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Dual Career Balance in Student-Athletes University Transition

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Poster abstract

AASP 2016

300 words

Title: Dual Career Balance in Student-Athletes University Transition

Balancing studies, a personal life and sports, that is, having a dual career, is considered as a challenge associated with transitional demands in athletic and non-athletic (psychological, psychosocial, academic/vocational, financial) domains (Wylleman, Reints, & De Knop, 2013). The aim of this study was to investigate student-athletes' university transition with a specific focus on how student-athletes balance different domains of their lives. Twenty-three Swedish university student-athletes (mean age= 21.52; 16 males and 7 females) representing six sports (equestrianism, golf, handball, ice hockey, soccer, table tennis) partook in the study. Participants completed the Dual Career Monitoring Survey (DCMS), weekly, over the first twelve weeks of their university education. The DCMS is developed by the authors and measures student-athletes perceptions of balance, time investments, demands, coping, satisfaction, resources and barriers in relation to sport, studies, private life, social life and financial situation. In exploring student-athletes' perception of dual career balance throughout the twelve weeks, an intra-class correlation analysis revealed a between-person variance of 0.14 (14%). That is, with regards to balance in their dual careers 86% was due to within-person variance, suggesting that balance is idiosyncratic and that further analysis should investigate within-person change. Encouraged by these findings we continued with a person-centered analysis using the Dynamic P-technique for modeling patterns of data (Nelson, Aylward, & Rausch, 2011). The relationships between changes in balance (i.e., prioritizing sport, studies or other domains of life), demands, coping and satisfaction throughout the twelve weeks will be presented. Our findings contribute to the understanding of balance as a central tenet of athletes' dual careers (Second author et al., 2015). From our findings we suggest practitioners to take into account the individual dynamics in dual career balance from a whole-person perspective.

283 words