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Athletes' Quality of Life After
Retirement: Research Analysis of Both
Retired and Active Athletes of
Mongolia

은퇴 후 선수의 삶의 질 분석:
몽골의 현역 운동선수와 은퇴 선수를 중심으로

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Abstract

Athletes' quality of life after retirement: Research analysis of both retired and active athletes of Mongolia

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Retirement or career transition is something that all individuals encounter during their lifetime, not just athletes. Compared to the general population, most athletes retire at a young age, which demands them to not only redefine their social personality but sometimes to straighten their goals. The athletes are provided with the adequate training and coaching plans to improve their performance and become highly competitive in their respective fields of sport. Similarly, athletes dedicate their lives to achieve their athletic dreams and improve the

context of their career in the sports industry. However, the long-term prospects of athletes tend to be undermined due to the extensive training schedule and standard of athletic performance that the athletes need to maintain. It eventually makes the athletes to focus less on the education and alternative careers, due to which the quality of life of athletes remains hindered. The current study aims to determine the quality of life of retired and active athletes of Mongolia and the extent to which they receive support from the government to maintain an adequate level of quality of life. The sample size is comprised of 16 athletes; out of which, 7 athletes are active, whereas nine athletes are retired. The interview conducted that has comprised of open-ended questions to acquire insights about the quality of life of athletes and understand their concerns in an efficient manner. The responses of the athletes were recorded, transcribed, and translated into English as a means to conduct thematic analysis to address the research objectives of the current study. The need for improving the quality of life of athletes has been determined; however, the factors that are required to be addressed to improve the quality of life remains unidentified. Thus, thematic analysis can help in identifying these factors. The results indicate that active athletes are too occupied to focus on their education

due to their extensive training schedule, and their overall source of income is not enough to address their financial needs, whereas athletes face financial challenges in meeting their travel and training expenses. The similar context has been observed with the retired athletes who need to find hard labor to meet their financial needs, and lack social and health insurance to address their wellbeing. Thus, career planning and counseling are required to be provided to the athletes to improve their quality of life. Therefore, it is essential for governments, sports federations and other stakeholders to recognize the factors (sport related and non-sport related) that impact athletes' quality of life after the retirement from an athletic career.

Keywords: Retired Athletes, Athletes' Life After Retirement, Athletes' Quality of Life, Athletes' Career Transition

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Chapter 1. Introduction

National sports organization, National Olympic committees, and sports federations around the world working hard to cultivate sports programs that facilitate athletes to successfully compete in the top level of international events across a variety of sports. National Sports Federations, clubs, and sports agencies invest significant resources in preparing and developing youngsters to become an exceptional athlete that competes in professional and international level (Holt & Mitchell, 2006; Walker, 1990). Trainers devote their time to form training plans that will accord athletes the chance to shine at international and professional sports. Athletes and the coaches commit to discipline themselves to train and practice for years for their career (Aquilina, 2013). Athletes dedicate their lives in pursuit of their athletic dreams and career. Majority of these dreams are to represent and bring exposure to their country and nation in international stages such as Olympic Games and World Championships. Governments, sponsors, and sports federations stress the athletes to be the best in international level more than ever. In the late 1980s, the industrialized countries started developing programs to help the transition process of athletes

from the competitive sport. After a long-term psychological and physical commitment to the training result, athletes compete at the highest levels of athletic performance. Further to psychological and physical commitment, athletes dedicate a significant amount of time to sport, mostly, at the expense of their education and other opportunities of life (Meyer, 1990; Parham, 1993). Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) stated that athletes do not only strive to reach the top but also to remain at the top in the competitive sport. The commitments to reach and stay at the top require huge investment from the athletes and those around them (e.g., physical, social, financial) for an extended period.

Retirement or career transition is something that all individuals encounter during their lifetime, not just athletes. Compared to the general population, most athletes retire at reasonably young age, which demands them to not only redefine their social personality but sometimes to straighten their goals. Sports psychology literature (Aquilina, 2013; David Lavallee et al., 1997; Maseko & Surujlal, 2011; Park, Tod, & Lavallee, 2012) established the necessity for athletes to have a 'dual career' or long-term objectives to plan for a post-athletic career while still actively practicing a sport. Approximately, 1% of the collegiate athletes in the United States become professionals, and the

average professional sports career survives around three and a half years (Beamon, 2010). The athlete is “forced” upon retirement to find an alternative career or method to support their family.

Imbalance in time and interest might disturb the normal developmental phases of life and events such as identity development, education, long-term career planning and other socially related developments such as spending time with family. As suggested by Peterson (1994), young athletes obtain a foreclosed identity when they exclusively identify with the role of an athlete at the expense of other roles, which may be crucial in their retirement transition (i.e., being a student). Young athletes competing at an elite level are more susceptible to an exclusive focus on sport, hence exclusive athletic identity with most of their self-definition and self-worth based on athletic career success (Beamon, 2010; Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993). Authors further described that sports administrator and coaches are presumably put pressure on the athletes to win and concentrate on the sport at the expense of being a student because of the public recognition. It has shown that not all athletes who compete at professional levels able to make successful living out of it. Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011) stated that athletes can make a living from their

athletic career only if there are deeply engaged in it, while others will not reach a level that would ensure them a livelihood.

Therefore, it is essential for governments, sports federations and other stakeholders to recognize factors (sport related and non-sport related) that impact athletes' quality of life after the retirement from the athletic career.

There are different types of career transitions exist in sport. Four types of athletic transitions can happen during an athletic career (Wylleman and Lavallee, 2004). Those involve introduction into organized sports, development to the higher level of the sport, mastery level of the sport, and ending of an athletic career. Transitions are hard to go through; however, all athletes experience the last transition, the retirement, as the most severe transition. According to Taylor and Ogilvie (2001), some factors impact the adaption to retirement process and new life situation, into catastrophe or successful transition process. These aspects include reasons for transition and what resources the athlete has and other internal as well as external factors. The introduction of the topic is discussed, and the literature review contains the information that will support the topic. This research will give insight concerning athletes of Mongolia relative to the quality of life

after retirement. The study will communicate the plan in detail while also informing the reader concerning information about the country of Mongolia and other pertinent information relative to athletes.

1.1. The Country of Mongolia

Mongolia is located in Central Asia and measures approximately 1,566,000 square kilometers and is more extensive than Western Europe. The country encompasses a series of geographical zones to include mountainous terrain as well as desert. The climate has low precipitation with winters that are extremely cold having temperatures as low as -50 degrees. The capital of the country is Ulaanbaatar with a population of over 1 million people as of mid-2000 (Briller, 2000). The Mongolian language is the National language. Many changes have occurred in the country over the years to include the overthrow of the Government which led to the renouncement of communism in 1990 creating a multi-party system causing the transition of the country to a market economy which affected the sports industry especially the national team system considerably. It is also of importance to note that the capital city of Ulaanbaatar is where over 50% of the population live which also slows the process of regional sports development.

1.1.1. The cultural ties to sport

The people of Mongolia exhibit a nomadic culture and are known to be most hospitable. The Mongolians have been nomads in the past, and half of the population living in the countryside still have the nomadic lifestyle. This nomadic lifestyle has had a notable influence on the culture of the people. Recognition and exposure of sport became much prevalent in the culture when Mongolia won the first Olympic gold medal at Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. Traditional festivals and holidays include the “Naadam Festival” that gives the time of celebration for what is called "Three Games of Man" which are wrestling, horse riding as well as archery. The researcher Ts.Shadargochoo stated in his work that the "Three Games of Man" has developed a lot during Hun Dynasty existed during year 209 to 93 BC and found the present form. The second celebrated time is “Tsagaan Sar” and is celebrated at what is termed the Lunar New Year with the local people visiting friends and family while also enjoying the food and drink of tradition. And the main event during this Lunar New Year is the traditional wrestling competition. These celebrations and activities have contributed that traditional sports development to become not just sport but also part of Mongolian culture and tradition.

1.2. Purpose of The Research

Purpose of this research is to determine the current condition of the retired athletes in Mongolia and finding the factors that are affecting the quality of life that athletes encounter after leaving the sports career. By looking at the life of retired athletes as an onlooker, the majority are struggling to maintain their livelihood and facing unemployment and financial difficulties. As for some cases, athletes leave athletic career due to uncertain future and to ensure their future by choosing a different career path. It is the hope that the research performed for this study will reveal information that will be of use academically as well as giving insight into positive steps that can be taken by professional athletes to be successful in the retirement process whether it is a planned or unplanned process. The research will gather information that will be most informative for future use where authorities can utilize to improve the conditions.

No matter the career, there will be time to end the career and enter the stage known as retirement. When an individual has worked a certain amount of time in life, retirement is viewed as a reward for hard work that was accomplished over the years. However, when something happens to cause early retirement, there can be issues that are of

concern, especially when the person that has to retire is a professional athlete. Most of the times athletes sacrifice their education to enable them to focus on sports. With the many factors limiting the development of the sports sector in the country, retirement is a nightmare for athletes. After retirement, athletes are unable to acquire other forms of employment which result in not being able to sustain themselves. The drastic changes affect them negatively causing depression because they can no longer live their lives as they were used to while still in the industry. Financial issues are leading factors that result in significant change in livelihood among retired athletes in Mongolia. Limited resources prevent the government from investing sufficient finances to the sports division. The athletes are paid very little or none for their participation despite the potential risks that come with participating in these highly skilled competitions. Low-income denies these sports athletes the ability to save enough money for future use. Once these athletes retire, they have very little to go on which leads to increase their levels of stress. This research will concern the life after an athlete retires or ends their career. However, it is also of importance to gain knowledge relative to the reasons that some professional athletes choose to retire.

Also, the topic of social welfare and livelihood of retired athletes is not a hot issue in Mongolia, but it is an important matter which is being overlooked. It is highly possible that talented athletes are leaving the sports industry due to risky, uncertain future. Therefore, the researcher wants to raise this issue to describe the current conditions of retired athletes' social wellbeing, as well as the factors that are affecting the athlete's life after leaving sports career.

1.3. Significance of the Thesis

The importance of this research is the assessment of the current retirement condition of the athletes. Officials and authorities of sports organizations will be able to use the result of this study to utilize the identified factors that are affecting the athletes' quality of life after the career transition which could ensure the future livelihood of the current and upcoming athletes. Sports industry could attract more people to pursue an athletic career which could lead to discovering world-class athlete.

The concept of athletes' retirement transition has experienced a significant progress in the literature the past decade. However, most research looks at the nature and causes of retirement (Cosh, Crabb, & Lecouter, 2013; Du & Tsai, 2007; Lavalley, 2005; Stambulova, Stephan,

& Jäphag, 2007; Stephan, Bilard, Ninot, & Delignières, 2003), and there is also a substantial development in recent years on literature that look at intervention programs for retired athletes (Baillie, 1993, Constantine, 1995; Lavallee, 2005; Smith & McManus, 2008). However, the researchers that have been done regarding the quality of life such as livelihood and financial aspects of retired athletes are limited. There is the desire to gain knowledge concerning what life is like after leaving a career in the field of sports. Research on athlete's retirement transition has been conducted around the world, the majority of the research targets specific national samples are limited (Aftermann & Stambulova, 2007; Huan. Schmidt, Hackfort, & Si, 2001). Information gained from the study can assist to reform the policies regarding the sports industry in Mongolia.

1.4. Operational Definition

Presidential program: The athletes who have a medal from Olympic Games (Summer and Winter Olympic Games and Paralympic Games) and World Championships from Olympic sports discipline receive lifetime monthly stipends from the government. The amount of money depends on the color of the medal and whether it is Olympic Games or World Championship. This program has been implementing

since 2012. As of 2017, only 51 athletes are the recipient of this program.

Government award: This award is a one-time award for an athlete for who has a medal from Olympic Games (Summer and Winter Olympic Games and Paralympic Games), Continental Games, Championships, and World Class Competitions.

National team: National team of Mongolia only forms for the few top sports which has shown exceptional success in international events whereas not all sport discipline has National team. National team members should receive salary, supplies for training, and expenses for competition from the Government. However, it is not always 100% provided.

1.5. Research Question

There will be three research questions that will be proposed to find out the situation athletes face after leaving the sports career:

RQ1. What are the factors that affect the quality of life in relation to athlete retirement?

RQ2. What is the relevance of athlete retirement planning to the quality of life?

RQ3. To what extent has the Mongolian government supported retired athletes?

Chapter 2. Review of Literature

The literature review provided in this chapter covers the theoretical aspect of the study that is relevant to understand the issues faced by athletes after retirement. Moreover, this chapter also critically discusses different studies related to issues faced by retired athletes and the role of different entities including the government to assist them in having a secure and healthy life after retirement. The purpose of the literature review is to establish the framework for the chosen topic. The information will assist the researcher in performing successful research that will be of benefit to not only the researcher but also adding knowledge to the body of knowledge in the field of academia. Other research can also be reviewed that will enable the researcher to consider the research that has performed in the past to add to that information. The literature review will also give a summary of the sources in an organized manner that will combine the summary as well as the synthesis of the work. The summary recap allows a clearer understanding of the information. There will be a combination of new as well as old interpretations that will support the reader in obtaining an accurate understanding of the information. The entire focus of the

literature review is to evaluate the sources giving the reader the most pertinent as well as relevant information (UNC Chapel Hill, 2014).

Another benefit of the literature review is that the information enables the development of a new argument as the information discussed in parts. This is the manner in which focus given via the building of a strong foundation that will support the work. It is important to note that the primary focus of any academic research paper (thesis or dissertation) is to develop the work with new insights while also acting as a guide or stepping stone for the success of the research process (UNC Chapel Hill, 2014). The researcher will focus on the theories of the leading aspect of the varied sources of books, research, and journals on the related topic. The primary objective of this thesis is to assess the current livelihood, quality of life condition of the athletes' after retirement in Mongolia.

2.1. What is Quality of life?

In general terms, the quality of life depicts that how a person leads their life. The study of Bruni & Porta (2016) illustrates that quality of life outlines the positive and negative features of life. Moreover, it ensures life satisfaction including physical health, social welfare, and financial viability. Health is also termed as a important

aspect of the quality of life. These socio-economic and welfare state determines the quality of life in the society. Hence, the quality of life of the person is degraded if a person fails to maintain a balance between finance and social factors in life (Bruni & Porta, 2016). The study conducted by Hetschko, Knabe & Schöb (2014) indicates that the people who are not having a consistent source of revenue or bad physical health are seemingly unsatisfied with their quality of life. In such condition, it becomes evident that the retired employees feel more unsatisfied as compared to the working employees (Hetschko, Knabe, & Schöb, 2014). The athletes also face a similar situation. Athletes while competing in sports do not feel displeased. However, after getting retirement, they start feeling discontented with their quality of life.

The validity of the above statement can be tested by reviewing the study of Pryor, Larson & DeBeliso (2016) as these researchers carried out an anonymous online survey by sending questionnaires to 200 sportspeople. The questionnaires were based on identifying their satisfaction level after getting retired. The result indicates that nearly 152 sportspersons gave negative response by stating that they are profoundly depressed after retirement as their quality of life has been

massively disturbed (Pryor, Larson, & DeBeliso, 2016). In this concern, it becomes evident that athletes have to face numerous consequences after retiring from sports. It could be highlighted that Mike Tyson, a famous young boxer, who fought more than 100 professional declared bankruptcy in 2003 after his retirement from the boxing profession. Similarly, Antoine Walker also faced a similar situation of bankruptcy after getting retired from sports.

The real question that arises is, what is the primary relationship of athlete's retirement and bankruptcy? In such condition, the study of Christensen (2013) can be used to get overview of this problem. The logistical regression analysis used in this research. The findings of the study illustrate that one of the significant factors that affect the financial status of athletes after retirement is that their physical training and diet requires a lot of budgets (Christensen, 2013). Therefore, athletes spend a lot of money in maintaining a high standard. Additionally, the study also explains that in many cases, these athletes adopt a terrible habit of gambling. Therefore, many athletes have lost all their savings on such addictive gambling. Darren McCarty, a famous hockey player also lost his \$15 million in gambling and drugs (Osborn, 2015).

On the other hand, there are several other factors, which apparently affect the financial condition of athletes. Poor financial literacy, bad financial advisors, divorce, ill-chosen accountants, and culture of lavish spending are few of the main factors that deteriorate the economic condition of athletes. However, the situation of athletes is entirely different in the developed nations and in developing nation. In this concern, the literature review will focus on identifying the situation of athletes after retirement.

2.2. Reasons for Retirement As an Athlete

Even though everyone one eventually faces retirement, careers in competitive sport are usually shorter than another professional career (Park et al., 2012).

The concept of athletes' retirement transition has encountered a significant increase in the literature past decade. Most studies look at the origin and reasons for career termination (Cosh, Crabb, & LeCouteur, 2013; Du & Tsai, 2007; Lavalley, 2005; Stambulova, Stephan, & Jäphag, 2007; Stephan, Bilard, Ninot, & Delignières, 2003), and there is also a notable increase in recent years of research that looks at intervention arrangements for retired athletes (Baillie, 1993; Constantine, 1995; Lavalley, 2005; Smith & McManus, 2008). The

nature of retirement from sport is frequently not only followed by a primary sense of loss (Stambulova, 2000), and a phase of re-orientation growth, but a re-adaptation into the community (Alfermann, Stambulova, & Zemaityte, 2004; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Wippert & Wippert, 2010).

Studies concerning the switch to post-sport career have mainly focused on the reasons for and the change to career termination. The reasons for career termination are manifold (Boothby, Tungatt, & Townsend, 1981; Bussmann & Alfermann, 1994; Koukouris, 1991; Ogilvie & Taylor, 1993), and seem to play a crucial role in adjustment to post-career life. This is especially true for the subjective feeling of freedom of choice (Alfermann, 2000; Coakley, 1983; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994, 1998; Webb, Nasco, Riley, & Headrick, 1998) of life. Ogilvie and Taylor (1993) and Taylor and Ogilvie (1994, 1998) emphasize four principal reasons of career termination are age, deselection, injury, and free choice in their overview of sports career termination research. The first three reasons underline that athletes are incapable of continuing competing due to performance decrements.

Therefore, there is no choice about withdrawal, being forced to do so. Athletes have to leave due to circumstances that are out of their

control. In addition, Ogilvie and Taylor mention free choice as a fourth category of causes. Webb et al. (1998) even dichotomize the causes of career termination "into two categories—retirements that are freely chosen and those that are forced by circumstances" (p. 341), out of the athletes' control, such as performance declining or injuries. The subjective feeling of control over events is a crucial part of social psychological theories of health and illness.

Typically, research conducted in Western Europe and North America, therefore representing countries with a capitalist economy (for an overview, see Lavalley, Wylleman, & Sinclair, 2000). Career termination was a seldom subject of research in socialist countries (see Svoboda & Vanek, 1982). One of the reasons could be that in socialism elite sport was glorified and possible adverse side effects were withheld from the public. In the former Soviet Union, for example, "an emphasis was placed on athletes' achievements and positive examples and facts. The negative facts were either passed over in silence or were given as exceptions to the general rule" (Stambulova, 1994, p. 223). This changed after Perestroika, when career transitions, including post-career, became a topic of research (e.g., Stambulova, 1994). However, so far, no comparative studies exist about how athletes from countries

of former socialist and capitalist societies react to their career termination. Lithuania and Russia were formerly united within the Soviet Union, and in those times had an identical system of elite sports support that gave athletes not only optimal training opportunities, but also social status, privileges, and financial security.

2.3. Assessing Reasons for Sports Career Termination

Fernandez, Stephan, and Fouquereau (2006) have examined the reasons for sports career termination via research. The fundamental objective of the study was to discover reasons that lead athletes to end their careers gaining the ability to diagnose the reason accurately. It was found that there were perceived difficulties' as well as feelings of insecurity that was associated with the vision of a new life. It was also discovered that the more the athlete loved the game, the more difficult it was for the athlete to decide to end the career even when there were positive aspects of the post-career life. It was also discovered, athletes that were forced to retire had the most difficulty adapting to a life without the profession (Fernandez, Stephan, & Fouquereau, 2006).

A study was also performed relative to the retirement of Swedish female athletes to gain insight on the contributing factors to this process. Lif & Lindmark (2012) created a conceptual model that

focused on three essential factors to include (a) what caused the athlete to end their career; (b) what affects the athlete from adapting to a new life; and (c) resources that are available to assist the athlete in adjusting to the life of retirement. The results from this research revealed (a) involuntary chosen retirement caused the less successful transition (more than 58%); (b) voluntary chosen retirement is the most successful retirement (more than 73%); (c) the most significant barrier to an unsuccessful transition is when the athlete has difficulties accepting the withdrawal process; and (d) the athletes that had a successful retirement had friends and family to support them as well as lifestyle training (Lif & Lindmark, 2012).

There is also the need to understand the reactions to sports career termination for the perspective of different athletes from different countries. Alfermann, Stambulova, and Zemaityte (2004) performed research to gain knowledge concerning the emotional, cognitive as well as behavioral consequences related to sports career termination of athletes from three countries including Germany, Lithuania, and Russia. From this research process, it was discovered that (a) psychological interventions enabled the athlete to have subjective control relative to the retirement process which was most

satisfied with athletes from Lithuania and Russia and (b) that training programs were also of great benefit for all athletes (Alfermann, Stambulova, & Zemaityte, 2004).

2.4. Condition of Athletic Career after Retirement

Liyang (2013) states that retired athletes are extensively affected due to financial crises and problems after retirement in developing nations. Although many athletes from developing countries have performed well at Olympics game and international platform, the federal government of these countries is not devoted to offering financial support and opportunities to the athletes. (Ranker, 2017).

It is notable that athletes in developing countries do not even receive any economic benefits during their service. Therefore, expecting a welfare from the government after retirement can be termed as an illusionary situation for most of the athletes. As a result, most of the athletes suffer massively after getting retired (Liyang, 2013). For this reason, it is also estimated that many countries are failing to succeed in the field of sports due to the shortage of funds and recognition.

2.4.1. Issues

After retirement, the main issue that athletes face is based on lack of financial support. The study of Liyang (2013) also validates that retired athletes have to go through numerous problems after retirement. The study also highlights that the most insightful challenges that athletes have to face are the shortage of financial resources to participate in an elite event. Similarly, lack of training facilities, lack of trained medical personnel, and lack of trained coaches are also profound challenges that athletes in developing countries face. However, athletes experience most of these challenges after their retirement.

In many cases, the retired athletes in African countries including South Africa, Zimbabwe, etc. have to rely on small part-time jobs after getting retired (Tshube & Feltz, 2014). Therefore, retired players in developing countries are not able to compete with the international sports stars that live healthier and luxurious life even after their retirement.

The main issue that athletes encounter after retirement is that they are not able to maintain a healthier lifestyle. As a result, many of these athletes who had faced injuries during the competitions fail to recover from ailment due to the lack of financial support from the

governmental sports department (Ranker, 2017). The issues faced by athletes after retirement can divide into two different segments (Physical Issues and Psychological Issues).

2.4.1.1. Physical issues faced by athletes

Physical issues considered as those difficulties that athletes encounter after retirement (Christensen, 2013). The study illustrates that Northeast Asia includes several financially unstable countries. Thus, athletes in these countries face problems when they get injured or sick. Additionally, the condition of medical infrastructure and services is relatively feeble. Therefore, the Governments of Northeast Asian countries are not in the state to give proper medical assistance and treatment to the national athletes.

On the other hand, the lack of financial resource does not only negatively impact the injured athletes only. In fact, a retired athlete also faces various physical issues as the several countries do not have any proper infrastructure to support their athletes. The study of Concannon, Kaufman, & Herring (2014) explains that athletes require proper training even after retirement as their body muscles have become addicted to the cumbersome workout process.

However, the government in developing nations such as Zimbabwe do not have any government-based training institute (Tshube & Feltz, 2014). Hence, the unavailability of training centers for athletes instigates physical disabilities in athletes (Liyang, 2013). Many cases have reported where athletes due to poverty and inaccessibility to the gym and balanced diet start relying on dangerous drugs which pose excessive physical problems for athletes.

2.4.1.2. Psychological issues faced by athletes after retirement

On average, an athlete contributes half of their life to the sport. For this reason, the study of Concannon, Kaufman, & Herring (2014) illustrates that an athlete has to practice even after getting retired. In developed nations, the athletes after getting retired become a team coach or they start competing on a domestic level (Nash, 2014). However, the situation is entirely different for athletes in developing nations as there are no opportunities for them to prosper in their field after getting retired. As a result, athletes in developing nations become profoundly depressed due to which psychological issues emerge.

According to Pryor, Larson, & DeBeliso (2016), there are specific social issues and conflicts which enhances the psychological issues of athletes after retirement in North American countries as well.

The issues become challenging if athletes belong to the rural side of the countries (Li, MacIntosh, & Bravo, 2012). The residents in rural areas of Northeast Asia believe that following western approaches and adopting their sporty games are affecting their religious and social norms.

The own ideology of ordinary citizens in developing nations within Northeast Asia makes it problematic for athletes to sustain. The particular mystical ideology also stimulates the member of the government and educational sector to abort the idea of adding athlete as a primary curriculum activity in the schools. However, there are specific private sports institutes, but they are too expensive for retired athletes.

The situation of female athletes is more crucial in conservative Asian countries (Hargreaves & Anderson, 2014). The local citizens do not profoundly admire them. Therefore, after getting retired, they are not left with any other option instead of migrating to other countries. However, only a few female athletes can migrate to other countries whereas others have to bear psychological and social issues due to the unavailability of financial aid and support from the government.

The study of Bruun & Odgaard (2014) states that female athletes have to suffer more in financially unstable and culturally influential countries. For instance, most of the people in Taiwan never allow their women to compete in global competitions (Chiang & Lee, 2017). As a result, female athletes find it more complicated to survive in such states. These issues get further intensified when athletes are no longer able to live their luxurious life after retirement. Therefore, they have to return to their normal life. The feeling of being unaccepted by the public and bad economic condition causes psychological problems in athletes.

2.5. Factors Affecting Quality of Life of Retired Athletes

Athletic and non-athletic factors influence the value of post-sport career transition and variation. The unavailability of training institutes in North America has also significantly affected the lives of retired athletes (Pryor, Larson, & DeBeliso, 2016). Hence, the situation becomes more crucial in countries which are not financially stable. Retired athletes have to face financial, work-related, psychological, physical, and social adjustment disputes after retirement from sports.

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institutes in North America has also significantly affected the lives of retired athletes (Pryor, Larson, & DeBeliso, 2016). Hence, the situation becomes more crucial in countries which are not financially stable. Retired athletes have to face financial, work-related, psychological, physical, and social adjustment disputes after retirement from athletic career.

The study of Kelly et al. (2014) also validates this concept of planning career-development strategies for retired athletes by stating that the government must provide financial assistance and medical assistance to operational and non-operational athletes in order to improve their quality of life. Additionally, the study also explains that the government should give excessive attention in acknowledging and admiring the efforts of retired athletes (Kelly et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the factors and elements that impact the quality of life of retired athletes can be understood by reviewing the several theories discussed below.

2.5.1. Activity theory

The activity theory explains that the satisfaction and gratification in the life of an individual are affected by his/her social interaction and social activity (Daniels, Edwards, Engeström, Gallagher, & Ludvigsen, 2013). In this concern, the respective theory validates the

relationship between retired athletes' social activities and satisfaction level. Moreover, the theory exemplifies that their sports-based activities highly influence sportsperson or athletes. They mostly spend their life in practicing sports. Thus, when they retired, they feel unsatisfied as they are not able to continue performing sports-based activities.

The study of Nash (2014) also confirms that each athlete is devoted to continuing to perform in the field of sports. For this reason, the activity theory recommends that individuals must try maintaining a homeostatic level of activity even after retirement. When the particular theory is applied to the athletic retirement program, the theory advocates that athletes should surrogate the active role of sportsmanship with new similar roles that are somehow related to sports. However, the condition of sports is completely different in South Asian countries as they do not have alternative options available (Majumdar & Mangan, 2013). Hence, they either have to live their life as an ordinary citizen, or they simply migrate to other countries. However, the situation in India and Pakistan are changing as the government and private organization have started to support their athletes (Majumdar & Mangan, 2013). Thus, other countries should also follow a similar structure to give comfort to their retired athletes.

2.5.2. Continuity theory

The Continuity theory proposed with an intention to assist people in bringing stability to their life (Nel, 2016). The theory states that a person's behavior must be flexible enough to adjust to new environment and atmosphere. The implementation of the particular theory in the field of sports is highly recommendable for retired athletes.

The respective theory highlights that athletes after retirement should continually try to maintain a positive and constructive behavior. Additionally, the theory also gives an overview that athletes after retirement should continually bring changes in their professional and personal life by starting a new business or job without giving attention to the fact that new profession is related to sports or not (Nel, 2016).

The respective theory is significantly valuable to evaluate the situation of athletes in developing Asian and African nations such as Taiwan, Mongolia, and Zimbabwe. If athletes in these countries will follow the guidelines of the continuity theory after retirement, they possibly will experience a reduction in the dissatisfaction level as it will give them hope to enter the new profession to grow and rise in life continually.

2.5.3. Subculture theory

The study of Hebdige (2013) termed subculture as a fragment of unique cultural, social, and ethical elements embraced by different members of the society. Hence, the subculture theory illustrates that people belonging from confined cultures must evolve themselves in the society (Hebdige, 2013). The primary advantage of following this theory is that it enables famous personalities who belong to traditional cultural society to convince their society members to accept their career.

Several Asian countries initially did not want their cricket team to enter the international sports world (Majumdar & Mangan, 2013). However, the situation began to change when these cricketers started meeting the local community members and took advantage of their celebrity status to bring comfort to lives of commoners. In this way, people in Asia started admiring cricketers due to which most of the cricketers are given immense respect, fiscal, and social opportunities in their respective countries. Therefore, athletes in developing nations face much criticism due to which they fail to attain satisfaction after retirement as they believe that they possibly have failed to gratify the local community members.

In such condition, if athletes in developing nations will start using their celebrity status to bring constructive change in the society,

people possibly will start giving them a social recognition, which, in return, will persuade the government and private organization to hire them for endorsement and public service campaign. In this way, it will help resolve the social and financial issue faced by athletes after retirement.

2.5.4. Disengagement theory

The disengagement theory is termed as the most controversial theory as it indicates that it is necessary for a person to get retired due to aging or injuries (Busbin & Self, 2013). However, this theory is substantial in the field of sports as the concept of retirement is much crucial for athletes. It is common to see that an athlete as young as 25 years old gets retired due to physical or psychological issues. However, the situation gets worse when government does not give retired athletes enough attention. As a result, many athletes suffer financially and socially due to the unavailability of economic opportunities after retirement.

In this concern, the exchange theory is vital to be applied by athletes as it proposes that a person must continually rearrange their activities to fit into a new sector, in case if they get retired, for instance, the study of Garbinsky, Klesse, & Aaker (2014) explains that a person

has to make sure that they save enough financial resources in reserve to make sure that they will not have to face fiscal issues once they are retired. Most of the sportsperson or athletes in western countries follow a similar pattern. They persistently invest their money into different side-businesses.

Additionally, the exchange theory also suggests that individuals should complete their qualification while competing in sports (Busbin & Self, 2013). In this way, if they have to get retired from an athletic career, they still will hold a professional degree which will help them in acquiring better jobs and financial values in the corporate sector.

However, few researchers argue that athletes and their satisfaction level not only affected due to the financial issues (Pryor, Larson, & DeBeliso, 2016). In fact, psychological issues are also required to be addressed equally to make them feel privileged after retirement. In this concern, a study was conducted by Sarı (2015) to identify the association between social/psychological needs and satisfaction among athletes. The study incorporated more than 400 respondents to examine their demands regarding the social satisfaction. Out of 403 respondents, 142 were female, and 261 were male respondents. Each of these respondents belongs to the sports industry.

Various questions were asked of these respondents regarding their satisfaction level.

The results indicate that nearly 72% of the respondents including men and women opted in favor of getting psychological and social security after retirement to attain a higher level of satisfaction (Sari, 2015). In this way, it becomes apparent that government of different countries must implement financial and social recognition program to enhance the livelihood level among retired athletes in the country.

2.6. Relevance of Athlete Retirement Planning to The Quality of Life Among Retired Athletes

The research discloses that the conditions surrounding retirement from competitive sports influence the athlete's quality of life drastically. In this concern, it is proposed that the respected council of athletic games must apply the mechanism to engage retired athletes in activities to protect them from getting isolated. The application of a dual-career strategy for retired athletes is the best option to give them social and financial support.

However, higher emphasis should be given to the social, psychological, and physical transitions by offering post-retirement programs for the retired athlete in the country.

The government must consult with the families of retired athletes to assist in offering moral support. The description of social and financial initiatives that must be adopted to reduce the dissatisfaction level and improve the financial and social circumstances for athletes is provided below.

2.6.1. Mindfulness process for psychological stress reduction among retired athletes

The retired athletes commonly encounter psychological illness if they are not given any other job in a similar field of sports (Byles et al., 2013). In this regard, several cognitive intervention methods have emerged to improve cognitive functioning in the elderly and retired people. One of the best techniques that could be applied by the government to enhance cognitive functioning process in each retired athlete is based on “Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Approach for seniors.”

The respective training program is designed exclusively for those citizens who face psychological problems due to adverse

intervention in their professional career (Crane, 2017). The advantage of this therapy or training program is that it helps elderly or retired citizens in gaining confidence to face the world and bring new constructive changes in their life.

The strength of this “Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Approach for seniors” can be further understood by reviewing the study of Keller, Singh, & Winton (2015) as the researchers in this study has developed the quantifiable mindful program. It took eight months to deliver the entire training program. The primary objective of this study/ experiment was to train seniors to gain positive behavior and adopt positive handling techniques to improve their quality of life. The result indicates that people after eight months of training felt satisfied and made decisions to enhance their quality of life (Keller, Singh, & Winton, 2015). In this regard, it becomes evident that issues regarding their psychological issues faced by retired athletes will be resolved if the governmental organizations will also take the initiative to give similar training programs based on Mindfulness Process.

2.7. Coping Process

Coping is termed as persistently changing conscious and communicative efforts to manage specific internal and external demands that assessed as challenging or surpasses the resources of individuals. Athletes who are unable to cope efficiently are confronted with a crisis transition, which may slow down or restrict their progress (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Wylleman & Reints, 2010).

The study of Plotnik & Kouyoumdjian (2015) explains that there are two different ways to cope up with stress. The first approach is originated on making initiatives to alter the source of fundamental problems (Plotnik & Kouyoumdjian, 2016). In this way, the government can help retired athletes by taking initiatives to bring improvement in their quality of life by offering economic advantages and free medical services.

The second coping strategy focuses on emotions and sentiments of individuals (Plotnik & Kouyoumdjian, 2016). The primary purpose of applying emotion-focused coping method is intended to reduce or manage stress. Hence, the governmental organization could introduce specific coping strategies for retired athletes by initiating training programs to keep them busy in exercises. However, the planned exercise must interrelate with sports to increase the personal

satisfaction level of athletes. Post-retirement coping strategies also entails that athletes should be given positive recognition and rewards by the government to let them have the resources to live a healthy life and make them feel more confident in improving the quality of life.

2.8. Social support

Social support has been acknowledged as essential factors in fostering athletic talent and handling post-sport career evolution for the retired sportspersons (Nel, 2016). A growing consciousness of the promptly increasing retired athletes has given a rise to the social problems and affected the quality of life. Contentment has been highlighted as a vital indicator of physical condition and is foretold by a sense of rationality. Therefore, the involvement of family in giving comfort to retired person plays a significant role in resolving the social concerns and improving the quality of life. In this concern, the study conducted by Byles et al. (2013) also supports that the mechanism of family relations helps people in gaining happiness and contention in life.

Another study that validates the above statement is based on analyzing a conceptual model to indicate the relationship of family, happiness, and quality of life in retired persons (Chiang & Lee, 2017).

Nearly, 142 retired participants were involved in the study. The researchers identified their perception regarding the impact of having social support from family and friends. The results indicate that family relations are certainly correlated with contentment, sense of rationality, and perceived health.

Moreover, the results also exhibited that effective family relations and a sense of rationality forecast greater happiness that helps the retired person in improving the quality of life. Therefore, if the governmental organization and training institutes will also start taking help from the family members of retired athletes, then the issues regarding the social concerns that confines athletes from attaining the quality of life will be significantly improved.

2.9. Balancing Sport and Other Career

The researcher examined that an assortment of factors simplified retirement transition (Tshube & Feltz, 2014). Balancing sports with other career is termed as the best approach to bring improvement in the athlete's quality of life. At present, the governmental organizations in developing nations do not offer any educational service or full-time job to its retired athlete. As a result,

most of the athletes in these countries fail to maintain a good quality of life after retirement because of their limited resources.

However, athlete's quality of life can be enhanced if the governmental organization will introduce programs during the retirement transition to engage them in other sports-related activities, for instance, they can be given jobs to become a sports coach at educational institutes. Similarly, they can be appointed in the Sports Ministry Department at different positions to perform duties that could help the sports industry of the country. In this way, these retired athletes can also contribute positively to the development of sports and related facilities for new sportspersons. They can provide guidance to them and train them for better performance in different sports (Tshube & Feltz, 2014).

Additionally, offering free educational programs will help athletes in gaining opportunities to advance their studies in their post-sport career (Martin, 2014). It is projected that completing university education will not only accord athletes the chance to promote their studies. In fact, it will also help them in attaining good employment in different sectors. As a result, their financial status will be improved due

to which the retired athletes will have a secured future, less dependence on others, and better quality of life.

2.10. Financial Support for Improvement in Quality of Life

It is apparent that athletes are not at the stage of learning. Therefore, financial support should be offered to such athletes by giving them pension after the retirement from sports. Baker, Safai, & Fraser-Thomas (2014) also explain that offering pensions to the retired person helps them in bringing comfort in their life. However, it is also apparent that countries in Northeast Asia are not rich. Therefore, it is impossible for them to give enough financial resources to its athletes.

Thus, it becomes evident that the main factors which primarily affect the quality of life among retired athletes are based psychological, social, and physical concerns (Hetschko, Knabe, & Schöb, 2014). At present, the governmental organization does not provide any fiscal, moral, or social support to its retired athletes. Therefore, the establishment of retirement planning programs is directly relevant to athlete's quality of life as the provision of financial and social support will offer an opportunity to retired athletes to become financially and socially stronger.

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The third chapter of the thesis provides the details of the method and its basis. The justification of the method is based on previous studies indicated that have used a similar approach to investigate the assessment of the athletes' life after the active career disengagement.

3.1.1. Qualitative research

The qualitative research methodology will be utilized during this study because the research wants to provide accurate results and to investigate the phenomena in depth. This research method originated from the behavioral and social sciences such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology. Qualitative data can be defined as observational information about the world, not in the form of a number (Punch, 1998). Qualitative methodology is not steered by universal rules, ongoing, fluid, possible to modify and familiarize as the study progresses and data emerges (NSF, 1997). QRCA (Qualitative research consultants' association) explains this research methodology is designed to uncover a target interview's variety of behavior and the observations that drive it concerning particular matters or topics. Qualitative research is

expressive rather than predictive. Crossman (2017) stated qualitative research is social science study that gathers and works with non-numerical data and that pursues to construe significance from these data that support us comprehend social life through the analysis of targeted places or populations. People regularly structure it in the opposite of quantitative research, which uses numerical data to find wide-ranging developments and engages statistical processes in defining causal and correlative relationships between variables. Qualitative research is characteristically focused on the micro-level of social interaction that compiles everyday life, whereas quantitative research emphasizes on macro-level trends and phenomena within sociology. Methods of qualitative research include interviews, observation and immersion, open-ended surveys, focus groups, content analysis of visual and written resources, and verbal description. The research wants to discover the issues and comments from the involved parties themselves in order to provide their perspective. Qualitative research strategy based on interpretive approach was selected as the appropriate method. It aims to explain those social phenomena which cannot be understood independently through the researcher's interpretation, (Furlong & Marsh 2010). Interpretive also stretches room to the researcher to

explain the connection between social phenomena which based on the understanding of the individual/subjects involved give their actions (Furlong & Marsh 2010).

3.2. Data Collection

Creswell (2002, 2004) identified four data collection approaches in qualitative research: observations, interviews, documents, and audio-visual materials. A researcher wants to use interactive selection method for the research. The researcher has conducted an in-depth interview. Before the interview, all participants have been briefed on the topic of discussion and each participant acknowledged consent to participate by verbal agreement. The briefing explains the nature of the study, its purpose, interview procedure, and nature of the questions. The participant briefing ensured the participant's confidentiality and anonymity in the research and publication process. Neuman (2003) explained that participants could become aware of their rights and what they are getting involved in when they read and sign a statement giving informed consent. The introductory verbal briefing acts as consent, and each participant will only respond if they agree to participate in the study. Participants will be reminded prior to and during the interview that sessions are recorded and transcribed.

Additionally, each participant will be informed that electronic and transcribed data will be archived by the primary researcher for three years, after which all electronic and transcribed documents will be destroyed. After reiterating the consensual information, each participant participated in a semi-structured telephone interview.

3.2.1. Research population

The study population is the retired and active athletes of Mongolia who live in the central city, rural areas and abroad as well. However, study population will have specific selection criteria during the sampling process.

3.2.2. Research sample

Research sample has chosen from both retired and active athletes of Mongolia. All Olympic and non-Olympic sports athletes are considered in the research. However, retired athletes would have to have at least ten years of their life dedicated to the sport, and for active athletes, they need to have at least 3 or more years of a sports career. Initially, 12 respondents selected for the research. However, several athletes who learned about the research reached out to be included in the research. This comprised total of 16 respondents (7 active athletes and nine retired athletes) from various sports (cycling-3, basketball-1,

volleyball-3, shooting-4, wrestling-1, judo-2, para-taekwondo-1, speed skating-1). Gender balance has been enhanced.

3.2.3. Interview

The researcher conducted an in-depth interview with semi-structured and open-ended interview style following a developed general interview guide. The interview questions derived with attentiveness from the background of the research and the objectives the researcher set out in the beginning. The interview questions covered three main areas; (i) impact of retirement on the quality of life; (ii) athletes' retirement planning, (iii) effectiveness of government's support. Scholars have noted that interview is the most comprehensive method to collect data in sports research. According to Trochim (2006), the most challenging and rewarding forms of measurement is the interview. Interview demands personal feeling, flexibility, and aptitude to stay within the constraints of the designed protocol. The interview also enables the interviewer to emphasize more on the topic depending on the answer that interviewee has given. The interview has conducted with two target participants to receive full perspective of the situation. The targeted participants include current athletes and retired athletes. In-depth interviewing is the primary means of data gathering used in

this research, specifically, the use of elite interviews. Marshall and Rossman (1995) described elite interviewing as a specific case of examining that concentrates on a particular kind of interviewee.

Rubin and Rubin (1995) stress that qualitative interviewing is justified whenever a depth of understanding is required. In this research, participants asked semi-structured, open-ended questions during a phone call or any forms of call making outlets. All the interviews have been conducted in Mongolian language. Afterwards, information is transcribed and translated into English language data file for further study. The interview has been conducted either via Skype or telephone calls with the interviewee depending on the interviewee availability for the choices. As National Science Foundation stated in 1997, that the researcher should keep in mind that it is essential to keep guiding questions during the steps of the analysis to reflect back on the research question, the purpose of the study and the potential. Johnson (2002) further points out that in-depth interview method is appropriate to use when the researcher is seeking to uncover information on a deeper level than would be revealed in surveys, informal interviewing or focus groups.

3.2.4. Interview questions

The interview questions asked the interviewee's name, age, sports discipline used to practice, monthly income during the career, current income, current job status, reason for retirement, a difference of financial condition after sport. Additional questions were asked depending on the answer given by the interviewee during the interview. The interview questions are slightly different according to whether the interviewee is a retired or an active athlete. Semi-structured interview questions included in Appendix A.

3.2.5. Follow-Up Questions

The follow-up questions asked via telephone call after the first interview and as it is the primary communication device in Mongolia and other social media devices utilized. The interviewee residing in different countries were mainly contacted through their social media profiles (Facebook messenger calls). The other form of contact information collected during the initial interview to ease the communication.

3.2.6. Data record

The technique of face-to-face interviewing (via video call) was selected based on the number of participants and their schedules. The

primary use of face-to-face interviewing with the option to use telephone interviewing for those who are unable to meet face-to-face would produce comparable quality data (Carr & Worth, 2001).

Additionally, according to Creswell (2002) telephone interviews may allow for more participants to respond, which is useful in collecting qualitative data quickly from a geographically dispersed group of people. An additional strength of this approach is during the individual interviews in this study, and respondents asked to share personal experiences, perceptions, thoughts and explain things that they might not feel comfortable sharing in a group or that could not be adequately described in a questionnaire or survey. All interviews' voice files have recorded with the permission of the interviewee.

3.3. Data Analysis

"A good thematic code is one that captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon. It is usable in the analysis, the interpretation, and the presentation of the research" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 31). There are no single methods of analyzing qualitative data in sports research (Gratton & Jones, 2010) but for these general study guidelines for the thematic coding analysis of qualitative data would be used (Robson, 2011).

Guidelines for the thematic coding analysis such as Familiarizing with

data to be collected, generating initial coding, identifying themes, constructing thematic networks and integration and interpretation were used. The themes identified will be checked concerning the commonality of the answers the participants give. Identification, examination, and interpretation of themes and patterns in textual data and how the determination of the themes and patterns assist answer the research question (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003). In order to produce and interpret an accurate information, data should be processed as organized, categorized, and synthesized. According to Pell Institute (2017), data analysis should begin at the same time the data is being collected. Research data is analyzed using the six-step process outlined by Creswell (2002). This six-step process provides a systematic, inductive method for examining and translating the massive amounts of detailed, raw data gathered during the interview process into a clear set of emerging themes about the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2002). The researcher first prepared and organized the raw data into

conceptual categories and create themes or concepts, which then uses to analyze data" (Neuman, 2003).

The data should begin reviewed the moment the first data are being collected, and researcher should mentally process it for specific themes and patterns. Data analysis is conducted in six steps. Please refer to the following figure.

Figure 1 Six Steps of Data Analysis

Step 1: It is critical to process the information and make notes



of the significant details such as things that stuck out, observations, highlights during the interview.

Step 2: The data analysis of the qualitative data collection should start as soon as the researcher begin collecting the data by reviewing the data and mentally processing the information for particular themes.

Step 3: As Pell Institute mentioned, qualitative studies generate a wealth of data, however not all of them is meaningful. Therefore, data reduction process is essential to identify and focus on the significant data.

Step 4: Based on the researcher's observation, the data should be categorized into themes or patterns, to analyze the qualitative data.

Step 5: To facilitate the conclusion, the data should be assembled, organized, and compressed into a display after the process of theme or pattern identification.

Step 6: The final step of the data analysis is the conclusion and verification.

The data has collected utilizing conducting interviews with the active and retired athletes. The athletes were asked open-ended questions, and their responses were recorded by using the digital audio recorder. The responses are transcribed and translated into the English language to conduct the thematic analysis due to the qualitative nature

of the collected data as a means to address the research objectives of the current study.

Thematic analysis ensures the systematic analysis of the information and helps in the developing the foundations of theories and concepts that account for the research problem, whereas it also helps in comparing the findings with the prior scholars as a means to determine the consistency of results. The thematic analysis in this study will be conducted by using the axial coding, in which the data will be coded at three different levels as a means to ensure the systematic organization of data. It helps in interpreting the organized data, which results in the identification of the concise findings. Similarly, the prevalence of identified codes ensures that the findings are appraised and compared with the prior scholarly findings. Hence, the researcher is provided with the direction to identify the limitations, significance, dissimilarities, and similarities with the generalized findings. Therefore, the findings are found to be labeled with the prevalence of specific categories that results in efficient drawing of conclusions.

The axial coding method is developed by grounded theory, in which specific codes have identified that result in the development of categories. It eventually results in the prevalence of organized

conceptual ideas that results in the occurrence of themes and contextual descriptions that help in answering the research questions. The identified categories are compared with the scholarly findings as a means to ensure the reliability of results obtained from the axial coding.

The axial coding method accounts for three levels, in which the first level of coding encompasses the structural coding that entails the propositions from the interviewees in an organized manner. The structural coding helps in the identification of significant information that helps in addressing the research objectives, whereas the information attained from the structural coding helps in the further analyses. In the second level of coding, pattern coding is conducted that identifies the major themes in accordance with their consistency to the past researchers on the basis of identified themes. In the third level of coding, the findings from the pattern coding are analyzed and discussed by their interrelation with the research questions as a means to draw meaningful conclusions. The overall findings from the analysis will be discussed and supported by the scholarly articles to confirm the reliability of the results.

In this study, thematic analysis is conducted to acquire insights about the quality of life of active and retired athletes. It will help in

understanding the factors that are reducing the extent of quality of life of athletes to address these factors and improve the quality of life of athletes. The context of quality of life is broad because the needs of every individual tend to be different on account of their priorities. In this instance, thematic analysis can ensure that such differences are identified and enlightened in accordance with the evidence. The need for improving the quality of life of athletes has been determined; however, the factors that are required to be addressed to improve the quality of life remains unidentified. Thus, thematic analysis can help in identifying these factors so that they can be addressed by the policymakers and concerned authorities to improve the overall quality of life of athletes.

3.4. Ethical Consideration

The selected participants' identity will be hidden, and pseudonyms will be used during the research.

- i. Informed consent will be used in the research to maintain confidentiality anonymity of the research.
- ii. The research also will use pseudonyms to ensure anonymity and privacy of all participants.

Chapter 4. Findings and Discussion

The current chapter provides the findings from the thematic analysis of the data collected from interviews of active and retired athletes. The findings are presented, and their relevance to literature is also provided in the discussion section. It will help in determining the consistency of the quality of life of athletes in the Mongolian context in accordance with the global context to ensure the prevalence of generalized results.

4.1. Findings

The data were collected from the active and retired athletes, out of which the group of active athletes was found to be comprised of 5 male and 2 female athletes; whereas the group of retired athletes was comprised of 3 male and 6 female athletes. The interviewed athletes were associated with cycling, volleyball, basketball, para-taekwondo, shooting, speed-skating, freestyle wrestling, and judo. The results are obtained from the thematic analysis, and the axial coding is provided in Appendix B. The findings are presented in accordance with the themes that are identified via the axial coding.

4.1.1. Lack of academic qualification

The results have indicated that the athletes are facing challenges in managing their academic activities and athletic activities. It has been observed that the athletes who are enrolled in academic programs cannot address their academic responsibilities due to the high work demand of athletic activities. For instance, an active cyclist A has indicated that *“I was used to go for competitions in different countries, and it conflicted with my school schedule due to which I could not finish my degree and gave up my scholarship”*.

Athletes have also indicated that they do not have adequate resources to address their academic objectives as a means to acquire necessary skills that can preserve their future after retirement. It eventually creates significant concerns for them because the compensation packages are not adequate enough to address the needs of athletes' life. The active athletes have indicated that they have selected this field due to their passion; however, they are utilizing their best potential and youth, specifically at the time when they can focus on their education and develop a better career. For instance, an active speed-skating athlete indicated that it would be great if the government can provide scholarships to support the athletes achieve a decent degree that can help them with their future career, since *“athletes are too busy*

focusing on their sport, they are left without education or proper degree.”

4.1.2. Inadequate compensation package

The athletes who are not part of the national team athletes are found to be dependent financially on their family members. It indicates the extent of being unpaid and lack of financial support from the federation. There are only few sports that have national team. Similarly, the athletes who are working part-time or own business are found to have adequate resources to address their athletic objectives in an effective manner. The athletes have indicated that their income is highly dependent on rewards that they receive from national and international tournaments, whereas their income also encompasses the club salaries.

It has been observed that the athletes, who are not part of the national team, are not compensated by the government, which indicates that the income of most athletes is highly dependent on their performance in tournaments. Furthermore, the athletes in the national team are found to be underpaid as their salaries are not sufficient to cover their training cost or personal expenses. For instance, an active cyclist has indicated that *“I do understand that the government can’t*

take care of everything and everyone”, whereas another retired female athlete has indicated that “It would be best if the government can provide training supplies as the cost of training supplies has been increased three times in the last ten years”.

The interviews from the retired athletes depicted that the retired national players, who were subject to monthly salary from the government, stopped receiving salary after the economic change to free market economy in 1990. It indicates that inconsistent compensation packages are offered to the national players that are irrespective of their contributions in uplifting the name of their country. The retired athletes have also indicated that they did not receive any proper salary before the implementation of the presidential reward program. Hence, the athletes consider that presidential reward program is a significant progress in safeguarding the quality of life of retired athletes. However, athletes noted that this program is only for the athletes who have won medals from Olympic Games and World Championship.

4.1.3. Financial challenges

The prize money received from regional tournaments barely covers the travel expense, which also becomes a major hindering factor in the wellbeing of athletes, as one athlete has stated that *“Prize money*

barely covered the participation expenses". Some active athletes have indicated that the athletes who are not part of the national team, are not compensated for the travel expenses, which increases their expenses while decreasing their disposable income, as one athlete has indicated that "*salary is not enough for her to buy vitamins.*" Furthermore, the athletes find significant challenges in finding sponsors to overcome their travel costs and training expenses due to lack of experience and personal relations.

The athletes noted that they receive one-time monetary rewards for winning regional tournaments, which eventually indicates the high demand of performance with inadequate financial rewards. Similarly, the high cost of training is also not addressed by the government, which includes personal training expenses and sport supplies, which eventually decreases the disposable income for the athletes. However, the athletes who win medals from Olympic Games and World Championship, then they are provided with the lifetime reward, whereas the financial aspect of this reward does not ensure quality of life.

The retired athletes who either own their business or became affiliated with some educational institution or club are found to be

doing well in terms of their income, whereas some of the athletes are found to move to foreign countries to find hard labor and earn well. It indicates the lack of career prospects available for the athletes during their active years where they could have focused on achieving academic qualification to transition towards a new career after their retirement in an effective manner.

4.1.4. Lack of career plans and counseling

Furthermore, the athletes do not possess an adequate plan for their retirement due to their extensive focus on athletic objectives. It has been observed that athletes are not provided with the adequate career counseling and they consider that they can only work in the sports industry after retirement. For instance, a retired athlete, who is currently improving her language skills to work as a referee and coach, has indicated that she does not know how or what she can do outside the sports industry, which indicates that the athletes do not have any hint about the possible careers they can select to become sustainable in the future.

The active athletes understand that the demand for coaches and trainers is not increasing in the sports industry, due to which they are open to suggestions for selecting a new career after retirement, but they

lack adequate skills and knowledge, and experience to find career prospects in any other field. As one athlete has stated that “*I am thinking to change field after retirement*”; but the athlete does not have prior academic or professional skills.

Considering these factors, the government should develop post-retirement career plans for the athletes to safeguard the career prospects of athletes. Moreover, it is also observed that athletes intend to start a new career from the basics after their retirement, which does not provide them with the adequate career prospects, which eventually hinders their quality of life, because athletes remain underpaid due to lack of academic and professional skills.

4.1.5. High training demand of athletic performance

It is also observed that difficult training schedule reduces athletes’ ability to focus on their academic objectives. Similarly, the athletes who want to acquire an educational degree do not possess enough time to attend college. Moreover, inadequate compensation packages reduce their ability to pay for their academic programs. In this manner, athletes have indicated that they would prefer if they can be provided with adequate scholarships or grants to pursue their academic

objectives as a means to safeguard their quality of life after their retirement.

4.1.6. Decreased quality of life

The retired athletes have indicated that healthcare cost increases their expenses because the injuries athletes endure during sports, tend to come out during retirement years, which increases their expenses and reduces their disposable income. For example, a retired wrestler Sen has stated that “*The traumas and injuries we got when we were athlete continues and some after effect comes out later in life, therefore, free medical insurance for retired athletes is a must*”. In this instance, the presidential reward program is required to be enriched with the elements of social and health insurance. It has been observed that many athletes have to address their family responsibilities while meeting their professional and academic objectives.

In this manner, athletes cannot acquire adequate education to support their career by means of finding decent jobs after their retirement. Similarly, some retired athletes are known to make their living by moving to the United States or South Korea and engaging and performing hard labor to earn their livelihood. Furthermore, retired athletes are not provided with pension due to the prevalence of young

age at the retirement. Hence, these findings indicate a hindered quality of life, regardless of the achievements of athletes at the national and international level.

4.2. Discussion

Athletes tend to face several professional challenges throughout their lives, and these challenges are extended in their retirement, which is followed by joblessness and financial hardships. The study conducted by Lavalle (2005) indicates that athletes are not provided with adequate career counseling and professional development interventions that can help them to acquire adequate skills, knowledge and abilities that are essential to maintain a quality of life. The athletes are not provided with the adequate career options and are not guided through the transition from being an active athlete from a retiree where they are not provided with financial resources, social insurance, and in some cases, health insurances, which significantly hinders their quality of life. This study is found to be presenting the consistent results with the current paper, in which the athletes have indicated that do not have career options and adequate knowledge because they have spent an extensive duration of their life being focused on athletic objectives. Similarly, lack of social and health insurance hinders their wellbeing,

which causes stress and hindered quality of life in the post-retirement phase.

The findings from the current study indicate that the retirees, who incorporated voluntary retirement, are found to have a better quality of life; however, their quality of life is not found to be related to their awards and performance. Hence, the quality of life is observed to be athletes' financial stability due to the financial stability of spouse of well-established business background. In this manner, the study conducted by Martin, Fogarty and Albion (2014) indicated that the athletes who consider voluntary retirements are found to have a better quality of life. This is due the fact that the voluntary decision of retirement is developed on the basis of financial stability and hence, when athletes believe that they will be able to address their financial needs in an effective manner, then the athletes retire at the optimal retirement age. These findings are consistent with the current study because the results from the interview indicate that voluntary retirement is based on the rational decision where the athletes reflects on their financial stability, either spouse, inherited income, alternative career or personal savings, which helps them maintain their quality of life in the most profound manner.

The athletes tend to develop several medical concerns due to their past injuries and physical exertion, which is found to be hindering their quality of life in later years. In this instance, the study conducted by Arliani et al (2015) indicates that retired athletes with past injuries tend to have the worst quality of life due to the prevalence of minor disability they face due to their medical condition. For instance, soccer is associated with a higher level of knee injuries, which leads towards the occurrence of osteoarthritis in later years, and is associated with low quality of life. In this manner, the significance of providing athletes with health insurance and benefits prevails in their post-retirement phase due to the increased risk of being affected by the injuries that athletes get during their active period. These findings reflect the results from the current study where the increased prevalence of physical hindrance is observed among the athletes due to their indulgence in extensive trainings and injuries during athletic activities that negatively affects their medical wellbeing in later years.

Similarly, the study conducted by Filbay et al. (2017) indicated that a decreased level of health is the antecedent of hindered quality of life. The athletes who experience pain, mild disability or discomfort due to the injuries they endured during their athletic years, tend to have

a higher extent of dissatisfaction with their quality of life. This context is found to be dependent on the financial capability of the athletes, in which financially stable athletes tend to acquire healthcare services in an effective manner, whereas lack of financial stability reduces the athletes' ability to seek on-going medical assistance. These results complement the findings from the current study, where the athletes who are effected by their past injuries in later life lack adequate medical insurance, which eventually hinders their quality of life. Similarly, these athletes are not financially stable to address their medical concerns, which indicates the prevalence of considerably significant concerns regarding the wellbeing of former athletes.

Filho et al. (2016) addressed the context of subjective wellbeing among the athletes and indicated that former athletes tend to have better immunity and cardiovascular health due to their active lifestyle. However, it was also observed that the psychological wellbeing of former athletes hinders due to the stress they feel after retirement regarding their career prospects. Furthermore, it is also observed that athletes don't take their retirement well because they will not be categorized as the active athletes who are cheered and appraised by the public due to their athletic achievements. Filhao et al. (2016) suggested

that the athletes should be provided with the adequate health assessment and treatments as a means to prevent the occurrence of at-risk disabilities and medical concerns among the athletes in older age. These findings are also found to be in accordance with the results of this study because the retired athletes have indicated that occurrence of medical concerns due to their past injuries, and the athletes are not provided with the adequate health insurance plans to address their wellbeing in the long-term prospects.

Simon and Dochetry (2016) indicated that the athletes need to find a new passion after being retired to maintain their life satisfaction. It helps in providing them with a purpose, which in most cases, is associated with better psychological wellbeing. Athletes need to be challenged to achieve, whereas the stress they encounter in their post-retirement phase hinders their wellbeing because they have to start over in their retirement phase by means of identifying a new career after acquiring new skills or academic qualification. These findings are found to be relevant to the current study because the athletes in the current study have indicated that they are stressed about their future and they do not have an adequate action plan to initiate a new career from the beginning.

Santos, Nogueira and Bohme (2015) addressed the context of compensation and rewards that athletes receive from the federation. The results indicated that athletes are highly dissatisfied towards the compensation mechanism because compensation is restricted to the high-performing athletes who tend to achieve international titles, whereas the athletes performing at national level are not provided any source of income, insurance or pension plan after their retirement. It adds the stress level of athletes, which is associated with hindered quality of life followed by the associated medical concerns. Athletes indicate that post-retirement career assistance is a major concern due to the underdeveloped skills of athletes in professional fields. Similarly, the findings from the current study depict the comparative issues, where active and retired athletes have indicated the same issue regarding the lack of adequate compensation and benefits plan to address the financial needs of active and retired athletes.

Park, Lavelle and Tod (2012) indicated that lack of counseling for retired athlete results a major antecedent of hindered quality of life. The athletes do not receive the benefits as per their contributions to their specific club or country, which makes the athletes highly dissatisfied in their older age. The context of career transition has been

undermined in the sports science, and there are no policies and procedures at the state and federal level to provide the athletes with the adequate career plan. Furthermore, the decision-making process for career transitioning is not supervised by specialists, which makes the athletes engage in the career that are less promising for their future. These findings reflect the results from the current studies where retired athletes move to foreign countries to engage in hard labor to earn enough finances to address their needs.

Smith, Bundon and Best (2016) have expanded the context of athletes' career by means of indicating their prevalence as activists in the society. It has been implied that opportunities for the athletes exists in the society and the athletes are required to innovate and adapt new behavior to demonstrate their presence in the society. It provides the athletes with the opportunity to work for their passion again, and in some cases, new passion, which enables the athletes to overcome the stressors that inhibit their quality of life. Hence, the athletes are required to develop their identities to represent themselves in the society, take new roles, develop new objectives and utilize their best potential to achieve those objectives. These propositions complement the findings from the current study, where some athletes are found to

have an alternative source of income or academic qualification that provides athletes with a vision to achieve after retirement.

Santos (2015) has addressed the hindered quality of life of athletes by indicating that athletes utilize their resources and efforts to achieve their athletic objectives and titles. However, these athletes face major challenges when they have to plan for their future after retirement under the lack of adequate guidance and career counseling. Furthermore, athletes also indicate hindered personal life and family relationships due to the fact that they spend a lifetime traveling and focusing on their training, and thus they do not have much time to settle down and sustain their relationships. These factors also incorporate stress in their post-retirement phase, which affects the psychological wellbeing. Moreover, it is also argued that the success of most athletes are dependent on the support they receive from their family in terms of covering their training and travel expenses and it is suggested by Santos (2015) that athletes should actively engage in findings sponsors and grants as a means to pay their expenses, because the context of sponsorship during the active phase of athletes ensures the possibility of having a career or a possible job in the sports industry due to their renowned prominence in the society. These results and suggestions

complement the findings from the current study, where the athletes who have indicated sponsorship and part-time jobs at any organization or clubs are found to have long-term career prospects due to their professional experience and renowned position in the sports industry.

Chapter 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter concludes the study by concluding the findings addressing the research questions. Furthermore, recommendations are also provided to address the concerns regarding the hindered quality of life of athletes as a means to develop adequate policies and procedures to safeguard the quality of life of retired athletes. Afterwards, the limitations of the current study are addressed followed by the future research direction for the scholars to address the context of this study in a broader perspective.

5.1. Conclusion

The current study was aimed to determine the factors that affect the quality of life of athletes with respect to their retirement and identifying the relevance of athlete retirement planning to the quality of life while addressing the support of Mongolian government towards the retired athletes. It has been observed that lack of financial stability, academic qualification and lack of alternative professional skills hinders the athletes' ability to address the context of their quality of life in the post-retirement phase. However, the active athletes are also encountered with the financial hardships due to the lack of consistent

income from the federation. It is essential that the athletes need to be provided with the adequate retirement plans that not only provide them with pension, health and social insurance; but also ensure that the athletes are acquiring professional skills and academic certifications as a means to secure their future.

Furthermore, athletes lack guidance about alternative careers, due to which they are required to be provided with career counseling to identify their interests in new fields and consider career prospects in the selected fields. It has been observed that the support of Mongolian government towards the retired athletes is not adequate enough to help them maintain their quality of life because the athletes are underpaid, and in some cases, deprived of social and health insurance. Therefore, the overall quality of life of athletes is well enough as the athletes are concerned about their future after retirement, and are facing financial hardships to address their training and personal needs.

5.2. Recommendations

The athletes are provided with training instructors who guide them through their transition from novice to the national and international champions. Similarly, it is essential that adequate guidance and career counseling be provided to the athletes so that they

reflect on their life and achievements with respect to the life that will be waiting for them after their retirement (Demulier, Scanff, and Stephan, 2013). It is highly required that career counseling is provided where the athletes are provided with the options regarding their career and select an adequate course of action. Similarly, it is essential that a systematic plan for developing the skills and knowledge of athletes to be positioned as professionals are required (Lally, 2007).

The training and development of athletes for adequate employment opportunities in the post-retirement phase are required to be addressed by offering them with educational opportunities via scholarships. It will ensure that the athletes are developing the knowledge that is essential to sustain alternative careers. The context of sports industry does not only accounts for athletes, and there are alternative careers available, mainly comprising of event planning, logistics, coaches, trainers, managers, and policymakers. Hence, athletes can select from various options as per their interest and can remain to be part of the sports industry, as sports industry accounts for their passion and interest (Lavallee and Robinson, 2007).

The context of the inadequate compensation plan for athletes is required to be addressed by the government policy makers and

concerned authorities. In this instance, it is essential that the athletes' compensation plan cover their travel and training expenses, and provides them adequate disposable resources that ensure that they meet an adequate quality of life (t et al., 2015). Similarly, health insurance is also required to be provided that should also last after their retirement. It will address the wellbeing of the athletes in the long-term. Furthermore, it will reduce the stress of athletes regarding their financial and health prospects after the retirement, which is also related to the enhanced well-being of athletes (Stambulova et al., 2009).

The Mongolian government provides lifetime rewards to the athletes who win medals from Olympic Games (Summer and Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games) and World Championships for Olympic sports. Moreover, the players enrolled in the national team are entitled to a monthly salary. In this instance, it is required that the government should provide the non-members of the national teams with the training expense and supplies as a means to reduce the financial burden that athletes have to face in order to focus on their training. It will help in motivating the athletes due to the increased concern of the government towards them, which will eventually result

in better performance because the athletes' focus will be directed to their training than financial concerns (Reese, 2015).

The athletes become stressed with their retirement because, for the most of their life, they are objectified towards the achievement of athletic objectives. In this instance, the athletes feel a loss of purpose from their lives and become stressed due to no possible career prospects where their interest resides (Torregrosa et al., 2015). Hence, it is suggested that the athletes should be provided with the psychological counseling as a means to adapt their behavior towards focusing on their future, reduce the occurrence of their stress and consider their post-retirement phase as an opportunity to discover new competencies and objectives (Ronkainen et al., 2013). The Governmental organization of developing nations must introduce plans to initiate welfare support programs by involving corporate sector, for instance, the media group can be asked to hire these athletes in their sports-based shows. Media groups should be asked to hire retired athletes in their advertisements and social awareness campaigns. Additionally, offering free medical services and free residence will help athletes in improving their quality of life. It will reduce their financial

burden, and they can get help from doctors or nurses for the symptoms that they developed during their period of association with sports.

5.3. Limitations

The current study conducted a qualitative research, in which the research questions were addressed by means of conducting interviews with the active and retired athletes. The qualitative study provides extensive insights into the research problem; however, it cannot ensure the prevalence of significant results that are supported by the empirical findings.

The research is conducted from South Korea to active and retired athletes of Mongolia who are not only residing in Mongolia, but also in United States, Australia, and South Korea. Therefore, the essence of right timing considerably felt and time difference between the countries made certain interview scheduling difficulties. Due to the interview being conducted via telephone or video calls, the researcher not being able to meet the interviewee created interview delays. Because participants often call to delay the interview or avoid it since the researcher does not have to wait to follow the respondent around physically.

The main topic of the study, Athletes' quality of life after retirement is now in the process of getting explored internationally; therefore there are not many literature reviews, research publications and theories are found related with this study. Mostly psychological factors are explored extensively.

5.4. Future Research

The field of research that accounts for sports science is profoundly undermined, which provides the researchers with the opportunity to address the research gaps efficiently. In the current research, the factors exhibiting the low quality of life of athletes are determined on the basis of qualitative data. Hence, future research should be focused on conducting the quantitative research as a means to identify the significant relationship between the antecedents of a low quality of life of athletes. Moreover, this data is based on the sample size that is determined using the purposeful sampling; due to which it is suggested that the future research should increase the number of sample size by means of a random sampling method to increase the generalization of the results in the broad population. Furthermore, this research did not address the transition process of athletes from being active to retirees; considering that such context can provide an in-depth

understanding of factors regarding the quality of life, this context of research should also be addressed by the future research.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions 1

For retired athletes

1. Which sport did you practice when you were an athlete?
2. How long have you been an athlete?
3. What age did you retire from athletic career?
4. Do you have college degree?
5. What was your income source when you were an athlete?
6. Did you receive any Government support when you were an athlete?
7. What became your income source after you retired?
8. How hard was it to find job after the retirement?
9. How did retirement change your quality of life?
10. Did you have to work after the retirement? If yes, Why?
11. Do you receive any pension?
12. Do you receive any Government support after the retirement?
13. If you receive, how does that support help?
14. Do you have to work even with the Government support?
15. What kind of supports do you receive?

16. Did you have retirement plan when you were an active athlete?

Interview Questions 2

For active athletes

1. Which sport do you practice?
2. How long have you been an athlete?
3. What age do you plan to retire from athletic career?
4. Do you have college degree? Or Do you study?
5. What is your income source?
6. Do you receive any Government support?
7. How effective/helpful is the Government support?
8. What kind of supports do you receive?
9. Do you have any retirement plan?
10. Do you think you will work after retirement?
11. Do you think you will work in the sport industry after retirement?
12. How do you picture your retirement?
13. Do you think Government support is enough for your retirement?

Appendix B

Results from Retired Athletes

Source	Node	Responses	Category 1	Category 2
2	2	Athletes only know how to play or become coach	Lack of career prospects	Career plans and counseling needed
1	4	Opportunity to find a new and stable career after retirement		
4	2	It is good to work in different fields		
1	5	Government never paid travel or training expenses	Lack of government support	Adequate Compensation Plan is required
3	2	No training supplies are provided by the government		
5	1	Income source accounts for salary from national team, prize money and club salary		
1	7	After retirement, old injuries come back and cause discomfort and mild disability	Athletes' wellbeing is not addressed	
5	3	Lack of health and social insurance		
1	6	No academic qualification reduces employment prospects for athletes	No professional skills in alternative fields	
1	3	President rewards system helped financially	Presidential Rewards are effective	Adequate Compensation Plan is required
5	2	Presidential rewards have changed the financial position of athletes		
2	4	Low salary and low pension	Low Income	
3	3	Low salary, it cannot even cover monthly transportation cost		
2	5	Income dependent on prize money that not everyone achieves		
2	1	Dependent on family for financial support		
3	1	100% dependent on parents for financial support	Financial Dependency	
6	1	Reward money only balances the cost of participating in the tournament		
3	4	Lack of sponsors because companies only hire famous athletes	Low economic prospects	
2	3	Move to foreign countries for hard labor	Financial hardships and lack of adequate employment opportunities	
1	2	Had to perform hard labor to provide for family while being an athlete		
4	3	Athletes lose focus due to low salary		
6	1	Difficult to balance work and training	High demand athletic objectives contradict with wellbeing	High work demand
4	1	Strong educational background with multiple part-time employments		

Results from Active Athletes

Source	Node	Responses	Category 1	Category 2	
1	2	Yes, studying law now, couldn't complete past studies due to demanding athletic schedule	Lack of academic knowledge	Lack of academic qualification	
2	1	Have educational background in physical education and sports medicine			
4	1	Studying to get a bachelor's degree			
3	1	Could not study due to athletic objectives			
4	5	Sport scholarship for athletes should be provided			
3	2	Low national salary, inability to meet travel and training expenses	Low Income	Inadequate Compensation Package	
1	3	Source of income from club and prize money			
1	4	No support from government	Lack of government support		
1	5	One-time monetary reward for winning international prize, monthly lifetime monetary reward for Olympic Games medal	No adequate salary package		
4	6	No guaranteed livelihood for athletes after retirement	No long-term benefits		
3	3	Pension reduces long-term stress about finances			
1	6	Lack of social insurance, health insurance, athletes not part of national team have also dedicated their life to the sport			No benefits
5	1	Difficult to maintain other job and working as an athlete	Challenging routine		High demand of athletic performance
2	2	Working as salesman, and private club as sources of income			
2	3	Career outlook in sports industry	Career Concerns		
1	1	No plan for retirement			
3	4	Lack of career plans			
4	3	Thinking to change field after retirement			
4	4	Athletes are doing hard labor after retirement	Financial hardships	Low quality of life	
2	4	Stress due to money issues			
4	2	Income is barely enough to buy some of the vitamins I need			

국 문 초 록

은퇴 후 운동선수의 삶의 질 분석:
몽골의 은퇴 선수와 현역 선수를
대상으로

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퇴직 또는 경력 전환은 운동선수뿐만 아니라 모든 개인이 인생에서 마주하게 되는 일이다. 운동선수들은 일반인들에 비해 어린 나이에 은퇴하며, 자신들의 사회적 성격을 새롭게 정의해야 하고 때로는 새로운 목표를 수립해야 한다. 보통 현역 운동선수는 자신의 경기력을 향상시키고, 각 스포츠 분야에서 고도의 경쟁력을 갖추기 위하여 적절한 훈련 및 코칭 계획이 제공 받는다. 또한 운동선수는 꿈을 이루고,

스포츠 산업에서 자신의 성과를 향상시키기 위해 자신의 삶을 바친다. 그러나 운동선수들은 선수로서 유지해야 하는 높은 운동 스케줄과 운동 능력 기준으로 인해 그 신체와 능력이 훼손되는 경향이 있다. 이러한 과정은 운동선수들이 교육 및 대체 경력에 대비 할 수 없게 만들며, 결과적으로 운동선수들의 은퇴 후 삶의 질을 감소시키는 원인이 된다.

본 연구는 몽골의 은퇴 운동선수들이 적절한 수준의 삶의 질을 유지할 수 있도록 하고, 또한 정부로부터의 지원 정도를 결정하는 것을 목표로 한다. 표본 크기는 16명으로 구성되었으며, 그 중 7명이 현역선수, 9명은 은퇴 선수로 구성되었다. 인터뷰는 선수들의 삶의 질에 대한 통찰력을 얻고, 그들의 관심사를 효과적인 방식으로 이해할 수 있는 자유로운 질문으로 구성되었다. 운동선수의 응답은 현재 연구의 목표를 다루기 위해 주제별 분석을 수행하는 수단으로 기록 및 영어로 번역되었다.

분석 결과, 운동선수의 삶의 질을 향상시킬 필요성이 결정되었다. 그러나 삶의 질을 향상시키기 위해 해결해야 할

요소는 아직 밝혀지지 않았다. 따라서 주제별 분석은 이러한 요인을 확인하는 데 도움이 될 수 있을 것으로 보인다. 또한 현역 운동선수는 너무 많은 교육 일정으로 인해 교육에 집중하기 어려워하는 모습을 보였고 여행 및 훈련비용을 마련하는 데 어려움을 겪고 있는 것으로 나타났다.

비슷한 맥락으로 은퇴 선수도 재정적 안정을 위한 안정적인 일자리가 필요하며, 복지를 위한 사회 및 건강 보험이 부족한 것으로 나타났다. 따라서 선수의 삶의 질을 향상시키기 위해서는 경력 계획 및 상담이 선수에게 제공되어야 한다. 이에 정부, 스포츠 연맹 및 기타 이해 관계자들이 은퇴 후 운동선수의 삶의 질에 영향을 미치는 요인 (스포츠 관련 및 비 스포츠 관련)을 인식하는 것이 중요하다.

핵심어: 은퇴선수, 운동선수의 은퇴 후 삶의 질, 운동선수의 삶의 질, 운동선수 일자리 전환

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