

**Title:** “When You're Coming from the Reserve You're not Supposed to Make it”: Stories of Aboriginal Athletes Pursuing Sport and Academic Careers in “Mainstream” Cultural Contexts

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**Keywords:** Cultural sport psychology, Indigenous, student-athlete, dual-career

**Sport:** Hockey

**Journal:** Psychology of Sport and Exercise

**Main theme:** Culture

**Secondary themes:** Social support

**Aims:** The aim of the study was to emphasise the role that culture plays in shaping dual career experiences to enable athletes who make this move to be better supported. A dual career can be a challenging experience, however, very few studies have looked at the experience of athletes who relocate across borders and into different cultures to undertake a dual career.

**Method:** Participants were athletes (male and female) from an aboriginal community in Canada, aged between 14 and 22 and had relocated to pursue sport and educational opportunities. Participants were asked to draw a circle and create an image that reflected their experiences pursuing dual careers, which was supplemented with interviews.

**Results and Practical Implications:** Results of the study found that athletes felt a backlash from members of their community back at home who perceived their transition as a form of cultural betrayal. The athletes therefore had to deal with a loss of cultural social support as they navigated the school and sport-related transition, highlighting how important social support may be for these individuals in their new environment. As a result of the loss of support from their home communities, athletes felt that they needed to prove themselves in their new dual career context. Athletes also felt that following their dual career transition,

they had to break down culturally oppressive stereotypes and attitudes by persisting and advancing their dual careers, but doubted their own ability to adapt and succeed in their new context. Although initially prioritising sport, as the athletes moved through the initial culture shock, they developed a stronger sense of identity as students and aboriginal community members. The results also found that the athlete felt mentally and physically drained trying to invest equally in their dual careers, and whilst doing so, felt that they were compromising their aboriginal identities. For athletes that move across cultures to pursue a dual career, they should be encouraged to stay culturally connected to enable them to achieve an optimal dual career balance.

TASS have produced this lay summary. The full article is available (permissions may apply):

[https://ac.els-cdn.com/S1469029215000242/1-s2.0-S1469029215000242-main.pdf?\\_tid=621cda5a-ac57-11e7-ba3a-00000aab0f26&acdnat=1507487877\\_cf5b73d3a26c3050b75486e16727fb9c](https://ac.els-cdn.com/S1469029215000242/1-s2.0-S1469029215000242-main.pdf?_tid=621cda5a-ac57-11e7-ba3a-00000aab0f26&acdnat=1507487877_cf5b73d3a26c3050b75486e16727fb9c)