

Abstract

Topic: The Factors Influencing Early Termination of Swimming Career in China

Goals: We studied a number of young Chinese swimmers who experienced early retirement. Great attention is paid to the reasons why Chinese swimmers ended their careers at a relatively young age. The goal of this thesis is to find out reasons that make Chinese swimmers choose to end their career during their top-performance period and at a much younger age compared with their counterparts worldwide. Meanwhile, finding potential solutions to the situation is also considered as one of the goals of the thesis.

Methods: On the basis of literature review, in this study, we collect the characteristics of Chinese swimmers who have experienced early intensive specialized training by conducting observation, interviews, and questionnaires.

Results: The number of Chinese swimmers who took early retirement increased incredibly during past twenty years. According to the interviews and the results of the questionnaires, the reasons why Chinese swimmers tend to finish their career at a relatively young age can be classified as follows: 1. Despite the professional training, they lack the spirit while they are training. 2. There are few materials guarantees after they finish their career. 3. Not all swimmers are given what they deserve due to the unbalanced policy. 4. Swimmers drop out of academic classes and other activities at a young age, focusing only on swimming. These reasons affect their future after they finish their career. Despite entering universities, lack of the educational background limits their majors only to those related to sport. Besides, full-time training brings physical injuries and mental fatigue. These factors lead the trend of finishing their career at a relatively young age among Chinese swimmers.

Keywords: Chinese swimming, early retirement, athlete retirement policy, bone age