

# Conceptualizing Entrepreneurship Training, Causes of Retirement and Psychosocial Support for Mental Health of Athletes Transitioning from Elite Sport

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**Abstract:** Transitioning from an elite sporting career has been shown to be difficult for former athletes with an increased likelihood of mental disorders. Studies have then been undertaken on psychological disorders of former elite athletes, with some reporting that successful transition to retirement is influenced by proper financial planning and management, while others have found this to be insufficient, instead highlighting the role of factors such as the actual cause of retirement, entrepreneurial skills and psychosocial support. The purpose of this study then is to provide a review of extant literature on mental health of athletes as they transition from elite sport to retirement. The study established that most researches have pursued discussions on the construct of financial planning, causes of retirement and psychosocial support separately. The current study identified data gaps on the correlation between causes of retirement, entrepreneurship training, psychosocial support and mental health of former elite athletes. The position taken by this paper is that there is need to re-think the current frameworks and develop an integrated model incorporating causes of retirement, entrepreneurship training and psychosocial support to register impact on the mental health of athletes transitioning from elite sport. The propositions developed in this paper are important in progressing knowledge and forming a basis for future studies to inform policy and promote mental health of current and former elite athletes.

**Keywords:** Causes of Retirement, Entrepreneurship Training, Psychosocial Support, Mental Health, Retired Elite Athletes.

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## 1. Introduction

Many countries have prioritized and heavily invested in elite sport because success in sporting events such as the Olympics, Cricket or FIFA world cup is celebrated as a national victory and often mobilized by political-economic elites so as to inspire the population to take up sport and boost national feelings of pride, unity and cohesion, often in the face of social divisions that cut through societies (Schwenk, *et al.*, 2017). Success in elite sport also has a feel-good effect among the population, generates positive international publicity that is prestigious to a country, results in increased sport participation from the masses, hence a healthier nation and a wider pool of people from which to pick future champions (Gerard & Heather, 2008). This view is supported by Alfermann and Gross (1997) who posits that elite sport contributes to brand image of a country which in return attracts unquantifiable benefits to a country. However, athletes' voluntary or compulsory transition out of elite sport due to injury or age-related reasons, occurs at a relatively younger age as compared to other conventional careers (Gouttebauge, *et al.*, 2019; Wylleman *et al.*, 2004). Lavalley, Gordon and Groove (1997) reported that elite athletes who had involuntary retirement from their sporting career were more likely to experience greater emotional and social adjustment difficulties than those who retired voluntarily. This conclusion is supported by Fortunato & Marchant (1999) and Smith & McManns (2008) who established that on the contrary, those athletes who retire voluntarily may have minimal coping problems.

In a study by Rintaugu, *et al.*, (2016), athletes may retire at any time due to numerous factors such as serious injury, lack of attractive incentives, diminishing physical ability, lack of encouragement from significant others, and de-selection or declined performance relative to new entrants into the game. This view is also shared by Muscat (2010) and Jodai & Nagawa (2011) who also emphasized the uncertainty attached to elite sporting careers. Gerard and Heather (2008) additionally reported that an elite sport is characterized by many stressors such that athletes tend not to simultaneously follow their sporting careers with educational opportunities necessary for alternate professions after sport, leaving them vulnerable to depression. Other studies have also observed that athletes while pursuing their elite sporting career, may struggle with their changing bodies (Lavalley & Robinson, 2007) and anxiety associated with ongoing chronic pain resulting from injuries sustained during training or while participating in competitive sport (Schwenk *et al.*, 2007).

Studies have therefore been undertaken on the symptoms and psychological disorders of elite athletes leading to the statement on mental health by the International Olympic Committee (Reardon, *et al.*, 2019). Poor mental health by current and former elite athletes has economic and social implications to a country, the afflicted person and close family members. The cost of psychological disorders quantified after estimating the

lost productivity and its effect on a country's gross domestic product has been variously reported (Chisholm, *et al.*, 2016). Direct costs relate to hospital expenditures on diagnosis and treatment of patients, including costs incurred for physician visits, psychotherapy sessions, purchase of medication and inpatient admissions into health care facilities. Indirect costs are incurred in the event of death, disability and lost economic productivity due to work absence or early retirement (Chisholm, *et al.*, 2016). This finding is anchored on the argument that national economic growth requires an interaction of human and non-human factors of production such as finances, both of which can be negatively impacted by the wellbeing of a person. Financial resources are consumed through expenditures in hospital facilities, while labor is negatively impacted by disability and mortality of the affected persons (Bloom, *et al.*, 2011). Expended financial resources can be quantified using data on saving rates and costs of treatment funded from individual and family savings (Thyloth, *et al.*, 2016). It is estimated therefore that the collective global economic output loss as a result of mental disorders for the period 2011 to year 2030 is US\$ 16.3 trillion, which is comparable to that of cardiovascular diseases, but higher than that of cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes (Gustavsson, *et al.*, 2010).

Though successful transition to retirement has previously been agued to be heavily influenced by proper financial planning and management, rivulets of other recent studies has established this to be insufficient, instead highlighting the role of other factors such as support from social groups (Allison & Meyer; 1988; Leung, Carre & Fu, 2005; Yeung & Zhou, 2017). This conclusion is also supported by several other studies which reported that an athlete's adjustment into life in retirement was impacted upon by pre-retirement socialization for alternative roles and the support system available from family and friends for transition from elite sport (McPherson *et al.*, 1989; Fortunato & Marchant, 1999; Mckenna & Thomas, 2007; Gilmore, 2008). Further, studies have also linked entrepreneurship to industrial transformation, job creation, income generation and poverty alleviation (Abiodun, 2011; Haltiwanger, *et al.*, 2010). Entrepreneurship particularly in the context of small and medium enterprise sector requires relatively low capital investment, hence can easily be started in rural, semi-urban and peri-urban areas adjacent to cities (Abiodun, 2011; Haltiwanger, *et al.*, 2010). This in turn creates employment in these areas thus preventing migration of people from rural to urban areas, resulting in balanced economic development (Hu, *et al.*, 2011; McKinsey and Company 2010). As Schumpeter (1934) put it, entrepreneurship becomes the force of creative destruction whereby established ways of doing things are destroyed by the creation of new and better processes to get things done.

The purpose of this study then is to provide a review of pertinent literature on the perspectives associated with the correlation between entrepreneurship education and psychological health of athletes for the purpose of re-thinking the current frameworks towards the development of an integrated model incorporating entrepreneurship education, personality characteristics and psychosocial support so as to register impact on the mental health of retired elite athletes. The propositions developed in this paper are important in progressing knowledge and forming a basis for future studies to inform policy, promote mental health and relational wellbeing of current and former elite athletes as they transition into life in retirement.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Many nations have heavily invested in elite sport because success at international events is celebrated as a national victory that boosts patriotism, feelings of pride and cohesion (Gouttebauge, *et al.*, 2019; Schwenk, *et al.*, 2017). However, transitioning into retirement from elite sport has been shown to be a difficult period for athletes, with an increased likelihood of developing mental health symptoms and disorders (Rice, *et al.*, 2016; Blinde & Stratta, 1992). According to Bailie & Danish (1992) and Parker (1994), athletes who have transitioned from elite sporting career to life in retirement especially on account of age or injury exhibit poor psychological health, including substance abuse, depression, suicidal thoughts, traumatic and disruptive blow to identity and self-esteem, and social relational difficulties with close family members and friends. This conclusion is shared by Williams, *et al.*, (1998) and Leung, *et al.*, (2005) who also observed that athletes who have not prepared well for transition from elite sport experience retirement related crisis characterised by psycho-pathology, substance abuse, occupational abuse and social relational problems. Similarly, a study by Gouttebauge, *et al.*, (2019) involving a meta-analysis of data on symptoms of distress, sleep disturbance, depression and alcohol misuse, established that many former elite athletes showed a prevalence of mental health symptoms and disorders ranging from 16% for distress to 26% for depression. Alcohol misuse in retired elite athletes was attributed by Reardon, *et al.*, (2019) to implications of transitioning distress, lack of meaningful substitute activities upon retirement from elite sport and enduring complaints related to prior injuries.

Since many studies have reported a correlation between retirement from elite sport and poor mental health, some recommendations have been suggested on how to thwart transition challenges. Mckenna & Thomas (2007) and Rintaugu, *et al.*, (2016) have recommended proper financial planning and management to facilitate successful transition into retirement. Other researchers have however found financial planning and management an important factor, but insufficient thus highlighting the role of other contextual variables such as

personality characteristics and support from social groups that account for successful adjustment into retirement (Allison & Meyer, 1988; Hershey, *et. al.*, 2013; Leung, Carre & Fu, 2005; Yeung & Zhou, 2017). Studies have also linked entrepreneurship and small business management to industrial transformation, job creation, income generation, poverty alleviation, improved standards of living of individuals and communities (Kreiser, *et al.*, 2013), allows entrepreneurs to bring creativity into the marketplace, creates businesses with the potential to hire millions of people and brings new products and / or services to the market place, and more recently, its contribution towards the achievement of sustainable development goals (Abiodun, 2011; Pradhan, *et. al.*, 2017; Mikušová, 2017).

Transitioning from elite sport therefore remains a research agenda with mixed conclusions from previous studies and therefore continues to constitute a significant risk to athletes' psychological health and well-being, and policy making has been hindered by scarcity of conclusive empirical evidence (Cosh *et. al.*, 2012). There is need therefore to effectively prevent, promote mental health and manage psychological disorders given the prevalence of mental illness in communities and the burden this continues to place on a healthcare system and the economic costs incurred by the affected individuals and family (Grand Challenges Canada, 2016). However, extant literature has mainly pursued discussions on the construct of financial planning, causes of retirement and psychosocial support separately. Based on extensive review of existing literature, the current study has identified data gaps on the correlation between entrepreneurship education and mental health of transitioning elite athletes, hence the need to re-think the current frameworks and develop a more integrated model incorporating entrepreneurship training, causes of retirement and psychosocial support based on empirical data. The propositions developed in this paper are necessary in progressing knowledge and forming a basis for future studies to inform policy towards promoting mental health and relational wellbeing of current and former elite athletes.

### **3. Theoretical and Empirical Foundations**

#### **3.1 Model of Adaptation to Career Transition**

There are sport-specific models of career transition that have been proposed which view retirement as a process. According to Taylor and Ogilvie (1994), the conceptual Model of Adaptation to Career Transition which is premised on thanatology that illuminates sports retirement is a form of social death including isolation from former team-mates and players, has five steps. Placed at the top of the model are the causes of retirement including age, deselection, injury and free choice. The next level in the model is has factors connected to adaptation to retirement, such as developmental experiences, social identity, tertiary contributors, self-identity and perception of control; and available resources, which include pre-retirement planning, social support, and coping skills. The third level is the quality of adaptation to athletic retirement. The fourth level could either be a healthy career transition or retirement crisis with the attendant psychological disorders. According to Taylor and Ogilvie (1994), this model does not consider the emotional and cognitive aspects of the retirement process, which can underline how athletes approach their social support and coping skills.

#### **3.2 Social Identity Model**

The social identity model proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979) is premised on three processes of social comparison, social categorization and social identification. Social categorization relates to the process by which individuals organize themselves into social groups in order to make sense of the social world. Social identification is the second process by which individuals identify as group members of their chosen social groupings. The third process is social comparison by which individuals liken their social groups with other groups in terms of prestige and social standing. The argument through the social identity model is that classifying people into groups is enough to make such individuals think of themselves in terms of membership to that group. This means that an individual conceptualizes the self-based on the social groups to which one belongs. As such, a plethora of studies on social identity have subsequently concluded that better adjustment to significant life changes, can be buttressed by access to support from social group networks (Haslam, *et. al.*, 2019). This conclusion from the social identity model of identity change is relevant to athletes transitioning from elite sport because it can be extrapolated that well-being adjustment for people in the context of life transitions can be enabled if the individuals are able to maintain membership to extant social groups that are important to them or in the alternative acquire new ones.

#### **3.3 Theories of Entrepreneurship**

There are a number of theories that seek to explain entrepreneurship. Economic oriented theories for instance date back to the first half of the 1700s with the introduction of the idea of an entrepreneur as an agent who buys means of production at certain prices to combine them into a new product (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006). Another of the economic theories is Schumpeter (1934) innovation theory of entrepreneurship, which

holds that an entrepreneur is a driver of market-based systems with and has three characteristics, that is innovation, foresight and creativity. All economic theories pose explanations for entrepreneurship that focus, for the most part on economic conditions and the opportunities they create. Such economic incentives include taxation policy by governments, industrial policy by regulatory agencies, sources of finance and raw materials, infrastructure availability, investment and marketing opportunities, access to information about market conditions and technology. Economic theories of entrepreneurship therefore tend to receive significant criticism for failing to recognize the dynamic, open nature of market systems, ignoring the unique nature of entrepreneurial activity and downplaying the diverse contexts in which entrepreneurship occurs (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006).

According to Landstrom (1998), there are also sociological (anthropological) entrepreneurship theories which centre their explanation on the various social contextual factors that facilitate the opportunities that entrepreneurs take advantage of. The core proposition here is that entrepreneurship is likely to get a boost in a particular social culture. Society's values, religious beliefs, customs, taboos influence the behaviour of individuals in a society. The entrepreneur is seen as a role performer according to the role expectations by the society. The anthropological model approaches the question of entrepreneurship by placing it within the context of culture and examining how cultural forces, such as social attitudes, shape both the perception of entrepreneurship and the behaviours of entrepreneurs (Coon, 2004).

Another perspective of entrepreneurship is through the Resource Based theories that explores economic factors that enhance entrepreneurial behaviour (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006). Resource based theories therefore focuses on the way entrepreneurs take control of different types of resources to get entrepreneurial efforts off the ground. Access to capital improves the chances of getting a new venture off the ground, but entrepreneurs often start ventures with little ready capital. Other types of resources entrepreneurs might leverage include social networks and the information they provide, as well as human resources, such as education. In some cases, the intangible elements of leadership the entrepreneur adds to the mix operate as resource that a business cannot replace (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006).

According to Landstrom (1998) there are psychological entrepreneurship theories that focus on the individual and the mental or emotional elements that drive entrepreneurial individuals. For illustration, Rotter (1966) theory holds that people with a strong internal locus of control believe their actions can influence the external world. Empirical research has subsequently shown that most entrepreneurs possess this trait (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006). Another psychological theory of entrepreneurship is McClelland (1961) model of Achievement Motivation which proposes that a person has three types of needs at any given time, that is, need for achievement (get success with one's own efforts); need for power to dominate and influence others; and need for affiliation (maintain friendly relations with others). The need for achievement is the highest for entrepreneurs and is related related to new venture creation (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006).

Another proposition that seeks to explain entrepreneurship is the Human Capital Theory which is anchored on education and experience as the two factors that impacts on entrepreneurial outcomes by an entrepreneur (Becker, *et. al.*, 1990). The theory posits that differences in opportunity identification and exploitation by entrepreneurs can be accounted for the education and experience distributed across individuals (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). This conclusion is supported by Korunka *et al.*, (2003) who showed a correlation between human capital factors and increased opportunity recognition (Davidson & Honing, 2003) and even entrepreneurial success (Anderson & Miller, 2003; Becker, *et. al.*, 1990).

### **3.4 Global Burden of Mental Disorders**

People afflicted by specific neurological disorders and substance abuse account for about 13% of the global burden of disease, with over one million people dying every year from suicide; a global mortality rate of 16 per 100,000 (World Health Organization, 2013). Mental illness has therefore been acknowledged as a global health priority given its economic burden to individuals, communities and national resources and health care systems. As such, it is now considered a global development priority, hence its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals adopted during a United Nations Summit (Pradhan, *et. al.*, 2017). According to World Health Organization (2013), Major depression, Anxiety disorders; Schizophrenia; Dysthymia and Bipolar disorder are the five types of mental illness that appeared in the top twenty causes of global burden of disease in year 2013. The increasing burden of mental disorders may be mainly attributed to stigma attached to mental illness, limited resources because of other competing demands, underutilization of available services, outdated frameworks and practices, and organizational fragmentation that impacts the ability to adequately assess, prioritize and respond to psychosocial disorders (Thyloth, *et. al.*, 2016). Mental health is therefore a research agenda considering that there is still no cure for the disease and the negative impact this has to the global economy and value that would have been generated in the alternative.

### **3.5 Psychosocial Support and Retirement Adjustment**

Existing literature have shown that though retirement is an inevitable part of aging, about 25% of people find the transition highly stressful and thus experience a marked reduction in overall well-being (Wang & Ghose, 2006). Retirement occasions changes in daily routine, income, status, social contacts, together with start of a new postretirement lifestyle. According to Jetten *et al.*, (2015), insufficient planning and voluntariness of retirement are some of the major factors that contribute to such stress. Hence, successful transition to retirement was agued to be heavily influenced by proper financial planning and management. However, rivulets of more recent studies have found this to be insufficient, instead highlighting the role of other factors such as support from social groups (Yeung & Zhou, 2017). According to Allison and Meyer (1988) social relationships have demonstrated capacity to protect health and well-being in a range of challenging and adverse transition situations for individuals including retirement adjustment. This finding is also supported by Muratore (2010) and Hesketh, Griffin & Loh (2011), who variously reported that additional factors that influence the transition include subjective health status, individual differences in coping styles, personal mastery and attitudes toward retirement. Related studies on transition to retirement have reported similar findings and concluded that identification with meaningful social groups such as family, friends has beneficial effects in the contexts of transition during significant life's changes (Jetten *et al.*, 2015).

### **3.6 Entrepreneurship Training**

The meaning of the concept of entrepreneurship has evolved since the 17th Century when this concept first came into attention. Currently, many people simply equate it with starting one's own business, but most researchers believe it is more than that. In the 20th century, Schumpeter (1934) focused on how the entrepreneur's drive for innovation and improvement creates upheaval and change. Schumpeter (1934) therefore described entrepreneurship as the force of creative destruction whereby established ways of doing things are destroyed by the creation of new and better ways to get things done. In the same vein, Sarasvathy and Venkataraman (2011) have subsequently described entrepreneurship as a process of opportunity recognition, the creation of goods and exploitation opportunities. Block, *et. al.*, (2017) in discussing Schumpeterian Entrepreneur, observed that entrepreneurship can be viewed as the capacity for innovation investment and expansion in new markets, product and techniques. Other researchers have defined entrepreneurship variously. For instance, Cole (1959); purposive activity to initiate and develop profit-oriented business; McClelland (1961); moderate risk taking, decisions and judgements about the coordination of scarce resources. However, from a functional view point, entrepreneurship can be defined as a combination of activities including the perception of market opportunities, gaining command over scarce resources, purchasing input, producing and marketing of a product, responding to competition, and maintaining relation with regulatory agencies for purposes of payment of taxes and acquisition of business licenses.

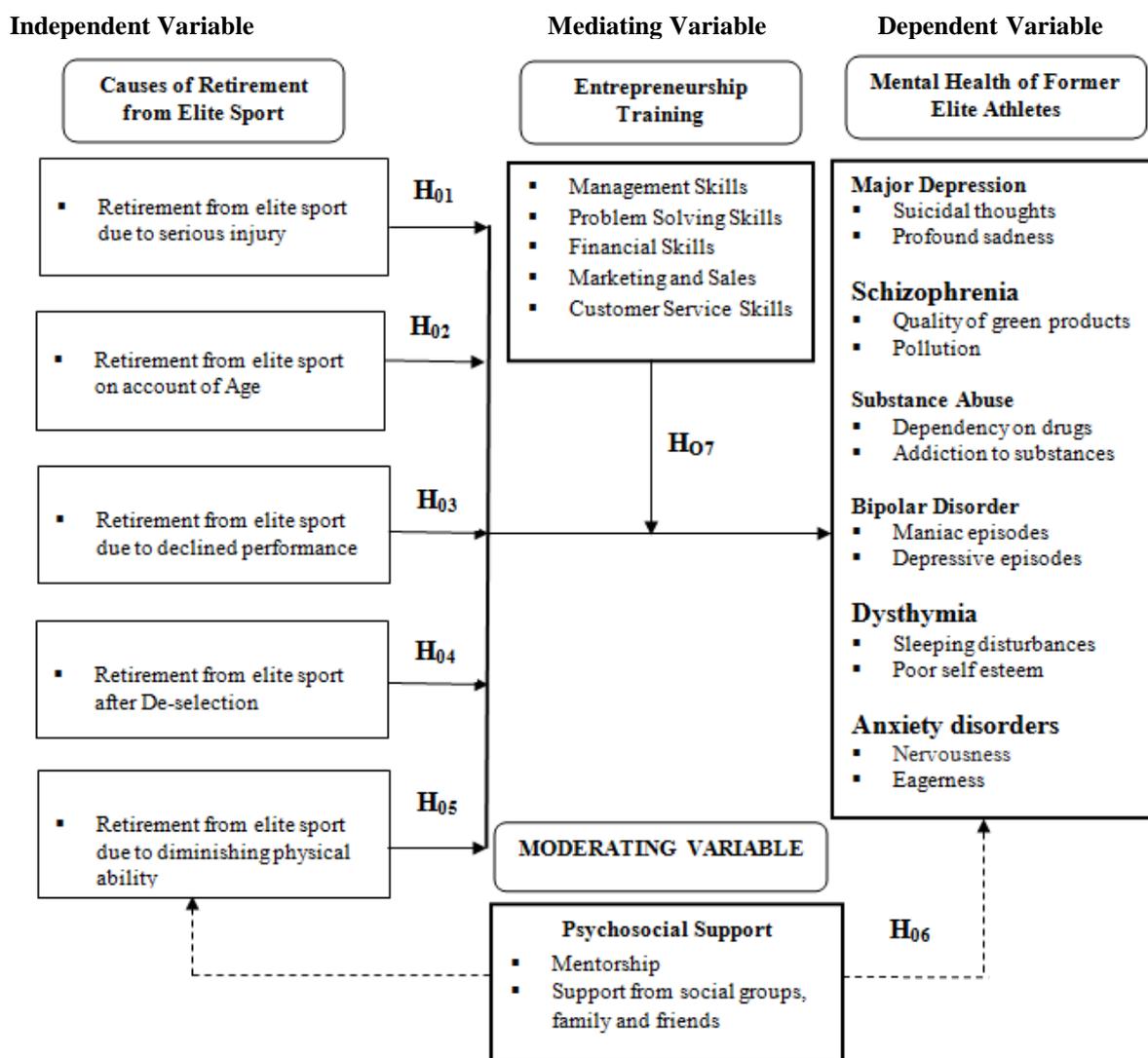
An entrepreneur can therefore be said to be a person who takes calculated risk and brings a unique idea to run a startup company in order to create utility for self and for the welfare of humanity (Sarasvathy & Venkataraman, 2011). Entrepreneurial businesses therefore generate value through the creation of new products, process or markets (Sinha, Akoorie, Ding & Wu, 2011). Through entrepreneurship, communities improve their standard of living (Banjoko, *et.al*, 2012), enables self-reliance by entrepreneurs after setting up businesses that allows them to reap the rewards for themselves (Haltiwanger, *et al.*, 2010). To successfully start and effectively manage a business that could give a livelihood to support self, family and contribute to local community's economic activity, entrepreneurs need to develop their entrepreneurial skills (Henry, Hill, Leitch, 2004). Through entrepreneurial training, entrepreneurs have the chance to reposition themselves in their business environment by enhancing their competencies and to finally redesign their startups towards sustainability.

Some of the required skills and knowledge by entrepreneurs in order to start and successful management a business enterprise include Management Skills to manage resources, including time, money and staff helps the entrepreneur achieve set goals (Henry, Hill & Leitch, 2004; Sinha, Akoorie, Ding & Wu, 2011); Problem Solving Skills to enable planning and good decision making sometimes under pressure (Klofsten, 2000), Financial Skills to enable forecast of cash flow and sales, as well as monitor the profits and losses (Klofsten, 2000; Henry, Hill & Leitch, 2004), and Marketing, sales and customer service Skills to enable the entrepreneur to effectively promote his/her products and provide good customer service (Henry, Hill, Leitch, 2004). Entrepreneurship training may therefore be important in enabling elite athletes transitioning out of sport to bring creativity into the marketplace, creates businesses with the potential to hire millions of people and brings new products and / or services to the market place. Transitioning athletes may also mobilize their own and/or borrowed funds, which can lead to capital formation, resulting in creation of wealth that is very essential for economic development (Kreiser, *et al.*, 2013). Such entrepreneurial businesses by transitioning elite athletes especially those that would be modelled to pay attention to the economic, social and environmental impact parameters of their products and investments, would result in not only improving society and the environment

(Gatukui & Gatuse, 2014), but also help alleviate poverty and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity (De Clercq & Voronov, 2011; Henry, Hill & Leitch, 2004). Entrepreneurship training to transition elite athlete may present myriad opportunities including providing solutions to various economic, social and environmental challenges. It is therefore subject to research across many scientific disciplines, the importance investigating of the interplay between causes of retirement, psychosocial support and mental health of transitioning elite athlete.

#### 4. Proposed Theoretical Framework

This study reviewed extensive empirical and theoretical literature related to causes of retirement, entrepreneurship training, psychosocial support and mental disorders with reference to athletes transitioning from elite sport. The study identified data gaps on the correlation between causes of retirement, entrepreneurship training, psychosocial support and mental health of former elite athletes. The position taken by this paper is that there is need to re-think the current frameworks and develop an integrated model incorporating causes of retirement, entrepreneurship training and psychosocial support to register impact on the mental health of athletes transitioning from elite sport. The following is the proposed theoretical framework that demonstrates the role of entrepreneurship training and psychosocial support on the link between causes of retirement and the mental health of athletes transitioning from elite sport. The model shows the interplay of the relevant factors upon which propositions at the abstraction level can be advanced and empirically tested as hypotheses.



Source: Author (2020). Conceptualizing Cause of Retirement, Entrepreneurship Training, Psychosocial support and Mental Health of former elite athletes.

#### **4.1 Propositions**

##### **4.1.1 Causes of Retirement for elite athletes**

Streams of research have reported on the causes of retirement for elite athletes. Voluntary or compulsory transition out of elite sport due to injury or age-related reasons, occurs at a relatively younger age as compared to other conventional careers (Gouttebauge, *et. al.*, 2019; Wylleman *et al.*, 2004). In a study by Rintaugu, *et al.*, (2016), athletes may retire at any time due to numerous factors such as serious injury, lack of attractive incentives, diminishing physical ability, lack of encouragement from significant others, and de-selection or declined performance relative to new entrants into the game. This view is also shared by Muscat (2010) and Jodai & Nagawa (2011) who also emphasized the uncertainty attached to elite sporting careers.

**Proposition 1 (P1):** *Causes of Retirement determines the mental health of athletes transitioning from elite sport but mediated by entrepreneurship training.*

##### **4.1.2 The Role of Entrepreneurial Training**

Entrepreneurial training allows the acquisition of required knowledge and skills set needed to develop, sustain and lead a business organization. The more developed an entrepreneur's skills, the better able to respond to environmental forces so as to grow and sustain the business. Such competencies which may be taken to imply the understanding of principles, facts, processes and the interactions among them is of higher value for entrepreneurship if it is related to specific entrepreneurial activities (Marvel *et al.*, 2016). An entrepreneur should have knowledge of the market, of relevant technologies or of how to run a firm. Therefore, it can be summarized that relevant knowledge and skills set is an important predictor of entrepreneurial outcomes (Krieger, *et. al.*, 2018). Based on this, the study proposes that:

**Proposition 2 (P2) & 3 (P3):** *Entrepreneurship training mediates the relationship between causes of retirement and the mental health of athletes transitioning from elite sport*

##### **4.1.3 The role of Psychosocial Support**

According to Adams & Rau (2011) and Yeung and Zhou (2017), have reported that factors such as financial planning and management are important though insufficient in guaranteeing the mental wellbeing of transitioning athletes, instead highlighting the role of other factors such as support from social groups. According to Marmot (2015), social relationships have demonstrated capacity to protect health and well-being in a range of challenging and adverse transition situations for individuals including retirement adjustment. This finding is also supported by Leung and Earl (2012) who reported that additional factors that influence the transition include subjective health status. Thus, the study proposes that:

**Proposition 4:** *Psychosocial support moderates the relationship between causes of retirement and the mental health of athletes transitioning from elite sport.*

## **5. Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to review existing literature, identify gaps in the phenomenon of causes of retirement, entrepreneurship training, psychosocial support and psychological disorders for athletes transitioning from elite sport and finally propose a conceptual model providing propositions for filling up the identified gaps. The reviewed writings show that psychological disorders by retired athletes relate directly to causes and challenges arising from transitioning from elite sport. This study has suggested more studies to clarify the nature of relation between the relevant variables. While this study contributes to existing literature, the study has identified emerging data gaps and came up with critical propositions for purposes of progressing knowledge and forming a basis for future studies to inform policy, promote mental health and relational wellbeing of current and former elite athletes.

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