

The Impact of Forced Retirement on Professional Athletes

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The Impact of Forced Retirement on Professional Athletes

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Instructor Approval

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Accepted by the Department of Kinesiology, Sport Studies, and Physical Education, SUNY Brockport, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Science in Education (Physical Education).

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Abstract

The Impact of forced retirement on professional athletes is prevalent throughout all professional sports. This review explores the key factors associated with involuntary retirement from sport, the impact it has on professional athlete's wellbeing, and the process of preparing for retirement as a whole. Throughout the process of gathering information there was a total of 10 critical mass peer reviewed articles that included a total of 469 participants. Researchers used various data collection methods to gather information. Findings indicated a variety of important variables that coexist throughout the process of forced retirement in sports; including one's overall life satisfaction, various stressors, and the most common in injuries. It is clear that involuntary retirement is a tragic outcome caused by a professional athlete's passion to compete for his/her choice of sport.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Retirement is considered the conclusive withdraw from one's position or occupation (Lowe, 2015). In order to develop a stronger understanding of retirement from sports, it is beneficial to look at the concept of retirement in general (Lowe, 2015). Outside of athletics, retirement is something people of older age actually look forward to. It allows them to settle down and enjoy life. As a retiree, you no longer have the same obligations as when you are employed. This means less potential stress, more relaxation, and more quality time with family or friends. There are various reasons why people work toward retirement, chief among these are longevity and the freedom from tedious work (Palmore, 2017). Retirement may have both positive and negative connotations. On one hand, it could be seen as an earned opportunity for leisure time after a life time of clocking in. Or on the other hand, it may be viewed as a loss of income or status for one who is in need.

The retirement of a 65-year-old English teacher after a 40-year career and the retirement of a professional athlete after his displacement by a younger player are completely different. The 65-year-old has taught the same classes and courses over his 40-year career. Therefore, when he files for retirement his view will be drastically dissimilar from the athletes. It will then be a time for relaxation and leisure. Within the athlete's case, this is considered as an instance of involuntary retirement (Lowe, 2015). This is the most common form of retirement among professional athletes as it encompasses illnesses or disabilities (Lowe, 2015). Retirement may mark the first time in the athlete's life when he is deprived of the satisfactions the sport has always given him (Lowe, 2015). Lowe also states "It will be an adjustment to an unfamiliar lifestyle in which he may not be able to rely upon sports to provide certain satisfactions" (2015, pg. 45). This is then recognized as a premature ending to his careers as a professional athlete.

Forced retirement for athletes is more prevalent than the average person working a 9-5 job. Professional athletes are prone to sustaining serious sport related injuries due to the massive pressure to succeed, traumatic events, and the common occurrence of psychological factors, which in some cases may lead to career termination (Pitcho-Prelorntzos, 2019). As professional athletes, the amount of pressure to succeed is implausible. Typically, when an athlete's pressure to succeed becomes too excessive, athletes either freeze up in competition or overthink their next action. This may also lead to injuries throughout that athletes' career. It is vital for athletes to find ways to cope with pressure or focus on something else because there will always be distractions that may cause an athlete to fail. For example, whether those distractions are coming from home, a fan of the opposing team on the road, or a minor disagreement with the coaching staff, entirely focusing on what makes one feel pressure or distracts them, tends to turn their athletic performance into a life or death proposition (DeGrave, 2019).

There has been a surplus of athletes that are forced to conclude their careers prematurely for psychological factors related to injuries (Pitcho-Prelorntzos, 2019). Psychological factors are defined as characteristics or social factors that influence an individual psychologically and/or socially. "Such factors can describe individuals in relations to their social environment and how these affect physical and mental health" (Kristenson, 2020, pg. 3). Meaning psychological factors like stress and depression can have a negative effect on athlete's well-being. Unfortunately, the relation between negative psychological factors and sports can occasionally result in injury. For example, throughout the 2020 NBA Playoffs 10 of the league's biggest stars fell to injuries months after the inclusion of various COVID-19 restrictions throughout the country. Although injuries are part of the sport, the added restrictions may have resulted into added stress on these players lives. Psychological stress and injuries can

occasionally coexist as an athlete may be experiencing them prior to getting injured (Pitcho-Prelorentzos, 2019).

Professional athletes are amongst the best athletes in the world. Almost everything they do is in regards to their play on the court. Retirement is just the beginning, it's also the possible wear and tear involuntary retirement can cause on one's mental state. NFL Star Luke Kuechly recent retired during the 2020 NFL season due to the common occurrence of concussion related injuries. Kuechly provided fans with a few specifics for his motives to retire, but ultimately, he referred to the choice to retire as opposed to a medically forced retirement. From 2016- 2019 NFL seasons, Kuechly suffered from three concussions with one leaving him in tears. Being aware of the dangers of CTE, (Chronic traumatic encephalopathy) which is currently connected with some high-profile suicide and murders from Aaron Hernandez to Junior Seau, Kuechly decided to make the best move for him. Although Luke Kuechly was forced to retire from the field due to concussions and injuries, he still remains a Carolina Panther today. Shortly after his retirement, he joined the Panthers as a professional scout. With responsibilities including, watching film, opponent breakdowns, and much more. The number of forced retired athletes that return to sports are very slim but the reason for return is the affect forced retirement had on their lives after it was all said and done (Roberts, 2016).

Statement of Problem

Professional athletes are amongst the best athletes in the world, and their participation in sports are often associated with numerous physical and psychological health benefits (Esopenko, 2020). But, their participation can also involve negative consequences such as career ending injuries or illnesses, which may have long term effects on their mental health. Esopenko. (2020) went on to mention that, "recent research suggests that involuntary retirement, due to injury,

illness, or mental health issues, can be particularly detrimental to an athlete's life" (p. 3). With the implementation of support programs and educational resources for those that were forced to retire from sports, it would allow athletes to intervene early, thus reducing the potential long-term psychological burden future professional athletes may experience (Esopenko, 2020)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this synthesis is to review the literature on the impact of forced retirement on professional athletes.

Operational Definitions

1. Forced Retirement – Forced retirement is the involuntary job termination of a professional athlete.
2. Professional Athletes – A professional athlete competes individually or as part of a team in organized professional sports leagues.

Research Questions

1. What are factors which lead to the athletes early forced retirement?
2. Have any of these athletes ever planned for their transition out of sports?
3. What impact does forced retirement have on athlete's overall well-being?

Delimitations

1. The articles used for this synthesis project were peer reviewed.
2. The articles were all published between the years 2010 and 2021.
3. The articles focused primarily on the forced retirement of professional athletes from sports.

Chapter 2: Methods and Procedures

The purpose of this chapter is to review the methods and procedures used to determine the impact of forced retirement on professional athletes. The various studies used throughout this synthesis were located from the Sport Discus database within EBSCO from the SUNY Brockport Drake Memorial Library.

Using Sport Discus, the following terms were used to determine the impact of forced retirement on professional athletes: “Forced retirement”, “Professional athletes + involuntary retirement”, and “Professional athletes + retirement”. These expressions were used to search and select articles for this synthesis. First, the phrase Professional athletes + retirement produced 346 search results. The phrase “Forced retirement” produced 94 search results. Thus lastly, the phrase “Professional athletes + involuntary retirement” produced 17 search results.

Prior to including articles within the review of literature, it had to meet a specific criterion. First, according to the criteria all articles must be peer reviewed in order to be considered for inclusion within this synthesis. Second, the characteristics of the articles within the critical mass included each article focusing on the several causes and effects of forced retirement within professional sports and specific athletes’ lives. The final number of articles included in the critical mass after applying the criteria of inclusion was 10 peer reviewed articles.

Throughout each database, all articles were found from a variety of different journals. These journals included the following titles: Journal of Psychology, Sport, and exercise, Journal of Sport Sciences, International Journal of Athletic Therapy and Training, European Journal of Sport Sciences, Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology, Journal of Aging and Human, The Sport

Psychologist. The journal of sport sciences provided over 3 articles for this synthesis, making it the most used journal source throughout this synthesis project.

There was an extensive number of participants within each of the articles used for this synthesis project. All participants were either current or former professional athletes. Throughout all of the articles that made the inclusion criteria there was a total of 469 participants. Out of those 469, 357 of them were recently retired due to involuntary retirement for numerous reasons like injuries, mental effects, health, and more. The other 112 participants were still professionally active but they were stressed with battling issues like repeated injuries that threatened the continuation of their professional athletic careers.

The articles that were researched for this synthesis project were analyzed in a plethora of ways. Although researchers used several ways to gather their data, only two types of analysis methods were used to examine the data collected. First, the most common analysis of data used was descriptive analysis. Descriptive data analysis uses past data to answer the “what happened” questions now. There were seven articles throughout this synthesis that used this form of data analysis to analyze data.

The second most used analysis throughout the three other articles researched for this synthesis project used previous experiences and statistics from professional athletes they interviewed to make predictions and determine future outcomes. The surveys consisted of various questions related to their professional careers and their experiences involving stress and depression. These three articles also required participants to complete surveys prior to and following the workshops to determine how each athlete’s perspective changed over time.

Chapter 3: Review of Literature

This purpose of this chapter is to present a review of literature on the impact of forced retirement on professional athletes' lives. In particular the following topics will be reviewed, factors that lead to forced retirement, professional athletes' anticipation for their transition out of sports, and how important an athlete's overall life satisfaction is to their wellbeing.

Factors that Lead to Forced Retirement

Stress and Depression

Both stress and depression have been cited as factors that influence performance and social functioning of athletes. Over the years, studies on stress within sports have begun to develop rapidly. Roberts (2014) and Thomson (2018) both discussed some of the concepts and methods that were designed to examine the relationship between stress and sports performance. Thomson believes the athlete experience is what is most vital in terms of managing stress in sports. He interviewed 20 retired athletes who had sustained a concussion throughout their careers to determine the prevalence of depression following their concussions. Results showed that 24% of retired players who had experienced a concussion also identified as having depression (2018). Similarly, Roberts also stated current athletes are at risk of suffering from a host of adverse physical and mental health consequences as a result of the high demands associated with their roles as athletes. The purpose of this study was to enhance future research on the career termination process. He interviewed nine individuals whom were professional cricket athletes to determine whether the devaluation of their sport caused their stress levels to rise. Results showed that their stress was caused by the sports depreciation and not by their coaches. Therefore, they both can agree that the relationship between stress and sports

performance is extremely complex and involves the interaction between the stressor and the psychological characteristics of the individuals performing it.

Most athletes throughout all levels of sport, experience various stressors that can possibly affect their ability to perform. A stressor is simply something that can cause a state of strain or tension. Roberts (2014) believes a stressor is hypothesized as an overly taxing demand to which individuals must respond or adapt, such as an injury or negative life event. Roberts (2014) also states current athletes are at risk of suffering from a host of adverse physical and mental health consequences as a result of the high demands associated with their roles as athletes. The impact that stress or depression can have on an athlete's career is endless, it can eventually lead to involuntary retirement and mental health issues following their athletic careers.

Like Thomson (2018), Wippert (2010) also examined the effects of involuntary athletic career termination stemming from psychological distress factors. Wippert (2010) believes the transition out of competitive sports result in increased levels of stress and depression, and can lead to an identity crisis. This is understandable, as professional athletes they are the best at what you do athletically, and when something of that stature is taken away from them, the burden is challenging to bare. The purpose of this study was to observe the terminated athlete's psychopathological distress, control perception, and mood following career termination. The researched collected data from 42 professional athletes using a list of standardized questionnaires. Results proved that athletes occasionally display significantly stronger psychological distress after professional events. Both Wippert (2010) and Thomson (2018) believe athletic identity has proven to be a crucial factor in the transition out of competitive sport among athletes. But, Thomson specifically focused on the aspect of depression within football athletes on their way out of the sport.

To further the research base, a study in which researchers examined the experiences of elite athletes who have been diagnosed with depression was reviewed. Depression is viewed as the feeling of severe misery and dejection. Sanders (2017) believes career ending injury is often associated with higher odds of depression during retirement, while also experiencing chronic pain and maintaining a high sense of athletic identity. The purpose of this study was to identify factors that increased the risk of mental health problems after career termination. His study examined 307 retired professional football players and measured depressive symptoms, chronic pain, and athletic identity. The results suggested that career ending injuries are strongly associated with higher odds of depression during retirement (2017).

Ramele (2017) and Thomson (2018) both have similar views on mental disorders and their effect on professional athletes, both active and retired. Ramele believes the more obstacles that professional athletes encounter the greater the impact on their mental health. The purpose of this study was to explore the incidence of symptoms of common mental disorders. Ramele created a list of questionnaires consisting of 5 questions which he asked former professional NFL athletes about to determine their connection between mental health and sports. Results showed that retired professional football players are more likely to report distress within 12-month post retirement. The incidence of symptoms ranged from 11 to 29%. In dealing with professional athletes, depression can be both a precursor to and a result of injury (2017).

Injuries

Sports participation is associated with the numerous physical and psychological health benefits that one can reap. But, they also involve the negative consequences such as career ending injuries. The negative feelings the athlete experiences after being injured is extremely overwhelming and may lead to involuntary early retirement. Throughout all sports, the leading

cause for early forced retirement is injuries (Esopenko, 2020). The reality is, for all athletes, injuries are unexpected and can happen to anyone. Whether that injury is career ending or a repeated, being forced out of competition can be devastating. Barth stated, “it’s more than losing your sport, at that point you may feel like you’ve also been stripped of your identity” (2020, pg. 54)

Elite athletes have been taught to train extensively for most of their lives in many cases. For many athletes, retirement is something they do not wish to think about. But, in time, all athletes’ careers will eventually end whether this is through age, injury, or fatigue. DeGrave, Pack, and Hemmings (2017) took a deeper look into forced retirement within the sport of cricket. The purpose of this study was to document the lived experiences of professional cricketers who had encountered a career ending injury. They interviewed a group of 12 former professional cricket players whom were forced to retire due to injury. The experiences from these athletes indicated that their career ending injuries aided their subjective system of meaning and thereby disrupted the coherence of their life narrative (2017). This shows how experiences like detrimental injuries can negatively affect one’s life and those around them. Results showed that participants worried about financial matters being a burden, since they no longer had the income they had while playing cricket.

Pitcho-Prelorentzos (2018) also provided an in- depth look into involuntary retirement caused by injuries of professional athletes. The purpose of this study was to reveal how Israeli athletes construct their retirement from sports due to career ending injury through the prism of constructivist. Methods and procedures consisted of the use of in depth semi structured interviews on 12 profession athletes whom were forced to retire due to injury. In this sense, these athletes transition out of sports is not only the most challenging but it is also the last time they’ll

be able to be acknowledged as professionals. Results demonstrated 3 key themes including degradation, void, and ambiguity. Degradation is referred to the process of wearing down, void is defined by the terms not valid or legally binding, and lastly ambiguity is the process of being open to more things. He states, after injury, it is the retirement transition when athletes decide to take advantage of the resources he or she has developed throughout their athletic career. Such as, investing, coaching, and much more they wouldn't be able to do while being professional athletes.

Esopenko (2020) and Sanders (2017) both examine the process of involuntary retirement for professional athletes. Esopenko (2020) focused on the challenges professional ice hockey players faced while battling injuries. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of career threatening injuries on professional ice hockey players wellbeing and career construction. Subjects included two professional ice hockey players who participated in a series of three interviews, examining transnational athletes career development. After interviews were conducted, the findings demonstrated that being injured led both players to experience existential isolation. Which means it was emotionally difficult for them to be present in practice or games. On the other hand, Sanders (2017) examined over 300 participants in a cross-sectional study to identify the factors that assisted in their termination prematurely. He states career ending injury is often associated with higher odds of depression during retirement, while experiencing chronic pain, and maintaining a high sense of athletic identity (2017). Results showed that former professional athletes with depressive symptoms were more likely to cite injury as a reason for retirement. Both authors believe the vital part of experiencing a potential career ending injury is the participants experiences of reluctantly, stress, and depression.

Transition Out of Sports

Barth (2020) also looked into the effects of involuntary retirement, but from the perspective of nine professional soccer athletes. The purpose of this study was to investigate soccer players reasons for retirement. Participants stated, “As a professional athlete, you must set aside financial currency occasionally so if you ever faced retirement earlier than expected, your transition would be smoother” (Barth, 2020, pg. 5) Throughout the study, Barth incorporated the use of systematic review on the nine professional participants. Results showed that 45 to 63% of former professional soccer players failed to prepare for retirement which left them in a bad position financially.

Similarly, NBA veteran Al Harrington was forced to retire due to a staph infection in his right knee from a repeated right torn meniscus injury. “Doctors expressed to Al that if he doesn’t take control of his injury at its current state, he may eventually suffer from long term physical incapability and psychological effects” (Lowe, 2015, pg. 2). The purpose of this study was to prove that investing and preparing for retirement as an athlete is beneficial. It has been said that if injuries go untreated, they may worsen in the future leading to harmful consequences on the mind and body (2015). So, Although Al continued to adjust and battle the infection, it took a toll on him. Here sparks a sudden interest in retirement preparation from Al. His decrease in self-satisfaction from injury forced him to look to the future (2015). Results showed that Al Harrington eventually lost his battle against injuries and was forced to conclude his career after 16 professional seasons in the NBA. Although Al was forced to retire due to injury, his transition to retirement was much simpler than most due to his preparation toward the end of his career.

Overall Well-Being

Life Satisfaction

Throughout their careers, athletes may disregard the importance of their overall life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is the level to which a person evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as a whole (Roberts, 2014). It may also be considered as the way in which people show their feelings and emotions about their direction or plan for the future. The purpose of this study was to enhance readers understanding of the career termination process and its effects on professional athletes' life satisfaction. The importance of life satisfaction within athletics doesn't get enough exposure. Athletes may understand why athletics is beneficial for their bodies, but fail to realize the benefit on their mental health it provides as well. Methods consisted of interviewing former male professional athletes whom were recently retired. Results showed that the participants reasons for the decreases in their overall well-being were sport devaluation, lack of communication, and reluctant retirees.

On the other hand, Wippert (2010) believes higher levels of life satisfaction are associated with better overall physical health and fewer long-term health conditions (2010). That is, the higher quality of life of an athlete would result in better athletic performance, increased commitment, and greater career satisfaction. With continuous low rates of life satisfaction, athletes may risk themselves physically and mentally while interacting with sports. Wippert (2010) examined athletes whom were both current or former professional sports players whom have had troubles with their mental health. First, all athletes displayed a significantly stronger psychological distress after their sports events were done. After conducting research, Wippert concluded that these athletes had the wrong perspective of life satisfaction. Athletes believed just the involvement of sports would separate them from others and that was far from the case; life

satisfaction has to be better understood by athletes. Wippert states, “individuals with high life satisfaction tend to have more positive social relationships, more support, and experience greater relationship satisfaction compared to those with lower levels of life satisfaction” (2010, pg.10). High satisfaction levels have a significantly lower risk of injury than individuals with low satisfaction. New research finds that higher life satisfaction is associated with better physical, psychological and behavioral health. Sports has always played a vital role for the health and well-being of athletes. Generally, sport is exercise and exercise can reduce stress, improve health, and reduced feelings of depression.

Summary

There may be those that overlook the importance of life satisfaction and overall well-being in sports, but there are others that believe that trends within an athlete’s overall life satisfaction can positively or negatively affect their lives and careers. Generally, injuries may always be the leading cause of forced retirement within professional sports. But, in this day in age professional athletes have all of the assets they need to work on themselves and potentially prevent any potential injuries or setbacks. The importance of quality of life throughout sports is crucial. Negatively, they may face involuntary retirement, injuries, and mental health issues after sports. On the other hand, positive life satisfaction would be beneficial to an athlete after sports and retirement. Instead of perturbing, athletes may focus on their health and wellness, family, and the next step in their journey after athletics. Moving forward, this information will be used to determine what effects forced retirement has on professional athletes.

Chapter 4:

Results, Discussion, and Recommendations for Future Research

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the review of literature on the impact of forced retirement on professional athletes and how these results align with the purported research questions which guided this synthesis project. In addition, recommendations for future research as it relates to involuntary retirement are presented as well.

The outcomes of this review of literature presented a wide range of results as it pertains to the impact of involuntary retirement on professional athletes. However, there is no clear-cut decision on how the effect of forced retirement has on professional athletes. The majority of research on this topic showed that athletes whom were forced to retire often felt drastic decreases in their overall quality of life, in terms of lack of motivation and depression. Research has also indicated that with more time away from sports, those who were forced to retire occasionally return to sports with a different title and mindset.

The literature review has also displayed that the most common key factors that led to professional athletes forced retirement consist of a wide range of health and injury complications.

Interpretations

There were several research questions formed to support this topic prior to the literature review. The first question was, what key factors led to the athletes early forced retirement? Results from previous literature reviews presented the biggest factor to be bodily injuries. For example, in Palmore (2017), researchers gathered injury information from NBA veteran Al Harrington, which consisted of his repeated injuries to the same body parts. Thomson (2018) displayed the inclusion of frequently concussed NFL athletes and how they can be detrimental to

an athlete's wellbeing. The work of DeGrave, Pack, and Hemmings (2017) was influential because they used a snowball sampling method to determine how often male professional cricket players encountered a career ending injury. Pitcho-Prelorentzos (2018) displayed a different take from others by incorporating semi structured interviews of Israeli professional athletes. He wanted to determine how these professional athletes construct their lives after being forced to retire due to injury. Esopenko (2020) presented results that harps on the challenges professional ice hockey players face while battling injuries prior to retirement.

The second research question that was examined was, what has been the impact of forced retirement on professional athlete's overall well-being? The results shown throughout numerous studies often displayed traits like depression and stress, and the negative mindset these athletes had on their mental and physical wellbeing. Wippert (2010) demonstrated the importance of learning to observe psychological distress in an athlete following his/her career termination. Ramele and Palmore (2017) also explored the mental health risk in professional NFL players after experiencing symptoms of common mental disorders. Sanders (2017) also provided beneficial evidence that explained how career ending injuries are often associated with increased odds of depression during retirement, while experiencing chronic pain. Roberts (2014) displayed the current status and view of professional athletes that suffer from physical and mental health consequences as a result of the high expectations linked with their roles as athletes. He realized the players felt isolated because of the devaluation of their sport, which caused them to fall under stress.

The final research question created was, have any of these athletes ever planned for their transition out of sports? The results from this literature review showed that professional athletes rarely anticipate for their transition out of sports. Lowe (2015) demonstrated the importance of

roles on a professional team. After hosting a total of 15 interviews with professional athletes whom were forced to retire, results provided participants with a different view of their retirement transition compared to their experiences. The common theme between the 15 was, each of their retirements came as a sudden shock and left them little time to prepare for their transition out. Barth (2020) also investigates professional soccer players reasoning for lacking preparation throughout their retirement transition. Again, the common theme between the athletes were the sudden surprise for retirement preparation rather than competing as professional athletes. Sanders (2017) also found that athletes who experience forced retirement due to injury, lack motivation to prepare for their retirement out of sports. They found it easier to attempt a comeback rather than anticipate the end of their professional athletic careers.

Implications

Previous research on the impact of forced retirement of professional athletes shows that there are various causes and moving parts to an athlete's involuntary retirement. Many of the conclusions of the results are linked throughout this synthesis. The results of this synthesis offer applied implications which can benefit professional athletes throughout the world at any stage throughout their retirement process.

For example, athletes who have experienced various injuries or mental concerns throughout their career may believe their career is coming to an end. When really, it's the mindset of negativity they have toward moving forward throughout their athletic career. Professional athletes are amongst the best competitors in the world, so being able to seek intervention for their mental or physical issues they may be experiencing is another ability that can be used to their advantage. This comes with the assistance from coaches and trainers as well, as it takes a team to keep athletes functioning at their best both physically and mentally.

Promoting safety, strength and conditioning as well as psychological intervention as needed, should continue to be the focal point of support from today's coaches and trainers.

It should also be noted that many variables within this synthesis and previous research correlate on a plethora of stages. Between injuries, mental issues, and life satisfaction previous research provided all the vital information needed to effectively complete this synthesis. Compared to other studies, the findings throughout this synthesis are very similar to what administrators and researchers provided in the past. Although the research provided doesn't challenge any current theories, it does give an entire new perspective on professional athletes and involuntary retirement. In fact, studies show over the last 10 years the rate of forced retirement in professional sports has dropped significantly, resulting in more money and less injuries.

Understanding the causes of involuntary retirement is critical to an athlete's rehabilitation. Today's professional athletes should understand that their bodies are full time investments into professional sports and one minor injury can cost them and jeopardize their future in sports.

Recommendations for Future Research

In reviewing the data based on the impact of forced retirement within professional athletes and other insights related to the literature. The following recommendations for future research should be considered:

1. Future research should continue to develop new variables that can impact the turnover time between athletes getting injured and returning to their choice of sport.
2. Future research should require colleges and high schools to hold general meetings to determine the prevalence of depression among concussed athletes and associated intervention programs.

3. Future research should provide a perspective on athletes putting sufficient retirement plans in motion at the early stages of their careers to reduce external and internal stressors. Which if not addressed, can increase sport injury risk and have a negative effect on athletes' reactions post-injury.
4. Future research should include the next steps in terms of forced retirement, in terms of other themes that may emerge due to forced retirement from professional sports.

Summary

The purpose of this literature review was to determine the impact of forced retirement on professional athletes. A thorough search of online databases were used to do an exhaustive search which yielded 10 critical mass articles. These articles were then synthesized to determine if professional athletes were negatively impacted after their involuntary retirement from sports. Research revealed a variety of important variables that coexist throughout the process of forced retirement in sports; including one's overall life satisfaction, various stressors, and the most common in injuries. It is clear that involuntary retirement is a tragic outcome caused by a professional athlete's passion to compete for his/her choice of sport.

To conclude, the relationship between involuntary retirement and professional athletes is one that will last forever. Although there are those athletes whom haven't experienced any traumas after their early retirement, there are still those who may be experiencing it now. There are thousands of professional athletes that compete day to day, when that's taken away from them they may have nothing left to strive for (Lowe, 2015). By looking at the different modalities through which one's athletic career can be ended prematurely, as well as examining the results of forced retirement due to different conditions like injuries and stressors.

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Author	Title	Source	Purpose	Methods & Procedures	Analysis	Findings	Discussion/ Recommendat Research Note Commonalities
Ramele, S. Palmore, A.	Mental health in retired professional football players	Journal of Psychology, Sport, and exercise.	To explore the incidence of symptoms of common mental disorders.	Questionnaires Five questions each questionnaire.	More life events showed a higher risk of experiencing distress.	Retired professional football players more likely to report distress. The 12-month incidence of symptoms ranged from 11 to 29%.	The views of th there is a need current and ret players. Future Researc wide range of a
Esopenko, G. Ronkainen, N.	Is hockey just a game? Contesting meanings of the ice hockey life projects through a career-threatening injury	Journal of Sport Sciences.	To examine the impact of career threatening injuries on professional ice hockey players wellbeing and career construction.	Two Finnish ice hockey players participated in a series of three interviews. Examining transnational athletes career development.	Holistic narrative was conducted to find the difference in themes in each participants life.	Being injured led both players to experience existential isolation. Emotionally difficult to be present in practice or games.	Showed reader of thinking abo injury. Future Researc athletes that ca analysis.

Roberts, C.	An in-depth appraisal of career termination experiences in professional cricket.	Journal of Sport Sciences.	To enhance our understanding of the career termination process.	Nine individuals were involved. Participants had to be male, former professional cricket players, and retired.	Interview generated 75 pages of transcripts.	The participants reasons for retirement included, reluctant retirees, contractual pressures, sport devaluation, lack of communication.	The devaluation causes players undervalued re Players felt iso devaluation of Stress was cau cricket and not
Barth, M.	Retirement of professional soccer players.	Journal of Sport Sciences	To investigate professional soccer players reasoning for retirement.	Systematic review on 9 former professional soccer players.	45 to 63% of former professional soccer players had voluntary terminated their career.	Nine studies considered players short term retirement under 10 years regardless of the type of retirement. (Voluntary or Involuntary).	Soccer players transition out o compared to th suggest many e retire involunta
Thomson, R.	Depression Following Concussion in Retired Professional football players.	International Journal of Athletic Therapy and Training.	To determine the prevalence of depression in retired NFL players following concussion.	Three studies were used because they met criteria of depression diagnosis as an outcome measure.	24% of retired players who had sustained a concussion also identified having depression.	NFL players that have sustained a concussion are more likely to be diagnosed with depression compared to the general population.	Retired players educated them possibilities. Further research determine the p depression ame athletes at othe like high schoo

Sanders, G.	Associations between retirement reasons, chronic pain, athletic identity, and depressive symptoms among former pro footballers.	European Journal of Sport Sciences.	To identify factors that increase the risk of mental health problems after career termination.	A cross sectional study with 307 retired male footballers who had played professional.	Out of 307 participants, 48(16%) of them met the cut off score for possible cases of clinically relevant depression.	Former players with depressive symptoms were more likely to cite injury as a retirement reason.	Career ending associated with depression during while experiencing and maintaining athletic identity.
Wippert, Pia-Maria.	The Effects of Involuntary Athletic Career Termination on Psychological Distress.	Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology.	The purpose of the study was to observe the terminated athlete's psychopathological distress, control perception, and mood following career termination.	Data were collected from 42 professional athletes using standardized questionnaires.	Athletes displayed a significantly stronger psychological distress after events.	Transition should be involved. An involuntary and unpredicted career termination represents a nonnormative transition.	Future research use of active athletes to compare psychological distress involving retirement and involuntary retirement.
Degrave, K. Pack, S. Hemmings, B.	Transitioning out of professional sport: The psychosocial impact of career ending non-musculoskeletal injuries among male cricketers from England.	Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology.	The purpose of this study was to document the lived experiences of professional cricketers who had encountered a career ending injury.	Snowball sampling method was used to approach professional cricketers.	After transcribing each interview, they were all sent to participants for personal review.	Participants talked about financial matters being a burden. Which arose as a result of injury from a source of worry and stress.	Future research athletes for a lifetime. Athletes should have plans in motion for their careers to reduce internal stress. This should be addressed, can reduce injury risk and the effect on athletes after injury.

Pitcho-Prelorentzos, S.	A Shattered dream: Meaning construction in response to retirement from professional sport due to career ending injury.	The Sport Psychologist	The purpose was to reveal how Israeli athletes construct their retirement from sports due to career ending injury through the prism of constructivism.	12 professional athletes whom were forced to retire due to injury participated in in depth semi structured interviews.	Participants created different meanings of their involuntary experience.	Results yielded 3 themes including degradation, void, and ambiguity.	Future research next steps according to specific athletes yielded themes retirement from sports.
Lowe, B.	The Inevitable Metathesis of the Retiring Athlete	Journal of Aging and Human	The purpose of this article is to understand the meaning of retirement.	Interviewed a total of 15 retired athletes whom were forced to retire.	Must understand the true meaning of retirement as a whole.	Results provided participants with a different view of retirement compared to their experiences.	Future research on the athletics. Instead of priming the process of