

THE ROLE OF THE ENTOURAGE ON ELITE ATHLETES' RETIREMENT TRANSITION

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ABSTRACT

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The primary objective of this dissertation was to investigate elite athletes' retirement transition experiences, including its psychological impacts, and post-sport career adaptation of elite athletes in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. The secondary objective was to investigate the role of the entourage on elite athletes' retirement transition. A total of 17 retired athletes (12 males and 5 females) from various sports (athletics-6, swimming-2, Boxing-2, rowing-2, field hockey-2, gymnastics-1, triathlon-1, biking-1) in Southern Africa and their entourages ($n = 35$) participated in the current study. All athletes had competed at the Olympics except one athlete who had competed at world championships and the commonwealth games. The study observed three major themes (*type of retirement, dual-career, and challenges*) consistent with the primary objectives as crucial in elite athletes' retirement transition and post-sport career and an additional major theme (*social and financial support*) consistent with the secondary objectives. The first major theme of *type of retirement* was derived from interviews with athletes and entourages to explain reasons for retirement and post sport career adaptation. Sub-themes observed under type of retirement were *voluntary* and *involuntary*. The second major theme observed in the study was *dual-career*. This finding reflected the athletes' balance between school and sport as primary in preparing for a post-sport career transition and adaptation. Sub-

themes observed under the major theme dual-career were *graduating from university, full-time job during one's career in sport* and *part-time job during one's career in sport*. The last major theme observed in the primary objective was *challenges*. It was clear from the respondents that athletes faced challenges including lack of financial resources to maintaining an elite sport career and support during retirement transition. Sub-themes observed under the major theme of challenges were *financial resources, lack of trained coaches, lack of facilities, and lack trained medical personnel*. The major theme consistent with secondary objectives was observed across the three phases of data collection indicating athletes receiving *social and financial support* from a variety of entourage members in their elite careers in sport as well as during retirement transition.

Keywords: Retirement, Career transition, Entourage, Elite Athlete, Olympians, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe

I dedicate this dissertation to my daughter Angela “Unami” Tshube. It is her unconditional love that gave me the courage and perseverance to continue on this long and winding road towards personal and professional improvement.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

Botswana National Olympic Committee-BNOC

Botswana National Sports Council-BNSC

Fédération Internationale de Football Association-FIFA

International Olympic Committee (IOC)

Namibia Sports Commission-NSC

National Olympic committee -OC

South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee-SASCOC

Zimbabwe Olympic Committee-ZOC

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Nature of the Problem

Sports federations across the world work hard everyday to develop sport programs that enable elite athletes to have the ability to compete in the top echelon of international sporting communities across a wide variety of sports. National sports federations and club teams, particularly in professional and international sports invest considerable resources in an effort to identify exceptionally gifted youngsters at an early age in order to accelerate their developmental process into elite sport (Holt & Mitchell, 2006; Walker, 1990).

Coaches spend a significant amount of time creating training plans that will accord talented athletes the opportunity to excel at international and professional sports. Individual athletes together with their coaches must discipline themselves to train and practice for many years over their athletic careers (Aquilina, 2013). Usually they need to dedicate most of their days in pursuit of their athletic dreams. Some of these dreams are to compete at the Olympic games and/or compete in professional sports. There is no doubt that governments, sport federations, sport clubs, and sponsors have put pressure on athletes to excel at the international level more than ever in the history of sports. For example, sociology of sports literature demonstrates that sport continues to be used as an instrument, to fulfill foreign policy goals. Governments sport funding and participation at the Olympic games has significantly increased in the past twenty years. Even though a significant amount of resources has been spent on athlete development, it was only in the late 1980s that even industrialized countries started developing programs to help athletes' transition out of competitive sport. There is no evidence in the literature of such programs in developing African countries.

Research in higher education (Aries, McCarthy, Salovey, & Banaji, 2004; Henry, 2013) and sports psychology (Kim & Moen, 2002; Lotysz & Short, 2004; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) demonstrate that elite athletes compete at the highest levels of athletic performance as a result of a long-term psychological and physical commitment to training and competition. Further to psychological and physical commitment, elite athletes dedicate a significant amount of time to sport, sometimes, at the expense of education and other avenues of life (Meyer, 1990; Parham, 1993). Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) affirm that elite athletes do not only strive to reach the top but also to remain at the top elite level in competitive sport. The commitments to reach and stay at the top require elite athletes and those around them to invest at different levels (e.g., physical, social, financial) during a long period of time.

The aim of this dissertation was to look at Olympians' retirement transition experiences and the role played by entourage members in elite athletes retirement transition. The researcher purposively selected Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe to participate in the study for two primary reasons. The first reason is that, athletes from the selected countries are among the least studied in the sport psychology literature. Most theoretical models and constructs that have been development on retirement transition were carried out mostly in industrialized nations in Europe, North America, and Asia which raises questions of generalizability of these existing models and constructs. This calls for a need to test the applicability of these theoretical models and constructs in other populations such as Southern Africa. An online search using the

keyword; “Botswana sport”, “South Africa sport”, “Zimbabwe sport”, and “Namibia sport” on ProQuest databases produced a total result of 18,967 studies. These results were of varying types of literature relating to sport in Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. At least 2,519 of the studies were from scholarly journal articles. Most of the scholarly journal articles were published in the *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance* and other international journals such as *International Journal of the History of Sport* and *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. It is worth noting that additional literature can be found in respective national libraries, archives, and other online databases. However, ProQuest is one of the most popular online database providers in the world.

The last reason for carrying out this dissertation in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe is informed by concerns made by retired athletes in the media regarding post-sport career adaptation. For example, even though the South African boxing legend, Baby Jake Matlala, was a four times world champion in the flyweight category, he was considered financially down and out at the time of his death (“Boxing legend Baby Jake Matlala dies at 51 - Times LIVE,” 2013). His friends and church colleagues had to raise funds to cover his medical expenses. In a similar scenario, an athletics legend from Botswana was quoted in *The Midweek Sun*, (2012) newspaper expressing concern over neglect of retired athletes. It is an inevitable reality that all athletes will face retirement from elite sport at some point in their sport career. What is of primary importance is the athlete’s post-sport career adaptation. In addition to the above two reasons, the rationale for the selected countries is to test the applicability of western models and constructs in less studied populations. In addition to testing models and

constructs, differences in sport budgets, sport structures and national populations accorded the researcher the opportunity to make cross-national comparisons.

Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) depict that termination of a high-level athletic career is an emotional experience, not only for the athletes themselves, but also for those in their close environment (e.g., parents, children, friends). Research findings (Blinde & Greendorfer, 1985; Du & Tsai, 2007; Lavallee, Grove, & Gordon, 1997) are consistent that retired athletes may experience a sense of loss and regret. For example, Blende and Greendorfer (1985) observed that in addition to retired athletes missing their favorite sport; these individuals felt that they lost the glory of being a famous athlete having to make a transition to being just another person. Most elite athletes retire at a young age as compared to the general population, which requires athletes to not only redefine their social identity but in some cases to also realign their career goals. Sport psychology literature (Aquilina, 2013; David Lavallee et al., 1997; Maseko & Surujlal, 2011; Park, Tod, & Lavallee, 2012) demonstrated the need for elite athletes to have a 'dual career' and or long term goals to prepare for a post-athletic career while still participating in elite sport. In the United States, approximately 1% of collegiate athletes become professionals, and the average professional sport career lasts around three and a half years (Beamon, 2010). The athlete is “forced” upon retirement to find an alternative career to support her/his family. It is therefore important for federations and other stakeholders in these countries to understand factors (sport related and non-sport related) that impact elite athletes’ retirement transition and post-sport career preparation.

One of the primary challenges faced by most elite athletes and their entourage (e.g., parents, coaches, teammates, and federations) is the ability to manage the elite athlete's intense exclusive focus in sports and still build resilience and capacity to meet the many transitions and demands required in both elite performance and life (Anderson, 2009). Imbalance in time and interest allocation may disrupt the normative developmental stages of life and or events such as identity development, educational career, long-term career planning and other socially related developments like spending time with family. Elite junior (athletes under the age of 20) and senior (athletes over the age of 20) athletes tend to form a foreclosed identity (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993; Pearson & Petitpas, 1990) due to a high investment and exclusive focus in sport. 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., role of being a student). Young athletes competing at 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). As presented earlier in this chapter, exclusive athletic identity does not only negatively affect elite athletes' self-definition and self-worth but also their transition out of athletics as they struggle to redefine their identities (Beamon, 2010). Blinde and Greendorfer (1985) observed that even though 75% of retired college athletes did not experience any trauma and continued following their teams, 25% of the athletes did, some who exclusively identified as athletes experienced crisis and trauma. Authors further explained that coaches and sports administrators are more likely to put pressure on athletes and coaches

to win/and or focus on sport at the expense of being a student because the public clamors for a winner and success. It is evident that not all athletes who compete at professional levels are able to successfully make a living out of professional sport. Nevertheless, most athletes are able to make a living from their sport only as long as they are engaged in it, while others will never reach an athletic standard that would ensure them a livelihood (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011). The primary objective of this dissertation looks at elite athletes retirement transition and the role of the entourage in athlete's retirement transition. This dissertation also assessed theoretical models and constructs on post-sport career transition. Participants include less studied members of the entourage such as federations and spouses. These samples give a different and unique perspective to theoretical models of career transition. For example, results from this dissertation indicate that they spouses play an instrumental role in providing social and financial support during retirement transition, which is new to sport psychology literature.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Even though retirement transition occurs across all ages, careers in competitive sport are usually shorter than other occupational careers (Park et al., 2012). For example, North and Lavalley (2004) found that elite athletes from gymnastics, diving, swimming, ice skating, and judo planned to retire in the 24–30 year age category, while those from sailing, golf, equestrian, and shooting planned their retirement well after age 40.

The concept of athletes' retirement transition has experienced a significant growth in the literature the past decade. Most research looks at the nature and causes of retirement (Cosh, Crabb, & LeCouteur, 2013; Du & Tsai, 2007; Lavalley, 2005; Stambulova, Stephan, & Jäphag, 2007; Stephan, Bilard, Ninot, & Delignières, 2003), and

there is also a significant growth in recent years on literature that looks at intervention programs for retired athletes (Baillie, 1993; Constantine, 1995; Lavallee, 2005; Smith & McManus, 2008). The nature of retirement from elite sport is often not only accompanied by an initial sense of loss (Stambulova, 2000), and a period of re-orientation growth, but a re-adaptation into the community (Alfermann, Stambulova, & Zemaityte, 2004; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Wippert & Wippert, 2010).

Given the challenges that retiring elite athletes face, it is crucial for them to have the ability to cope effectively with retirement transitional challenges in order to progress and make a successful transition to the next stage in their development (Wylleman & Reints, 2010). Athletes who are unable to cope effectively are confronted with a crisis transition, which may slow down or restrict their progress (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Wylleman & Reints, 2010).

This dissertation provides a unique, holistic and multifaceted approach to elite athletes' retirement transition. As presented earlier in this chapter, about 18,967 studies have been found on the ProQuest database on Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Search keywords used in the online search are; "Botswana sport", "South Africa sport", "Zimbabwe sport", and "Namibia sport". Literature gap filled by this dissertation include assessing theoretical models and constructs that have been development in the industrialized nations in Europe, North America, and Asia. Participants included unique and less studied members of the entourage that include federations and spouses. In addition to a unique set of participants, the study had a large pool of entourage members from four different nations. Even though research on elite athletes' retirement transition is being conducted around the world, the majority of

research targets specific national samples, cross-cultural studies are limited (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007; Huang, Schmidt, Hackfort, & Si, 2001). This dissertation tested theoretical models and constructs that have been developed in industrialized nations and specifically looked at less studied populations in the sport psychology literature. The dissertation made cross-national comparison, specifically looking at the impact of budgets, population size, and sport organizational structure. For example, even though the four countries have ministries of sports, the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) was formed in 1994 to assume the functions of high performance sport which were previously carried out by other sport bodies such as National Olympic Committee of South Africa, South African Commonwealth Games Association, and South African Student Sports Union. In other three countries, National Olympic committees (NOCs) are specifically designed for elite high performance sport while National Sport Commissions/Councils (NSCs) are charged with the responsibility to develop grassroots sport and promote nation wide sport participation.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this dissertation was to investigate elite athletes' retirement transition experiences, including its psychological impacts, and post-sport career adaptation of elite athletes in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. A sub-objective was to examine the coping strategies used by retired elite athletes during retirement transition.

The secondary objective was to investigate the role of the entourage on elite athletes' retirement transition. A sub-objective was to examine the availability of

retirement transition services for elite athletes in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Lastly, the dissertation made cross-national comparisons, looking specifically at budgets, population size, and sport organizational structure impacts on sport development.

1.4 Significance of Study

In the past decade, a few studies have advocated for a holistic approach to the study of athlete development and retirement transition (Henriksen, Stambulova, & Roessler, 2010; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). A holistic approach to the study of elite athletes' retirement transition, taken by this dissertation accords the researcher the opportunity to study elite athletes and their entourage members as opposed to studying only one sample. The significance of studying different entourage members provides a multi-faceted approach that looks at the concurrent, reciprocal, and interactive nature of athletic retirement transition. . In addition to studying a large sample, this dissertation examined events that occurred in and outside sport to understand elite athletes retirement transition. For example, the study observed that even though some athletes may not be satisfied with their post-sport career jobs, having a job facilitated retirement transition. The current study adds to the literature, a reciprocal interaction between elite athletes and their entourage members. Results from this dissertation demonstrate not only that athletes should prepare for a post-sport career, but also provides specific recommendations on what athletes from southern African countries should do in preparation for a post-sport career. The dissertation further provides the type of career support that elite athletes need from their entourage members during retirement transition. Specific examples, including lifestyle management services, lifestyle skills, and transitional skills that are used by

athletes. Lifestyle management enables elite athletes to balance elite sport, education, vocation, and personal/family life in such a way that they are able to develop, sustain and maximize their wellbeing and level of performance throughout as well as after their elite career (Wylleman & Reints, 2010).

1.5 Definitions

1.5.1 Athletic Career: A term for a multiyear sport activity, voluntary chosen by the person and aimed at achieving his or her individual peak in athletic performance in one or several events.

1.5.2 Athletes' Entourage: The entourage comprises all people associated with athletes including; Family; Agents; Coaches; Sport Federations; and any person identified as promoting the athlete's sporting career.

1.5.3 Transition: An event or non-event, which results in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world, and thus requires a corresponding change in one's behavior and relationships (Schlossberg, 1981).

Chapter 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The primary objective of this dissertation was to investigate elite athletes' retirement transition experiences including its psychological impacts of elite athletes retirement transition. The secondary objective was to investigate an in-depth account of the role of the entourage on elite athletes' retirement transition. Lastly, the dissertation makes cross-national comparisons, looking specifically at budgets, population size and sport organizational structure impacts on sport development. This chapter starts by presenting countries' background information to contextualize theoretical constructs and reviewed literature. Gerontology and thanatology models that have been applied to sport to explain elite athletes' retirement transition will follow the background information. Lastly, the chapter presents literature review on retirement transition and models that further explain elite athletes' retirement transition and factors that affect retirement transition. It should be noted that theoretical constructs and models used in this dissertation might not be applicable to Southern Africa context. Models and constructs on elite athletes retirement transition have been carried out in industrialized nations. These models and constructs are made to fit industrialized nations cultures (i.e., sport organizational structure, customs and size of the economy). Historians and economists have demonstrated the relationship between sport, economy and society (Tranter, 1998). For example, sports in the United States is highly commercialized and primarily funded by private companies while sport in developing countries is heavily dependent on government funding and nongovernmental organizations such as the International Olympic Committee and Fédération Internationale de Football Association. These differences in sports systems may have implications for the services available for retired

athletes. Sport psychology literature (Côté, 1999; Gould, Lauer, Rolo, Jannes, & Pennisi, 2006; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) demonstrates a significant youth sport parental involvement in industrialized nations, yet in developing countries particularly in Southern Africa, athletes are more likely to perceive a lower parental involvement (Malete, 2006). It should be noted that differences in parental involvement might also vary by socio-economic statuses. For example, inner city youth in the United States may perceive parental involvement differently compared with youth who live in suburbs.

2.1 Countries Background

Botswana-The Republic of Botswana (581,730 sq km,) is a landlocked country in Southern Africa, bordered by South Africa to the south and southeast, Namibia to the west and north, Zimbabwe to the northeast and Zambia to the north. Formerly the British protectorate of Bechuanaland, Botswana adopted its new name upon independence in 1966 from Britain. Botswana is hailed as one of most peaceful countries in Africa with a record of more than four decades of uninterrupted civilian leadership, progressive social policies, and significant capital investment that have created one of the most stable economies in Africa. Even though Botswana tourism industry experienced a significant growth in the past two decades, Botswana's economy is dominated by mineral extraction, principally diamond mining. Botswana has a population of 2.004 million est. 2012 with a GDP of \$14.50 billion (\$ 7,191.44 per capita) and GDP growth rate of 4.2%. Botswana has one of the world's highest known rates of HIV/AIDS infection, but also one of Africa's most progressive and comprehensive programs for dealing with the disease. The most popular sport in Botswana is football (soccer), and other mainly played sports include netball, volleyball, athletics (track and field) and

Boxing. It should be noted that even though Botswana started participant in the Olympic games in 1980, the country won its first Olympic medal in 800m at the London 2012 Olympic games. Botswana National Sports Council (BNSC) was established in 1965 as an independent organization entrusted with the mission of raising funds to construct sport facilities and source equipment for athletes. Botswana National Olympic Committee (BNOC), incorporating Commonwealth Games Botswana, was formed in 1980 and charged with the responsibility to facilitate the development of high performance athletes to compete at the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. Botswana National Sports Council and Botswana National Olympic Committee (BNOC) are the two principal sports organizations in Botswana.

Namibia-Republic of Namibia (825,615 km²) is a country in southern Africa with a population of 2,113,077 million, it shares land borders with Angola and Zambia to the north, Botswana to the east and South Africa to the south and east. Its western border is the Atlantic Ocean. It gained independence from South Africa on 21 March 1990, following the Namibian War of Independence. Namibia is a low middle-income country with an estimated annual GDP per capita of US\$5,155 but has extreme inequalities in income distribution and standard of living. The most principal sports in Namibia include football (soccer), athletics (track and field), rugby, cricket, and fishing. Major achievements in Namibian sports include 4 Olympic medals in 100 and 200m at the 1992 and 1996 Olympic games respectively. Other highlights include reaching final stages at world games in cricket and rugby in 2003. Namibia Sports Commission (NSC) is charged

with the responsibility to ensure that opportunities for sports are made available to all people throughout Namibia. Consistent with other National Olympic Committees in Southern Africa, Namibia Olympic Committee promotes high performance sport throughout Namibia. In addition to high performance sport, it leads the Olympic movement and promotes Olympism throughout Namibia.

South Africa-South Africa is the 25th-largest country in the world by land area, and with close to 53 million people, is the world's 24th-most populous nation. It is located at the southern tip of Africa. It has 2,798 kilometers (1,739 mi) of coastline that stretches along the South Atlantic and Indian oceans. Countries of Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe boarder South Africa to the north; to the east are Mozambique and Swaziland; and within it lies Lesotho, an enclave surrounded by South African territory. South Africa is an upper-middle income economy with the largest economy in Africa, which accounts for 24% gross domestic product in terms of purchasing power. This makes the country one of only four countries in Africa in this category (the others being Botswana, Gabon and Mauritius). Since 1996, at the end of over 12 years of international sanctions, South Africa's Gross Domestic Product has since almost tripled to \$400 billion, and foreign exchange reserves have increased from \$3 billion to nearly \$50 billion; creating a growing and sizable African middle class, within two decades of establishing democracy and ending apartheid. There is no doubt that South African is a key player in sport development at Africa level. South Africa is a host to a variety of high performance centers that serve athletes from African counties. South Africa demonstrated to the rest of the world that it has made economic and political progress that accords it to

host world-class sporting events. South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) is South Africa's national multi-coded sporting body charged with the responsibility to ensure that South African teams perform at all the multi-coded events (i.e., Olympic games, Paralympic games, Commonwealth games, and All Africa games). Popular sports in South Africa include football (soccer), rugby, cricket, swimming and Boxing.

Zimbabwe-The Republic of Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in Southern Africa with a population of 12,619,600. It is bordered by Botswana to the southwest, Zambia to the northwest, Mozambique on the east, and South Africa to the south. Zimbabwe got independence from the United Kingdom in April 1980, following 14 years as an unrecognized state under the conservative minority government of Rhodesia, which unilaterally declared independence in 1965. An economic summary of Zimbabwe: GDP/PPP (2011 est.): \$6.474 billion; per capita \$500 (2011 est.). An Act of Parliament created the Sports and Recreation Commission in 1991. The Sports and Recreation Commission (SRC) ensures that all people of Zimbabwe have access to sport and recreation programs. In addition, the SRC oversees the general running of sport and recreation programs by National Sports Associations (NSA). Popular sports include football (soccer), cricket, rugby, and athletics (track and field).

2.2 Literature Review on Southern Africa

Areas in sport that have attracted most attention in Southern Africa literature include the impact of political history on current sport particularly in South Africa and Zimbabwe (Allen, 2011; Anderson, Bielert, & Jones, 2004; Chaulia, 2003; Chesterfield,

2007; Novak, 2012), the role of sport in national identity development after independence (Amusa & Toriola, 2010; Keat, 2011), and the use of sport to fight HIV/AIDS (Biddle, Akande, Vlachopoulos, & Fox, 1996; Clark, Friedrich, Ndlovu, Neilands, & McFarland, 2006; Fuller, Junge, Dorasami, DeCelles, & Dvorak, 2011). African colonies began to attain independence from their colonial masters in the late 1950s. African leaders who assumed power were charged with the responsibility to build nations and restore values that were lost during the colonial era. As young nations, it was important for political leaders to forge a national identity and build national pride. As they had used sport before to build a sense of nationalism, they used sport again to galvanize a sense of shared identity and destiny (Amusa & Toriola, 2010; Keat, 2011). For example, the shifting race relationships in post-apartheid South African sport literature indicates the crucial role sport played in building the rainbow nation and social integration in post-apartheid South Africa (Anderson et al., 2004; Booth & Nauright, 2003; Chappell, 2005a). Pelak (2005) examined the extent to which netball changed in the post-apartheid South Africa in order to accommodate cultural diversity in South Africa. The researcher observed that netball athletes and administrators construct new collective identities across a variety of cultural differences.

Keat (2011) explained that African national leagues and the African Nations Cup were developed for the specific purpose of promoting national identity. It was also in this era that African nations gained memberships in international sports federations like the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). Sport also became an important tool for African nations and international organizations to build peace and unite

warring nations or ethnic communities across (Anderson et al., 2004; “United Nations Sport for Development and Peace - Sport and Peace,” n.d.).

Gaining membership to international sport federations accorded African nations to bid and host international sporting events both at continent and world level. South Africa had the opportunity to host the first FIFA World Cup on Africa soil. In hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup, South Africa became the first African nation to join industrialized nations that have hosted one of the largest sporting events in the world. South Africa demonstrated to the rest of the world that it has made economic and political progress that accords it to host world-class sporting events. The 2010 FIFA World Cup budget was R15 billion (\$2bn) with R8.4 billion (\$1.1bn) spent in building five new stadiums and upgrading existing facilities, while R6.4bn (\$800m) was invested in public transport initiatives and supporting infrastructure (“S Africa unveils World Cup budget,” 2006). South Africa has the largest economy in Africa with Botswana ranked 18th, Namibia in the 25th spot and lastly Zimbabwe ranked 31 (“Top 12 Largest And Strongest African Economies,” n.d.).

In the past 25 years, there has been a significant growth in partnerships between non-governmental organizations (e.g., UNICEF) and national governments to use sport to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS epidemic. National athletes and celebrities have been used to teach and send messages on HIV/AIDS education, particularly to youth in African countries. According to UNICEF, Eastern and Southern Africa is home to half the world’s population living with HIV. Today the region continues to be the epicenter of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with 48 % of the world’s new HIV infections among adults, 55% among children, and 48% of AIDS-related deaths. According to the World Health

Organization 2013 report on HIV/AIDS in Eastern and Southern Africa, the Southern Africa sub-region, experiences the most severe HIV epidemics in the world. Nine countries - Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe have adult HIV prevalence rates of over 10%. The report estimates 26 %, Swaziland has the highest HIV prevalence rate in the world, followed by Botswana (23.4%) and Lesotho (23.3%). With 5.6 million people living with HIV (17.3%), Southern Africa is home to the world's largest epidemic (UNAIDS, 2013). Sport has therefore been found to play a crucial role in teaching HIV/AIDS messages to students and young people across Africa. In a study that used professional football (soccer) players to provide HIV education in an interactive curriculum for 7th grade boys and girls in Zimbabwe, students in the intervention classrooms demonstrated significant increases in knowledge and attitudes using pre-, immediately post- & five-month post-intervention surveys (Clark et al., 2006).

2.3 Gerontology and Thanatology Models of Retirement Transition

Research on the concept of transition in the past decades has been linked to a wide range of topics that include individual life span development (Erikson, 1963), career planning (Hopson & Adams, 1977), educational processes (Newman, Lohman, Newman, Myers, & Smith, 2000), social support (Cutrona & Russell, 1990), and the processes of aging, retirement, and dying (Cummings & Henry, 1961; Kubler-Ross, 1969). Popular reports on the incidence of distress experienced by athletic career ending for youth and professional athletes were initially explained in terms of a singular, all-ending event (Wylleman et al., 2004). For example, In the 1960s, theoretical frameworks that were used

to explain athletic career ending were derived from thanatology (i.e., the study of the process of dying and death) (Kubler-Ross, 1969) and (social) gerontology (i.e., the study of the aging process). Thanatology and gerontology models will be briefly explained below.

2.4 Social Gerontology Models of Retirement Transition

Social gerontology is a multidisciplinary field grounded in the sociology of aging but informed by psychologists, policy and public health researchers, medical and social work practitioners, and economists other fields. Research in social gerontology addresses many domains of social life and behavior, including family relationships, health and disability, and older adults' social participation (Putney, Alley, & Bengtson, 2005). There are numerous transition theories based on Social Gerontological models that could be applied to athletic retirement transition, such as activity theory, continuity theory, subculture theory, disengagement theory, social breakdown theory, and exchange theory.

2.4.1 Activity Theory. Activity theory asserts that an individual's life satisfaction is directly related to his degree of social interaction or level of activity (Knapp, 1977). Havighurst and Albrecht (1953) were some of the first researchers to suggest an association between social activity and adjustment to retirement transition from the work force looking specifically at old age. The theory suggests that individuals should maintain a homeostatic level of activity throughout their lifespan. When applied to athletic retirement transition, the theory suggests that athletes should substitute the active role of an athlete with new roles during retirement transition (Havighurst & Albrecht, 1953). Even though the activity theory received empirical support in the gerontology literature (Rosenberg 1981), it was criticized for assuming that sport retirement is similar to

occupational retirement where individuals are “forced” to withdraw from the labor force due to chronological age (Blinde & Greendorfer, 1985; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994). Several factors such as deselection, injuries and change of career are some of the primary reasons for retirement from competitive sport.

2.4.2 Continuity Theory. Continuity theory suggests that individuals seek to maintain role stability throughout their life course (Atchley, 1989). Behaviors and attitudes are often the single most significant predictors of present or future behaviors (Utz, Carr, Nesse, & Wortman, 2002). The application of this theory to sport suggests that continuity theory can predict the level of adjustment to retirement by examining the significance of sport in the lives of athletes (Lerch, 1984). Rosenberg (1981) asserts that if one’s athletic role is seen as more meaningful than other roles; athletes’ may experience some difficulties in distributing them during retirement transition. One of the challenges of the continuity theory application to athletic retirement is when sustaining the athletic role is not a priority for the athlete in transition, the reallocation of time and energy to remaining roles will not create problems in the adjustment process (Lavalley & Wylleman, 2000).

2.4.3 Subculture Theory. Hart (1976) defined subculture as a segment of society embracing certain distinctive cultural elements of their own. Shared subcultural elements include a set of identifiable beliefs, values, and means of symbolic expression. Sport provides a highly visible, easily accessible, and particularly salient setting for the formation of subculture and the resulting expression of subcultural values (Green, 2001). The theory suggests that continued social interactions among individuals might enable the retiring athletes to be less active and adjust well during retirement transition (Rose,

1962). This hypothesis was affirmed by Rosenberg (1981), who asserts that prolonged social interactions among individuals leads to the development of a group consciousness, and that people can be less active and well adjusted even if the situation is different from overall social norms. Even though athletes have fairly distinguishable (sub) cultural characteristics, and although it assists in revealing potential adjustment problems experienced by athletes in ending their athletic career, there was no empirical support to use this theory because retiring athletes are moving out of the proposed subculture (Wylleman et al., 2004).

2.4.4 Disengagement Theory. Disengagement theory suggests that as adults' age, they gradually withdraw from society (Cumming & Henry, 1961). When the theory is applied to sport retirement transition, the theory suggests that athletes' retirement transition is a necessary manifestation of mutual withdrawal of athletes and the sport structure. The mutual process of disengagement makes room for younger generations and prevents unnecessary disruptions in the social system caused by deaths among the older population (Utz et al., 2002). Given that athletes can involuntarily and suddenly leave the work place due to injury and deselection, retiring from elite sport does not fit this theory. In addition to involuntary retirement, athletes do not only retire due to chronological age. Athletes can retire as early as 20 due to an injury or lack of interest.

2.4.5 Social Breakdown Theory. The social breakdown theory suggests that an individual's sense of self, his ability to mediate between self and society, and his orientation to personal mastery are functions of the kinds of social labeling experienced in life (Kuypers & Bengtson, 1973). The theory incorporates elements from activity,

subculture, and continuity theory and proposes that athletes become vulnerable to social judgments upon retirement. The theory further suggests that athletes are exposed to unfavorable redefinition, which may lead them to withdraw further from their sport and become susceptible to more negative evaluation (Kuypers & Bengston, 1973). For example, athletes may lose their celebrity status upon retirement and be relegated to a common figure in society, which “forces” athletes to redefine their identity. Some athletes may fail to redefine their identity hence isolation. Rosenberg (1981) applied this theory to athletes and affirms that the withdrawal cycle demonstrates how elite athletes are vulnerable to social judgments upon retirement. Edwards and Meier (1984) observed a relationship between adjustment to retirement from sport and several variables proposed to be significant in social breakdown theory, including socioeconomic status, preretirement planning, and health. Athletes who have access to services that provide employment and stable financial opportunities are more likely to use these support services to facilitate their retirement transition hence a healthy retirement transition than athletes who do not have access to such services.

2.4.6 Exchange Theory. The exchange theory was proposed by Homans (1961) to explain how aging individuals rearrange their activities so that their remaining energy generates maximum return. When applied to sport, Johns, Linder, and Wolko (1990) demonstrated in a study carried out with former competitive gymnasts in Canada that the examination of factors that contribute to retirement from sport through a social exchange perspective has some merit. Rosenberg (1981) has suggested that this theory is the most applicable to elite sport as it is often the inability of an athlete to create these new networks that contributes to a difficult adjustment. In a different study, Koukouris (1991)

challenged the processes associated with exchange theory that they do not stand up because they deny the possibility of the development of a career after sport. Gordon (1995) suggested that resources such as physical talent might be able to be exchanged for meaningful rewards from the sports system. These resources are finite and their inevitable deterioration will affect the degree of control over the sports relationship (Gordon, 1995).

Social gerontology theories provide a multidisciplinary approach informed by psychologists, public health researchers medical, social work practitioners, and economists other fields. Even though these theories address many domains of social life and behavior, they did not fully explain retirement from competitive sport let alone preparation for a post-sport career. These theories did not look at factors such as reasons for retirement and goals that athletes have achieved in their career in sport. Research (Du & Tsai, 2007) has shown that reasons for retirement influence retirement transition and post-sport life experiences.

2.5 Thanatological Models of Retirement Transition

Thanatology is the study of the process of death and dying. Park (1912) outlined thanatology by demonstrating the biomedical causes of death. Disciplines of psychology, anthropology, sociology and theology have made significant contributions to the thanatology literature (Rando, 1986). Thanatological models were used to suggest that retirement from an athletic career is comparable to loss of social functioning, isolation, and ostracism (Kalish, 1966). The application of these models has been criticized because athletes continue to function even though they may face challenges.

2.5.1 Social Death. Social death approach was used to explain that after athletes' sports career termination, athletes are treated as if they were dead even though still biologically alive, bringing about the loss of social functioning, isolation, or even ostracism (Wylleman et al., 2004). The concept was used to explain the psychodynamics of athletic retirement, which in some cases athletes, might be isolated (Lerch, 1984). This approach failed, among others, due to the obvious fact that athletic retirees continued functioning in society, albeit in a different social role (Wylleman et al., 2004).

2.5.2 Stages of Death. In describing retirement from sport, a more popular use of thanatology was developed to describe athletic retirement in the series of stages experienced when facing death (Kubler-Ross, 1969). The stages of dying as applied to retirement from sports, include denial and isolation. Retired athletes in denial and isolation initially refuse to acknowledge the inevitability of their career termination; anger, in which retiring athletes become disturbed at the overall changing situation; bargaining, in which they try to negotiate for a lengthened career in sport; depression, in which they experience a distress reaction to retirement; and acceptance, in which retirees eventually come to accept their career transition (Wylleman et al., 2004). The application of the stages of death theory was a topic of interest in athlete retirement research. For example, theorists employed this model to describe the psychological consequences experienced by athletes during rehabilitation from injury (Wiese-Bjornstal & Smith, 1994). The model's narrow approach to retirement transition calls for caution in its applicability to athletes' retirement. For example, the model assumes that retirement from sport is always involuntary (i.e., through injury). Recent research (Du & Tsai, 2007;

Lavallee et al., 1997) demonstrate that athletes can retire voluntarily to take new roles in their lives. Even though the models were instrumental in stimulating research in career transition issues and appealed to some researchers in sociology of sports and sports psychology, thanatological models were criticized especially because of the lack of analogy between terminal illness and career termination (Gordon, 1995; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1998). Thanatology models remain limited for explaining sports career termination from a non-sport specific character; the model also presumes that career termination is inherently negative and requires considerable adjustment (Wylleman et al., 2004).

2.6 Summary on Gerontology and Thanatology Models

The universal application of the retirement concept justified the use of theoretical perspectives underlying sport retirement from social gerontology and thanatology given the period they were used. A discussion of these models stimulated research in sports psychology, sociology of sports and clinical psychology, which ushered a new understanding of elite athletes retirement transition, which will be discussed below.

Social gerontology and thanatology models inability to adequately address the complex nature of athletic retirement, theorists suggested that alternative perspectives are needed to explain athletic retirement transition (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994). Researchers further suggested that athletic career termination might serve as an opportunity for social rebirth rather than a form of a social death (Coakley, 1983). The shift in studying retirement transition not only ushered new transitional models but also presented interventions necessary for retired athletes (Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008).

2.7 Athletic Career Transition Models

In counseling psychology, the concept of transition is presented as an event or a non-event, which results in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one's behavior and relationships (Schlossberg, 1981). In sport psychology, transition was introduced to study how former athletes coped with the event of retirement from high-level competitive and professional sports (Haerle, 1975; Mihovilovic, 1968). Recent literature (Henriksen et al., 2010; Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008) and models (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) advocate for a shift from studying retirement transition as a single event and or in isolation but focus on a holistic approach to athletes' retirement transition. A holistic approach to retirement transitions, incorporate athletes' experiences that occur at athletic, psychological, psychosocial, academic/vocation level, and their ability to cope with these changes (Wylleman, Alfermann, & Lavallee, 2004). Even though theoretical models and constructs have been developed to help researchers explain elite athletes' retirement transition, these models and constructs may not be applicable to Southern African populations.

Transitional challenges that retired athletes have to deal with include, among others, adjusting to a new life and a new lifestyle following the sport career (Wylleman & Reints, 2010). Retired athletes have to deal with missing the sport atmosphere and competition, as well as bodily changes that come with retiring from competitive sports. Some of the changes include a subjective wellbeing and, or adapting to a new social status and vocational responsibilities (Cecicerpic, Wylleman, & Zupancic, 2004; Stephan et al., 2003). It is therefore crucial for development programs to understand transitional challenges experienced by athletes during and after retirement from elite sport. Wylleman

and Reints (2010) observed that former elite athletes need motivational readiness and interpersonal skills to integrate back into non-sports professional settings. The study provides evidence that elite athletes are confronted during and after retirement with transitional challenges that impacts the course and progress of their development in and outside sport. The authors further argue that several former elite athletes may in fact turn to their family-of-origin for support (i.e., due to lack of financial stability), or even “return home” to live with their parents and may then also experience interpersonal (or intergenerational) problems.

Two models that guide this study are Stambulova’s (2003) athletic career transition model and Wylleman & Lavallee’s (2004) lifespan model. The primary reason for selecting these models to guide this dissertation is that they complete each other in addressing issues relating to athletes retirement transition. A further in depth elaboration on each model and evidence of empirical support is presented in this chapter.

Consistent with the two models that guide this study, athletes describe highlights in their athletic career in terms of specific moments or situations that occurred throughout their career. For example, a specific moment might include their first-training day with a coach, their first competition, being invited to join the junior team followed by the senior team camp, and eventually the retirement press conference. Some of these highlights are very specific like winning first medal at All Africa games or the Olympic games. What is also consistent in these highlights is transition within the athletic career from a certain point to another. Wylleman and Reints (2010) depict that athletes face two types of transitions throughout their athletic career, namely predictable and anticipated or “normative” transitions (e.g., from junior to senior level, from amateur to professional

status, ending the athletic career) and more or less unpredicted, unanticipated, and involuntary or “non-normative” transitions (e.g., a season-ending injury, unanticipated de-selection from the team, loss of a personal coach).

Even though there is need for a thorough understanding of career transitions in sport and empirically supported data in Southern Africa, the Wylleman and Lavallee’s (2004) lifespan model provides developmental stages that athletes go through in their career in sport. This model is one of the widely used models in sport psychology literature. For example, the initiation stage is characterized by specific moments that are the main highlights specific only to the beginning of athletes’ careers in sport. One of the primary highlights is the development of passion and love for participating in the activity or disliking the activity leading to withdrawal. Parents take a leadership role by providing young athletes with the initial opportunity to participate in the domain and sought out their child’s first formal teacher or coach (Wylleman et al., 2004). Parents are also crucial during retirement transition for providing both financial and social support in athletic and non-athletic contexts. Some of the more specific highlights may be scoring their first goal in primary school. Sports programs in African schools provide the opportunity for athletes to play sport. Once athletes have moved to an upper phase like development, they look forward to a normative transition from junior team to a senior team. This transition is in athletic contexts. Outside sports, athletes may be transitioning from junior secondary to senior secondary school. It is important to emphasize that each stage is characterized by shifting demands on the athlete and entourage members (Baker, Horton, Robertson-Wilson, & Wall, 2003). In a similar study carried out earlier, Côté (1999), observed comparable transitions occurring between stages of sampling, specializing, investment,

and mastery in the development of deliberate practice.

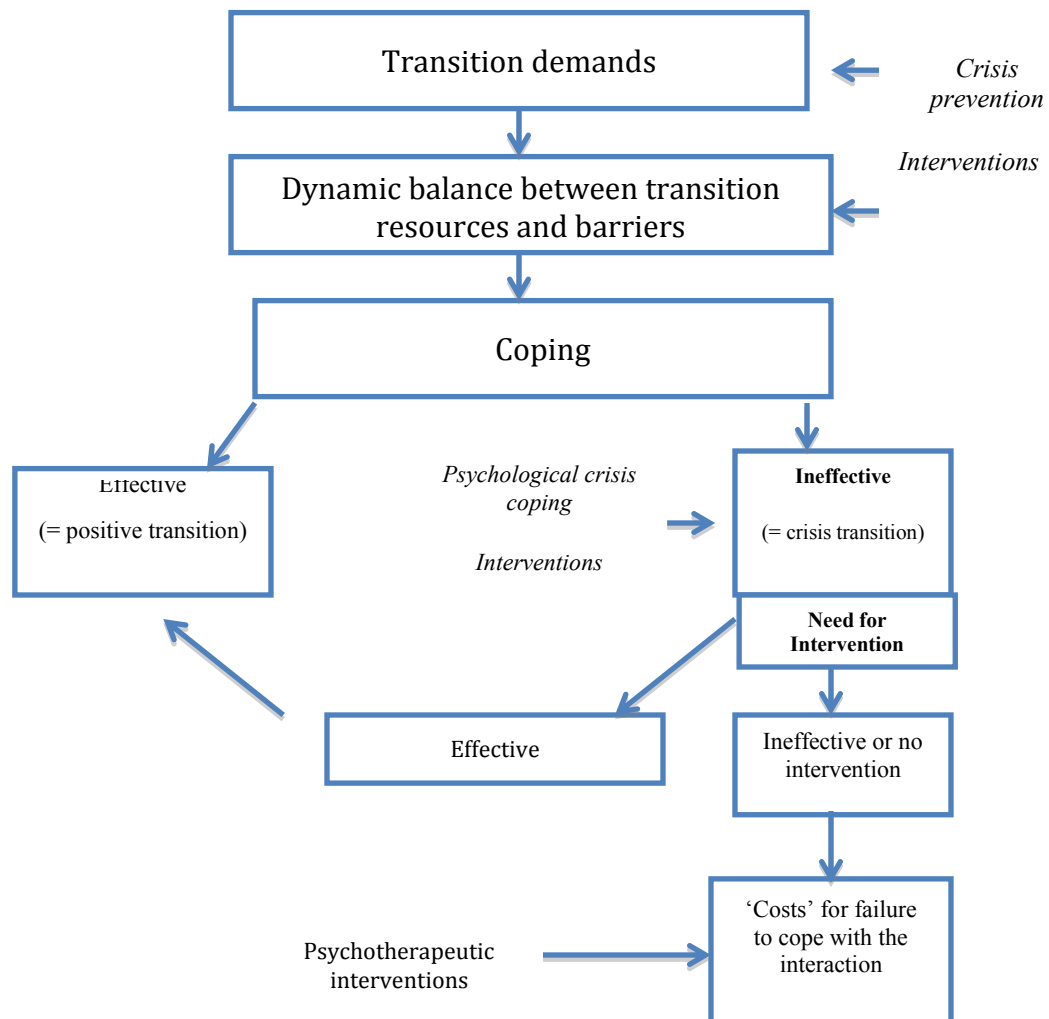
2.7.1 Athletic Career Transition Model

Stambulova's (2003) athletic transition model (Figure 1) presents the athletic career transition as a process of coping with a set of specific demands and or challenges necessary for athletic career success or adjusting to a post-sport career. A detailed explanation, including steps of the model is presented below.

According to the model, developmental conflicts and challenges stimulate the athlete to mobilize resources and the support system required to cope with challenges and demands during retirement transition. This model is important for providing an understanding on the influence of circumstances surrounding athletes' retirement and the support system to post-sport career transition and adaptation, which is pivotal in discussing results of this dissertation. The ability of the athlete to effectively cope is dependent on the balance between transition resources (internal and external factors, which facilitate the coping process) and barriers (all internal and external factors, which interfere with effective coping) (Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008). If the athlete effectively manages to cope with the challenges he/she will have positive consequences and the inability to cope leads to crisis-transition. Crisis in an athlete's development may be caused by a set of transitional problems (contradictions, or inner conflicts) that he/she has to resolve, but is not able to resolve without qualified psychological assistance (Stambulova, 2000). The author provided three types of athlete crises that are identified and described as (a) age-related crises, (b) sports career-related crises, and (c) situation-related crises. Success or goal achievement has also been associated with a smooth

retirement transition. For example, if the athlete's goal was to compete at the Olympic games, that may give closure for the athlete to focus on a new career. Sinclair and Orlick (1993) explored transition experiences of high-performance athletes and observed that athletes who adjusted smoothly tended to retire after they achieved their sport related goals or because they had achieved their goals in sport. Even though there is empirical data supporting the athletic career transition model from past research (Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008; Park, Lavalley, & Tod, 2013) and the current study, the model does not provide empirical evidence on what athletes need to do, in preparation for retirement. This dissertation provides empirical data to support the model on the type of retirement and circumstances surrounding retirement transition, and in addition, this dissertation provides recommendations on what athletes should do while at the peak of their careers in preparation for a post-sport career.

Figure 1: Athletic Career Transition Model



2.7.2 Lifespan Model of Athlete Development

Wylleman and Lavelle's (2004) descriptive model (Figure 2) approaches athletic career transition from a holistic and lifespan perspective. The model discusses how athletes move through stages of athletic development that are tied to their ages and developmental levels. The model is considered holistic because it incorporates many aspects of life such as education, sports, and social life. Incorporating sport and events occurring outside sport such as education is not new to sport literature. The ancient Greeks' worldview advocated the development of both mind (e.g., educational programs) and body (physical training programs) through sport (Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2014). Recent research (Borggreffe & Cachay, 2012; Corrado, Tessitore, Capranica, Rauter, & Topic, 2012; Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2014; Wylleman et al., 2004) in sport psychology, has taken keen interest in issues occurring in and outside sport as athletes move through stages of athletic development. International organizations such as the European Commission (EC) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) have also taken keen interest in this approach. The European Commission acknowledged the importance of dual career (balancing school and sport) for young elite athletes by promoting policies that promote good physical and psychological health. These policies are made to ensure the reintegration of professional sportspersons into the labor market at the end of their sporting careers. The International Olympic Committee runs a program that guides Olympic athletes into education with the goal of a better postretirement life.

The primary reason for choosing this model to guide this study is that it considers transitions occurring in the athletic domain as well as those occurring in other domains of athletes' lives. In addition to the fact that this model is widely used in sport psychology

literature, the model has significant empirical support (Debois, Ledon, Argiolas, & Rosnet, 2012; Stephan & Demulier, 2007; Wylleman & Reints, 2010) from studies carried out around the world. For example, Aquilina (2013) demonstrated that events occurring in and outside sport (i.e., balancing school and sport) plays an instrumental role in the understanding of athletes retirement transition. The author depict that some athletes' time may be dedicated to developing their sporting career, with very little time left to develop other aspects of their lives outside their sport such as education which may result in more severe retirement transition challenges.

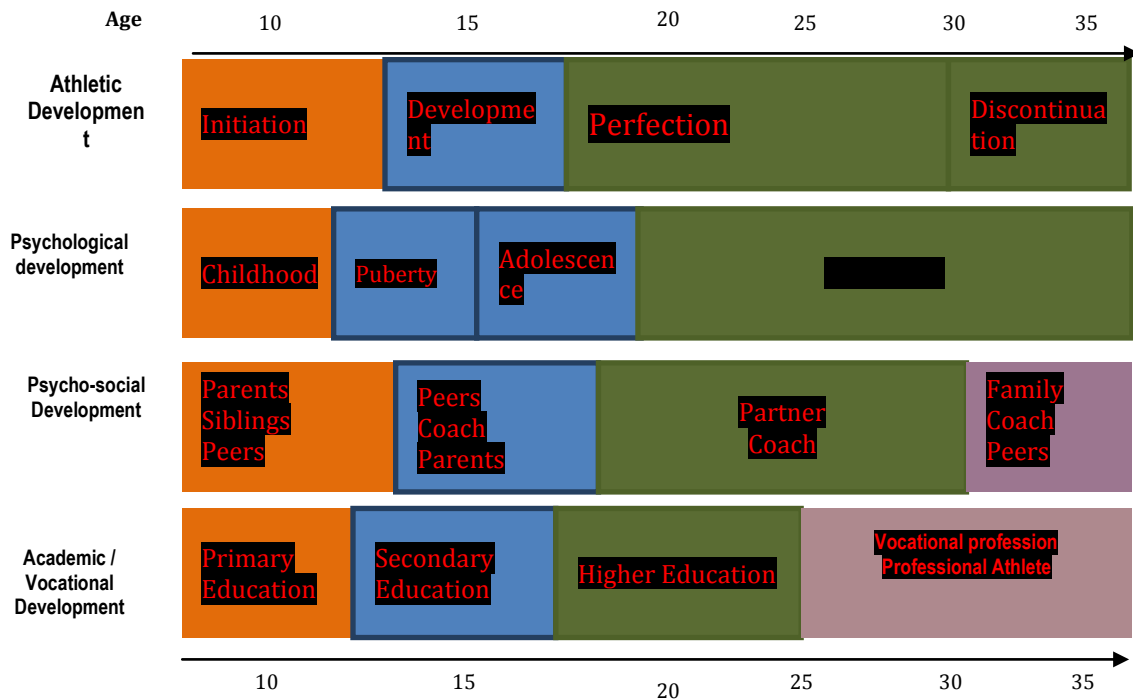
In order to get an understanding of the development of talented elite athletes and how they cope with the transitions in their athletic development, it is crucial to also get an understanding of the other developmental transitions (e.g., at psychological level, at psychosocial level) faced by elite athletes (Wylleman et al., 2004). The lifespan model reflects the concurrent, interactive, and reciprocal nature of athletes' development in four domains (athletic, psychological, psychosocial, academic/vocational). The athletic domain consists of four stages that depict normative progression from initiation, development, mastery and discontinuation. These stages are similar to those observed by Bloom (1985) and Cote (1999). The initiation stage introduces young athletes to organized sports from 6 to 7 years of age. From the initiation stage, athletes are recognized as talented in the development stage. Training time and level heightens to prepare athletes for the next stage. Athletes who reach the mastery stage compete at the highest-level of competition in their respective sport. Athletes in the mastery stage compete at national, international, and elite level. The mastery stage coincides with higher education. The last stage is the discontinuation stage where athletes withdraw

from competitive sport. It is worth noting that discontinuation can occur earlier in the athletic career. For example, it can occur at initiation if the athlete loses interest in the sport at 7 years old and withdraw from sport. The psychological domain consists of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. It is crucial for coaches to be aware that development stage in the athletic domain coincides with adolescence in the psychology domain. It is important for adolescents to continue involvement in physical activity and sports, which contributes to achieving and maintaining good emotional and physical health. The psychosocial domain represents the changes that may occur in the social development of an athlete. The psychosocial domain also denotes individuals who are perceived by athletes as most significant during that particular transition or stage (e.g., parents, coach, peers, life time partner) in the athlete's career (Wylleman & Reints, 2010). The final domain is the academic/vocational domain, which represents the stages in the academic and vocational development of the athlete (primary education, secondary education, higher education, Vocations training/ professional occupation).

The academic development of athletes is influenced by the education system in respective countries. For elite athletes, vocational development may start after secondary education or after higher education. In some cases, elites athletes may engage in part-time/ full time work. Even though the model is widely used in sport psychology research, this is the first study to test its applicability of Southern Africa population. For example, the psychosocial component of the model suggests that parents play a primary role of introducing their kids into sport (mostly organized sport) as early as six years of age. Horn (2008) affirms that the sport involvement of children takes place in a social context, and parents, peers, and siblings can strongly influence the psychological

outcomes of this involvement. However, in the context of Southern Africa, this dissertation observed that even though parental involvement is important, school sport programs provides an environment that support children's participation in sport and parents are not as engaged as it is the case in industrialized nations. Results from this dissertation are consistent with Shehu and Akpata (2008)'s findings that teachers in many schools in Southern Africa volunteer, and it is also part of a lot of teachers' jobs to coach, be umpires, and organize intra- and extra-mural sport events. As a result, teachers in most African countries are not only in a position to widen youth sport participation but to inspire life-long physical activity and encourage attainment of self-directed sport aspirations. Malete (2006) affirms this statement, given the cultural context and perception in Botswana. It is therefore likely that young athletes may perceive lower parental support than their counterparts from industrialized nations. This lifespan model does a great job in explaining how athletes move through stages in their career in sport but may not fully explain some specific components of athletes' psychosocial development particularly in African populations. The model does not account for the role of extended family members which may be significance role given the family structure in many African countries.

Figure 2: Lifespan Model of Athlete Development

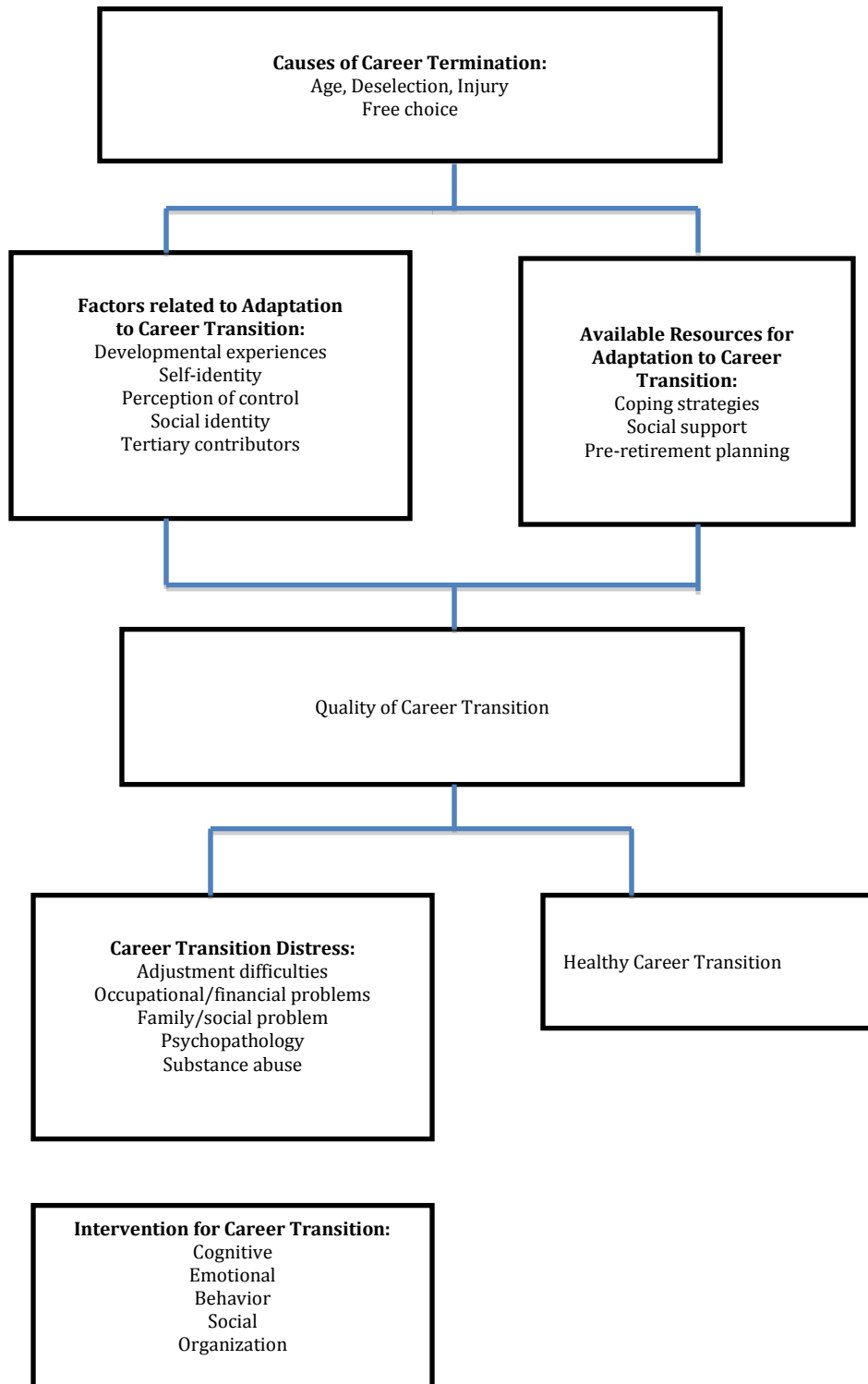


2.7.3 Conceptual Model of Adaptation to Career Transition

Drawing from previous theoretical frameworks, both within and outside of sport, and current empirical research, Taylor and Ogilvie (1994) proposed a five-step model (Figure 3) that examines adaptation to athletic retirement. The model examines the entire course of the career transition process. According to the model, the first stage identifies the causal factors that initiate the retirement process (i.e., age, injury, and free choice). Depending on the cause of withdrawal from competitive sport, the second stage presents developmental factors related to transition adaptation. Factors related to transition that are emphasized in the model include developmental experiences, self-identity, and tertiary contributors. The third stage describes the available resources that affect the response to retirement. The resources required (i.e., social and financial support) for coping with retirement are crucial for athletes. Research (Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999; Wylleman et al.,

2004) demonstrates that members of the entourage (i.e., family, peers, and coaches) provide needed support during athlete development and retirement. The fourth stage assesses the quality of adjustment to career transition, and the final stage looks at possible treatment issues for distressful reactions to career transition. The quality of retirement is influenced by many factors that include among others, social support and nature of retirement.

Figure 3: Conceptual Model of Adaptation to Career Transition



2.8 Factors Affecting Retirement Transition

The quality of post-sport career transition and adaptation is influenced by athletic and non-athletic factors. Some of the greatest contributors to a difficult transition include involuntary retirement (i.e., injury, deselection, and age), a strong, exclusive athletic identity, and lack of pre-retirement planning and support services (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994). Retired athletes are faced with financial, occupational, emotional, and social adjustment challenges during the athletic career transition (Grove, Lavalley, & Gordon, 1997). Factors influencing athletic career transition can result in a successful, relatively smooth transition, or in more or less intense difficulties at the psychological, physical, psychosocial, and/or occupational level (Cecić Erpič, Wylleman, & Zupančič, 2004). It is therefore crucial to pay attention to preparing elite athletes for retirement transition and post-sport career.

Athletic identity issues, coping processes, support network, and career planning have been identified as fundamental factors that influence adaptation during an athletic career transition (Cecić Erpič, Wylleman, & Zupančič, 2004). Cross-cultural research indicates that transition out of elite sports is a dynamic, multidimensional, multilevel, and multifactor process in which nationality/culture plays a crucial role in post-sport career transition (Alfermann et al., 2004; Stambulova et al., 2007). Even though retirement planning regardless of nation is associated with more favorable emotions and coping behaviors in the transition (Alfermann et al., 2004; Stambulova et al., 2007), it is not associated with perceived quality and long-term consequences of the transition (Stambulova et al., 2007). This dissertation provides an understanding of what athletes need to do for a long-term post-sport career quality. For example, research (Aquilina,

2013) suggests that dual-career can be a good long term post-sport career plan for elite athletes. In a cross-cultural study between Russian, German, and Lithuanian retired athletes, German athletes showed more positive and less negative emotions after retirement than Russian and Lithuanian athletes. Though Russian and Lithuanian athletes were accepting the reality of retirement, Lithuanian athletes showed more signs of denial while Russian athletes used distraction strategies more than athletes in other nations. In a similar cross-cultural study comparing French and Swedish athletes, Swedish athletes showed more positive retirement transition than French athletes. Starting a new professional career was perceived as difficult regardless of a nation (Stambulova et al., 2007). It is worth noting that most theoretical models and constructs that inform elite athletes' retirement experiences are carried out using quantitative research methods. For example, Biddle (1997) reviewed papers ($n = 529$) published in two major sport psychology journals (*Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, JSEP*; *International Journal of Sport Psychology, IJSP*) between 1985 and 1994. The researcher observed very little diversity in research methods. Over one-third of the papers used cross-sectional survey methods and less than 6% used qualitative methods. In a more recent review, Culver, Gilbert, and Sparkes (2012) reviewed qualitative research published in three leading sports psychology journals (*Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, The Sport Psychologist, and Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*) between 2000 and 2009. Researchers observed a 68% increase in qualitative researcher papers published between 1990 and 1999 (from 19.3% to 29%). In addition to the fact that there is need for more diversity in the research method (Biddle, Markland, Gilbourne, Chatzisarantis, & Sparkes, 2001), the applicability of these theoretical models and constructs needs more

empirical support with participants from Southern Africa.

2.8.1 Athletic Identity. Athletic identity is one of the well-studied areas in sports psychology and one of the main predictors of athletic retirement transition (Fraser et al., 2010; Lavalley & Robinson, 2007; Warriner & Lavalley, 2008). Brewer, Van Raalte, and Linder (1993) defined athletic identity as the degree to which an individual identifies with the role of an athlete. High athletic identity is associated with strong commitment to athletic goals (Lally, 2007), particularly during adolescence a period demarcated for the pursuit of an identity (Warriner & Lavalley, 2008). High athletic identity has also been found to contribute to less positive reactions to retirement transition and to more problems in athletes' retirement adaptation process (Grove et al., 1997; Lally, 2007; Warriner & Lavalley, 2008). Even though athletic identity is related to retirement difficulties, some studies argue that it is not related to overall life satisfaction and athletes' anticipated disrupted identities upon retirement (Lally, 2007; Webb, et al., 1998). A proactive diminishing of athletic identity prior to retirement is associated with positive effects on retirement transition particularly, precluding a major identity crisis or confusion upon and following athletic retirement (Fraser et al., 2010; Lally, 2007; Lavalley & Robinson, 2007; Webb et al., 1998).

Looking specifically to gymnast retirees' adjustment to retirement, problems pronounced in gymnastics were due to the young ages at which participants began and ended their competitive careers (Lavalley & Robinson, 2007). Identity loss is salient upon retirement from gymnastics and physical changes associated with retirement are some of the challenges that gymnasts face (Caine, Lewis, O'Connor, Howe, & Bass, 2001; Lavalley & Robinson, 2007). Athletic retirement challenges also intensify due to the fact

that athletes invest heavily in sport during adolescence; a period that coincides with a time when adolescents typically undergo profound changes physiologically and in identity development (Emmert, 2012; Lavalley & Robinson, 2007; Warriner & Lavalley, 2008).

2.8.2 Coping Processes. Coping is defined as constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person (Lazarus & Folkman, 1986). Authors further proposed that there are generally two ways of coping with stress. The first way is problem- focused coping, which is aimed at problem solving or doing something to alter the source of the stress. The second strategy is emotion- focused coping. Emotion focused coping is aimed at reducing or managing the emotional distress that is associated with (or cued by) the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1986). Although most stressors elicit both types of coping, problem-focused coping tends to predominate when people feel that something constructive can be done, whereas emotion-focused coping tends to predominate when people feel that the stressor is something that must be endured (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980).

Using coping strategies, Sinclair and Orlick (1993) demonstrated, through an exploratory study, that specific coping strategies such as having other interests, keeping busy, and or continuing to exercise are positively correlated with adjustment to retirement from sport. In a similar study, with a sample of 48 retired athletes, acceptance and positive reinterpretation were the most frequently used coping strategies during the career transition process (Grove et al., 1997). Social support (i.e., family and friends), engaging in pre-retirement planning, and a subsequent control of the transition out of sports by

reducing participation gradually and finding a meaningful replacement has been found to be crucial in managing retirement transitions (Fraser et al., 2010; Lavalley & Robinson, 2007; Warriner & Lavalley, 2008). Even though dual career is a challenge to a lot of athletes, it is associated with positive athletic retirement transition because athletes move from one career to another instantly (Borggreffe & Cachay, 2012; Corrado et al., 2012). Dual-career is viewed as a valuable tool for promoting an important contribution to the development of policy actions in the area of sport and education at national and European levels (Corrado et al., 2012).

2.8.3 Social Support. Social support has been identified as one of the most important factors in both nurturing athletic talent (Gould et al., 2006; Wuerth, Lee, & Alfermann, 2004) and managing post-sport career transition (Park et al., 2012; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994). Parents and other family members involved in athletes' athletic careers provide family environment that affects the quality of performance and retirement transition particularly starting a new career. Consistent with the literature, Du (2008) studied Hong Kong retired elite athletes and observed that the quality of placement of elite athletes in Hong Kong after retirement was affected by their sports achievements and "personal support" gained from family members, coaches, and friends during retirement transition. A similar study revealed differences in the psychological states, retirement awareness, retirement plans, self-regulation, social support, and life contentment between the successful retirement cases and the failed ones (Siekanska, 2012). Successfully retired athletes were often aware that they were going to retire and made plans to start new careers, but athletes who failed to start new careers after retirement often used avoidance coping mechanisms (Du, 2008; Siekanska, 2012; Yang,

Peek-Asa, Lowe, Heiden, & Foster, 2010). Family members and the network gathered during athletes' careers are significantly helpful to the quality of athlete retirement placement in terms of getting new jobs. Du (2008) argues that the society and sports organizations should not use medals as the only achievement measure. The author suggests that the society and government should provide elite athletes with occupational training or learning opportunities, thus enhancing the quality of placement of retired athletes.

2.9. Summary: Factors Affecting Retirement Transition

The research reveals that the circumstances surrounding withdrawal from competitive sports significantly influence the quality of retirement. Some of the coping mechanisms used by athletes are to engage in other activities while other athletes may opt to avoid their challenges and hence be isolated. Family support and other members of the entourage provide the much-needed support that may be social and or financial. Having a dual-career like going to college is also a crucial factor in retirement transition. Greater emphasis should be directed towards the psychological, social and physical transitions experienced by elite athletes prior to and after retirement to ensure a positive adaptation into post- sports life.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

The primary objective of this dissertation was to investigate elite athletes' retirement transition experiences including its psychological impact, and post-sport career adaptation. The secondary objective was to investigate psychological impacts of elite athletes retirement transition and the role played by the entourage on elite athletes' retirement transition. Presented in this chapter are methods and procedures used in the conduct of the research. The following format is followed in the presentation of this chapter; research design, participants, procedures, instruments, pilot study and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

To address the problem stated above, this study used a grounded theory research approach. The notion of grounded theory approach was developed by the work of sociologists Glaser and Strauss (1967). Grounded theory can be described as a systematic, yet flexible methodology for collection and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories that are grounded in the data themselves (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The grounded theory approach was chosen to explore the experiences of retired elite athletes and their entourage members because it accords the researcher the opportunity to generate theory rather than impose theory on the data. Although the components of a grounded theory appear in linear sequence, it is worth emphasizing that the grounded theory approach is a recursive process. In practice, the researcher consistently shifts in the data collection and analysis process largely due to a constant comparison method required in the grounded theory. What makes theory developed in the grounded theory profoundly different from other psychological theories is that in the grounded theory

method, the theory is created during data analysis, and the validity of the theory is “grounded” as the data supporting it increases. Unlike other methods of qualitative research where theories are generally cemented in the original hypothesis and therefore have the possible of change during the research process, in grounded theory the research theory is developed throughout the research process and as more data is received and analyzed, the theory continues to change as the data dictates.

3.2 Participants

A total of 17 retired athletes (12 males and 5 females) from various sports (athletics-6, swimming-2, Boxing-2, rowing-2, field hockey-2, gymnastics-1, triathlon-1, biking-1) in Southern Africa and their entourages participated in the current study. All athletes had competed at the Olympics except one athlete who had competed at world championships and the Commonwealth games. A total of 35 entourage members participated in the study and included parents, coaches and spouses.

3.3 Procedure

National Olympic Committees of Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia were contacted to facilitate the recruitment process. Personalized recruitment letters were then sent to each individual retired athlete recruiting them to take part in the study. Participants were awarded a \$50 gift card or cash for participating in the study. The researcher was granted the research permit by Michigan State University Institutional Review Board and National Olympic Committees of participating countries. Data collection was carried out in three phases.

3.3.1 Phase I. The first phase comprised a 15-minute online demographic survey that was emailed to athlete participants after they agreed to participate in the study (Appendix A). The demographic questionnaire sought information such as age, type of sport, time of retirement and if athletes were ready for retirement. The primary reason for Phase I data collection was to focus interviews and give the researcher more information about the participant prior to the interview process.

3.3.2 Phase II. The second phase involved in-depth online (via Skype/phone) interviews. Each in-depth interview lasted 45 to 55 minutes. All athletes and their entourage members were interviewed separately. Given the distance and time difference between where the researcher lives and where participants live, Skype/telephone were the most viable way to conduct interviews. The researcher also traveled to the site to conduct interviews with participants who were not available for a Skype/telephone interview (*athletes n=2 and entourage n=17*).

3.3.3 Phase III. The third phase of data collection consisted of focus groups with the same retired athletes from South Africa, Botswana and spouses of athletes from Botswana. Focus groups were conducted separately for each set of participants and they were conducted on separate dates. Botswana focus groups were conducted at the University of Botswana (UB) and for South Africa, they were conducted at the South Africa Sport Confederation of Olympic Committee (SASCOC). Focus groups were used for triangulation purposes as a data quality control measure as well as to follow-up on questions that were not answered or emerged during the interview process. Interviews and focus groups with multiple samples (athletes, parents, spouses, coaches and federation) accords the researcher the opportunity to triangulate data and use different

data sources as a quality control measure. Retired athlete focus groups were conducted first and followed by spouses' focus group in Botswana (*athletes n=6, spouses n=3*) and (*South Africa athletes n=2*).

3.4 Instruments

The conceptual model of adaptation to career transition (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1998) and the lifespan model (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) were used to guide the interviews. Demographic information collected in Phase I was also used to further guide the interviews for this study. A total of three data collection instruments were designed for this study: the online survey (Appendix A) and two semi-structured interview schedules. Two semi-structured interview schedules were designed for individual athlete interviews and the focus groups respectively. Athletes' interview guide (Appendix B) was influenced by the lifespan model on athlete development, the role played by the entourage in athletes' careers, circumstances surrounding career termination and retirement transition. The conceptual model of adaptation to career transition influenced some questions particularly on circumstances surrounding retirement. Entourage interview guide (Appendix C) focused on the same areas as athletes interview guide but from the entourage perspective. A sports psychology professor examined the instruments, and revisions were made where necessary. A follow-up instrument was designed after interviews to enquire further and provide clarity where needed during focus groups. Even though instruments in the appendix show question on athletes entire career in sport, questions that were of primary interest to this dissertation are those relating to retirement transition and the role of the entourage.

3.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study with two retired athletes was conducted and data from the pilot were transcribed and analyzed to test the validity of the instruments. Revisions were made accordingly. Retired athletes who participated in the pilot study were not recruited to be part of the study sample.

3.6 Data Analysis

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

2012).

Reading and listening to all audio recordings accords readers the opportunity to judge whether the phenomenon of interest has been illuminated from a particular perspective. Consistent with ground theory data analysis (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), transcribing data was followed by an intense line-by-line manual open coding using the participant's own words by the researcher and his independent colleague. She is a doctoral student in the kinesiology department with experience in qualitative research methods. During the open coding process, researchers consistently engaged in a comparison method. The concept of open coding and constant comparison is described as finding key phrases or words in documents and experimenting with meanings (Miles et al., 2013). This process accorded researchers the opportunity to ask specific questions such as 'who interacted with elite athletes in their athletic careers?' 'Under what circumstances did they interact with athletes?', 'how did retired elite athletes and entourage members experience the interaction?', and "when did that interaction take place in athletes careers?'. Consistent with the (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), the researcher remained open minded throughout the data analysis process.

Open coding was followed by axial coding , where the researcher created subcategories and related them to main categories and specified properties and dimensions of a category (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The last stage of data analysis was selective coding. The researcher linked all categories and sub-categories to the core category in order to create a story of theoretical propositions.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the Data

The researcher made efforts to ensure that data reduction and analysis were rigorous, authentic and trustworthy. For reliability and data quality, the researcher adopted a blind coding approach. The researcher and an independent academic with experience in qualitative research independently listened to all recordings of the interviews and read the transcripts several times. The blind method is part of a scientific method used as a quality control measure to prevent research outcomes from being influenced by outcomes from either the placebo effect or the observer bias (Creswell, 2012). The role of an external reviewer is also to “keep the researcher honest,” by asking difficult questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations (Creswell, 2012) of data. Reviewer and researcher analysis were compared, and discussed during a three-hour meeting. Consensus regarding core themes was achieved.

Chapter 4: RESULTS and SPECIFIC DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this dissertation was to investigate elite athletes retirement transition experiences including its psychological impacts and post-sport career adaptation in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The secondary objective was to investigate the role played by the entourage on elite athletes' retirement transition. Lastly, this dissertation made cross-national comparison looking specifically at sport budgets, population size and sport organizational structure.

This chapter begins with a brief profile of each athlete participant including his or her retirement transition experience. A demographic table providing more detailed information on athlete participants in this dissertation follows the profiles. This chapter concludes with a detailed explanation of the main concepts discovered and subcategories in this dissertation. Results are presented consistent with primary and secondary objectives of this dissertation and specific discussions are made in the context of Southern African populations and models used in this dissertation. Pseudonym names have been assigned to all athletes and their entourages to protect the participants in this study. Additionally, pseudonym names have not been associated with specific countries because of potential identification of the participant. When it was relevant to describe the country of a participant, a number was used to refer to the participant.

4.1 Research Participants Brief Profiles (Athletes)

Mod started gymnastics at the age of 8. He then went on to represent (country name) at the world championships, commonwealth games and world university games. His coach, parents and extended family members provided him with the social support he

needed in his career in sport. Mod did not complete university, with an attempt to focus on gymnastics but involuntarily retired around the same time he left university at the age of 22. He was married and self-employed during data collection of this study.

Thato competed in the flyweight Boxing category at the (city) Summer Olympic games. He started boxing at senior secondary school after playing other sports that included volleyball, track, and tennis. Thato had a brother who was also a boxer and a great inspiration to him. Thato won a silver medal at the (city) Commonwealth games. Thato is currently a teacher and he is actively involved in sport development in (country name). Teachers and his teammates provided support at the beginning of his career. His job and family played a crucial role in his retirement transition. Thato had a smooth transition because he had a job during his retirement transition

Ellis started boxing by accident at the age of 16. He joined a workout group with the motive to manage his weight and ended up competing at the (city) Summer Olympic games. Before joining boxing, the 35 year old played Badminton. The 35-year-old former (country name) Olympic boxer got support from his club, teammates, and family during his athletic career. Ellis mentioned consistently in the interview that teachers were crucial his development in the boxing career. He voluntarily retired to pursue his new career and also work as a coach for young developing boxers. Ellis shared with the researcher that he had a smooth retirement transition because he had a job upon retirement.

Trice represented (country name) at the (city) Olympic games and other major world championships such as International Associations of Athletics Federations (IAAF) world championships, commonwealth games and world university games in 100 and

200m. He started participating in his sport at the age of 10. His coach/teacher and his parents provided him with support at the beginning of his career. The federation provided him with financial support during his elite career in sport. Trice retired at the age of 28 to focus on his teaching job as well as spend time with his family. He consistently mentioned during the interview that even though he missed his sport, he had a smooth retirement transition. He also mentioned that retirement accorded him more time with his family.

Daniel is a retired middle distance runner who represented (country) at the (city) Olympic games and other major tournaments. The 36 year old former middle distance runner was recruited by a teacher whom they have had a father-son relationship with since then. His former teacher becomes a crucial mentor both in sport and outside sport. Daniel had to go back to school after retirement and is currently a teacher and lives with his wife. Daniel involuntarily retired from competitive sport and he was quick to mention during the interview process that he was not ready for retirement. His wife played a crucial role in his elite career as well as during retirement transition. One of the factors that played a pivotal role in Daniel's transition was studying after competitive sport.

Joe is a retired long distance runner who represented (country name) at the (city) Olympic games. One of his major achievements includes being ranked fourth in world cross-country rankings. Joe started his athletic career as a high school student competing for his school. A university official who spotted him competing in track races at the age of 18 recruited him to train under his guidance. Even though his family was not forthcoming in supporting him at the beginning of his career in sport, Joe's family played

a crucial role in his elite athletic career and retirement transition. Entourage members who were profound in Joe's athletic career include the university official who recruited him, his teachers and his wife. The university official did not only train Joe, he provided him with meals, training shoes and other needs that Joe had before he had a job. During Joe's elite career and retirement transition, his wife played a crucial role providing him with social support. Joe retired involuntarily due to a career ending injury.

Mmoloki is a retired (country name) sprinter and Olympian who started track at 19 years of age in senior secondary school. One of his major achievements includes competing at the (city) Summer Olympic games, winning a silver medal at the (city) world in-door games and a gold medal at the All Africa games. The 34 year old had a career ending injury a few months before the (city) Olympic games. His peers, teachers and siblings provided support during his career in sport. His retirement transition was not planned hence he lacked employment and had other related challenges. He strongly believes that God provided solace during his retirement transition.

Bill is a retired (country name) sprinter who competed at the (city) Olympic games and made the final in 100m at the (city) Olympic games. He also represented (country name) at several world championships. When Bill was 6, he started playing different sports because it was required at his school. He specialized in athletics when he got to high school and college. He went to college in the United States where he competed at several championships. People and organizations that played a crucial role in his athletic career include his parents, coach and the federation. Even though Bill had a career ending injury, he was ready for retirement. He had planned for retirement by going to graduate school and starting a real-estate business. Some of his worries during

retirement transition included the uncertainty of whether he had fully planned for his retirement from elite sport or not. Bill's spouse played a crucial role in providing him with social support during retirement transition.

Nick is a retired triathlete who represented (country name) at the (city) and (city) Olympic games. His parents taught him how to swim at the age of six. Nick was also competing in school cross-country races around the same age. His friend invited him to a swimming meet and he brought his bike with him, to put the running, swimming and bike together. At the age of 18, Nick specialized in triathlon and never looked back. Nick's parents and his siblings played a crucial role in his athlete development by providing financial and social support that Nick needed throughout his athletic career. Other entourage members who played a crucial role in his athletic career include the federation and his wife. Nick's wife was instrumental in providing social support during his retirement transition. Nick voluntarily retired at the age of 30. He was employed and satisfied with his retirement transition.

Anne represented (country name) at the (city) Olympic games in rowing singles. She retired after the Olympics games at the age of 36. Other major highlights in her athletic career include placing fifth place at the world junior championships. Anne credits her parents in supporting her athletic career from as early as six years old when she started participating in rowing. Entourage members who played a supporting role in her athletic career include friends, teachers, coach, siblings, extended family and the federation. Even though Anne was not ready and did not prepare for retirement, she moved into a new career upon retirement.

David is a 30-year-old (country name) retired middle distance runner. He won a silver medal in 800m at the (city) Olympic games, (city) Commonwealth games, and the (city) world championships. Even though his parents provided social support, they were not fully involved in his athletic career. People who played a crucial role in David's career in sport include his senior secondary school teacher/ coach and his coach at elite stage. David was recruited at the age of 15 to compete for his senior secondary school and joined professional sport after his senior secondary school. He involuntarily retired from elite sport at the age of 29 due to an injury.

Brad is a 31 year-old retired (country name) track cyclist. He represented (country name) at the (city) Olympics. Before specializing in his sport, he played football (soccer) at university level. People who played a crucial role in his career in sport include his parents and his sister. He retired after the Olympics games. Brad planned his retired and was happy with his retirement transition. Brad shared with the researcher that he was ready to focus on other aspects of his life when he retired from competitive sport.

Helder is a retired (country name) rower and Olympic medalist. Helder won a bronze medal at the (city) Olympics in the coxless pair with his partner. He started rowing at the age of seven and his parents and teachers were crucial at the beginning of his athletic career and his coaches were more profound at the elite stage of his career in rowing. Helder graduated from the university when he was at the peak of his career in sport. He shared with the researcher that even though he missed his sport, he had a smooth retirement transition.

Missy is a 32-year-old retired field hockey player. She was a member of the (country name) squad that represented (country name) at the (city) Olympics. Other

major achievements include competing for (country name) at several world championships. Even though Missy had support from her coaches and teachers, she considers her parents to have been behind her success in field hockey throughout her career. She did not complete university and she is currently employed. She retired involuntarily from competitive sport.

Julie is a 38-year-old retired former (country name) field hockey player. Julie started playing field hockey at the age of 12 at her primary school and went on to represent (country) at various international competitions including the (city) Olympic games. She also represented (country name) at the Commonwealth games and the world cup. Even though field hockey was introduced to Julie in school, her parents played a crucial role in supporting her socially and financially until her retirement at the age of 29. Julie retired due to a career ending injury and tried to return to sport but eventually retired. Even though she was disappointed for deselection after her injury, she moved on in her new career in marketing.

Jocy is a 39-year-old retired (country name) swimmer. Her parents taught her how to swim at the age of six. Jocy participated in several other major world games including two Olympic games. Her parents supported her financially and socially to the point she retired at the age of 22. She voluntarily retired to focus on her studies and start a family. She had a smooth retirement transition and is happy to have made a decision to retire from competitive sport.

Thabo is a swimmer who represented (country name) at the (city) Olympic games. She started swimming at the age of 10 and retired 2 years after the Beijing Olympic games. Before she specialized in swimming at the age of 14, she took part in

other sports including track. Thabo was introduced to swimming by her parents and started competing in primary school swimming galas to the point of winning a national championship and competing at world swimming championships and the Olympics. People who were most profound in her athletic career include her family, coach, peers and husband. When Thabo learned that she had qualified for the Olympic games, she chose to withdraw her university registration to focus on training for the Olympic games. She voluntarily retired to start her swimming school and also give back to her parents after many years of support.

Table 1 presents general demographic data on athletes that participated in the study and some of the major and minor variables observed in this dissertation. A presentation of the primary and secondary objective results is presented following Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Data and Themes

Athlete	Gender	Marital Status	Sport	Dual career	Retirement type	Think of ret (when senior athlete)	Prepare for ret?	Ready for ret?	Education	Ret age
Jocy	F	Married	Swimming	Yes (university)	Voluntary	Yes	Yes	Yes	University degree	22
Julie	F	Single	F-Hockey	Yes (university + part-time work)	Involuntary	No	Yes	No	Graduate school	29
Helde	M	Married	Rowing	Yes (university)	Voluntary	No	No	No	University degree	36
Brad	M	Single	Biking	Yes (university)	Voluntary	-	Yes	Yes	University degree	-
Anne	F	Single	Rowing	Yes (university)	Involuntary	No	No	No	University degree	36
Nick	M	Married	Triathlon	Yes (university and part-time work)	Voluntary	Yes	Yes	Yes	University degree	30
Bill	M	Married	Athletics	Yes (university)	Involuntary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Graduate School	31
Joe	M	Married	Cross country	Yes (full-time work)	Involuntary	No	Yes	Yes	Secondary School	36
Trice	M	Married	Athletics	Yes (university)	Voluntary	No	No	No	University degree	28
Ellis	M	Single	Boxing	Yes (university)	Voluntary	Yes	Yes	Yes	University degree	28
Thato	M	Married	Boxing	Yes (university)	Voluntary	Yes	Yes	Yes	University degree	28
Mod	M	Married	Gymnastics	No	Involuntary	No	No	No	Did not complete university	22
Thabo	F	Married	Swimming	No	Voluntary	No	-	No	Withdrew university registration	23
Missy	F	Single	F-hockey	No	Involuntary	No	No	No	Did not complete university	28
David	M	Divorced	Athletics	No	Involuntary	No	No	No	Secondary school	35
Mmoloki	M	Single	Athletics	No	Involuntary	No	No	No	Secondary school	29
Daniel	M	Married	Athletics	No	Involuntary	No	No	No	Diploma (after elite sport)	33

4.2 Results by Primary Objectives

The primary objective of this dissertation was to investigate elite athletes' retirement transition experiences, including its psychological impacts, and post-sport career adaptation. A sub-objective was to examine the coping strategies used by retired elite athletes during retirement transition. The study observed three major (see Table 1) themes (*type of retirement, dual-career, and challenges*) as crucial in elite athletes' retirement transition and post-sport career. The first major theme of *type of retirement* was derived from interviews with athletes' and their entourages' to explain athletes' experiences during retirement transition and post sport career adaptation. Sub-themes observed under type of retirement were *voluntary* and *involuntary retirement*. Elite athlete experiences during retirement transition varied by type of retirement and circumstances surrounding retirement and post-sport career. The second major theme observed in the study was *dual-career*. Athletes and their entourages shared with the researcher during the interview process that finding the balance between school and sport was primary in preparing for a post-sport career transition. It was also clear during data analysis that, dual career significantly influenced athletes' retirement transition and post-sport career. For example, as presented in Table 1, a total of 10 athletes managed to balance school and sport in order to have another career outside sport hence positive post-sport career transition.

Other crucial factors that influenced athletes' experiences include the availability of support during retirement, preparing for retirement as well as being ready for retirement were crucial in athletes' experiences in retirement transition. Sub-themes

observed under the major theme dual-career were *graduating from university, full-time job during one's career in sport, and part-time job during one's career in sport*. The last major theme observed in the primary objective was *challenges*. It was clear from retired athletes and their entourages during the interview process that athletes experienced challenges during their career in sport as well as during retirement. Some of the challenges shared by athletes and their entourages include lack of financial resources to maintaining an elite sport career and support during retirement transition. Sub-themes observed under the major theme of challenges were *lack of financial resources, trained coaches, facilities, and trained medical personnel*. Each of these major themes and subthemes will be discussed in detail below.

4.2.1 Major Theme # 1: Type of Retirement from Sport. It was clear across the three phases of data collection that the impetus of sport retirement transition is a function of two primary factors: voluntary retirement (making a decision to voluntarily retire) and involuntary retirement (forced by circumstances to retire). Consistent with sport psychology literature (Lavalley & Wylleman, 2000; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994) on retirement transition, reasons for involuntary retirement shared by athletes and their entourages include injury, deselection from the team, and failing to qualify for the games. Involuntary retirees experiences psychological distress of felling stressed, devastated and in some cases, isolated. Athletes who voluntarily retired from sport shared with the researcher that they had planned and knew when they will retire. Data analysis showed that voluntary retirees used events such as major games to mark their retirement from competitive sport. For example, athletes would make a decision that they will retire after their next Olympic games. Reasons for voluntary retirement shared by athletes include

focus on studies, start a family, and career change. Even though voluntary retirees missed the sport and had to navigate life without competing in their favorite sport, they moved on their new career. Data analysis also showed that voluntary retirees had thought of retirement when they were senior athletes. Participant # 16 from Namibia shared with the researcher that even though she retired after the (date, city) Olympic games, she had been planning and thinking of her retirement.

I had made up my mind even long before the Olympics. I knew I couldn't combine both my studies and my sport to the extent that I would want to. I was happy about my decision and looking back I still am happy about my decision.

It was clear in the data analysis that voluntary retirees were “switching” from competitive sport to join a new career. Participant #16 consciously made a decision to end her career in sport because of the conflict between school and sport. She also shared with the researcher that even though her new career did not immediately replace her passion for sport, she had something meaningful to look forward to. Similar to participant # 16's comments, other athletes retired from competition to a new job. These athletes used words such as “smooth”, “automatic” or “transfer” to refer to the ending of their competitive sport and transition to a new career. Participant #3 from Botswana voluntarily retired to start a career in teaching.

I must say that mine was actually automatic transition because I was a student when I was (sport). That meant that when I finished schooling, I started working. I was concentrating on my teaching career. Being a retired athlete did not frustrate me because sport was not paying us much. We were not benefiting financially so retirement did not strain me in any way and I didn't need to prepare anything special for retirement.

Participant #3 makes reference to the fact that he did not have significant financial benefit from (sport) and as a result, he did not feel any financial loss from quitting competitive (sport). Nonrevenue sports such as boxing, swimming, and hockey did not earn athletes significant amounts of money except in cases where the team had a sponsor or they were exceptionally talented to have a sponsor on their own. The commitments to reach and stay at the top of elite sport require elite athletes and those around them to invest at different levels (e.g., physical, social, financial) during a long period of time (Baker et al., 2003). At least three athletes (2-Botswana 1-Zimbabwe) shared with the researcher during the interview process that they chose to retire because of lack of financial support to continue with their sport. All athletes were asked the same question on circumstances surrounding their retirement and shared their thoughts and experiences on retirement. Even though circumstances of financial support led to their retirement, these athletes made a conscious decision to retire from competitive sport. These athletes also used major events such as the Olympic games and or world championships to mark their retirement from elite sport. Participant # 13 from Botswana shared with the researcher that even though he was ranked 8th in the world, he did not have enough support to prepare for international games and decided to retire and focus on developing young athletes.

I felt I was not getting enough support to achieve what I wanted to do. I was one of great (sport) in Botswana, ranked 8 in the world. I needed more international exposure. For example, to take part in competition such as the Olympics and the World Cup, you have to go for a few months to prepare for the competition but in Botswana you have to go direct to that competition. I was also looking at my knowledge of (sport) that if I retire, I can assist our senior national team in any way.

Participant # 13 is one of the athletes from Botswana who successfully completed university studies and voluntarily retired from competitive sport. It was clear during the interview that if participant # 13 had financial resources to continue, he could have continued with the sport. Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) affirm that elite athletes do not only strive to reach the top but also to remain at the top elite level in competitive sport. In addition to lack of support, participant # 13 shares that he was also looking at giving back the knowledge he acquired through his sport over the years. The sentiment of giving back to the nation and or other young athletes was consistent across at least 6 athletes expressing a sense of patriotism and love for their country. During the data collection of the project, participant # 13 worked with (sport) development teams at junior and senior level. He shared with the researcher that he was happy with his retirement transition experiences. Consistent with participant # 13's statement about lack of support, participant # 2 from Botswana shared that she did not enjoy playing her sport anymore because of lack of support and also decided to retire from competitive sport.

I got to a point where I wasn't enjoying it. Like I told you, I wasn't getting any financial support from anyone but my parents. I had enough of that and I wanted to start giving back to them. I was an adult now and they had to continue to pay for my studies, and coaching. It just didn't feel like it was fair. So a lot of my decision was based on no funding.

As presented earlier in this chapter, it is important for athletes to prepare for a post-sport career and also plan for retirement. Data analysis across the three phases indicated that a small number of athletes ($n=8$) had prepared for retirement. Athletes shared with the researcher that savings, buying assets (particularly a house) and graduating from university were their primary approach to preparing for retirement. A distribution of

athletes' preparation for retirement by country is presented in Table 2 show that only two athletes from Botswana thought of retirement when they were senior athletes.

Table 2: Athletes Retirement Planning by Country

Country	N	Think of retirement at senior stage	Prepared for Retirement	Planned for retirement
Botswana	7	2	2	2
Zimbabwe	4	2	3	2
South Africa	4	0	1	0
Namibia	2	2	2	2

Zimbabwe had the highest number of athletes who planned for retirement. None of the athletes from South Africa thought of retirement in their senior stage. It is not surprising for elite athletes not to think of retirement in their careers in elite sport. The conflict between motivation for success in sport and preparation for a post-sport career (or retirement) is evident throughout athletes' careers in sport. It is important for athletes to focus and have high motivation to achieve significant success (e.g. winning an Olympic medal) in sport. Some entourage members (i.e., coaches) may influence athletes to exclusively focus in sport (Blinde & Greendorfer, 1985) even at the expense of education. Athletes' focus on other factors of life (e.g., education) may be viewed as distraction from success in sport. Past research (Brewer et al, 1993) affirms that high athletic identity and an exclusive focus in sport may force athletes to neglect other aspects of life in order to fulfill the athlete role. The conflict between high motivation for success in sport and a focus on planning for retirement may also force athletes to sacrifice spending time with family and friends, and other important aspects of their life such as proper career planning, which may be detrimental in athletes retirement transition. It is

therefore important for educators, federations and sport programs to consider developing more flexible programming for gifted athletes without compromising the time and quality requirements as established by education departments in each country.

Consistent with sport psychology literature (Alfermann et al., 2004) on retirement transition, psychological impact of involuntary retirement included sense of vulnerability, panic, nervousness, and lack of control during retirement transition. In some cases, some athletes ($n=4$) presented a sense of feeling denial of the circumstances that they had to retire from competitive sport. All involuntary retirees showed similar experiences regardless of country of origin. These athletes made an attempt to return to elite sport but could not continue for a period of not more than a single season.

Participant # 12 from South Africa shared psychological experiences of not making the team after working hard to return to playing.

I was devastated. I was desperate to make the team, I was training really hard. I thought I made a good enough recovery to be at the level that I needed to be to play. But the coaches in the selection thought differently. I was in a bad place.

Similar to participant # 12's experiences, participant # 6 from Botswana shared with the researcher that he was more concerned about returning to athletics than planning retirement transition when asked about circumstances surrounding his retirement and services available for athletes who retire from competitive sport.

No, when you retire they do not give you anything, not even money. For me I never really fought on the side of money. I was fighting to return. I was hopeful that I will come back to athletics.

It was clear during the interview process that Participant # 6 wanted to continue competing and was not ready for retirement. His retirement was due to a career ending injury. The quotes presented above demonstrate typical examples of athletes who retired involuntarily and worked hard in anticipation that they return to competing. Even though all athletes shared sentiments of worry, disappointment and missing their sport, it was clear during the data analysis process that involuntary retirees without job or university education ($n=6$) were more concerned about source of income to support their families. Consistent with statements shared by participant #6 (athlete from Botswana), there were no services available specific to athletes who retired from competitive sport in all the four countries except an International Olympic Committee career-planning program in South Africa. However, even though a South Africa federation official shared that the program had recently been implemented, athletes did not have much information on the program. Participant # 10 from Zimbabwe explained to the researcher that unavailability of retirement transition services was a problem in Zimbabwe. Participant # 10 also shared with the researcher how he prepared and coped with retirement transition.

That's a big problem in Zimbabwe. Most athletes don't prepare for life after sport. A lot of them are unemployed and struggle with their lives despite the fact that they did very well in sport. For me, I can say I was fortunate because I prepared myself for life after sport. I had passed my high school exam and I have a good job. During my athletic career, I took sport management courses. Most of my colleagues in sport didn't have basic education. They cannot find jobs or do sport courses because they do not have basic education. So that's the major problem with other athletes. But for me, I don't have a problem. I'm comfortable with what I have.

Completing secondary school accorded athletes the opportunity to further their studies during and in post-sport career. Participant # 10 affirmed that, passing secondary school

exams accorded him the opportunity to take advantage of short sport management courses that are offered by local and international sports federations to further his studies. Completing university education did not only accord athletes the opportunity to further their studies but also to seek employment in a variety of disciplines such as teaching, finance, and marketing depending on their university qualification. Completing secondary school and university positively facilitated athletes' experiences, particularly in post-sport career adaptation.

As indicated earlier, financial challenges during retirement transition were most evident in athletes ($n=6$) who did not complete college education and or source of income. Upon retirement, athletes realized that they needed another source of income because they heavily relied on appearance fees and allowances from competing internationally for their countries. Athletes used words such as “facing life” to refer to their experiences in transition from competitive sport. Such experiences brought a sense worry, panic, and nervousness. Their immediate worry that athletes had was supporting their families financially. In some cases, athletes had to live with friends or family members because they did not have a place to live since they had lived abroad in their career in sport. Participant # 6 from Botswana retired after a career ending injury. He shared his experiences with the researcher after retirement.

At that point when you retire, there are things that you face in life. You get challenges. You need to have a source of financial support. So what happened with me was that, I was just about to break through into making money. I can't say I was making enough to rely on yet. What I could do next was either look for a job or do some courses.

Consistent with participant # 6's comments, participant # 13 from South Africa shared similar comments with the researcher during the interview process that his immediate worry after retirement was supporting his family.

My immediate worry was the ability to support my two boys. When you're (sport) you're make money and paying your bills. But when you stop, there's nothing that's coming. You're used to the lifestyle that money is coming in and out but when you retire, it's only going out. My worry was if I was able to get a good job and to be able to get back to the South African society.

In addition to lack of financial resources, one of involuntary retirees felt isolated. Participant # 5 expressed a sense of isolation after his retirement from competitive sport.

If you get injured today or you retire without anything nobody will even think of you or where you are. We will meet you at the bus rank (bus station) looking very old, tired and without anything. I had a similar situation but I was lucky to go back to school just before it happened to me.

Returning to school and finding alternative sources of income are some of the strategies athletes used to cope with financial challenges during their retirement transition. Athletes also joined federations, became coaches, did public speaking (only in South Africa) and engaged in other sport related activities for income and to remain within sports circles.

4.2.2 Summary: Type of Retirement from Sport

It was clear during the data analysis that athletes' experiences upon retirement were more crucial in understanding their type of retirement and post-sport career. For example, all ($n=6$) athletes who did not complete university education experienced financial insecurities during retirement transition, regardless of their nationality. It is worth noting that South African athletes had support resources such as sponsors and or part-time jobs, which played a crucial role to prepare them for a post-

sport career in sport. These athletes were able to have post-sport careers emanate from their part-time employment when they were elite athletes. A further discussion of challenges that athletes face in their career in elite sport as well as during transition is presented in the next paragraphs.

4.2.3 Major Theme # 2 Elite Athletes' Challenges. Athletes experienced a variety of challenges in their careers in sport. The most profound challenges that athletes faced include lack financial resources to compete at an elite level, lack of training facilities, lack of trained coaches, and lack of trained medical personnel. Athletes experienced most of these challenges in their senior stage and retirement transition. Athletes and their entourage members explained to the researcher that in some cases, they did not have access to information, which resulted in more challenges. A spouse of an athlete from Zimbabwe summarized some of the challenges that her husband and other elite athletes from developing athletes experienced during their career in sport.

I think when you come from an underdeveloped country you have a lot of other challenges that come your way and I think, never mind financially, its logistically, its lack of internet, its not being able to communicate, its hearing about things at the last minute. For example at the Olympics, no one communicated the rule with regard to the kits logs until last minute. (Athlete name) literally was with (coach name) taping over his logos and changing his bike and covering logos with tape. You know those kind of rules weren't communicated effectively to (athlete name). First world countries athletes don't have to deal with these challenges, they come with the best equipment, and the best bikes. I mean, there were people in (city name) who had to weight their bikes because their bikes were too lite. And now you have a little third world (country name) arriving and his bike weighs double anyone else's bike.

Data analysis showed that even though athletes from South Africa experienced financial challenges, they had local sponsors to give them financial support and part-time jobs.

Athletes from Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe did not have local sponsors hence

relied primarily on their government and international sponsors. Participant # 11 from Zimbabwe also affirmed that financial challenges were profound in his elite career in sport. To address financial challenges, Participant # 11 explained to the researcher that he raised money to support his (year) Olympic games qualification tour.

The last 2 to 3 months trying to qualify for (city) were really hard for me from all points. I was always trying to fight always trying to raise money to get to races. I got it but I had to fight really hard to get it and it took a lot of energy.

Lack of training equipment and other resources posed a lot of challenges for athletes from Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Participant # 16's coach from Namibia explained to the researcher that they have a 25m-heated pool. However, when participants# 16 was an elite athlete, they did not have a heated pools for swimming in winter. In order to train in winter, they focused on endurance, weight lifting, and some mental exercises. The coach also shared with the researcher that in some cases, they used wood burning stove to heat their swimming pool.

We did a more all rounded training with a lot of endurance training, and weight lifting. To avoid being bored in the longer sense, I would give them quizzes or riddles to solve. Sometimes we would heat a pool with word-burning stove, what we call a donkey.

It should be noted that a lot of athletes from Botswana, Namibia Zimbabwe consistently mentioned that they trained in South Africa and industrialized nations (i.e., England, Germany and Norway). Access to world-class sport facilities and medical treatment are some of the reasons shared by athletes for training abroad. Major races that athletes took part in took place mostly in Europe. Competing in Europe also created some challenges for athletes who were in school while competing in major world competitions such as the

Olympics. The next chapter will discuss athletes' experiences and the importance of balancing a career in and outside of sport.

4.2.4 Major Theme # 3: Balancing Sport and Other Careers. The researcher learned that even though a variety of factors facilitated retirement transition, education, part-time and or full-time job, and engaging in other activities played a crucial role in facilitating retirement transition. Completing secondary school accorded athletes the opportunity to further their studies during their career in sport as well as in post-sport career.

Completing university education did not only accord athletes the opportunity to further their studies but also to seek employment in a variety of disciplines such as teaching, finance, and marketing depending on their university degrees. Athletes who were employed part-time or full time were only observed in South Africa and Zimbabwe (an athlete from Zimbabwe living in South Africa). Athletes who had part-time jobs suggested that it was a great way to learn skills that were useful in their post-sport career and also to give them an opportunity to be employed full time upon retirement from competitive sport. Athletes did not only share the benefits of dual career but they were also visible in athletes who had jobs and/or completed higher education. These athletes were quick to mention to the researcher that they were teachers and/or worked in other fields of their post-sport career. Participant # 12 from South Africa shared with the researcher that she had a job during her career in elite sports.

I had a job, which was kind of in the marketing field. The company I worked for understood my needs as an elite athlete. They hired me full-time and also gave me extra time off to train in the morning and at night, which did not affect my leave time. I was paid most of the time at competitions.

As presented in Table 1, at least athletes ($n=10$) successfully completed a university degree while competing in elite sport at the same time. Even though the study did not look into the type of jobs and athletes' income, all retired athletes ($n=17$) were employed during the data collection of the project. It is therefore important for future research to focus on the type of jobs that retired athletes do. Competing at the elite level and working part-time jobs accorded athletes unique skills and experiences that they used in their post-sport career. In South Africa, some athletes had an arrangement of part-time work with their sponsors. These athletes were able to use such skills efficiently and their social network as resources for a post-sport career. An athlete's employer/sponsor from Zimbabwe (they lived in South Africa) shared with the researcher that they discussed what was best for the athlete when he retired from competitive sport.

So (name) had been working for us part time since 2009. We also supported him financially in terms of some of the events he needed to go to last year over the salary we gave him. So when he was coming up to his retirement, we sat down and he said "look I'm retiring" and we had a very open dialogue on what his career aspirations were. I think there was a lot of support just like when anyone is coming to work for you full time and the career conversations and so on. Yea, it was very involved between us.

The sponsor/employer's company was based in South Africa but sponsored a Zimbabwean athlete based in South Africa. Athletes who worked part-time in their elite sport mentioned to the researcher that the skills learnt were useful in their post-sport career and it was not challenging to get such part-time jobs in sport industry companies. Participant # 12 shared her experience of working part-time while she was an elite athlete.

I guess sport people like to work with other sport people. They know the

dedication and commitment that it takes to be an elite athlete and they can relate that back to their work at their job. In marketing my field is relatable to sport and some people like to hire those that know what it takes to be an athlete and relate that to their job.

It was clear during the interview with Participant # 12 that she learned to transfer her sport-learned skills, such as commitment and determination, to her part-time job in marketing. The ability for athletes to transfer sport-learned skills is crucial for post-sport career adaptation. Athletes who are able to transfer their skills are more likely to adapt to their post-sport career faster and be able to use sport-learned skills such as teamwork, resiliency, and positive thinking which are taught in sports. Even though it was clear that balancing school and sport facilitated retirement transition, athletes experienced a lot of challenges balancing school and sport.

Athletes ($n=10$) who successfully completed a university degree during their elite career in sport also shared challenges they came across in finding the balance between school and sport. Data analysis indicated that it required patience, resiliency, time management skills and social support to successfully balance school and sport. In some cases, athletes made a conscious decision with their parents to withdraw from university in order to train for the Olympics but in other cases, athletes were dropped from university by their respective institutions. Participant #2, an Olympian from Botswana had moved to study overseas when she learned that she had qualified for the Olympics and decided to focus on training for the Olympic games instead of starting her university studies. Participant #2 explained to the researcher the decision she made.

I actually had moved to the UK. My (extended family member) lives there and I moved there with them to go study. I registered to study psychology, but about four months before I started I got a call that I had qualified for the Olympics. I had to talk to my parents and they told me that it was

entirely up to me but if it were them, they would definitely go to the Olympics and not give up an opportunity like that. That's where I am today.

Upon Participant # 2's retirement from competitive sport, she completed a swimming-coaching course in the United States funded by her parents. Table 3 shows athletes highest academic qualification during data collection by country.

Table 3: Athletes' highest Academic Qualification

<i>Country</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Athletes highest academic qualification</i>				
		<i>Senior school</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>Diploma</i>	<i>University degree</i>	<i>Graduate degree</i>
Botswana	7	3		1	3	
Zimbabwe	4	1			2	1
South Africa	4	2			1	1
Namibia	2	0			2	

In a similar case, the university dropped participant # 15 from South Africa after 6 years.

The quote below is Participant # 15's response from the researcher when she was asked about her experience when she was at the university while competing in elite sport.

Ooh f*** well, we are all growing and learning how to make sports more professional. I was there for six years and I didn't qualify or I still don't have a degree. I will never blame anyone because I was an adult and I made my decisions, hockey was my thing, my number one thing and its difficult to play for the national team and get a degree. I would miss lectures because of training. It came a time where it was almost pointless for me to be in a lecture because I would go in to the Gym in the morning from six to seven, then go to lectures before lunch-time. I would then go for a 30 to 40 minute run. Now I am tired. I go to lectures in the afternoon, then in the evening I have a skill session and that's my day. "You are in class, and its just showing up. Your mind is everywhere and you are literally napping in your mind".

Participant # 15 also made suggestion on the best possible way to help students who compete internationally for their countries to cope with balancing school and sport.

They should say you are here to do (sport), your degree takes three years but from history, you will take five or six years. No way I would juggle that, its almost impossible. Maybe just take half of each semester load then you can cope. No one tells you that when you apply for varsity and when they give you a full scholarship. No one tells you that it's going to be difficult and they help you where they can like missing class and you can't substitute that. You can't substitute for time in class.

Participant # 11, an Olympian from Zimbabwe shared his experiences of competing internationally. He goes further to share his concerns regarding support from his university in balancing school and sport.

So basically growing up through senior secondary school, I was fortunate enough that I went to two world championships. With that, then university got in the way and I didn't think I would really be continuing with the sport that much. I went to (university name), which wasn't really renowned for sports such as (sport). It was in the end of my second year at university that I really wanted to give it a go again.

Participant #6 from Botswana shared that he had a choice and did not consider balancing school and sport to be viable at the time because he was doing well in sport as early senior secondary school.

There was a choice. I could have maybe tried to focus more on academics and try to balance it with athletics. I did not consider it to be a viable option at that time. Maybe I should go back to re-write some of the subjects so that I can be admitted to a college or university.

Participant # 6's comments are consist with research (Blinde & Greendorfer, 1985) that suggests that athletes may focus on sport at the expense of being a student because the public clamors for a winner and success.

Challenges of navigating elite sport and higher education were also shared by coaches and other entourage members. Participant #6 and Participant # 5's coach from Botswana shared with the researcher that the system or structure of sport makes it difficult for students to balance school and sport. The coach also shared that coaches and parents should encourage athletes to find balance between school and sport or else, athletes would choose sport over school.

It is very difficult to balance school and sport especially in our system here. I think it is the role of parents and coaches to encourage athletes to balance school and sport otherwise the players would drop from school and go elite.

Three athlete participants had enrolled in the university and one did not start while the university dropped the other two. What was most common in these athletes decision was that they both chose sport over their university studies. The role played by universities, coaches, and parents in supporting athletes through elite sport and higher education is crucial. Participant #3, a retired Botswana (sport) shared that the most challenging times of his career in sport were juggling sport and education. The athlete further shared that sport also provided an opportunity to refresh from schoolwork and come rejuvenated.

The challenge with me would be juggling sport and education. It proved to be very difficult because sometimes I would miss classes and exams. I would miss out on a lot of content and when I come back, I have to really work hard to cover up. In a way, I would benefit because I would have refreshed and study well. That was a big challenge. Sometimes I would not attend international camps because I was a doing school work. But it did not stop me from working hard to achieving results. The university and my coach were very supportive.

It is therefore very important for athletes to have career guidance and academic support during their career in sport and school. Athletes inability to balance school and sport may

pose some challenges leading to athletes being dropped from university or choosing sport over education.

4.2.5 Summary: Balancing Sport and Other Careers

The theme of dual career revealed that even though balancing sport with other career such as school and employment is a challenge to a lot of athletes, it is important in facilitating long-term post sport career transition and adaptation. Completing university education accorded athletes the opportunity to further their studies and also seek employment in a variety of disciplines such as teaching, finance, and marketing depending on their university degrees.

4.3 Results by Secondary Objectives

The secondary objective of this dissertation was to establish the role of the entourage on elite athletes' retirement transition and also make cross-national comparisons, looking specifically at budgets, population size, and sport organizational structure. In addition, this section provides general results on factors that facilitate elite athletes' involvement in sport observed in Southern Africa. Table 4 provides athletes and entourages that were interviewed in this dissertation. A sub-objective was to examine the availability of retirement transition for elite athletes in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Table 4: Athletes and Entourage Members Interviewed

Athlete	Gender	Marital status	Sport	Entourage members interviewed
Jocy	F	Married	Swimming	Parent and coach
Julie	F	Single	F-Hockey	Coach
Missy	F	Single	F-hockey	Parent and coach
Helder	M	Married	Rowing	Parent
Brad	M	Single	Biking	Spouse
David	M	Divorced	Athletics	-
Anne	F	Single	Rowing	-
Nick	M	Married	Triathlon	Parent, spouse, coach and sponsor
Bill	M	Married	Athletics	-
Mmoloki	M	Single	Athletics	Coach
Joe	M	Married	Cross country	-
Daniel	M	Married	Athletics	Coach, spouse, and family focus group (father, mother, 3 siblings)
Trice	M	Married	Athletics	Spouse
Ellis	M	Single	Boxing	Parent and coach
Thato	M	Married	Boxing	Spouse, coach, and parent
Mod	M	Married	Gymnastics	-
Thabo	F	Married	Swimming	Spouse, parent and 2 coaches
Federation officials		Botswana -3	Namibia-1	South Africa -1 Zimbabwe-1
Total entourage members				35

4.3.1 Major theme # 4: Social and Financial Support. This dissertation observed that in addition to having university education, entourages played a crucial role in facilitating athletes' retirement transition. Financial and social support from family (i.e., spouse and parents) and other entourage members (i.e., coach and federations) played a crucial role in facilitative retirement from competitive sport. As presented in previous chapters, Athletes shared with the researcher that they did not have any retirement transition services from federations and or their respective governments.

Research (Beer & Pretorius, 2011; Côté, 1999; Gould et al., 2006) on parental involvement and other members of the entourage suggests that different members of the entourage play different roles at different stages in athletes' careers in sport. This dissertation (see Table 5 and 6) observed that parents and teachers play a crucial role in supporting athletes at the beginning of their careers while the federations and the coach were observed to play a profound role at senior and late stage in athletes careers. Table 5 presents elite athletes entourage profiles across the four stages in athletes' careers.

Table 5: Athletes Entourage Profiles

Age	11	14	18	33
	<i>Start</i>	<i>Junior</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Retirement</i>
	Teacher	Coach	Coach	Family
	Parents	Teacher	Federation	Coach
	Siblings	Parents	Parents	Federation
	Ext family	Federation	Friends	Friends

Members of the entourage that were introduced for the first time in the literature particularly in Southern Africa include the role played by spouses, federations, schools

and extended family members. It is not surprising that schools play a crucial role at the beginning of athlete career in sport given sport programs in school across different African countries. The next paragraph and table (table 6) provides more details on the role of the entourage particularly school and parental involvement in the early years of athletes careers in sport and the role of spouses and coaches during retirement transition.

Table 6: Summary of Athlete Stages and Raw Data

Athlete Phases	<i>M age</i>	Raw data
<i>Start</i>	11	
School		I took part in sports because there was sport at school My parents gave us the opportunity to play sport right from the start.
School		Sport is a general requirement in Zimbabwean school
<i>Junior</i>	14	
Parents		My parents were supporting me because I was also getting an education In terms of support, my high school coaches were the ones that used to push me.
Coach/Teacher		
<i>Senior</i>	18	
Federation		They provided the vehicle with which to develop They provided a good relationship with international sporting bodies Had a passionate athletics and swimming coach I got support especially from my coach
Coach		
<i>Retirement</i>	33	
Family		I had my family and my wife Probably my fiancée because she encouraged me a lot but sometimes she would just say, “ go ahead and get a job and start working”.
Federation		They gave me a really great send off and felt being appreciated; it made me feel great about the transition and the position I was taking.

Playing a variety of sports before specialization provides youth athletes with a wide base of movement skills before they specialize in the sport of their choice. School systems in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe provided athletes with the opportunity to play structured sport at the beginning of their careers in sport. Participant # 11, an athlete from Zimbabwe who was introduced to swimming by his parents and had a lot of support from his parents explained to the researcher that the Zimbabwean school system

accorded him and others the opportunity to play a variety of sports before specializing in his sport of choice.

Growing up in Zimbabwe school system, you go through a lot of sports. Some afternoons in winter you have to play rugby and hockey, which I did. I was also a competitive swimmer. I was a captain in both junior and senior school. I did cross-country running in junior school and I loved it. Even in senior school up until my third year in senior school I still played rugby and hockey. I stopped rugby and hockey because I was focusing more on (sport).

Parental involvement is crucial in supporting athletes in their career in sport from the beginning to retirement. Participant # 16 from Namibia shared with the researcher that her parents gave her the freedom to make decisions on her practice sessions. Her parents did not force her to attend practice sessions if she didn't want to attend.

They were always there, but there wasn't pressure from their side for me to do anything I did not like or didn't enjoy. It was more of a supporting structure than anything else. If I didn't want to go to the training session they said, "then don't go, stay at home". But I went anyways. They respected decisions of what I wanted to do. When we had training camps they made arrangements that we could be there. They were more in the background more than anything else, but for me it was an absolute foundation.

Consistent with Participant #16 comments, Participant #2 from Botswana indicated that her parents introduced her to swimming and went further to share that her parents enrolled her to a club. Participant #2 also acknowledged that the school organized competitions that accorded her the opportunity to compete with other students.

My family, I was taught swimming as a life skill at that age. At that age we did a few little competitions at school. It came around then that I actually had talent because I was winning races. At about ten years old my parents took me to a club and that's when it started. Basically it was my parents and

coach that really got me involved and I was talented and I shouldn't throw it away.

Participant # 11 from Zimbabwe also shared with the researcher the role-played by his parents created a family environment that accorded him and his brother to play a variety of sports.

It was definitely my parents. I was very fortunate to have my family. I have 2 brothers, my older brother played cricket, I did swimming and rugby, and my younger brother also did swimming and water polo. My parents were very passionate in making sport a part of our lives. So they did give us the means to do that. So growing up in Zimbabwe, it was definitely my parents who gave us the opportunity to do that, right from the start.

In addition to parental and school support at the beginning of athletes careers, it was evident in the data analysis that close entourages such as parents, siblings, and spouses availed themselves to spend time with athletes during retirement transition. Entourages and athlete participants shared with the researcher during the interview process that in addition to financial and social support, engaging in multiple roles (having a life partner) and activities (continued active life style) and spending time with family kept athletes engaged in something meaningful. Spouses of retired athletes shared with the researcher that retirement from an elite sport was an opportunity for their life partners to focus their energy on their relationship. Participant # 11's spouse shared her experiences and ideas on the role she played in her husband's retirement transition as well as providing some positive outcomes after retirement.

Obviously it's been quite a change but I think it helps if you're proactive with other activities. For example, now we can go to the gym and it's not this athlete who runs 3 minutes a K and his wife who is running 5 and half minutes a K. Now we can do things together you can stay active in a different way. For example, (name) and I do a lot off road and obstacle courses so we race

together almost every weekend. He may do 18 K and ill do the 12 K but we go together and we do different things so we are still keeping active. So I think instead of putting all that energy into himself and his progress we now put that energy into our progress and us together. So I think that helps, we put a diary together of things to keep us active which is fantastic and that's been key to the transition.

Participant # 5's spouse also shared similar sentiments with the researcher that in addition to providing financial support the family, she provided social support to her husband during retirement transition.

I had a job so I made sure that we had food all the time. What my son and I also did was to make him understand that the best thing he can do to "survive" (deal with retirement) is to focus on his family and most importantly start training our son; he was around seven years at the time of his (participant # 5) retirement. We also made him realize that there are a lot of young athletes he can help develop to the level he did.

In addition to the role played by the entourage in providing social support, Participant # 11 from Zimbabwe shared with the researcher that even though there are no retirement transition services, he felt recognized and appreciated by his federation when they staged a send off ceremony in for his retirement.

There isn't really any support for anyone who retires, but the (federation name) really went out of their way to give me a really good send off in my final (sport). They awarded me with a gift of an awards function in my name. So they gave me a really great emotional thanks and an emotional send off. I also had a full time job that I could get into. I was working part time for (Company name) and it was a stepping-stone into something else. My fiancée and I already had a wedding planned for December. It was all these factors.

Participant #11 provides evidence that even though there were no retirement transition services, recognitions from the federation, having a job, and a life factors were crucial in supporting his retirement transition. Table 7 presents the number of athletes who were

married, single and those that were divorced during data collection. Only six athletes were single and one divorced.

Table 7: Athletes' Marital status by Country

<i>Country</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Divorced/separated</i>	<i>Single</i>
Botswana	7	5		2
South Africa	4	1	1	2
Zimbabwe	4	3		1
Namibia	2	1		1
Total	17	10	1	6

It should be noted however that even though parents provided social support to elite athletes' retirement transition, some athletes ($n=8$ -Botswana-6, Zimbabwe- 1, and South Africa-1) shared with the researcher that their parents were less involved at the beginning of their careers in sport. When Participant #3 was asked about his parental involvement, he explained that his parents were not forth coming in supporting his career in sport particularly at the beginning. His parents were not against his participation in sport, but they were mostly concerned about his schoolwork.

My parents didn't care much about what I did except my school. They saw sport as part of playing. They were not against it, but they were not coming forward to provide some specific support towards sports. I will chat with my father and he would say, "I hear you fight people and you are so tiny. They will kill you."

Consistent with Participant #3's experiences with lack of parental involvement at the beginning of his career in sport, Participant #10 from Zimbabwe shared similar sentiments and made generalizations in Africa, parents are more concerned about school and fear that sport may temper with progress in school.

You know in Africa, our parents normally want you to concentrate in your schoolwork first and after that you can do sport. They think that sport is playing. My parents thought that I was playing and I wasn't concentrating on my schoolwork. They were worried that maybe I was going to fail in school.

It is important to note that for both Participant #3 and Participant 10, their parents may have considered sport as part of play not a profession that can be undertaken for a career. Parents confirmed during the interview process that their primary concern was for their children to get the education they need from school.

Consistent with Participants #3 and 10's comments, past research (Chappell, 2004; Maletse, 2006) in Southern Africa shows that Batswana (People of Botswana) and some cultures in Southern Africa may view sport as mainly play for fun and enjoyment. For example, in Setswana (language for Tswana speaking ethnic groups in Southern Africa), the term sport is loosely translated as *tshameka*, which means play that is not serious and that cannot be considered for anything serious. This may have an influence in the parents perception of playing sports as waste time and not engaging in something serious with their lives. In *Ikalanga*, (another language in Southern Africa) sport is also loosely translated as *zana*, which means playing and the word can be used to refer to someone who is not serious with whatever they are doing. It is worth noting that the use of such words implication may only be applicable in Southern Africa and may not make sense to other culture. The researcher used these examples to provide more context and understanding of parental involvement to athletes in Southern Africa. A federation official from Botswana affirmed that entourage involvement varies, but parents are the least engaged in their kids' sport.

That's absolutely right, the level of engagement varies from the involvement of teachers, spouses to parents. I easily agree with them because their parents are the least engaged. Here in the (Federation name), we would like to see a change in that for greater parent involvement because in our view the greater parental involvement the better the athlete does.

In cases where parents were not highly involved in supporting their children at the beginning of their careers, teachers played a crucial role in supporting athletes by providing them with resources to play sport even outside school. Participant # 3 from Botswana explained to the researcher that his teacher/coach supported him financially at the beginning of his career in sport. He shared with the researcher that his teacher/coach bought him his first ticket to Europe to compete in professional sport. The relationship that Participant # 5 had with his teacher/coach properly fits the description of a parent-child relationship, even though they are not biologically related. Teachers in several schools played a parental role once they identified a talented athlete with the potential to succeed in professional sport. Participant # 5's teacher/coach provided him with sport gear, running shoes and supplements as well as transport to competitions even those outside the school calendar.

He bought me shoes. If you remember very well, I use to run barefooted. He introduced me to spikes, bought me trainers and supplements. There is nobody who can do that for you. He also drove me to competitions.

Research (Carron, 1978; Forde, McMahon, Gronn, & Martin, 2013; Gilbert & Trudel, 2004) in sport psychology on coach-athletes relationship indicate that coach's role goes beyond the technical and tactical instruction in the field. Coaches are considered parents and mentors to athletes.

4.3.2 Summary: Social and Financial Support

It was clear across the three phases of data collection that different entourage members played different roles in athletes' careers in sport. Parents and schools were crucial at the beginning of athletes' careers in sport but federation and spouses were more profound at the end of athlete's careers in sport. In addition to providing social support, spouses also provided financial support to athletes that did not have jobs during retirement. Spending time with family and engaging in a variety of activities were observed to also play a crucial role in facilitating retirement. There were no available retirement transitions services for retired athletes.

4.4 Comparisons Across Countries

Even though there may be cultural similarities between South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe, the South African economy, population size and infrastructural development gives South Africa an edge to compete with industrialized nations such as the United States, Germany and Russia. Even though the researcher was able to find the South Africa annual sport budget, SASCOC's budget for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympic games is estimated to about R400 million (about \$37, 710, 912), which is by far less than Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe budgets. For example, Botswana National Sport Council Olympic games budget is small given that they send about four athletes on average to the Olympic games. Botswana National Sport Council 2013/2014 budget was P71, 158,990 (\$810,469.26), which is smaller compared to the South Africa budget for the 2016 Olympic games.

Botswana National Sports Council is responsible for reviewing and coordinating National Sports Association budgets and distributing the government grants to the 34

associations and Botswana National Olympic Committee. Even though the researcher could not find sport budgets for Namibia and Zimbabwe, the nations' GDPs indicate that they have lower gross income compared to Botswana and South Africa. As presented in chapter 1, The 2010 FIFA World Cup budget was R15 billion (\$2bn) with R8.4 billion (\$1.1bn) spent in building five new stadiums and upgrading existing facilities, while R6.4bn (\$800m) was invested in public transport initiatives and supporting infrastructure ("S Africa unveils World Cup budget," 2006). South Africa was the first country in Southern Africa to have the capacity to host the football world cup. South Africa has the second largest economy in Africa while Botswana ranked 18th, Namibia in the 25th spot and lastly Zimbabwe ranked 31 ("Top 12 Largest And Strongest African Economies," n.d.).

4.5 Minor Themes by Primary and Secondary Objectives

Minor themes observed in the study-included patriotism, entitlement, federation politics, and race related politics. Athletes shared with the researcher that, even though there were no services for retired athletes, it brought a sense of patriotism, pride, and love for their countries. Athletes used words such as "ambassador" to refer to representing their countries at international competitions. Athletes and entourage their entourages consistently used the politics to refer to some ways in which athletes used to navigate federation experiences. Participants consistently mentioned that federation officials were insecure that athletes would take the officials' positions upon the athletes' retirement from competitive sport. The theme of race and politics came up only in South African athletes. Three retired athletes shared with the researcher that they were unfairly judged

because they were black. Athletes also shared that they had to work harder to impress their white coaches in order to be in the team.

4.5.1 Athlete Patriotism. Data analysis indicated that athletes exemplified patriotism and expressed love for their countries in many ways. During the interview process, athletes talked passionately about their countries and what should be done to improve sport in their respective countries. They consistently suggested that their countries should emulate industrialized countries and also implement the long-term athlete development models implemented in Canada. The researcher learned that athletes felt entitled to be supported because they represented their countries abroad. They used the word “ambassador” in reference to representing their countries abroad. Participant # 5 from Botswana suggested that the government should have a plan for retiring athletes.

Let me use this analogy for you. Parents of kids in pre-schools already know which primary schools they will send their kids but here in Botswana it's something else. You have to represent your country and when you are done, there is nothing for you.

4.5.2 Lack of Retirement Transition Programs and Federation Politics.

All the four countries studied did not have retirement transition programs or post-sport career training programs for elite athletes. Athletes could join federations and or chose to coach after their elite career. Federations also employed some athletes, particularly those who had tertiary education.

In some cases, athletes and their entourages shared that federation politics impacted their participation in Sport. For example, three participants raised concerns that they had problems with federation officials during their elite career in sport. Such problems included athlete choice of the coach, funding from the federations, clearance to

compete internationally and qualification rules interpretation. For example, some athletes shared that federation officials did not provide enough support but expected athletes to contribute 10% of their earnings to the federation coffers. Participant # 10 shared with the researcher his experiences with his federation.

I have to be honest that there was the problem in my federation. There was friction in my federation. Some of them were power-hungry and jealous. That was the problem with my federation. They thought maybe if you became successful you take over the positions of the management of the federation, so at times we used to have some friction. At times, they wanted about 10% of our earnings for nothing. I was sponsored by (two sponsor names), so they used to fly me to different competitions. The federation didn't give me enough support. If the federation had supported me, I would've achieved a lot. I used to miss some of the competitions because my federation failed to buy me flight tickets.

4.5.3 Bias and Racism. South African black athletes shared that white coaches treated them unfairly. Athlete participants from South Africa shared that they were subjected to more scrutiny than their white teammates. For Example, Participant # 15 consistently mentioned that the quota system in South African (sport) team during her time subjected her and other black players to stereotypes that they did not earn to be in the team but were brought in to meet the minimum number required by the policy. The quota system in South Africa was implement to encourage black South Africans in sports such as rugby and cricket continues to be discussed in South African media. Participant # 15 shared her experience watching men (sport) with the researcher.

I have sat in the stands watching the men (sport) team player in RSA and players will go on and off the field and a non-white player will make a mistake and you could hear this murmur around the stands. I know its not everybody but if the player makes the same mistake and they would be like haahaaa a “quota player”. Not ever thinking that this guy is having a bad day today. A white player would make mistakes all the time but they won't

see it that way, they will say John is off today.

It should be noted that the quota system and representation of black athletes is currently being discussed in South African media to increase participation of black athletes in sport such as hockey, rugby and swimming.

Chapter 5: GENERAL DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this dissertation was to investigate elite athletes' retirement transition experiences including its psychological impacts and post-sport career adaptation. The secondary objective was to establish an in-depth account of the role of the entourage on elite athletes' retirement transition. Lastly, the dissertation makes cross-national comparisons, looking specifically at budgets, population size and sport organizational structure impacts on sport development.

To address the objectives stated above, this dissertation used a grounded theory research approach and development the to post-sport career adaptation model (figure 4). The grounded theory approach was chosen to explore the experiences of retired elite athletes and their entourage members because it accords the researcher the opportunity to generate theory rather than impose theory on the data. The study observed three major themes in the primary objective (*type of retirement, dual-career, and challenges*) as crucial in elite athletes' retirement transition and post-sport career and two major themes (*social and financial support*) in the secondary objectives. Brief summaries of major findings are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The first major theme of *type of retirement* was derived from interviews with athletes and entourages to explain reasons for retirement and post sport career adaptation. Sub-themes observed under type of retirement were *voluntary* and *involuntary*. The second major theme observed in the study was *dual-career*. This finding reflected the athletes' balance between school and sport as primary in preparing for a post-sport career transition and adaptation. Sub-themes observed under the major theme dual-career were *graduating from university, full-time job during one's career in sport* and *part-time job*

during one's career in sport. The last major theme observed in the study was *challenges*. It was clear from the respondents that athletes faced challenges including lack of financial resources to maintaining an elite sport career and support during retirement transition. Sub-themes observed under the major theme of challenges were *financial resources, lack of trained coaches, lack of facilities, and lack trained medical personnel*. Consistent with literature on retirement transition, the study observed that athletes' experiences in elite sport are crucial in explaining not only their retirement transition, but also their post-sport career adaptation. The three key findings from this dissertation are that there is a need to balance school and sport, it is important for federations and other major stakeholders to provide services for athletes in retirement transition and lastly, athletes should be provided with medical care to help them deal with injuries. Even though there are some reports ("Retiring Olympic Athletes May be at Risk of Substance Abuse, Studies Suggest," 2012) that some athletes in retirement transition may fail to adapt into the community and resort to drugs, this dissertation did not observed any maladaptation to that level in Southern Africa. Athletes who did not have jobs made an attempt to find employment and seek support from entourage members to adapt to the community.

Results from primary objectives of this study are discussed within Wylleman and Lavelle's (2004) Lifespan Model of Athlete Development and Taylor and Ogilvie (1994)'s Conceptual Model of Adaptation to Career Transition. The primary reason for choosing these models to guide primary objectives results is that they incorporates transitions and experiences occurring in the athletic domain as well as those occurring in

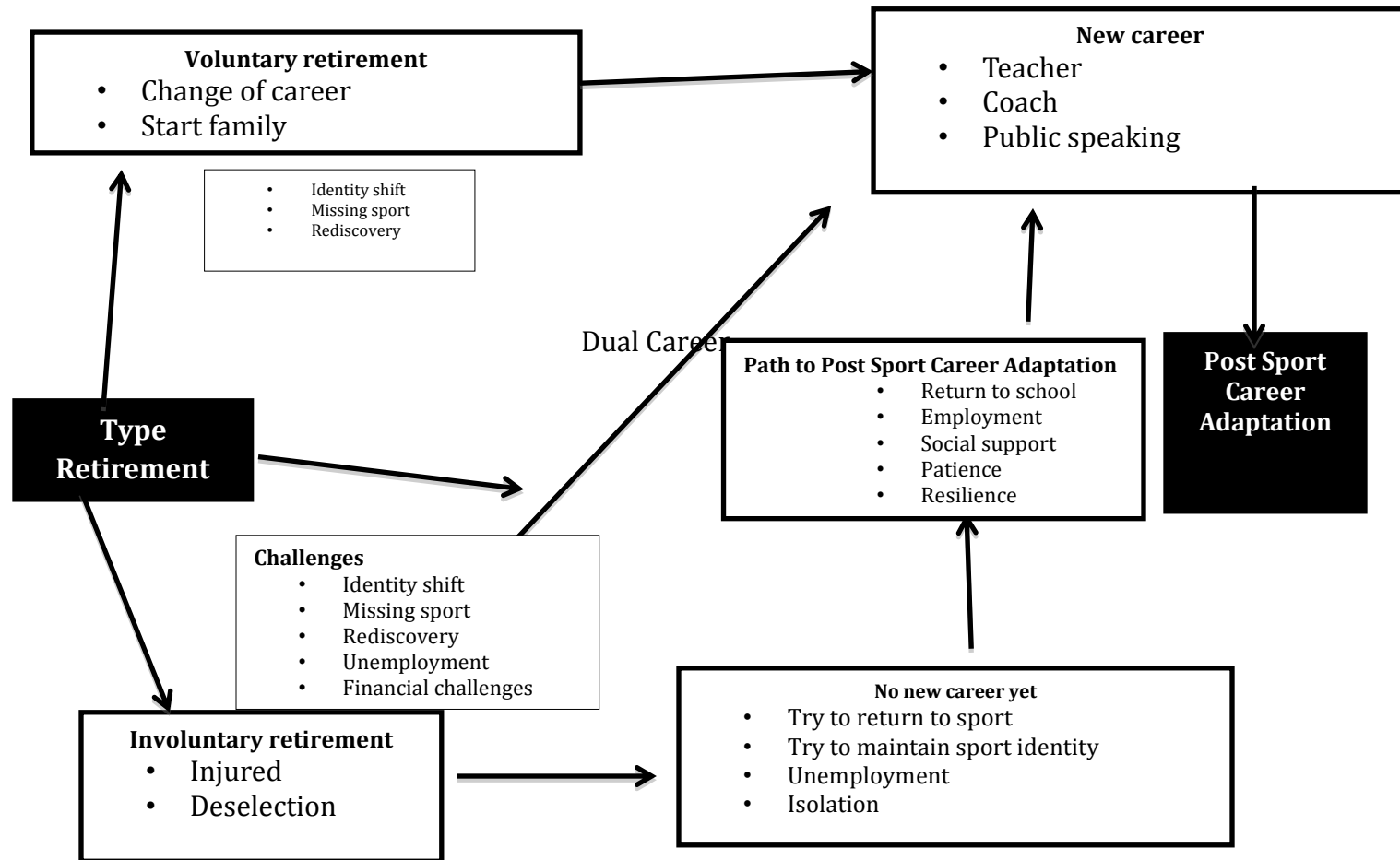
other domains of athletes' lives. In order to understand elite athletes' career paths, it is crucial to take into account developmental transitions occurring outside sport, such as athlete psychological, vocational/academic, and psychosocial development (Wylleman et al., 2004).

Results from this dissertation extend theory and the understanding of elite athletes particularly on the role of the entourage on retirement transition. For example, the Lifespan Model of Athlete does not have federation and teachers as entourage members in athletes' careers but this dissertation observed that in cases where parents are not fully involved in their kids' participation in sport, the federation and school played a crucial role making sure that kids have access to playing sport. The Lifespan Model does not take into account the role played by extended family members, but discusses the role played by close family members. Results from this dissertation are able to extend the Lifespan Model to include extended family members and other members of the entourage as presented in Table 5.

Results from this dissertation were consistent with the Conceptual Model of Adaptation to Career Transition. Consistent with the model (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994), causal factors that initiate the retirement process (i.e., age, injury, and free choice) were crucial in explaining athletes retirement transition. Depending on the cause of withdrawal from competitive sport, developmental experiences and tertiary contributors either facilitated retirement or because a challenge for the athlete to overcome. For example, involuntary retirees made an attempt to return to sport but eventually retired. There were no available resources/services for retired athletes, which created a deficit in athlete's retirement transition, particularly in those that did not have university education to be

immediately employed. The resources required (i.e., social and financial support) for coping with retirement are crucial for athletes. Research (Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999; Wylleman et al., 2004) demonstrates that members of the entourage (i.e., family, peers, and coaches) provide needed support during athlete development and retirement.

Figure 4: Paths to Post-Sport Career Adaptation



The Path to Post-Sport Career Model was developed through the grounded theory approach using major theoretical constructs observed in this dissertation. Major themes in the model include circumstances surrounding retirement (type of retirement), dual career, challenges, support from entourages and athletes' ability to find paths to post sport career adaptation. It should be noted that involuntary retirees who did not have university education were immediately looking for jobs to support their families after retirement. Even though some of them were not satisfied with their new jobs, athletes preferred to have jobs than roam the streets. Athletes shared with the researcher as presented in this chapter that supporting their families was a priority. Given unemployment rate of about 60% in Zimbabwe, 37% in Namibia, 25% in South Africa and 17% in Botswana, athletes may not necessarily have a choice in selecting jobs and seeking for satisfaction. A further discussion of the major themes is presented in the following paragraphs.

5.1 Dual Career: Balancing Sport with Another Career Outside Sport

Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) explain that even though athletic factors (e.g., achievement in sport) have a significant influence in athletes' within-career transition as well as retirement transition; there are a lot of factors occurring outside sport (e.g., athletes' education, and social support) that impact within-career transition, retirement transition, and post-sport career life. The current study observed that graduating from university, and part-time and fulltime employment positively facilitated retirement transition. Results from this study demonstrated that athletes use dual-careers (job/education and elite sport) to prepare for a post-sport career. Pre-retirement planning has been found to broadly and positively influence retirement transition (Coakley, 1983;

Schlossberg, 1981; Yeung, 2013). Results from this finding are consistent with Cecić Erpič, Wylleman, and Zupančič (2004) who observed that quality of sport career termination process depends on the voluntariness of career termination, participant's subjective evaluation of athletic achievements, education status and the occurrence of the negative non-athletic transitions.

One of the primary challenges faced by most elite athletes and their entourage (e.g., parents, coaches, teammates, and federations) is the ability to manage the elite athlete's intense exclusive focus in sports and still build resilience and capacity to meet the many transitions and demands required in both elite performance and life (Anderson, 2009). Even though at least 10 athletes in this study had university education, the conflict of sport and school was evident in athletes' careers particularly in the early stages of their careers in sport. There is no doubt that governments, sports federations, sports clubs, and sponsors have put pressure on athletes to excel at the international level more than ever in the history of sports while most universities adhere to high academic standards for their students, regardless of their athletic status. Pressure to succeed in sport and exclusive focus may lead to athletes dropping out of school to focus in sport. Some of the factors observed in research (Fong, Lin, & Chi, 2003; Lang, 1988; Whitley, 1999) that play a crucial role in influencing student-athletes to dropping out of school to play sport include secondary school grades, repeating a year in school, feelings towards school, and mother's education.

This study observed that athletes perceived graduating from college as a positive way to prepare for a post sport career. This finding is consistent with most literature on retirement transition. Even though dual career is a challenge to a lot of athletes, it is

associated with positive athletic retirement transition because athletes move from one career to another instantly (Borggreve & Cachay, 2012; Corrado et al., 2012).

Research (Aquilina, 2013; Grove, Lavalley, & Gordon, 1997; Park, Tod, & Lavalley, 2012) further demonstrated the need for elite athletes to have a 'dual career' and/or long term athlete development to prepare for a post-athletic career while still participating in elite sport. For example, the United States Olympic Committee has arrangement with some of American universities to offer online classes to athlete. This is an approach that African universities can take. Instead of offering online classes, they can offer part-time classes and provide more flexible time for athletes. Professional sport is one of the shortest careers that one can undertake; most competitive athletes retire at a young age, which requires athletes to redefine their sense of self and social identity (Baker, Koz, Kungl, Fraser-Thomas, & Schorer, 2013; Witnauer, Rogers, & Saint Onge, 2007). In the United States college sport, approximately 1% of collegiate athletes become professionals' athletes, and the average professional sports career lasts around 3.5 years (Beamon, 2010). The athlete and entourage members have to find an alternative career path that would last beyond playing in professional leagues. In addition to education, it is known that sports might offer alternative career paths and relief athletes and their families from poverty.

Athletes can be encouraged to save and invest their money in the early years of their career. In the west, dual-career is viewed as a valuable tool for promoting an important contribution to the development of policy actions in the area of sport and education (Corrado et al., 2012). International organizations such as the European Commission (EC) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) have also taken

interest in this approach. The European Commission acknowledged the importance of dual career (balancing school and sport) for young elite athletes by promoting policies that promotes good physical and psychological health(Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2014). These policies are made to ensure the reintegration of professional sportspersons into the labor market at the end of their sporting careers. The International Olympic Committee runs a program that guides Olympic athletes into education with the goal of a better postretirement life. It is therefore crucial for federations and governments to support athletes to find balance between school and sports. Research (Borggreffe & Cachay, 2012; Corrado et al., 2012; Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2014) demonstrates that dual career maximize athletes' contributions to society by building on the capabilities athletes have developed during their athletic careers. Athletes who succeed in sport and other careers are great role models to young athletes who may aspire to be play sport professionally.

5.2 Elite Athletes' Challenges in Elite Sport and Post-Sport Career

In addition to lack of retirement transition programs, data analysis indicated that elite athletes faced challenges that include lack of financial resources to compete and remain at the top of their elite career in sport. Athletes also experienced injuries that required specialized trained to work with athletes. Reasons for retirement among some of the involuntary retirees were either due to injuries, deselection and or failure to qualify. Some voluntary retirees shared that they did not have financial support to continue with the sport and opted for retirement from competitive sport.

Challenges experienced by athletes in several African countries are a subject of discussion in the literature. Some studies have looked at barriers of participation in sport

(Amusa, Toriola, Onyewadume, & Dhaliwal, 2008), challenges faced by elite athletes in high performance centers (Gizaw, 2014), and challenges faced by student-athletes navigating school and sport simultaneously (Burnett, Peters, & Ngwenya, 2010). Consistent with challenges observed in this study, studies (Amusa et al., 2008; Burnett et al., 2010) carried out in Southern Africa affirm that low socio-economic status, socio-cultural factors, facility inaccessibility, and lack of student-athletes support were primary barriers of athletes in developing countries. Amusa and colleagues suggest that planning and delivering sport and recreation services as well as implementing intervention programs are crucial for communities in Botswana. In a study that looked at student-athletes needs in South Africa, Burnett and colleagues observed that student-athletes came from relatively impoverished backgrounds and that they needed tutoring and more flexibility in completing assignments. Authors also depicted that student-athletes expressed a need for medical coverage and professional rehabilitation services due to constant injuries that comes with training and competing in elite sport.

Sport-related injuries were perceived as the biggest threat to the continuation of a sporting career, and, despite being socialized into accepting and even competing with minor injuries, athletes perceived that injuries remained a real threat to their careers (Burnett et al., 2010). Gizaw (2014) suggest that limited role of the community in sports, the decline of sports in schools, shortage of sports facilities, sportswear and equipment, as well as the lack of trained personnel are some of the challenges faced by elite athletes in high performance centers. African federations should market their athletes more for sponsorship to generate more revenues. In addition, it is important for federations to

understand their athletes value when they seen sponsorship. Africa has retired legends in a lot of sports that can be used to market and generate funding for African federations.

5.3 Entourage Support and Type of Retirement

Sport psychology research (Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999; Debois et al., 2012; Wylleman et al., 2004) demonstrates that elite athletes' career in sports can be organized into four main stages from the initiation, development, mastery, and discontinuation. Even though this dissertation focuses primarily on retirement transition, athletes' experiences at earlier stages likely impact athletes' retirement transition. One of the primary differences observed in this study and the previous literature is the types of challenges that athletes face in their careers in sport. For example, athletes in the industrialized nations, particularly middle class families may face challenges of parental over-involvement (Heinzmann, 2002; O'Rourke, Smith, Smoll, & Cumming, 2011) while athletes in Southern Africa may perceive lower parental involvement (Chappell, 2004; Malete, 2006). Athlete participants in this study did not always expect parental involvement and in some cases, parents had never travelled to watch their kids compete. In middle class industrialized nations, it is almost expected that parents will travel to watch their kids.

Elite athletes' career stages (i.e., initiation, development, mastery and discontinuation) are discussed in the literature showing that athletes continuously advanced from one stage to another in their career in sport. The role played by different institutions varied by stage. For example, in this study, athletes related most of their early careers to the role played by schools and parents with no or minimal mention of the federation. It was clear from the data analysis that athletes were dependent on financial

and social support from the school to play sport at the early stages of their careers. Even though parental involvement varied, school programs had resources to accord athletes the opportunity to play a variety of sports throughout the year. Horn (2008) depicts that the sport involvement of children takes place in a social context. Parents, peers, and siblings can strongly influence the psychological outcomes of this involvement. In the context of Southern Africa, even though parental involvement varied, school sport programs provided an environment that supported children's participation in sport. Shehu and Akpata (2008) explained that teachers in many schools in Southern Africa volunteer, and it is also part of a lot of teachers' jobs to coach, be umpires, and organize intra- and extra-mural sport events. As a result, teachers in most African countries are not only in a position to widen youth sport participation but to inspire life-long physical activity and encourage attainment of self-directed sport aspirations. Malete (2006) affirms this statement, given the cultural context and perception in Botswana. It is therefore likely that young athletes may perceive lower parental support than their counterparts from industrialized nations. However, because teachers were found to play such a central role providing them with information about developing athletes on and off the field might be particularly important.

Athletes used age, and level of performance to indicate progression from just playing for their schools to a national junior and or senior nation team. For example, athletes consistently mentioned qualifying for the "under 21" world junior championships or joining the senior national team and the role-played by the federation to give them access to international competitions such as the Olympics. At the elite stage, participants also shared with the researcher that they started earning income that showed that they had

advanced to a stage of independence. Transition from junior to senior stage and experiences within each stage posed within-career transitions that athletes coped with advance to a higher stage. For example, an athlete may make the youth Olympic team but fail to advance to senior Olympic team. Stambulova (2000) depicts that within-career transitions can be normative (expected), or non-normative (unexpected). Research in sport and other careers (Cabello Bonilla, 2012; Kosugi, 2012) demonstrated that within-career transitions are common among young athletes as well as young employees that just joined their professional field.

Normative and non-normative transitions observed in the study were consistent with studies that have looked at within-career transition (Lorenzo, Borrás, Sánchez, Jiménez, & Sampedro, 2009; Stambulova, Franck, & Weibull, 2012; Wylleman et al., 2004). Normative transitions were determined by age (e.g., qualifying for the Olympic games or qualifying for “U21-team”) and in contrast, non-normative transitions were unpredictable experiences (e.g., injury and de-selection leading to retirement) that athletes coped with in their athletic career. Data analysis showed that involuntary retirement due to cutting, injury, and failing to qualify for major games was associated with non-normative transition. Athletes had expected to continue with their sport but rather got injured and ended their career.

Reaching and staying at the top in elite sport requires the need to train more intensively (e.g., increased physical and psychological commitment) as well as cope with higher competitive levels (Wylleman et al., 2004). The model of human adaptation to transition, Schlossberg et al. (1995) suggests four primary fundamentals of managing transition. Schlossberg and colleagues identified personal control over the transition, self-

efficacy in dealing with the transition, availability of social support during transition, and the individual's coping strategies as crucial in understanding and explaining one's ability to cope with transition. Wylleman and colleagues affirm that, a supportive psychological network (e.g., coach, family, peers), attention to injury prevention, and a gradual developmental athletic career may provide athletes with the possibilities to progress towards high-level competitive sport. The study observed significant challenges that will be discussed further in this chapter. Some of the challenges observed include lack of resources and specialized trained medical personnel. According to Stambulova and Alfermann (2009), the universal knowledge about "athletes in general" seems insufficient to explain the behavior of athletes' transition from different cultures. It is therefore crucial to incorporate not only culture but also transitions occurring outside sport (i.e., school) particularly in Southern Africa where there are no transition support services for athletes.

5.4 Summary: Entourage Support and Type of Retirement

Athletes began their athletic careers in school with the support of teachers and parents. The school system in Southern Africa accords athletes to play a variety of sports before specializing in their sport of choice. Different members of the entourage play different roles in athletes' careers. Federations expose athletes to international sports as well as provide developmental programs for junior teams. Graduating from high school and college is an important factor in preparing athletes for retirement transition as well facilitating retirement transition. Engaging in multiple roles during retirement also facilitated retirement transition such as continuing training as well as being married. Close entourage members such as spouses and parents spent time with athletes during

retirement transition. All athletes had full-time jobs during data collection and did not express financial insecurity. Promoting dual-career does not only prepare retirement transition, but also facilitates retirement transition because athletes engage in multiple activities and roles.

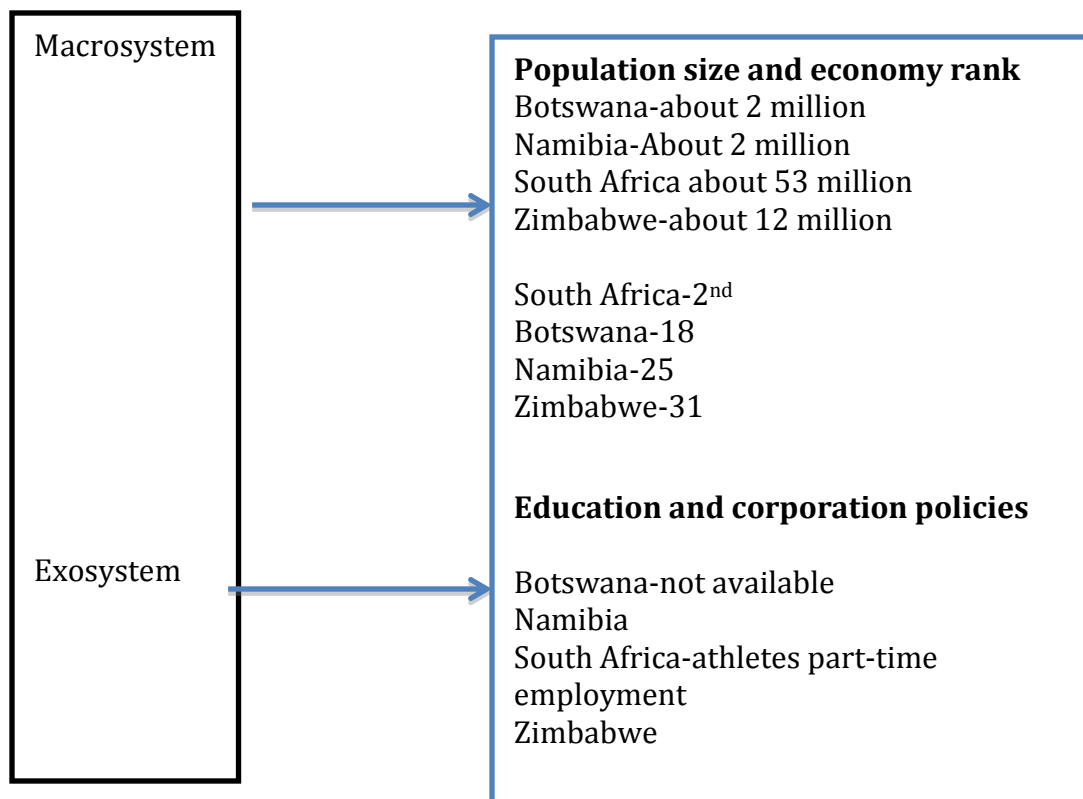
5.5 Comparisons Between Southern African Countries

Given the cross-national comparisons made in this dissertation, the Ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) was used to discuss comparisons across the four countries. The model takes into account the social context of human development as consisted of macro-social factors (laws, traditions, policies on level of society), and micro-systems (e.g., family, peers, schoolmates/teachers, teammates/coaches), in which a person is involved. This model has been used to make cross-national comparisons by past researchers including Stambulova and colleagues. For example, it was clear during the data analysis that South African athletes reflected some obvious macro social factors in their social environments such as population and economic size. Even though there were differences at macro-social level (i.e., population size, sports budgets, and structural sports system across the four counties), there were no major differences across the four countries at micro level (i.e., family). Even though South Africa is a developing country, it's economic size and the private sector accorded South African athletes part-time employment and sponsorship that were not available for athletes from Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. South Africa is the only country in South Africa that has hosted the FIFA world cup and has shown interest in hosting the Olympic games. There were more similarities between Botswana, Namibia and

Zimbabwe in sport structure than there are differences. National Olympic committees are responsible for elite sport while sports commissions and sports councils develop wide participation in sports. South Africa is the only country in the region that combined its federations in to confederation.

A lack of paid jobs and or support programs in sport available for former athletes and higher requirements to employees' educational level might more favorable to athletes with university education and less favorable to those without college education.

Figure 5: Cross-National Comparisons



As presented earlier in this dissertation, in all countries, retired athletes are not

provided with financial and or any organizational support programs except part-time employment and IOC career assistance program in South Africa. Sport systems in all the countries give athletes a free choice to decide about their termination from sports and about what to do afterwards. South African's large economy increases employment possibilities for elite athletes compared to the other economies of Namibia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Through these factors, together with an absence of financial support and or any special support programs for retired athletes, the sport systems places complete responsibility of the transition to the post-career on athletes themselves. Athletes and their entourages across the four countries are responsible for making their own retirement plans and decisions and decisions on ways to cope with retirement transition.

5.6 Southern African Context

Even though African communities have always played a variety of games including some form of football (soccer), the British colonials in the mid-1800s introduced organized football. The first documented game on the continent was played in South Africa in 1862, a year before soccer's official rules were codified(Alegi, 2006). Traditional games were primarily meant for recreation as well as for educational purposes but not as a form of employment. It is a historical fact that it took time for African communities to view sport as a form of employment and it is still in that transition phase.

Recent research (Chappell, 2004, 2005b; Maletle, 2006; Shehu & Akpata, 2008), carried out in Southern Africa including findings from this dissertation affirm that even though socioeconomic status may have an influence in parental involvement is kids participating in sport, culture plays a crucial role in explaining parental involvement. As presented earlier in previous chapters, the use of certain terms and the context in which

they are used perpetuates stereotypes on participation in sport including parental perceptions of participating in sport. Chappell (2004) affirms that the use of the term *tshameka* (loosely translated as play) may have an influence in parents' perception of playing sports as wasted time and not engaging in something serious with their lives.

5.7 Limitations

Readers are encouraged to exercise caution in drawing conclusions from theoretical constructs derived from this research and applying them in industrialized nations. Results from this research can only be applied to Southern Africa populations. Athletes who took part in this dissertation are exceptionally talented, hence their participation at the Olympic games. Results may not be applicable to amateur athletes and/or athletes who do not reach elite sport.

5.8 Potential Future Research Directions

Findings from this dissertation affirm that retirement from sport is a complex and multifaceted process, it is therefore important for future research to consider validating research tools on athletes' retirement and transition to post sport career. In addition to instruments, research that looks at athletes' retirement transition should be "holistic" to incorporate factors in sport and those occurring outside sport (Wylleman et al., 2004). Most studies that look at retirement transition trace athletes' retirement transition after they have retired. Future research should consider different research methods such as mixed methods and longitudinal research. Engaging in qualitative and quantitative research methods increases the validity of research findings and promotes greater understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The use of longitudinal research will

accord research to follow athletes' careers in sport to retirement. For example, even though this dissertation observed that all athletes were employed, it is important for future research to investigate further particularly on the type of jobs that retired athletes do. An investigation into the type of jobs that athletes do accords researchers to understand if retirement athletes are satisfied with their post-sport careers. A further look on the role of universities on student-athletes particularly in Southern Africa would provide more specific recommendations.

Consistent with research in sport psychology (Stambulova & Alfermann, 2009), future research should incorporate culture in the study of athletes' retirement transition. It was evident in the data analysis that cultural context is crucial in explaining athletes retirement transition.

5.9 Suggested Solutions for Elite Athletes' Career Assistance in Southern African Countries

Many countries around the world have, in the past 20 years, developed programs to help their retiring athletes. The Canadian Olympic Career Centre was created in 1985 to assist Canadian athletes with their careers after elite sports. This was one of the first programs for elite retired athletes in the world. The United States Olympic Committee Career Assistance Program followed in 1988 to give athletes the much needed assistance during their athletic career transitions (Pearson & Petitpas, 1990). The Athlete Career and Education (ACE) in Australia and the United Kingdom were established to provide elite athletes with career, education and personal development guidance. National Olympic Committees and federations in Africa should develop similar programs for their athletes so that retiring athletes can make better post-career transitions into life as productive members of their society. The next paragraph provide specific possible solutions

In conclusion, even though there are programs across Southern Africa that introduce athlete to sport, schools provide the most obvious platform for athletes. Teachers are already trained in different disciplines, it is therefore important to provide additional (e.g., life skills) to enhance their skills hence athlete development. The introduction of physical education in Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe provides training for coaches, teachers and students. This also accords schools the opportunity to build sport facilities, which are also used for sport. There is an urgent need for retirement transition programs for retired athletes. It was clear in the data analysis that that athletes should at least have a place to go if they needed help with going back to school and or seeking employment.

1. Provide additional training to teachers and coaches, particularly in primary and secondary schools. Based on the findings of this research, it is crucial for teachers to have adequate technical (sport skills) training as well also life skills (skills (e.g., decision making, team work, public speaking, leadership) training. Teachers and coaches ability to teach life skills accords athletes the opportunity to learn skills that are transferrable to post-sport career. Seminars, workshops and educational modules should be used to train teachers and coaches. Collaborative conferences attended by teachers, coaches and federations should be stages at least annually.
2. Federations introduce programs that attract parents to not only provide social and or financial support to their kids but also attend practice and competitions for their kids. Introducing incentive programs (i.e., best parent award) may encourage

parents to be involvement in their kids' sport. In some cases, parents trivialized their kid's participation in sport.

3. Provide tutoring service and more support for student-athletes. Flexible study times, coach-teacher interaction and mentorship for student-athletes until at least university level. Athletes who successfully balance school and sport are likely to have a better transition than athletes without university education.
 - a. Provide scholarship programs tailor-made for student-athletes unique challenges (e.g., longer university degree for athletes)
 - b. Provide scholarship programs for retired athletes (e.g., open scholarship for Olympians)
4. Introduce part-time employment/attachment for athletes (e.g., five hours a weeks).
Part-time employment accords athletes the opportunity to learn both soft skills (communication, creative thinking, work ethic, networking, problem solving and critical thinking) and hard skills relevant to their field of interest.
5. Provide vocational and professional occupation training for elite athletes, including vocational guidance, soliciting (e.g. resume', interview, curriculum vitae), knowledge of the job market, networking, and career advice.
6. Federations/governments provide relevant career transition training to athletes (through workshops, seminars and provision of pamphlets). Include topics such as, possible advantages of retirement, perceived and expected problems related to

retirement, physical/physiological aspects of retirement and decreased levels of athletic activity.

- a. Pre-retirement counseling
- b. Career planning/information on jobs and education opportunities
- c. Financial help/advice
- d. Readings on how other athletes have dealt with retirement
- e. Physiological and dietary detraining programme
- f. Seminars with other retired athletes

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Demographic Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain a comprehensive view of the factors that have been important in your athletic career from your development to retirement. This includes the role of your parents, coaches and federation to your development and preparation for retirement. The researcher will use the information you provide in this questionnaire to create an interview guide.

1. What was your main competitive sport?

- a) Swimming
- b) Track and Field
- c) Rowing
- d) Hockey

2. What is the highest level of competition you have participated at in your sport?

- a) Olympic Games
- b) World Championships
- c) World University Games
- d) Commonwealth Games
- e) All Africa Games
- f) African Championships

3. In your opinion, who do you think played the most important role in your achievements?

- a.
- b.
- c.

Lets now talk about your elite level. This is when you competed at the highest level in your athletic career. It includes competitions in Europe and other parts of the world. Example Africa Championships and the Olympics.

4. How old were you when you competed at elite level for the first time?

- a) 17-20
- b) 21-23
- c) 24- 27

5. In your opinion, who was your main source of support at this stage?

6. Please rank in order of importance the following people in terms of support and role they played during your ELITE years of sports.

- a) Parents
- b) Coach
- c) Federation
- d) Siblings
- e) Sponsor
- f) Agent
- g) Friends
- h) Extended Family

7. Did you ever think of retirement at this stage?

- a) Yes
- b) No

8. Indicate the amount of support you received from each of the following people during your ELITE athletic career.

	Very Small Support	Small Support	Average Support	Enough Support	A lot of Support
Parents					
Coach					
Federation					
Siblings					
Sponsor					
Agent					
Friends					
Extended Family					

Lets now talk about retirement from competitive sports. This is the stage when you did not continue to compete in sports.

9. How old were you when you retired?

- a) 20-25
- b) 26-30
- c) 31-36

10. Were you ready for retirement?

a) YES

b) NO

11. Who was there for you during retirement transition?

a) Parents

b) Coach

c) Federation

d) Siblings

e) Sponsor

f) Agent

g) Friends

h) Extended Family

12. Did you plan for your retirement?

a) YES

b) NO

13. Indicate the amount of support you received from each of the following people during your RETIREMENT transition.

	Very Small Support	Small Support	Average Support	Enough Support	A lot of Support
Parents					
Coach					
Federation					
Siblings					
Sponsor					
Agent					
Friends					
Extended Family					

14. Please rank in order of importance the following people in terms of support and role they played during your RETIREMENT transition.

a) Parents

b) Coach

c) Federation

d) Siblings

e) Sponsor

f) Agent

g) Friends

h) Extended Family

15. How long before your retirement did you start pre-retirement planning?

- a) 0-2 months
- b) 2-5 months
- c) 6-11 months
- d) 12 and more

16. Were any of the following services were provided to you in preparation for your retirement from elite competitive sport? (Tick all that apply).

- a) Pre-retirement counseling
- b) Financial advice/advice
- c) Career planning/information
- d) Readings on how other athletes have dealt with retirement
- e) Physiological and dietary detraining program
- f) Seminars with other retired athletes
- g) None
- h) Others (Specify)

17. Which of the following conditions were most difficult during transitioning out of competitive sport?

- a) Financial (changes in financial status, losing contacts, making new friends, etc.)
- b) Emotional (Feeling confusion, anger, depression, loss and fear)
- c) Occupational (finding a job, new career, adjusting to new working hours, etc.)
- d) Physical (changes in body shape, adjusting to new level of exercise and new diet, etc.)

18. Are you.....?

Single
Married
Divorced or Separated
Widowed

19. Which of the following best describes your current occupational status?

Employed
Unemployed
Student

20. Gender

Male
Female

21. Age

- a) 23-25 b) 26-28 c) 29-32 d) 33-36 e) 37-40

Appendix B: Athlete Interview Guide

Thank you to have agreed to participate in this interview. We will talk about your involvement in elite and the support you got from different people.

1. Tell me about your initial involvement in sport and some of your major achievements.
2. Who provided you with support when you first got involved in sport and what type of support?
3. How do you characterize your parents' involvement in your athletic career when you first started?
4. Did any other person influence you significantly when you started? (Coach, agent, sponsor, federation, friends and extended family)
5. You indicated in the survey that you did not think of retirement while in your elite stage. Tell me more about that.
6. How do you characterize your parents, federation coach and spouse involvement when you were an elite athlete?
7. Let's talk about your retirement transition.
8. What were circumstances surrounding your retirement from competitive sport?
9. You indicated in the interview that you were not ready for retirement, can you tell me more about that?
10. You also stated that you did not plan for retirement, can you talk a little bit more about that
11. What were your immediate worries when you retired from competitive sport if you had any?
12. How much thought did you give to your withdrawal from elite sport?
13. What other activities or roles were you involved in during your professional career? work? marriage?
14. What transition and support services are available for elite athletes in retirement transition?
15. What would you say you needed after your elite career ended to give your life meaning and satisfaction?
16. Who provided you with support during retirement transition from elite sport and what type of support?
17. How do you characterize your spouse, parents and coach involvement during your retirement transition?
18. Did any other person influence during your retirement transition? (Coach, agent, sponsor, federation, friends and extended family)
19. Final Thoughts

20. What have been the hardest things about achieving the athletic success you have?
21. If you had the opportunity to make recommendations to talented athletes who want to achieve what you have, what would you suggest?

Appendix C: Entourage Interview Guide

Introduction-background Information

1. When did you first meet athlete X?
 - a. What was he or she like?
 - b. What do you remember about him or her?
2. How long did you coach (if coach) him or her?
3. When did you first realize this athlete was talented?
4. How would you characterize your relationship with him during his/her athletic career?
5. Given your entire coaching career, what was your greatest thrill relative to working with this athlete?
6. Who provided athlete X with primary support during his elite athletic career?
7. How would you characterize his or her parents' involvement during his or her athletic career?
8. Did any other events or individuals (siblings, friends, federation, sponsor, spouses, and extended family) influence his or her participation in sport at this period?
9. What were the circumstances surrounding his/her withdrawal from competitive sports?
10. What role did you play during his/her retirement transition?
11. Who is responsible for athletes' transition?
12. In your opinion do you think your relationship had changed from when he/she was an elite athlete?
13. Who do you think played a primary role in athlete X's retirement transition?
14. What should be done for retired athletes?
15. Anything to add?

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