

**Title:** The Relationship Between Dual-Career and Post-Sport Career Transition Among Elite Athletes in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe

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**Year:** 2015

**Keywords:** Athlete dual-career; retirement transition.

**Sport:** Athletics, swimming, boxing, rowing, field hockey, gymnastic, triathlon and cycling).

**Primary Theme:** Career plans

**Secondary Theme:** Transitions; benefits of being a student athlete.

**Aims:** The aim of this study was to investigate the role a dual career can have on the retirement transition of an elite athlete and to compare the findings across four African nations: South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. These nations were chosen because of the differences in availability of support services athletes might experience.

**Method:** A total of 17 participants took part in the study. These participants were 12 male and 5 female retired athletes from various sports (athletics, swimming, boxing, rowing, field hockey, gymnastics, triathlon and cycling) and had competed at an Olympic Games, World Championships or Commonwealth Games.

**Results and Practical Implications:** Similar to research in other cultures, the athletes who had combined their sporting career with education or a vocational career described their retirement from sport as “smooth” and “automatic”. Despite this, the participants still noted a number of difficulties in combining sport with an education or vocation. Some athletes found the challenges too much and so, withdrew from one of their pursuits. A lack of support and flexibility were described as reasons for making a dual career more challenging. When comparing the findings across the nations in this study, it was seen that South African athletes were more likely to describe support systems put in place and described environmental factors (such as, sponsorship deals) as making it finally easier to



pursue sport. This research highlights the need for post-retirement career planning in African cultures. It is therefore, crucial for these nations to develop sports systems to support athletes who aim to combine their sporting pursuits with educational or vocational pursuits.

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[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tshepang\\_Tshube/publication/280774790\\_The\\_relationship\\_between\\_dual-career\\_and\\_post\\_sport\\_career\\_transition\\_among\\_elite\\_athletes/links/55c5d32308aeca747d61ab84.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tshepang_Tshube/publication/280774790_The_relationship_between_dual-career_and_post_sport_career_transition_among_elite_athletes/links/55c5d32308aeca747d61ab84.pdf)