

GEOSPORT FOR SOCIETY

Scientific Journal founded in 2014 under aegis of University of Oradea (Romania),
University of Debrecen (Hungary), University of Gdansk (Poland)

ISSN 2393-1353

Edited by Oradea University Press
1, University Street, 410087, Oradea, Romania
Journal homepage: <http://geosport.uoradea.ro>



Sports career versus educational career

Simona OROS ^{1*}, Iacob HANȚIU ²

1. Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Physical Education and Sports Doctoral School, 7 Pandurilor Stree, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, e-mail: simona.oros20@gmail.com
2. Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Physical Education and Sports Doctoral School, 7 Pandurilor Stree, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, e-mail: iacobhantiu@gmail.com

* Corresponding author

Article history: Received: 10.05.2018; Revised: 22.05.2018; Accepted: 20.06.2018, Available online: 04.07.2018

Abstract: Premises. Athletes are dealing with additional challenges in the management of double careers, having to dedicate countless hours to sports while respecting the educational, academic rigors, which generates the neglect of one of activities at the expense of the other. Objectives. The main objective of this study was to investigate the way of approach sports career and training, as priority activities carried out in parallel. Subjects and methods. The sample included a total of 300 performance athletes at the representative sports clubs of the country's N-V region (Bihar County, Bistrița-Năsăud, Cluj, Maramureș, Satu Mare, Sălaj). In conducting the study the method of investigation was used by administering a questionnaire. Results. The analysis of recorded data shows that the subjects of the first performance value echelon (N=176, M=2.78+1.02) allocate less time to the school preparation, compared to the subjects of the second echelon (N=124, M=3.05+1.19), positioning sports career as a priority activity. Female athletes show greater concern for study and training, compared to male athletes ($\chi^2=16.92$, df=1, p=0.000). Conclusions. The study conclusions emphasize the trend of athletes working in higher performance echelon, to focus mainly on sports success, as well as a more active concern of female subjects for study and training.

Keywords: athletes, sports career, educational career, double career

Introduction

The complexity of life and the challenges of the contemporary world underlines the importance of factors contributing to the achievement of education and sport training. Practiced for various reasons – for pleasure, for the victory against the opponent, for the value of relations with coaches and teammates, for personal achievements to overcome physical and emotional boundaries – sport

attracts millions of participants, people qualified with a variety of professions associated with a perceived prestige according to the social groups to which they belong. It offers the environment in which young people can be educated, learned to compete, is a means for building positive relationships to promote personal development. The ultimate goal of sporting youth participation "should be the promotion of lifelong physical activity, recreation and healthy competition skills that can be used in all aspects of future activities" (Brenner, 2007, p. 1244).

Any activity, any act of conduct arises due to reasons which direct and support the human being in addressing and solving problems (Nuț, 2009). The reasons for sport participation, regardless of the sports branch, are varied, but "most are related to the fact that the practice of sport offers the most powerful and diverse satisfaction" (Epuran and Holdevici, 1980, p. 22). For whatever reason, any athlete wants to win, to achieve the highest level of performance.

In contemporary society, education is one of the fundamental dimensions of human development, it is "the condition and progress of humanity" (Cucoș, 2000, p. 45). Economic development, increasing the complexity of social structures has led to the expansion of educational systems, extending the chances of access to education, increasing the period of schooling, boosting the role of the school in society as "a court credited with the function of selecting and allocating statuses and roles" (Gal, 2010, p. 31). The followers of the theory of "sport as an education" argue that sport participation is equally important for the development of pupils as well as educational, academic experience, which requires support in the formation of adolescents, therefore sport should not be considered an extracurricular activity, but an educational one (Rowles, 2015).

The aim of the study was to present how athletes perceive the motivation of dual careers management – sports activity and educational commitment, vocational training.

Objective: the main objective of this study was to investigate how athletes approach sports and vocational training, as priority activities carried out in parallel.

Hypothesis: focusing mainly on sports career influences the concern for study, damaging educational performance and training.

Subjects and methods

The sample included a number of 300 performance athletes (N=173, 57.7% – male, N=127, 42.3% – female gender) legitimately in the representative sports clubs of the country's N-V region (Bihor County, Bistrița-Năsăud, Cluj, Maramureș, Satu Mare, Sălaj), participants in national and international competitions, in the first (N=176,) and second (N=124) staggering performance value, with a minimum age of 18 years, Romanian citizens.

The question of research led to the use of the following methods: bibliographic documentation, sociological inquiry by administering the questionnaires, the statistic-mathematical method used for analyzing recorded data. A questionnaire was developed for conducting the study, set for the theme and objectives of the research. The collection of data was preceded by a training stage in which the managers of sports clubs were contacted, to present the intention together with the

research topic and to obtain the agreement to be part of the study. The questionnaire was conducted between February – June 2016. The recorded information was processed using the statistic-mathematics method, software applications (SPSS – T-Test, χ^2 ; Excel – Graphical representation).

Results

The analysis of the recorded results highlighted relevant aspects concerning the preoccupation of athletes for study and sports, integrated activities under the concept of dual career. In the hierarchy of priorities, the athletes of the first echelon value performance put the sports career first, compared to the athletes of the second echelon ($\chi^2=9.02$, $df=2$, $p=0.011$). Female subjects grant importance to both sports careers and the preparation of future professional careers, while in the case of male subjects the priority focus on sports performance is more evident ($\chi^2=16.92$, $df=1$, $p=0.000$).

Education, professional qualification are objectives positioned secondly by an important part of athletes (64.3%), focusing on the issue after retirement from the sports career (Fig. 1). For 6.3% of subjects "educational/vocational training" (Fig. 2) is a priority, arguing that it is an "important objective to achieve" (10%) (Fig. 1).

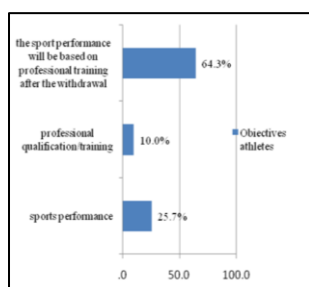


Figure 1. Goals pursued by athletes

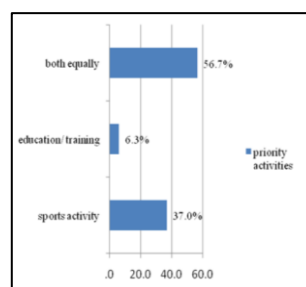


Figure 2. Priority of activities appreciated by athletes

The aspiration for sport performance was reflected by the way in which they choose to position sports activity and the objective of being selected in the national group, in the hierarchy of priorities. Most subjects – 56.7% (Fig. 2) claim to be concerned by both with education/training and sports activity, as appears from the analysis of the answers to the question "As importance, which of the activities are positioned first?" (Fig. 2). This response could be a desirable one, if you corroborate it with the objectives considered important, where in the first place and with a majority percentage (90%), the sport performance is evoked, according to the answers to the question "What is the most important objective pursued by you?" (Fig. 1).

Association of gender variables and performance value indicates that the probability that male subjects should activate in the first staggering value of the performance is higher, compared to female subjects, whose probability of belonging to the second echelon is higher. For female subjects, the focus on sports career is more evident in the case of those selected in the national group, the results suggesting statistically significant differences ($\chi^2=8.998$, $df=2$, $p=0.011$). In the case

of male subjects it is possible to note the concern for the sports career regardless of the selections in the national group ($\chi^2=3.174$, $df=2$, $p=0.205$) (Table 1).

Table 1. Hierarchy of objectives' selection in the national group according to gender

Gender	Item	Answer	You have been selected for the national group		χ^2	p
			yes	no		
M	What is your most important goal?	Sports Performance	34,0%	30,4%	3.174	0.205
		Qualification/Training	4,3%	11,4%		
		Sports performance, following the withdrawal of sports to focus on training	61,7%	58,2%		
F	What is your most important goal?	Sports Performance	16,9%	16,1%	8.998	0.011
		Qualification/Training	4,6%	22,6%		
		Sports performance, following the withdrawal of sports to focus on training	78,5%	61,3%		

For male subjects the main objective pursued was the development of sports career, compared to female subjects ($\chi^2=10.80$, $df=2$, $p=0.004$). The relationship between the category of sport they practiced and the views of athletes on the orientation to sports performance or study activity, supported by the coach was statistically significant ($\chi^2=15.75$, $df=2$, $p=0.000$). The assertion of the subjects of the sports games to be encouraged by the coach predominantly to the sport activity is more evident, compared to subjects in the category of individual sports, whose concern has been recorded both for school sport training and for school training also. The interest of the athletes within sports games for the sports career can also be understood by the amount of financial benefits, especially for athletes working in the first staggering performance value.

Table 2. Perception of orientation in dual career supported by coaches according to selections in the national group

Gender	Item	Answer	As a sportsman you were encouraged by the coach to focus your priority on?			χ^2	p
			Sport Training	Equally sports training and education	equally sports training, school, family, social life		
M	Have you been selected for the national group?	yes	63,8%	26,6%	9,6%	7,37	0,025
		no	44,3%	45,6%	10,1%		
F		yes	60,0%	21,5%	18,5%	24,44	0,000
		no	24,2%	64,5%	11,3%		

Athletes selected in national groups claim to have been encouraged by coaches to focus on sports development primarily, aiming at maximising sport performance,

meaningful relationship in terms of statistics, both in the case of male subjects ($\chi^2=7.37$, $df=2$, $p=0.025$), and in the case of female subjects ($\chi^2=24.44$, $df=2$, $p=0.000$) (Table 2). Analyzing the data in Table 2, it can be seen that male athletes who have been selected in national groups perceive, for the most part, encouraging coaches mostly to sport activity, compared to female subjects, differences being statistically significant.

Athletes, in particular the segment of those focused on the great performance, considered that the school/academic activity influences in "small measure" or in "very little measure" sports achievements (52.6%), but for 36.4% time is insufficient for the efficient management of the two activities, for 9.7% being harmed the sport activity "very much", and for 26.7% "really great" (Fig. 3).

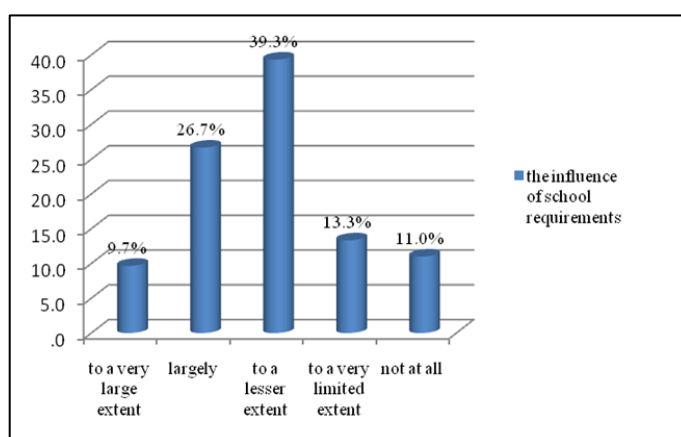


Figure 3. Influence of school training on sporting performance

Comparing the groups of athletes in the first and second performance value echelon, on their perception of the influence of time allocated to the achievement of school requirements on sporting performance, significant difference was recorded in terms of statistics – $t(298) = -2.05$, $p=0.04$. The subjects of the first echelon ($N=176$, $M=2.78 \pm 1.02$) allocate significantly less time to school preparation compared to the subjects in the second echelon ($N=124$, $M=3.05 \pm 1.19$). As a result, the more time they will allocate school preparation, the time for sporting training will be reduced, with negative influence on sports performance.

The mission of the educational institution is the training of pupils and students in accordance with the requirements of society. The subjects accuse the education system regarding "developing highly-loaded school programs, demanding requirements for students and students involved in sport performance", having to manage time among school, sports and social life. Although the knowledge taught in courses is appreciated by 43.3% of subjects as important "very much" for their formation (Fig. 4), absences from courses due mostly to sports activity (99%) make the assimilation of information to be carried out with syncope, because the recovery of courses involves "transcription of colleagues' courses" (63.7%) or "individual training" (24%), without further recovery of lost lessons (Fig. 5).

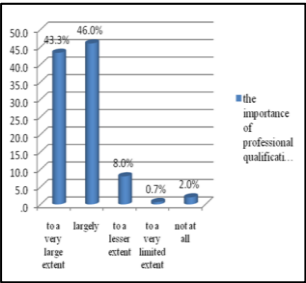


Figure 4. The importance of the courses

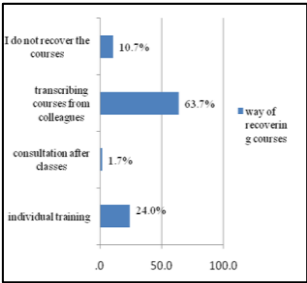


Figure 5. Methods to recover courses

The probability that the subjects of the first staggering performance value to give importance to personal and professional development is less than the subjects assigned to the second echelon ($\chi^2=15.05$, $df=4$, $p=0.005$).

The data recorded with reference to the relationship between the gender variables and the relevance of the knowledge taught in educational institutions showed a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2=17.73$, $df=4$, $p=0.001$). Female subjects give greater importance to education and training towards male subjects, attitude confirmed by statistically significant difference ($\chi^2=11.74$, $df=1$, $p=0.001$), recorded between gender variable and promotion of the baccalaureate exam, girls registering higher promotion.

By comparing the groups of subjects (male and female), statistically significant differences ($t(298)=3.94$, $p=0.00$) were found on the importance of teaching in courses. Male subjects pay less attention to school preparation ($N=173$, $M=1.87 \pm 0.85$), compared to female subjects ($N=127$, $M=1.51 \pm 0.68$).

Achieving school performances is not an easy approach for pupils or students, in terms of high energy consumption for sport training. Most of the subjects appreciated that the time spent on sports training and competitions influences the school results "very much" and "largely" – 49.7%, (Fig. 6).

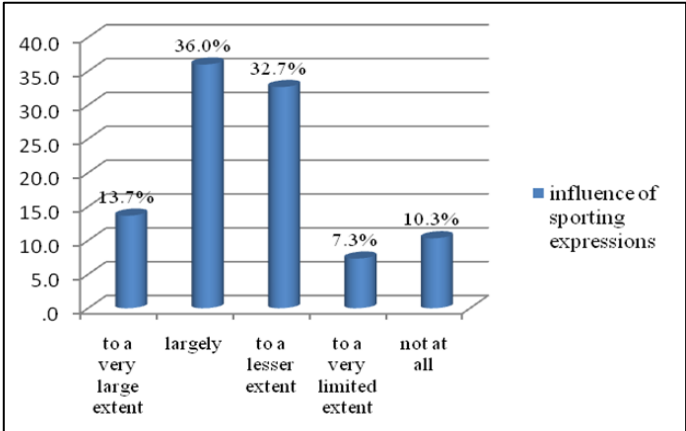


Figure 6. Influence of sports demands on school performances

Athletes from sports games perceive the problem of the time needed for sports activity as having negative influences on school performance, rather than athletes from individual sports. This context can generate pressure on athletes, putting athletes in front of a possible school dropout, rather among team sport, than in the case of individual sports ($\chi^2=9.80$, $df=4$, $p=0.002$).

The results of the t-test test showed statistically significant differences – $t(298) = -2.60$, $p=0.01$, as regards the perception of the subjects of the first and second staggering performance values, on the influence of time allocated to training and sport competitions on school/academic performances. Subjects of the second-performance value echelon ($N=124$, $M=2.85 \pm 1.21$), appreciates that the involvement in the sports career more influences the school preparation, compared to the subjects in the first value echelon ($N=176$, $M=2.51 \pm 1.04$). By spending more time on sports-specific activities, there will be less time to study and prepare for future professional careers, negatively impacting school/academic performance.

Discussion

The duration of the sports career is different for each athlete, relatively short and requires the completion of certain stages from initiation to completion. A small percentage of athletes end up becoming top athletes, gaining earnings to ensure a decent living, but others, most of the athletes, reach the end of their sports career with no income sources to help them have a decent life and often without to accumulate thorough training through theoretical and practical studies. With the choice of sports performance route, subjects tend to focus mainly on sports activity, especially in the case of athletes who end up performing in the first staggering value of performance ($\chi^2=9.02$, $df=2$, $p=0.010$) and those selected in the national group (more evident among female subjects summoned to the national group ($\chi^2=8.998$, $df=2$, $p=0.011$)).

The athlete, under the influence of intrinsic or extrinsic motivations, often supported by the coach, prepares to maximize performance, reaching situations of neglecting other aspects of family life, educational or Social. The concern for building successful sports career is more emphasized among male subjects ($\chi^2=16.92$, $df=1$, $p=0.000$), while female subjects pay attention to both sporting activity and education ($\chi^2=12.633$, $df=2$, $p=0.002$). This tendency to make greater efforts for academic training, registered among female subjects, has also been highlighted by Fuchs, Wagner, Hannola, Niemisalo, Pehme, Puhke, Marinsek, Strmecki, Svetec, Brown, Capranica and Guidotti (2016, p. 31). Whether or not they have selections in the national group or the value echelon in which they perform, for male subjects, the main objective was the sport performance ($\chi^2=10.80$, $df=2$, $p=0.004$). Concluding, it can be noted that male subjects are identified more strongly with sports status, positioning as a priority objective sports career, whether or not they fall in the echelon of elite sport. For female subjects, the situation is different, the sports that have been selected in the national group being more dedicated to sports career than those that have not reached this level of performance. According to López de Subijana, Barriopedro and Sanz (2015), men have a stronger sports identity than women (similar to the study of Brewer et.al. 1993 apud López de

Subijana et al., 2015) and is more pronounced in the category of elite athletes' International competitive level and age category < 24 years (Lupo, mosses, Guidotti, Cugliari, Pizzigalli & Rainoldi, 2017).

The focus of the priority activity on the development of sports performance was encouraged by the coaches, the orientation stated mainly by the practitioners of sports games ($\chi^2=15.75$, $df.=2$, $p=0.000$) and athletes convened at national groups, Both in the case of male-type subjects($\chi^2=7.37$, $df.=2$, $p=0.025$), and in the case of female subjects ($\chi^2=24.44$, $df.=2$, $p=0.000$). In this context, athletes often get to be "over-educated" in terms of the physical aspects of sport training, but also "sub-educated" in terms of its psychic aspects "(MTS, 2000, p. 257) or other life situations. This direction of development is not perceived negatively by athletes if sports success means financial benefits and a different social state. The results of the study conducted by Siekańska and Blecharz (2014) Emphasize that sport-oriented people have a stronger sense of fulfillment in sport than outside of it, while education-oriented people have had a more Great fulfillment outside of sport. Dawn (2013) argues that encouraging athletes to focus on other activities than performing sporting performance (such as academic study) contributes to reducing stress related to competitive pressure and learning skills.

Socrates ' assertion, highlighted by Balch (2009) In his studies, refers to the fact that "there is only one benefit, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance" (p. 9), should draw the attention of the sports authorities, coaches who They tend to orient athletes to an exemplary sporting life, but with demands that limit interest in other social and educational or academic activities. Athletes dedicate such a lifestyle can reach the end of the sports career with a restricted informational baggage, limited to sports experience and less theoretical knowledge. Currently, as noted in Dawn (2013) "the requirements imposed on Olympic athletes and professionals in contemporary world sports are such that they must devote more and more to achieving excellence" (p. 374), which will generate an imbalance Between the time spent on sporting development and for other non-sport issues.

Athletes, while engaged in sports activity alongside training, are exposed to threats that can damage important life issues, on the one hand they engage in a sport career determined as time that does not guarantee their stability or success, and on the other hand due to the demands of sports performance, make sacrifices that affect education, personal life and future career. However, when allocating more time to school training, athletes perceive the restraint of the time needed for sports development, with an impact on sports performance. Dedicate to the sports career, the subjects in the first echelon ($M=2.78\pm1.02$) allocate significantly less time to school preparation compared to the subjects in the second echelon ($M=3.05\pm1.19$) – $t(298)= - 2.05$, $p=0.04$, a lower rate of possible sport abandonment. According to Hoffmann, Dirk and Wulff (2011), the highest rate of sport abandonment is among the youngest elite athletes in the age group.

Choosing a sports career or continuing university studies is a problem present in Romania, for high school graduates, faced with such a decision. Hirokazu Arai, Fumiya Suzuki and Shigeki Akiba (2016) underlined that it is difficult for an athlete to strike a balance between sports and private life, with intense daily energy

consumption, with overlapping educational programs at risk of dropping out of school sporting requirements. The schooling of athletes can not follow a natural course with those who do not practice sports, as the recuperation of the courses is done with syncope by transcribing lessons from colleagues (63.7%) or individual training (24%). McCormack and Walseth (2013) appreciated that during high school studies, the accumulation of educational capital is affected by elite athletes. In the absence of support strategies for balanced dual career careers, athletes in the first performance-level echelon focus mainly on sports career, limiting the interest for professional development ($\chi^2=15.05$, $df=4$, $p=0.005$). At the same time, female subjects follow more closely the professional qualification in parallel with the sports activity ($\chi^2=17.73$, $df=4$, $p=0.001$). This trend is supported by studies conducted on the axis of school outcomes reported to gender differences, which show that "girls have significantly better school results than boys, especially in some subjects" (2006, p. 178). Dedicated to sporting performance, subjects operating in the first staggering performance value allocate more time to activities specific to sports career development and less time for study and preparation of future professional careers, Negatively influencing school/academic performance ($t(298)=-2.60$, $p=0.01$). Subjects of the second-performance value echelon ($N=124$, $M=2.85\pm1.21$), appreciates that the involvement in the sports career more influences the school preparation, compared to the subjects in the first value echelon ($N=176$, $M=2.51\pm1.04$). It can be concluded that the main involvement in sports or educational activity, without ensuring a balance in the management of the two important activities in the development of athletes, will prejudice the performance of an activity at the expense of the other priorities, which was also evoked by Sorkkila, Aunola and Ryba (2017), which argues that "expectations of success in a single field may increase the risk of injury in another field" (P. 58). Performing school performances is not an easy approach for athletes, "compared to traditional students, sports students face additional challenges and energy consumption in achieving good academic and sporting performance" (Shuman, 2009, Gaston-Gayles, 2005, Gatmen, 2012 apud Lupo, Tessitore, Capranica, Rauter & Topic, 2012, p. 54). Academic success depends on the amount of time and energy that students invest in their study experience, regardless of life commitments, as Simpson and Burnett point out (2017).

Conclusions

Throughout the athletes' career, their main goal is to maximize performance, achieve sport excellence, which encourages athletes to position their educational activity, training either in a secondary plan or on the same level of priorities as sports activity, especially for high performance athletes. This tendency to concentrate predominantly on sports performance distracts attention from the importance of preparing athletes for the transition to another stage of life and has not achieved performances that will allow them a decent living (getting a living rent). Athletic dedication limits the time required for educational training to impair professional training, with differences in concern depending on the level of performance and gender.

References

- Balch, P., (2009), *Nutriție și biotratamente*. Volumul 1. Editura Litera. București. Traducere din limba engleză de Aurelia Ulici.
- Brenner, J., (2007), *Overuse injuries, overtraining and burnout in child and adolescent athletes*, Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, 119, 1242-1245. DOI: 10.1542/peds.2007-0887
- Cucoș, C., (2000), *Educația. Dimensiuni culturale și interculturale*, Editura Polirom, Iași.
- Dawn, A., (2013), *A Study of the Relationship Between Elite Athletes' Educational Development and Sporting Performance*, The International Journal of the History of Sport, 30:4, 374-392.
- Epuran, M., Holdevici, I., (1980), *Compendiu de psihologie pentru antrenori*, București: Editura Sport-Turism.
- Fuchs, P.X., Wagner, H., Hannola, H., Niemisalo, N., Pehme, A., Puhke, R., Marinsek, M., Strmecki, A., Svetec, D., Brown, A., Capranica, L., Guidotti, F., (2016), *European Student-Athletes' Perceptions On Dual Career Outcomes And Services/Pogled Evropskih Studentov Sportnikov Na Rezultate*, In Stortive V Podporo Dvojni Karieri, Kinesiologia Slovenica. Ljubljana (22) 2: 31-48.
- Gal, D., (2010), *Valențe mobilitare ale educației școlare în contextul social actual. Educație și schimbare socială, perspective sociologice și comunicaționale*, Coordonatori Bălătescu, S., Chipea, F., Cioară, I., Hatos, A., Săveanu, S. (2010), Oradea, Editura Universității din Oradea, p. 31 – 36.
- Hatos, A., (2006), *Sociologia educației*, Editura Polirom, Iași.
- Hirokazu A., Fumiya S., Shigeki A., (2016), *Perception of Japanese Collegiate Athletes about the Factors Related to Mentoring Support*, Journal of Physical Education Research, (3)4:12-24.
- Hoffmann, A., Dirk, B., Wulff, J., (2011), *Psychological characteristics of youth elite athletes—starting point to improve career development?*, Institute for Applied Training Science. Conference Paper · July 2011, Conference: 13th FEPSAC European Congress of Sport Psychology, At Funchal.
- López de Subijana, C., Barriopedro, M. I., Sanz, I., (2015), *Dual career motivation and athletic identity on elite athletes*, Revista de Psicología del Deporte, (24), Suppl 1: 55-57.
- Lupo, C., Mosso, C.O., Guidotti, F., Cugliari, G., Pizzigalli, L., Rainoldi, A., (2017), *The Adapted Italian Version of the Baller Identity Measurement Scale to Evaluate the Student-Athletes' Identity in Relation to Gender, Age, Type of Sport, and Competition Level*, Journal PLOS One. Published: January 5, 2017.
- Lupo, C., Tessitore, A., Capranica, L., Rauter, S., Topic, M. D., (2012), *Motivation for a Dual-Career: Italian and Slovenian Studentathletes*, Kinesiologia Slovenica, (18) 3: 47–56.
- McCormack, C., Walseth, K., (2013), *Combining elite women's soccer and education: Norway and the NCAA*, Journal Soccer & Society, (14) 6: 887-897.
- Ministerul Tineretului și Sportului. Centru de Cercetări pentru Probleme de Sport (2000), *Metodologia antrenamentului*. SDP 419-422. Uz intern. București.
- Nuț, S., (2009), *Psihologia sportului*, Editura Politehnica, Timișoara.
- Rowles, K. S., (2015), *An Investigation into Factors that Contribute to the Perception of Disparities between Academic Achievement and Athletic Participation in High School Student-Athletes*, The Sport Journal, Refereed Sports Journal, Published by the United States Sports Academy, 2015.
- Siekańska, M., Blecharz, J., (2016), *Dual Career Pathways: Psychological and Environmental Determinants of Professional Athletes' Development*, Studies in Sport Humanities. p. 6-19. Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego im. Bronisława Czecha w Krakowie University of Physical Education in Kraków, Poland.
- Simpson, D. B., Burnett, D., (2017), *Commuters Versus Residents. The Effects of Living Arrangement and Student Engagement on Academic Performance*, Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice.
- Sorkkila, M., Aunola, K., Ryba, T.V., (2017), *A person-oriented approach to sport and school burnout in adolescent student-athletes: The role of individual and parental expectations*, Psychology of Sport and Exercise, (28), 58-67.