

Motivation and Constraints of Athletes' Migration: Foreign Players in Korean Volleyball League (V-League)

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Abstract : An increasing number of athletes, across all sports, are moving from their home countries to play in foreign countries. The migration of athletes, coaches, managers, and administrators within and between nations is an important aspect of the social and cultural changes taking place in modern, global sports. It is especially important to understand the context of these migrations as they are critical factors in the successful development of sports policies. In previous decades, efforts have been made to understand the motives of migrating athletes from a variety of sports, including rugby, cricket, baseball, and soccer. These studies focused on the athletes' motivations, experiences as migrants, and recruit process. However, few studies have been conducted in order to understand athletes' constraints of migration. The concept of constraints in leisure studies refers to the barriers that exist between an individual's desire for participation and an individual's real participation. The study of constraints is not a new topic in the fields of sports and recreation. In addition to understanding the motives that drive athletes to work or play in foreign countries, it is also important to recognize that negative dimensions exist that stop some athletes from migrating. Furthermore, little research has explored what makes athletes consider playing in small and unknown volleyball markets, such as the Korean Volleyball League (V-League). The V-League is a professional men's and women's volleyball league, started in 2005. It consists of seven men's clubs, and six women's clubs and each team has one foreign player. In addition, several limitations are placed on the foreign players, such as on height, position, and salary to play in the V-League. Thus, the main focus of the present research is to understand why foreign athletes (e.g., European, American, Brazil, etc.) are attracted to the V-League, which has a smaller market compared to its neighbors (i.e., China, Japan, and The Philippines). In addition, the current study seeks to identify the negative factors that prevent athletes from playing in the V-League. The participants for this study will be foreign volleyball players participating in the V-League. The investigators will provide a brief introduction to this study and inform the potential participants that they can choose whether to participate in this study. In terms of theoretical saturation, at least 12 participants are generally an adequate number to reach saturation, if they belong to a relatively homogenous group based on culture and ethnicity. This study utilizes a qualitative approach in order to understand the migration experiences foreign volleyball athletes playing in the V-League. The proposed study represents ongoing research to support work conducted by the investigators to understand the possible motivations and constraints for foreign volleyball players playing in the V-League. In addition, significant contributions to scholarship in the field of sports, psychology, and coaching studies will be an outcome of this study along with additions to the body of knowledge in several disciplines, including psychology, sociology, and social work.

Keywords : athletes' migration, motivation, constraints, volleyball

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