



The relationship between dual-career and post-sport career transition among elite athletes in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe[☆]



Tshepang Tshube^{a, *}, Deborah L. Feltz^b

^a Department of Physical Education and Health, University of Botswana, Botswana

^b Department of Kinesiology, Michigan State University, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Available online 1 August 2015

Keywords:

Athlete dual-career
Retirement transition
Botswana
Namibia
South Africa
Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this study was to get an in-depth account of the role of dual careers on elite athletes' post-sport career transition and to examine these issues cross-culturally between South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. This study also examined the availability of support services for student-athletes' dual-careers in their respective countries. Lastly, this study examined the retirement transition experiences of dual-career elite athletes compared to non-dual career elite athletes. To achieve the study objectives, the study used online survey, semi-structured interviews and focus groups to collect data on retired athletes from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. A total of 17 retired athletes (12 males and 5 females) from various sports (athletics-6, swimming-2, Boxing-2, rowing-2, field hockey-2, gymnastics-1, triathlon-1, biking-1) in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe participated in the study. All athletes had competed at the Olympic games except one athlete who competed at world championships and the commonwealth games. The study observed three major themes (*type of retirement, dual-career, and challenges*) as crucial in elite athletes' retirement transition and post-sport career. Consistent with the literature on retirement transition, the study observed that athletes' experiences in elite sport are crucial in explaining not only their retirement transition, but also their post-sport career adaptation.

© 2015 Published by Elsevier Ltd.

Competing at the elite level accords athletes unique skills, backgrounds and experiences that are invaluable. Even though high performance in elite sport exposes student-athletes to great experiences, it requires a vast commitment at the cost of education, work, family, and other interests in life (Crook & Robertson, 1991). Research in higher education (Aries, McCarthy, Salovey, & Banaji, 2004; Henry, 2013) and sport psychology (Kim & Moen, 2002; Lotysz & Short, 2004; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) demonstrates that elite athletes compete at the highest levels of athletic performance as a result of a long-term psychological and physical commitment to training and competition. Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) observed that elite athletes do not only strive to reach the top but also remain at the top in elite sport. The commitment to

reach and stay at the top requires elite athletes and those around them to invest at multiple levels (e.g., physical, social, and financial) during a long period of time. Despite limited literature on student-athletes' dual-career experiences in Africa, available studies examined barriers and challenges faced by student-athletes in African countries. For example, Burnett, Peters, and Ngwenya (2010) observed that student-athletes in South Africa need tutoring services, convenient study times, and welfare services to support balancing school and sport.

The primary objective of this study was to get an in-depth account of the role of dual career in athletes' post-sport career transition and to examine these issues cross-culturally between South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. This study also examined the availability of student-athletes' dual-career support services in their respective countries. Lastly, this study examined elite athletes' retirement transition experiences of dual-career athletes compared to non-dual career athletes. Research has shown that the quality of elite athletes' retirement transition depends on athletic factors (e.g., athletic identity and athletic success) and non-athletic

[☆] This research was supported by a grant from the International Olympic Committee.

* Corresponding author. Physical Education Department, University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana. Tel.: +267 3552402 (office), +267 76323739 (mobile).

E-mail address: tshayang.tshube@mopipi.ub.bw (T. Tshube).

factors (e.g., dual-career and family support) (CecićErpič, Wylleman, & Zupančič, 2004). Stambulova, Stephan, and Jäphag (2007) observed that pre-retirement conditions (e.g., retirement planning), coping and related factors are crucial in elite athletes' retirement transition and adaptation.

Theoretical frameworks

Historically, social gerontology and thanatology models were applied on the concept of retirement across a variety of disciplines in social sciences (Atchley, 1989; Blinde & Greendorfer, 1985; Kim & Moen, 2002; Putney, Alley, & Bengtson, 2005; Utz, Carr, Nesse, & Wortman, 2002). Recent research (Debois, Ledon, Argiolas, & Rosnet, 2012; Henriksen, Stambulova, & Roessler, 2010a, 2010b; Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008; Stambulova et al., 2007; Wylleman & Reints, 2010) advocates for a shift from studying retirement transition as a single event but to focus on a holistic and a lifespan approach to athletes' retirement transition. Cross-cultural research (Alfermann, Stambulova, & Zemaityte, 2004; Stambulova et al., 2007) indicates that transition out of elite sports is a dynamic, multidimensional, multilevel, and multifactor process in which nationality and culture play a crucial role in post-sport career transition. The ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) was used to discuss comparisons across the four countries.

Method

Participants

A total of 17 retired athletes (12 males and 5 females) from various sports (athletics-6, swimming-2, Boxing-2, rowing-2, field hockey-2, gymnastics-1, triathlon-1, biking-1) from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe participated in the current study. Participants ages ranged from 27 to 43, mean age of 30, median, 27, and mode of 37. The average retirement age was 33 and 8 athletes had university undergraduate degrees. Number of year's athletes retired varied by sport. Given a small number of Olympians in the region, some athletes had retired two years prior to the interview while others had over ten years retired from competitive sport. Athletes had competed at the Olympics except one athlete who had competed at World Championships and the Commonwealth Games.

Procedure

National Olympic Committees of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe and were contacted to facilitate the recruitment process. Participants were awarded a \$50 gift card or cash for participating in the study. Approval to conduct this study involving human subjects was obtained from the University Institutional Review Board and National Olympic Committees of participating countries. Data collection was carried out in three phases. The first phase comprised a 15-minute online demographic survey that was emailed to participants after they agreed to participate in the study. The demographic questionnaire sought information such as age, type of sport, time of retirement and if athletes were ready for retirement. The second phase involved in-depth online (via Skype/phone) interviews. The first author (referred to in this study as the researcher) conducted all interviews. Each in-depth interview lasted 45–55 min. The third phase of data collection consisted of focus groups with retired athletes from Botswana and South Africa. Focus groups were conducted separately for each set of participants and they were conducted on separate dates.

Instruments

The conceptual model of adaptation to career transition (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994) and the lifespan model (Wylleman & Lavalée, 2004) were used to guide the interview guides. Demographic information collected in Phase I was also used to further guide the interviews for this study. A total of two data collection instruments were designed for this study: the online survey and the semi-structured interview schedule. Athletes' interview guide focused on elite athletes' dual-career experiences, support services, and retirement transition. Examples of the questions include: What are some of the experiences of balancing school and sport you are willing to share? What are the services available for student-athletes balancing school and sport? What were the circumstances surrounding your withdrawal from competitive sports? How long did it take for you to come to terms with your decision to withdraw? A follow-up instrument was designed after interviews to inquire further and provide clarity where needed during focus groups. Follow up questions used include: Please share some of your retirement transition experiences. What are things/factors that facilitated and or hindered your retirement transition from competitive sport? If you were to relive your career in sport, what would you change?

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics such as mean averages and frequencies were calculated for Phase I data collection. Grounded theory was used to provide the philosophical understanding and guidance of the data collection and analysis process. The basic tradition within the grounded theory approach involves a specific mode of analysis in which the researcher generates or “discovers” a theory from the data (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The researcher generated abstract concepts from numerous manuscripts and created a theory on elite athletes' retirement transition. To accomplish the objective of creating a theory, Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2013) explained that the researcher needs to be flexible and open to criticism throughout the research process. Following data collection, all recordings were transcribed which is an obvious first step in grounded theory data analysis process. For reliability and data quality, the researcher adopted a blind coding approach. The researcher and an academic with experience in qualitative research independently listened to all recordings of the interviews and read the transcripts several times. The blind method is part of a scientific method used as a quality control measure to prevent research outcomes from being influenced by outcomes from either the placebo effect or the observer bias (Creswell, 2012).

Reading and listening to all audio recordings accords the researcher and an independent colleague, who is an expert in qualitative research and sport psychology the opportunity to judge whether the phenomenon of interest has been illuminated from a particular perspective. Consistent with grounded theory data analysis (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), transcribing data was followed by an intense line-by-line manual open coding by the researcher and an independent colleague using the participant's own words. During the open coding process, the researcher and colleague consistently engaged in a comparison method. The concept of open coding and constant comparison is described as finding key phrases or words in documents and experimenting with meanings (Miles et al., 2013). Consistent with the (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), the researcher remained open minded throughout the data analysis process.

Open coding was followed by axial coding, where the researcher created subcategories and related them to main categories and specified properties and dimensions of a category (Sparkes &

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/894267>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/894267>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)