Background: Dropout in sports has always been an imperative issue in our country. This research aimed to find what reasons motivated young athletes to drop out in sports. The participants of this research have played either in the district, state, or national tournaments at some point in their careers. The age (25.87, ±1.055) group of the participants in this research is between 18 to 30 years. The most important reasons that lead to dropping were found to be an influence of parents or friends, had commitments other than sports, did not get enough recognition, skills did not improve, not as good as wanted to be and did not receive enough awards. Whereas reasons like the relationship between coach, did not like to compete, wanted to play another sport, and did not like the pressure played no role at all for the athletes to drop out in sports.

Methods: Athletes were asked to fill up a set of questionnaires with possible dropout reasons and rate them from one to five which they believe played an important role in dropping out of sports.

Conclusion: The data indicates that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors had an influence on an athlete to drop out. Reasons such as had other things to do, friends and parents no longer wanted me to compete, my skills did not improve, did not get enough recognition, did not receive enough awards and not as good as wanted to be are the foremost reasons for dropout. It also indicates that non-sport reasons also played a major role in athletes to drop out.

Keywords: Competitive Sports, Dropout, Athlete
understand what were the different pressures internal and external faced by the athletes during their formative years.

Physical activities or playing any organized sport during childhood has its advantages. It helps in moulding the child's character and also teaches them life lessons of teamwork, discipline, and self-confidence \(^{(4)}\). Even though all of this is true, it has been found that one-third of all the athletes’ dropout from sports between the age of eleven to seventeen years each year. This paper tries to find why some of the young elite athletes give up on their careers during adolescence or early-mid twenty's. For this, we used the Participation Motivation Inventory \(^{(5)}\) to investigate the reasons that led to the dropout from sports during adolescence and mid-twenties in the country.

The reason for an athlete to dropout depends on both, intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors such as self-motivation on trying new things, to excel in the sport, and to expand the skillset, whereas extrinsic factors are such as wanting to participate in sport for improving their appearances and desire to win. Factors such as parent's and friends' influence on taking a decision also play an important role to understand why an athlete dropout \(^{(6)}\). An athlete goes through a variety of experiences right from the start or even before his/her career, both positive and negative. It has been suggested that negative experiences have also contributed to dropouts among young athletes \(^{(7)}\). Even athletes who choose their sport of specialization early in their preteen also choose to drop out as they lose interest in the sport. Research on sport dropout traditionally included reasons such as conflict of interest, time commitment, lack of fun, or sports competence \(^{(8)}\). But India back in time was crippled with unemployment and a poor economy so ‘lack of enjoyment’ could hardly be a reason. Whereas reasons such as studying and job, injuries, time-consuming came into play \(^{(9)}\), which can be true up to an extent even today.

Specialization in a single sport during the early ages of a young athlete rather than trying out different sports during the time is the best way for a skilled performance athlete. After school the athlete for further studies joins a college. Here the athlete along with his/her rigorous training routine he has to give an equal importance to his academic’s routine too. But being out of college during the competition period the student is left with no choice but to miss his academics. This balancing of academic and sports becomes a main task for an athlete which in turn becomes challenging for an athlete to opt for other career options other than sports \(^{(10)}\). When compared to non-athletes, they are left with many problems such as career maturity, educational plans, social lives etc.

Studies have also shown the impact of negative experiences an athlete faces which in turn leads him to drop out from sports \(^{(7)}\). These experiences can be directly related to the community size the athlete was born into. The frame work of this research is built into 4 external (support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations) and 4 internal (commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies and positive learning) according to the birthplace effect\(^{(11)}\) and also tells us about how and why there are larger number of drop out from sports by young athletes in larger communities than compared to an athlete from smaller community.

In the case of women athletes there has been a lot of hinderances faced by them in her day to day life. When mothers shield their teenage daughter from many things in a thought that her daughter wouldn’t face the difficulties she faced, she is actually depriving her from many dreams. As the child grew older, she faces many problems, internal and external. Even if the girl in her teenage doesn’t face any problems she surely faces it when she matures and has to take decisions at important junctions of her life. Marriage, children, family are few that comes their way. During their struggle in life because of many problems they face even the creamiest of the talented athletes give up their dream of sports in time. And if she makes her way to the elite group of athletes, many Olympic athletes have to flimflam the obstacles of societal gender-based roles

All of these factors are important to note to find out the reasons for dropout because the degree of participation in young athletes depends on what motivates them to even participate in that particular sport \(^{(12)}\). There are three main reasons for an athlete that motivated him/her to participate in any sport: longing to develop the physical ability, community inclusion and parental and friends support, and entertainment \(^{(13)}\). But there is no study or investigation done as to even if the athlete had a deliberate play or practice with all facilities that led him/her to drop out of sports even then. The aim of this research was to find the reasons which led an athlete to dropout from sports after receiving deliberate training, guidance and even after participation in district, state, nationals or even SGFI.

2. Material & methods:
This research was conducted with the help of 120 participants (94 Males and 26 Females). Each of them was asked to fill up a set of questionnaires consisting of 30 questions. These questions were based on the Reasons for Attrition (14). The selection of these athletes was done with a criterion that none of these athletes are currently a member of any sports club from the past two years (15) and have not participated in an open district, state, or national tournaments in last 3 years. The age (25.87, ±1.055) of the participant athletes in this research ranges from 21 years to 30 years. Preferred athletes had a highly invested adolescent in sports, that is with at least 10-12 hrs of training a week and has participated either in-state, nationals or SGFI tournaments during their career. The data was collected during the month of June, 2020. It was collected from 120 athletes selected, who met the dropout period criterion mentioned above and was accessed on the questionnaire. The questionnaire was self-explanatory. Even though any doubts regarding the questionnaire was clarified, if requested by the participants.

Each question carries five different responses, in which the participant can opt only one response depending on how important he feels the reason lead him/her to drop out of the sport. The responses to each question are given below.
1 – Not at all an important
2 – less Important
3 – Somewhat important
4 – Important
5 – Extremely important.

Frequency analysis and descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) has been used to study the nature of the data collected from participants.

To ensure the validation of the top motives that led to dropout, which were found by using the mean and standard deviation of all the possible reasons, SPSS version 24 was used for statistical analysis. Chi-square test, and the effect size of each possible reason was calculated. The level of significance was kept at 0.05.

3. Results and Discussion:
The mean and standard deviation of each responses is given below in table 1. The reasons which were found to be pivotal are “Had other things to do(3.6667), “Parents and friends no longer wanted me to compete(3.4833)”, “Not as good as wanted to be(2.75) “Did not get enough recognition(2.9583)”, “Did not receive enough awards(2.5083)”, “My skills did not improve(2.4407)”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had other things to do.</td>
<td>3.6667</td>
<td>1.19757</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not like the coach.</td>
<td>1.8583</td>
<td>1.05556</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough team spirit.</td>
<td>1.6833</td>
<td>0.89802</td>
<td>144.2</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No teamwork.</td>
<td>1.775</td>
<td>0.96548</td>
<td>117.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not get enough recognition.</td>
<td>2.9583</td>
<td>1.16961</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested in me.</td>
<td>1.8333</td>
<td>0.97303</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The training was too hard.</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.02572</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was not popular.</td>
<td>1.9407</td>
<td>1.21453</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not like to compete.</td>
<td>1.4917</td>
<td>0.80956</td>
<td>144.6</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not win enough.</td>
<td>1.9333</td>
<td>1.05904</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not as good as wanted to be.</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.28501</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not compete enough.</td>
<td>2.3333</td>
<td>1.21844</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough fun.</td>
<td>1.6379</td>
<td>0.88854</td>
<td>126.2</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My skills did not improve.</td>
<td>2.4407</td>
<td>1.31749</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Statistical Analysis of Each Reason
The data obtained was found to be satisfying all the conditions of the respective tests and thus authenticating the reasons selected. The data obtained was found to be satisfying all the conditions of the respective tests and thus authenticating the reasons selected.

There have been previous studies conducted to investigate dropout in sport. But most of these studies were centric towards the general public view or the individual factors such as laziness, not interested in sports and more. This study has been conducted with participants which were active in sport during their adolescence with deliberate practice over the years and have participated either in district, state or national level competitions. And the questions were so designed keeping in mind the external factors, that is people closer to athlete and their influence on the athlete, as well as internal factors such as athlete’s reason of dropping out. The impact of negative experiences an athlete faces which in turn leads him to drop out from sports [7] was kept in mind to find out the possible reason were there that an athlete chose to dropout from sport in India.

**Had other things to do.** The p value (0.000) shows significant differences between the responses with large effect size (0.60) shown in table 1. More than 85% of participants in this research accepted that they had commitments other than sports in their day to day life which led to their dropout. According to previous studies one of the reasons which led an athlete to drop out was that athlete along with his/her rigorous training routine, had to give an equal importance to his academic’s routine too. But being out of college or school during the competition period the student is left with no choice but to miss his/her academics. This balancing of academic and sports becomes a main task for an athlete which in turn becomes challenging for an athlete to opt for other career options other than sports (10).

**Friends and Parents no longer wanted me to compete** One of the most important reason for the athletes to drop out were that their friends or parents dint wanted them to compete after a point of time. Significant differences were found in the presence with large effect size (0.71) according to the data obtained, shown in table 1. Over 89% of participants believes their friends and parents somehow influenced their thoughts in dropping out. There have been studies done previously on the influence of parents on drop out of athletes from sports which found, the parental influence was not a factor in dropping out from sports in school athlete. But there also have been studies suggesting parents did influence the decision of dropout from sports in athletes.

**My skills did not improve** One other major reason that the participants believe is that, over time their skills did not improve in their specific sport. The p-value was found to be 0.00 showing significant differences between the responses as shown in table 1. 67% of participants believe no...
improvement in skillset to be a reason. For improving skills in a sport requires immense practice hours of deliberate training. This takes a toll on the body of an athlete, by practicing a same shot or by repetition of the same exercise, leading to the overuse of muscles or muscle fibres, this when coupled with no improvement in skill leads eventual dropout from sports in adolescence. And also, most of the time the training is so much focussed on winning that athletes with higher capabilities are given maximum time of play in a game making a negative impact on those with lesser capabilities, and leading them to drop out from sports.

*Did not get enough recognition* According to the participants of this research 91% of them admit that not getting enough recognition has also played a role over time, in taking the decision of dropout. In this case significant differences were found in the preferences with effect size (0.14) shown in table 1. But this comes contradictory to the fact that not getting enough recognition was not a reason at all for athletes to dropout. But relationship with coach was one of the main reasons.

*Did not receive enough awards* According to the participants of this research 65% of them believed they did not receive enough awards during their career. The p-value was found to be 0.00, as depicted in table 1, showing a significant difference in the responses. This in turn also makes a negative impact on the athlete over a period of time and leads him to drop out. This contradicts the earlier research which showed, the athletes did not believe receiving enough awards was a reason for them to drop out from sports.

*Not as good as wanted to be* Another main reason for athletes to dropout was, they believed, they weren’t as good they wanted to be in the sport. The p-value (0.00) shows significant difference in the responses, shown in table 1. 75% of the participant agreed they were not as good as they wanted to be in their respective sport. To be a master at any sport or to improve the skill set one needs to have enough hours of deliberate practice. And the athlete should choose the sport way ahead in its preteen. As it gives him/her enough number of hours of practice to improve the skillset, that gives a performance advantage over the athlete who has chosen the sport way ahead in the future.

Specialization in a single sport during the early ages of a young athlete rather than trying out different sports during the time is the best way for a skilled performance athlete with strict training routine during the formation years of an athlete.

4. Conclusion:

The aim of this research was to find the reasons which led an athlete to dropout from sports after receiving deliberate training, guidance and even after participation in district, state, nationals or even SGFI. The data indicates that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors had an influence on an athlete to drop out. Reasons such as had other things to do, friends and parents no longer wanted me to compete, my skills did not improve, did not get enough recognition, did not receive enough awards and not as good as wanted to be are the foremost reasons for dropout. It also indicates that non sport reasons also played a major role in athletes to dropout. Role played by parents and friends also plays in important role weather or not the athlete choses to dropout. To terminate these factors there should be an all-inclusive program structure from school to college and thereafter, where athletes should be given proper phycological training and monitored for continued participation and fewer dropouts.

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**Source of Funding:** Self-funded

**Conflict of Interest:** There is no conflict of interest among the authors

**References:**


