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APSS465 Capstone Project for Practicing Social Policy and Administration

High performance athletes' perception towards the development of
sports career: under the factors of social image and social support

(Water Sports)

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Executive Summary

In this study, qualitative research method is being used to explain and discuss the hypothesized factors that would motivate or in other way constraint the high performance water sports athletes' perception and possible determination towards sports career engagement. Other than the reviewed Self-determination theory, a new factors model has developed to hypothesized the factors positioning and compared with the research result model in four directions, which are the positive cognitive effect, negative cognitive effect, positive behavioral effect and negative behavioral effect; while, the effect of government support being the most controversial factor. The perception and determination shows that the image of academic achievement and the support from parents are being the most common significant effects. The relationships between factors have also being discussed in the research with the community acceptance being the central component. Whereas, synchronize swimming is being a team sport and having a lower popularity in Hong Kong, it shows enormous constraint in sports career engagement compare to swimming. At last, practical suggestions are offered for eliminating the constraints and burden of sport career engagement.

Key words: Athletes' engagement, social image, social support

Introduction

Background

Overviews the sport participation and engagement in Hong Kong, it comprises of different social groups together with various affections. Whereas, different sectors have attached to different levels of sport participation, which include the general public intensity towards physical exercise; the youngers' continuity of sport activities as well as the athletes' attainment within the sport career. As a whole, Hong Kong people's sport participation are affected by factors that considered social image and support, sport governance practices, as well as social and physical environments. Under the various attributes, specific factors can be pointed out. For the general public, the accessibility of exercising area and sport friendly policy of the workplace are highly associated with their intensity of doing physical exercises. While, the younger generations' intensity and continuity are determined by their own self-interest. Yet, this can be understood that sports are being seen as leisure towards the general public, it may not be essential to their living. On the other hand, the professional athletes' attainment is being hindered by the procedural justice of the sport governance and the societal perspectives, which include the image and support towards athletes. In the following research, it will focus on the societal perspectives towards professional athletes.

The Hong Kong legislative council document has stated that the Hong Kong government has budgeted over 90% on promoting community sports and a less proportion in supporting elite sports nor developing Hong Kong into a prime destination for hosting international sport events. According to the Hong Kong Sport Institution Statistics of the year 2016-2017, there are 29 elite sports with 827 athletes are receiving the Elite training grant, which over half of the athletes are part-time athletes. Looking at the figures, the curiosity towards Hong Kong athlete's development and Hong Kong elite sports trend are popping out.

Hong Kong people always question the benefits of engaging in sports, even the Hong Kong chief executive Mr. CY Leung mentioned that Sports cannot create any economic benefit to the society. The social atmosphere and the society ideology towards sports become one of the constraint on the development of Hong Kong athlete's career. "Hoping the child to have a bright future" (望子成龍) is a Chinese traditional phrase, in which has engraved in most of the Chinese' mind, however, this does not include Sports. As most of the Sports organizations are

bearing the word “Amateur” and the Hong Kong sports’ career has never been professionalized, the public can hardly believe in being a full-time athlete can lead to success. Especially under the circumstances of Hong Kong, examinations, studies and works always come to the first priority in people’s life development, sports can only be seen as a leisure and a treasure. Athletes who planned to become a professional are even being teased by the peers and deterred by parents and teachers (So, 2014). Tong Ching-Feng (2012) has written the "Asian Weekly" for the American Basketball League Chinese star Jeremy Lin with the cover topic lamented: "If he is in Taiwan or mainland China, may be for the exam and work hard, is unlikely to have this achievement in basketball.", in which Hong Kong is in a similar situation that the importance of academic and career overrides the life of the society, becoming the only chance to start their bright future.

The Rio Olympic Games has just successfully held in 2016. The Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at Chinese University of Hong Kong has conducted a public research on the citizens’ attention and attitudes towards athletes has done. It results in having over half of the interviewees has paid attention to The Hong Kong athletes and feel proud of them, in which there are more than 20% of increase compare to the previous Olympic Games. Despite of their high level of attention, only 24.7% of the interviewees think that Hong Kong athletes have brought a high-level of economic and social contribution to Hong Kong; as well as around 60% of the interviewees stated that the Olympic game aren’t able to raise their interest towards sports participation. These also show that the achievement of Hong Kong athletes is not able to seek community acceptance neither bring a positive social image towards the public.

Aims of the Research

The purpose of doing sports is always a question in the community. It can be known that doing sports can reduce health issues but does the contribution towards high-performance sports necessary? Despite the Hong Kong government has provided budget towards people's sports participation, there are still various constraints in participating sports towards different social groups, especially in athlete's development. The Hong Kong's sport development is hard to be exhaustive and the sports culture can barely be brought up; so as the athletes in Hong Kong, either elite sports or non-elite sports events' players are facing different frustrations and considerations towards their sports career development. Therefore, athletes' engagement is not being encouraged and having a low acceptability among the Hong Kong community.

The purpose of this research is to discuss and investigate the factors that affect Hong Kong high performance water sports athletes' determination of sport career engagement. Also, to explore the details of how the factors obstruct or motivate their sports engagement, likewise the perception of elites-athletes towards the factors and whether it will be associated with their decisions on sport career development.

Research objectives:

1. To investigate the perception of elite athletes towards full-time sports engagement.
2. To investigate the factors that hinder their consideration towards having sports as their career.
3. To suggest ways to eliminate the constraint factors.

Hypothesis:

1. There are inter-relations between factors.
2. The community acceptance towards the athletes is associated with government support.
3. Academic achievement dominates athletes' career choices and opportunities.

Literature Review

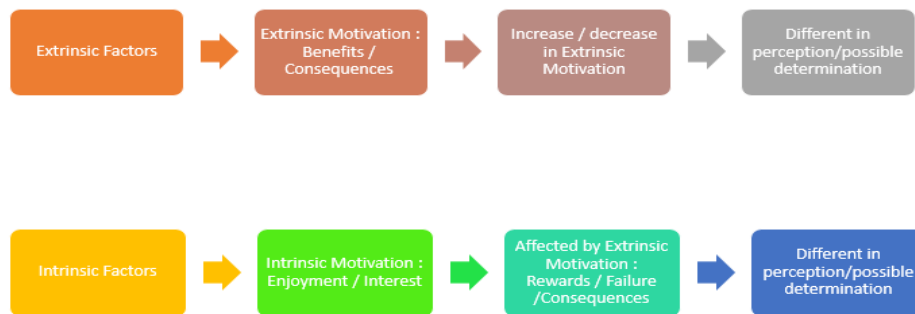
Theoretical Framework - *Self-determination Theory* - *The hierarchical model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (HMIEM)* by Deci & Ryan (1985, 2000) & Vallerand (1997)

Self-determination Theory is a motivational theory for recognizing individual's motivation, the causes of motivation and its consequences by doing such act. In the sport context, several sports-related research has adopted this domain to examine the linkage between the motivation factors and sports performance. Therefore, the self-determination Theory can be applied to this research, to explore the intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors that affects athletes' perception or the constraints towards their determination in continuous sports engagement; in which sport engagement refers to an enduring and relatively stable sport experience. (Hodge & Lonsdale & Jackson, 2009)

According to the Self-determination Theory, Vallerand (1997) has developed the hierarchical model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (HMIEM), which allows researchers to analyze and recognized the determinants and possible consequences associated with the different forms of factors or motivations. In this research, the model is being simplified, which mainly includes intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors. The hierarchical model (Vallerand, 1997) has also hypothesized that motivation leads to affective, **cognitive and behavioral** consequences (Gillet, Vallerand, Amoura & Baldes, 2010).

According to the model (Fig 1), Extrinsic factors will lead to extrinsic motivation which includes possible outcomes or consequences, this will affect the athletes' incentives in sport engagement and results in different determinations. While intrinsic factors may also be affected by some negative extrinsic factors that may influence athletes' considerations. In the following literatures, it has concluded two big aspects of extrinsic factors, which are the social image and social support. Yet, there are several attributes under the two aspects; the level of academic achievement, choice of career and community acceptance show influences towards social image; whereas, government support, parental support, coach-athletes relations and sport retirement support are being determined as the aspect of social support.

The hierarchical model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (HMIEM)



(Figure 1)

Social Images

Social-image relates to the images that individuals have of a certain behavior and of the type of person who does the behavior (Burrow,1924). Social images suggested that individuals are more likely to start or give up a certain behavior if they want to acquire the desired, or avoid the undesired, behavior-related social images (Chassin, Tetzloff, & Hershey, 1985). This is because people usually have well-elaborated images of the type of person who engages in different behaviors even if they have not tried these substances themselves. (Piko,Bak&Gibbons,2007)

Academic Achievements

Despite of the high qualification needs of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Sport Development Board (1997) published a research stating that “Sport do no harm on study, it can work the other way round.” Broh (2002) has proved this statement, it stated that participating in interscholastic sports promotes students’ development. It also suggested that sport participation is positively associated with students’ core subjects grades. However, there are also research stating that students-athletes are required to sacrifice their attention to academics (Meyer, 1990; Parham, 1993), in which it is difficult for them to devote enough time on studies and earn good grades (Cantor and Prentice, 1996). Aries, McCarthy,Salovey &Banaji (2004) also indicates that high-performance athletes are having a greater academic difficulties. Therefore, athletes of having poor academic achievement demonstrate a negative effect in a cognitive way.

Career choice

Academic achievement has always related to one's career prospect. Therefore, the career development of sport retirement is considered as another factor affecting the social image of developing sport career.

Kellenberger (1992) stated a review from Iowa State university that there are many individuals employed because of athletics. In Chow's research (2001), it stated that high profile athletes have less retirement transition difficulties than lower ranked athletes. It is because customers and the public have a positive impression of being trustworthy towards athletes, such as being tough and have developed resilience to cope with problems. However, an athlete of the research (Torregrosa, Boixdos, Valiente & Cruz, 2002) mentioned in her interview that athletes have lack of knowledge in sport non-related fields that in comparison they have less professional experiences than non-athletes. On the other hand, the interviewed athletes (Chow, 2001) believed that only individuals who own adequate academic qualifications would have better sport retirement career opportunities. This shows that despite of easy transition, high-performance of sports has behaviorally narrow down their career prospect and future, which regarded as a concern of considering high-performance sports engagement as a future career.

Community and Agencies Acceptance

Researchers from the Southeast Europe have conducted a research on the universities' support for student athletes. It mentioned that the European communities emphasized the importance of providing dual career training for young sportsman, which can safe guard their moral education and professional interest. (Commission of the European communities, White Paper on Sport, Business, 2007) ; therefore, education becomes one of the influencing factor among athletes' development. In Romana Caput-Jogunica, Curkovic and Bjelic's (2012) research, it raised strategies and methods of different countries' university on dealing with student-athletes education progress and opportunities. Furthermore, the universities have contracts with the National Sport Federations, guaranteed to provide a range of benefits and services for the student athletes, aims to motivate and support young athletes' efforts towards the sports career. Under the cooperation between agencies and the community, it generated a positive social image towards the public behaviorally, showing that athletes are beneficial.

To summarize the aspects of social image, it reviewed that academic achievement has dominated the image of high performance athletes, either in schools, universities or work places. Athletes with poor academic achievement may lead to a negative career prospect, and at the same time they need to bare a negative situation within the society. However, with community acceptance and cooperation, it enhance the support from agencies, which may twist or improve the hypothesized negative image of athletes.

Social Support

According to the National cancer Institute, “ Social Support is a network of family, friends, neighbours; and community members that is available in times of need to give psychological, physical, and financial help.” (National Cancer Institute's Dictionary of Cancer Terms).

Government Support

Policies always dick the path we walk, therefore Government and finance is always a core of an implementation of a policy. Government, being a policy maker, formulated different sports policies which has highly affected the development of elite athletes.

In Houlihan and Zheng’s research (2013) on the Olympic and Elite sport policy stated a various countries’ change in elite sports budgets in recent years. It stated countries such as New Zealand and Korea have reallocated their budget to elite sports in the previous years, in which they both achieved an encouraging results and improvements in the following international games in return. This proves that with more behavioral support from government the higher motivation athletes get.

Parental Support

In the research of Leff & Hoyle (1994), it mentioned that young sportsmen are greatly influenced by their parents’ involvement. Their level performance and achievement are also facilitated by parental involvement. Parents are either positioning at a supportive role or the one who are enforcing pressure on the young athletes. Whereas parental support is associated with higher levels of self-esteem (Felker, 1968), parental pressure is also associated with negative self-evaluation (Smith et al, 1978), which may result in fear of failure, anxiety; in particular, unhappiness with sport involvement and the willingness of participation (Smith, 1986)..

Therefore, the role of parental support considered as a significant role towards young athletes' participation, in which both cognitive and behavioral support do affect athletes' engagement in sport career.

Coach- athletes Relationships

According to Thomas & Co'te' & Deakin (2007), the role of the coaches has placed at a very important position in motivating athletes' continuous engagement in sports, especially in coaches- athletes relationships and coaches' behaviors. (Barnett et al., 1992; Smoll et al., 1993). Coach-athletes relationships is presented as a motivational sequence that coaches' actions and behaviors do influence athletes' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation through their impact on athletes' perceptions of autonomy; such as providing opportunity for choice, acknowledge athletes' feelings and perspective, give athletes opportunities to take initiatives; competence and relatedness. (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003). These three psychological needs, in turn, foster the development and maintenance of athletes' intrinsic and self-determined extrinsic motivation as well as adaptive outcomes, in other words, provide athletes a positive motivation at a cognitive basis to have a continuous development and engagement in high-performance sports career.

Sports retirement Support

Chow's (2001) research on athletes' retirement from competitive sport also mentioned the support towards retired athletes. He concluded that Hong Kong does not provide any concrete assistance and arrangement for athletes' retirement. Aforementioned, most of the athletes will choose to become a coach after their retirement, however, Chow's research interviewees mentioned that some of their athletes were not able to have a satisfied development on their coaching despite of having a coaching qualification. With the level of sufficient and effectiveness of sport retirement support remain questionable, it behaviorally causes a negative effect towards athletes' determination and perception towards their career.

According to the reviewed and analyzed literature, the inter-relationships between factors are being hypothesized as follows:

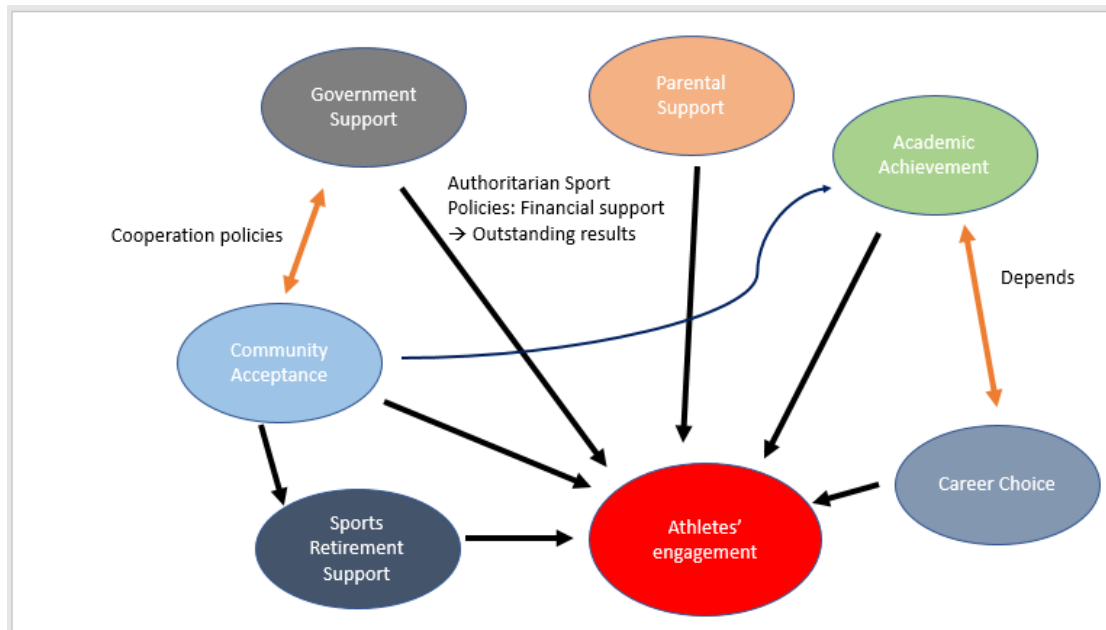


Figure 2. Hypothesized factors relationships model

Methodology

This research will be focusing on the study of water sports athletes' engagement. In order to gain more in-depth perspectives and feelings from interviewees, qualitative research method is used in the research, to collect and analysis the required data. In the research, in-depth interviews will be adopted to gather water sports' athletes perception towards full-time sport engagement and their concern towards the hindering factors. The interview guide is developed base on the reviewed factors and take reference from the Life After Sports Scale (LASS) to qualitatively analyze different domains that influence perceptions of the career transition process, in which also includes Career Path Well Planned, Balancing Academics and Athletics, and Positive Role Model.

A research framework has developed for this research. Firstly, under the Hong Kong circumstances, there are variety of sports events; being an experienced high performance athletes in Hong Kong, the research will be focused on researcher's professions, water sports. It includes swimming and Synchronize swimming in which they are able to create a significant difference; Swimming being a Tier A elite sports and Synchronize is a non-elite sport with less popular and narrow development. Interviewing athletes both water sports are able to show the most significant concern towards the factors. Secondly, according to the athletes' ratio of Hong Kong, the ratio of full-time athletes and part-time athletes is 1:2, therefore 2 full-time athletes and 4 part-time athletes are being selected. In the interviews, full-time athletes are able to provide their perceived and overcame constraint factors during his or her transition; part-time athletes can provide their expression towards their perceived full-time sport engagement and their concerns towards it. Finally, the research result will be presented according to the following frame.

Social Image	1. Academic achievement – interviewed results and evidences 2. Career Choices - interviewed results and evidences 3. Community and agencies acceptance - interviewed results and evidences
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Social Support	1. Government Support - interviewed results and evidences 2. Parental Support - interviewed results and evidences 3. Coach-athletes' relations - interviewed results and evidences 4. Sport retirement support - interviewed results and evidences
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Data Analysis - Findings

Social Image

Academic Achievement

The concern towards academic achievement is being the first mentioning factor among all interviewees, and they show a negative perception towards it. Interviewee P perceived that being a full-time swimmer will have a lower education level than others. Interviewee S also proves that the image of having academic achievement is important in sports development too, stating that:

*“My friends think that I should have a **certificate**.”, also “...some of them has persuaded me **to continue to study**.”*

The same situation applies to the synchronize swimmer, they think that the full engagement in sports will be unable to balance their studies or focus on academics .

Miss G: *“ If being a full-time athlete, my academic results will be regressed, and **not able to focus on the academic field**.”*

It can be seen that the image of having high qualification is affecting athletes cognitively, that they mainly use “if”, “think”, “may” and “seems to be” in the conversation (Fig. 3), in which the perceived effects are unfavorable to their determinations upon full sports engagement.

However, there’s an argument raised from Mr.P’s expression that he will not be a full-time swimmer if he can have better academic achievement. By means that a positive achievement in academic is not necessarily favor to be a full-time sportsman, as good at academic can gain more opportunities other than the sport field.



Fig. 3 Word cloud result

Career Choice

Among our swimmer interviewees, they admit that full-time athletes are having a narrow career choice which affects their perception towards sports career development. As the current full-time

swimmer, Miss S would be considered staying in the sport field such as in the sports organizations. Mr CK also mentioned that

*“ This is the truth that athletes have **no other choices** other than being a coach or apply for the disciplinary force after they retire.”*

and he kept repeating *“is really narrow”* throughout the conversation, which is considered as a negative and behavioral effect. However, the image of career choice has less influence towards the synchronize swimmers' perception. It is because the synchronize swimmer interviewees think that with a sufficient academic qualification would not limit their career choice of just being a coach or stay in the sport fields. This factors relation has also mentioned in the previous reviews and will be discussed in the later part of the research.

Community and Agencies Acceptance

Swimmers and synchronize swimmers show significant different comments towards community's acceptance. The support from agencies in Hong Kong are more on a school basis, especially for elite sport events. Our swimmers' interviewees mentioned that most of the mainstream universities have provided sportsmanship scheme for elite athletes. This shows that the acceptance from the agencies are shown behaviorally, which lead to positive perception towards sports career engagement. However, the synchronize swimmers are facing an opposite situation.

Miss R: *“It is because the school in Hong Kong has no synchronize swimming, not even in inter-school competition. It is a big deal of not having an inter-school. They have no preventiveness at school even for university students, right!”*.

As synchronize swimming is not a popular sport, schools are not supporting their acts, nor the universities. Miss N expressed that the universities are not eager to know about synchronize swimming, even they are given interview opportunities. These affect the synchronize swimmers cognitively and provide a negative image towards sports engagement.

Social Support

Government and Financial Support

In the research findings, both swimmers and synchronize swimmers' interviewees provide straight negative comments towards government support. Despite swimming is a Tier A elite

sports, interviewees show both negative cognitive effects and behavioral effects comments towards the government, as the synchronize swimmers' interviewees do. The followings are the expression from the interviewees:

Mr P, *"The feelings given by the government is that they are not take athletes' achievement seriously and the **subvention quota** given by the government is **scarce**."*

Mr CK, *"is truly said, it is significant that the Hong Kong society **thinks the sports field is not having any contribution towards the society**..... this shows that **sports are considered as meaningless** in the government's view."*

It can show that interviewees have great complaints towards government support on both financial and psychological support, in which limited their sport career achievements. The synchronize swimmers are facing a similar situation that behavioral effects are more significant. The dilemmas of synchronize swimmers are being stated:

Miss R: *"As there are less resources for this event, therefore its difficult for us to be a full-time athletes. Firstly, we have **less financial support**, also we are only able to **train very less hours and venue using are rare** as well. Even though I am willing to be a full-time athletes, we may **not have sufficient venues and training hours for us to do so**."*

Other interviewees have also mentioned that there are previous athletes quit the team due to financial problem on affording competition fees. Nevertheless, there are some cognitive effects on government neglecting the special features and needs of coordinating synchronize training. These expressions show the lack of government support lead to a negative determination of sport career development.

Coach- athletes Relationships

In the interviews, all interviewees expressed that coach support do give positive effects cognitively towards their sport career engagement. Swimmers' interviewees pointed out that coaches are able to provide them consultation and analytical suggestions during their determination process. In parallel with Synchronize swimmers', their coaches are able to build

up their faith and self-confidence towards their sports career; enabling them to recover from desperation of losing, as well as, being a motive to continue and remain in their athletes' engagement.

Parental Support

Parents and family are being the most significant factor on affecting athletes' determination on developing their sport career. Miss S has also proved with her own case:

"Because of having the support from my parents, I can say loudly that I don't have to worry."

However, swimming and synchronize swimming athletes have generated different views towards parental support.

Swimmers' interviewees expressed that they receive straight positive parental support and mainly are behaviorally, lead to less frustration and being a motive of continue engagement of high-performance sports. Parental behavioral support refers to providing actual financial support, as most of the interviewees' expressions are:

Miss S: *"**Family's economic situation** allows me to be an full-time athletes."*

Mr CK: *"...**your salary** is not enough to afford your daily living! how can you survive..."*

Mr CK: *"She said I don't have to worry about **the family's economic status**, they can still afford it."*

In contrast, parents are giving negative effect cognitively towards the synchronize swimmers. As the athletes and coaches would heard different worries and considerations from parents, such as time and cost investment. Thus, this obstruct the synchronize swimmers' perception and determination towards the engagement of sports career.

Sport retirement support

Sport retirement support is being a factor that contains the most controversial results compare to the research literature review. In the Hong Kong circumstances, the sport retirement support either provided by the government or the community can generate less influences towards our water sport athletes. Some concrete views are raised by the interviewees:

Miss S, *"you need to take risk for every decision that you have made, **nothing is 100% guaranteed.**"*

Mr CK, “(Career development worries) This can only **blame themselves** of not taking additional course to upgrade their own ability during leisure time.”

In their point of views, athletes should not totally rely on external support but also their own effort towards their career development. Therefore, whether there are sport retirement supports for athletes, it does not create effects towards their perception and determination.

Reviews on the hierarchical model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (HMIEM)

It can be revised that HMIEM includes affections by intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and the above results have stated researched extrinsic factors. So do intrinsic factors affect athletes’ determination? The answer is YES. However, in this research of water sports, intrinsic factors have only significant influence the swimmers but not the synchronize swimmers. The intrinsic factors of swimmers are shown unintentionally throughout the conversation, including mentioning about “ my own sports results”, “self-ability”, “my improvements”, “hardwork and enthusiasm”, “goals to achieve” etc.

Discussion

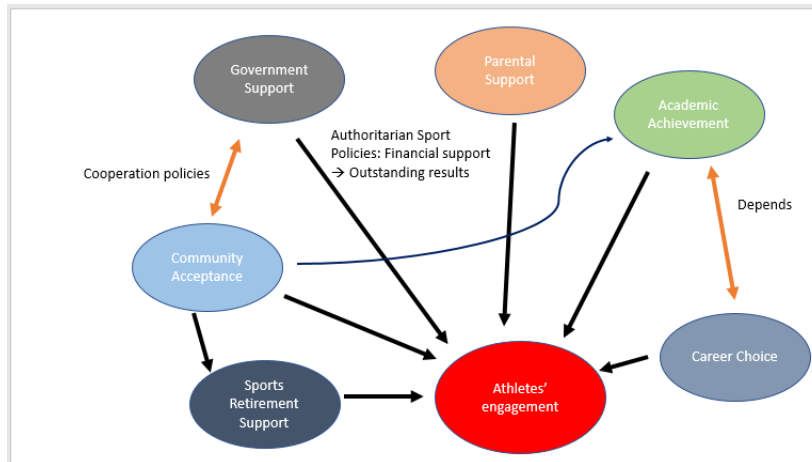


Figure 2. Hypothesized factors relationships model

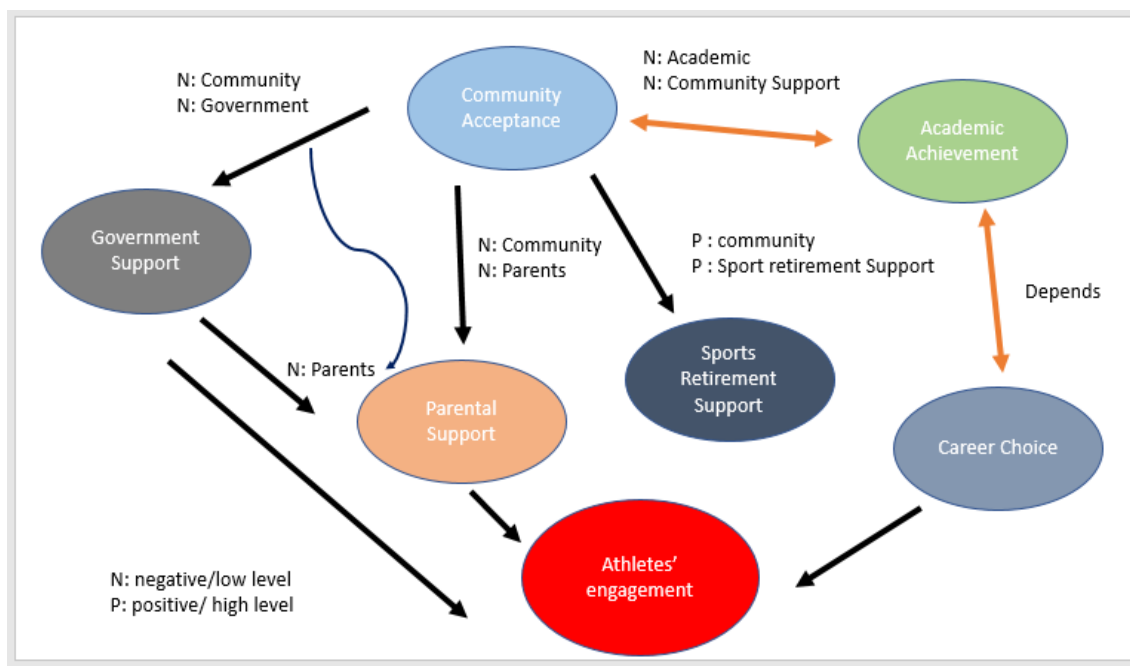


Figure 4. Resulted Inter-relations between attributes model

Other than the results of each attributes, the interviews results have also showed the inter-relations between factors (Fig.4). Refers to figure 4, Community and Agencies Acceptance is being the dominant factor among others. Firstly, according to Miss S views, the opposing views from the community “*will not affect the athletes directly **instead of their parents.***”, in which a negative community support will affect parent’s perception towards athletes, that may lead to a

negative parental support. Furthermore, it also contains the linkage with government support. This is also expressed in Miss R's conversation:

*"The sports in Hong Kong only consider two things, they are being an elite event and having popularity. Synchronize swimming is not popular, therefore, **the government is not supporting**, and so the **parents may think that synchronize swimming's future is unpredictable.**"*

This shows the level of government support will affect the perception of parents as well.

However, it is different from the hypothesized relations model. In the hypothesized relations, the government has established an authoritarian sport policy that the government has controlled over the sports career development, providing all kinds of support in terms of monetary. Then, it results in outstanding competition achievements. Despite there are no direct evidences showing that good sports achievement will result in positive athletes' engagement; however, with athletes' intrinsic motivation, their self-ability of achieving success surely encourage them in athletes' engagement. Moreover, it emphasizes the cooperation between community and government (agencies), enhancing the non-monetary support for elite athletes. Hence, it resulted in a possible positive athletes' engagement. The differences show that the form of government support and implementation of sport policy have resulted in contrasting result.

Secondly, on the perspective of career choice, the interviewees show a similar perception as the literature reviewed that there are limited choices unless of having adequate academic qualifications. Thus, this shows the linkage between academic achievement and career choice. Moreover, Miss S also shows the importance of academic achievement towards school base community support, stating that

"Actually, there were some local universities offer me as their student. However, as I didn't take the certificate examination, therefore they need me to take back some examinations in order to accept me."

Hence, it shows that with inadequate academic achievements will lead to negative community acceptance. In contrast, reviewed literatures show that community acceptance has enhance the support on athletes' academic opportunities, which consist of an indirect relationship with the social image of athletes' academic achievement and career choice.

This result is tended to raise an argument that whether poor academic achievement will definitely result in having a negative career prospects. It is true that there are a lot of successful person in

the society not necessarily own an adequate academic certificate, for instance Mark Elliot Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook and Steve Jobs , founder of Apple. However, social image is something that engraved in people cognitively, the 0.000001% of successful persons can never be persuasive.

Lastly, considering the relations between community support and sport retirement support is stated in previous reviews that there are jobs and companies prefer to hire athletes due to their attitude and tough personality, in which can be seen that with a positive community support can enhance the retirement support of athletes. However, the interview results do not show the direct influence on athletes' engagement.

Conclusion and Suggestions

To conclude, the research finds out that academic achievement generates the most significant effect towards the athletes' determination and perception under the social image aspect; and so do the parental support and government support in the social support aspect. This result can also be seen in the World Cloud generator (Fig.3), showing the term "study", "parents" and several times of "finance". According to the Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000 & Vallerand, 1997), it results that swimming being a Tier A elite-sport event, athletes' determination and perception are still strongly tied with the intrinsic factors, including self-interest, self-ability and goals. Despite of having some considerations towards the extrinsic factors, their determinations are less likely be affected. In contrast, synchronize swimming, a non elite-sport event, due to the limitations and negative affections brought by the extrinsic factors, especially on perceived lower academic achievement image and negative parental and government support, athletes' perception and determination towards developing their sports career is affected.

Generally, the community sports participation and athletes' engagement are having an interrelationship instead. The research has started with the effects brought from the societal level, vice versa, the athletes' attainment has also influence the public. Under a society which sports are not being professionalized and not able form a mature society structure, it can hardly encourage the general to engage in sport, nor just as a leisure.

In the final part of this research, some suggestions would be given to improve the limitations of the extrinsic factors, eliminate their obstructions and transfer these extrinsic factors from constraints to motives.

1. Government should advertise different type of sports games and sports competitions that held in Hong Kong. The government should promote and encourage the public to watch sports games, both international competitions and local competitions. It can provide more chances for the public to experience sports and the life of being an athlete.
2. Government should also bare the role of educating the public, raise the public awareness on the value of athletes. Government's hardware support is not enough to up hold the society's attention; the government should also provide software support, such as having

officials to visit athletes' training and go to support their games personally. This not only applies to elite-sports events but for unpopular sports events as well. Having more promotion on uncommon sports can help the development of the event, in which can be a motivation for the athletes to remain committed to the sports. Additionally, with a country which pay more attention to sports, people would not only have a better physical health, but athletes can also be the role model of the younger generation. This can surely generate a positive and hopeful national atmosphere and culture.

3. The government should also have the responsibility to seek more support for the athletes from the community. As the business sector advocates the importance of corporate social responsibility, private companies and businesses are encourage to land a helping hand to the athletes, for instance sponsoring sports supplements and basic transportation fees for athletes' training and competitions. This can also highly reduce the constraints and burdens of our Hong Kong athletes, as well as the in putting of positive perception and views towards the parents.
4. Lastly, the research would like to advocate the reformation of the Hong Kong Sport Institute (HKSI), by adding sport professional focus courses and sports science technology research. It can be widely known that there are numbers of famous sports schools in other countries that they are able to provide athletes a professional training and academic qualification under great cooperation and coordination from various parties. By reforming HKSI, it can surely reduce the possible concern of athletes, for example, academic qualification concerns, the coordination between school's operations and training schedules, facilities arrangement and limitation. Moreover, with the support of technology and sports inventions, Hong Kong athletes have a higher chance to achieve the international standard. Thus, this can provide a peaceful and well-developed environment for athletes' development.

Limitation

Due to the narrow focus of the research topic, it has only focused on two water sports which contains significant difference. This has neglected the high performance athletes' situation of different sports, which may contain a variety of external factors affecting their determination towards sport career development, such career prospect, the development of the sport event and the popularity of the sport events. Therefore, for further studies, a mixed method research can be conducted. By using quantitative research method , the research is able to figure out the most significant common factors that affect the athletes' determination among different sports. Hence, it can conduct focus groups or interviews to figure out more in-depth information and views from the target group.

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Appendix - Information Sheet

Information Sheet

The study of social innovation and sport participation in Hong Kong

Introduction

We are Year 4 students from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. We are conducting a research on the most constraint factors of participating in sports among different target groups, in which my interview will be focused on the factors affecting sports engagement of the Elite athlete. You are invited to participate in a study conducted by undergraduate students from the Department of Applied Social Sciences (the Department) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The project has been approved by the Human Subjects Ethics Sub-committee (HSESC) (or its Delegate) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HSESC Reference Number: HSEARS20170104004).

It can be known that doing sports can reduce health issues but does the contribution towards high-performance sports necessary? The Hong Kong chief executive even mentioned that Sports can't create any economic benefit to the society. The Hong Kong's sport development is hard to be exhaustive and the sports culture can barely be brought up. So as the athletes in Hong Kong, either elite sports or non elite sports players are facing different frustrations and considerations towards their sports career development. Therefore, athletes' engagement is not being encouraged and having a low acceptability among the Hong Kong community. In this research, it aims at exploring the factors that constraint elites-athletes from starting their full-time sport engagement career.

This interview will be lasted for around 30 minutes. There may be some words that you do not understand. Please ask us to stop as we go through the information and We will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can feel free to ask us.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. You may change your mind later and stop participating even if you agreed earlier.

Confidential

In order to ensure the authenticity of the study, the interview process will be transcript and recorded. The information that we collect from this research project will be kept confidential. Information about you that will be collected during the research will be put away and no-one but the researchers will be able to see it. It will not be shared with or given to anyone except The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. We assure that all the answers you have provided will be kept in the strictest confidentiality and will be destroyed at the end of the research. For any further

information or any inquiries about the study, please feel free to contact us at ykong@polyu.edu.hk or call 27665754

If you have any complaints about the conduct of this research study, please do not hesitate to contact Miss Cherrie Mok, Secretary of the Human Subjects Ethics Sub-Committee of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University in writing (c/o Research Office of the University) stating clearly the responsible person and department of this study as well as the HSESC Reference Number.

Certificate of Consent

Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:

- 1. Participants are voluntary**
- 2. All the questionnaires and results data will be kept confidentially.**

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participant.

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent:

Wong Ming Yu, Claudia

Date : 14/1/2017

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to participate as a participant in this research.

Print Name of Parent/guardian(if participant under age of 18) _____

Signature of Parent/guardian _____

Print Name of Participant _____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____

