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Master's Thesis of Global Sport Management

**Exploring Factors Influencing
Elite Golf Performance in
Kenya**

케냐 엘리트 골프 선수의 경기력 관련 요인 탐구

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Abstract

Exploring Factors Influencing Elite Golf Performance in Kenya

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The increase in popularity of the game of Golf is an achievement to be acknowledged as it has experienced incredible growth over the years. However, this achievement is barely reflected on the representation of Kenyan golfers at the World's golf stage unlike in athletics when Kenya leads in middle- and long-distance races in the world.

This qualitative case study was a part of a larger phenomenological investigation intended to explore the factors influencing elite golf performance in Kenya. The study sought to examine how the Micro, Meso and Macro factors undermined golfing success by the Kenyan elite golfers

and to come up with recommendations for the future growth and development of elite golf.

From a purposeful homogeneous sampling of ten participants, Kenyan elite golfers with a lot of experience were interviewed through semi-structured open-ended interview questions about their golf's career paths and experiences concerning how and why Kenyan golfers continue to lag behind other nation's elite golfers.

This study highlighted important challenges faced by Kenyan elite golfers as an explanation to the underperformance. Results suggested that lack of quality physiological and psychological training, financial challenges, lack of a sustainable competition structures and coaching among others contributed to the underperformance by Kenyan elite golfers.

The results of this study serve as the baseline information on elite golf in Kenya and it's hoped that these findings will help to influence the government and golf federations to provide and create an enabling environment for success in golf.

Keywords: Elite golf, High Performance, Kenya, Interview

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Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables.....	vi
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1 Research Background.....	1
1.2 Research Objectives	4
1.3 Research Questions	4
Chapter 2. Literature Review.....	6
2.1 Golf as a Sport	6
2.2 Golf in Kenya	7
2.3 Motivation for Playing Golf.....	10
2.3.1 Health Benefits	16
2.3.2 Social Benefits.....	18
2.3.3 Economic Benefits.....	19
2.3.4 Environmental Benefits	22
2.4 Determinants of Good Performance	23
2.4.1 Optimal Performance.....	23
2.4.2 Mental Abilities of Golf Performance	24
2.4.3 Technical and Physical Abilities of Golf Performance	25

2.5	The High Performance Model	26
2.5.1	High Performance Management of Elite Sport	27
2.5.2	Managing High Performance Sport	33
Chapter 3. Method.....		40
3.1	Research Design	40
3.2	Participants	41
3.3	Interview Guide	43
3.4	Pilot Study	44
3.5	Procedure and Data Analysis.....	45
Chapter 4. Findings.....		47
4.1	Introduction	47
4.2	Micro Level Environment	49
4.2.1	Physical Fitness Status	49
4.2.2	Mental Preparedness.....	51
4.2.3	Significant Others	53
4.2.4	Frequency of training.....	56
4.3	Meso-Environment	57
4.3.1	Talent Identification and Development	57
4.3.2	Financial Support.....	60

4.3.3	Competitions and exposure opportunities	61
4.3.4	Access to golf facilities and equipment.....	62
4.3.5	Coaching.....	63
4.4	Macro Environment.....	64
4.4.1	Commercialization of Sport.....	64
4.4.2	Government Policy and Involvement.....	65
4.4.3	Socio- Cultural Factors.....	66
Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusion		69
5.1	Discussion.....	69
5.1.1	Micro Level Factors.....	70
5.1.2	Meso level factors.....	72
5.1.3	Macro level factors	76
5.2	Conclusion.....	77
5.3	Limitations and Directions for Future Research.....	78
References.....		80
Appendices		85

List of Tables

Table 1: Summary of participants	43
Table 2: Emerging themes.....	48

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Golf has increasingly become more popular on an international and national level (The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews – R&A, 2016). Mentioning big names like Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy, Jason Day etc suggests how prevalent the game has become. Globally there has been a steady increase of tournament coverage and media advertising of events such as The Masters and the Ryder Cup (Hudson, 2009). The popularity of the game of golf has also been fueled by its resumption as an Olympic sport in 2016. Previously, golf had featured in the 1904 Olympics but was removed due to its lack of popularity. The realization by government and new participants that golf which is already a healthy sport to play, could be pursued more safely than many other forms of recreation, gave it a higher profile. An unexpected opportunity therefore arose to grow the sport to a point where, globally, a record 66.6 million people are now enjoying various forms of golf. (R&A Report 2021).

Hallmann et.,al (2012) explained that elite sports are widely considered by national governments as a merit good through which many benefits to society as whole can be fostered through the stimulation of national pride and happiness. For that reason governments embarks in

supporting the elite sport system with financial and human resources (Cooke, 1996; Pringle, 2001). Success in elite sports also acts as a motivation tool for young athletes to continue pushing to get to that elite level and in addition most sportsmen and women who have excelled in sports, had earned international accolades, and changed their financial fortunes forever (Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage Kenya, 2020).

Unlike in athletics where Kenya has excelled worldwide especially in Middle- and Long-distance races, Golf is hidden in the shadow and currently no any representation in any of the popular golf tours like Professional Golfers Association (PGA), Ladies Professional Golfers Association (LPGA), DP World Tour, Asian Tour and Ladies European Tour (LET). The reason for this is because a Kenyans rank very high on the Official World Golf Ranking (OWGR) and therefore no one qualifies to play at the above-mentioned levels. According to OWGR (2021), the best ranked Kenyan professional at the close of year 2021 was ranked position 1744, Worse case is on the Women's ranking as no single Kenyan lady is listed on the Rolex women's ranking (Rolex women Ranking, 2022).

While research on various fields of sports is increasing, there lack studies that focus on golf performance and participation in Kenya, with even less studies focusing on the context of Africa. Previous studies in Kenya

investigated the underrepresentation of women in sports leadership and concluded that the inadequate financing of women training in sports (Economic factors); the belief that women cannot lead men (cultural factors); lack of women role models in sports leadership (social factors); and women's failure to use their own networks to help females get jobs (political factors) were the main respective factors leading to job inequity in sports leadership. The economic factors stood out as the main impediments to women provision of leadership in sports (Mwisukha and Rintaugu, 2007). Other studies have focused on the underachievement of Kenyan women in sports which was attributed to differentiated socialization processes in to sports (Njororai, 1996).

There was no study about golf as a sport in Kenya, this study aimed to fill that gap in literature by exploring the factors undermining elite golf success in Kenya. As a fundamental foundation on this area of study, it is expected that further research will be conducted to explain other important facets of the game of golf in the Kenyan society for instance, its contribution to the growth of the economy, low participation level especially by women. Moreover, this study will shade light of the benefits associated with golf participation, the role of family in socializing their children in to golf and

would guide the decisions of policy makers while designing the specific golf programs or policies.

1.2 Research Objectives

The main aim of this study was to explore the factors influencing elite golfers' performance in golf in Kenya. This study utilized the high performance model (HP Model) to analyse the Micro, Meso and Macro factors that affect a golfer's performance during tournaments. The study intended to understand reasons for the underperformance by the Kenyan elite golfers. A good understanding of the factors enabled the researcher to come up with recommendations on the interventions that can be made to enhance and boost performance.

1.3 Research Questions

To achieve the intended purpose of the study, the following research questions were developed to guide the study.

RQ1. What are the Micro-level factors influencing the Elite golfers performance in Kenya?

RQ2. What are the Meso-level factors influencing the Elite golfers performance in Kenya?

RQ3. What are the Macro-level factors influencing the Elite golfers performance in Kenya?

Chapter 2. Literature Review

1.4 Golf as a Sport

The game of golf is played with a maximum of 14 clubs and a ball, starting from the teeing ground to the hole with a consecutive number of strokes. A stroke can be defined as the swinging of the golf club while hitting the ball with the goal of moving the ball nearer to the hole. A round of golf consists of 18 holes whereby the player has to hit the ball into the hole with the fewest number of strokes possible. At the end of the round, the player with the least strokes wins the competition (R&A, 2016). There are numerous playing formats for instance, stroke- play and Match-play which can also derive other types of competitions such as foursomes, four ball better ball, green-some and scramble.

Golf is an individualistic game and is played without supervision or an umpire. Unlike other team sports such as soccer or rugby, the game of golf requires players to regulate and monitor themselves during a round of golf (Clark et al., 2005). In addition, the golfer is expected to maintain an attitude of sportsmanship and adhere to the discipline of the game as well as demonstrate respect towards playing partners (R&A, 2016).

A research study found a correlation between the skill level of a player and their adherence to golf etiquette and rules. Their findings also

indicated that a good understanding of the rules of golf serves as an indicator of the players' perception of the sport (Barnicle et al., 2014).

1.5 Golf in Kenya

Kenya, officially the Republic of Kenya is a country in East Africa which sits at 580,367 square kilometres making it the 48th largest country by area in the world. Kenya is bordered by South Sudan to the northwest, Ethiopia to the north, Somalia to the east, Uganda to the west, Tanzania to the south, and the Indian Ocean to the southeast. As per the 2019 census, it was reported that the population was above 47.6 million.

In Kenya, Agriculture is the largest economic activity sector; tea and coffee are traditional cash crops, while fresh flowers are a fast-growing export. Tourism in Kenya is the second-largest source of foreign exchange revenue following agriculture, the main tourist attractions are photo safaris through the 60 national parks and game reserves. Other attractions include the wildebeest migration at the Masai Mara, which is considered to be the 7th wonder of the world; historical mosques, and colonial-era forts at Mombasa, Malindi, and Lamu; renowned scenery such as the white-capped Mount Kenya and the Great Rift Valley, a splendid view of Mount Kilimanjaro across the border into Tanzania and the beaches along the Swahili Coast, in the Indian Ocean.

Sport has been an important element of Kenyan culture and from history, various indigenous traditional sports have prevailed for instance wrestling, racing exercises, stick fights, hunting (using spears and arrows), board games, bull fights and dances.

Kenya owes credit to the British colonialization for modern sports, they introduced and organized professional sports as early as 1922, The most popular sports in Kenya is football but Globally, Kenya is mainly known for its dominance in middle-distance and long- distance races like the Marathon which has yield medals consistently in the Olympics and at the commonwealth games. The sports were then introduced in schools in 1925 and most of the sports federations were registered thereafter including the Kenya Golf Union which was established in 1928 and it happens to be the oldest running sports union in Kenya.

The current total number of golfers in Kenya is approximately twelve thousand (12,000), out of which men triumph over 77% while women settle for only 23%. (Kenya Golf Union World Handicapping system, 2022). The golfers are distributed among the 38 golf courses across the five regions in the country with over 50% located within the Nairobi City Metropolitan.

Most of the golf is enjoyed at the respective members club level for instance the weekly members nights and club tournaments. There are a few inter club competitions like the Nairobi District league, Easter tournament, Patrons Club, RNGC and Francombe for the women. On the national level, the Kenya Golf Union (KGU) runs a series of 22 events called Kenya Amateur Golf championships (KAGC) which counts towards the World Amateur Golf Rankings. The series also acts as the qualifier for national team selection for international duties (www.kenyagolfunion.org). Equally the Kenya Ladies Golf Union (KLGU) runs a series of Golfer of the Year (GOTY) and selects the Women's National team from this ranking.

The Magical Kenya Open (MKO) championship is the most lucrative annual professional tournament in Kenya. It has a history dating back to 1967 and appeared on the DP World Tour's schedule for the first time in 2019, having previously taken its place on the Challenge Tour schedule since 1991. The event offers a chance to the local professionals and elite amateurs from the various Kenyan Clubs to compete at a global stage with the rest of the professionals coming from all over the world. With live global broadcast coverage across four days, the Magical Kenya Open offers a great opportunity to promote Kenya as a golf destination to the world and

also support Kenyan golf development. (Ministry of sports culture & Heritage 2020).

The Magical Kenya Ladies championship is the ladies version of the Magical Kenya Open which was established in 2019 as part of the Ladies European Tour annual Schedule. (Ladies European Tour, 2022).

1.6 Motivation for Playing Golf

The major cause of death and disability globally are non-communicable diseases like obesity, heart disease and stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated the annual worldwide tally to be approximately 35 million people per year dying of these chronic diseases, which is double the number dying from all combined infectious diseases, like HIV/AIDS and malaria (WHO, 2005). It is sad that children have a shorter lifespan than their parents due to non-communicable diseases (Wang & Veugelers, 2008). Aside from the human cost of losing lives, the non-communicable diseases are also associated with a huge financial loss in terms of money spent in hospitals for treatment and medication, in the year 2005 alone, the estimated losses in national income from heart disease, stroke and diabetes were \$18 billion in China, \$11 billion in the Russian Federation, \$9 billion in India, and \$3 billion in Brazil (IWG, 2008).

The importance of sports and physical activity for most policymakers and politicians lies in its status as the least expensive and most effective preventive treatment for combating the increasing worldwide problem of non-communicable ailments. Bonow et. Al (2002) noted that physical activity and sports may represent the most effective strategy to prevent chronic disease. The relationship between sedentary behaviors and prevalence of obesity has been well documented. Although it is only one factor in a myriad of influences, the number of sports and physical activity in which people engage is linked to their status of being overweight or obese.

Sports are valuable in policy term; therefore, because they are a popular form of exercise, they are a palatable medicine. They are also effective medicine, as sports participation is associated with higher overall levels of physical activity (Troost et.al, 1996).

Increasing participation in sports forms a core objective across a range of government policies in most developed countries through the sport for all idea in an effort to reduce the consequences of inactivity and sedentary lifestyles to its citizens. Breuer & Pawlowski (2011) found out that the wide-scale development of sports and other physical activities has

become a policy target because of their significance in health care systems and economies in general.

Physical activity during childhood and adolescence is an important part of the foundation of a happy, healthy and longer life. The serious dangers associated with inactive lifestyles are equally clear, such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity. Research conducted by Sisson & Katzmarzyk, (2008) on scientists, medical professionals and public bodies expressed serious concerns that current levels of sports and physical activity among children and young people are inadequate, and that most children and young people around the world fail to meet recommended daily levels of activity. Other studies have suggested that the pattern of childhood and adolescent activity in the developed world, and at an increasing rate, in the developing worlds is getting worse (Beets et.al., 2011). Craig et al. (2012) added that there is a 'pandemic' of inactivity. Many authorities suggest that children and young people should build up at least 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity every day, and at least three times a week to accrue these benefits (Britain & Donaldson, 2004). It is unfortunate that there is ample evidence that not all children and young people spend enough time being physically active, In England for instance, data showed that only 32 percent of boys and 24 percent of girls achieved the recommended levels of physical

activity (Craig, Mindell & Hirani, 2009). There is a general pattern which suggests a gradual reduction in levels of sports and physical activity from childhood through adolescence across the globe, with a drop-off that is particularly striking among girls, Crombie et.,al (2009) found that barely one in ten 14-year- old girls in the United States meet the activity recommendations.

Becker and Mincer (1962) created the human capital model which related the relationship between sports, physical activity and human development according to six different domains of capital; physical, emotional, individual, social, intellectual and financial. Physical Capital refers to the direct benefits of sports and physical activity to physical health and human function, including the prevention and mitigation of non-communicable diseases and conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and obesity. Emotional Capital are the psychological and mental health benefits associated with sports and physical activity, including increased levels of self-esteem and self- efficacy, reduced depression and anxiety, reduced social isolation, and a greater ability to process stressful events. Individual Capital are the elements of a person's character like life skills, interpersonal skills, values that accrue through participation in play, sports and other forms of sports and physical activity for instance teamwork,

co-operation, moral and social responsibility, and resilience. Social Capital are the outcomes that arise when networks between people, groups, organizations, and civil society are strengthened because of participation in group-based physical activity, play, or competitive sports. This domain of this capital includes the development of both prosocial behaviors and social inclusion through participation in physical activity. Intellectual Capital are the cognitive and educational gains that are increasingly linked to participation in sports and physical activity. This feature of capital focuses particularly on the effects of regular exercise on cognitive functioning, on subject-specific performance at school, and on general academic achievement. Last but not least Financial Capital includes gains in terms of earning power, job performance, productivity and job attainment, along with reduced costs of health care that are linked to regular sports and physical activity participation. Each of the above capitals represents a set of important investments to human health and well-being. It is however worthy of noting that the capitals act synergistically for example, the development of Intellectual Capital has been shown to have significant positive effects on Financial Capital, and the effects of increased Social Capital are felt in each of the other Capitals. So, it is important to pursue all the capitals and not neglect others.

Golf is a sport that is usually played on a large open-air course, in which a ball is struck with a club, with the aim of taking the lowest number of shots possible to get the ball into a series of holes in the ground. Golf is a sport played by 55 million people in 206 countries, by males and females across the life-course. Globally, this compares to 250 million direct participants in football (soccer), 75 million tennis and 5 million rugby union players. Gaining health benefits and exercise are powerful motivators for persons to play sport, and golf in particular. Golfers more frequently continue to play into middle age compared with participants in sports like football and rugby. Golf is played by people of all backgrounds, but participation is stronger in males than females. At all levels and in all roles – community participation, elite athletics, coaching, and leadership – women, especially those from marginalized groups, have been under-represented in the sports sector. Working in a sector where there are in the minority can give women the sense that they do not belong in the world of sport (Sport Scotland, 2008).

The Focus (2020), adds that media coverage focuses almost entirely on men's sports. On average, only 5% of sports coverage in national and local print media is dedicated to women's sport. This is significant because the media plays a central role in informing our knowledge, opinions and

attitudes about women and sport, which, in turn, influence participation levels.

1.6.1 Health Benefits

The World Health Organization defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that result in energy expenditure above resting level WHO (2011). On the other hand, Sport is defined as all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels WHO (2011). Improvements in the sport and physical activity participation levels of citizens provide benefits for health, economic and social outcomes for countries. Health is influenced by a range of individual behaviours and characteristics, and the physical, social and economic environment that people are subject to. There is compelling evidence that regular physical activity has longevity, physical and mental health benefits for people of all ages, genders, geographical and socioeconomic backgrounds, and can deliver economic benefits for communities, as well as national and international policymakers. Research has evidenced that Participation in sport and physical activity is strongly associated with decreased risk of several chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension,

coronary heart disease, strokes, osteoporosis and some cancers (Nocon et al., 2008; Warburton et al., 2006). Regular physical activity promotes subjective well-being and life quality, mostly through improved mood, increased self-esteem and self-perception (Biddle et al., 2003; Stephens, 1988). Furthermore, participation in sport improves mental health outcomes by reducing risks of anxiety and depression (Fox, 1999; Petruzzello et al., 1991). Golf as a sport has potential to provide physical activity, and thus health, economic and social benefits to persons of all ages. Golf can provide moderate intensity physical activity and is associated with physical health benefits that include improved cardiovascular, respiratory and metabolic profiles, and improved wellness. The best available evidence suggests that playing golf may contribute to reduced mortality and increased life expectancy (Murray et al., 2017)

According to Getchell et al. (2000) regular participation in golf may improve lung function and maintain it in older adults. Separate golf and swimming interventions decreased hospital admission rates and symptom severity, while improving quality of life. The incidence of golfing injury is moderate. Accidental head injuries are rare, but can have serious consequence. The relative contribution of golf to population physical activity increases in older adults, a group that are typically less physically

active than younger adults, but for all ages remains considerably less than recreational walking, which is highly accessible and often bears zero cost.

1.6.2 Social Benefits

A study conducted in the UK confirmed that playing golf can produce relatively higher levels of life satisfaction when compared to other sporting and leisure activities performed at a moderate intensity (Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017). Golfers typically utilise the time to play with friends and colleagues during their leisure time, thereby creating and nurturing social relations. Golf is also played outdoors in a natural green environment, which has been found to further promote personal wellness (Bowling et al., 2010).

Golf is a social activity by nature and it is evident in more recent times the strong correlation between taking up the game with the social interaction. Golf is undeniably a social sport, and there are arguably more social benefits of golf than many other sports. A comprehensive survey conducted by Golfshake found, highlighting the attractive benefits of the sport in a modern age, golf is a low-impact sport, meaning that it is a low-impact exercise. You can play at your own pace, and most of your physical expenditure will be used on walking between holes.

According to Coate and Schwenkenberg (2013), quantitative and qualitative studies have described benefits related to self and group identity

and social connections, many of which have been cultured long term. Golf facilitated opportunities for intergenerational interaction, and created opportunities to rebuild social connections and confidence during and post illness.

Golf is associated to development of social Capital which refers to connections among individuals, social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them (Putnam, 2000). Social capital allows a group of people to work together effectively to achieve a common purpose or goal. It allows a society or organization, such as a corporation or a non-profit, to function together as a whole through trust and shared identity, norms, values, and mutual relationships. In an investigation, it was found that that active participation in voluntary organizations can foster social trust (Putnam, 2000).

1.6.3 Economic Benefits

The 20th century has been marked by significant rise in the demand for sports tourism throughout the world with focus shifting from the health and fitness benefits of sports to increased use of sports to market destinations (Weed, 2009). The attraction toward sports tourism has gained momentum with Gratton and Henry (2001) indicating that sports is being recognized as having the potential to make a significant contribution to

contemporary society while Emery (2002) suggests that major sports events have the potential to offer significant benefits to any city that hosts such events. The same view is taken by Bunce (1995) who observes that world cities are increasingly choosing sports events as a potential growth strategy and a means of achieving strategic corporate objectives. In the face of this realization, many countries and especially cities have been bidding to host special events like the Olympics, World Cup events, Motor rally and special marathons.

In the view of Ritchie and Adaire (2004), sports tourism can be defined as travel to participate in passive sports e.g. (sports events and sport museums) sport holiday or active sport holiday e.g. (scuba diving, cycling and golf). Graham et al (2001), adds by noting that Ritchie and Adaire (2004) left out active sporting in their definition and they provide an alternative definition of sports tourism as a three- dimensional concept involving travel away from home to play sport, watch sport or visit a sport attraction and include competitive and non- competitive activities (i.e. golfing). Sinclair (2005) observes that sports tourism also encompasses travel for such activity as can be regarded as sports supportive. Golf Kenya among other sports associations in the country, are expected to play the following roles; locally promote the sports activities, exercise effective

management of the sport and competition, develop and maintain of sports facilities, development and maintain infrastructure, lobby skills to obtain government support, lobby skills to attract and host international tournaments/events, uphold internationally acceptable practice while hosting leading international sports personality, promote Kenya as an appealing destination for the sports, attract superior and adequate accommodation facilities at the destination, seek corporate sponsorship and funding and be involved in creating a sound partnering framework between sports to tourism. The Kenya Vision 2030 report (2007) identifies sporting associations as key participants in galvanizing the success of sports tourism.

In addition, golf is a big contributor to the economy with the number of professional golfers, coaches, administrators all depending on it for a living, Golf is an \$84 billion economic engine that drives nearly 2 million jobs and contributes more to charity than any other major sports industry. (The National, 2019). Golf is a multifaceted economy, which comprises several industrial sectors and a wide range of businesses. At its centre, it is a global sport and leisure activity, which embraces tourism, hospitality and real estate. Golf also incorporates core businesses such as media, tournaments, capital investment, machinery, sporting equipment and apparel

that is supported by a network of interrelated industries, including air travel and car rental (SRI International, 2008).

1.6.4 Environmental Benefits

Golf also has positive environmental benefits in that it provides positive impact on biodiversity through the protection and conservation of natural habitats (Audubon International, 2009). Additionally, golf courses construction and operation can lead to creation of wildlife sanctuaries, water resource protection, rehabilitation of degraded landscapes and improved local air quality. Such positive environments can educate golfers and the general public on environmental conservation and protection and promote environmentally sound management practices beyond the course itself (Audubon International, 2009). Colding and Folke (2009) noted that from an ecosystem management perspective, golf courses represent a promising measure for restoring and enhancing biodiversity in ecologically simplified landscapes. Furthermore, the review suggests that golf courses hold a real potential to be designed and managed to promote critical ecosystem services, like pollination and natural pest control, providing an opportunity for joint collaboration among conservation, restoration and recreational interests. On the negative side, golf has negative impacts that arise during golf facility construction and include deforestation and

destruction of natural landscapes that ultimately contributes to a loss of flora and fauna (Salgot and Tapias 2006; Wheeler and Nauright 2006).

1.7 Determinants of Good Performance

1.7.1 Optimal Performance

The main and most important aspect of optimal performance in all sports as expressed by psychology theorist is Flow. Csikszentmihalyi, (1999) defined flow as the ideal state of mind where the athletes perceive a balance between the challenges in the environment and their capability to effectively deal with these challenges. Flow is also viewed as peak performance (Clark et al., 2005) and mindfulness (Potgieter & Botha, 2014).

Fletcher & Hartwell, 2004 contributed by confirming that being mentally focused, employing effective emotional regulation and coordinating motor movements would optimise the performance of any athlete, including golfers.

The optimal performance of a golfer comprises of various specific skills (mental, technical and physical) of the game (Fletcher & Hartwell, 2004).

1.7.2 Mental Abilities of Golf Performance

High achievement-oriented athletes in all sports have been closely associated with mental toughness (Jones, Hanton & Connaughton, 2002). Experiential learning forms an integral part of developing mental toughness and exposure to challenging situations in training and competition fosters ample coping and problem-solving skills (Crust & Clough (2011). In addition, having and maintaining meaningful social networks also contributes to mental toughness (Crust & Clough, 2011; Nel, 2014). Therefore, the cultivation of this factor significantly contributes to the development of a highly competitive, self-motivated and committed individual who is able to cope efficiently and maintain focus and concentration under stressed or high-pressure circumstances which is a significant advantage in the game of golf. Due to the nature of the sport where competitive golf tournaments are laced with high pressured situations, golfers need to develop an array of cognitive abilities, such as concentration and focus, in order to enhance their performance (Pop-Jordanova & Demerdvieza, 2010). During high pressure situations, it is common for players to experience heightened emotional arousal which always disrupt their focus leading to an adverse impact on performance (Smith, Wright & Cantwell, 2008) and hence for optimal performance

among golfers, being mentally tough and possessing optimal cognitive skills is crucial.

1.7.3 Technical and Physical Abilities of Golf Performance

Physical and technical abilities are equally important in enhancing golf performance in as much as golf is really not a physically demanding sport. One of the contributors to improving a golfer's score is acquiring a consistent and replicable golf swing (Thomas & Fogarty, 1997; Smith, Roberts, Wallace, Kong, & Forrester, 2015). Other additional diverse variables, such as wrist rotation, the type of equipment (golf clubs) that the player is using, ball placement technique, posture, core stability, functional movement and wind conditions have an impact on the execution of the swing (Fletcher & Hartwell, 2004; Ghasemzadeh et al., 2009). The aforementioned variables are vital for an elite golfer as they contribute to human movement (Okada, Huxei, & Nesser, 2011). Core stability influences the execution of the swing movement (Liemohn, Baumgartner, & Gagnon, 2005) while functional movement allows the golfer to maintain a balance between mobility and stability while executing a golf swing with accuracy and efficiency (Okada et al., 2011). Consequently, technical and physical abilities in combination with his/her mental abilities combine to have an important impact on the performance of a golfer.

1.8 The High Performance Model

High Performance sport can be appreciated as the top end of sport development and encapsulates any athlete or team that competes at an international or national level, this field includes Olympic and non- Olympic sports, professional sport and team sports like Golf, baseball, football and also emerging sports such as surfing. Playing at such level it is paramount to possess the skills and an enabling environment for performance and sustainability (Green, 2005; Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2009).

The process begins with attracting athletes, retaining/transition and nurturing them (i.e. the ARTN processes) in the sport system. Organizations and stakeholders offer opportunities for competitions, training in specialised facilities, coaching and skill development, talent identification, selection, development and transition to higher levels of competition (Rees et al., 2016). The success of the HP Model is dependent on the successful ARTN sport development processes and stakeholders' input. High Performance is a complex process that is influenced by macro-, meso- and micro-level factors (De Bosscher et al., 2006).

The macro-level factors reflect the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of nations. The macro-level factors have effect on sport systems, policies and athlete pathways.

Meso level refers to High Performance sport management at an organisational/sport policy level is where sport organisations develop strategies and policies. Precious research confirms that designed and implemented strategies and well-considered sports policies support long-term performance (Sotiriadou & Bosscher, 2013).

Lastly, the micro level where performances resonate on managing individual athletes, coaches and their close environment as well as the processes that would attract retain/transition and nurture athletes.

This High Performance Sport Management (HPSM) model uses a funnel as a conceptual framework for examining, studying or analysing High Performance. The funnel of HPSM is comprised of three interrelated components: High performance management of elite sport, Managing high performance athletes and Issues in the management of high performance.

1.8.1 High Performance Management of Elite Sport

In management definition, two aspects are commonly emphasized; the setting of strategic goals and the coordination of resources to ensure the achievement of those goals while the second aspects focus on management of the organization's environment. In management of High Performance (HP), those two aspects derive commercial, political, social and cultural

factors that affect their operations whether they operate in an international or national level, whether public, not-for-profit or commercial.

These are factors that are more significant in shaping HP policies and determining success at HP level.

a) Commercial factors

The impact of commercialization on HP Sport has had both positive and negative effects on the HP sport for instance, Development of technologies leading to better production of sports, equipment and machineries, increased paychecks to athletes as a result of increased sponsorship. On the contrary, negative commercialization has led to use of performance enhancing substances and vices such as match-fixing and corruption

According to De Bossscher et.,al (2013) some of the commercial interests that has effects on High performance sport include:-

Marketing partners of HP sports who are keen on building their brands and market share have powers to influence or pressure to organizations for instance in the fight against doping and their demand for sponsorship exclusiveness increases the sport dependence.

Sports media has always maintained a supply of attractive sport content which have a global appeal, this has led to increased popularity of sport, increased sponsorship and in most sports tendency to prioritize men's over women's event thereby creating a gender imbalance which in turn contributes to slow growth of women's sport. Sport leagues, clubs and individual athletes have all embarked on a mission to protect and expand their asset value, this increased concerns by leagues and clubs to protect assets can reduce willingness to release players for national teams. There is improvement in quality of medical care of elite athletes, very big investment in talent identification and development and transfer trade in athletes.

Sport facilities providers and event organizers who are looking for income maximization and share of the market have complimented or undermined international federations activities in talent identification and development programmes.

Equipment and sportswear manufacturer provides sponsorship of clubs and individual athletes and drives innovation that enhances performance.

b) Political Factors

It is important to bear in mind that while much HP sport is intensely commercialized, there are so many sports and events that rely heavily on government support especially in developing countries. Even those sports that are commercially successful they are rarely immune to the politics. Hood and Maretts (2007) identifies four basic resources available to government: Nodality- government tends to hold a central strategic position in terms of the flow of information, Authority –to make and enforce regulations and laws, Treasure –possession of money that be distributed or exchanged for other resources and organization – the capacity and expertise. These resources tend to give the government powers to intervene in sports. Lowi (1964, 1967), translated these resources in to four instruments that shows the different forms of government interventions;

Regulation, this involves for instance control over the sale of broadcasting rights for sports events of National importance (USA and UK), control of player transfer to foreign teams (China) and Regulation of entry to the lottery market (Germany)

Distribution, this includes determination of how much funds to be allocated to sport and provision of federal funding to National Governing bodies (NGBs) the National Olympic Committees (NOCs).

Redistribution, some governments like in the UK have made laws that 5% of premier league broadcasting revenue have to be allocated to grassroots football development. Establishment of administrative structure, Establishment of Anti-doping agencies is one good example of structures to control some elements of the sport.

c) **Socio-cultural Factors,**

The above two factors are closely intertwined and are derived of a deeper socio-cultural factor. The prioritization of a HP sport in a particular country and the way a particular country responds is basically out of the socio-cultural history that the country is grounded on.

The current characteristics of a country such as population size and structure, degree of urbanization, employment status can be affected by increased improvement in public health, labour shortage and topography and in return cause an effect in HP sport. Population size and per capita Gross Domestic Product explains over 50% of variations in elite sporting success (Bosscher, 2007). In addition, highly urbanized environment make access to high quality coaches and training partners more probable (Bosscher, 2007). Long standing beliefs and values found within communities can be a contributing factor to success of HP Sport i.e Korean Women success on the

LPGA tour following the Korean war that resulted in a very mentally strong Korean woman as well as the Confucianism religion which they use to develop mental calmness. (Shin and Nam, 2004)

For most countries the experience of the dominance of a particular religion, established patterns of family relations, education systems, invasion and colonialism have all left a mark on broader societal values, this has great influence on the nature of HP goals as well as policy delivery mechanisms and management practices. (De Bosscher et.,al 2013).

Howlett and Ramesh (1995) highlighted that the strength of these deeply rooted socio-cultural values not only helps in explaining current HP Sport practices but they also impose significant restrictions on future policy and management practice.

In many countries, Distinctive types of welfare regimes (Liberal, Conservative and social democratic) have emerged over time and generated sets of values and practices that influence the identification of issues as public problems and setting the parameters of policy response. Therefore, the extent to which HP Sport and sporting success are prioritized, the treatment of athletes, the extent and nature of government involvement and the amount of public funding can be explained by the deeply rooted orientations (Esping –Andersen 1990,1999).

1.8.2 Managing High Performance Sport

In HP Sport (elite sport) systems are created and programmes are developed for young talented athletes, Elite athletes, their coaches and organizations because there is a growing belief among policy makers that the international success of athletes is developable and hence can be subjective by human intervention. Additional studies by De Boscher et., (2008) confirmed that nations who plan for success increase their chances of success.

The HP model presented a conceptual framework that policy makers and high performance managers can use to compare and benchmark nations in elite sport, to measure the performance of their organization and to evaluate the effectiveness of national elite policies (De bosscher et.,al 2011), the model is not limited to nations but could also be applied to institutions of different levels like commercial teams (Boogerd, 2010). The model acronymed as SPLISS stands for Sport Policy factors Leading to International Sporting success. It includes 9 pillars:

a) Financial Support

A fact to note is that countries that invest more in elite sport can create better opportunities for athletes to train under suitable environments

and thus improve their chance of success for instance, the United Kingdom implemented a world –class performance programme after the unsatisfactory performance in Atlanta 1996, they consequently increased their performance and number of medals during the Olympics games in Sydney 2000. (De Bosscher et.,al 2008). In most successful nations, HP Sports are financed from government tax revenues or lotteries where the funds are distributed to the National Governing bodies (NGBs) for sport in general and for elite sport.

b) The governance, organization and structure of elite sport

The most important in this pillar is the need to have a strong coordination of all agencies involved in elite sport where there are clear task descriptions and no overlap of tasks (Clumpner, 1994). Oakley and Green, (2001) emphasized that sports systems need long-term strategic planning, a good communication system with simplicity of administration. Further, Mitzberg (1994) and slack (1997) strengthened that a centralized system facilitates the decision-making process especially in area where a higher level of specialization is required.

Hoye and Cuskelly (2007) noted that in the governance of the NGBs, involvement of all stakeholders (athetes, coaches, members) is paramount so

that members can have a say in the strategy of the organization. Dooms (2010) urged that the stakeholders should be involved prior to, during and after policy planning and implementation.

c) Sport Participation

The viewpoint of SPLISS model is that is that most top athletes have their roots in sport for all, this pillar have three categories on determining sport participation; first is whether children have opportunities to engage in golf during school time, second is whether they can enjoy golf outside of school organized or not and lastly is whether sports clubs are able to deliver the game to the children. In his study, Van Bottenburg (2003) found a significant correlation between mass participation and medals won during the Olympics games of Barcelona and Sydney.

d) Talent Identification and development system

When young people choose to participate in golf on a regular basis, the NGBs should ensure that the talented ones can be identified and developed further with a view of moving towards excellence. Talent identification involves monitoring systems and the criteria that should be

used to recognize whether one is talented, Talent detection, talent scouting and selection process (De Bosscher et al., 2008).

The talent development phase is where golfers becomes highly committed to the sport, train more and becomes more specialized. Wylleman and Lavallee (2003) noted that at this phase athletes face a number of transitions at this stage, at the academic level, the athletic level and the psychosocial and psychological level. It is crucial for NGBs to get information, guidance and financial support to build an optimal support for talent development. (De Bosscher 2008).

e) Athletic and Post-athletic career support

The SPLISS model takes the view that the individual living circumstances of golfers need to be provided in a way that they get opportunity to concentrate on the sport full time. For optimal athlete development, a holistic approach is ideal for creation of an optimal environment including career coaching, legal advice, media training, coaching support, training and competition support, sports science support and sports medicine support. Therefore, golfers pursuing High Performance should be treated as employees who receive funding for living and sporting costs. (De Bosscher et.,al 2008).

Athletes need to be offered appropriate training and opportunities to prepare for their life after retirement. Conzelmann and Nagel (2003) confirmed that many athletes are insufficiently prepared for life after sports.

f) Training facilities

In Elite Sport development systems, sport facilities and infrastructure i.e well developed and a specific facility with priority to elite athletes is very important. Accessibility of the training facility by the athletes and coaches requires centralization of training facilities with other sports institutes such as sports medicine and administrative headquarter. This is to reduce distances and travelling times for athletes. (Oakley and Green, 2001).

g) Coaching Provision and Coach Development

At each level of sport development, the quality and quantity of coaches is important. NGBs should be concerned and consider the quality and organization of training certification systems, the opportunities delivered to coaches to become world-class experts and how to develop the best coaches. The living circumstances of coaches i.e the pay they receive,

working hours should be clarified to determine how attractive coaching is as a profession.

Access to world-class coaching is widely accepted by athletes as the most important support they receive (De Bosscher et.al 2007).

h) National and international competition

Competition is an important factor in development of athletes as it allows them to measure themselves against rivals, individually or as a team (Crespo et.,al 2001; Green and Houlihan, 2005). In a study conducted by Bernard and Busse (2004) results indicated that opportunities for international competition for athletes can be enhanced when major sports events are organized in their own nations i.e Olympics games. There need to be a national policy and support system for the organization of major international sports events, the opportunities for athletes to participate in international competitions and the standard of the national competitions in which the athletes participate. (De Bosscher et.al 2008).

i) Scientific research and innovation

SPLISS 2008 study shed light that this pillar is one that nations can use to gain a competitive advantage over others as the search for innovation

and use of scientific research in the development of HP sport is one of the key indicators that shows that nations are strategically developing elite sport (De (Bosscher et.,al 2008).

Chapter 3. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study will employ qualitative research method to explore the factors leading to underperformance in elite golf among Kenyan professional athletes. Teherani et al. (2015) define qualitative research as the systematic inquiry into social phenomena in natural situations on how people behave, experience aspects of their lives, and how organizations function. Choosing a qualitative study method will allow the researcher to obtain a rich description of a phenomenon by capturing the participant's point of view (Chaleunvong, 2009; McMahon & Winch, 2018). In addition, it is exploratory, and seeks to explain 'how' and 'why' a particular social phenomenon, or program, operates as it does in a particular context. It tries to help us to understand the social world in which we live, and why things are the way they are (Polkinghorne, 2005).

For this study, phenomenological design will be used. This approach is the most suitable for this research topic as it explicates a thorough understanding of the participants' 'lived experiences' (Creswell, 2009; Fouche & Schurink, 2011). Furthermore, it allows the researcher to provide an unbiased and authentic report of factors that may potentially affect performance in the game of golf (Creswell, 2009).

2.2 Participants

Participants were recruited from the population of Elite golfers in Kenya. A purposeful homogeneous sampling technique was used for the selection of potential participants for this study. Purposeful homogeneous sampling is described by Taherdoost (2016) as a sampling strategy in which particular settings of persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be attained from other choices.

Purposeful homogeneous sampling allows picking of a small and homogenous sample to describe some particular subgroup in depth (Vogl, 2013).

The target sample was 5 male professional golfers and 5 female professional golfers with over 10 years' experience in Elite golf, However due to the low number of women golfers in Kenya, four semi-professional women were selected and 6 professional men. To qualify as part of the sample, it was required that each participant had had an experience in playing the two lucrative golf events in Kenya;- Magical Kenya Open (Men) and the Magical Ladies Kenya Open (Women).

To recruit participants of the study, an introductory email was sent to all participants enquiring their consent to take part in the study. Each participant was supposed to confirm their consent to take part in the study

by replying to an introductory e-mail. On the day of the scheduled interview, the consent letter was reviewed with the participant before proceeding with the interview. This prior communication served as an invitation for them to take part in the study, explain to them the nature of the study, significance of the study, and how their participation would help to generate knowledge in that area.

To obtain demographic information from participants, interviewees were asked about their personal information during the interviews and the researcher filled them in a prepared personal data sheet. The data sheet included information about age, gender, and years of experience in golf. The study participants were also told that to protect their identity, their names or numbers that may identify them, would not be used either on the data sheet or throughout the writing of the results. Each participant was given a code to maintain confidentiality.

Table 1: Summary of participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Golf Experience in years
P1	Female	25	19
P2	Male	34	28
P3	Female	33	24
P4	Male	39	14
P5	Male	25	22
P6	Female	32	24
P7	Male	35	26
P8	Female	29	8
P9	Male	45	18
P10	Male	35	25

2.3 Interview Guide

An interview guide was developed from the relevant literature and was used to explore themes and gather data. The study was guided by the

High Performance model and consisted of Macro level factors (the different political ideologies, Commercial factors, Socio-Cultural factors that impact systems, policies and athletes pathways), Meso level factors (These are the sport policy factors that lead to sporting success) and Micro level factors (Qualities of individual athletes and their close environment such as family and friends) that affected performance of professional golfers during elite competitions.

2.4 Pilot Study

A pilot study of the interview guide was conducted with one golfers who was not part of the main sample of ten participants. The purpose of this pilot interview was to ensure that the interview guide sufficiently examined the three categories of factors that influenced the performance of professional golfer in Kenya. The pilot study also enabled the researcher to practice and refine his interview skills and techniques as well as it ensured that the questions were pitched at an appropriate academic level. Following the pilot study, the orders of questions were changed, additional questions were included and some of the questions were simplified to give a clear understanding to the interviewees.

2.5 Procedure and Data Analysis

Data collected was analyzed using the thematic analytic process, which is commonly used to analyze interview data Chaleunvong (2009) and it involved developing and putting data into categories Pathak et al. (2013) which was accomplished through determining the links and meanings and seeing how they fit into themes (Thorne, 2000). The significance of using thematic analysis was to generate categories and identify common thematic elements across the research participants, the events they report and the actions they take (McMahon & Winch, 2018).

Interview questions were used to give direction to the study in obtaining beliefs, and experiences from participants relevant to the purpose of the study (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018). Although this study employed specific research questions to guide the interview, data collected was analyzed to find the themes reflected from experiences of the participants. To prepare and organize the raw data into conceptual categories and create themes, interview responses were coded by breaking data into discrete parts and comparing them for similarities and difference from repeated words.

These codes were put in categories to help create some order and then developed into themes (Chaleunvong, 2009). Data gathered from each participant was treated with the same value and then organized into

emerging theme groups. The researcher then made structural description representing the essence of the group experiences under study using data organized in themes by reading and understanding all transcripts.

All interviews were recorded through zoom and transcribed. Later, the text data was manually analyzed by visually scanning the transcriptions to gain a general understanding of the information. Next, the data was explored in detail by again reading all transcripts, and then developing a list of emergent themes and coding to create preliminary groupings.

Chapter 4. Findings

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the descriptive analysis and qualitative findings derived through themes that emerged from interviews with participants. The study sought answers to three research questions:

- 1) What are the Micro factors influencing elite golf performance in Kenya?
- 2) How do the Meso-level factors influence elite golf performance in Kenya? And
- 3) What are the Macro level factors influencing performance of elite golfers in Kenya.

Emerging Themes

A comprehensive thematic analysis was conducted of the collected data from the interviews. The participant's responses and researcher notes were organized in alignment with the interview questions. The sequencing and organization of the data allowed for the identification of themes that emerged from the responses. These themes were used to convey and interpret the meanings the participants communicated about their lived experiences as Elite golfers in Kenya. As guided by the research questions,

3 major themes derived smaller and more specific sub themes addressing the experiences of the Kenyan elite golfers. Below is a table summary:

Table 2: Emerging themes

Research Questions	Major Themes	Sub-Themes
RQ1 What are the Micro factors influencing elite golf performance in Kenya	Micro environment	Physical Fitness Status Mental preparedness Significant Others (Parents, friends, fans, sponsors, Caddy, Sponsors) Frequency of
RQ2 How do the Meso- level factors influence elite golf performance in Kenya?	Meso Environment factors	training Talent Identification and development Financial Constraints Competitions and Exposure Opportunities Accessibility to golf Facilities Golf Equipment Coaching
RQ3 What are the	Macro	Commercialization of sport

Macro levels factors influencing performance of elite golfers in Kenya.	Environment factors	Government policy and Involvement. Socio-Cultural Factors (Population, Richman's game perception etc.
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3.2 Micro Level Environment

This theme examined the qualities of individual athletes and their close environment such as family and friends barriers that can act as a facilitator or constraint to excelling in golf. Participants in this study cited several factors or aspects that some have been previously identified in the literature review. The theme was categorized into four sub themes: (1) Physical fitness status (2) Mental Preparedness (3) Significant Others (4) Frequency of training.

3.2.1 Physical Fitness Status

All respondents confirmed that physical fitness is an important factor in enhancing golf performance in as much as golf is not a very rigorous activity. P9 mentioned that:

Good physiological status is very important in Golf because as much as it is not a vigorous activity, you require strength or energy to be

able to perform well especially for elite golf that requires one to be in your tiptop shape.

P6 derives his confidence on his physiological status:

My performance is dependent on whether I'm in the correct physiological state to do the task and put up with like for example playing golf it takes about four and a half hours which I need to maintain that state. So I do a lot of longevity and conditions training in the gym combined with golf training to be well prepared to perform in a tournament.

In as much as being physically fit is important in enhancing ones performance, there should be a good understanding of the anatomy of golf in designing the kind of exercises to partake and hence the need for a golf physical trainer. P10 describes as follows:

I have a physical fitness trainer in the Gym at our golf course but the problem is that he is not specialized for golf and that makes me rely more on learning exercises through watching videos on YouTube. It is important to have a trainer who can keep a close check of your body to perform well and this is a big challenge in Kenya since we don't have such trainers

3.2.2 Mental Preparedness

Being highly competitive, self-motivated and committed individual who is able to cope efficiently and maintain focus and concentration under stressed or high-pressure circumstances is a significant advantage in the game of golf.

Due to the nature of the sport where competitive golf tournaments are laced with high pressured situations, golfers need to develop an array of cognitive abilities, such as concentration and focus, in order to enhance their performance. P9 illustrated as follows:

The mental preparedness that's required during competitions is for instance you have to understand how to play some holes versus others based on the challenge each hole presents. You have to be able to deal with mistakes; a small setback can really compound issues for you quickly if you maybe get a quick double bogey in a hole that you shouldn't have gotten a double bogey if you are not able to calm down after making a mistake. If that state persists the bad score will keep compounding and piling up your scores. Mental coaching enables one to learn how to handle pressure, adversity and to absorb those challenges whenever they arise.

P2 described how he manages to remain calm during competitions:

To control my mental state in the game I treat my competitions as playing social rounds to reduce the pressure that comes with the game, with that I am able to play freely and I don't think of you know, the numbers, I just play one shot at a time and that makes me score even better.

P3 elaborated that mental training is one of the areas he is lacking and feels he would be better if he had the training:

I have never gone through any kind of mental training and most of the Kenyan professionals too. Most of us rely on google and YouTube which is really not ideal. So in a competition as big as the Magical Kenya Open we are disadvantaged as compared to professional athletes who come from Europe, Asia and South Africa.

Some religious practices seem to be an added advantage. P5 Narrated as below:

I'm a religious man and that really helps me keep content with the result because most of the time we are tempted to keep checking the scores and the result but my faith allows me to concentrate more on the process rather than focusing on the results.

3.2.3 Significant Others

These are people in an elite golfers close environment including parents, family, friends, coach, sponsors and caddies who play a role or contribute as a support system to the athlete.

(1) Parents

Parents are very significant especially at the beginning of a golfer's career, Cases of the greatest golfer in the world Tiger Woods, Likes of Serena Williams in Tennis clearly evidenced how parental involvement in an athlete is crucial. The respondents in this study agreed that their parents (and on one incident a guardian) played important multiple roles on the lives of the golfers i.e Introducing them to the game, Coaching, financial support and moral support. Below are testaments from some of the respondents:-

P2: My parents are the most significant people in my golf career because they're the ones who gave birth to me and of course introduced me to golf at a tender age.

P5: I'd say my most significant people are my family and especially my dad who is a golfer and has been an avid fan; he has really been looking at my career and keeps pushing me to greater heights.

P6: My dad introduced me to golf when I was 8 years old, he has supported, encouraged and has been the sole financier of my golf expenses since then.

(2) Friends and fans

Friends and fans are known as a source of moral support to athletes.

P5: My golfing peers as it is in our Kenyan culture, guys check up on each other and give each other competition you know, and they push each other into even working harder.

P10 Some My fans encourage me by appreciating my performance, need to push harder and even assure me of better round in future. That encouragement makes me stronger and I get motivated to keep them proud of me.

(3) Sponsors

Playing golf and elite golf for that matter calls for commitment of monetary resources to be able to meet up with the related expenses such as Airfare, accommodation, caddy fees, meals etc. the expenses varies with the geographical location of the competition venues. Additionally, other golf

related expenditure includes training facilities fees, equipment such as golf clubs, gloves, attire and golf balls which can be a big burden to a person who does not acquire sponsorship.

P4: I have missed out competitions on numerous occasions due to lack of finances to fund my expenses. Other times you will be in so much pressure to play well to recover the amount you spend from the prize fund, this sways the momentum and focus on the game leading to poor performance.

P10; my sponsors enables me to travel to different competition venues, caters for my meals and accommodation.

Golf club members have at a personal level assisted and supported elite golfers as explained by P2

Some of the members have been with me basically through my journey of life, some even contributed not only to fund my golf career but also in funding my education in top notch schools.

(4) Caddies

Of all the respondents, only P10 noted a caddy being important part of their golf career:

My caddy is one other very important person in my career, he not only gives me guidance on the course, but he also thinks for me especially when am under tension and likely to make bad decisions, he comes in handy by giving better solutions and calming me down.

3.2.4 Frequency of training

According to Hebscher & Gilboa (2016), Confidence is a function of memory which can be developed through frequent practice, during which the golfers play various shots repeatedly with successful execution. As such golf requires frequent, consistent and efficient practice to hone a player's skills and abilities. The respondents in this study were all positive on the need to put in more hours on their training in order to improve on their performance, However there were some reservations as described below:-

P2: I have a full-time job working at the club and my focus has been mainly you know doing the club job, so I play twice a week but before before you know getting the full-time job I used to play five times a week or six even five times a week, there is no sustainable professional golfer career in Kenya due to the low number and low purse of professional tournaments and therefore most golfers shifts their focus to working on the respective club and teaching for a daily living.

P8: If I didn't have other commitments like pursuing my education and working, I would commit more time to golf and am confident that my game would significantly get better.

P3: I use my winnings to finance my next events, so if I don't win I rely on the fees I receive from coaching which is quite challenging as it is also used to put food on the table for my family. In that case, if I have some free time to practice I train but in the event a client shows up I definitely abandon my training and take the job. So this really affects my performance as I am not normally fully prepared for competition as needed.

3.3 Meso-Environment

This theme addresses on the role of the National Governing Body (NGB) in creating an enabling environment for high performance of elite golfers in Kenya. The following subthemes emerged: Talent identification and development system, financial support, competitions and exposure opportunities, accessibility to golf facilities, golf equipment and coaching.

3.3.1 Talent Identification and Development

The definition of golf development portrays it as a process that creates opportunities for excelling in golf and this is achieved by working

with various stakeholders in creating numerous strategies, systems and pathways to facilitate elite golf success. (Houlihan & Green, 2011). This starts from talent identification level all through the life of the athlete until post career level of the athlete. Question on this to the interviewees had some diverse responses but majority confirmed that they had not been involved in any golf development system and that they had learnt the hard way by themselves:

P1: I am grateful to the KLGU as they organize golf training clinics for the national team in preparation for international events, I have greatly benefitted from them, I wish we could have a long term system of such training program.

P2: I was privileged to attend a golf school abroad where I learnt my fundamentals which is significant to my performance even to date. Lack of such services in Kenya is one of the major challenges to high performance in golf.

P10: Interms of transition from initial stages of talent development to elite athlete level there is a disconnect in that in the junior golfers level, there are numerous strategies, competitions and activities and same for the elite amateurs who has year round organized golf

competitions, the most elite level or the professional level has been neglected and this has led to stagnation in the entire process.

3.3.2 Financial Support

A fact to note is that countries that invest more in elite sport can create better opportunities for athletes to train under suitable environments and thus improve their chance of success. Sports are financed from government tax revenues or lotteries where the funds are distributed to the National Governing bodies (NGBs) for sport in general and for elite sport. Expenditures by the government on sports are usually unavailable or insufficient and this calls for the national governing body to also have means to raise finances to ensure a sustainable environment for elite golf performance. Respondents had the below responses on the contribution of the government and the National Governing Body in golf performance:

P1 noted that the government has made very significant contribution to golf in Kenya especially when it became the title sponsors of the Magical Kenya Open and Magical Ladies Kenya Open which are part of the DP World Tour and Ladies European Tour respectively. This event have not only assisted in popularizing the game of golf in Kenya but has also contributed to the growth of the Tourism Sector. ... "As a result of that support, a development tour called Safari Tour meant to prepare the elite golfers for the big events was born". P10 in support of the government involvement.

P8; the national governing bodies have played a great role in organizing these tournaments and encouraging participation across all levels of golf.

P9 noted that since Kenya lacks golf technical expertise such as golf mental coaches, physiotherapists, nutritionists, coaches etc and in consideration that outsourcing them from abroad is costly, the KGU should partner with local universities that has sports science program to have golf included as part of their curriculum which in like 5 years' time Kenya can have its own experts who can greatly impact the level of golf of the Kenyan golfers.

P10: the government should in its annual budget finance as a matter of priority the professional golf, the KGU should work closely with the government in setting up structures for creating an enabling and sustainable environment for elite golf.

3.3.3 Competitions and exposure opportunities

Participants interviewed for the present study were of the view that a lack of exposure to competitive golf tournaments also notably prevented them from performing more optimally during important tournaments. This is about becoming accustomed to dealing with the competitive environment by

participating in greater numbers of competitive tournaments which would improve their overall levels of performance. P7 summarized it all:

The underperformance of professional golfers during major events like the Kenya Open can be well explained to the lack of competitions.....we need at least 20 series of events running in a year and that way most professionals will commit to practicing and playing regularly rather than being teaching professionals as most are currently.

3.3.4 Access to golf facilities and equipment

As an elite golfer, one is required to take at least 8 hours on the golf course or practice facilities to enhance his/her performance. The respondents did not have a challenge in terms of distances and costs for using the facilities, however;

P3 lamented that the training facilities are not well equipped with the latest golf enhancing technologies for instance the trackman and the G-Squad which that can really give information on the swing execution and diagnose any issue in regard to the stroke.

P7 noted that our training is based on guess work and improper ways of practicing due to lack of resources needed for golf improvement.

P10 noted that due to the high cost of golf clubs he is forced to play with a set of clubs for more than 5 years and most of the times unable to buy the current leading brands and versions in the market.

3.3.5 Coaching

Access to world-class coaching is widely accepted by athletes as the most important support they receive (De Bosscher et.al 2007). Out of the 10 respondents only two had coaches: P1 described that:

Am privileged to be in a good academy with ample performance enhancing technology, I use them to practice every day under the watch of my coach who also designs drills for me to work on my game and improve, am steadily getting better.

The rest of the respondents had not had a coach consistently due to financial constraints and that had a negative influence on their performance.

P3 stated that:

Training using Youtube videos is not efficient, as an elite golfer you need a coach who understands your swing and will notice any bad movement and rectify it.

P10 added that Kenya lacks high performing coaches and also specialization, there need to be a swing coach, putting coach, mental coach to assist golfers in enhancing their performance

3.4 Macro Environment

This theme addresses the different political ideologies, Commercial factors, Socio-Cultural factors that impact systems, policies and athletes pathways. The following are the sub themes that emerged: Sports Commercialization, Government involvement and social cultural factors.

3.4.1 Commercialization of Sport

The impact of commercialization on Sport has had both positive and negative effects on the high performance sport for instance, Development of technologies leading to better production of sports, equipment and machineries, increased paychecks to athletes as a result of increased sponsorship. On the contrary, negative commercialization has led to use of performance enhancing substances and vices such as match-fixing and Corruption. P10 Mentioned that:

The emergent of more corporate sponsorship especially for the Magical Kenya Open has for the last 3 years greatly publicized the game of golf in Kenya due to the media coverage associated with the event.

Room for improvement is always available as P9 elucidates:

If we had proper structures for elite golf and especially a pro-league running through the year, more corporate companies would

be able to see value in sponsoring and more so endorsing some of the elite golfers as their brand ambassadors.

Emergent of high performance equipment is a big boost to enhancing performance, the challenge is on how to afford them. P10 added:

The costs for this equipment both golf clubs and training equipment is very expensive, if possible the government can assist by waiving the import duties on all sports related equipment.

3.4.2 Government Policy and Involvement

According to Hood and Margetts (2007) the government has four basic resources for power: Nodality- government tends to hold a central strategic position in terms of the flow of information, Authority –to make and enforce regulations and laws, Treasure –possession of money that be distributed or exchanged for other resources and Organization –the capacity and expertise.

These resources enable the government to complete its responsibility in Regulation, Distribution, and Redistribution and in establishment of administrative structures. P10 noted with a lot of concern that:

The enactment of the Sports Act in 2013 was the best move sports in Kenya as it led to establishment of three organizations; The Sports Kenya- To oversee the management of sports stadia, Kenya Academy

of Sports –To develop athletes and the National Sports Fund to finance the respective sports in Kenya. The act demanded for a sole representative organ in each sport as a compliance requirement to enable more organization in communication and financing. This has so far not been achieved in Kenya and is one of the challenges we have in developing the game of golf.

3.4.3 Socio- Cultural Factors

The current characteristics of a country such as population size and structure, degree of urbanization, employment status can be affected by increased improvement in public health, labour shortage and topography and In return cause an effect in HP sport. Population size and per capita Gross Domestic Product explains over 50% of variations in elite sporting success (De Bosscher, 2007). The respondents commented on two Socio- Cultural factors:

(1) Population

The number of golfers in the country currently sits at approximately 12000 out of a population of about 47.6 Million people. This is clearly a low number.

P5: The number of elite golfers is very few as a result of the only about 12000 people in the country, this is mainly due to the structure of Kenya where Education is valued as the Key to success than anything else, no one thinks of sports and golf as a career for that matter. The way around this is to give priority to professional golf whereby once developed there will be a ripple down effect to the grassroots development and increase in numbers when Kenyans observe elite golfers making a living out of golf.

(2) Rich Man's game perception

Just related to the above, the game of golf is regarded as a 'rich

man's old man's game' and so many non-golfers in Kenya would not buy the idea of even thinking to join a members club. As P7 noted:

...people are scared of even thinking about golf due to the costs and class discrimination associated with the members clubs.

P10 also stated that the government should play an integral role in encouraging mass participation by liaising with County government in constructing public golf courses which can be made available to any user at a small fee without having to pay membership fee.

Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusion

4.1 Discussion

This chapter will offer a critical reflection on the findings reported in the previous chapter. It will discuss the findings relative to the literature reviewed, attempt to answer the questions of the study and provide a new perspective to analyze factors influencing Elite golf performance in Kenya whilst offering possible recommendations for improvement.

According to Thompson, Kaufman, De Petrillo, Glass, & Arnkoff, (2011), various mental, physical and technical skills impact on a golfer's performance, the most important element is attaining a 'flow state' which enables an increase in mindfulness which assists the golf player in optimizing performance. This current study has utilized the High performance model factors influencing optimal performance to gauge the Micro level factors, Meso level factors and Macro level factors as experienced by Kenyan Elite Athletes to draw an explanation as to the underperformance during golf Tournaments. In a nutshell, this study found out that Kenyan elite golfers are in one way or the other disadvantaged when it comes to performance during elite events like the Magical Kenya Open and the Magical Ladies Kenya Open which are organized and played on their home soil.

The key findings and value of this study obtained a better understanding of the barriers that impedes the Elite golfers' pursuit of a successful career in golf as a professional. It further provides valuable information to administrators, coaches, significant others and the Elite golfers concerning these performance inhibiting barriers.

4.1.1 Micro Level Factors

The Micro level factors represent the Qualities of individual athletes and their close environment such as family and friends that influence performance of professional golfers during elite competitions.

On the importance of physiological of an elite golfer, this current study agrees with previous work of Thomas & Fogarty (1997); Smith, Roberts, Wallace, Kong, & Forrester, (2015) who concluded that one of the contributors to improving a golfers score is acquiring a consistent and replicable golf swing which is achieved by training for core stability, flexibility, hip rotation to be able to execute a golf shot in an efficient and effective manner. That said, some of the interviewees confirmed that they had not had any kind of golf specific training and only rely on the Physical fitness trainers in the golf clubs or health centers and by watching YouTube videos.

Mental training was found to be a notch more important in golf performance training than the physiological status. This current study collaborates with previous research that concluded that golf competitions being laced with high pressured situations, golfers need to develop an array of cognitive abilities, such as concentration and focus, in order to enhance their performance (Pop-Jordanova & Demerdvieza, 2010). Lack of mental toughness leads to disruption of their focus leading to an adverse impact on performance (Smith, Wright & Cantwell, 2008). Again, the interviewees are aware of this great need but in Kenya there is inadequate capacity to facilitate a high level of Mental training among our elite golfers.

The question on the most significant people in an elite golfer's career ranks Parents as the most important. This study is in unison with the findings of Hassmen et.al (2007) that almost all interviewees mentioned that their first contact with golf came through their parents or the parents of some close friend. In addition, parents play the role of coaches at the initial stages of the children's golf career as well as acts as chief financiers of golf and living expenses for their children.

Professional golf is a fulltime job and as Carroll, (2009) and Santos, (2013) put it, professional players are able to sustain themselves financially through their winnings, and hence expected to be utilizing the practice

facilities in order to match their game demands, this study found that on the contrary to the above study, Kenyan elite golfers have acquired daily jobs as coaches in clubs and others in other fields in corporate world and therefore most do not achieve the optimal level of training required for High Performance.

According to Lee (2010), the sponsorship of promising golfers allows them to focus solely on their training and games without having to deal with the burden of economic costs, and thereby playing a decisive role in enhancing a players' competence. The interviewees noted sponsors as very crucial in their career and therefore this study concludes that lack of sponsorship is a contributing factor to underperformance by the Kenyan golfers. A Korean Women professional Gloria Park (LPGA) revealed in an interview that when she didn't have a sponsor, she had to travel by car to save money on air fare and that there were innumerable times that she had to sleep in the car her father drove. Sponsorship enabled her stable tour life and allowed her to devote herself to the games. (Lee, 2016)

4.1.2 Meso level factors

This level includes the sport policy factors that lead to sporting success. The High performance model utilized in this study employs the SPLISS (Sport Policy factors Leading to International Sporting Success)

Model to illuminate how an enabling environment for High performance should be (De Bosscher et.al.,2006). As described in the literature review section, the SPLISS model has 9 pillars; Financial Support for elite sport, The governance, organization and structure of elite sport, Sport Participation, Talent identification and development system, Training facilities, Coach provision & development, National and international competition and lastly, scientific research and Innovation.

The current study participant appreciated the big role played by the Government in conjunction with the NGBs especially in the hosting of the Magical Kenya Open and Ladies Open championship which has greatly popularized the game in Kenya and gave birth to the Safari Tour. However, there was consensus that a year round golf tour is urgently needed to keep the elite golfers on the golf course as this would ensure that the frequency of their training increases, some will not have to seek for day jobs hence would commit to playing only. This would lead to better preparation and confidence boost while facing a major competition. Other key areas to note include:

First, the need for a strong coordination of all agencies involved in elite golf in Kenya, with clear task description and no overlap of different

tasks. This also involves having only one organization at the national level that is exclusively responsible for golf.

Second, as part of sport participation and foundation creation, Children should have opportunities to participate in golf at school during Physical education or extracurricular activities. As part of policy, a national statutory minimum amount of time for golf in all level of education.

Third, most of the interviewees in the current study had not undergone any kind of talent development system and had learnt golf on their own. The NGBs ought to create structures and come up with an effective system for the identification of your talented athletes so that the maximum number of potential top level athletes is reached at the right age.

Fourth, another challenge posed was the insufficient number of coaches and quality training facilities, there is need for Kenya to build capacity through development of the coaches as well as getting the right minimum standards of the training facilities. This study found out that the lack of professional services and assistance prevents Kenya elite golfers from gaining the required knowledge and expert advice on their game.

Lastly, Results from this study also revealed that lack of exposure to the competitive environment and exposure to a variety of golf courses

further inhibited their development of their golf skills and tournament mind-sets.

4.1.3 Macro level factors

This level represents the different political ideologies, Commercial factors, Socio-Cultural factors that impact systems, policies and athletes pathways. To a high extent, the interviewees viewed the Macro-level factors as contributing to the development of the sport and especially the government polities like the enactment of the Sports Act 2013, Rule by Anti-Doping Association of Kenya (ADAK) to have all federations abide by their code, technological advancement which has increased the playing and practicing quality of the game, Increased sponsorship opportunities through the corporate world etc.

A big concern was however raised on the low number of people in the population taking up the sport and the need to demystify the game of golf as a rich man's old man's sport in Kenya. This can be achieved by the National government working together with County governments in establishing public golf courses aimed at ensuring that any Kenyan Citizen can walk in to the Course, pay a little fee and play. The result of this study also suggested that the government should waive the import duty fees for golf equipment in an effort to bring the costs down for the citizens. This study supports the findings of Piper (1990) who investigated the relationship between the demand for public golf courses and several demographic

variables, he found out that Income and age were found to have an inverse relationship with demand for public courses (as opposed to private, membership courses) and therefore establishing public golf courses would enable low, young income earners to be able to access the golf facilities and hence increase in participation.

4.2 Conclusion

This qualitative study provided the opportunity to explore lived experiences of Elite golfers in Kenya and factors influencing their performance. This study created a theoretical implication by being a foundation for future research since there is scarcity of research that focuses on Golf in Kenya.

This study concludes that the three level of factors (Micro, Meso and Macro) are all significant in Elite golf performance and each of the three complement each other.

A critical reflection on related literature and the current findings clearly identified a gap in elite golf in Kenya; the study revealed that inadequate competitions for the elite golfers were the big contributor for non-performance. All the other barriers like inadequate resources to finance better coaching, training, time limitation could be managed if a sustainable tour for the Elite was established. The study derived a practical implication

in that if a golf tour can be established in Kenya, It would in a big extend employ the elite golfers so that they would not have to look for day jobs to facilitate their livelihood and golf expenses, the tour would attract sponsorship and endorsement deals for the elite golfers, the tour would also be a platform for acquiring Official World Golf Ranking (OWGR) points which would create a pipeline to join other higher tours, the tour would be a benchmark for young and ambitious golfers to aspire to join, the tour would also open up reasonable business ventures like establishment of golf academies and practice grounds. In a big way, establishment of a year-long tour for elite golfers would sort out the key issues that have contributed to stagnation of the Kenyan elite golf.

This study also concludes that there is need for collaboration between the NGBs and education institutions that offer sport science course to consider integrating a golf specific Coaching, Physiotherapy, Nutrition, strength and conditioning section in order to develop capacity for the future.

4.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study has predominantly focused on elite golfers' lived experiences to analyze the factors influencing their performance, it is recommended that a study encompassing the perspectives of Coaches and Administrators be conducted.

The results of this study serve as the baseline information of related research in the future. Therefore, future studies should:-

Find out the role of Sports as an economic contributor to the Kenyan economy, an understanding of the role of sports and golf in specific would guide the government in budgeting as currently the sports sector in Kenya is not really prioritized.

A quantitative study is recommended to explain the barrier to golf participation especially on the case of Kenyan Women. Getting the survey from the citizen would show the reasons for the low uptake of the game in Kenya, the information would guide the federation in coming up with barriers reducing measures and hence boost participation.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Informed Consent Form

Date.....

Mr. Mrs./Ms. *Address*,

Introduction:

My name is Michael Ngene. I am currently a master's student in the Department of Physical Education at Seoul National University (SNU) majoring in Global Sports Management. I am conducting a research study entitled "Exploring factors influencing elite golf performance in Kenya." which is a part of fulfillment of my master's degree.

As a renowned elite golfer in Kenya, I am respectfully asking you to voluntarily take part in this study. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the factors influencing elite golfers' performance during competitions. The study will sought to understand the challenges undermining their performance and possibly come up with recommendations for interventions in future.

Activities:

If you agree to take part in this research, you will be asked to:

1. Participate in in-depth interview which will be done in English either through zoom, Skype or telephone. Each session will be held approximately for 30 to 40 minutes.
2. Note that all interviews will be video/audio taped using a digital recorder.
3. Your participation is voluntary. If you decide not to participate, or withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no any penalty or loss of benefits.

Eligibility:

You are eligible to participate in this research if you:

4. Currently, a professional golfer in Kenya.
5. Have participated in either Magical Kenya Open or Magical Ladies Kenya Open.
6. Have at least 10 years of golf experience.

Risks:

There are no expected risks to you from participating in this research study.

Participation is not intended nor expected to cause any mental or physical

challenges. Additionally, all communication with the participants will be direct and clear and therefore there will be no misleading actions and no deception.

Benefits:

Your participation in this study will be of no direct benefits to you. However, taking part in this study will help to increase the body of knowledge in golf performance and provide information to the government and the federations on measures to put forth to enhance the game.

Confidentiality:

All information gathered in this study will be kept confidential and your identity will be protected. The results of the research study may be published, but your identity will remain confidential, and your name will only be known to the researcher. All records will be stored in a locked facility for three years, which upon completion of the study, all electronic files will be deleted, and hard copies torn.

Contact Information:

If you would like any additional information or if you have any questions regarding this study and the interview process, please contact me at (+82) 010-9808-9110 or through my email address: ngene430@gmail.com.

If you agree to participate in this study, please respond to this e-mail and I will arrange an interview time at your convenience.

I thank you in advance believing that you will sacrifice your precious time to take part in this study. Your experience and knowledge of golf matters will be helpful in understanding the area under study.

Thank you,

Michael Ngene, Graduate student,

Seoul National University, Department of Physical Education,

Global Sport Management Major–Dream Together Master Program,

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

Age

Number of years in elite golf

Micro factors

1. In what way does your physiological status affect your performance?
2. How do you cope with the physiological requirements of competitions?
3. How can you describe your mental preparedness during competitions?
4. Who are the most significant people in your golf career? What role do they play?
5. How often do you play? (be it training or in competition)
6. How is your golf and living expenses financed?

Meso factors

1. How has the government influenced sport policy in Kenya?
2. What has been the contribution of the National Governing body of golf in your golf performance?
3. Have you been through a talent development system to develop your game? If yes give details.
4. Where do you conduct your training, what aspects of training do you work on and how often are the facilities/resources available for you?

5. What is the contribution/significance of your coach in enhancing your performance?
6. How often do you participate in a competition either nationally or internationally?

Macro factors

1. How has commercialization of sport influenced your performance?
2. What government activity has been of influence to your golf performance?
3. What socio-cultural factors can you mention that have had an influence in the way you approach your golf career? How have they influenced?

국문초록

케냐 엘리트 골프 선수의 경기력 관련 요인 탐구

Michael Ngene Wanjiku

글로벌스포츠매니지먼트 전공

체육교육과

서울대학교 대학원

소비자들의 골프에 대한 관심은 수년간 엄청난 성장을 경험했기 때문에 인정되어야 할 성과이다. 하지만 이러한 성과는 케냐의 중장거리 육상 종목과 달리 세계 골프 무대에서 케냐 선수들의 대표성은 거의 반영되지 않고 있다.

본 사례 연구는 케냐의 엘리트 골프 경기력에 영향을 미치는 요인을 탐구하였다. 구체적으로 케냐 엘리트 골프 선수들의 성과를 미시적, 거시적으로 어떻게 저해하는지 살펴보고 엘리트 골프의 미래 성장과 발전을 위한 긍정적 방향을 도출하고자 한다.

10 명의 참가자들을 대상으로 고의성 추출법을 통해 경험이 많은 케냐 엘리트 골프 선수들의 진로와 케냐 골퍼들이 어떠한 요인으로 다른 국가의 엘리트 골퍼들에 비해 계속 뒤처지는지를 반구조화 인터뷰 질문을 통해 파악하였다.

본 연구는 케냐 선수들의 저조한 경기력에 대한 설명으로 골프 선수들이 직면한 도전을 강조하였다. 연구 결과, 케냐 엘리트 골프 선수들의 저조한 성적의 원인으로 생리학적, 심리적 훈련의 부족, 재정적 어려움, 지속 불가능한 경기 구조, 코칭의 부족을 꼽고 있다.

본 연구의 결과는 케냐의 엘리트 골프에 대한 기준 지표로 사용될 수 있으며, 정부와 골프 연맹이 케냐의 골프 종목에 있어서 성공할 수 있는 환경을 제공하고 조성하는 데 긍정적인 영향을 줄 것으로 판단됩니다.

주요어: 엘리트 골프; 경기력; 케냐; 인터뷰

학번: 2021-25687