

Title: Identity Tensions in Dual Career: The Discursive Construction of Future Selves by Female Finnish Judo Athletes

Author(s): Kavoura A. & Ryba, T. V.

Year: 2019

Keywords: Cultural praxis; cultural sport psychology; feminist poststructuralist theory; gender; martial arts and combat sports

Sport(s): Judo

Journal: Soccer & Society

Main Theme: Identity

Secondary Theme(s): Dual career policy

Aims: The aim of the study was to explore changes in an athlete's understanding of themselves (i.e., their identity) that occur due to a change in policy or practice, in this case DC policy.

Method: The data consist of semi-structured interviews with three adolescent and three adult female elite judo athletes (6 in total).

Results and Practical Implications: The result showed that, as expected, sport was a priority for all participants but that athletes of different ages in imagining their sporting success. For example, adult athletes spoke of hopes of becoming Olympic athletes, whereas younger athletes moderated their goals because they believed the Olympic dream was unrealistic. Athletes explained that Judo was not a sport they could live off after retirement and, therefore, it was always considered along with an alternative career or education. Two of the participants chose vocation-based education routes because they were seen as a faster way to working life. Therefore, enabling the athletes to financially sustain themselves whilst practicing Judo. Whereas, other athletes had career aspirations that required higher education degrees. The results showed that athletes made educational and vocational

decisions based on their compatibility with sport and being able to pursue a dual career. However, young athletes expected a smooth dual career path, whereas older athletes explained the challenges of a dual career. This suggests that younger athletes might be unprepared for the barriers to combining sport with an education or vocation. Practitioners should aim to work on contingency plans for not being able to maintain a dual career with youth athletes. It is also important to promote and increase the ability to pursue sport at the elite level to young female athletes who might dropout from sport because they do not believe it is possible.

TASS have produced this lay summary. The full article is available (permissions may apply): <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17430437.2019.1669325>