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1 “Nobody will be there to do the laundry for you”: A qualitative study 2 of wellbeing in university athletes in two cultures

3 This study explores how British and Hong Kong (HK) university athletes make
4 sense of their wellbeing through sports participation. Semi-structured interviews
5 were conducted with 12 participants: six from British universities and six from
6 HK universities. Interviews were conducted bilingually, enabling code-switching
7 between Cantonese and English to preserve nuances between the cultures.
8 Transcripts were analysed via Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Results
9 indicated that: 1) British and HK participants experienced sport as drawing out
10 strength of character and as a therapeutic agent; 2) British participants claimed
11 that university is an energising environment, yet competing for their university
12 brings emotional turmoil; and 3) HK participants claimed that sport helped
13 maturation, yet HK’s culture is counterproductive to athletic development. Our
14 findings offer a cross-cultural, lifeworld perspective of how being a university
15 athlete may be a double-edged sword. We highlight ways this unique population
16 requires support from policy makers and practitioners in sports and other relevant
17 fields.

18
19 Keywords: Hong Kong; lifeworld; Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis;
20 United Kingdom; university

22 **Introduction**

23 University students are a rapidly growing population. In 1970, there were less than 30
24 million people enrolled in higher education, as attending university was considered an
25 elite privilege for elite and wealthy individuals at that time (Pierce, 2017). Since then,
26 the number of students in higher education has increased dramatically – the worldwide
27 higher education enrolment is predicted to rise from 216 million in 2016 to 380 million

1 by 2030 (ICEF Monitor, 2018). As university degrees are becoming more popular
2 around the world, the wellbeing of students is under threat, especially due to the
3 increase in tuition fees and the need to obtain a good degree (Cooke et al., 2006). Based
4 on recent data collected from the 2018 Student Academic Experience Survey, Neves
5 and Hillman (2018) found that undergraduates reported lower levels of wellbeing than
6 other adults aged between 20 and 24, and that only 17% of these students were happy
7 with their life (4% lower than in 2016), both of which highlighted the need to improve
8 the wellbeing of university students.

9 Traditionally, physical activity and personality are both established predictors of
10 university students' wellbeing, according to quantitative research (Wunsch et al., 2017).
11 Despite its contribution in identifying the antecedents of wellbeing, Mayoh and Jones
12 (2015) recently criticised quantitative studies for not allowing exploration of
13 participants' own self-constructed meanings, that they may be attributed to their
14 wellbeing. They argued that instead of measuring statistical relationships between
15 objective variables, more research should employ qualitative methods to explore the
16 subjective human experiences of wellbeing, especially through the perspective of
17 individuals who are at risk of suffering from negative wellbeing. This study focuses on
18 understanding how university athletes, a unique group deserving scholarly attention,
19 experience and make sense of their wellbeing through their participation in university
20 sports teams. These students tend to be more physically active and report higher levels
21 of desirable personality characteristics like extraversion and conscientiousness than
22 their non-athlete counterparts (Clemente et al., 2016; Cox, 1998). Yet in addition to the
23 common university stressors, such as academic pressure, lack of time, and unfamiliarity
24 of the environment (Hurst et al., 2012), they face various psychological threats to their
25 wellbeing that are less relevant for other university students, such as the loss of "star

1 status” experienced in secondary school, fear of injuries, and internal competition with
2 teammates (Etzel, 2009). Their complex and unique experience may illuminate the
3 mixed findings reported in quantitative studies that compare their wellbeing with that of
4 their non-athlete counterparts. Aries et al.’s (2004) 4-year study showed that collegiate
5 athletes in the United States (US) had significantly higher levels of self-reported
6 wellbeing than other college students, in all four waves of their study. Demirel (2016)
7 compared sedentary or non-athlete university students to athlete university students in
8 Turkey and found higher levels of depressive symptoms and psychological stress in the
9 latter. A study by Wilson and Pritchard (2005) of students at a private Midwestern
10 university found athletes less likely to suffer from social isolation, financial burdens,
11 and decision-making regarding their education than non-athletes. Nevertheless, they
12 also found athletes more likely to suffer from relationship issues and lack of sleep.

13 These mixed findings indicate complexity and diversity in the manifestation and
14 impact of intercollegiate sport on student wellbeing. They may not be fully captured by
15 quantitative studies focused on aggregated data and statistical relationships, as argued
16 by Mayoh and Jones (2015). Qualitative research, on the other hand, may offer rich
17 insights into the complexity of their lived experiences. Based on content analysis of
18 interview data, Blinde et al.'s (1993) study of 24 intercollegiate female athletes in the
19 US reported three personal outcomes of sports participation: 1) bodily competence
20 (increased health consciousness, care of the body, and capability in use and control of
21 different body parts), 2) perceived self-competence (feeling special through being
22 looked-up to by others, self-fulfilment and satisfaction through working hard to reach
23 challenging goals, and self-control through managing emotions and handling tough
24 situations), and 3) a positive approach to life (transferring lessons learnt in the sporting
25 context to other parts of life, including goal-setting, a willingness to challenge

1 themselves and take risks, and coping with failure). Kimball and Freysinger's (2003)
2 interpretative study of 14 athletes at a Mid-Western Division I university highlighted
3 the role of self-determination in their participants' experiences of stress. They
4 concluded that when there was a felt sense of self-determination, sports participation
5 appeared to be a buffer of stress. For example, feelings of empowerment and self-
6 competence through sports helped university athletes to solve the problems in their
7 lives. Yet when there was a lack of self-determination, the sport itself became a source
8 of stress (e.g., a controlling coach made them feel particularly stressed on days they had
9 to train). Using a general inductive approach, Kamusoko and Pemberton's (2013) study
10 of seven athletes from an American institution in the Intermountain West demonstrated
11 how performance played a big role in their participants' wellbeing. They reported that
12 those who were happy with both their individual and team performance noted that
13 playing for the team felt like being part of a family. Yet those who were dissatisfied
14 with either their individual or team performance, claimed this affected them not just on
15 the field, but also in the classroom when questioned and challenged by non-athlete
16 peers. McKenna and Dunstan-Lewis' (2004) action research with ten athletes from a
17 British university found the participants experienced confusion and frustration with
18 priorities. For example, one participant expressed feeling clueless whether the priority
19 should be competing or graduating, and that being an athlete prevented having the
20 normal life that other students enjoyed. Through a constructionist approach, van Rens et
21 al. (2019) explored how eight athletes from an Australian university made sense of their
22 identity and wellbeing. Their findings showed that sport allowed participants to
23 experience a high level of competence, e.g., being able to turn nothing into something;
24 fulfil their need for relatedness, e.g., becoming close friends with people in their squad;
25 and develop as a person, e.g., becoming more resilient. Despite such benefits, they also

1 found that most of their participants experienced difficulty coping with the dual
2 demands from education and sport, especially as many also had full- or part-time jobs to
3 cover the dual expenses of sport and education.

4 In general, qualitative research has demonstrated that while sports participation
5 can enhance a sense of competency and wellbeing in university athletes, it can also
6 create a serious clash with their studies resulting in confusion, frustration, and being
7 stressed out. It is noteworthy, however, that while existing qualitative findings have
8 provided a fuller picture of how university athletes experience and make sense of their
9 sports participation, most of the work has been based on 1) data collected from a single
10 institution (Gayles, 2009), and 2) participants from English-speaking, western countries
11 (Li & Sum, 2017). In relation to the latter issue, Stambulova and Ryba (2013) suggested
12 that to internationalise existing findings and develop culturally specific strategies to
13 support sports during tertiary education, more research should focus on Asian countries.
14 In tune with this view, Mayoh and Jones (2015) argued for more qualitative research on
15 “how different societal groups may experience sport differently, and the impact this
16 might have on their ability to experience a positive relationship between sports
17 participation and personal well-being” (p.250).

18 This study addressed these issues through using Interpretative phenomenological
19 analysis (IPA) (Smith et al., 2009) to enquire into the lived experiences of university
20 athletes from six educational institutions in Hong Kong (HK) and the United Kingdom
21 (UK). The study forms part of a larger multi-method project on the relationship between
22 physical activity and wellbeing in university students and older adults in these two
23 locations. Located in East Asia, HK was a British colony for around 150 years before
24 the handover to China in 1997. Owing to its historical background, HK’s education
25 system is built upon the twin legacies of Chinese tradition and British colonialism

1 (Morris & Adamson, 2010). HK's higher education enjoys a strong reputation (Cheung,
2 2015). With only eight universities, five are rated in the top 20 of Asian universities,
3 according to the Times Higher Education's (2019) world rankings. The strict
4 examination oriented culture of HK may subtract from balanced opportunities for
5 students to develop physically and psychologically (Ng, 2005). Students in HK have
6 been discouraged from exercise – their physical fitness levels are lower than those of
7 their counterparts in Japan, Canada, and the US (Fu et al., 2004). Further, dropping out
8 from competitive sports is common in tertiary education (Hassan et al., 2017). In the
9 UK, on the other hand, university athletes have attracted increasing attention, with
10 several high-level sports men and women attending university (Brown et al., 2015).
11 British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) (2012) reported nearly two-thirds of
12 Olympic Gold Medallists between 1992 and 2012 had been to university.

13 This study recruited participants from the UK due to: 1) its reputation for
14 valuing sporting life (Brown et al., 2015); 2) it is considered the best destination for
15 overseas study among parents and students in HK (British Council, 2017); and 3) the
16 first author had been a university athlete during his undergraduate studies in the UK.
17 IPA, an increasingly popular qualitative approach in sporting research, harnesses the
18 researchers' own subjectivity as a resource in the enquiry into participants' lifeworlds,
19 through the enhanced interpretive activity derived from lived experience (Allen-
20 Collinson, 2009; Smith et al., 2009).

21 We adopted Todres and Galvin's existential-phenomenological theory of
22 wellbeing (Todres & Galvin, 2010; Galvin & Todres, 2011) as an initial interrogative
23 framework, as outlined in a previous study (Chan & Lee, 2020). Drawing on Heidegger
24 (1927 [1962]), the theory proposes that dwelling (rootedness) and mobility (flow),
25 experienced together account for existential wellbeing in its deepest possibility. These

1 may be experienced in any of the six elements of the lifeworld: embodiment, identity,
2 intersubjectivity, mood, spatiality, and temporality (see Table A1 in Appendix). It is
3 noteworthy that specialists on the wellbeing of university athletes also extol the value of
4 articulating individual lived experience. For example, Jolly (2008) argued for a deeper
5 understanding of what it is like to live in their world. Likewise, in their discussion on
6 mental wellness published by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA),
7 Brown et al. (2014) highlighted the importance to listen to intercollegiate athletes and
8 “get to know them as individuals” (p.70).

9 **Method**

10 *Participants*

11 Participants were recruited through a combination of purposive and snowball sampling.
12 The inclusion criteria were: 1) undergraduates from a British or HK university, 2)
13 member of the university’s badminton team, football team, or field hockey team, who
14 had represented their university in their chosen sport, and 3) able to understand English.
15 Twelve students (six from HK, six from the UK; six men, six women; age range 18 to
16 23 years) from six (two British and four HK) universities participated in the study.
17 Smith et al. (2009) recommended a sample size of around three to six participants as
18 most appropriate for IPA’s purpose of understanding and making sense of lived
19 experiences. Football, badminton, and field hockey were chosen as the top three most
20 popular participation sports in the world (BBC Sport Academy, 2017; Pledge Sports,
21 2018). Table A2 (in Appendix) shows the participants’ demographic information. The
22 average length of the interviews was 42 minutes.

23 *Procedure*

1 A semi-structured interview schedule was prepared. A pilot interview was conducted
2 with a HK university athlete in Cantonese, in order to: 1) check the time schedule, and
3 2) ensure the questions made sense in Cantonese. Before the interviews, participants
4 were invited to read an information sheet and sign a consent form. Following agreement
5 to participate, relevant demographic information was noted, including age, year of
6 study, and frequency of playing their sport. Interviews began with relatively
7 straightforward questions focusing on the participants' chosen sport (e.g., "What are
8 your strengths in badminton/football/hockey?"). Participants were then asked about
9 their wellbeing (e.g., "What do you gain from playing badminton/football/hockey at
10 university?") and culture (e.g., "How does the culture of HK/UK affect you as a
11 university athlete?"). Probes (e.g., "Can you explain what you mean by that?" and "Can
12 you think of any examples?") were used throughout the interview. The HK participants
13 had the option of doing the interviews in either Cantonese or English. One HK
14 participant opted for English, the others Cantonese. To ensure that the latter were not
15 misinterpreted, they were invited to read their English translated transcripts and check if
16 the translation correctly captured their meaning. None of them needed to make changes.

17 ***Data Analysis***

18 Analysis was conducted based on Smith et al.'s (2009) IPA guidelines and a published
19 cross-cultural IPA study by Tan et al. (2010). In stage one of the analysis, to obtain a
20 high degree of familiarity with the participants' meanings, their transcripts were read
21 multiple times. In stage two, a lifeworld table was developed for each participant
22 applying an empathic hermeneutic to the transcript (Ricoeur, 1970). In stage three, over-
23 arching themes were derived through searching for connections between participants'
24 themes. Themes that did not fit well with the emerging structure were dropped in this
25 stage. In stage four, the remaining inter-case themes were reconfigured for the HK

1 group and the UK group separately. Finally, the similarities and differences between the
2 two groups were identified.

3 Three main strategies were adopted to increase the credibility of our analyses.
4 First, in order to allow readers to form their own understanding of our data, verbatim
5 extracts which best captured symbolic responses were presented for analytical
6 discussion (Elliott et al. 1999). Second, we employed Smith and McGannon's (2018)
7 suggestion of using a *critical friend* to evaluate the data presented. The second author
8 played this role in multiple stages of the data analysis. For example, in stage two, he
9 reviewed the emergent themes for each of the participants, in terms of whether they 1)
10 captured the essential elements of the lifeworld, and 2) could be re-named or interpreted
11 differently. Third, researcher reflexivity was attended to. Specifically, the first author
12 kept a journal to reflect on how his personal experiences (e.g., attending both primary
13 and secondary education in HK, doing his undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in
14 the UK, being a university athlete in a HK secondary school and in a British university)
15 and understandings (e.g., the two education systems, challenges faced by university
16 athletes, the meaning of wellbeing in the two cultures), could have an impact on the
17 research process. The potential influence of these factors was carefully monitored
18 through regular dialogues with the second author throughout the research process.

19 **Results and discussion**

20 The findings are presented in three sections. The first section focuses on shared themes
21 between participants in the UK versus HK. The second section presents unique themes
22 from the UK participants, and the third section unique themes from the HK participants.

23 ***Shared themes: Sport as therapeutic and drawing out my strength of character***

24 *Sport as therapeutic.* Participants in both cultures experienced their sport as therapeutic.

1 Nicole describes the experience of training with the hockey team:

2 “We’ve got lots of exams and things coming up, so (pause) we’re in the library quite a
3 lot, or we are, you know, doing essays and working quite a lot. So, it’s quite therapeutic
4 in a way that you can just go, you can train, you can be in that environment and just feel
5 really free, and like you can release some of that tension, or some of that energy. Erm,
6 and then, you’re able to like be in a better mind-set. Yeah, it definitely is very
7 therapeutic [...] Once you’re there, you’re there for the training, you’re with everyone
8 else, and it’s just (pause) it feels like other things don’t really matter.” – Nicole

9 Nicole uses her training with the hockey team to cope with academic tension.

10 Todres and Galvin (2010) note that when dwelling is experienced in the dimension of
11 temporality, one is absorbed in the present in a way that is desired. Further, when
12 mobility is experienced in the dimension of identity there is a sense of ‘I can’. Both
13 illuminate Nicole’s experience of wellbeing through her training. In terms of
14 temporality, she feels “really free” and there is a quality to time such that “other things
15 don’t really matter”. In terms of identity, it is notable that she uses the words “you can”
16 four times in succession: “you can go...you can train...you can be...you can release”,
17 indicating the agentic possibilities she experiences. Training for hockey gives her a
18 concrete sense of how she is able, and confers wellbeing in this element of her
19 lifeworld.

20 For Luke, being in the badminton squad provides social opportunities which
21 would otherwise elude him:

22 “It’s a group of people that don’t want to talk about Medicine all the time. Erm, and
23 actually I’ll add to that point, when I’m just socialising with my friends from
24 Medicine (pause) for like a long period of time, I find myself unable to (pause)
25 converse that well with people outside of Medicine, and that scares me. Erm, so I
26 feel that’s so important.” – Luke

1 The extract shows how sport brings balance to Luke as a medical student. Sport
2 allows a corrective, through encountering a greater diversity of people than those from
3 his subject of study. He elaborates that when spending too much time with medical
4 students he feels incapable of conversing with other people, which “scares him”.
5 Badminton offers him an experience of mysterious interpersonal attraction. In other
6 words, it supports his wellbeing through an experience of mobility in the intersubjective
7 element of his lifeworld.

8 Natalie elaborates on how badminton is a vehicle for true friendships:

9 “In university, if I only go to the lectures, it’s very difficult to find true friends, and
10 see them regularly. But because I now play badminton with the uni people twice a
11 week, three hours each time, I see them a lot indeed. We also go to dinner together
12 after training. For example, we had hotpot together recently. We all went to our team
13 captain’s home for that, and to celebrate Chinese New Year as well. So yeah, I have
14 a very solid group of friends because of that.” – Natalie

15 For Natalie, badminton provides a means for meeting up on a frequent and
16 recurring basis. The added social element of dinner after training, in her captain’s flat,
17 celebrating Chinese New Year together, is experienced, by Natalie, socially as “very
18 solid”. Celebrating Chinese New Year has symbolic resonances in HK culture - an
19 activity that is reserved for those who are close, thus it signifies for Natalie a
20 confirmation of her new family and true friendships. There is be a sense of kinship and
21 belonging, indicating that dwelling is experienced in an intersubjective way.

22 Lazarus and Folkman (1984) distinguished methods to cope with stress as
23 problem-focused or emotion-focused. Kim and McKenzie’s (2014) study reported that
24 physical exercise was used as problem-focused coping among university students (e.g.,
25 one participant stated that running gave him time to reflect on what he should do). Luke
26 and Natalie share similar experiences of using their sport to cope with the academic

1 stressors: long periods of time spent with highly focused medical students, and the
2 difficulty of developing solid friendships. The value of teammates in their university life
3 is consistent with van Rens et al. (2019) that sport offers an opportunity for relatedness.
4 In contrast, Nicole uses sport as emotion-focused coping, supporting Phoenix and Orr
5 (2014) that sport and exercise provide a focus that enables temporary escape from
6 everyday demands. In the foregoing theme, sport was therapeutic for both groups of
7 participants by providing a means for coping with stress and corrective to work life
8 balance.

9 *Strength of character.* Participants in the UK and HK both experience sport as allowing
10 their character to shine. Keira enjoys her extraversion:

11 “Some people are extraverted, some people are extremely introverted, but when
12 we’re all on the pitch, we’re all doing the same thing, so it’s quite nice. Obviously
13 I’m extraverted, so I just like (pause) call people out or something, and then people
14 start to feel more comfortable being themselves around people, so (pause) yeah I
15 think it works well for the team.” – Keira

16 Keira mediates between extraverted and introverted individuals in the team. She
17 experiences herself as extraverted, and uses this to “call people out” which, instead of
18 upsetting them, helps them to be themselves. This aspect of her character is called forth
19 by the situation, thereby helping their collective purpose, as she puts it: “it works well
20 for the team”. It is notable she says “we’re all doing the same thing” when on the pitch,
21 as if mysteriously equalised by the forces of the hockey pitch. The interiority of each
22 player ‘divides through’ (Wittgenstein, 1963) and what remains are the working parts,
23 with their different roles on the pitch. Galvin and Todres (2011) posit philosophically
24 the experience of ‘we’ rather than ‘you’ and ‘I’, in the dwelling aspect of
25 intersubjectivity, as when Keira and each team member move together as a collective
26 whole on the pitch.

1 Nicole recalls how her experiences in hockey “highlights” two of her qualities:

2 “There have been situations where members of the team aren’t really sure about their
3 positions in the squad, they’re not really sure whether it’s solidified, they wanted to
4 talk to the coach about that but they’re not sure what they should say or do, so they
5 kind of come to me and ask me what I think they should say, so that kind of (pause) I
6 guess highlights that I guess I’m quite an approachable person [...] The caring side as
7 well, like (pause) erm, you know, again going back to the whole selection kind of
8 process, if (pause) you know, girls are coming up to you and asking what you think, or
9 your opinion, it is just that kind of (pause) being able to give them that sort of advice,
10 but also kind of comforting as well. Erm, to be able kind of be a part of that team, and
11 give that kind of input that way, is a positive thing.” – Nicole

12 Nicole discovers she is “approachable” as exemplified by situations where
13 teammates ask her what she thinks they should say or do. Her use of hedging in ‘I
14 guess’ and ‘if you know’, to describe the behaviour of others towards her person,
15 indicate an element of uncertain self-discovery through mirroring received from others.
16 Sartre (1946) described the third ontological dimension of the body, as distinct from the
17 body object and body as lived. The third ontological dimension of the body is that
18 which is discovered intersubjectively, through noticing the comportment of others
19 towards the self, and which can be integrated as self-knowledge through what he called
20 the special attitude of reflection. Nicole’s act of reflection in the extract leads to
21 interpretations as to her identity as “approachable”, “caring” and “positive”, as her ways
22 of making sense of how she experiences herself in the first person and in the third
23 person as conveyed by her teammates.

24 Elliot shares how captaining his university’s badminton team draws out his
25 strength of character:

26 “I’m not the kind of people who can make everyone happy, and I’m not the best player in
27 the team either. However, I’m quite good at sorting out the admin stuffs, and I’m quite

1 organised too. After all, there're a large range of admin stuffs you need to take care of
2 [...] I think I'm a responsible person. For example, if I couldn't attend the training, I
3 would make sure I already told the others few days before. But some people weren't the
4 same, they just didn't show up without warning anyone. Besides, as a captain, I used to
5 inform my teammates the content of each training session in advance, like what would we
6 focus on. I'm quite a warm person as well, like I used to remind everyone to wear a bit
7 more when the weather changed. I would gather the team for a gym session. I would also
8 gather them to see a movie or something." – Elliot

9 Elliot's "responsible" and "warm" characteristics are reflected in the badminton
10 context. He is willing to take care of the administrative duties and show his care for
11 teammates. The captain's role allows him to experience mobility in the identity element
12 of his lifeworld: despite not being the best player, he gains a sense of 'I can' through
13 being able to use his character to help his team perform in various ways.

14 According to Merleau-Ponty (1945 [1962]), our sense of self is given by our
15 involvement in an intersubjective world. We experience our self through other people's
16 eyes. In his example that there is no such thing as cripple-consciousness, he explains
17 that the self is normally invisible to consciousness. That it is only in the comparison
18 with others, via taking on their perspectives, that we may experience ourselves in that
19 company as 'cripple'. The ways that our participants make sense of their lived
20 experiences support his notion. Keira sees herself as extraverted in a context where she
21 has to interact with extremely introverted people and help them feel more comfortable.
22 Nicole discovers her approachable and caring sides through the eyes of her teammates
23 who seek comfort from her. Elliot sees himself as responsible in a team where he has to
24 deal with less responsible members, and he sees himself as warm through the eyes of
25 his teammates who receive kind reminders and invitations from him. Being a university
26 athlete places our participants in an intersubjective world that allows them to see and
27 use their character strengths, defining their identity and benefiting their wellbeing. Their

1 lived experiences converge with Blinde et al. (1993) and van Rens et al. (2019) that
2 university athletes enjoy a sense of competence through sport.

3 ***UK participants' themes: University is an energising environment for university***
4 ***athletes); yet competing at a high level brings a lot of emotional turmoil***

5 *Energising environment.* For our participants in the UK, the university culture plays a
6 vital part in their enjoyment of being a university athlete. Alex compares the university
7 team to his previous clubs and his opponents from non-university teams:

8 “The facilities are really good, and (pause) I’ve been impressed by the training as well.
9 I’ve not experienced training as good as the first team here. And, just the standard in
10 general, the standard is good, and the attention to detail from the coaches [...] They
11 spend a lot of time looking at the videos, and (pause) you know, they will pick up a
12 certain points, talk about them individually [...] The players spend a lot of time
13 socialising, and (pause) say like in changing room or whatever, we get chances to
14 speak to each other wherever we can, or just even during a game or training, we’re not
15 arguing, but we’re trying to help each other. We talk about things in a chilled
16 environment [...] The togetherness of the team, erm, I think (pause) the team’s morale
17 is probably better than most teams, because there’s such a good social life, erm, like
18 for example, the BUCS League is on Wednesday, and on Saturday we play in the
19 Scotland League, which is against other teams that are not universities, so I’d say
20 (pause) the university teams have a better (pause) like team morale (pause) and
21 togetherness than the non-university teams.” – Alex

22 Alex is energised by the training sessions, in which he gets to enjoy good
23 coaching and facilities. The football team provides plenty of socialising opportunities
24 for Alex that contribute to his sense of “togetherness” and “morale”. He is one of the
25 few first year students in the team, and in an earlier part of the interview notes that the
26 social nights play a big part in helping him settle in. His experiences suggest that both
27 dwelling and mobility are made possible through football. In the element of spatiality,

1 his participation in the sport enables him to feel at-home (dwelling) and to enjoy the
2 spatial possibilities offered by the dressing room and the training facilities (mobility). In
3 the element of intersubjectivity, being in the football team offers a strong sense of
4 kinship as indicated by the frequent use of “we” in the extract (dwelling), and it also
5 gives him interactional possibilities with teammates (mobility).

6 Nicole feels lifted by the university atmosphere:

7 “[My university] is one of the best universities in the UK, so (pause) it kind of
8 gives you that motivation to want to play for them. The accreditation that, if you
9 play for them, then you’re pretty good [...] We had 150 freshers who tried out for
10 just 25 spaces, so erm, and I think that kind of (pause) that kind of incentive is a
11 nice culture [...] We’re really fortunate with the facilities as well that we’ve got,
12 and the people around just to support us, the physiotherapy appointments and
13 things like that as well. So, erm yeah, definitely really happy with what we get [...] Our coach is part of the Scotland women’s team as well, so she has got amazing
14 experience, and she has been with the team through (pause) for the past however
15 many years, and so she has really got strong grasp of how to deal with university
16 students, because it can be a bit of a difficult kind of dynamic sometimes, but she’s
17 really good. She has got good drills, she’s intense, she’s competitive, and you want
18 to impress her, I think that’s really important as a coach, to be able to kind of have
19 that ability to erm (pause) kind of control everyone, but at the same time, everyone
20 knows that they’re in a relaxed environment [...] Everyone’s pretty active in [my
21 university], everyone’s always doing something, or (pause) erm in the gym, you
22 know, the gym is always really full. So, it’s quite motivating. Erm so, it definitely
23 motivates me to want to become a part of the team, or become part of the society,
24 in which I chose hockey.” – Nicole

26 Nicole is impressed by the facilities and keen to impress her coach. She
27 perceives the busy gym as a symbol of the energising environment that is a motivation
28 for her hockey. Similar to Alex, Nicole’s experiences show that dwelling-mobility, the
29 deepest possibility of wellbeing, can be experienced in the sporting context. In terms of

1 spatiality, she knows that she is in a “relaxed environment” with support around her
2 (dwelling); yet there is also possibility for her to go further afield to “impress” her
3 coach (mobility). In terms of identity, she sees herself as “pretty good” as she is
4 representing one of the best hockey teams at university level, and this sense of self is
5 backed by the continuous histories she experiences as a hockey player in her university,
6 including being selected from a highly competitive trial, treated by physiotherapists, and
7 coached by someone with “amazing experience”, all of which supporting her sense of
8 self as “pretty good” (dwelling); and she also has a positive orientation towards her
9 potential self, in a sense that through hockey, she can “become part of the society”
10 (mobility).

11 Carl explains how the university atmosphere is helping him both as an athlete
12 and a student:

13 “You play centre back, you can’t really be shy, you just have to talk, especially like
14 (pause) when you go to the 1st team and don’t know anyone, but still have to like
15 (pause) be around [...] I’d say the social stuff definitely helps, because you get to
16 know people in football but like (pause) when you see them outside of football, you
17 actually get to know them as a friend I guess. I guess that’s even better, it makes you
18 feel more confident (pause) talking to them I guess [...] I think (pause) coming to
19 university, going into football team is like (pause) actually makes me want to play
20 football even more, because I feel like in the trials there were so many people there,
21 then you get to mention you play for the football team, and everyone’s like (pause)
22 quite surprised, because there’re like hundreds of trialists, and they only took a few,
23 so it’s quite a good feeling [...] Before I went to the football team, I never bought
24 any of like (pause) you know when you first come to the university, you go buy
25 university tops and stuff, I was never into any of that, I never wanted any of that.
26 But I think like, after joining the football team, I’ve got all the training kits that said
27 university stuff (laughs), so I guess I’m more a part of it.” – Carl

1 As an athlete, Carl's position in football requires his confidence to talk to other
2 people, and the social activities around the university help him to gain such confidence.
3 As a student, being selected to represent his university motivates him to be more
4 physically active. It also enhances his self-esteem and sense of belonging to the
5 university. For Carl, mobility is experienced in both temporal (he is energised by the
6 future opportunities to play more football) and intersubjective (he gets to understand the
7 mystery of his teammates through their social interactions) ways. Nevertheless, playing
8 sport at such a high level is also experienced as stressful for Carl, which will be
9 analysed below.

10 *Emotional turmoil.* Our UK participants report experiences of emotional turmoil in their
11 sport. Ellie is particularly stressed when she feels she is "going to lose", even if the
12 match is not finished yet. Similarly, Carl describes his experience of not doing well in a
13 match:

14 "Once I make a mistake, my head goes numb and I make more. So, I'm fine until I
15 make my first mistake, but once I make my first mistake, I'm stressed [...] As long
16 as I'm playing well in the start, I'm fine, but if I make a mistake early on, then I'm
17 like shaking." – Carl

18 This extract shows how making a mistake on the pitch can affect Carl
19 psychologically. Hockey and Allen-Collinson's (2007) embodied analysis of the body
20 in sport invokes a feedback loop which can exacerbate the body once experience is
21 disrupted. For example, playing indifferently or poorly can affect the rhythm of
22 breathing (Goodridge, 1999), and "tense or erratic breathing is often the enemy of
23 effective bodily control and coordination and thus sporting performance" (Hockey &
24 Allen-Collinson, 2007, p.120). For Carl, the mistake makes him feel "numb" and
25 "stressed", and he may make more mistakes because of "shaking".

1 Carl also talks about the turmoil he experiences off the pitch, especially through
2 the coach. In contrast to Nicole, Carl finds his coach difficult:

3 “Four times a week can be quite a lot, especially when you’re studying and stuff,
4 so like sometimes it does get a bit too much [...] It’s quite serious, if you’re
5 injured or (pause) if you got something on, they’re quite pushy about getting you
6 (pause) like you should still be coming and stuff, so that’s something that worries
7 me [...] I try to miss some, but it’s not that easy to miss. Because like sometimes
8 we miss them, and the coach’s like (pause) he will message me, ‘Why?’, and then
9 it makes you feel nervous, and he’s always like ‘You should just revise before you
10 come, or revise after.’ So, he makes it hard.” – Carl

11 There is emotional turmoil for Carl both on and off the pitch. The words “too
12 much”, “serious”, and “pushy” convey a sense of overwhelm in his experience of
13 juggling with studying alongside the training demands of his coach. In terms of the
14 existentiality of mood, the experiential claims “worried” and “nervous” and the use of
15 the word “should” suggests his coach makes attending training a moral obligation. The
16 one-word text message “Why?” shows a degree of emotional manipulation. The source
17 of tension within this fraught scenario depicted in the extract is captured by the simple
18 missive at the end: “he makes it hard”.

19 Likewise, Keira also experiences stress from her coach:

20 “If we’re playing a big match, then it’s nerve-racking. Erm, and the environment
21 we’re playing in as well, it’s really competitive, like for places in the team. So, to be
22 honest, quite a lot of nerves, sometimes quite a lot of pressure on you to have a good
23 game, which I don’t enjoy, to be honest. The pressure isn’t great, because I play a lot
24 better when I’m in a comfortable environment. Erm, but sometimes our coach can be
25 quite rash with the selection. Erm, so it means, if you’re playing, you got to play
26 well, or you won’t be playing next week [...] I don’t think our coach is that
27 appreciative of like how much people actually have to do. There’re a lot of people
28 that do Medicine and stuff in the team. And erm, it’s quite hard to like juggle [...]

1 We've got gym at 7 in the morning on Fridays, gym on Monday nights, and then
2 training two nights, and games in the weekends, so it's quite time consuming, and
3 you meet 1.5-hour before the game, and then after the game you're there for half
4 hour as well, so it turns into a 4.5-hour experience, where people really need to be
5 studying." – Keira

6 This extract shows a number of tensions. Keira's experience of the big match is
7 "nerve-racking", "lots of nerves", "pressure", and she "does not enjoy it". What seems
8 to make her environment uncomfortable is her coach's approach, such as their team
9 selection being "quite rash". The rashness makes it seem to her to fall entirely on how
10 well she plays in this one game, because if not, she "won't be playing next week".
11 Furthermore, the coach is "not appreciative" of the student workload. She gives a vivid
12 account of the commitment in the extract, which amounts to five days per week and is
13 time "people really need to be studying". Similar to Carl, Keira's coach is a source of
14 angst. However, the manipulation is not moral, rather it appears as a future menace, in
15 the threat of de-selection. For Keira, bodily consciousness of the match not only
16 includes her present situation, but also an assessment of the future. Consciousness
17 temporalises the consequences of her not performing well, and the threat on the horizon
18 makes her experience not only nervous, but "nerve-racking". Lyon (1997, p.96) argues
19 that "the bodily aspects of emotion cannot be separated from the social action more
20 generally because they partly constitute that action, and this action is part of what
21 constitutes emotion". As a university student who plays hockey at a high level, Keira's
22 embodiment of competitiveness is a turmoil on and off the pitch, since the body is one
23 and the same medium, and gives its consciousness to both the social and the sporting
24 world, and the restrictions of these worlds inevitably infect each other.

25 Overall, British participants were lifted by the university environment. This
26 resourceful, chilled, relaxed, supportive, and sociable context makes them want to play

1 their sport even more, helps team spirit, and develops confidence. Nevertheless, they
2 also experiences emotional turmoil both on and off the pitch. The seriousness of
3 competing at inter-university level puts them in an intersubjective world that may be
4 experienced as nerve-racking, stressful, worrying, hard, etc. It is worth highlighting the
5 influences that coaches have on both the desired and undesired experiences. Alex and
6 Nicole both find enjoyment through working with their coaches. The latter's attention to
7 detail and capability to maintain a balance between controlling the players and making
8 them feel relaxed are appreciated by the former. Carl and Keira, on the other hand, note
9 that the impact of having a poor game or failing to attend training on their wellbeing is
10 magnified by the lack of understanding from their coaches. Their experiences support
11 Kimball and Freysinger (2003) that coaches' authority and power could be a source of
12 stress for university athletes, as well as Wachsmuth et al. (2018) that unresolved coach-
13 athlete conflict could affect athletes' mood.

14 The concept of coachability – whether an athlete is coachable, has been
15 commonly discussed in the field of sport psychology. Favor (2011) studied coachability
16 as a personality attribute and found that the more coachable athletes differed from less
17 coachable in commitment, emotional maturity, reaction to feedback, respect and trust
18 for coaches; and willingness to learn and listen. Being coachable may be pivotal to how
19 our participants understood their relationship with their coach. Nicole displayed her
20 commitment to the team, still attending training during her exam period, while Carl and
21 Keira both claimed that this was too much to ask. Nicole experienced the training as
22 therapeutic, while Carl and Keira experienced emotional turmoil, and disagreed with
23 their coaches. These experiences illuminate that other than self-determination (Kimball
24 & Freysinger, 2003) and individual and/or team performance (Kamusoko & Pemberton,
25 2013), coachability may also play a part in university athletes' wellbeing.

1 *HK participants' themes: Sport is a catalyst for maturity; yet our cultural values*
2 *make sport development difficult*

3 *Maturation through sports.* The HK participants' experiences suggest sports
4 participation helps maturation. Stephanie explains her transition from learner to teacher:

5 “When we first entered the team as a freshers, our job was to learn from the
6 older players, but maybe when we got to Year 3, then we had to share the
7 responsibility of teaching the younger players, like we tried to give them some
8 advice [...] I think it makes me a people person, like maybe better at
9 communicating with different people. For example, you need to adjust your
10 tone when you're talking to the younger people in the team. Back then I was
11 the team captain, so I was the more senior player, and when I tried to teach
12 them, I might feel a bit frustrated, and subsequently my attitude might not be
13 ideal. So, I needed to control myself, to talk to them in the appropriate tone
14 [...] We tried to say more supportive words, or we might share our previous
15 experience with the younger players in the team. Both tended to work quite
16 well, the younger players would feel more optimistic.” – Stephanie

17 Stephanie claims that her role in Year 3 is making her “a people person”, as
18 illuminated by how she values the need to control her frustration and ensure that she is
19 using the appropriate tone when teaching the younger players. Throughout her
20 interview, Stephanie mentions that she is usually quite calm and friendly around other
21 people, but in hockey sometimes she is affected by the frustration of how some of her
22 teammates “just didn't really take it seriously”. Heidegger (1927 [1962]) notes that
23 hearing one's conscience is key to being authentic, and describes this conscience as a
24 voice that brings us back to ourselves. For Stephanie, the hockey team triggers her
25 conscience - instead of allowing frustration to get the better of her, she is guided by
26 resolve to control herself. According to Heidegger, there is a temporalising of being that
27 is not absorbed in the present mood or moment. Rather it embodies its past and future:

1 taking responsibility for past failings, and seeing through commitments in the future,
2 e.g., to being “a people person”.

3 Natalie feels that she becomes more proactive because of her involvement in the
4 badminton team:

5 “It did make me more proactive, for example, I will proactively try to keep
6 myself in the best physical condition, I will constantly go to the gym [...] In
7 my first year, our badminton team didn’t really have enough players, so I was
8 an automatic starter, and probably because of that, I didn’t really work that
9 hard. However, more and more students joined the badminton team in the
10 following years, so we needed to fight for our places, and I started going to the
11 gym regularly to make sure I was in the best shape.” – Natalie

12 The competitive context offers Natalie a sense of vitality (she “fights for her
13 place” and ensures she is in “the best shape”), suggesting that mobility is experienced in
14 an embodied way. It is relevant to add that in another part of her interview, Natalie
15 claims that because of her commitment to badminton, she tends to stay away from bad
16 influences around her, such as peers who smoke or drink heavily. This converges with
17 the extract above to illuminate the role of sports in making her a more proactive,
18 resolute and mature person. Her increased consciousness to look after her body recalls
19 Blinde et al.’s (1993) finding that intercollegiate sport facilitated bodily competence.

20 Victor describes responsibilities of being a university athlete:

21 “Nobody will be there to do the laundry for you, to collect the balls, and to
22 sort out the equipment. We have to do everything ourselves, and probably
23 because of the fact that we have to do everything together, we develop a
24 strong sense of belonging.” – Victor

25 This extract shows how university athletes are expected to take care of
26 themselves. In an earlier part of his interview, Victor mentions that in his previous
27 football club, there used to be people offering help for the players, such as sorting out

1 the equipment for them. This is clearly not the case for his university team, in which
2 Victor and his teammates have to step up and share such responsibilities together. Such
3 responsibilities, however, allow them to develop a strong sense of togetherness. Thus,
4 dwelling is experienced in an intersubjective way.

5 *Cultural Barriers.* HK participants also feel that the cultural values in their hometown
6 are limiting their enjoyment of playing sports. When asked about his badminton
7 experiences in relation to HK's culture, Elliot has "a lot to say":

8 "I can have a lot to say about this. Hong Kongers, I think we have a utilitarian culture
9 here [...] Like Ng Ka Long, he had the experience of beating Lin Dan and Lee Chong
10 Wei, so he was all over the news. Because of that, more people knew that HK's
11 badminton was doing well, so subsequently the government would be willing to
12 invest. And because of the government's investment in badminton, I think
13 badminton's development in HK has been good. More people want to learn how to
14 play the sport, more people are investing, and so the HK team also receives more
15 resources, and I think that's positive. However, because of the utilitarian culture here,
16 you'd only get the support after you did really well. There're still a lot of underlying
17 problems here, such as the lack of venues. I don't know if such a large amount of
18 people actually needed to book badminton courts, but I've heard many badminton
19 coaches complained about the difficulty of booking a badminton court. I think this
20 culture is definitely affecting badminton's development in HK [...] We need more
21 badminton courts and physiotherapists. I think having a fitness coach can make a
22 difference too, the HKU teams had that, and I could see a major improvement from
23 their teams. However, it's always difficult to get the resources if the team didn't have
24 enough achievements." – Elliot

25 This extract shows how Elliot experiences HK's utilitarian culture via
26 badminton. While professional athlete Ng Ka Long's victories against Olympic
27 medallists Lin Dan and Lee Chong Wei have earned more media attention and financial
28 support for HK's badminton, many ordinary coaches experience difficulty to even find a

1 badminton court in the overpopulated city. He claims human resources like coaches and
2 physiotherapists are unavailable to his team due to lack of tangible achievement. His
3 frustration is underlined by his emphasis in the first (“I can have a lot to say”) and last
4 (“it’s always difficult”) sentences of this extract.

5 The utilitarian culture is also experienced by Edwin, who helps his university
6 win their first inter-university football competition in 23 years. He mentions in his
7 interview that after the historical victory, the university finally provided funding to fix
8 their training pitch, a pitch he describes as “so bad that we can’t even pass the ball”.
9 This converges with Elliot’s understanding of the utilitarian culture that “you’d only get
10 the support after you did really well”. Edwin has other concerns:

11 “Most of the players in HK, they play to a certain age and then they give up
12 (pause) eventually, because they think that they can’t continue playing football,
13 they need to focus on other things such as their studies, and they just totally give
14 up football, and that’s the cultural differences between what we have in HK and
15 other countries that have a rich football culture, or rich sport culture [...] It’s sad to
16 say, but the culture in HK makes us - I’ll also admit it - more materialistic.
17 Because like, look at everything around, everything is so expensive, like if you
18 think about my future, I probably can’t even get a house to live in, I can’t like
19 (pause) I really worry about my future, because like (pause) erm, everyone’s so
20 materialistic, and they’re not (pause) putting time in like erm, personal
21 development, such as sport, or artistic development. Everything is about studying,
22 earning money, and it’s like, I feel that, erm, erm, they don’t really look to sports, I
23 always worry like should I continue playing football.” – Edwin

24 Edwin repeatedly uses the word “worry” when talking about his future,
25 especially in terms of whether continuing football is the right decision. His “worry”
26 may be interpreted via two culturally notable ways. First, many of the players around
27 him have already quit playing. Thus, by continuing he feels in a minority. Second, while
28 getting a good degree is likely to help him earn more money in future, playing football

1 is not. Yet, more time on playing football means less time on studying. By continuing
2 his engagement in football, he is also taking a risk on his own future, a future in which
3 he “probably can’t even get a house to live in”. Owing to HK’s culture, playing serious
4 football at university is experienced as a considerable threat to his temporal self (it may
5 affect his future possibilities) and his mood (there is a lack of peacefulness, i.e., “I
6 always worry...”).

7 Edwin’s cultural concerns are relatable for other HK participants, e.g., Tiffany
8 mentions that her studies and her work always “have to come before hockey”, and
9 Victor claims that students in HK “can’t really develop their interests”. Such concerns
10 support Ng’s (2005) argument that the educational climate in HK could make physical
11 exercise difficult for university students. As someone who used to play with Western
12 players in his previous club, Victor elaborates on how HK is “different”:

13 “Growing up in HK is quite different compared to growing up in foreign countries. I
14 feel like in foreign countries, people tend to be more outgoing, and it’s probably easier
15 for them to have a conversation with someone they don’t know. However, growing up
16 in HK, maybe because of the education we have here, you usually avoid speaking to
17 people you’re not familiar with, and in return, you tend to be less outgoing, more
18 introverted [...] The Western players all very nice, very friendly, and very proactive.
19 They will start a conversation with you, and always say hello to you. As for local
20 players, usually they tend to take it slow, and they will not start a conversation with
21 you until they’re familiar with you.” – Victor

22 Victor thinks that the culture of HK makes people “less outgoing” and “more
23 introverted”. This is reflected in his footballing world. He experiences the foreign
24 players as “nice”, “friendly”, and “proactive”, as exemplified by their willingness to
25 greet others and initiate a conversation. In contrast, he claims that the local players
26 usually “take it slow”, as exemplified by how they only speak proactively to teammates
27 whom they are familiar with. In an earlier part of his interview, Victor describes himself

1 as a “lively” person who likes to “joke around”. This suggests that there may be a
2 mismatch between his desired self and the intersubjective world he is living in: his
3 “lively” character may not necessarily be well received by his teammates who prefer to
4 “take it slow”.

5 Overall, engagement in sport may help students in HK become more mature
6 individuals - they are more capable of controlling emotions, taking responsibility, and
7 are more resolute in commitments and in caring for themselves and others. These recall
8 van Rens et al. (2019) that sports facilitated Australian university athletes’ overall
9 personal development. Apart from personal resilience highlighted in their study, our HK
10 participants also displayed proactivity, responsibility and interpersonal development
11 through sports. However, university athletes in HK were frustrated by the materialistic,
12 utilitarian, and reserved cultural value system. The system limited their experience of
13 sports and their futures within it.

14 **4. Further Discussion and Conclusion**

15 This study explored the lived experience of university athletes in HK and the UK and
16 their understandings of wellbeing through sports participation. Participants in both
17 cultures experienced sport as allowing them to realise and utilise their strength of
18 character. They also experienced sport as therapeutic - being a member of the university
19 squad provided a diversion from academic stress, and brought diversity to social life.
20 We show how Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) conceptualisation of emotion-focused
21 coping and problem-focused coping could be applied through sports participation. The
22 therapeutic gains may inform stress management interventions and/or exercise
23 promotion programs targeting university students. Among university athletes in the UK,
24 being part of a community, recognition, credit, and coaching were significant to their
25 experience of wellbeing. Their counterparts in HK experienced sport as a catalyst for

1 maturation making them more proactive, responsible, and communicative.
2 Nevertheless, the students also voiced notable challenges unique to the two cultures.
3 Those in the UK claimed that the competitive culture, demanding training schedules,
4 and pressure from the coach could pose serious threats to wellbeing. In contrast, their
5 counterparts in HK were mainly discouraged by the utilitarian culture that undervalues
6 physical over scholastic achievement.

7 Our findings from two cultures suggest various implications. In the UK, in
8 addition to time management and resilience training, there is a need for British
9 universities to ensure that coaches understand students' academic worries and
10 workloads. Policy makers like the BUCS may consider setting guidelines on how much
11 time students in the UK may expect to commit to athletic activities. Such guidelines
12 exist in the US, e.g., the NCAA does not allow major-college athletes to spend over 20
13 hours per week on required athletic activities during the playing season (Berkowitz,
14 2016). As for HK, the lack of resources for the university squad is a fundamental issue
15 that universities need to address. Universities may consider investing more on training
16 facilities and human resources to support their athletes. The British participants
17 highlighted that the facilities contributed significantly to their experience of an
18 energising and motivating campus. From a societal perspective, HK's policy makers
19 need to address the negative impact of the utilitarian culture on experiences of sport. In
20 particular, the university culture of investing only in teams that are already doing well,
21 is largely a reflection of the HK government's attitude towards the homegrown athletes
22 in general. Under their current scheme, the allocation of funding for different sports
23 depends mainly on how many medals were achieved in the Olympic Games and the
24 Asian Games (Chan, 2018; Leung & Wong, 2018). Consequently, many young athletes
25 were not able to get the support they needed, and some had to move to a different

1 country in order to continue their athletic aspiration and development (Choy, 2018;
2 Leung & Wong, 2018). There is an urgent need in HK to ensure that young adults who
3 show promise in their sport are able to feel supported and valued. At university, this
4 would be rewarding winners, but also acknowledging time taken for attendance of vital
5 training sessions and competitions.

6 All of our participants competed as part of a team (including the badminton
7 players who competed mainly in doubles), rather than as individual athletes. This was
8 reflected in how they made sense of their experiences. Future research may investigate
9 student participants of individual sports, such as boxing and golf, who may experience
10 the relation between sports and wellbeing differently. Considering the impact that
11 coaches may have on the wellbeing of university squad members, we also advocate for
12 sports psychologists to work collaboratively with educators to investigate how the
13 relationship between coaches and students competing at a high level may be improved.

14 Overall, this study adds to the existing literature by showing the various ways in
15 which the hermeneutic phenomenological approach has enabled an articulation of
16 diverse and specific ways student wellbeing may be enhanced through sports
17 participation at university. The analysis of the university athletes' lived experiences has
18 disclosed that sport proffers wellbeing through opportunities to experience kinship and
19 belonging, vitality, interpersonal attraction, places of promise, identity development,
20 maturation and resolve. These provide valuable correctives and balance to academic
21 life. Higher education is a considerable undertaking and investment. Our qualitative
22 findings suggest a possible mutual enhancement of intellectual and physical domains,
23 and that culturally informed strategies to support university athletes are warranted.

24 **Conflicts of Interest** The authors declared that they had no conflicts of interest.

1 **Appendix**

2 Table A1. Dwelling-mobility lattice adapted from Galvin and Todres (2011)

Element of lifeworld	Dwelling	Mobility	Dwelling-mobility
Embodiment	A sense of comfort	A sense of vitality	Combination of familiarity with own body and possibility of bodily movement
Identity	A sense of “I am”	A sense of “I can”	Combination of accepting the present self and having a positive orientation towards the potential self
Intersubjectivity	A sense of kinship and belonging	A sense of mysterious interpersonal attraction	Combination of familiarity through maintaining current relationships and unknown through developing new relationships
Mood	A sense of peacefulness or settledness	A sense of desire or excitement	Combination of being at one with the world and looking forward to future events
Spatiality	A sense of being at-home	A sense of adventure	Combination of familiarity with environment and opportunity for adventurous horizons
Temporality	A sense of being absorbed into the present moment	A sense of flow and forward movement	Combination of satisfaction with the present and readiness for future possibilities

3

4

5

1 Table A2. Demographics of Participants

Participant* (Nationality/ Ethnicity)	Gender	Age	Year of Study	Sport (Frequency of Playing)	Other Regular Physical Activity
Edwin (HK/Chinese)	Male	20	2	Football (3-4 Times a Week)	Cross Country Running
Victor (HK/Chinese)	Male	22	3	Football (3-4 Times a Week)	None
Natalie (HK/Chinese)	Female	22	4	Badminton (3-4 Times a Week)	Gym
Elliot (HK/Chinese)	Male	21	4	Badminton (3 Times a Week)	Gym
Stephanie (HK/Chinese)	Female	22	4	Field Hockey (4 Times a Week)	Tennis
Tiffany (HK/Chinese)	Female	23	5	Field Hockey (3 Times a Week)	None
Alex (UK/White British)	Male	18	1	Football (6 Times a Week)	Swimming
Carl (UK/White British)	Male	18	1	Football (4 Times a Week)	Gym
Keira (UK/White British)	Female	20	3	Field Hockey (5 Times a Week)	Gym and Skiing
Nicole (UK/White British)	Female	21	3	Field Hockey (4 Times a Week)	Gym and Tennis
Ellie (UK/Asian British)	Female	20	1	Badminton (2-3 Times a Week)	None
Luke (UK/Asian British)	Male	20	2	Badminton (2-3 Times a Week)	Gym

2 *Note.* *All participants were given nicknames to preserve anonymity and
3 confidentiality.

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