughout.

In football, progression can start at the school/community level. A player can progress through the youth clubs, academies, provincial teams and elite programmes. This movement requires scouting,

monitoring, coaching, competition and cooperation of stakeholders. Weak pathways lead to dropout and lost potential (Bjørndal & Gjesdal, 2020). This is particularly true in systems that are isolated and support is weak.

Application to the present study

This study takes into account the potential role of school-club relationship in enhancing the transition of school football players who show great promise to formal club sport structures.

2.2.6 Youth Football Development Systems

Youth football development systems are the structures, programmes and policies used to identify and support young players. They usually involve schools, clubs, academies, coaches, parents, governing bodies and communities (Ford et al., 2020).

Effective youth football development systems provide:

- Talent identification opportunities;
- Structured coaching programmes;
- Age-appropriate training;
- Competitive experiences;
- Athlete monitoring mechanisms;
- Educational support;
- Psychological development programmes.

The LTAD model argues that athlete development should move through progressive stages. Each stage should provide experiences that suit the player's development (Balyi et al., 2013). Well-organised football systems usually link schools, clubs, governing bodies and communities. Fragmented systems are more likely to lose players and offer few clear routes for progression.

Relevance to the Current Study

This study assesses existing development structures in Bindura and considers how partnerships could improve opportunities for identification, development and progression.

2.2.7 Stakeholder Collaboration

Stakeholder collaboration occurs when people and organisations plan, communicate and make decisions together to achieve a shared aim (Ansell & Gash, 2008). In sport development, it can affect how well programmes work and whether they last.

Key stakeholders involved in youth football development typically include:

- Schools;
- Football clubs;
- Coaches;
- Parents;
- Sport governing bodies;
- Community organisations;
- Sponsors;
- Local authorities.

When stakeholders work together, they can share information, mobilise resources, support players and plan development activities. Cooperation can reduce repeated effort and improve the player experience. It can also be difficult. Misener and Doherty (2014) identify communication problems, competing priorities, resource shortages, organisational differences and unclear responsibilities as common barriers.

Relevance to the Current Study

Because this study focuses on school-club partnerships, stakeholder collaboration is central to understanding how local organisations can strengthen youth football in Bindura.

2.2.8 Resource Sharing

Generally, resource sharing means making joint use or exchanging of physical financial human, information and technology resources to achieve common goals (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). It is important in sport as often individual entities do not possess sufficient resources so much that they can carry out programmes for full development of athletes.

For instance, resource sharing in youth football can take what comes next forms:

- Sharing sports grounds;
- Holding joint coaching sessions;
- Sharing the equipment;
- Giving transport;
- Going financial;
- Implementing athlete surveillance;
- Sharing technical skills.

One of the cornerstones of Resource Dependency Theory is that sometimes organisations forge partnerships because they want to get resources from others (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Schools and clubs through collaboration can use each other's facilities, people and knowledge. Good sharing can increase the number of opportunities, improve the quality of programmes and reduce the cost (Misener & Doherty, 2014). However, poor sharing would limit the opportunities and lead to the inefficient use of what is available.

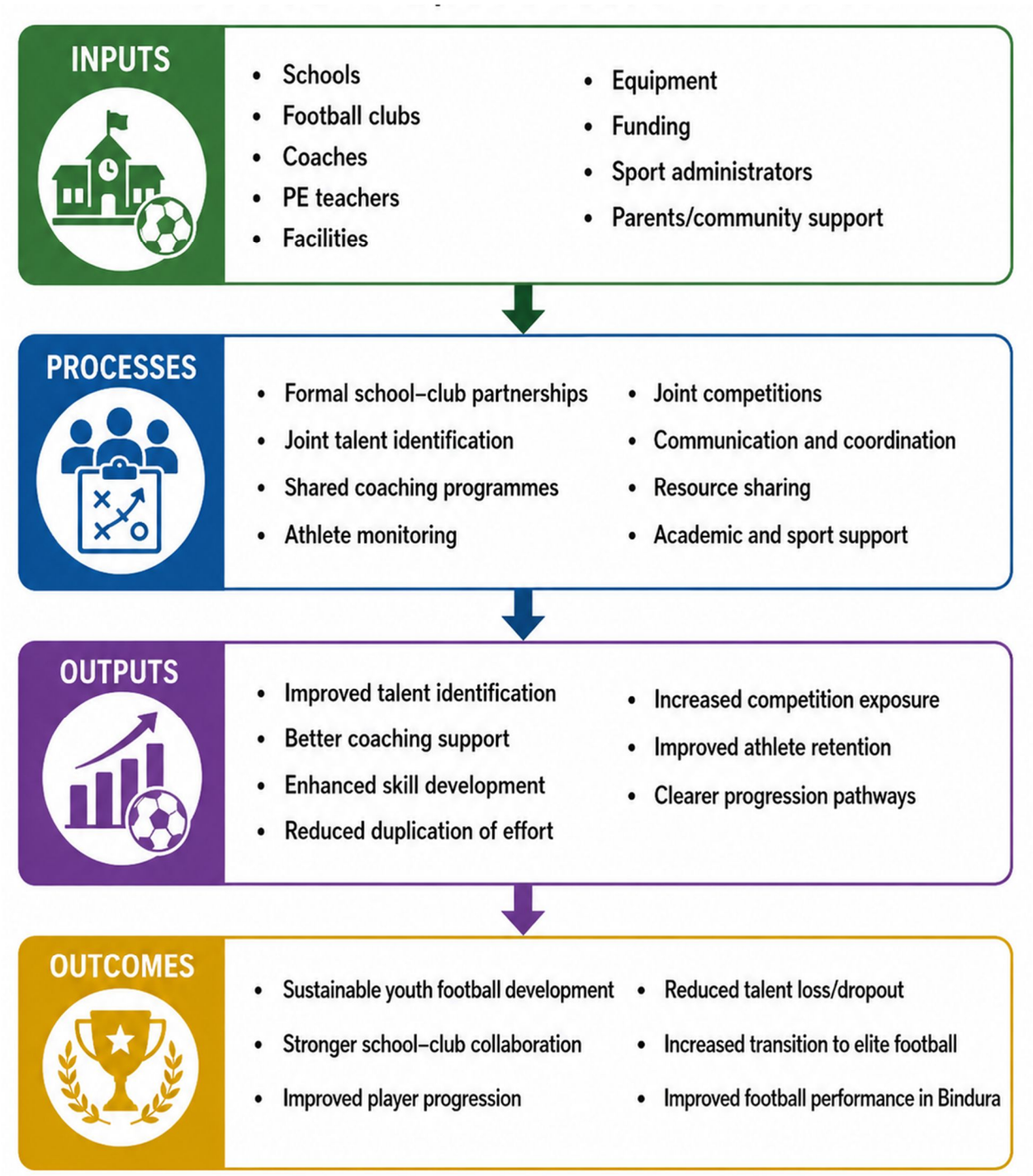
Relevance to the Current Study

Resource sharing is one of the crucial elements in the area of Bindura where schools and clubs are facing scarcity of finance and proper infrastructure. The study explores in what ways shared resources can be used for the support and development of players.

2.2.9 Conceptual System

Conceptual setup refers to the explanation of how school-club partnerships may act as a foundation of talent development in Bindura. It depicts the link between inputs, development processes, immediate outputs and longer-term outcomes.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework for School–Club Partnerships and Talent Development in Bindura Youth Football



The conceptualization of the researcher was based on the research of Aalberg and Sæther (2016), Bjørndal and Gjesdal (2020), Henriksen and Stam Bulova (2023), and Resource Dependency Theory. The conceptual framework of this study is shown in figure 2.1.

The framework starts with inputs: Schools, Clubs, Coaches, Physical Education Teachers, Facilities, Equipment, Funding, Administration and Community Support. When such inputs are uncoordinated or are spread apart, they are of limited value. Phases two involves the activities of the partners. These consist of formal agreements, joint scouting, common coaching, player monitoring, common competitions, communication, sharing of resources and academic-sport support. These activities should result in better talent identification, coaching, skills, exposure to more competition, less duplication, better retention and clearer pathways. The expected outcomes over time include more sustainable youth football, reduced drop-out, increased sportsmanship and increased number of players moving up to higher level football.

The framework sees partnership as a connection between different local activities. It is the navigating force for the problem, methods, findings and recommendations for this study.

2.3 THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.3.1 The Long-Term Athlete Development Model

Originator of the theory

The Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model was originally developed by István Balyi and colleagues in Canada, particularly through the work of Balyi and Hamilton (2004) and later refined by Balyi, Way and Higgs (2013). The model has been widely adopted by national sport organisations, including Sport Canada and many international federations, as a framework for structuring athlete development from childhood to adulthood.

Key advantages of the LTAD model

The LTAD model offers several advantages for studies of youth sport development:

- It provides a clear, stage-based pathway that aligns training, competition and recovery with the athlete's age and developmental stage (Balyi et al., 2013).

- It emphasizes long-term planning rather than short-term results, which helps to reduce early specialization, burnout and dropout.
- It recognizes the importance of fundamental movement skills and physical literacy before intensive sport-specific training.
- It supports the integration of school sport, club sport and high-performance programmes into a coherent development system.
- It is flexible enough to be adapted to different sports and contexts, including resource-constrained environments.

Why this theory was chosen for the study

The LTAD model was selected because it directly addresses the issue of player progression from school football to club and higher levels of competition, which is a central concern in Bindura. The model's emphasis on planned pathways, age-appropriate training and coordinated support aligns with the study's focus on strengthening school–club partnerships to improve talent development. Although Bindura may not be able to implement every stage of the LTAD model in full, its principles of long-term planning, progressive development and institutional coordination provide a useful guide for designing more effective local talent-development structures.

2.3.2 Holistic Ecological Approach

Originator of the theory

The Holistic Ecological Approach (HEA) to talent development was developed by Kristoffer Henriksen and colleagues, particularly Henriksen, Stambulova and colleagues in Denmark, through a series of studies on talent development environments in sport (Henriksen, Stambulova & Christensen, 2010; Henriksen & Stambulova, 2017; Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023). The approach builds on earlier ecological and systems-oriented perspectives in sport psychology and talent development research.

Key advantages of the Holistic Ecological Approach

The HEA offers several strengths for understanding youth football development:

- It shifts the focus from the individual athlete to the entire development environment, including family, school, club, peers and community.
- It highlights how the quality of relationships and interactions among stakeholders influences athlete development, motivation and wellbeing.
- It recognises the importance of organisational culture, support systems and the alignment of goals between different actors in the sport system.
- It is particularly useful for studying contexts where resources are limited and where the environment plays a decisive role in shaping opportunities for young players.
- It supports the idea of "dual career" development, where education and sport are integrated rather than treated as competing demands.

Why this theory was chosen for the study

The HEA was chosen because the development of young football players in Bindura is strongly influenced by the broader social and organisational environment, not just by individual ability. The approach helps to explain how schools, clubs, families, coaches and local authorities interact to either support or hinder player development. Given that the study examines school–club partnerships, the HEA provides a suitable lens for analysing how the quality of these relationships and the overall development environment affect talent identification, retention and progression in a resource-constrained setting.

2.3.3 Systems Theory

Originator of the theory

Systems Theory has its origins in the work of Ludwig von Bertalanffy, who introduced General Systems Theory in the mid-20th century (von Bertalanffy, 1968). The theory has since been applied across many disciplines, including biology, management, sociology and education, to understand how complex systems function through the interaction of their components.

Key advantages of Systems Theory

Systems Theory offers several advantages for analysing youth football development:

- It views organisations and institutions as interrelated parts of a larger system, rather than as isolated entities.
- It emphasises communication, coordination and feedback among system components, which is essential for effective talent-development pathways.
- It helps to identify how weaknesses or breakdowns in one part of the system (for example, schools or clubs) affect the performance of the entire system.
- It supports the analysis of roles, relationships and processes among multiple stakeholders, such as schools, clubs, coaches, parents and governing bodies.
- It provides a conceptual basis for understanding how improved coordination and collaboration can enhance overall system effectiveness.

Why this theory was chosen for the study

Systems Theory was selected because youth football development in Bindura involves multiple interacting components, including schools, football clubs, coaches, players, parents and local authorities. The theory helps to explain how fragmented relationships and poor coordination between these components lead to inefficiencies, player dropout and lost talent. By applying Systems Theory, the study can analyse how strengthening school–club linkages and improving communication among stakeholders can create a more coherent and effective talent-development system.

2.3.4 Resource Dependency Theory

Originator of the theory

Resource Dependency Theory was developed by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald Salancik in their seminal work *The External Control of Organizations* (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). The theory explains how organisations depend on external resources and how this dependence shapes their behaviour, strategies and relationships with other organisations.

Key advantages of Resource Dependency Theory

Resource Dependency Theory offers several strengths for understanding sport partnerships:

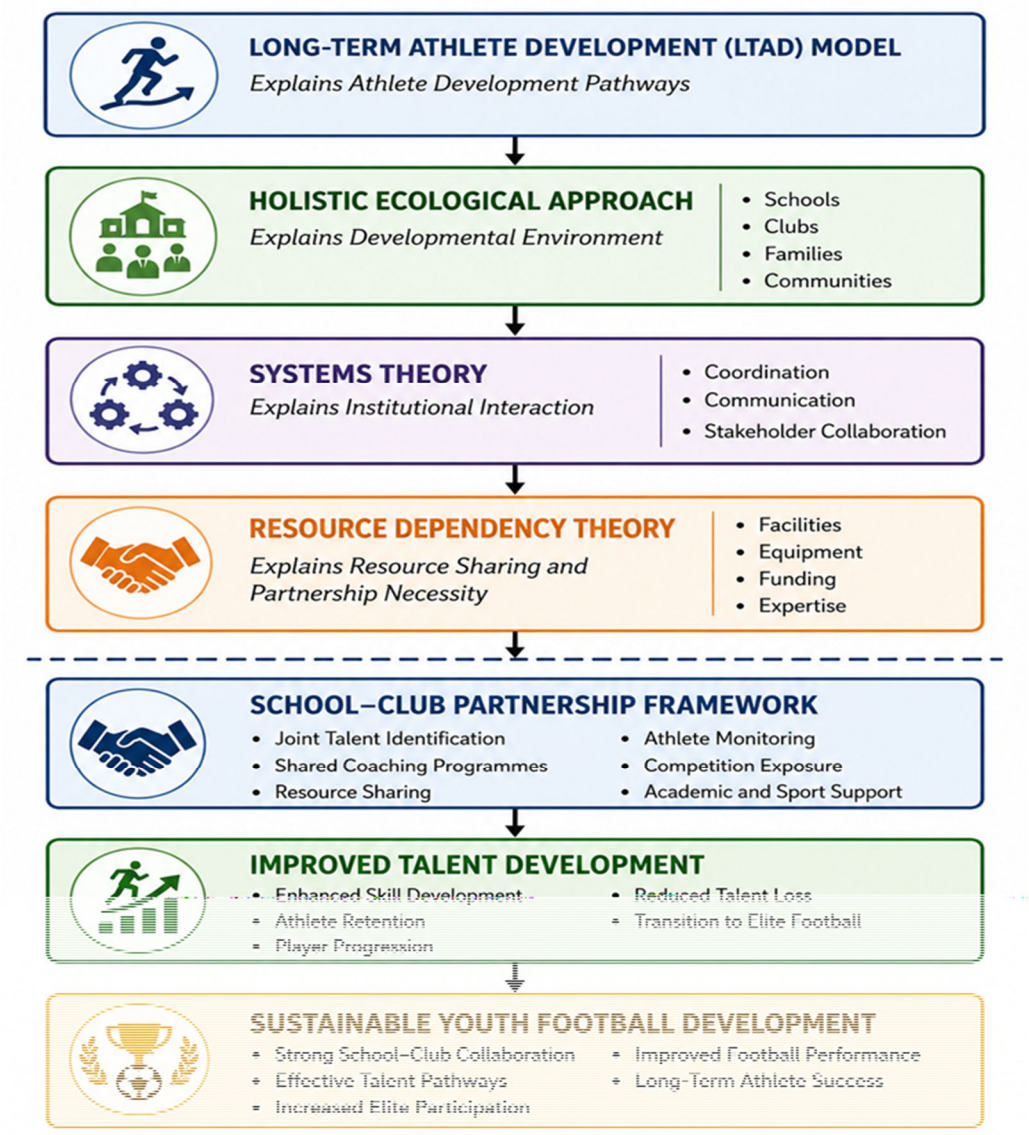
- It explains why organisations form partnerships and collaborations to access resources they do not possess internally.
- It highlights how resource scarcity can drive organisations to share facilities, expertise, funding and opportunities.
- It provides insight into power dynamics, negotiations and mutual dependence between partner organisations.
- It is particularly relevant in contexts where financial, human and material resources are limited, as is often the case in grassroots sport in developing countries.
- It supports the analysis of how resource sharing can reduce duplication, improve efficiency and enhance programme sustainability.

Why this theory was chosen for the study

Resource Dependency Theory was chosen because schools and football clubs in Bindura face significant resource constraints, including limited funding, inadequate facilities, insufficient equipment and a shortage of qualified coaches. The theory helps to explain why school–club partnerships are both necessary and beneficial in such contexts: by pooling resources, schools and clubs can provide better training environments, more competition opportunities and stronger support for young players. The theory also supports the study's recommendation that formal partnerships and resource-sharing arrangements can strengthen talent-development structures and progression pathways in Bindura youth football.

2.3.5 Integrated Theoretical Framework

Figure 2.1: Integrated Theoretical Framework



The theories are used in conjunction with each other as they explain different aspects of youth football development. LTAD justifies the importance of transition and of planned pathways.Holistic Ecological Approach focuses the player's awareness on the surrounding environment. The connections between schools, clubs, families and other stakeholders are

understood by Systems Theory. It also demonstrates the importance of communication and synergic cooperation.

The need to share facilities, expertise, funding and opportunities are explained by Resource Dependency Theory. The theories collectively imply that high quality school-club relationships will develop a more integrated environment for players. These links can be used to assist with identification, retention and progression in football.

The framework integrates the Holistic Ecological Approach, LTAD and Systems Theory and Resource Dependency Theory. It is intended to give a theoretical foundation to explore the potential and possible effects of school-club partnership for sustainable talent development and player progression in Bindura.

2.4 THEMATIC REVIEW

2.4.1 The extent to which students' needs are addressed through Teaching and Learning Development Plans (TLDPs)

Research on football development highlights the shortcomings in talent identification. Lack of financial constraints, and lack of educational support and progression opportunities in non-elite contexts, are cited by Reeves et al. (2018). In African Settings, Akubah et al. (2024) concluded that coaches tend to choose the players based on observation during games. This can rule out players who are not going into formal competitions. Another source of bias is relative age. Players born earlier in a selection year might be more physically mature than their peers and therefore be more likely to get selected (Dimundo et al., 2023; Reeves et al., 2018). If a coach does not perform maturation assessment, he/she might miss the chance to see the potential of a player, or the player's advantage is only temporary.

2.4.2 Factors that contribute to weaknesses in the systems for nurturing talent

There are a number of related factors that relate to talent-development weaknesses within Bindura. Zimbabwe's fiscal issues have contributed to investment for sporting facilities and the ability of clubs to sustain regular programmes has become difficult (Dandah & Chiweshe, 2021). This can also impact the capability of practitioners to access qualification and continuing education. When schools and clubs do not synchronize time for the purposes of training, school work can conflict with training (Sulistiyono et al., 2021). Li et al. (2025) also associate weak governance with growth

in an uncoordinated manner. In these cases, the greater number of players around a player doesn't automatically mean more support for that player.

2.4.3 The effectiveness of existing initiatives in the school and club environment.

There is a mixed record of success with current school and club-based programs. Shared coaching roles in some European models can help to ensure continuity and better use of resources (Bjørndal & Gjesdal, 2020). In Zimbabwean-type conditions, there is a lack of funding, communication, and formal agreements that limit implementation (Nhamo & Magonde, 2014). Li et al. (2025) illustrate partnerships that grew in size, but did not get better. Gregson et al. (2022) and Sweeney et al. (2021) suggest that such a focus on shared aims and objectives is frequently lacking, and that this is intentional coordination between schools and clubs. Partnerships between schools and clubs can vary considerably in their form and scope. School–Club Partnership Development can take many shapes and sizes.

The study suggests a number of measures to enhance the partnership between schools and clubs. Written agreements, joint committees and trusted informal relationships are pointed out by Bjørndal and Gjesdal (2020). Agreements clarify responsibilities. Informal contacts assist partners to address day-to-day issues. Henriksen and Stambulova (2023) capture the dual-career environment that nurtures education and sport at the same time. Clear support and institutional commitment are still relevant in Bindura, though it might not be able to sustain all parts of that model. Uslu (2023) also associates sustainable partnerships with common ownership of a development philosophy.

2.4.4 School–Club Partnership Model Development

Introduction

The development of partnerships is critical to youth sport as no single organization is likely to possess all of the resources and expertise required to support every aspect of athlete development. A partnership model can help define roles, communication among partners, what each partner brings to the table, and what they are looking for to accomplish. This can be especially helpful in low resource areas.

Partnership Framework Development

Developing a partnership framework is the process of creating a partnership design, whereby organisations collaborate to achieve a shared purpose. The key features identified by Bryson et al. (2015) are having clear objectives, stakeholder involvement, shared decision-making, accountability and sustainable governance. The local needs and evidence should inform the development of the framework, not dictate it.

Problem Identification

Stakeholders identify existing challenges that require collaborative solutions.

Stakeholder Identification

Relevant organisations and individuals are identified and engaged.

Goal Development

Shared objectives and expected outcomes are established.

Framework Design

Roles, responsibilities, communication channels, and operational procedures are developed.

Implementation

Partnership activities are introduced and coordinated.

Evaluation and Refinement

After implementation, partners should review what happened and make changes where needed. In youth football, a partnership framework can cover scouting, coaching, resource sharing and routes for player progression.

Collaborative Governance Models

Collaborative governance means that several stakeholders take part in planning, decisions, implementation and review (Ansell & Gash, 2008). It is relevant to youth football because schools, clubs, families, communities and governing bodies all affect player development.

Shared Decision-Making

Stakeholders jointly participate in planning and policy development.

Shared Responsibility

Responsibilities for programme implementation are distributed across partners.

Mutual Accountability

Partners are collectively responsible for outcomes.

Trust and Communication

Effective partnerships require transparency, communication, and trust. Collaborative governance can make a programme more sustainable, improve resource use and encourage ownership among partners (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015). For school-club partnerships, it can support joint scouting, player monitoring, competition planning and progression decisions.

Sport Partnership Implementation

A partnership needs more than a good design. It must be put into practice. Sport partnership implementation refers to the day-to-day work through which partners carry out their agreed activities. According to Misener and Doherty (2014), successful sport partnerships typically demonstrate:

Clear Objectives

Partners understand the purpose of the collaboration.

Defined Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholders know their specific contributions.

Effective Communication

Information flows regularly among partners.

Resource Commitment

Stakeholders contribute financial, human, and material resources.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Partnership activities and outcomes are continuously assessed.

Partnerships often fail when roles are unclear, communication breaks down, resources are missing or partners have competing priorities. In youth football, weak administration and conflicting institutional goals can make these problems worse.

Stakeholder Engagement Models

Stakeholder engagement means involving people and organisations that influence a programme or are affected by it (Freeman, 1984). It is important for a partnership because young players depend on support from several groups.

- Schools;
- Football clubs;
- Coaches;
- Physical education teachers;
- Parents;
- Players;
- Football governing bodies;
- Sponsors;
- Community leaders.

Engagement should continue from planning through implementation. Reed et al. (2018) identifies consultation, collaboration, participation and empowerment as useful forms of engagement.

Consultation

Obtaining stakeholder opinions and perspectives.

Collaboration

Joint planning and implementation.

Participation

Active involvement in decision-making processes.

Empowerment

Stakeholders need a real chance to shape decisions. Involving them can improve legitimacy, ownership and implementation. It matters in school-club partnerships because player development depends on people working in different organisations.

School–Club Partnership Models in Youth Sport

School-club models have been used in several countries to support youth athlete development. Common examples include dual-career models, talent-development environments and community sport partnerships.

Dual Career Models

Widespread across Europe, such models Mainly focus on combining educational and sports-related aspects of the athletes' lives through strong partnerships between schools and sports bodies.

Talent Development Environments

Rather than focusing on only one aspect, these sports education models involve coordinated efforts from not only schools and clubs but also families and communities in helping athletes advance.

Community Sport Partnership Models

Community sport models function by connecting, not only schools and clubs but also other local organizations, for increasing participation and offering more player-development opportunities.

Studies show that successful partnership models can be tied to, among other things, better identification of talents, stronger support for young athletes, more efficient utilization of resources, clearer pathways, and improved retention. Improved talent identification;

Enhanced athlete support;

Greater resource efficiency;

Stronger progression pathways;

Improved athlete retention.

Partnership models still need to fit the local setting. A model that works in a well-funded system may not work in Bindura without adaptation.

Relevance to the Current Study

This study examines school-club partnerships and talent development in Bindura. The reviewed literature helps explain how partnerships are created, governed and implemented. It also shows why stakeholder involvement, shared governance and local ownership matter.

The literature points to partnership governance, stakeholder involvement, shared resources and clear implementation as key features of successful models. These features may help reduce fragmentation and improve development outcomes in Bindura youth football.

2.5 LITERATURE GAP

Much of the work on coaching talents, helping them grow, and making arrangements between schools and clubs that have been successful have been done in European academies and other top-level sports places. The studies demonstrate how collaboration, creating clear paths, sharing of means, etc. may contribute to athlete development (Bjorndal & Gjesdal, 2020; Henriksen & Stam Bulova, 2023).

African and Zimbabwean research has mainly documented problems like lack of money, dilapidated facilities and shortage of trained coaches (Nhamo & Magonde, 2014). It has not really focused on the school- club partnerships as a way that communities with limited resources could practically respond to their situation.

There is barely any research that has looked at the interaction between schools and clubs in Bindura youth football. There is very little information on how local players find their way or on what strategies are employed to identify, develop and move promising players from one level to the next.

This research paper closes this very important local gap by looking into the possibility of school-club partnerships enhancing talent development.

2.6 CONCLUSION

The research results indicate a move away from selecting only on individual performance to models that value the whole development environment. It also reveals that partnerships can be a means of supporting identification and development in football set ups that are feature of rich countries. There is not a lot of information on how these notions can be translated to small and resource-challenged communities of sub-Saharan Africa. Bindura is one such example: youth football is lively, but its development structures are scattered. This study looks at this gap.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter set the scene by defining school-club partnership, talent identification and talent development. LTAD, The Holistic Ecological Approach, Systems Theory and Resource Dependency Theory were all reviewed. It also looked at the problems in player identification and progression, what causes these problems and how partnerships can be built. Chapter Three outlines the ways in which these issues were researched in Bindura.

CHAPTER THREE

MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter illustrates how the research was conducted. It highlights research philosophy approach time horizon strategy population sampling data collection analysis trustworthiness and ethics.

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

The research adopted an interpretivist stance. Interpretivism considers social reality to be the result of individual people's experiences and communications (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This was a perfect match for the research since different stakeholders like coaches, players, sports directors and club administrators should have varied understandings and views on the concept of local talent development. In fact, the research did not seek the one and only truth but rather attempted to understand how these groups make sense of identification development institutional relationships, and partnership opportunities in Bindura.

3.3 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The research was based on the qualitative research method. It was suitable for digging into perceptions, experiences, and social interactions rather than labelling and measuring variables numerically (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The respondents were able to explain the process of player identification barriers school-club collaboration, and local partnership improvement which a survey only would have missed.

3.4 TIME HORIZON

The study used a cross-sectional time perspective. That is to say data was collected only once for the whole study to describe the talent-development structures and school-club relationships in Bindura at that time (Saunders et al. 2019). Actually, this approach not only fails to observe changes over time, but still brings a convenient "snapshot" of the stakeholders' views at a given moment.

3.5 RESEARCH STRATEGY

Case study was chosen as the research strategy. Case study is a research strategy that enables the researcher to investigate a contemporary occurrence in depth and within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). The research found that Bindura was a good case as it is the place where most fundraising and youth football activities take place in schools and clubs. The use of such strategy gave us an opportunity to closely examine local scouting, organizational settings of player-development, school and club initiatives, coordination, and partnership opportunities.

3.6 STUDY POPULATION

The study population consisted of the main actors in youth football talent development in Bindura District. School coaches, club coaches, sports directors, physical education teachers, club administrators and players 13 years to 18 years old made up the population. These groups were targeted since they have knowledge of player identification, support and management. Coaches have direct contact with players. Sports directors and administrators are responsible for planning, resources and coordination of programmes. Players are at the receiving end of opportunities and obstacles.

3.7 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

3.7.1 Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was the selection technique. This refers to the selection of individuals based on their experience in youth football development and school-club partnerships (Patton, 2015). The research required informants who are capable of elaborating on the local system. Participants were selected based on the following criteria:

Coaches

- Minimum of two years' coaching experience in youth football.
- Active involvement in player development programmes.

Sports Directors and Physical Education Teachers

- Direct responsibility for organising football activities within schools.

- Involvement in talent identification and athlete development programmes.

Club Administrators

- Responsibility for managing football development programmes.
- Involvement in youth football policy and programme implementation.

Players

- Aged between 13 and 18 years.
- Participation in organised school or club football competitions for at least one season.

3.7.2 Sample Size Determination

Sample size was not calculated statistically. Interviews continued until later interviews did not add new themes, which is described as data saturation (Guest et al., 2017). The study expected about 18 to 25 participants from the selected stakeholder groups. Table 3.1 shows the proposed distribution.

Table 3.1: Proposed Sample Distribution by Participant Category

Participant Category	Proposed Sample
School football coaches	5
Club football coaches	5
Sports directors / PE teachers	4
Club administrators	3
Youth football players	5
Total	22

The final number of participants was based on saturation, not on a fixed numerical target. Interviews stopped when subsequent interviews no longer produced new themes.

3.8 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Interviews and document analysis were used so that the study could gather detailed accounts and compare them with available records.

3.8.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

We relied Mainly on semi-structured interviews for data collection. This technique was based on having a list of pre-planned questions; Though, it also gave the interviewer the possibility to ask additional questions if the interviewee brought up something that needed further explanation (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). We drafted separate interview guides for coaches, sports directors, club administrators, and youth players. The interview topics tackled included identification practices barriers current initiatives, and partnership opportunities. Each guide consisted of approximately eight to ten open-ended questions. The interviews were conducted one-on-one at schools or club premises at times convenient to the participants. They were 40 - 60 minutes long and were recorded after the participants had given their consent. English or Shona was the language used by the participants. The recordings were safely kept and were transcribed immediately after the completion of fieldwork.

3.8.2 Document Analysis

Document analysis was also conducted, in addition to the interviews. The researcher looked at the existing school sports policies, club constitutions, programme reports, competition records, meeting minutes and talent-development guidelines. These documents were used as a way to place the participants' story in context and as a means to compare the participants' story with what is written in the documents.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The collection of data was carried out in several sequential stages.

Stage 1: Ethical Approval.

The University's Ethics Committee gave approval for the start of fieldwork.

Stage 2: Access and Permissions.

School authorities, football clubs and appropriate educational authorities were consulted.

Stage 3: Participant Recruitment.

Purposive sampling was employed to identify eligible participants and they were choose for their voluntary participation.

Stage 4: Conducting Interviews.

Interviews took place at convenient times and locations for participants. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, confidentiality, and their rightdocumwnta to withdrawal and that participation would be voluntary before every interview. Be aware that the audio was recorded only with consent.

Stage 5: Transcription.

Verbatim transcriptions of interviews were carried out right after data collection.

Stage 6: Document Collection.

Organisation documents relevant to the purpose were gathered and studied. The student will use data to interpret trends and patterns. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006) was used to analyse the data. This enabled the identification of and interpretation of common themes within the stakeholder accounts. The material was coded, retrieved and compared using NVivo. The analysis was conducted in six steps.

Phase 1: Familiarisation.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed immediately following. The researcher listened to the transcript a few times and sifted out initial ideas and familiarized himself with the content.

Phase 2: Initial Coding.

Descriptive codes were given to meaningful pieces of text. Codes were manually generated and coded in NVivo to enable meaningful and consistent organization and comparison.

Phase 3: Theme Search.

Codes that were related were grouped into themes. Themes were formulated based on the data, but were still connected to the research goals.

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes.

Themes were verified for logical flow, and for sufficient data support. Some were merged, split or renamed as required by the evidence.

Phase 5: Identifying and labelling Themes.

A clear name and definition were used for each final theme. The outlines and connections to other themes were documented.

Phase 6: Producing the Report.

The results are presented under the research objectives and supported by quotes from the participants. The central issues discussed were: limitations in identification and development, factors that limit the system, importance of current efforts, potential role of school-club partnerships and strategies for developing sustainable partnerships. Themes are presented in a narrative account, in tables and in quotations.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

The data were analysed through thematic analysis using the steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This approach helped identify and interpret recurring patterns across stakeholder accounts. NVivo supported coding, retrieval and comparison of the material. The analysis followed six stages.

Phase 1: Familiarisation.

Interview recordings were transcribed soon after collection. The researcher read the transcripts several times, noted initial ideas and became familiar with the material.

Phase 2: Initial Coding.

Meaningful pieces of text were given descriptive codes. Coding was done manually and in NVivo so that the data could be organised and compared consistently.

Phase 3: Searching for Themes.

Related codes were brought together into broader themes. Themes were developed from the data while remaining linked to the research objectives.

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes.

Themes were checked for coherence and adequate support in the data. Some were combined, divided or renamed when the evidence required it.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes.

Each final theme was given a clear name and definition. Its boundaries and relationship to other themes were recorded.

Phase 6: Producing the Report.

The findings are organised around the research objectives and illustrated with participant quotations. The main themes concerned weaknesses in identification and development, factors that weaken the system, the value of existing initiatives, the possible contribution of school-club partnerships and strategies for building sustainable partnerships. Narrative accounts, tables and quotations are used to present the themes.

3.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS

The criteria of trustworthiness were dealt with by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

3.11.1 Credibility

Member checking with selected participants was conducted, enhancing the credibility. Interviews were also checked with documentary sources. The researcher used continued engagement during fieldwork to get an understanding of the setting and the views of the participants.

3.11.2 Transferability

The setting of the study, the participants, and the process of data collection is described sufficiently to allow readers to assess whether the findings might be generalizable to other contexts.

3.11.3 Dependability

The dependability of data was aided by the maintenance of interview guides, interview transcripts, coding notes and field notes. These records were combined to give an audit trail.

3.11.4 Confirmability

Reflexivity notes, an audit trail and the use of participants' quotations to illustrate the ways in which findings were reached, supported confirmability.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted with ethical consideration in research with humans. Safeguards were used for those who were aged between 13-17 years.

Informed Consent.

Information sheets and signed consent forms were provided to coaches/ administrators. Written consent from a parent and player and player's verbal consent were obtained for young participants. Study information was written in a language that was meaningful to the young participants and described the purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits of the study.

Voluntary Participation.

Participants were informed that they were to participate voluntarily. They had the option of withdrawing at any time, without penalty or negative consequence.

Protection of Minors.

The young participants were interviewed in private and neutral settings with the presence or availability of a member of staff. Questions did not cause distressing topics. Participants were informed that if they reported harm, abuse or a matter of safety, it would be dealt with in accordance with legal reporting requirements. Information about counselling support was provided.

Anonymity.

Pseudonyms and codes were used, e.g., Coach 1, Player 3. No names of participants, schools and clubs were reported and included in the dissertation.

Confidentiality.

Electronic files were stored on password protected and/or encrypted media devices. Paper records were kept in a locked cabinet. The researcher will securely destroy the data in 3 years after the end of the study.

Permission.

Relevant gatekeepers in the local communities such as club chairpersons and District Education Officers have given their permission to collect data.

3.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter gave an explanation of the qualitative case-study methodology applied in Bindura. It was about interpretivist approach, purposive sampling, interview, document analysis, and thematic analysis with the use of NVivo. It also established the procedures followed to protect the participants and to ensure the trustworthiness. The results are provided in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports and analyses testimonies of different categories of participants in youth football in Bindura community. The results are published as research objectives and illustrated with tables, figures and direct quotations from the participants. The chapter begins with a description of the sample of participants and presents the major themes of the study and lastly relates the findings to the literature and theories discussed in Chapter Two.

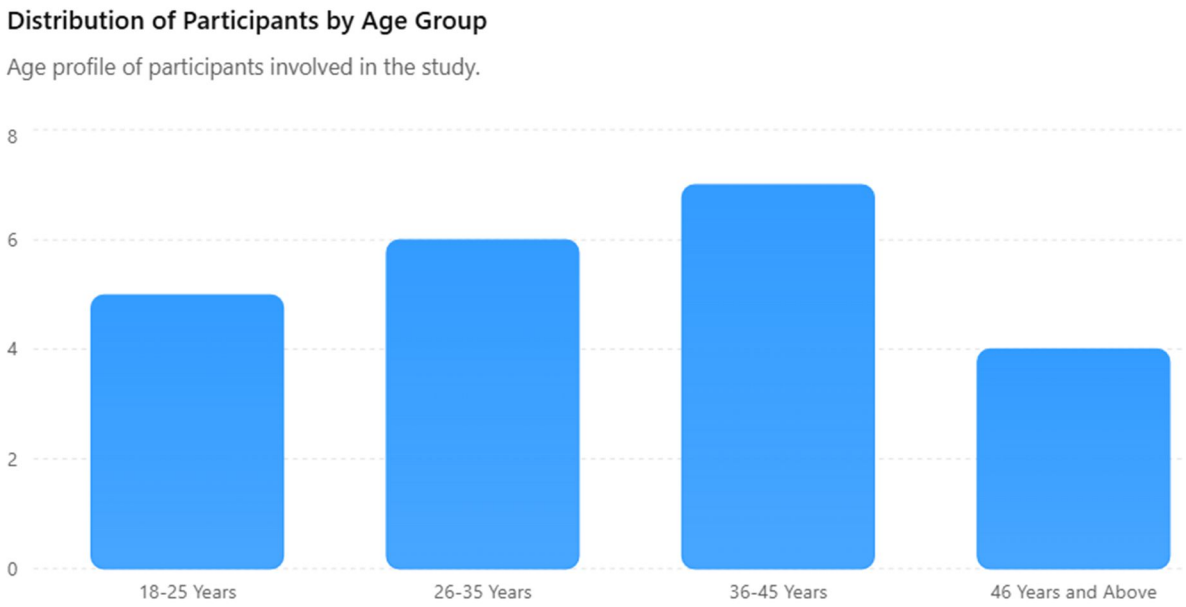
4.2 Demographic Data

Figure 4.1: Gender of Interview Respondents



Sixteen of the 22 participants were male and six were female. This pattern reflects the male-dominated nature of football participation and administration in many Zimbabwean settings.

Figure 4.2: Age Distribution of Interview Respondents



Most participants were between 36 and 45 years old, followed by those aged 26 to 35. Fewer were aged 18 to 25 or 46 and above. The sample therefore included experienced stakeholders as well as younger people involved in youth football.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA LINKED TO RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

4.3.1 Introduction

This section presents the findings by research objective. It combines interview accounts with document analysis. Thematic presentation makes it possible to show both the difficulties in the local system and the partnership opportunities described by participants.

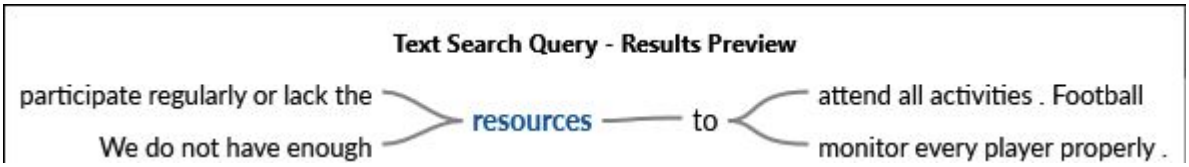
4.3.2 Objective 1: Weaknesses in Talent Identification and Talent Development Structures

Table 4.1: Weaknesses in Talent Identification and Talent Development Structures

THEME	DESCRIPTION	QUOTES	Number of Mentions
Limited resources	Lack of financial, material, and human support for talent development	"We lack enough resources to support players properly."	14
Poor infrastructure	Inadequate pitches, facilities, and training environments	"Our grounds are not good for proper training and development."	12
Resource constraints	Overall shortage of funding, equipment, and development support systems	"There is no proper support system for developing talent."	10

Resource-related difficulties dominated the accounts of weak talent identification and development. Limited resources received 14 mentions, making it the most frequently raised issue. Participants linked shortages of money and materials to weaker player support.

Figure 4.3: NVivo Text Search Query Showing Resource Constraints



There were 12 mentions of poor infrastructure from the participants. Some of them mentioned unsuitable playing fields, while others referred to the lack of proper training facilities.The participants overall saw such environments as hindrances to player performance and development. Other resource constraints were mentioned 10 times. They included limited funding, inadequate equipment and lack of formal development programmes.

When combined, the narrations reveal that identification is occurring in a poorly resourced environment. The facilities and support systems are not robust enough to enable youth football development on a regular basis.

Documentary Evidence for Objective 1

Table 4.2: Documentary Evidence on Talent Identification and Progression Weaknesses

Document Reviewed	Evidence Found	Weakness Identified	Interpretation
School Sports Policy	Learners participate in inter-school football competitions.	No formal talent tracking mechanism after competitions.	Talented players may be identified but not systematically monitored.
NASH Competition Guidelines	Competitions provide opportunities for talent exposure.	No structured progression pathway from school football to elite development programmes.	Player advancement depends largely on individual initiative.

Football Club Constitution	Club aims to recruit talented youth players.	No documented scouting framework.	Talent identification appears informal and inconsistent.
Competition Records	Players participate in district and provincial tournaments.	Records focus on results rather than player development.	Limited evidence of long-term athlete development planning.
Development Programme Reports	Coaching clinics occasionally conducted.	Activities are irregular and dependent on available resources.	Talent development support lacks consistency.

Documents also highlighted poor coordination in talent scouting and development. Schools, competitions and clubs create opportunities for talent spotting Still there was a lack of formal tracking tools, written scouting agreements, or clearly defined continuation paths. Competition records mostly captured only results rather than a player's entire development. Coaching clinics for talent development were also carried out to a limited extent due to shortage of resources. As the evidence many individuals rely on the informal arrangements after their discovery.

4.3.3 Objective 2: Factors Contributing to Ineffective Talent Development Systems

Table 4.3: Factors Contributing to Ineffective Talent Development Systems

THEME	DESCRIPTION	QUOTES	Number of Mentions
Financial constraints	Lack of funding for equipment, transport, and development programmes	“We struggle because there is no money to support football activities.”	6
Poor facilities	Inadequate pitches and training equipment affecting training quality	“The fields and equipment are not good for proper training.”	4

Low competition exposure	Few leagues, tournaments, and competitive matches for players	"We don't get enough matches to improve our skills."	3
Human resources	Shortage of qualified coaches and limited technical support	"There are few trained coaches to guide young players."	4

For Objective 2, financial limitations had the highest number of mentions (6). Participants said that lack of funding affected equipment, transport and the running of organised development programmes.

Poor facilities received four mentions. Respondents pointed to low-quality pitches and limited training resources, which reduced the quality of player development.

Human-resource limits also received four mentions. The main concern was a shortage of qualified coaches who could give young players sound technical guidance.

Competition exposure with low level of competition only got three mentions. Participants argued that players only in few leagues and tournaments had less opportunity to gain the experience necessary to develop and be noticed.

The findings reveal interrelated money, facility, and human resource problems. Altogether, they hold back training, player development and exposure to competitive games.

Documentary Evidence for Objective 2

Table 4.4: Documentary Evidence on Factors Affecting Talent Development

Document Reviewed	Factor Identified	Evidence	Implication
Meeting Minutes	Lack of funding	Concerns raised about limited resources for competitions and equipment.	Restricts development opportunities.

Club Development Report	Inadequate training equipment	Shortage of footballs, bibs and training materials reported.	Affects quality of training sessions.
School Sports Policy	Limited facilities	Schools share playing fields and have inadequate infrastructure.	Reduces training frequency and quality.
Meeting Minutes	Transport challenges	Difficulties travelling to provincial competitions documented.	Limits player exposure.
Club Constitution	Shortage of qualified coaches	Dependence on volunteer coaches noted.	Affects technical development of players.

The documents pinpointed the same issues: lack of money, insufficient equipment, limited areas, problems with transport and hardly any qualified coaches. Limited budgets made it impossible to attend competitions or buy even the most basic equipment. Poor facilities meant that training sessions were not only of a lower standard but also less frequent. Most of the sports programs were run by volunteer coaches, which naturally lowered the level of technical training and guidance. All of these factors contributed to the deterioration of the local talent development system.

4.3.4 Objective 3: Effectiveness of Existing School and Football Club Initiatives

Table 4.5: Effectiveness of Existing School and Football Club Initiatives

THEME	DESCRIPTION	QUOTES	Number of Mentions
RESOURCE	Lack of adequate financial support, training equipment, and infrastructure affecting programme delivery	"We often train without proper equipment and sometimes lack training kits."	1
WEAK PROGRAM	School and club programmes are poorly structured, inconsistent, and lack proper coordination	"There is no clear structure between school and club training schedules."	3
SKILL DEVELOPMENT	Initiatives contribute moderately to improving basic technical and tactical football skills	"Training sessions help us improve our passing and ball control."	3
POSITIVE IMPACT	Existing initiatives provide motivation, exposure, and opportunities for competition	"Playing in school tournaments has helped me gain confidence and exposure."	3

The school and club initiatives came with pros and cons. Lack of resources not only impacted the regularity of training but also the capability to organize programmes. Besides, participants pointed out the scarcity of equipment and insufficient overall support.

Another huge issue was the poor structural setup of the programme. Insufficient coordination between schools and clubs resulted in occasional training and confusing paths for the advancement of players.

Even so, participants acknowledged the flip side. Current efforts enabled players to sharpen fundamental skills including passing, ball control, and tactical awareness.

Figure 4.4: NVivo Text Search Query Showing Results Preview



Propels or school-level competitions were mentioned by the participants as a source of motivation for players as well as a means of exposing them to the game and boosting their confidence.

These initiatives were quite helpful but they were not brought to the same level for all. The effectiveness of these initiatives was lessened by poor coordination and scarcity of resources. If schools and clubs could be more effectively linked, these programs could become more regular.

Documentary Evidence for Objective 3

Table 4.6: Documentary Evidence on Existing School and Club Initiatives

Document Reviewed	Existing Initiative	Assessment
School Sports Policy	Weekly football training sessions.	Provides basic development opportunities.
NASH Competition Records	Regular inter-school competitions.	Effective for talent exposure.
Club Development Report	Youth football development programme.	Moderately effective due to resource limitations.
ZIFA Grassroots Activities	Coaching and grassroots festivals.	Positive contribution where implemented.

Competition Records	Participation in district leagues.	Helps players gain competitive experience.

The papers reveal that schools and clubs Yes play a role in giving players chances for development. Training at schools help laying up rudimentary skills, while NASH competitions work as a platform for identifying players. Club activities are also helpful in player development; Yet, limited resources is a major constraint for them. In cases where ZIFA coaching clinics and football festivals were held, they supplemented the efforts. District leagues also provided players with more opportunity to play matches. The record shows that these efforts are worthwhile but irregularly supported or coordinated.

4.3.5 Objective 4: School–Club Partnerships and Athlete Progression Pathways

Table 4.7: School–Club Partnerships and Athlete Progression Pathways

THEME	DESCRIPTION	QUOTES	Number of Mentions
Informal Partnership	Existing relationships between schools and clubs are largely unofficial and lack formal agreements	"Schools and clubs work together sometimes, but there is no formal arrangement."	2
Poor Communication	Limited communication between schools and clubs affects coordination of player development activities	"Coaches from schools and clubs rarely meet to discuss player progress."	1
Need for Joint Programs	Participants emphasized the importance of collaborative training sessions, competitions, and talent development initiatives	"Schools and clubs should organize joint training camps and tournaments."	6

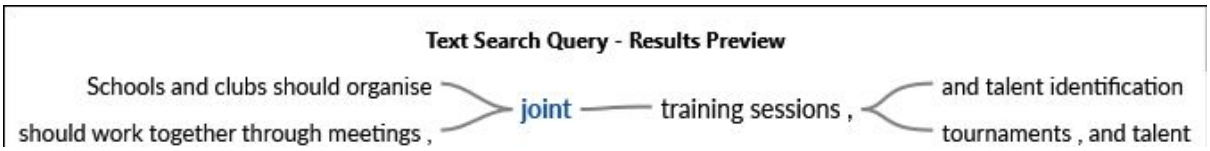
Progression Pathways	Strong partnerships can create clear routes for talented players to advance from school football to club and higher levels	"Working together would help players move smoothly from school teams to clubs."	6

School-club relationships in Bindura were informal generally. There was some cooperation, but the participants revealed that there were very few written agreements or clearly defined responsibilities.

The participants also mentioned that the communication between school and club coaches was poor. This resulted in difficulties when sharing information about the players' performance and developmental needs.

Both joint programs and progression pathways got six mentions each. The participants wished that schools and clubs with the support of running training, scouting activities, and competitions together. They viewed these arrangements as means of coordinating work and utilizing scarce resources more effectively.

Figure 4.5: NVivo Text Search Query on School–Club Partnerships



Respondents believed that stronger partnerships could give players a clearer move from school teams into clubs and higher competitions. In their view, formal agreements, regular communication and joint activities would strengthen development and progression.

Documentary Evidence for Objective 4

Table 4.8: Documentary Evidence on School–Club Partnerships

Document Reviewed	Partnership Evidence	Potential Contribution
Meeting Minutes	School coaches liaise with local club coaches regarding talented players.	Supports athlete referrals.
School Sports Policy	Encourages community participation in sport.	Creates opportunities for collaboration.
Club Constitution	Club open to recruiting school players.	Enhances progression pathways.
Competition Records	School and club teams participate in shared competitions.	Facilitates talent visibility.
Development Reports	Joint football clinics occasionally conducted.	Improves knowledge sharing and coordination.

Documentation revealed a number of informal connections that existed at the time. For example, minutes of meetings indicated that some school and club coaches talked with each other about highly skilled players. There were also school rules that promoted community sport, while club bylaws permitted the tracking of good school players. Evidence has further revealed shared competitions and football clinics held jointly by the clubs. Such activities opened up the doors for each other and they shared knowledge, but unfortunately, they were sporadic. A formalized structure may allow the relationship to be more clearly coordinated and include procedures for player referrals.

4.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.4.1 Weaknesses in Talent Identification and Talent Development Structures

The authors of the study agree with Nhamo and Magonde (2014) that facilities and resources are lacking in the Zimbabwean youth sport. Furthermore, it highlights the comment made by Akubah et al. (2024) that in African football environments, informal watching of football games can replace systematic scouting. Not having clear pathways aligns with Reeves et al.'s (2018) contention that

talent development entails planning and organised structures. In a competition a player might be seen but not be supported on the field.

This is explained by Systems Theory: the schools, clubs and development programmes lack coordination and, as a consequence, the effect of the system is less than effective. Players must be followed and supported and stronger institutional linkages are needed. Many factors influence the effectiveness of talent development systems. There are multiple factors that contribute to the effectiveness of talent development systems.

The factors identified as causing a weakening of the system were money, facilities, competition exposure, and qualified coaching. It is indeed as Dandah and Chiweshe (2021) point out, that Zimbabwe's economic difficulties make investment in grassroots sport a challenge. Lack of resources means players having fewer quality training sessions, less support as well as fewer opportunities to compete.

The findings on facilities are also in line with Sulistiyono et al. (2021) who link the lack of physical facilities with the reduction of development and performance levels. But, a lack of qualified coaches is a reminder of Nhamo and Magonde's (2014) worries for youth football coach education. As Resource Dependency Theory, organisations running out of resources, can be helped by sharing and exchanging the resources with each other. Because of this, school-club collaboration may help to alleviate some of the local difficulties.

4.4.3 is designed to assess the effectiveness of the existing school and football club initiatives.

The existing training, match and skill building programs within schools and clubs also facilitated training, but school based training programs and inter-school competitions offered players an opportunity to showcase their skills and be noticed. Technical work and competition opportunities were provided in club programmes and/or in grassroots activities. However, they were limited by the lack of resources, poor programme structure and lack of coordination.

This aligns with Bjorndal and Gjesdal (2020), who state that the development of athletes can only be effective when school and sport organisations work together. Moreover, it validates the work

of Gregson et al. (2022) that argues for fragmented programmes that do not optimise player-development opportunities.

The activities in Bindura provide an example of starting points but do not have a lasting effect in that village due to the fact that they are not always implemented and existing resources are used. There is scope for school and club working to be better coordinated for schools to be more effective. The school–club partnership program along with athlete progression pathways.

Participants felt it was important to address school club partnerships as a good method of improving school-coordinated scouting and player development. They looked for greater collaboration in training and held up to date communication between coaches and identified clear links between school sports and clubs and other competitions.

This opinion is supported by Aalberg and Sæther (2016) who link school-club cooperation with sharing of resources, coordination of support, and improved athlete management. Furthermore, Henriksen and Stam Bulova (2023) claim that IE can play a role in the success of young athletes in education and sports.

Based on Resource Dependency Theory, organisations by sharing what they lack can work more effectively. The relationships between schools and clubs at present are informal and there are some areas which are not maximised. The use of written agreements, joint programmes, regular meetings and communication could be enhanced and repetitive tasks minimised with players' support reinforced. These measures are feasible and reasonable in improving the stability of talent development in Bindura.

Through the analysis it is found that the youth football in Bindura is still restricted in structures, resources including coordination. It also shows that the links between schools and clubs could be strengthened to improve the communication around the use of resources and player progression. Results of the research confirmed that both Systems Theory and Resource Dependency Theory are suitable theories in understanding benefits that can be obtained from institutional cooperation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the important findings and conclusions from the data. Moreover, it points out the research gaps, practical and theoretical implications and future research directions. The suggestions aim at enhancing youth football via effective school-club partnerships in Bindura.

5.2 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The study examined the possibility of partnerships between schools and clubs to help to raise the profile and talent development of young players in football in Bindura. It pointed out the need for improvement in scouting, player support, coordination and progression components of the game.

Objective 1, the researchers noted weak and uncoordinated talent identification and development. In addition to lack of resources and poor infrastructure, the major issues that were identified were the lack of a regular player-monitoring system and unclear progression pathways.

The participants responded to Objective 2 (Lack of funding, poor facilities, limited competition, and very few coaches) by identifying a number of issues including: These difficulties affected the quality of training, support and opportunities for progression.

Schools plus clubs provided players with training, matches and the opportunity to develop new skills for Objective 3. A weak program structure, poor resources, and limited coordination between institutions negatively impacted their effectiveness. For Objective 4, the participants expressed the opinion that school-club partnerships might be a way to enhance communication, resource use,

scouting, and player progression. They recommended common training, agreements and development activities.

The research identified significant structural issues and opportunities for improvement arising from greater cooperation between schools and clubs.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

5.3.1 Weaknesses in Talent Identification and Talent Development Structures

There are a few scattered talent identification and development activities in Bindura with minimal coordination. Arrangements are currently based on informal practice. They do not offer ongoing checks or guarantees for the players throughout the years. Potential young players may not be identified and/or provided with assistance when participating in post-secondary sports. The factors that contribute to a lack of effective talent development systems are outlined below. Below are the factors that lead to the absence of effective talent development systems are identified.

The primary challenge for local talent development is resource issues. Development programmes are affected by lack of funding, poor facilities, few equipment and few qualified coaches, and transport issues. These problems are correlated; when there's a lack of money, it often means facilities are lacking at the same time. Joint investment and collaboration are needed to ease their effect. There is an existing school initiative and a football club initiative that is effective.

Current programs offer valuable involvement opportunities, skill exposure and competition opportunities. But they are not very effective as they are not well resourced and coordinated. They can offer better support if the schools and clubs work together more purposefully.

5.3.4 School-Club Partnerships and Athlete Progression Pathways

Partnerships between schools and clubs provide a valuable means for enhancing the talent development of local talent. Written agreements can help with communication, resource utilisation, scouting and player pathways. Missed opportunity with Bindura youth football system as there is no formal agreement.

5.3.5 Overall Conclusion

The challenges in Bindura are mainly structural. Links between institutions are weak, resources are limited and pathways are absent, all of which limit the efficacy of youth football development. A pragmatic solution is school-club partnerships. They can contribute to building a more robust system for local development by aligning resources and establishing well-defined pathways for players.

The study has certain limitations. There were some limitations in the study.

There were several constraints that arose during the study that should be taken into account when interpreting the results.

The study was conducted in Bindura District only. The results may not be representative of other districts and provinces in Zimbabwe, and should not be assumed to be valid in other parts of the country.

Twenty-two participants were involved in the qualitative design. It gave detailed accounts but the results cannot be "statistically generalised" to all youth-football stakeholders in Zimbabwe. The study focused on depth of understanding, rather than breadth.

There were some informative documents that were not available. Some schools and clubs did not have partnership agreements in writing, or have full programme records. This reduced the amount of documentary evidence available to compare and contrast with data from interviews.

There were some participants who started off not wanting to talk about their weaknesses in the organisation. They were informed that their names would not be disclosed. The researcher also developed rapport before the interviews to allow for ease of responses.

The study primarily depended on self-reports of the participants. The opinions might have been affected by memory and their interests or a desire not to make their organisation appear poorly. To avert this risk, interview evidence was juxtaposed with documents and perspectives from multiple stakeholder groups.

In spite of these constraints, the study offers valuable information regarding youth football development and school-club relationship in Bindura. It provides a foundation for further study and action at the local level.

5.5 Implications And Recommendations

5.5.1 Implications for Practice

Bindura Schools, clubs etc football stakeholders are advised to do the following to improve the situation:

1. Make Formal Partnership Agreements

Schools and clubs should enter into basic Memoranda of Understanding regarding their responsibilities, the sharing of resources and how they will collaborate in player development for a common purpose. The pledges need to include what each party will provide, and how progress will be monitored. A yearly review would enable partners to amend the agreement if there is a local need change.

2. Adopt Joint- Talented ID and Scouting Programmes

There must be a common method of scouting and keeping records of potential players within schools and clubs. Coaches and club scouts in schools may use the following common assessment criteria and scouting dates and one player record. If this information were shared it would decrease the likelihood of a capable player not being recruited due to institutional working in isolation.

3. Plan for regular joint training and development activities

All training times should be agreed upon between schools and clubs and sessions, coaching clinic/ camps should be co-ordinated. Consultation should take place with planning of coaches from both settings to keep priorities in mind and avoid conflicting schedules. However, joint activities would also afford a chance for coaches to learn from each other.

4. Invest in Sporting Infrastructure (Priority)

Pitches, training areas and equipment should be enhanced for local authorities/schools/clubs/community stakeholders. They are able to integrate fundraising with local government support and involvement. Improved facilities would improve quality of training and decrease likelihood of injury.

5. Increase the size of Coach Education and Development Programmes

The Sports and Recreation Commission (ZIFA), schools and clubs need to expand the provision of quality coach education at an affordable price. Continuing development and subsidised courses and workshops could enhance the technical guidance and mentorship of youth coaches.

7. Understand the need for Structured Athlete Monitoring and Progression Systems.

Training, competition involvement and development steps should be documented on a paper or electronic player record. It is to be used by both school and club coaches. Frequent reviews would enable partners to better make decisions on progression and identify players who require additional support.

7. Enhance Communication and Coordination Systems

School and club heads should keep in regular contact to discuss player development and activities. Having a clear communication channel would help to ensure information sharing was consistent and tackle one of the primary challenges mentioned by participants.

Support Dual Career Pathways.

Schools and clubs need to help balancing school and football. Academic support by teachers and communication with coaches can help to minimize conflicts between the academic and physical training areas, along with flexible training times.

5.5.2 Implications for Theory

The study contributes to the evidence in a resource-constrained environment of Zimbabwe. Previous studies of school-club connections have been primarily conducted in football systems which are already well established (Bjørndal & Gjesdal, 2020; Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023). The Bindura case illustrates that partnership principles are also relevant in situations where resources and funds are scarce, but the forms of partnership need to be adapted to local contexts.

The results support the Systems Theory. The outcomes of youth football were not a matter of either the school or the club.It was not a matter of just the school or the club, it was a matter of relationships between a number of stakeholders. Links that were broken down in fragments did not have as strong an impact. The broader development context was enhanced through coordinated partnerships.

Results also support the Resource Dependency Theory. Schools and clubs were different resources: the schools had access to players regularly, structure and some facilities, and the clubs had technical expertise and competitive routes. Cooperation enabled the use of these resources together and helped to overcome some of the constraints.

The study contributes to the few publications in Zimbabwe and Sub-Saharan Africa in the field of youth football development. It documents the local conditions and partnership opportunities at Bindura. It also indicates that the Holistic Ecological Approach could be of assistance in environments where the quality of the player's environment is a function of inter-organisational relationships and resources.

The results also demonstrate the feasibility of applying LTAD principles in resource-limited contexts. Bindura might not need to implement each step of the model as is, but the concept of long-term planning, progressive development and institutional coordination is still good.

5.5.3 Implications for future research

The following are some recommendations for further research based on the findings and limitations of this study:

1. Geographical Comparative Studies

School-club partnerships could be compared with partnerships in other school districts and provinces in the future. Such studies may help to shed light on local factors that facilitate or impede partnership and contextually inform policy.

2. Quantitative Impact Studies

The impact of partnerships on player retention, progression and performance could be measured using quantitative and longitudinal designs. This qualitative study would provide a detailed description that would complement these studies.

3. Role of Other Stakeholders

Future studies may focus on the activities of parents, community, private groups and local authorities. Their opinions can help identify other areas of support for youth football.

4. Longitudinal Studies

When players leave school to go onto to club football and higher they can be followed up longitudinally to check what factors promote or hinder progression over time.

5. Urban-Rural Comparative Studies

Urban football systems can be compared with rural football systems to find out the different needs and then provide suitable interventions.

6. Intervention Studies

Specific school-club partnership models may be pilot tested in Bindura or similar areas using Action research. It might determine what is effective, for whom and in what context.

Study of coaching and player development.

Future research may be expanded to the coach's education and the psychological, social and educational issues of young players. These areas are key to more comprehensive athlete-development programmes.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The results, conclusions, limitations and implications were summarized in this chapter. It revealed that lack of coordination, insufficient resources, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of a clear progression pathway are barriers to youth football in Bindura. Identification and development are mostly informal, resulting in lower opportunities for players to move up.

School/Club collaborations provide a viable solution. Formal arrangements can enhance communication, shared resources, joint training, player pathways. The study calls for the creation of such partnerships at Bindura to ensure sustainable and consistent youth football development.

The study supplies Zimbabwean proof that is pertinent to Systems Theory and Resource Dependency Theory. Comparisons with other locations should be made further study and a consideration of the role of parents, communities, and other partners is warranted.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL FOOTBALL COACHES

1. What talent identification methods are used in your school football programme?
2. What challenges do you experience in identifying and developing talented football players?
3. How does your school collaborate with local football clubs?
4. What factors limit athlete progression from school football to higher levels of competition?
5. How can school–club partnerships be strengthened to improve youth football development in Bindura?
6. What recommendations would you make for improving talent development structures in youth football?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR CLUB FOOTBALL COACHES

1. How is talent identification conducted within your football club?
2. What criteria do you use when selecting young players for development programmes?
3. What challenges do you face in developing youth football players?
4. How do you collaborate with schools in identifying and developing players?
5. What role do resources and facilities play in player development?
6. What are the main barriers to effective talent progression in Bindura?
7. How can school–club partnerships be improved to enhance youth football development?

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SPORTS DIRECTORS/PE TEACHERS

1. How is school football organized in your institution?
2. What methods are used to identify talented football players?
3. What challenges affect football development in schools?
4. How do schools collaborate with local football clubs?
5. What support is provided for talented learners beyond school competitions?
6. What are the limitations of current school football structures?
7. How can partnerships between schools and clubs be strengthened?

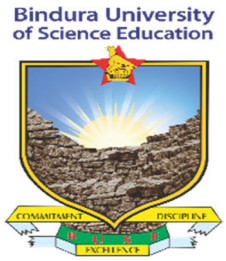
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR CLUB ADMINISTRATORS

1. What is the structure of your football development programme?
2. How are players recruited into your club system?
3. What challenges affect club football development?

4. How do you coordinate with schools in talent identification?
5. What systems are in place for player monitoring and progression?
6. What role do partnerships play in your club operations?
7. What improvements are needed in youth football development systems?

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR YOUTH FOOTBALL PLAYERS

1. How did you become involved in football?
2. What support do you receive from your school or club?
3. What challenges do you face in developing your football skills?
4. Do you receive opportunities to be scouted or selected for higher levels?
5. How do school and club systems help your development?
6. What barriers limit your progression in football?
7. What improvements would help young players develop better?



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCES

1 June 2026

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: REQUEST FOR ORGANISATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH STUDY

This letter confirms that Gratitude Majasi is a registered Bachelor of Science Honours in Sports Science and Management student in the Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences at Bindura University of Science Education.

The student is conducting a research project entitled: "School-Club Partnership and Talent Development Structures in Bindura Youth Football" under the supervision of the Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences. The study is an essential requirement for completing the degree programme.

We kindly request your organisation's cooperation in facilitating the collection of data relevant to the study. Your participation will contribute significantly to the successful completion of this academic research and to the generation of knowledge that may benefit the sport industry and related sectors.

Participation is voluntary, and all information obtained will be treated as strictly confidential. Organisations and participants will remain anonymous in all reports and publications unless explicit written consent is granted.

A copy or summary of the completed study may be made available to participating organisations upon request.

For any clarification, please contact:

Dr. Lysias Tapiwanashe Charumbira

Chairperson, Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences

Email: lcharumbira@buse.ac.zw

Tel: +263 772 916 712

Thank you for your valued support and cooperation.

Yours faithfully,



Dr. Lysias Tapiwanashe Charumbira

Chairperson

Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences

Bindura University of Science Education

FACULTY OF SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCES

DISSERTATION SUBMISSION APPROVAL AND RELEASE FORM

For submission of a dissertation for assessment/examination

This form must accompany the dissertation submitted to the Department. All applicable sections should be completed before submission.

A. STUDENT AND DISSERTATION DETAILS

Student full name: GRATITUDE.T.MAJASI_____	**Student number:** B222596B_____
Programme: SPORTS SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT_____	**Submission date:** 31/08/2026_____
Dissertation title: SCHOOL CLUB PARTNERSHIP AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURES IN BINDURA YOUTH FOOTBALL_____	
Ethics approval/reference no. (if applicable): _____	**Submission category:** First submission ☐ Resubmission ☐ Final corrected copy ☐

B. SUPERVISOR CERTIFICATION AND AUTHORISATION

I certify that I have supervised the above-named student and, to the best of my professional judgment, confirm that:

1. the student has engaged appropriately with the supervision process and has addressed the substantive feedback and corrections communicated during supervision;
2. the dissertation is substantially complete and is presented in accordance with applicable University, Faculty and Departmental requirements and accepted scholarly conventions;
3. where applicable, the required research ethics approval, permissions and/or institutional clearances were obtained, and the study was conducted within those approvals;
4. applicable academic-integrity/originality requirements have been reviewed, and I am not aware of any unresolved concern that should prevent submission; and
5. the dissertation is, in my professional judgment, ready to be submitted for independent assessment/examination.

Important: *Supervisor approval confirms readiness for examination; it does not predetermine the examiners' judgment, guarantee a pass, or imply endorsement of every argument, interpretation or conclusion in the dissertation.*

Supervisor name: R.MUNHAMO_____	**Signature:** 	**Date:** _____
Co-supervisor name (if applicable): _____	**Signature:** _____	**Date:** _____

C. STUDENT DECLARATION

I confirm that the version being submitted is the version approved for submission by my supervisor(s); that all sources and contributions have been appropriately acknowledged; and that I remain responsible for the integrity, accuracy and originality of the work in accordance with University regulations.

Student name: GRATITUDE.T.MAJASI **Signature:**  **Date:** 31/08/2026_____

_____

D. DEPARTMENTAL CLEARANCE

I confirm that the required supervisory approval has been recorded and that, subject to the University's submission and examination procedures, the dissertation is cleared by the Department for submission for assessment/examination. Departmental clearance is administrative and does not predetermine the examination outcome.

Chairperson/Head of Department: **Signature:** _____ **Date:** _____

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