

# Introspection of Cultural Education and Analysis of Current Vocational State for Retired Athletes in China

**Zhao Shuangshuang, Li Zaihui**

Department of Foreign Language, Chengdu Sports University, Sichuan Province, China  
michellezss1010@163.com, li-zaihui@163.com

**Abstract** - Recent years have witnessed a high-speed development of modern competitive sports. But there are many problems, especially current vocational state and career prospect of retired athletes, which seriously plague the development of national sports undertakings. Why did the problem appear in China? After all, competitive athletes are absorbed in sports training while ignoring cultural education. Nevertheless, cultural education is an essential part of overall qualities and an important way to adapt to modern society. The purpose of this essay is to study retired athletes' current vocational state and introspects their cultural education and thus expands various vocational ways and fields of retired athletes.

**Index Terms** - retired athletes, cultural education, current vocational state

## I. Introduction

China's sports undertakings have been developing with the promotion of its comprehensive national strength. The level of competitive sports is at the top of Asia and the world. Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 has witnessed a success. Although it is at a stage of rapid development, we should be aware of a problem that competitive athletes are eventually suffering from low cultural quality, difficult employment and narrow outlet after retiring. The essay mainly analyses current vocational state of retired athletes and introspects their cultural education in order to expand the vocational ways of retired athletes and enhance competitive athletes' comprehensive qualities.

### A. Current vocational state of retired athletes in China

#### a) Difficult employment

21st Century is the world of talents. As the society T there is a growing need for high-quality talents and so is the sports undertakings. Competitive sports donnot purely depend on strength and technique, but developing into an undertaking, which requires high cultural quality. Nevertheless, competitive athletes are lack of cultural accumulations largely due to professional training since childhood. Gradually, their adaptabilities to modern society become worse and worse. Zou Xiaolan, for instance, is a national weightlifting champion who used to break a world record. But she has a low cultural education and even can not spell. She eventually degenerates into a labor helping others shower. Cai li was praised as "the strongman of Asia" and won the national champion more than 40 times and Asian champion more than 20 times; however, Sports Institute of Technology in Liaoning Province arranged for him to be a guard after retiring because of his low cultural level. The world champion, Qu Yunxia has ever said "I can

not do anything except running." From what has been mentioned above, we can draw a conclusion that these excellent retired athletes fail to adapt to modern fierce society mainly due to their low cultural quality.

#### b) Narrow outlet

The current vocational arrangements for retired athletes are mainly three ways. Firstly, they serve as coaches in professional sports teams, such as: national teams and provincial teams. Secondly, they work for schools as PE teachers. Thirdly, they take charge of clubs and gyms.

It seems that they have a promising vocational arrangement, but actually not. Let's consider the second way. There is a growing tendency for modern society to require overall talents with high education. Let's consider a matter of employment information in Yuzhong District, Chongqing. The educational needs have reached the Master degree, especially for arts and sports students. Therefore, the education prevents retired athletes from the educational industry.

The most important one is that sports industry has a minor requirement for talents; however, there are a large number of retired athletes every year waiting for arrangement. It is the typical situation—demand exceeds supply.

## II. Introspection of cultural education for retired athletes in China

### A. Outdated sports training institution

For a long time, our nation carries an institution that sporting system provides sports training and cultural education for athletes. But this kind of institution separates athletes from the whole educational environment. Under the imperfect environment, we imperfectly educate a special group—competitive athletes who have high skills and techniques, but lack cultural education. That is to say, competitive athletes can do nothing but take part in match.

Our national sports training institution is formed by "Three-level athletes training system"(such as figure 1). One of the most remarkable characteristic is choosing the sports talents from childhood, sending them to professional sports school to carry out sports training, then selecting and eliminating one by one according to training results. Certainly, some athletes can luckily enter national teams to obtain good arrangements after retiring, but the majority of athletes without arrangements have bad environment owing to their low cultural education. This institution fails to render competitive athletes a regular cultural education since childhood.

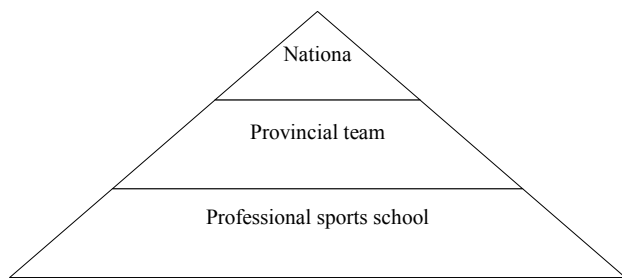


Fig.1 the structure of sports training institution in China

Why did we implement this sports training institution in China?

Before reform and open to the outside world, China is not rich enough to solve the food problem, let alone the sports issue. There was a time when many Asian countries including China were regarded as “the sick man of Asia”. With the advancement of economy, China strives to develop sports undertakings, train the excellent and professional competitive sports talents. The aim is to enter a great sporting nation and a strong sporting nation. This unique sports training institution attaches more importance to professional training and less concentrates on cultural education.

At the first decades, competitive sports undertakings indeed gained the high-speed development. It was fully proved in Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 when our nation achieved a big success. Moreover, it is also a good result of carrying out this unique sports training institution. But we should be aware of the problem that low cultural education can result in “difficult employment and narrow outlet” of retired athletes. And the low cultural education is formed by this kind of sports training institution.

### III. Various vocational ways for retired athletes in China

#### A. Reform of competitive athletes' cultural education is the core.

Under the original sports training institution, we should strengthen the cultural educational cultivation of competitive athletes. “Double value” that emphasizes on sports training and culture is considered as an important part of sports education, improving athletes' professional skills and cultural knowledge.

#### B. Reform of expanding vocational fields is an essence.

Upgrading the cultural education of retired athletes is unable to be achieved in the short term. Thus the basic method of solving the “difficult employment and narrow outlet” of retired athletes in China is to expand the vocational fields.

#### a) The expansion of higher education among the colleges and universities

Retired athletes enter the higher schools through single recruit from sports colleges. Thus, they have the title of excellent athletes plus the cultural education. It is one of the

main ways to address the difficult employment for retired athletes.

#### b) The development of vocational physical education

Many athletes gain the diploma after entering the ordinary colleges and universities; however, most of them remain unemployment, resulting from the limitation of what they major in colleges.

Therefore, the development of vocational physical education plays an important role in solving the problem of “difficult employment and narrow outlet”. Athletes can receive a targeted vocational education and also gain the relevant professional skills to start a new career. Vocational physical education can set up many relevant courses, such as: sports service and management, sports English, sports tourism and sports manager so as to expand the vocational fields.

#### c) The expansion of social influences of sports stars

Sports stars exert a far-reaching influence on popular sports. The recent program—*stars in danger* that is a starts diving program, for example, has witnessed this advantage. It provides retired athletes with opportunities of employment and chances of displaying their professional knowledge. In addition, some pop stars, movie stars and other celebrities are invited by the production team to dive as amateur players. And the retired sports stars act as coaches and judges, such as: Xiong Ni, Tian Liang, Gao Min. The program causes a wide public concern. Besides, these retired athletes amplify the social influences and stimulate a further development and expansion of leisure sports and popular sports.

### IV. Conclusion

As is known to all, athletes' career is short. In early childhood, they train hard; while at later stage, they are obsessed by pains from head to foot. All these sufferings have hidden behind a few glory days. The professional training from childhood can lead to lack of cultural knowledge. This is the main reason why retired athletes are facing the “difficult employment and narrow outlet” problem. Thus, the first step is to strengthen the cultural education. On the basis of analyzing the current vocational state of retired athletes in China, the second necessary thing we should do is to expand the ways of employment. At the same time, retired athletes can also foster a further development and expansion of leisure and popular sports by means of participating in programs with social influences. The final purpose is to develop athletes' overall qualities and make them conform to the times.

### References

- [1] After Gold. What's Next? Chinese Athletes in Retirement. *China Daily*, 2008(12).
- [2] De Xin zou. The Analytical Framework for the Optimal Allocation of Athletes Sustainable Livelihood Assets in China. Proceedings of the 2011 Chinese Control and Decision Conference (CCDC), 2011(05)
- [3] Du Jian kang. The Culture Educational Introspection for Top Athletes in China under the New Situation. *Vocational Education Platform*, 2010(12).

- [4] Huang Mei hao. Analysis of the Current State of and Measures for Vocational Education for Retired Athletes in China. *Journal of Physical Education*, 2009(07).
- [5] Shi Dianhui. Education of Professional Athletes in the Current Situation and Countermeasures *Sport Science and Technology*, 2010(3).
- [6] Wang Lu ning. Research on the Schooling of Chinese Top Athletes. *Journal of NanJing Institute of Physical Education*, 2000(12).
- [7] Zhai Lin hou. On Psychological Problems of Retired Athletes. Proceedings of the Third International Congress Asian-South Pacific Association of Sport Psychology, 1999(10).