FLOURISH IN SPORT:
EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TRACK AND FIELD OLYMPIC MEDALISTS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of the Olympic games as described by Olympic track and field, medal winning, athletes for evidence of well-being. Furthermore, this study explored emergent evidence that was consistent with Seligman’s (2011) theory of well-being, also known as the PERMA Model. A qualitative research design utilizing multiple case study methods was used for this study. The data were collected using semi-structured interviews guided by an open-ended question: What were your experiences at the Olympic games? The data analysis utilized adapted content analysis strategies. The participants included four Olympic track and field, medal-winning athletes who competed in the 2012 London Olympic Games. Six themes emerged as evidence of well-being that were present in the described experiences of the Olympic games. Five themes emerged consistent with Seligman’s PERMA model and one additional theme emerged. The themes included Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Achievement and Motivation. This study reported evidence of well-being that emerged from the lived experience of these Olympic athletes.