

championships. The coaches cooperated with the researcher and provided assistance with the sampling and selection of participants. The most important part of this process was the engagement with the athletes. It was necessary to get their full cooperation, willingness, trust and consent to be part of the study. The participants were informed of the study and the objectives of the study after which written consent were gained.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The interviews were conducted during the 3rd Edition of the WAKO African Championships of Nations at the athlete's village. The researcher used a semi-structured interview schedule containing open-ended questions (see Appendix 3) to encourage the participants to reveal in-depth information in a natural way about the topic and to explain and clarify their responses (Polit & Hungler, 2004). The questions were posed from a broad perspective such as "what is sport psychology?", "how does the athlete prepare him/herself mentally for a contest?". The interviews were then narrowed down to the point where the researcher asked about the desires of the participants which is fundamental to LOA (Burns & Grove, 2003).

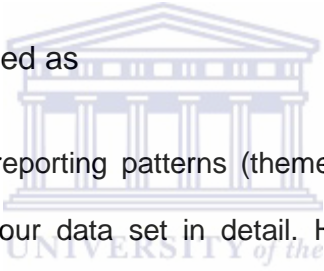
3.8 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

All participants received a brief introduction about the research topic prior to the interview and a time was scheduled with them for the interviews. Participants were provided with an information sheet and a consent form. All participants provided the researcher with written consent and interviews were conducted at a safe and quiet facility within the athletes' village. The participants were given a code to protect their privacy. Interviews were recorded and saved in a folder with the code of the

participant. The researcher also took notes during the interviews to reflect on observations made during interviews that would be used during data analysis. The researcher, being well-known in international kickboxing circles, enjoyed free access to the subjects and received good cooperation from the participants. All interviews were conducted by the researcher accompanied by an assistant who acted as an interpreter was fluently in French and English, the two major languages spoken by the participants. The interpreter was comprehensively briefed and trained by the researcher in terms of the said topic and task at hand to ensure the true reflection of the responses of the participants.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis can be defined as



Identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79).

The researcher opted to use thematic analysis and the steps are outlined as follows:

First Step: Data was collected. Audiotapes were used to record interviews which were transcribed and studied; patterns of experiences were listed and grouped.

Second step: Data was analysed deductively using pre-determined themes and were organised or grouped into meaningful units. A theme, as defined by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 82)

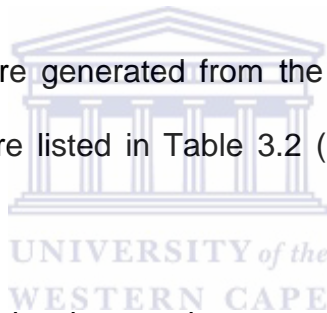
captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.

These themes reflect on the phenomenon of LOA as it is experienced by the participants. The themes that came out very strongly were thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude which are also primary fundamentals of LOA.

Third Step: The researcher sought the different perspectives of the participants as they related to the various themes.

Fourth Step: The various themes identified were used to build a valid argument and overall description of LOA as experienced by the kickboxers.

The themes of this thesis were generated from the participants' responses to the research questionnaire and are listed in Table 3.2 (pg 50). They are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.



The following table illustrates the themes that were derived from the responses of the participants' interviewed.

Table 3.2: Research Themes

No	Research Questions	Themes
Q7	Do you experience stress before a contest	Theme 1 (Thoughts)
Q6	Do you think that the LAO (which allows you to attract success) can work in kickboxing?	
Q12	Are you spiritual or religious?	
Q13	What do you think is your family's feelings about your kickboxing career?	
Q8	How do you feel about your physical abilities during kickboxing training sessions?	Theme 2 (Feelings)
Q11	How do you feel about your training facilities?	
Q9	Do you feel that you can become the best kickboxer in the world, should you have the correct training and coach?	
Q10	How do you feel about your coach?	
Q9	Do you feel that you can become the best kickboxer in the world, should you have the correct training and coach?	Theme 3 (Desires)
Q3	Do you practice some form of sport psychology?	
Q9	Do you feel that you can become the best kickboxer in the world, should you have the correct training and coach?	Theme 4 Gratitude
Q10	How do you feel about your coach?	
Q11	How do you feel about your training facilities?	

3.10 VALIDITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Validity is the “integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research” (Bryman, 2008, p. 31). Qualitative validity and trustworthiness ensure that the findings of the study are accurate by employing procedures to reflect on transferability, dependability, conformability and credibility of the data.

Transferability: This refers to the probability that the study findings have meaning to others in similar situations. Transferability is also called “fittingness” for it determines whether the findings fit in or are transferable to similar situations (Streubert-Speziale & Carpenter 2003, p. 39). The participants provided rich information in terms of their feelings, thoughts and desires about their involvement in kickboxing. This information, referred to as population validity, could be generalised to other people in the world of kickboxing. The questions asked during the interviews were based on the fundamentals of LOA which can be measured and this contributed to the validity of the conclusions.

Conformability: This can be defined as a neutral criterion for measuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research. If a study demonstrates credibility and fittingness, the study is also said to possess conformability (Streubert-Speziale & Carpenter, 2003, p. 38).

It is a criterion for evaluating data quality and refers to the neutrality or objectivity of the data by an agreement between two or more dependent persons that the data is similar (Polit & Hungler, 2004, p. 435).

Data received from the participants can be viewed as neutral as it was gathered

directly from the participants being interviewed. Furthermore, the raw recordings were analysed by the researcher and another independent person and both came to similar conclusions with regards to the raw recorded data.

Credibility: Credibility was ensured through data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions on the findings. The researcher have relate the findings to relevant literature in order to confirm conclusions.

3.11 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was also to describe the research methodology and the limitations of the study. The next chapter will deal with the findings of the study, which will be built around the themes which were formulated from the responses to the research questionnaire.



CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to explore whether the phenomenon of LOA is being used by African kickboxers to enhance their sport performances. The LOA deals with the sub-conscious mind and focuses on thoughts and feelings to achieve desires. Questions posed to the participants in this study investigated whether the participants were aware of LOA and whether they used it as a means to enhance their kickboxing capabilities. The responses of the participants from the semi-structured questions were grouped according to the fundamentals of LOA and were categorised into themes. These themes are: thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude and, under these themes, sub-headings related to the relevant theme emerged.

From their own experiences, the participants shared what they thought about their skills levels, their kickboxing capabilities and what their thoughts were prior to a competition, during and after the competition. They shared their feelings about their coaches, the support of their families and what motivated them to engage in such a physically demanding sport. The participants expressed their desires, what they wanted to achieve in the kickboxing world and how they dealt with success.

This chapter deals with the findings of the study through the analysis of the themes which unfolded from the questions posed to the participants during the interviews (see Appendix 3). The discussion introduces the participants and this is then followed by reporting the findings in the following way:

Firstly the theme is introduced; secondly, a brief summary of the responses from the

participants relevant to the theme is offered; thirdly, the responses of some of the participants for that theme are elaborated upon; and, lastly, literature is compared to the findings related to the specific theme. This sequence will be followed for all the themes.

Pseudonyms (Table 4.1, page 54) are used to protect the participants and their responses within this thesis will be in italics.

Table 4.1: Participants Profile

Pseudonym	Gender	Achievement
Jude	Male	African Champ
Kapel	Male	National Champ
Ola	Male	African Champ
Lena	Female	African Champ
Alladin	Male	African Champ
Hanno	Male	African Champ
Brice	Male	World Champ
Peronne	Male	African Champ
VD Merwe	Male	African Champ
Layla	Female	African Champ
Jan	Male	National Champ
JP	Male	National Champ
Faroa	Male	African Champ

4.2 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.2.1 Theme 1: Thoughts as a process

Thought, considered in its movement of becoming (and not merely in its content of relatively well-defined images and ideas) *is* indeed the process in which knowledge has its actual and concrete existence (Bohm, 2002, p. 64).

It is confirmed that thought is an active response to memory and, when the kickboxer is competing in a contest, the memory of stress, fear and a lack of abilities may surface. This can become disastrous for the kickboxer and can ultimately lead to failure or a loss. On the other hand, if the kickboxer's memory of skills, winning and positivism surface then the contest can become a victorious moment (Bohm, 2002).

For the purposes of this study, this theme was used to explore the participants' thought processes and to verify whether they used the process to beneficially contribute to their performances in the sport of kickboxing.

The discussion elaborates on the thought processes of the participants prior to and during a contest. The following sub-sections have emerged within this theme: stress, kickboxing abilities and their opinions of their coaches and family support. These will be discussed in the format described in the introduction to this chapter.

4.2.1.1 Stress

Stress is defined as a condition in which an outside influence such as overwork, or a mental or an emotional state such as anxiety changes the working of the body and can affect the hormone balance of the individual (Bateman, McAdam & Sargeant, 2006). The question of whether the participants were stressful before a contest was

very difficult to analyse because it could not really be verified whether the participant understood the concept of stress. Many assumed that it is being nervous before a contest.

From a sporting perspective, a degree of stress before a contest is considered normal but this directly contrasts with LOA. This stress might not even be because of the imminent contest but because of a thought process manifested within the conscious and unconscious mind of the kickboxer since the beginning of his/her kickboxing career. Lena said that when she thinks of an imminent contest, which she wants to win, the stress factor is constantly occupying her mind. JP admits that he always has a degree of stress before any contest and does not really know whether it is caused by fear or excitement. He believes that his kickboxing ability is on a high level and yet, contrary to that belief, he still exhibits stress when preparing for a contest and even during the event itself, however the concept of stress was not further explored as it was not the focus of the study. Thinking and focusing about a deficiency only exacerbates it (Byrne, 2006). This study found that most of the kickboxers interviewed perceived stress as a normal phenomenon and not as a negative attribute in competition.

The study found that the stress level before a contest is different from person to person, for example, VD Merwe indicated that he loves the game of kickboxing so much that he does not really get stressful or nervous before any contest. For him, it is more like excitement. This sentiment was echoed by Brice who said that he does not allow negative thinking before a pending contest. He said that he just prepared himself as if it was just another contest. This attitude was shared by other

participants, however, contrary to this approach, there were participants who allowed the stress factor to enter their thought processes before a contest, in example, Layla said that almost all of her international competitions are stressful for her. This leads her to doubt the outcome of the contest and she cannot predict the outcome of the contest. She found it difficult to maintain positive thoughts all the time, because she always wants to show respect for her opponent. For Layla, the most stressful time is normally minutes before her contest. JP expressed that a little stress before the contest is quite normal and when the contest commenced, most of it disappeared. This approach was also shared by Jan who said that he did not think of stress as being negative but he agreed that stress was present in his thought processes before a contest by saying that “*there is always a little degree of stress when I hear about a contest*”. Faroa confirmed that when he is informed about a pending contest, normally a month prior to the contest, he starts to think about the fight. According to him, he goes into a mode where he mentally prepares for the contest through positive thinking and not stressing about it.

The law of attraction indicates that stress is not only negative, but it also creates fragmentation within the brain and mind (Bohm, 2002). Stress is a physiological condition that reduces effectiveness and ultimately becomes an obstacle to optimal performances (Fariselli, Freedman, Ghini & Valentini, 2008). Scientific research has also proved that stress can contribute to illnesses and diseases and it can also negatively affect sporting outcomes and desires (Fariselli et al., 2008).

In the study, most of the participating kickboxers said that they experienced stress before a kickboxing contest. In terms of LOA, this is a negative feeling and therefore

negativity will be projected back to the kickboxer (Byrne, 2006). All the kickboxers expressed that they felt good about themselves in terms of skills, physical abilities and they were confident in their coaching. However, there was still a degree of stress before a kickboxing contest. Furthermore, it was found that these kickboxers built up this stress primarily from external influences with the expectation to perform and win gold medals at all cost. These external influences emanates from coaches, peers, the government as sponsors, media and family. The Universe responds to the negative stress factor within the thought process, because that is what the athlete focus on. Therefore it is likely that the kickboxer will receive a negative outcome. It was found that the kickboxers lacked absolute relaxation before the contest, they presents to be very anxious and stressful. This implies that the kickboxer does not really enjoy the contest. LOA teaches us that what the kickboxer projects, that is what the kickboxer will receive from the Universe (Lossier, 2007). Stress can be positive or negative. It is often acceptable for athletes to experience some form of stress before a competition and some coaches and even sport psychologists will view it as normal. Contrary to this belief, scientific research has proved that stress can contribute to illnesses and diseases. It can also negatively affect sporting outcomes and desires (Fariselli et al., 2008). The negativity that stress projects into the Universe brings an imbalance into the desires of the kickboxer (Bohm, 2002).

Many of these kickboxers indicated that the stress levels in their thought processes sometimes lead to an undesirable outcome or poor performances. The stress tends to drain them psychologically and physically, ultimately creating fragmentation in the thought process which leads to an imbalance in the vortex of the being. Through the

use of LOA, the kickboxer can become aware of elements such as stress being perceived as negative by the Universe, which will ultimately assist with the practice of positive thinking. This kind of awareness will allow him/her to eliminate the negative thoughts of stress from the thought processes bringing more relaxation and allowing him/her to enjoy the contest leading to the kickboxer's desired outcome.

4.2.1.2 Kickboxing Abilities

For LOA to be most effective, one must feel good about oneself and become one with the Universe (Byrne, 2006). Most of the participants thought very highly of their physical abilities as kickboxers in terms of the body composition and physique. They were also confident about their kickboxing abilities even though some of them indicated that they still think that their European counterparts had more advanced kickboxing skills than the kickboxers from the African continent, especially if one look at the medal tally at the end of a world championships. Brice disagreed with this sentiment and he felt that his kickboxing abilities and skills level within kickboxing was just as good as any of the top kickboxers in the world. This sentiment was echoed by Ali who believed that kickboxers from the African continent can compete with their European Counterparts. Peronne, once ranked number three in the world, said that in order to become the best, one must believe in one's abilities to compete with the best in the world. This means that abilities, self-believe and correct coaching must connect.

Hanno echoed what Peronne said and explained that he trains very hard like any kickboxer and believes in his kickboxing abilities. He furthermore indicated that even his physical body composition is on par with that of any international kickboxer.

The following are responses of the participants in terms of what they think of their own kickboxing abilities:

Alladin indicated: *“I’ve been in kickboxing for long and I’m a national champion, but the kickboxers in the Russian Block countries are just very strong, especially in the ring.”*

Van der Merwe said *“When competing in Europe, the judges are most of time biased to the kick boxers from the European countries”*. This is sentiment was shared by other participants.

4.2.1.3 What the kickboxer thinks of the support from the coach/family

The support from family members (social support) and the relationship that kickboxers have with their coaches are important throughout the entire sport spectrum and can become crucial to the kickboxer’s performance. Some kickboxers rely heavily on the support of their families and coaches for emotional strength, which is referred to as autonomously dependent (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim & Kaplan, 2003). Contrary to this, it is also not unusual for kickboxers not to depend on social support due to the individualistic nature of the sport which means that the kickboxer can become autonomously independent (Chirkov, et al., 2003).

The coach in many instances form part of the family circle of the kickboxer, hence the grouping of the two components. When the question was posed what role the family and coach play in the participants’ kickboxing life, most of the kickboxers responded that the family and coach are very important in their kickboxing careers and lives. Layla indicated that her coach is her “everything”. Jan confirmed that he

received tremendous support from his family and he thought that it definitely helped him in his kickboxing career. Contrary to Layla and Jan, Jude said that the lack of support from his family does not really affect his kickboxing abilities and he does not often think of their absence in his kickboxing career.

Ola echoed the sentiment of Jude. For Ola, it was just important to fight and his family must be in the back ground.

The following quotes are some of the responses of the participants in terms of how they view the support of the coach and family:

During the interviews Layla said: *“My coach is my rock, I never compete when he’s not present”*. Brice indicated: *“When I’m competing at home, it’s always nice to have the family support, but when I’m abroad, it’s not an issue”*. Brice showed that being autonomously independent can be beneficial to the kickboxer.

It was found that most of the kickboxers are emotional and socially reliant on their coaches. Research indicates that this kind of dependence can be very beneficial during emotional events, whereby winning is everything such as championships. (Ryan et al., 2005) but it can also be detrimental when the kickboxer is dependent on this kind of support. In this case, when this kind of support is absent when needed, the outcome can be negative because the absence of and longing for the support that the coach/family occupies space in the thought process (Ryan et al., 2005).

The law of attraction emphasises the importance of synergy within the athlete’s environment. It is important that everybody within the kickboxer’s circle must be aligned with each other so that all positive energy exhibited by the coaches, family,

supporters and friends of the kickboxer is assimilated within the vortex of the kickboxer. This kind of connection will attract the desire of the kickboxer easily and quickly (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

4.2.1.4 Brief summary of Theme 1: Thoughts as a process

Bohm (2002) refers to fragmentation which happens when a thought is divided into many folders. In the case of the kickboxer, thoughts can be created to win the contest, on engaging the opponent, about the possible superiority of the opponent or about the fairness of the officials. These are all examples of how the kickboxer's initial thoughts get fragmented as the event progresses.

Participants expressed that they were always thinking, however, it seems that their thoughts were not controlled or structured, but fragmented (Bohm, 2002). They got confused about what they wanted to achieve. By listening to some of them during the interviews, it became obvious that their thoughts and feelings were not necessarily a vibrational match (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). Sometimes it seemed that the thought-wave of the kickboxer's opponent became a barrier, so that the kickboxer lost focus when engaging or encountering the opponent. This was visible because some kickboxers did well during the fight but lost it in the final round.

4.2.2 Theme 2: The effect of Feelings

Feelings can be described as a mood or vibe (derived from the word vibrations), which is picked up from someone else or from the physical environment (Lossier, 2007). Feelings are interconnected with thoughts because feelings must be in sync (the same vortex) with thoughts in order for the Universe to respond positively to desires (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

For the purposes of this study, this theme explored how the participants felt about their thoughts and verified whether they used the fundamentals of LOA to benefit their sport performances in the sport of kickboxing. The discussion elaborates on how the participants channelled their feelings towards their self-belief and their training environment including their coaches and family.

4.2.2.1 Self-belief

The abilities of any kickboxer are the end results of many components which include: hard physical training, good kickboxing skills, perfect body physique and above average mental toughness. These qualities add to a sense of self-belief.

Most of the kickboxers indicated that their kickboxing abilities could and should improve. Faroa stated that he sometimes felt that his opponents were just too strong for him. This allows the kickboxer to acknowledge that there is room for improvement. If this feeling persists even though others inform the kickboxer that he/she is in good form and shape, then this behaviour will not be in alignment with the vortex (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

Most of the study participants felt that they were able to win a contest even before it began which means that they had confidence in their own abilities. Brice indicated that he was on par with any kickboxer in the world and that he felt confident about his abilities every time he participated in a contest. On the other hand, some of the kickboxers said that they would like to win, but were not totally convinced that they would win. These participants sent out negative vibrations but those who were positive about winning projected positive vibrations. The negative vibrations are

captured within the thought process as negativity and affect how the kickboxer feels (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

The following quotes are the responses of the participants in terms of how they felt about themselves:

VD Merwe said:

I have great belief in my kickboxing abilities and when it comes to local, national and continental kickboxing events, I always feel positive about winning, but international and world championships then is like fifty-fifty per cent.

During the 2012 African Cup of Nations, it was observed that a participant in the study, Faraa had an advantage in the contest but lost it in the last round. During the interview, when asked what went wrong, Faraa responded that his opponent was just too strong and he could feel that he was not strong enough to win the fight. Through observation, when a kickboxer loose a contest for whatever reason, most of them refer to the fact that their opponents are too strong, something that the participants cannot really define.

Aladdin said whom was interviewed after the championships said *"I train hard, feel good about myself and feel confident every time I fight."* This illustrates a very positive feeling which, when sent out to the Universe, will be answered with a positive outcome. Aladdin won the competition within his category.

Brice said: *"I'm always in good form and know that I can win any fight that comes my way"*. Brice mastered the sport of kickboxing to be a world champion because his

approach was to harness positivism and to eliminate the memory of negative thoughts that can surface during training and competitions. The participant indicates that he focus on the imminent contest.

The kickboxer should always give attention to his/her positive desires and eliminate the negativity. Thoughts will respond to the memory of the positive desires and success will be eminent because that is the Law (Byrne, 2006).

Layla said *“I believe that my skills and physical physique is what it must be, but it seems that the European competitors are always one [step] ahead.”*

The law of attraction states that whatever you focus your mind on will receive energy in abundance (Byrne, 2006). It was found that the participants focused on the good qualities of their opponents, such as their opposition being stronger from a physical perspective and also from a kickboxing skills perspective.

Kickboxing is a very demanding sport and requires commitment in all areas of physical fitness which encompass: physical fitness, body composition, kickboxing and mental skills. All the participants who were interviewed felt good about their body composition (physique) and they indicated that they worked hard to maintain their physique. Yet, it was found through the interviews that the participants still respected the kickboxers from Eastern Europe and the Russian block countries.

It was found that the participants felt good about their physical and kickboxing abilities and, contrary to this, they still acknowledge the superiority of their Russian and European counterparts. From the perspective of LOA this can create contrasts in their vortex, which can cause fragmentation within their thought processes. The

way you feel about yourself must complement what you want to achieve, there must be no doubt in your own physical abilities.

4.2.2.2 Feeling towards training environment

Kickboxing gyms (*dojo*'s) were equipped with all the basic requirements for the kickboxer to practice the sport. They were regarded as sacred grounds in the past and only competitors were allowed in the *dojo*. However, with the commercialisation of the sports industry, kickboxing has become a corporate commodity. Because of this, the normal basic kickboxing gyms have been modernised to cater for the corporate element which has become a lucrative commodity for the coach and/or owners of the *dojo*.

Despite these changes, some traditional coaches retained their basic kickboxing *dojos* with the philosophical fundamentals of kickboxing, which is to teach the art of kickboxing for sporting purposes (Job, 2003).

During the interviews, most of the participating kickboxers indicated that they were quite comfortable in their *dojos* and that they regarded them to be good kickboxing learning environments. Some were not totally happy/comfortable with the current status of their *dojos*. Ola said: "*Our dojo lacks most of the equipment, I mean, we are training in a school class room*". Dissatisfaction with their *dojos* implied that they lacked a degree of gratitude in terms of LOA. In order to benefit from LOA and to achieve desired outcomes, all the four principles of LOA, thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude, must be practiced.

Feelings must be in alignment with the kickboxer's vortex (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

Most of the kickboxers interviewed expressed their feelings by referring to their gut feelings. If they had a gut feeling that they would do well or do badly, this referred to the individual's mood (vibe) which was how the individual felt about himself/herself, the training or the contest.

It was found that the kickboxers who were comfortable with their training environment had an objective to achieve the highest level within the kickboxing world and that they were not influenced by the corporate identity of the dojo. It was also found that the participants who were concerned about their training environment and the equipment there were those who found it difficult to perform on the highest level.

The law of attraction states that, in order for one to be able to receive, one must express gratitude for what one has and is about to receive (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

4.2.2.3 Feelings towards coach and family

This section deals with the feelings of the participants towards the coach and his/her immediate family. The reason for grouping the two components together is because the coach is seen as part of the kickboxer's family, even though they play distinctive roles. The coach is of paramount importance in the sport of kickboxing. He/she is responsible for many aspects such as the training schedule and the logistics which encompass training facilities and training equipment. In the world of kickboxing, many coaches become involved in teaching the sport because they practiced or participated in kickboxing competitions. This means that the particular coach may not be qualified in terms of international/national standards or rules and regulations. This might have an impact on how the kickboxer perceives the coach.

Skills training teaches the athlete to execute the correct techniques at the right time and make correct decisions at the right time (Thelwell, Greenlees & Neil, 2006). It was found through observation that, during the African championships, the athlete with the best skills achieved the top honours and that the size of the body had little or no influence on success.

While physical abilities (physique) are important for kickboxers, superior skills will allow the kickboxer to outclass a much stronger opponent who has fewer kickboxing skills. This shows the importance of synergy between all the variables (sport specific skills, physical fitness, body composition and the mental aspect). Research indicates that, in order to achieve success through LOA, one must believe in oneself, must rely on the unconscious level of one's being and project one's desires to the Universe and be willing to accept it with gratitude (Byrne, 2006). Layla said: *"My coach has the required qualifications and experience within the world of kickboxing therefore I feel comfortable that he can teach me the proper techniques"*. Brice echoed this by adding *"As a former world kickboxing champion, I feel that one needs to know that you have a good coach that can teach you the proper and correct techniques"*. And JP added: *"I am feel happy with my coach, he knows the sport and trains us good"*.

During the study it was found that most of the kickboxers believed that they would improve and become the best if they received the correct training from the correct coach. All the participants agreed that the coach must be qualified and have the proper kickboxing training. Some of the kickboxers who were interviewed felt that they were not sure whether they would ever become world champions regardless of the correct training and the correct coach. This kind of thinking contradicts the theory

of LOA and will ultimately lead to failure.

Finding of this study indicated that most of the kickboxers wanted to achieve their goals and they would do almost anything to achieve them. Ola echoed this by saying that she did not choose her coach. In her country, there were not many qualified kickboxing coaches, therefore she joined the nearest dojo in order to practice the sport and work towards her dream. In this study, it was found that all the participants felt good about their coaches and believed in them to the extent that the coach became the alpha and omega in their kickboxing lives. Even though the coach and the kickboxer have a very close and good kickboxing relationship, certain boundaries must still be kept because, if emotional reliance (ER) is present, the kickboxer can become psychologically dependent on the coach (Ryan et al., 2005). This means that ER can be viewed as a negative concept, because the kickboxer can feel a degree of longing for the coach should the coach be absent from a specific event. LOA believes that once the kickboxer is trapped in a negative situation, the Universe will respond and shower them with negative emotional situations.

Parents are starting to play a meaningful role in the sport careers of their children, especially in the ages between 5-17 years (Jellineck & Durant, 2004). Families use sport as a means of interaction with others and time spent on sport related events is viewed as leisure time (Kassing, Billings, Brown, Halone, Harrison, Krizek & Turman, 2004).

Jan says that his country is very small and the community normally supports the kickboxing events. His immediate family, such as his mother, was always present

when he competed and he had become accustomed to this. Layla indicated that her family was her biggest support group and when they were not present, she felt their absence, which can be described as negative feelings.

It was found that most of the participants said that their families supported their kickboxing careers and that the families felt good about them practicing the sport. This can contribute to the flowing of positive energy towards the kickboxer from an LOA perspective (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). It is important for the kickboxer to have positive vibrations and energy flowing towards them. The closer the source of the positive energy to the kickboxer, the stronger is the flow towards the kickboxer (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

4.2.2.4 Brief summary on Theme 2: The effect of Feelings

Support from the families and the coaches play an integral part in the thought processes of the athlete. If this support is negatively perceived by the athlete (consciously and or subconsciously), it can create fragmentation in the thought process which can lead to an undesirable outcome (Bohm, 2002). It was found that many of the participants felt good about themselves and said that they felt confident but, when observing their body language during the interviews, it could be seen that there was a degree of uncertainty in some of the participants. On the other hand, it was found some of the kickboxers were very confident of themselves; they were spontaneous and excited about the sport of kickboxing and, when talking to them, they show an aura of positivity. Hanno described this by saying that sometimes when he competes, it feels like floating. Brice said that sometimes he was in a “zone” and wished that the bell would never ring to stop the round.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Desires of kickboxers

The third theme of this thesis deals with desires which can be referred to as a form of energy which changes from one desire to another. It is scientifically proven that energy cannot be destroyed, but if the desire becomes fragmented or disturbed, it can become another form of energy (Osho, 2007). People send out vibrations (things that we desire) into the Universe all the time. Most of the time, we are not even aware of sending out these vibrations (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). To ensure we receive our desires, we need to become more conscious of our thoughts and feelings towards these desires for them to manifest (Lossier, 2007).

This theme was used in this study to explore the desires of the participants and to verify whether they used the process of deliberate attraction to contribute beneficially to their sport performances in the sport of kickboxing. The discussion elaborates on how the participants projected their desires or goals. This theme investigated the process of deliberate attraction in order to express how the participants reached their desired outcomes. This will be discussed as steps to reach deliberate attraction which are: Step 1: Observe what you receive and have in life (negative or positive), Step 2: While observing, you send out a vibration (positive or negative), Step 3: LOA responds to the vibration you send, and Step 4: You get what your vibrations send.

4.2.3.1 Observe what you receive and have in life (negative or positive)

During interviews, the participating kickboxers affirmed what they already had obtained as athletes, also what they had in the form of training facilities and the support of their families and friends. The law of attraction teaches that, in order to achieve, you must know what you have for it to multiply through deliberate attraction

and focusing on it (Lossier, 2007). What one have or want to have differ from person to person and in the world of kickboxing there's no prescription of how a perfect dojo should look like.

Alladin said: *"I have already achieved a lot within the kickboxing world, such as winning the African championships, however I still need to win the world championships"*. During the interviews, it was evident that most of the participants and their coaches conducted goal setting procedures, which is a sport psychology tool to achieve desired goals. The law of attraction refers to goal setting as deliberate attraction, whereby the athletes focus on what they want to achieve and simultaneously it manifests within the unconscious and conscious mind (Lossier, 2007) for instance, Ola said *"Our dojo is not the best that it could be and I hope that we could receive some better training equipment and a better equipped dojo"*. The law of attraction teaches that it is good to be able to observe what you do not have because it will provide the knowledge of what you need, therefore the focus should be on what you need and not on what you do not have (Byrne, 2006).

VD Merwe echoed the sentiments of Ola and indicated: *"Yes, most dojos are not fully equipped for kickboxing, but I focus more on the kickboxing techniques to better my kickboxing skills than on what type of equipment is in the dojo"*. Contrary to Ola and VD Merwe, Layla expressed this about her dojo: *"Our dojo is fully equipped, we are blessed and it definitely helps with competition preparations"*. Peronne indicated: *"I'm aware of the fact that we don't have a state of the art dojo, and I would like us to have one, but still our dojo produces world class fighters"* and Brice said *"I focus on what I have; I have the best coach that is why I'm the best in Africa"*.

It is important to observe what you have for this kind of awareness will place you in a position to express your desires. The kickboxer who observes a lack in his/her dojo, perceives this as a barrier to success if he/she focuses on the lack. The law of attraction says that he/she should be aware of the lack, but must focus on getting an equipped dojo which can lead to success (Lossier, 2007).

4.2.3.2 While observing, you send out a vibration (positive or negative)

Fragmentation within the desire process can and will have a negative outflow which ultimately affects the desired outcome (Bohm, 2002) hence the importance of focusing on what you have and what you want to achieve. The vibration projected into the Universe must be positive. While you are observing, you are sending out vibrations into the Universe and the Universe is responding to those vibrations (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

Most of the kickboxers who were interviewed indicated that they had doubts from within and that they struggled to control these negative feelings. Hanno indicated: *“I know what I want, but when it comes to the ultimate contest, it is like I just cannot step up”*. LOA refers to this situation as not being ready to receive the desired outcome; it is almost as if the person feels unworthy of the prize (Byrne, 2006). Brice says: *“I understand the importance of sending the right vibrations out, hence the reasons that I surround myself always with positive people, especially during important events. I always visualise the end results of the contest, when the medal is hung around my neck”*.

When observing a situation or object, human beings send out vibrations into the

Universe, consciously or unconsciously. For the purpose of this study, the kickboxer must be aware of negatively observing his/her dojo because that will be sent as a vibration into the Universe. When the kickboxer steps in the competition arena and observes a deficiency on his/her side, it will be sent as a vibration into the Universe and it might prevent him/her from achieving his/her desired outcome (Lossier, 2007).

4.2.3.3 LOA responds to the vibration you send

Positive and negative emotions cannot equally occupy the mind at the same time. One or the other always dominates. It is your responsibility to make sure that positive emotions constitute the dominating influence of your mind (Lossier, 2007, p. 25).

It was found through the interviews that most of the kickboxers wanted to achieve their goals and that they would do almost anything to achieve them. However, they viewed the sport as demanding, physical and aggressive, hence the continuous fragmented thoughts which they projected into the Universe. Kapel indicated that he always strived to send out positive vibrations and to stay positive, but that it was not always possible. Lena echoed this but, at the same time, indicated that, from time to time, she had doubts. It was found that some of the participants were sending mixed vibrations into the Universe. While they wanted to win, they still had elements such as stress and doubt (negative feelings) which received more attention and the Universe responded to them.

The theory of LOA is very clear that vibrations that are sent out into the Universe will come to the one who sent them out (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). Therefore, when the kickboxer sends out stress and doubt vibrations even though he/she wants to win,

the Universe will respond to the stress and doubt (Lossier, 2007).

4.2.3.4 You get what your vibrations send

The law of attraction indicates that one will receive what one sends out into the Universe, however, the vibrations must be in alignment to what the kickboxer feels and any doubts will have an adverse outcome (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). Doubt is a negative vibration and is often created from limiting beliefs (Lossier, 2007). The kickboxer must also allow success to enter his/her realm and he/she must release the negativity to get positive vibrations.

Alladin, expressed the desire to win and ultimately to become an African champion. This was also expressed by most of the participants. Listening to some of them, a degree of uncertainty whether they will ever achieve their desired outcome can be sensed. It was found that some of the participants did not even manage to win the African championships which is a step up to the world championships. Stated desires are just a form of energy and can change from time to time, hence the focus on the desired request to the Universe (Osho, 2007).

Most of the kickboxers who were interviewed expressed the desire to become a world champion and to be the best in the world at some point in their kickboxing careers. All sports people have desires and kickboxers are no exception, however, LOA has certain rules in terms of expressing and following through the said desires before they are granted. With the alignment of the thought process (imagery, visualisation), positive feelings towards the thought and hard work (kickboxing training and participating), LOA will provide the desired outcome (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

It was found that some kickboxers who expressed the desire to become champions, did receive their desired outcome. Whether this was as a result of the use of LOA cannot be scientifically proven, however, it is aligned with the principles of LOA.

4.2.3.5 Brief summary on Theme 3: Desires of kickboxers

Desires and or stated goals can be pursued in two ways, deliberate and non-deliberate attraction. Deliberate attraction is when the athlete expresses desires or goals, writes them down and focuses on them. On the other hand, non-deliberate attraction is when the person subconsciously focuses on what they do not have and projects that into the Universe (Lossier, 2007).

My finding through the interviews and engaging with the participants in the study is that most of the athletes were not following through with the entire process of the desire cycle as discussed in Chapter 2.

4.2.4 Theme 4: Gratitude towards achievements and what you already have

Gratitude is to be thankful for receiving something tangible or intangible which will positively influence your life (McCullough & Tsang, 2004). To live in a style of gratitude is an indication of positivity and contentment with what you have received and will receive from the Universe. This kind of lifestyle will normally outflow to others within your environment because the Universe perceives gratitude as positive, therefore, the more gratitude you exhibit, the more you will receive (Bartlett & De Steno, 2006).

For the purpose of this study, this theme was used to explore the participants' degree of gratitude towards what they had, whether it was good body physique,

kickboxing skills, good coach and family support, good training facilities and or just the abilities to achieve. Also whether they expressed gratitude towards desires that were still within the thought process. The teachings of LOA indicate that the use of gratitude beneficially contributes to achieving one's desires particularly within the sport arena (Byrne, 2012).

The African Championships are normally viewed as the stepping stone for the world championships and are viewed very important. Peronne said: *"Winning the African championships was my goal and desire, therefore I can only express gratitude toward the Almighty/Universe"*. Many athletes tend to hold onto the moment of a win instead of allowing the moment to pass in order for another moment to occur. This is normally due to the ego within the athlete (Tolle, 2008). Jude indicated: *"After any contest I express thanks for stepping out of the kickboxing ring unharmed, because the sport we participate in can become very physical at times"*.

It is important to express gratitude for not getting injured in the kickboxing ring. Many athletes do get injured and therefore one can understand the gratefulness of Jude. It was found that most of the participating kickboxers expressed gratitude after a successful kickboxing bout and that the kickboxers projected their gratitude to a higher being. During interviews, most of the participating kickboxers indicated that they were spiritually orientated and this was the reason for acknowledging a higher being. Spirituality teaches us the advantages of gratitude, it implies that those who have gratitude will receive more (Byrne, 2012). Alladin said: *"I pray before and after each contest, first to ask for help and then to say thank you"*. Lena expressed *"I can only be grateful to have won the African championships, the competition was tough"*.

During the interviews, it was found that most of the participants were focused on the event that was happening and not about what was still to come. This made it challenging to analyse their degree of gratitude for what they could still achieve.

Layla said: *“Being a spiritual person, gratitude allows me to be humble and this is the fundamental principle of kickboxing”*. Most people outside the sport of kickboxing interpret kickboxing as a violent sport, hence the perception that all kickboxers are violent or practice violence. On the contrary, the best kickboxers in the world have a very soft approach towards life and control their egos while others allow their egos to control them and they lose sight of the principle of the sport. For when ego steps in, gratitude disappears (Tolle, 2006).

It was found that most participants expressed gratitude for what they had achieved and that there is a definite correlation between the participants who practice gratitude and their successes. It was also found that participants are not necessarily grateful for things which are still in the thought process and must still manifest themselves.

4.2.4.1 Brief summary on Theme 4: Gratitude towards achievements and what you already have

Gratitude, as a way of life, projects positivity into the Universe which responds to give one back the same or even more (Byrne, 2012). The practice of gratitude enhances one’s social behaviour and attracts not only positive social people, but also positive things (McCulloug & Tsang, 2004).

It was found through the interviews and engaging with the participants in the study, that most of the athletes practice gratitude. They indicated that they were grateful to

be able to compete in such a competitive and physically demanding sport. They expressed gratitude for winning a contest and for exiting the kickboxing ring unharmed. It was furthermore found that most of the participating kickboxers only expressed gratitude for things that they had already achieved and not for the things that were still to come and that was still in the thought processes.

Van Der Merwe indicated: *“I’ve won the African Championships and for now that is all”*. During interviews, the participants expressed that they wanted to win the world championships, however, they did not express the desire continually. Faroa said: *“I am happy for now, what happens in the future must happen”*.

4.3 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed at providing clarity and the understanding of the fundamentals of LOA, how LOA is being used by the kickboxers participating in the study and how it can benefit the kickboxers from a sporting perspective. It furthermore addresses how these fundamentals can contribute to the enhancement of the social and spiritual lives of kickboxers. These fundamentals are all interconnected and it emphasised the degree of unity that must be present within the individual from an intrinsic perspective. Should one of the fundamentals be out of sync then the entire process of wanting and actually receiving can become distorted and the end result can be affected (Byrne, 2006).

The thought process is where creation begins. The content of the process and the thought can be separated, which can lead to the prolonging of the initial thought/concept. It is therefore important to keep the thought and the thought content

in synergy, even in the presence of other thoughts. The clearer the thoughts are and more intent they have, the lesser the lead time for manifesting them (Bohm, 2002).

When the thought is released into the Universe in the form of energy, the kickboxer must feel that what he/she is thinking about is possible. The feelings and the thoughts must be within the same vortex. This is where kickboxers fail to manifest their desires (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

This study found that the thought processes of the participating kickboxers was occupied by various desires or goals that needed to be achieved. The kickboxers found it difficult to prioritise or to streamline their thoughts and this created a situation where energy flowed in the wrong direction. Their feelings in terms of what they thought, what they wanted to achieve and what they could achieve must be in sync. This did not come out strongly because the kickboxers concentrated on their own physical capabilities and kickboxing skills and, at the same time, felt very stressful prior to a kickboxing contest.

In order for desires to be achieved, they must already be manifested within the kickboxer and the participant must believe that they are already being achieved (Byrne, 2006). The law of attraction is unambiguously clear: whatever the mind conceives and believes can be achieved. It also demonstrates that LOA works more effectively when the desires which are exhibited by the thought process are from an intrinsic level rather than from an extrinsic level even though extrinsic motivations can still be achieved. Most of the kickboxers wanted to become world kickboxing champions, mostly for the extrinsic value (Lossier, 2007).

Gratitude is the most important of all the fundamentals of LOA. It involves not just the individual, but also the entire group around the kickboxer. Gratitude exhibits respect for the entire wholeness and contributes to achieving desires (Lossier, 2007). Most of the kickboxers who were interviewed exhibited some degree of egoism which is in contrast to gratitude and the wholeness of the “being” (Tolle, 2008). This kind of attitude can be detrimental to the outcome of desires or goals.

The next chapter will deal with the conclusion, focusing on the themes of the study, the summary of findings and recommendations. It also provide meaningful recommendations for further research of this topic.



CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review indicated that LOA can be a useful tool that can be used for the achievement of desires, including in sport (Byrne, 2006). Human beings possess magnetic qualities which allow them to attract what they desire (Lossier, 2007). It is imperative for kickboxers to follow the processes of LOA, which are the use of thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude, to ensure a successful outcome (Lossier, 2007). The thoughts of the kickboxer, which are formulated from words heard or thought, must remain clear and decisive with no fragmentation (Bohm, 2002).

Feelings must be in harmony with the thoughts and be in sync with the vortex of the thought process (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). The kickboxer must stay focused on his/her thoughts and feelings in order for the desire to manifest because a desire is like energy, if it is not focused on, it can change into something else (Osho, 2007). Gratitude must be practiced throughout the kickboxer's life, even when he/she loses a contest and gratitude must be practiced even though the desire has not manifested yet (Byrne, 2012).

There was no conclusive evidence that the participants were using LOA as a tool to enhance their sport performances. Evidence did indicate that some of the participants were using visualisation and imagery, which are elements of LOA, in their thought process (Byrne, 2006).

This study followed a qualitative exploratory methodology design in order to determine whether African kickboxers were using LOA as a tool to assist them to

enhance their sport performances. The questionnaire used during interviews allowed the researcher to retrieve rich descriptive data from their thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude, which are fundamental elements in the practice of LOA. Thematic analysis was used to explore the nature of the data collected from the participants and to draw conclusions. The research questions were:

- a. Does the kickboxer express a relevant desire? E.g. “I want to be the best kickboxer in the world”.
- b. Does the kickboxer give attention to the said desire?
- c. Does the kickboxer exercise the practice of observance? (What have you already received from life?)
- d. Does the kickboxer live a life of inner peace and well-being?
- e. What vibration (vibe) does the kickboxer project into the Universe?

The aim of the study was to explore whether LOA is being used by African kickboxers to enhance their sport performances. In order to achieve the aim of the study, the following objectives were identified in Chapter 1:

- To explore whether kickboxers are aware of LOA.
- To explore the perceptions of kickboxers of using LOA as a belief system during competitions.
- To explore perceptions of kickboxers using LOA as a sport enhancement tool to improve their performances during competitions.

- To explore whether LOA should be introduced to kickboxers as a training tool to improve their performances.

5.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings presented in Chapter 4 are described within the framework of the themes of this study in order to get a comprehensive picture of whether or how the participants used the fundamentals (thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude) of LOA in order to enhance their sport performances.

Participants expressed that they were always thinking, however, it seems that their thoughts were not controlled or structured, but fragmented (Bohm, 2002). They got confused about what they wanted to achieve. By listening to some of them during the interviews, it became obvious that their thoughts and feelings were not necessarily a vibrational match (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). Sometimes it seemed that the thought-wave of the kickboxer's opponent became a barrier, so that the kickboxer lost focus when engaging or encountering the opponent. This was visible because some kickboxers did well during the fight but lost it in the final round.

Support from the families and the coaches play an integral part in the thought processes of the athlete. If this support is negatively perceived by the athlete (consciously and or subconsciously), it can create fragmentation in the thought process which can lead to an undesirable outcome (Bohm, 2002).

It was found that many of the participants, from a superficial perspective, felt good, believed in themselves and expressed confidence in their abilities, but when observing their body language during the interviews, it was obvious that there was a

degree of uncertainty in some of them. It was also found that some of the kickboxers were very confident about kickboxing skills, spontaneous and excited about the sport of kickboxing and they showed an aura of positivity.

Desires and or stated goals can be pursued in two ways, deliberate and non-deliberate attraction. Deliberate attraction is when the athlete expresses desires or goals, writes them down and focuses on them. On the other hand, non-deliberate attraction is when the person subconsciously focuses on what they do not have and projects that into the Universe (Lossier, 2007).

Findings through the interviews and engaging with the participants in the study are that most of the athletes were not following through with the entire process of the desire cycle as discussed in Chapter 2.

Gratitude, as a way of life, projects positivity into the Universe and the Universe responds by giving back the same and even more (Byrne, 2006). The practice of gratitude enhances one's social behaviour and attracts not only positive social people, but also positive things (McCullough & Tsang, 2004).

It was found through the interviews and engaging with the participants in the study, that most of the athletes practice gratitude. They indicated that they were grateful to be able to compete in such a competitive and physically demanding sport. They expressed gratitude for winning a contest and for exiting the kickboxing ring unharmed. It was furthermore found that most of the participating kickboxers only expressed gratitude for things that they had already achieved and not for the things that were still to come and that was still in the thought processes.

During interviews, the participants expressed that they wanted to win the world championships, however, they did not express the desire continually.

Final conclusions and recommendations will be presented according to the themes and the objectives listed above.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

As far as could be established from literature review, this study is the first to explore the use of LOA by kickboxers from the African continent. The participants in this study were amongst the best kickboxers in Africa and were dedicated to the sport of kickboxing. The sport demands commitment from participants and requires a very high level of skills that coincides with various internal and external variables to ensure top level performances.

The findings presented in Chapter 4 are described within the framework of the themes of this study in order to get a comprehensive picture of whether or how the participants used the fundamentals (thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude) of LOA in order to enhance their sport performances. It also addresses the study objectives and illustrates their relevance.

This first theme highlighted how the participants allowed their thoughts (negative or positive) to affect their sport performances. This was done by exploring the themes in the following way:

1. What do the participants understand about stress and how do they deal with it?
2. Whether the participants think that their kickboxing abilities are on a high level.

3. Whether they think that the coach/family supports their kickboxing careers.

It is possible that “thought” can be separate from “things” and does not necessarily lead to “things”, just like “thoughts” can be separate from intelligence (Bohm, 2002).

The study concludes the following regarding stress in the thought process and how the participants dealt with their thoughts:

- The participants in this study experienced stress before a scheduled contest while preparing for the contest and also in the competition stage.
- Some of the participants experienced stress on the verge of competing.
- The stress factor was more prominent during championships which take place over two days and implies that participants competed in more than one contest during this period.
- Although the degree of stress was always present, the participants continued to compete and said that the stress did gradually fade as the contest progressed.
- However, the thought of stress was already in the thought process. This was negative and contradicted the teachings of LOA. It furthermore created a fragmentation of the thought of winning (Bohm, 2002).
- Factors from an extrinsic motivation perspective, when the participants want to receive something tangible or want to receive recognition from different entities which included the coach, families, friends, governments and sponsors, play a crucial role in the performance of the participants.
- The participants were normally aware long in advance of their kickboxing competitions and whether it was to be a single contest or championships. This period allowed the participant to prepare and think about the contest. These

thoughts can be positive or negative depending on what the athlete focuses on. Some of the participants used some practices of LOA to prepare for the event such as visualisation, however, this was done without proper guidance.

- The practice of visualisation by the some of the participants was not entirely correct in terms of LOA. The participants allowed negative thoughts such as “I want to win, but we’ll see what happens on the day of the competition” or “what happens will happen”. This kind of thinking is projected to the Universe and gets captured within the vortex of the thought process (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).
- This study also concludes that most of the participants thought highly about their own abilities as kickboxers, yet they expressed great respect for their opponents. This kind of thinking is very paradoxical. While it is good to respect others, in terms of kickboxing, it must only be from a human perspective and not from a kickboxing perspective.
- This respect for the opponent’s abilities are a barrier in the thought process because the focus is likely to fall on the abilities of the opponent. When the kickboxer focuses on the abilities of the opponent, the Universe will do the same, therefore the attention will focus on the opponent. The law of attraction indicates that you will receive what you focus on (Byrne, 2006).
- With regards to the support of the coaches, this study found that all the participants had very high regards for their coaches and were convinced that they had the support of their coaches.
- The study showed that some of the participants had become dependent or emotionally reliant on their coaches. This can be a negative phenomenon because if the coach is not present during a contest, the outcome may be

negative (Ryan, et al., 2005).

- In terms of the family support, the study showed that most of the participants viewed their family support as important, however, some participants indicated that the support of the families was not crucial. The law of attraction indicates that the more positive energy that flows into your vortex can only strengthen the manifestation of your desires or goals (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). It is important not to become emotionally reliant on the support that is offered or is readily available.
- All the participants' thoughts of their kickboxing careers are assimilated with the thought process (Bohm, 2002). The kickboxers found it difficult to separate the different kinds of thoughts that emerged in their minds. This shows a lack of understanding of how the thought process operates and how beneficial the thought process can be. Also, the participants did not fully understand how emotional reliance can have a negative impact on performances.

This second theme, feelings, highlights how the participants allowed their feelings (negative or positive) to have an effect on their sport performances. This was done by exploring the theme in the following way:

1. How do the participants feel about themselves (Self-belief).
2. The participants' feeling towards their training environment.
3. The participants' perceptions in terms of the support from their coaches and families.

Feelings can be described as a mood or “vibe” which one senses from someone else or from a physical environment (Lossier, 2007). People are supposed to feel good and live a blissful life and, in order to do that, their feelings and thoughts must be aligned with each other and also with those around them (Hicks & Hicks, 2009). The study concluded the following in terms of how the participants dealt with their feelings towards their thoughts and other variables:

- The participants in this study felt good about themselves from a physical and kickboxing perspective, yet some participants indicated that their kickboxing abilities were not on the highest level yet and that it was a concern. If the focus is on the lack of abilities then LOA will provide more of the lack (Byrne, 2012).
- There was a contradiction between what the participants were thinking and felt because the two fundamentals were not always aligned with each other.
- Most of the participants felt good about themselves as kickboxers, yet they focused on the lack of equipment in their dojo. The law of attraction responds to whatever vibration you are sending out by giving you more of it, whether it is positive or negative. If it simply responds to the vibration in the above scenario, LOA will focus on the lack of equipment in the dojo (Lossier, 2007, p. 16).
- The support of the family was highly regarded by most of the participants and they believed that just knowing and feeling the existence of this kind of support allowed them to perform better in the sport. The law of attraction believes that the more positive vibrations are directed to the kickboxer, the stronger the energy level will be and the kickboxer will be able to manifest his/her goal or desire faster (Hicks & Hicks, 2009).

This third theme is desire and highlights how it can have a positive effect on sport performances. This was done by exploring the theme in the following way:

1. Observe what you receive and have in life.
2. Sending of vibrations.
3. Response of LOA to vibrations sent.
4. Receive from LOA what you send.

Desires can be referred to as a form of energy which can change from one desire to another. It is scientifically proven that energy cannot be destroyed, but, if the desire becomes fragmented or disturbed, it can take in another form of energy (Osho, 2007).



The study concluded the following:

- The participants in this study expressed their desires in the form of goal setting. Some of the participants expressed a desire but were not really convinced about achieving it. Participants were not focused on their desires; their minds were occupied with other matters, such as stress, lack of equipment in the dojo, sponsors and performances.
- The participant's desires, which should be intrinsic by nature to influence LOA, were primarily extrinsic from the kickboxer's perspective. The law of attraction teaches that desires that stem from an intrinsic motivation will be achieved above those of an extrinsic motivation (Markland & Ingledew, 2007).
- Most of the participants viewed the world championships as the ultimate achievement and when they were in a position to compete for the first position,

they could not really believe that they were on that platform as if they were not ready to receive or not ready to accept what they requested from the Universe.

The law of attraction says, ask for it, believe that you will receive it, and accept it (Byrne, 2006).

The fourth theme is gratitude and highlights how the practice of gratitude by the participants can have a positive effect on their sport performances. This was done by exploring the theme in the following way:

1. Remain in a state of well-being.
2. Express gratitude.
3. Display sportsmanship.

Gratitude is a positive emotional reaction to the receipt of a benefit that is perceived to have resulted from the good intentions of another (McCullough & Tsang, 2004). Gratitude is the most important of the four LOA fundamentals (thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude) (Byrne, 2012). To practice gratitude is about being thankful for things one has and the things that one desires that are still within the thought process.

The study concludes that:

- Most of participants practiced a spiritual lifestyle which made it easier for them to apply gratitude within their kickboxing careers. The lifestyle of a top performer kickboxer also becomes soft in nature which encompasses respect for the environment and especially for people within the kickboxing world who

hold a higher position within the sport.

- When winning a contest, the kickboxers will express gratitude to the higher being and to the coaches.
- Most of the participants were grateful for the support they received from their families.
- Most of the participants only expressed gratitude for what they had in the moment and not necessarily what must still come or what is within the thought process. The Law of Attraction says that when a desire is expressed (through words or in the mind), it is captured within the thought process or vortex. It is important to live one's life as if one has already received it which is the reason to be grateful for what must still come (Byrne, 2012).

On the basis of these conclusions and the findings in Chapter 4 of this study, the objectives will be presented as follows:

Objective 1: To explore whether kickboxers are aware of LOA

Through the use of thematic analysis, the responses of the participants of the interviews were analysed and the researcher concludes that some of the participants were indeed aware of the phenomenon of LOA. Most of them had heard of LOA through various kinds of media, however, none of them had any formal introduction to LOA.

Objective 2: To explore the perceptions of kickboxers in using LOA as a belief system during competitions

Through the interviews and the use of thematic analysis, the researcher found that most of the participants perceived LOA as a viable tool or belief system that could be used should the definition of LOA hold true. Most of the participants viewed themselves as spiritual beings, which made them more susceptible to alternative methods which are not harmful to the individual or other people. Some felt that LOA could become a way of life.

Objective 3: To explore perceptions of kickboxers in using LOA as a sport enhancement tool to improve their performances during competitions

Through the interviews and the use of thematic analysis, the researcher found that most of the participants perceived LOA as a viable tool or belief system that could be used should the definition of LOA hold true. Some of participants indicated that they were already using some of the elements of LOA, some believed that it worked while others believed that it could work if they used it properly.

Objective 4: To explore whether LOA should be introduced to kickboxers as a training tool to improve performance

Through the interviews and the use of thematic analysis, the researcher found that most of the participants wanted to achieve more in their kickboxing careers. Most of them wanted to become the best kickboxer in the world and wanted to remain at the top for a long time.

There are always searches for alternative methods to produce the best performances possible. Most of the participants felt positive about the use of LOA and felt that it could and should be used as a training tool and also as a lifestyle to improve their sport performances and holistically to improve their lives.

5.4 LIMITATIONS TO THE CURRENT STUDY

The law of attraction is a relatively new phenomenon practiced by few individuals throughout the world including athletes. The individuals who use LOA are generally very successful economically and socially. The study gathered information on the perceptions and use of LOA by kickboxers within the African context. There were, however, limitations to the study that should be taken into consideration. The limitations were as follows:

- The limited literature regarding LOA made the study extremely difficult, especially from a research perspective.
- The law of attraction is a relatively new phenomenon practiced by few individuals throughout the world including athletes. The individuals who use LOA are generally very successful economically and socially. Most kickboxing practitioners are from lower socio-economical classes which excludes them from this well informed group. Therefore, the main limitation of this study was the lack of understanding and information in terms of LOA, especially in Africa and in the context of kickboxing.
- The researcher did not take the language barrier into consideration during the planning of this study with a preconceived perception that all participants would be fluent in speaking English. The contrast was found at the stage of data

collection and an interpreter had to be called in for assistance. The language barrier was also a limitation of this study because most of the participants found English a challenge. An interpreter was used but it still limited the participants' ability to provide the researcher with rich descriptive data required even if it would seem irrelevant.

- The event (the African Championships) and the research setting (the Athlete's Village) could also have distracted some of the athletes due to the importance of the event. Because of this, some of the participants might not have focused fully on the study.
- Gender was not considered as a sampling procedure for the purpose of this study and posed a limitation to the study in that the voice of female kickboxers at this level of participation did not come out strong enough even though there were two female participants in the study.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants in this study indicated that they were aware of LOA and that some used various elements of LOA. The application of the phenomenon can lead to a lifestyle of well-being and the achievement of desires. The following recommendations are provided based upon findings and conclusions:

5.5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following recommendations are made for future research within the field of LOA to create a better understanding of the phenomenon:

- The lack of knowledge of LOA was revealed by this study. Therefore, more

insight must be provided to equip more people with the knowledge of the phenomenon.

- Inadequate literature exists that addresses the processes that should be followed for the effective application of LOA. This is an area that must be explored to assist kickboxers or other sports people to follow such processes.
- Findings revealed that spirituality and meditation are an important attribute of LOA. Literature supporting this finding is limited and the correlation between those attributes and LOA should be further explored.
- The study indicated that LOA deals with the “being” part of the human-being, which is referred to as “energy” and that this energy has magnetic abilities. More research is suggested to explore how this “energy” functions in order to manifest the desires of individuals.
- Fragmentation in this study indicates that the thought processes may be distorted by unnecessary thoughts which can derail the desires or goals. It is suggested that further research be undertaken to clarify the process of fragmentation of the thought process.
- This study was limited to the inclusion of only two female participants. It is therefore recommended that a similar study be undertaken to explore how females in specific view the utilization of LOA as a tool for sport enhancement at this level of participation.
- Although the researcher were clear that this study was specifically conducted at the level of African Championships, higher levels of participation was not explored in order to determine if participants would use LOA as a means to participate at higher level competitions. This leaves scope for further studies to

explore if kickboxers would use LOA different for different levels of participation or as a means to proceed to the next level of participation, and even to determine if they arrived at their desired level of participation.

- The role of the different role players: coach, family, dojo's, the universe and the self, as contributing factors to sport performance could be explored in more depth.
- Further studies could be considered determining to what extent an athlete should believe in him/ herself and how much on the Universe as a means to perform in sport.

5.5.2 Recommendation for coaches and athletes

The following recommendations are intended for coaches and athletes to ensure further understanding of LOA:

- This study was athlete focused, however, the success of the athlete is also dependent on the state of well-being and the proper mind-set of the coach who can also experience stress. If these are not taken care of, they can result in negative thoughts which can overflow to the kickboxer leading to a negative outcome. Therefore it is recommended that a similar study be conducted with the coaches within the field of kickboxing.
- The study revealed that people with good positive energy around the kickboxer can contribute to his/her success. Research can be conducted to develop a LOA relationship model between the athlete, coach and family which indicates guidelines for interaction between the various parties to ensure the success of the kickboxer.

- Stress is difficult to define, however, most of the kickboxers within this study revealed that stress was present throughout their kickboxing careers especially before and during competitions. Further studies that explore the use of LOA in a specific stress program should be compiled to eliminate it so that the focus can stay on the enjoyment of the sport and on positive outcomes.
- The process of LOA starts with the kickboxer expressing a desire to achieve and as such set personal goals for their athletic performance. This request is captured within the thought process. The study revealed that it was during this process when the kickboxers attracted a negative outcome through allowing negative thoughts, such as doubt and stress to enter the same thought process. It is therefore recommended that further studies be conducted to provide the kickboxer with specific guidelines on how to keep the thought process clear of negative thoughts so that it will be beneficial to the kickboxer.
- Families of athletes should be educated in LOA to fully understand the importance of the support they should provide to the athlete.

5.5.3 Recommendation for practice

The following recommendations are intended for the use of LOA during training to ensure better performances of the kickboxer:

- Training programmes of kickboxers include various components to ensure a comprehensive training program for competitions. This also includes mental training as a sport psychology tool. It is therefore recommended that coaches should explore LOA as a useful tool and combine it with existing training programs for the kickboxer.

- The knowledge of LOA and its application will allow the kickboxer to experience a life of altruism free of stress and doubt.
- Kickboxing, as revealed in the study, is a demanding and physical sport, however, the practice and application of LOA will have therapeutic value.
- The kickboxer and coach can use LOA together when conducting goal setting.
- Goal setting for different levels of participation and excelling into higher levels of participation should be emphasised as a mental training tool.
- Different variables that includes sport specific skills, physical fitness, body composition and mental training should work in synergy and coincide with skills training in preparation of athletes to perform at competitions.



5.6 STUDY CONCLUSION

This study explored whether the kickboxers from an African perspective were using LOA to enhance their sport performances. LOA was investigated through an extensive review of the literature and correlations were found between the phenomenon and other variables such as sport psychology, spirituality and meditation. The four themes, which are also regarded as fundamentals of LOA, that emerged from the study, namely, thoughts, feelings, desires and gratitude were discussed in detail within this study and it was found that the participants were using it to some extent, however, not to the extent as prescribed by the teachings of LOA.

The study showed that thoughts, fundamental to LOA, allow the participants not only to think of what they want to achieve, but also to view the outcome even before it has manifested. It furthermore allows the participants to practice techniques from a non-physical perspective. The alignment of the thoughts and feelings came out very strongly in this study and the participants could experience the disposition of their thoughts and feelings. The study revealed that stress and doubt were factors in the thought processes of the participants and the literature review indicated that LOA together with meditation should be used to eliminate these elements.

Findings from this study can and should be used for the application of LOA in sport. The phenomenon of LOA is not used by kickboxers to its full extent, however, findings in this study indicated that kickboxers were using certain elements and aspects of LOA.

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APPENDIX 1: INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa

Tel: +27 21-959 -2377 Fax: 27 21-959 -3688

E-mail: myoung@uwc.ac.za

INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: Exploring the utilisation of the “Law of Attraction” in the sport of kickboxing from an African Perspective

What is this study about?

This is a qualitative research project being conducted by, Josh Cloete at the University of the Western Cape. We are inviting you to participate in this research project, you are a possible candidate to participate in the study because you are an elite kickboxer within Africa. The purpose of this research project is to gain an understanding of whether African kickboxers utilise the Law of Attraction in their sport.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to participate?

You will be asked to participate in a focus group discussion to discuss the topic researched. The discussions will be recorded with your permission. All data obtained, transcriptions and recordings will be kept confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your participation in the study will make valuable contribution to kickboxing research in Africa. The discussions will take place at the 2012 African Kickboxing Championships in Madagascar which will be conducted for an hour per sessions. I will personally explain the study in full to you.

Would my participation in this study be kept confidential?

We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, your name will not be used in the data collection procedure. Data will be stored in locked filing cabinets and storage areas, using identification codes only on data forms, and using password-protected computer files.

If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible.

What are the risks of this research?

There may be some risks from participating in this research study. The study may include risks that may be better described as things that could make the subject feel uncomfortable such as disclosing information that you don't want to share. You may then ask to move to the next question and are under no obligation to answer. You may withdraw from the study at any time. Other than that there are no known risks associated with participating in this research project.

What are the benefits of this research?

This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help the investigator learn more about the perception of LOA. We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of the research topic.

Do I have to be in this research and may I stop participating at any time?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalised or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

What if I have questions?

This research is being conducted by *Josh Cloete from the Department Sport Recreation UWC* University of the Western Cape. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact me at +27(0)0741434963 or email: josh.cloete@yahoo.com.

Should you have any questions regarding this study and your rights as a research participant or if you wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact:

Supervisor: Dr. Marie Young

Head of Department: Dr S. Bassett

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17

Bellville 7535

Telephone: (021) 959 2377

E-mail: sbassett@uwc.ac.za



This research has been approved by the University of the Western Cape's Senate Research Committee and Ethics Committee



APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa
Tel: +27 21-959 -2377 Fax: 27 21-959 -3688
E-mail: myoung@uwc.ac.za

CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project: Exploring the utilisation of the “Law of Attraction” in the sport of kickboxing from an African Perspective

The study has been described to me in language that I understand and I freely and voluntarily agree to participate. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason, and this will not negatively affect me in any way.

Participants Name:

Participant's signature: Date:/...../201...

Witness Name:

Witness Signature: Date:/...../201...

Should you have any questions regarding this study or wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact the study coordinators:

Study Coordinator Name: Marie Young

Cell: +27(0)787029028

Email: myoung@uwc.ac.za



APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa
Tel: +27 21-959 -2377 Fax: 27 21-959 -3688
E-mail: myoung@uwc.ac.za

QUESTIONS

1. Can you describe what you understand about sport psychology?
2. What do you understand about sport science?
3. How do you psychologically prepare yourself for a kickboxing contest?
4. You have been briefed about LOA before the interview; have you heard about it prior to this particular briefing?
5. Have you applied the concept of the LAO in kickboxing?
6. Do you think that the LAO (which allows you to attract success) can work in kickboxing?
7. Do you experience stress before a contest?
8. How do you feel about your physical and kickboxing abilities during kickboxing training sessions?
9. Do you feel that you can become the best kickboxer in the world, should you have the correct training and coach?

10. How do you feel about your coach?
11. How do you feel about your training facilities and other resources?
12. What belief system, eg “Spirituality or Religion” do you practice?
13. What do you think is your family’s feelings about your kickboxing career?

