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**Sports entrepreneurship and African identity, the case of Kenyan athletes migrating
to foreign countries**

by

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Abstract

Kenya has over time emerged and maintained its identity as a power house in athletics. This has had significant contributions to the economy of the country. It is quite clear that the business is today one of the fastest growing in export category. It is estimated that over 40 Kenyans have “defected” to other nations to run for money. The methodology used is heuristic and literature based. This paper discusses the African Identity and Sports Entrepreneurship. It further discusses the reasons for the change of Nationality and the dilemma that most of these athletes find themselves in. In conclusion the paper proposes that athletes changing Nationality should be understood and not looked at as unpatriotic. They are victims of globalization of athletics, crisis of individuality, nationhood and identity, in African economic development. Thus, a modality should be established to assist them by especially granting them dual citizenship and making them understand better the political environment of their new nations. The government should also provide guidance and framework of operation for the athletes who wish to run for other nations for economic gains.

Introduction

The history of sports in Kenya stretches way back to the period before the British rule. The people of Kenya were actively involved in traditional sports such as dance, wrestling, hunting, traditional archery and other sports which were mainly confined within various indigenous communities (Kenya, 2003). With the coming of the British to Kenya, there was development of sports such as golf, tennis, cricket, horse racing and polo for themselves. Soccer, boxing and Athletics (track and field) were developed for the Africans (Manners, 1997). The first major international competition in which indigenous Kenyans participated and made an impact was in the 1954 Vancouver common-wealth games. They attained fourth positions in two athletics events namely; the three miles and 4 x 440 yards races (Kenya, 2003). Kenyans were to appear again in the International stage at their first Olympics in Melbourne (Australia) in 1956. Kenyan athletes, Nyandika Maiyoro (who competed in the 3 miles) and Kunoti Sum (competing in marathon), were the first world class runners who paved way for the subsequent dominance of Kenyan distance runners in world of athletics.

The Kenyan distance running success story is arguably second to none. Since 1968 Kenya has won every Olympic steeple-chase race it has entered, in addition to an impressive 36 Olympic medals in distances between 800 m and the Marathon, far more than any other country in the world (Pitsiladis et al, 2004). The 1968 Mexico Olympics provided an indication of what was to follow, with Kenyan athletes scooping gold medals in 10,000m, 3,000m steeple-chase and the 1500m. Since then, there has been an increased participation of Kenyans in International competitions with the highest medal haul being in 1988 Seoul Olympic Games where Kenyans scooped a record of four gold, two silver, and one bronze medal in track and field events and one gold and one bronze medal in boxing (Kenya, 2003).

Pitsiladis, et al (2004) further noted that the unparalleled achievements of Kenyan winners on the International running circuit are in stark contrast to Kenya's economic/social infrastructure, where it ranks poorly in nearly every social and economic category (among them life expectancy, per capital income and child mortality). The dominance of Kenyan athletes in middle and long distance running has been attributed to a number of factors. These include favorable environmental conditions, genetic endowment resulting in physiological and/or anatomical advantage; and specific social and cultural development and motivation (Pitsiladis, et al., 2004). The recent demographic study of Kenyan runners shows that both the national and international runners were also motivated to run for economic reasons, tradition and Olympic glory. For

example 38% of National and 35% of International runners (table 1) become athletes for economic empowerment (Onywera et al, 2006).

Table 1: Reasons for Athletes engaging in Athletics

National Athletes		International Athletes	
Reasons	Proportions	Reasons	Proportions
Olympic glory	12%	Olympic glory	14%
Tradition	11%	Tradition	17%
Economic	38%	Economic	35%
Talent	22%	Talent	17%
Fun	4%	Fun	7%
Fitness	7%	Fitness	5%
Other	6%	Other	5%

Source: Onywera et al., 2006

Research Methodology

This paper was developed after a review of literature on athlete emigration issues and global trends in sports emigration. In addition heuristic methodology was adopted for this study. It is based on the personal experience and insight of the researchers, their experiences of the phenomenon and the essential experience of others who also experience this phenomenon. The reasons for choosing this methodology for the study was the fact that the researchers have been involved in all aspects of sports development and growth in the country both as managers and games tutors. Thus their experience was useful in explaining the various situations, observations and deductions.

Sport Entrepreneurship

Sport Entrepreneurship cannot be easily defined without first defining the two terms that constitute it; Sport and Entrepreneurship. There is no universally accepted definition of sport; We use the term sport in its widest possible sense to include the whole range of competitive and non-competitive pursuits that involve skill, strategy, and/or chance in which human beings engage, at their own level, simply for enjoyment and training or to raise their performance to levels of publicly acclaimed excellence (Standeven, 1999). Entrepreneurship places emphasis on innovative products, methods, markets and forms of organization which leads to new demands and hence wealth creation. A consistent universal definition of entrepreneurship does not exist, but rather it consists of several different approaches including psychology and economical approaches. This paper adopts Hisrich and Peters (2005) definition of entrepreneurship as “the

process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming accompanying financial psychic and social risks and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence”.

This paper is also based on the Schumpeter's theory of entrepreneurship. Schumpeter (1943) as quoted by Glancey and McQuaid (2000) saw an entrepreneur as an innovator, that is, one who wishes to change things or do things differently. Entrepreneurship is thus seen as the source of change and dynamism in society and the economy. Schumpeter's innovations create new activities and markets and so “destroy” or supersede the old markets, hence its role in the economy is both creative and destructive (Glancey and McQuaid, 2000).

Sport entrepreneurship can therefore be described as all forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activities participated in an organized way for commercial reasons. Sports must constantly adapt to new developments. Sports disciplines and sport events have their own life cycles. They too grow out of fashion and increasingly find themselves having to compete against leisure activities and events. In this context the performance orientation and increased commercialization in the world of sport constitutes a problem. It is an open question whether the global leisure society of the future will be dominated by performance oriented sports as well as sports which are highly commercialized at elite level or on the contrary by activities and events of a more cultural nature. In sport too there is a constant need for the adaptation of individual sports and events to the changing requirement of sportsmen and sportswomen as well as spectators (Keller, 2001). Sports entrepreneurship can therefore be seen as an innovation creating a new way of carrying out activities and opening up new markets. The idea of professional athletes running for other nations could be seen as a new way of utilizing athletics potential and taking advantage of the new market. Currently 30% of top marathoners in the IAAF rankings are Kenyans and almost every week a Kenya runner wins a marathon somewhere in the world. The Marathon is by far Kenya's strongest event, yet quality performances have been elusive in championship events because they don't pay well (Lukalo, 2005)

Identity

Merriam Webster's collegiate dictionary defines identity as the distinguishing character or personality of an individual (Britannica, 2004). On the other hand Encarta dictionary defines

identity as what identifies somebody or something, the name or essential character that identifies somebody or something (Encarta, 2006). In sociology and political science, the notion of social identity is individuals' labeling of themselves as members of particular groups (i.e., nation, social class, subculture, ethnicity, gender, etc.) It is in this sense that sociologists and historians speak of a national identity of a particular country (Wikipedia, 2005). This is the definition taken in this paper. On the other hand an African is defined as somebody who comes from Africa. Encyclopedia free dictionary defines an African as a native or inhabitant of Africa. Wikipedia (2007), the Internet Encyclopedia defines an African thus: "as a person of African descent". This paper acknowledges that one can be an African by birth or through naturalization.

Entrepreneurship in National Development

The entrepreneur in the community is a primary contributor and mobiliser of resources to develop the economy, a provider of employment for others and a stabilizing factor in the society. Entrepreneurs are the ones who provide goods and services and employment which in turn leads to healthy and viable economic communities (Kenya, 1992). The role of entrepreneurships in economic development involves more than just increasing per capita output and income; it involves initiating and constituting change in the structure of business and society. This change is accompanied by growth and increased output, which allows more wealth to be divided by various participants (Hirsch et al, 2005).

One theory of economic growth discussed by Hirsch et al, (2005) depicts innovation as the key, not only in developing new products (or services) for the market but also in stimulating investment in the new ventures being created. This new investment works on both the demand and supply sides of the growth equation; the new capital created expands the capacity for growth (supply side) and the resultant new spending utilizes the new capacity and output (demand side).

In the case of athletics in Kenya, the income generated has brought change in the structure of business and society. The athletes have invested in real estate, health and education thus creating numerous jobs for Kenyans. The training camps which have sprung up to tap the athletics potential, have also spurred economic growth in the country. This has led to an increased output of athletes, and consequently more and more business. Besides, the athletes are involved in community projects. Table 2 shows a list of some of the athletes by gender and their earnings. The figures exclude the appearance fees and kit endorsements and other non-monetary prizes like automobile whose proper value is difficult to assign.

Table 2: Athletes Life-time Earnings

Name	Gender	Earnings in US \$
Paul Tergat	M	1,253,590
Evans Rutto	M	635,345
Moses Tanui	M	553,395
Daniel Komen	M	509,885
Benjamin Limo	M	493,095
John Kagwe	M	442,136
Robert "K" Cheruiyot	M	439,100
James Muindi	M	435,310
Martin Lel	M	422,285
Luke Kipkosgei	M	397,905
Rodgers Rop	M	389,170
Felix Limo	M	387,725
Daniel Njenga	M	386,000
Josephat Kiprono	M	359,520
Paul Koech	M	355,089
Sammy Kipketer	M	343,010
Joseph Chebet	M	342,850
John Korir	M	335,390
Ibrahim Hussein	M	317,799
Simon Bor	M	292,090
Paul Bitok	M	287,500
Cosmas Ndeti	M	287,500
Christopher Cheboiboch	M	286,385
Thomas Nyariki	M	281,330
Lazarus Nyakeraka	M	278,355
Steven Kiogora	M	276,525
Sammy Korir	M	275,070
Catherine Ndereva	F	1,606,502
Tecla Lorupe	F	1,061,305
Joyce Chepchumba	F	1,012,535
Margaret Okayo	F	770,265
Susan Chepkemei	F	767,495
Edith Masai	F	350,990
Sally Barsosio	F	296,241
Delillah Asiago	F	287,615

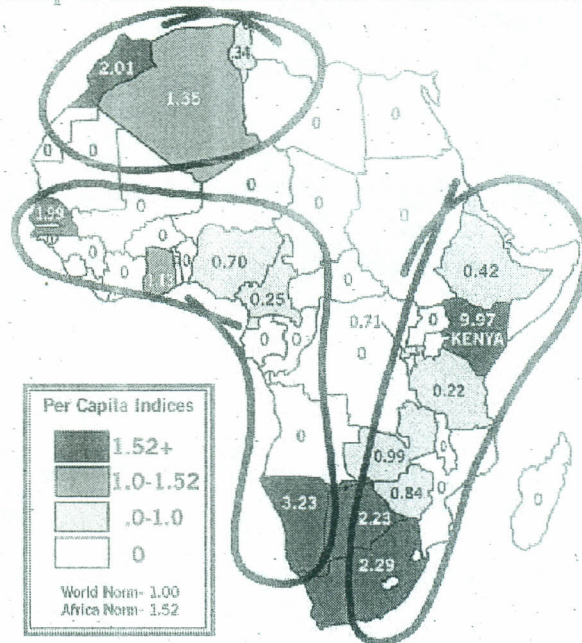
Source: Association of Road Racing Statisticians, (2006) URL: http://www.arrs.net/PM_Life.htm

The earnings from these athletes is fast turning the North rift region into a hotbed of Kenya's athletes, from an agricultural zone into a massive investment zone (Macharia, 2007).

A new industry has been developing; great athletes from lesser developed countries are being bought by wealthier nations without a sporting history. These countries despite their wealth are unable to produce world class athletes. This may be due to a number of factors; poor genetic pool, poor structure, lack of sporting culture, geographical limitations, political climate, lack of

competition, desire for immediate results, decaying moral fabric and in some cases a lack of desire and belief combined with pure laziness (Roberts, 2005). Kenya with a population of about 32 million is home to the greatest per capita concentration of raw athletic talent in the history of the world (figure 1) (Entine, 2006).

Figure 1: Map of concentration of raw athletic talents in Africa



Source: Entine, 2006 URL: <http://www.pponline.co.uk/encyc/06576.htm>

There is an international flow of athletes from Kenya which has recently been referred to as global trade in muscle in which Kenyan athletes have switched allegiance from their country of birth to the oil-rich states of Qatar and Bahrain (Simms and Rendell, 2004). Export of athletes by continent provides a substantive insight into the number of athletes exported from different continents namely Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and Oceania (table 3).

Table 3: Athletes exported from different continents

Continents	% of athletes exported
Africa	50%
Europe	25%
Americas	17%
Asia	5%
Oceania	3%

Source: Jarvie G., (2007).

Globalization has ignored the uneven and differentiated forms of capitalism emerging in the 21st Century, so it is crucial not to ignore the injustices and uneven patterns of sports labour migration. It is essential that any contemporary understanding of global sport must actively listen to and engage with other sporting communities, places and voices. Perhaps it is impossible for humanity or global sport to arrive at an understanding of the values that unite it, but if the leading capitalist nations cease to impose their own ideas on the rest of the sporting world and start to take cognizance of other sporting culture, then the aspiration of global sports might become more just and less charitable. It is not charity which Africa or African runners want but the tools by which Africans can determine their own well-being and life chances in a more equitable sporting world (Jarvie, 2006; McAlpine, 2005). Table 4 below shows the breakdown of the export of athletes by country and illustrates that Morocco, Kenya, Ethiopia and Nigeria are high exporters of athletics talent in comparison with other countries.

Table 4: Export of athletes by country

Country	% Athletic talent exported
Morocco	32%
Kenya	23%
USA	13%
Ethiopia	8%
Nigeria	8%
Cuba	8%
G.B.	8%

Source: Jarvie G., (2007)

Reasons for Athletes Running for other Nations

In this section the paper seeks to address the motivations for the migration by Kenyan athletes. Kenyan runners have to overcome barriers to maintain presence on the International athletic circuit today and so they have opted to migrate to countries where these barriers are minimal. Several reasons have been forwarded to explain why athletes migrate to other nations including:

a) Economic forces

Athletes are drawn to where core sources of economic wealth are located a process that leads to a relational situation whereby those countries on the periphery are influenced by those at the core (Jarvie, 2007). Rich countries attract more athletes because they have better training facilities, give better remunerations and in most cases meet the training costs of their athletes. Some Kenyan athletes who have migrated to other countries have pointed out that the country offers few opportunities for a sporting career and does not meet their training costs. Though athletes had been switching nationalities for years before Stephen Cherono went to Qatar,

Saif Saaeef Shaheen represents a separate category because there are no apparent motivations for his switch of allegiance beyond financial gain. This is in contrast, for example, to the politically motivated change of Zola Budd (former women's 5000m world record holder from South Africa) or the marriage and emigration issues that led Wilson Kipketer to compete for Denmark (Wikipedia, 2007). Moses Kiptanui, a previous ~~holder of~~ 3000m steeple chase world record holder, while sympathizing with Shaheen's move to Qatar stated: "We have seen a lot of athletes who were running in the 1968 and 1972 Olympics living in very deplorable state. They are very poor despite the fact that they have done great things for this country". Cherono defending his stand stated that "Athletics is a short career and I went there looking for a better life and better prospects. It is not that I don't like Kenya, I love it". He migrated for a monthly stipend of \$1,000 for life (Mynott, 2005).

b) Emigration and lack of government support for athletes

For some athletes like Bernard Lagat, a two time Olympic medalist, his change of nationality to the USA was due to emigration and later due to lack of support from the Kenyan Government, recognition and better remunerations from the U.S. Lagat has lived in the USA since 1996 and has a home in Tucson, Arizona. He ran for Kenya in 2004 Olympics. A year later he denounced his citizenship to compete for the U.S.A (Xinhua, 2005).

c) Marriage

For some athletes like Lorna Kiplagat her change of nationality was occasioned by her marriage to her coach Pieter Langerhost who is Danish. She also said that the Athletic Federation in Kenya had nothing for her; and that she was not invited to run in any championship for Kenya. The Dutch Athletic Federation was very supportive to her.

d) High concentration of athletes

The location quotient by Bale and Sang (1996) shows the percentage number of elite runners from a certain country expressed as a percentage of the total world population. A quotient of above unit indicates that the country is producing runners at more than the average rate. In 2002, for example, there were 18 male and female Kenyan athletes in world top three distances between 800m and the marathon, which amounts to 37.5% of the total. With the Kenyan population of 32.4 million, which is 0.5% of the world population, this gives a location "quotient" of 75. However this number disguises the gender output of athletics talent from the country. When gender is calculated separately, Kenya is seen to produce elite males at 134 times the predicted rate, while females have a location quotient of 16 (Jarvie, 2007). With this kind of scenario, it is therefore evident that the country has many high performing athletes and is therefore capable of exporting others (refer to figure 1). The

competitive environment in Kenya makes it hard for Athletes to make it to the National squad as Cheron (Shaheen) was quoted to have said (Lukalo, 2005).

(e) Globalization

Globalisation is one of the "modernities" of our time. It makes the world shrink and alters our idea about time and space. Since time and space are basic notions in our lives, we can expect globalisation to have a great impact on the individual, the community and the policy in the years to come. There are many definitions of globalisation. Globalization refers to increasing global connectivity, integration and interdependence in the economic, social, cultural, technological, political, and ecological spheres (Wikipedia, 2007). Globalisation leads to new trans-national public spheres, to new communities which often transcend national and regional boundaries. At the same time national communities become increasingly pluralized and fragmented, in the course of which less people in a neighbourhood share the same cultural inventory; fight for the same values and speak the same language. A case in point is the IOC high altitude training camp at Kazi Mingi farm, Eldoret where athletes from different countries, culture, religion and speaking different languages live harmoniously. Globalisation thus results in athletes leaving their homeland to run elsewhere. They uproot themselves to the country where their skills are required, where their talents are needed. The counter effects of globalization include stressing their own identity, culture and religion because of the demands of the adopting country. Shaheen's move is a prominent example of increasing globalization in athletics. In addition to winning over Shaheen, Qatar has also been successful in persuading a number of other athletes, particularly Kenyan athletes, to switch allegiances, including 5000 metre athlete Albert Chepkurui. Fellow Gulf State Bahrain has also been successful in persuading high-profile athletes to change nationalities, most notably a middle distance runner Rashid Ramzi from Morocco and Mushir Salim Jawher, born Leonard Mucheru Maina, a long-distance runner who specializes in the 3000m (Sharrock, 2007).

Across the world, we are seeing more and more of these 'borderless athletes' who transcend not only national borders but racial and ethnic borders in the world of sport. In some cases they might be regarded as athletic mercenaries but in others they are either highly skilled athletes moving between international corporate-funded franchises or political refugees seeking a better life for themselves and their families. What they have in common is the fact that they run for countries where they were not born and where their attachments are often rather weak. This phenomenon is one manifestation of much wider global processes occurring in society (Chiba, Osamu and Shinji, 2001). Should they change their nationality to

meet the demands of the adopting countries? Do they have any identities in the process of naturalization? In the globalization process, we can predict that the value of citizenship or nationality will become increasingly less and that the personal sense of identity will diversify. Now and in the future we will need to make a new relationship with foreign-born runners not by domesticating their differences but by recognizing them. But the new identity has to be lived and earned, and can also be delimited or constrained by ascribed characteristics of the individual athlete. A case in point is the issue of Mucheru who migrated to Bahrain and changed his citizenship but still went ahead against the wishes of his adopted country and competed in Israel resulting to him being stripped of his citizenship.

Kenyan runners have dominated the long distance events over the past 60 years from marathon to cross-country and on the track. The Kenyan national distance running programme is a shining example of deployment of resources in an efficient manner, thereby creating a virtual, perennial river of performers (Roberts, 2005). The rules governing all major international competitions ensure that a maximum of 3 athletes can enter any one event from a single country. Consequently, for a country like Kenya this means that at times in excess of 12 world class runners are unable to attend the Olympic games, African games, World championships, commonwealth games, etc. (Trinidad Guard, 2005). This stiff competition at home has led to the migration of some athletes who feel that they may never have a chance to represent their country. For example in the past few years over 40 Kenyans have migrated to Qatar and Bahrain. These athletes receive the best of both worlds, they receive large amount of money from Qatar/Bahrain while they are still able to train in Kenya and get a chance to participate in international meets yet they would have possibly been left out if they were still in Kenya. Other athletes who have migrated include Wilson Kipketer who switched nationality to Denmark (Wikipedia, 2007), Leonard Mucheru now Mushir Salem Jawher, changed citizenship to Bahrain and Albert Kirui 5000m runner changed name to Abdullah Ahmed Hassan after also emigrating to Bahrain.

Implications for the athletes running for other nationals

The single greatest honour that can be bestowed upon the athletes is the opportunity to compete for their country of birth. Wearing one's national colours and having the national anthem of the winners' country played, after the presentation of the awards, engenders a sense of pride and accomplishment (Robert, 2005). To illustrate this, a case is given of a debate by some Singaporeans with regard to the Gold medal haul by foreign athletes in the Commonwealth Games. The bone of contention was that medals were won by foreign athletes who were given

Singapore citizenship. They would have preferred to see home-grown local athletes win. Only then would this give them the feeling of national pride and a sense of national identity. They also noted that the emigrant athletes were not able to sing Singaporean national anthem (Bin Daipi, 2002). From the illustration above one can read a sense of uneasiness and hostility towards foreign athletes. It also brings out several key multicultural issues that can be addressed in advance by providing quality and culturally sensitive counseling to athletes.

For those who migrate to other nations, they sing national anthems of their adopted countries and don national colours of their adopted nations. For those who defect to the Gulf rich nations they also change their names, religion and race, nationality, social and economic status. A case in point is when a Kenyan runner who migrated to Bahrain lost his citizenship and his livelihood after becoming the first Arab athlete to compete in Israel (Sharrock, 2007). The identity of the athlete had changed from African to Arab. For a Kenyan, there was nothing wrong in running in Israel, but for being an Arab it was an issue serious enough to cost him citizenship. After winning, Jawher told the Jerusalem post that he was very proud of running in Israel (Sharrock, 2007). The case above clearly shows an African in an identity crisis, while the athlete has changed his status from being African to Arab he does not seem to understand the implications and responsibilities that go along with the change of his race status. Back at home the athlete is still referred by his African name as the Secretary-General of Athletics Kenya said "Mucheru is a very good athlete. There is no doubt about it but he is in a very difficult situation" (Sharrock, 2007).

Name change presents also another identity crisis. Saif Saaeed Shaheen the former Kenyan 3,000m Steeplechaser, then known as Stephen Cherono "changing his name from Stephen Cherono to Saif Saaeed Shaheen and his citizenship, the former Cherono was reported to have received up to \$1 million. Shaheen has denied this" (Wikipedia, 2005). His migration to Qatar and change of names was not received well by his family. His brother Abraham who ran with him when he won his first steeplechase in 2003, 17 days after migrating to the oil rich state refused to call him by his adopted names and did not even congratulate him for his achievement (Jarvie, 2007). Similarly when visiting and training in Kenya the athlete is referred by his original name.

Change of citizenship may also pose an identity crisis for the athlete. Peter Mucheru is another Kenyan athlete who migrated to Bahrain changed his citizenship and adopted a new name, Mushir Salim Jawhar. After competing in Israel against the wishes of his adopted country, the

athlete was said to have received the news of loss of citizenship while at his parent's home in Kiambu, Kenya (Mbaisi and Toskin, 2007). Despite the fact that the athlete was supposed to be in Bahrain his adopted country while not training, he was reported to be in his former country. A conflict of interest is notable here, the athlete for the remunerations aspect changes citizenship to Bahrain, but does not want to surrender his Kenyan passport. Kenya does not provide dual citizenship. This seems to be a case of wanting the best from two worlds. Commenting on Peter Mucheru's issue, Kenya's Sports Minister Maina Kamanda said "He should have adhered to the agreements he entered into with the Bahrain government when he became a citizen of that country" (Mbaisi and Toskin, 2007).

Religion is also another issue that creates identity crisis for athletes who migrate to other countries. The change of names from Stephen Cherono (a Christian) to Saeef Saaeed Shaheen (a Muslim) indicates a change of religion. Again the extent to which the athletes practice the doctrine of their adopted religions is not clear. Whether the changes that go with change of names and religion were explained to the athletes is still unclear. To the athletes, change of religion was due to financial motivation and nothing more.

Change of economic status may also pose an identity crisis for the athlete. Historically, sports used to be a possible route out of poverty in the western world (Jarvie, 2007). Nowadays, money is arguably the most important motivation for athletes. To a European athlete, an Olympic Gold medal may be the pinnacle of their career. However for most Kenyan athletes it is simply a gateway to earn money which could transform their lives and that of their communities (Jarvie, 2007). A case in point is that of Stephen Cherono who was raised in Kamelilo village in Keiyo district where there was no tap water and everyday after school, he walked 3 km to collect 10 litres of water. His move to Qatar was allegedly based on an offer of at least \$ 1,000 dollars a month for life. He was later to comment "Athletics is a short career and I went there looking for a better life and better prospects. It is not that I don't like Kenya; I love it" (Mynot, 2005). Asked to comment on his son's new status, Cherono's father said; "I don't care what they call him, he went to secure his future and that is what we want all young men to do. To me he is still Stephen and when he visits he will always bring me something" (Njenga, P., and David M., 2005).

Haile Gebrselassie another African athlete has left no doubt about both social and political responsibility of the athlete and the limits and possibilities of sport in relation to poverty in his country. He says; "When I am training I think about this lot, when I am running, it is going over

in my mind as a country we cannot move forward until we eradicate poverty and whereas sport can help – the real problems will not be overcome just by helping Ethiopians run fast” (Jarvie, 2007). He acknowledges that sport can help eradicate poverty though it is not the only means (table 2: Athletes life-time earnings)

Cherono’s (Shaheen) migration to Qatar generated controversy. One reason for the controversy was due to change of citizenship. Secondly, it was due to the challenge he posed to the Kenyans in an event they had dominated for many years; 3,000m steeplechase. The dominance was threatened with a contested identity shift. Whereas the winner is Kenyan the honour goes to Qatar and the national anthem played is Qatari (Lukalo, 2005). The cultural significance and value of the 3,000 metres steeplechase event in the history of Kenyan athletics is challenged whenever Shaheen wins the event and aligns himself with Qatar symbolically outliving the economic benefits. Commenting on the issue of athletes defecting to other nations, the president of International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), Lamine Diack said, “It’s hard for a starving family to stop their son or daughter from going for US \$100,000 (Kshs.7.6m) if they defect” (Mbaisi, 2005). The government of Kenya was urged to provide incentives to its athletes to stop them from migrating. However this should not be the case, they should be encouraged and supported for Kenya to exploit its abundant raw talent in athletics.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the modern African athlete is facing a crisis. Whereas they may want to be patriotic and run for their nation; there are far too many contesting for the same. This means only the very best get an opportunity to represent the country. The economic status of the country also forces other athletes to be easily convinced by rich countries to change citizenship for economic gains.

The change in citizenship comes with other implications which involve change of names, religion, social and economic status. Change of names and religion represent a change in identity that may cause a crisis in the individual. The donning of foreign uniforms and running against athletes from the country of birth, singing a foreign national anthem after winning, may constitute a crisis of identity for the migrating athletes.

Recommendation

The movement of athletes to other countries where their talents are needed or for greener pastures, is a fact that cannot be ignored any more; it's the effect of globalization. The fact that athletes admit they do not run for other nations because they hate their countries of birth should make them be treated fairly. The Kenyan government therefore should allow dual citizenship for these athletes so that after their athletics career, which is very short, they can come back home with their earnings. This would also encourage them to invest in Kenya while they are still capable. That way the athletes and Kenya as a country would benefit from sports entrepreneurship.

The fact that most of these athletes still invest in Kenya, their country of birth, the country should treat them just like an export commodity due to the availability of the same. Thus the government through Athletic Kenya (AK) should develop special programs that target athletes so that they can be taught about the political environments of the countries they move to so that they can prepare for the changes and also make informed decisions.

There is also the need for psychological counseling services for athletes to prepare them tackle the multi-cultural issues that they are bound to face. Counseling will promote expansion of the athlete's skills, beliefs, values and personal qualities. Such growth can help them deal with issues like identity and social isolation enroute to establishing a set of problem-solving and decision making skills that will serve them well over the course of their lives particularly in the foreign land (Shorts and Shoffner, 2004). Therefore the government and particularly the Kenyan Athletics body (AK) should make it a requirement for all training bodies and camps under it or otherwise to offer psychological counseling to athletes.

Lastly how can our athletes sink their roots and remain Kenyans even if they are overseas? How can we build national identity in the midst of globalization? These are pertinent questions. In order to foster and strengthen a strong Kenyan identity among the youth, the government ought to come up with programs which aim to develop national identity, the instinct to fight for Kenya's survival and instill confidence in its future. The programs should aim to foster a sense of identity, pride and self respect as Kenyans, to understand Kenya's unique challenges, constraints and vulnerability. A strong national identity is needed to withstand the divisive impact of globalization and the attractions of the richer countries and this does not necessarily mean that they should not migrate but remain Kenyans in Diaspora.

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