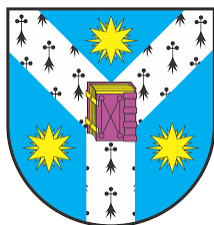


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FACULTY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF SPORT SCIENCE AND PHYSICAL
EDUCATION
FIELD: SPORT SCIENCE AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION**



**Mass-media: channel for promoting and educating
athletes' dual careers**

THESIS SUMMARY

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2023

Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
PART I. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE RESEARCH THEME.....	6
CHAPTER 1. Conceptual boundaries: career vs. dual career.....	6
1.1. Overview of the term "career".....	7
1.2. Dual career.....	8
CHAPTER 2. Decision-making aspects regarding dual career.....	9
2.1. Dual career in some European countries.....	9
2.2. Dual career in Romania.....	11
CHAPTER 3. Mass media – conceptualization.....	12
3.1. Mass-media and sport.....	13
3.2. The concept of dual career in mass-media.....	14
3.3. Social communication channels in the world and Romania - general aspects.....	15
3.4. The champion and sports performance - context..	15
PART II. APPLICATIVE PART.....	17
CHAPTER 4. Investigative approach regarding dual career in Romania.....	17
4.1. Future research directions.....	19
CHAPTER 5. Preliminary study.....	20
5.1. The premises of the preliminary study.....	20
5.2. Research hypotheses, objectives, subjects and variables.....	20
5.3. Analysis and interpretation.....	22

5.3.1. "Dual career" category.....	22
5.3.2. "Profile of the athlete" category.....	22
5.3.3. "Mass media" category.....	23
5.3.4. "Mass-media tools" category.....	23
5.4. Hypothesis testing.....	25
5.4.1. Testing the secondary hypothesis 1.....	25
5.4.2. Testing the secondary hypothesis 2.....	26
Conclusions of the preliminary study.....	27
Limitations of the preliminary study and future research directions.....	27
CHAPTER 6. The main study.....	29
6.1. Prerequisites of the main study.....	29
6.2. Research hypotheses, objectives and subjects.....	29
6.3. Research methodology.....	30
6.4. Hypothesis testing.....	31
6.4.1. Testing the secondary hypothesis 1.....	32
6.4.2. Testing the secondary hypothesis 2.....	34
Conclusions of the main study.....	39
The conclusions of the research.....	40
Future research directions.....	44
Limits of research.....	45
Dissemination of results.....	46
Acknowledgements.....	47
Selective Bibliography.....	48

Keywords: mass-media, dual career, athlete, social media, Youtube.

INTRODUCTION

The phrase "dual career" represents an association of words that we sometimes encounter in everyday life. Undoubtedly, the notion is relatively new in the socio-human approach, and the optimization of an individual's purpose and goals represent, today, successful models for professional fulfillment.

Throughout their performance career, athletes are obliged to fulfill several social roles at the same time (students, family members, employees, etc.) and are forced to manage, with the help of the family, school or sports environment, their dual career (sports and educational or professional) (Kristiansen, E., 2017, Oros & Hanțiu, 2016). For them, continuing their education while participating in competitions represents, according to Abenza-Cano et al. (2020), a challenging and intense task.

The demands of performance sport require the total allocation of time for the achievement of excellence. This implies a total concentration of the athlete for the development of the sports career, because he has very little time, besides sports, for other aspects of life. That is why it is very important that athletes have a dual career or be prepared for another activity after retirement. In the conditions presented, the two notions (sport and career), not only must be compatible, but must also be complementary (Aquilina, 2013).

In recent years, the media and its influence on society has grown exponentially, along with the development of technology,

and some countries even implement formal and non-formal media education programs (Yevtushenko & Kovalova, 2019).

The strategy and action plan for raising awareness of dual careers through the media provides an opportunity to assess the awareness actions and their impact at the national level. It is found that, most of the time, sports students use social networks to mainly praise (promote) their sports performances, without taking into account their school achievements. In this sense, real opportunities to raise awareness about dual careers are lost. To resolve the situation, the solution is simple: the optimal education of athletes who rigorously continue their education, to effectively use social communication channels and to present both sports and educational performances. In this way, they will contribute to the promotion of dual career and on the media channels, so used by the young people of the contemporary society.

PART I. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE RESEARCH THEME

CHAPTER 1. Conceptual boundaries: career vs. dual career

"Dual career" refers to the attempt of athletes to combine sports performance with education or work, in an attempt to protect themselves after the sports career ends (EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes, 2012).

The notion of "dual career", combining terms that combine sport and education (or sport and career), has gained worldwide recognition and is the subject of numerous analyzes and studies (Gledhill & Harwood, 2015). Since man, in general, is not always concerned with what comes next, analyzing a future career (while holding another) can be considered a challenge.

Young student athletes are involved in two dominant social contexts: they are both students and athletes. Often, under this status, young people are forced to approach some situations from the perspective of the student, and others, from the perspective of the athlete.

The relationship between sports activity and education (work) is described by Pallares et al. (2011) in 3 directions: "linear path" (in which athletes are focused only on their sports career and are totally disinterested in obtaining a professional status after its conclusion), "convergent path" (where athletes prioritize their sports career and have an superficial approach on the development of dual career) and the "parallel path", which

represents the optimal method, because athletes give equal importance to academic and sports performance (which also represents the future model of fulfilling one's potential as European citizens).

1.1. Overview of the term "career"

Although it was initially associated with the hierarchical ascent of a person within an organization, Lemeni and Miclea (2010), associate career with a person's development path, through learning alongside work, and suggest that in contemporary society, the term represents an essential component in the evolution of everyone's personality, which implies, according to Gherman et al. (2010), a continuous struggle to achieve personal goals or objectives.

Usually the term "career" is equated with an upward vector of success and not just associated with people who occupy important managerial positions within an institution.

"Sports career" is a term that represents a sporting activity carried out over a period of several years, which is voluntarily chosen by a person and which aims to achieve sporting success in one or more competitions.

In conclusion, we can confirm that in order to build a career, regardless of whether we are talking about a performance athlete or a person who does not practice sports activities, a complete and complex knowledge of the whole process is required. In this context, Schwaiger (2012), is of the opinion that making a choice or a career change is no longer a simple thing,

but becomes complex and complicated in the world economy that is constantly based on competition.

1.2. Dual career

The concept of "dual career", which refers to the challenge of combining sports career with education or work, remains, according to Ryba et al. (2015), a constant source of concern for most performance athletes.

There are numerous studies in the specialized literature regarding the dual career. Although many specialists try to define the phrase as precisely as possible, numerous approaches are present in the field of research. In this sense, Gomez et al. (2018) are of the opinion that a student athlete represents a person who is still in the field of education but also trains at the highest level or a person who is a student or pupil and who participates in competitions or competes under the aegis of a sports federation, club or association.

Dual career, according to Stambulova et al. (2015), proves to be the optimal solution to highlight the benefits of playing sport and at the same time prepare those who retire from performance for what is to come. There is an acute need to coordinate and support the dual careers of athletes, with the aim of keeping talented young people in the fields of sports and education and highlighting the advantages of a dual career.

Although the transition that exists in dual career refers predominantly to sport and education, retirement from sport is often predictable and inevitably associated with challenges and

changes in all areas of activity that involve the development of the athlete as an individual.

CHAPTER 2. Decision-making aspects regarding dual career

The notion of a dual career for performance athletes implies, by definition, the involvement of related fields (work, education, health) in the sphere of sports activity. A country's rulers and those responsible for the policies development must be aware of the vulnerability of athletes who end their careers.

In reality, knowing the motivation and the desire to achieve in life by the student-athletes, in relation to the different educational systems of Europe, can promote, according to Lupo et al. (2015), a better understanding of academic or sports expectations and thus, provide important information to those who can decide in the corresponding fields. In this respect, cross-country comparisons, together with the determination of student-athletes regarding dual careers, contribute to the development of sustainable strategies for the realization of programs that combine education and sport.

2.1. Dual career in some European countries

The promotion of dual careers to ensure the educational and vocational development of young athletes reflects the strategy of the European forum, which wants a low school dropout rate, a high number of university graduates and a high

percentage of employability among young people (Aunola et al., 2018).

For Europe, one of the important documents looking at dual careers is the European Guidelines for Dual Career Athletes, which describes policy action recommendations to support dual careers in high-performance sport

The state can intervene in the promotion and management of the dual career in that country. Studies have identified 4 types of state approaches to dual careers (Aquilina & Henry, 2010):

- Type 1: State-centred regulation, where government legislation or statutory regulations assign responsibilities to higher education institutions. We find this type of approach in countries such as France, Hungary, Luxembourg, Spain, Poland, Portugal;
- Type 2: the state as sponsor/facilitator, where formal agreements are promoted to meet the educational needs of athletes. Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden represent countries that put into practice the characteristics of type 2 dual career approach;
- Type 3: in this situation the National Sports Federations or Institutes are directly engaged in the negotiation with the educational entities on behalf of the athletes. The states using the described strategy are Greece and Great Britain;
- Type 4: *laissez-faire* (trans. „Let it be”), where there are no formal structures and agreements are negotiated individually. It is the simplest dual career approach, and

in this situation things can be improved considerably both through clear policies and government involvement. Countries such as Austria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia can be classified under this type of dual-career state relationship.

2.2. Dual career in Romania

In our country, dual career takes the first steps towards development. Since joining the EU, Romania is obliged to align its legislation with European trends regarding dual careers.

At the moment there is no dual career culture for athletes. The authorities are in a position to support dual-career actions, as there are EU-funded programs trying to promote the concept at national level.

Romanian athletes are more focused on winning competitions than developing their ability to find solutions in combining training with education/work. The situation is like this due to a common fault: coaches, federations, even parents are interested in the immediate top results and less in the activity that the athletes will carry out after the end of their career.

In Romania, regarding dual career, there are programs and projects that present the real situation and propose optimal solutions for the implementation, in the consciousness of the Romanian athlete, of the notion of a dual career. The educational organizations in the field of sports propose the promotion of dual career, and the institutional decision-makers are also with this approach.

CHAPTER 3. Mass media – conceptualization

Human communication is achieved with the help of the interaction between two types of relationships: direct (when we talk about interpersonal communication) and indirect (when technological support also intervenes in mediating communication).

Mass media represents (according to Bălă, 2015), a phrase that comes from the English word "mass", which refers to the mass of consumers, and the Latin term "media" which refers to the supports on which the respective messages are fixed. Regarding the second term, Coman (2016), considers it a continuous source of confusion from a conceptual but also a linguistic point of view, because, at the moment, there is no unanimously accepted formula. The term can refer to a technique or set of techniques for producing or transmitting messages through manageable media or specific channels, or it can refer to a set of messages (created with this technique), or a set of organizations (that produce these messages). Morariu (2014) refers to the "media" as a main way of interacting with a large number of individuals.

Although different explanations and definitions of the term "media" are tried, and initially, according to Livingstone (2015), mass media meant only press, television or cinema, one idea remains constant and is always found in the presentation of the term: transmission (communication) from a central system to several receivers.

3.1. Mass-media and sport

The junction point for sports experiences with those of social communication channels creates an intriguing and unique scenario. The situation in which a world-class athlete (idolized by children and adults) presents, with the help of social networks, his life and internal struggles, represents a moment of accessibility in his aura of invincibility. This state allows fans, but also critics, to look and understand future aspirations, through personal information posted (Bireline, 2014).

A large amount of information about the activity of athletes is given to the general public by the mass media and through the numerous sports biographies and autobiographies. The role of mass media in sports is to communicate and transmit messages from the sports organization, or the athlete, to the audience. If we consider the effect of sport on the different dimensions of personal and social life, the role of the media as a mediator becomes essential.

Sport and social communication channels have developed in a perfect symbiosis as a result of technological development. With the advent of television, the relationship between sports and mass media is becoming closer and closer. Thus, television was identified as the primary source for obtaining information, followed by the Internet, newspapers and a very small percentage from the radio. Knowing the preferences of media consumers can be useful in making decisions to promote the advantages of dual careers. Later, with the evolution of the sociology of sport, physical education, mass sport, etc., the relationship between sport

and mass media gradually becomes the object of academic research (Wei et al., 2020).

In mass media, there is, at the moment, enough content for sports media: broadcasts of competitions, interviews with athletes, movies (documentary or artistic) about coaches or sports events, etc.

3.2. The concept of dual career in mass-media

Media plays a shaping role in the development and sustainability of national culture, including dual careers (Capranica & Guidotti, 2016). According to Florescu (2014), young people analyze the behaviors and values presented in mass media, and if the promoted opinions converge towards accepted conduct, they can become role models.

In order to provide an empirical and theoretical basis for the further promotion of dual media careers, the need for an adequate understanding of the image of the student-athlete created by the media is considered vital for a successful foundation.

The media is therefore urged to increase the provision of examples of good practice in dual careers, as well as an account of the challenges of athletes combining sport with education. However, sports entities and educational institutions should also encourage the media to develop the important role it plays in raising dual career awareness among the general population, but also help their student/athlete athletes to develop appropriate skills to convey positive messages that inspire future generations of talented athletes.

3.3. Social communication channels in the world and Romania - general aspects

Currently, social communication channels are spreading all over the world with the help of digital progress, which opens new approaches to a multitude of platforms and applications (Gabelaia, 2019). Social networks, as an integral part of mass media, have gradually become a constant in our lives. These networks represent the new normal (Chakrabarti et al., 2023), where online activity is a major factor that contributes to the development of social position.

The time spent on social communication channels has seen an unprecedented increase in recent years, and young people represent the largest category in using different types of platforms (Brough et al., 2020), who are always exploring the possibilities of communication (Usman et al. , 2022). As it hosts millions of videos, the YouTube platform offers multiple features that users can access to discover the information they want. Moreover, after a search for a term, Youtube will then recommend poses associated with that search, and the students can receive (even on the first page), multiple materials about "dual career".

3.4. The champion and sports performance – context

Achieving performance is based, in addition to the phenomenon of emulation or social facilitation, on the tendency of the individual to overcome himself. This represents a solid argument for society to appreciate the intrinsic competitive

tendency of man, which, most of the time, is exposed in front of the public, when there is a fight between the athlete and himself.

The need for performance, which automatically implies the tendency to maximize it, leads to the mechanism of optimizing the athletes' personality, the training principles lead to a mix of solid biological and psychosociological foundations. Even if we are talking about performance sports or sports for all, the activity is aimed at better results than the previous ones.

In the field of sports, the factors that generally lead to success are well known. They are determined by somatic predispositions but also by motor, technical and tactical training. Obviously, genetic traits also matter in the selection process, but the individual value is given, then, by the training achieved. And yet, despite this recipe, most athletes cannot become champions. In this sense, more and more coaches believe that the psyche is behind special performances, and sports psychologists have become an integral part of victory (Piepiora, 2021).

PART II. APPLICATIVE PART

CHAPTER 4. Investigative approach regarding dual career in Romania

In order to develop a research that covers as many aspects as possible regarding the understanding of dual career, an investigative approach was carried out to present the view of the respondents regarding the phrase dual career.

The study was conducted on a group of 61 respondents, students of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, of whom 47 are no longer performance athletes, and 14 are still active at performance level.

The frequency of occurrence of mentions and mean ranks of occurrence were used for the analysis, along with the frequency of occurrence and mean ranks of importance (Tables 1 and 2):

Table 1. Categories, frequencies and average ranks (average rank of occurrence and average rank of importance), R.S. indicator, specific to respondents who are not performance athletes

Respondents – N = 47

<i>Crt. No.</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Rank of occurrence</i>	<i>Rank of importance</i>	<i>R.S. indicator</i>
1.	Personal Development	102	3.03	2.85	299.88
2.	Sacrifice	45	2.48	2.72	117
3.	Job	21	2.66	3.09	60.37
4.	Benefits	33	2.96	2.87	96.19
5.	Obstacles	9	3.44	3.44	30.96
6.	Material Advantages	5	2.4	2.8	13

Table 2. Categories, frequencies and average ranks (average rank of occurrence and average rank of importance), R.S. indicator, specific to respondents who are performance athletes

Respondents – N = 14

<i>Crt. No.</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Rank of occurrence</i>	<i>Rank of importance</i>	<i>R.S. indicator</i>
1.	Personal Development	30	3.23	2.93	92.4
2.	Sacrifice	11	2.45	3.45	32.45
3.	Job	9	3	3.22	27.99
4.	Benefits	13	2.69	2.53	33.93
5.	Competition	6	3.16	3.83	20.97
6.	Material Advantages	2	4.5	2	6.5

In the analysis of the central and peripheral system, the results associated with both groups are presented in Figures 1 and 2.

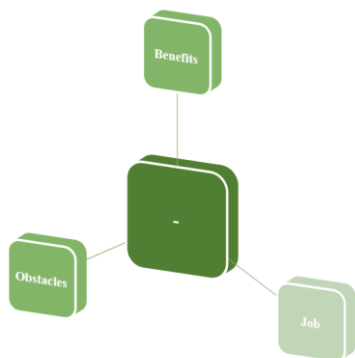


Figure 1. Social representation of outcomes associated with respondents who are not performance athletes

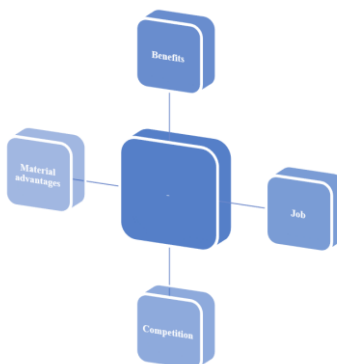


Figure 2. Social representation of outcomes associated with respondents who are performance athletes

From the perspective of social representation, in both cases, there are no elements that make up the central system. This fact is caused by the weak (even non-existent) dissemination of the phrase dual career in public discourse, collective memory and social interest. The results are not surprising if we take into account the current state of dual career promotion and management in Romania.

The picture, as a whole, created by the responses of the respondents, attests to the individual opinions and experiences of those questioned, and the absence of the central core highlighted obvious gaps in the use and knowledge of the dual career phrase.

4.1. Future research directions

The importance of mass media is a proven fact in the world. Through the prism of this statement, we believe that there cannot be a complex analysis of the notions without further related research, which also impacts this field.

Although research in Romania is not, for various reasons, at a particularly high level of performance, the analysis of the dual career can be achieved by studying articles, materials, but also through meetings and discussions of specialists in the field. In this way, connecting and participating in the news in the field can represent an optimal solution for athletes who have not yet accessed dual career and who want a career after the end of the sports activity.

CHAPTER 5. Preliminary study

5.1. The premises of the preliminary study

To carry out the application part, which involves an exploratory study, people who work in the mass media were interviewed.

After this stage, a qualitative analysis was carried out, entitled categorical/thematic content analysis, which presented and interpreted the views and opinions expressed.

The answers highlight the cognitions of the specialists and present their vision of the categories used.

5.2. Research hypotheses, objectives, subjects and variables

In carrying out the research, we made the following hypotheses:

The main hypothesis: *Mass media fulfills an important role in promoting "dual career" and in the formation and promotion of the performance athlete's profile.*

Secondary hypothesis 1: *Mass media has the quality to promote "dual career".*

Secondary hypothesis 2: *The formation and promotion of the profile of the performance athlete is determined by the mass media.*

The objectives of the preliminary research are the following:

- a. Hypothesis formulation;
- b. Establishing the sample participating in the research;
- c. Creation of the interview guide;
- d. Applying the interview guide;
- e. Analysis and interpretation of the obtained data;
- f. Validation of assumptions;
- g. Elaboration of conclusions.

The subjects of the research are 30 people who work in mass media (printed press, television, radio), considered specialists in the field through the prism of the skills and experience they have, features that guarantee the objectivity of the answers.

The research variables: in order to identify the interview indicators from the main study, which would analyze a possible association between the independent variable (mass media) and the dependent variables (dual career and performance athlete profile), we built an interview guide, which contained 14 items. The items were created in such a way as to include all aspects of the phenomenon to be analyzed and are structured in the following categories: "Dual career", "Profile of the athlete", "Mass-media" and "Mass-media tools" .

5.3. Analysis and interpretation

Following the centralization of the opinions expressed by the interviewed persons, we notice the fact that most specifications are part of the Mass-media category, which demonstrates the importance it has in the context of the research topic.

5.3.1. "Dual career" category

From the perspective of media specialists, the phrase "dual career" is present in society through an academic approach, which studies the concept itself. At the same time, public exposure is of overwhelming importance and constitutes one of the study's objectives. There is an uncertain approach regarding the phrase "dual career". Although the term, in its essence, refers to duality, it is not clear, in the view of people who work in the media, in which direction it should be appropriated: it is about a person who has two jobs at the same time, who is a sportsman but also active in another field or we are talking about an athlete who, at the same time as the competitive life, has enough time for the educational side as well.

5.3.2. "Profile of the athlete" category

In analyzing the type of athlete who fits the dual career patterns, we encounter attributes that describe the ideal model of the athlete. He must be adaptable to unforeseen situations, show

impeccable conduct and develop standard characteristics, for which the ultimate goal is success in the form of constant performance.

The attitudes and behaviors of the performance athlete can be found in the answers of those interviewed, which indicates that the mass media specialists correctly present the athlete profile and thus help to educate and develop the vision of the winner in sports.

5.3.3. "Mass media" category

Through the lens of communication, the respondents' vision regarding the role of the mass media in everyday life is defined. And the most important dimension is the promotion of useful aspects for the studied concept, but also informing the public opinion on the areas of interest and the activities carried out.

The strategies regarding the support of performance sports can be carried out in two clear directions: the media discourse must be an adapted one, which highlights the needs, aspirations, problems of the sports field and must act in the spirit of the positive values encountered in sports.

5.3.4. "Media tools" category

Mass media can influence the population's perception of a subject by reporting on the cause itself. Those who work in the media have come to the conclusion that the continuous development of technology, which has revolutionized social

communication channels, has not yet completely captured the field.

The traditional media has, for the moment, its followers, who cannot be completely attracted to the online platforms for retrieving information. For this reason, in drawing up the conclusions of the preliminary study, we must pay more attention to the traditional category in the media, in order not to neglect a (nevertheless) large audience that "struggles" with the impact of social communication channels for informational supremacy.

Following the centralization of the obtained results (figure 3), we can see that mass media is the optimal solution for presenting and raising awareness of the dual career. Around it, the constitutive dimensions of the questionnaire must be created, through which we can capture the fundamental aspects of the problem: the mass media must represent the fundamental element in the formation and promotion of the performance athlete's profile.

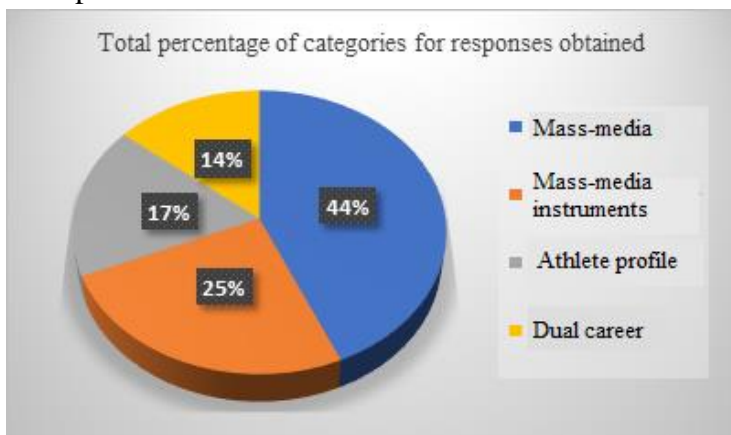


Figure 3. Hierarchy of content analysis categories for interviews

5.4. Hypothesis testing

To establish whether there are associations between two variables, the Chi-Square Test will be used.

In this sense, we will analyze whether the independent variable media influences the dependent variables "dual career" and "athlete profile". This test is carried out using categorical variables, and the initial point of departure for the analysis is the establishment of the null and alternative hypotheses:

Null hypothesis 1: The mass media does not have the quality to promote "dual career".

Alternative hypothesis (Secondary hypothesis 1 of the research): Mass media has the quality of promoting "dual career".

Null hypothesis 2: The formation and promotion of the profile of the performance athlete is not determined by the mass media.

Alternative hypothesis (Secondary hypothesis 2 of the research): The formation and promotion of the profile of the performance athlete is determined by the mass media.

5.4.1. Testing the secondary hypothesis 1

To test the secondary hypothesis 1, the total specifications that were determined for the two variables: mass media and dual career were used (table 3).

Table 3. The value of the Chi-square Test of Independence for the variables "Mass-media" and "Dual Career"

<i>Chi-square</i>	72,52
<i>df</i>	1

We notice that for $df = 1$ (Degrees of Freedom), the value obtained is higher than the standard value for the significant threshold of 0.05, namely 3.841. In this sense, we can state that the null hypothesis is rejected, so the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which means that there is an association between "Mass-media" and "Dual Career".

5.4.2. Testing the secondary hypothesis 2

To test the secondary hypothesis 2, the specifications for the media variables and the athlete's profile were analyzed, in order to establish whether there are associations between them (table 4).

Table 4. The value of the Chi-square Test of Independence for the "Mass-media" and "Sportsperson Profile" variables

<i>Chi-square</i>	27
<i>df</i>	1

We note, in this case too, the fact that for $df = 1$ (Degrees of Freedom), the result obtained is, for the significant threshold of 0.05, higher than the value in the distribution table for Chi-square, so the null hypothesis is rejected and it follows that there is an association between "Mass-media" and the "Profile of the Sportsman".

Conclusions of the preliminary study

Dual career is a concept that is not publicized in Romania. The use of the phrase on a large scale would allow athletes to understand why they need a backup option for sports activity.

Mass media, through its working tools, can achieve this desired, because today's society is in a continuous connection to information. Regardless of the communication channels to which we are connected (social, audio-visual, press, etc.), the presence of dual career can constantly be part of the champion's consciousness.

Dual career should be intensively promoted on social communication channels, because the target group of the final research (athletic students) predominantly uses related communication methods.

An important role in the development of "dual career" is played by sports institutions - clubs, associations, ministries, etc. It is necessary to go through all the stages of analysis and synthesis, for the purpose of a strong visibility, which uses and transmits the phrase ("dual career") to all active athletes.

Since the statistical analysis demonstrated the fact that there are associations between the defined variables, we can state that the proposed hypotheses were confirmed.

Limitations of the preliminary study and future research directions

The fact that 53% of those who participated in the study have a working experience in the mass media of up to 10 years,

was considered a sensitive point of the research, because it can be considered that they have little experience in the field. This situation can also have an encouraging perspective, namely: the media representatives, at the beginning of their career, will become the main pawns in the media future, and their approach to dual career can be improved, in relation to the information they have at this moment the older ones. The optics described is certified by a wealth of information about dual career, which we hope that, at the level of society, we will have.

Another limitation of the study is given by the subjective analysis of the answers obtained. Since an interview guide was used, the respondents formulated complex phrases on the item addressed, and their synthesis may present small inadvertences of transposition.

As future research directions, after the analysis of the results obtained in the preliminary study, we propose to develop some questionnaires (addressed both to athletes and to those who work in the media and sports institutions), in which the concepts identified up to that moment can be found. Based on the answers obtained in these questionnaires, a course can be created to be presented to education specialists, with the aim of being taught in High Schools with a Sports Program in Romania.

Another direction of research can be the foundation and support of a project, at the level of the Moldova region, in which students participate in activities aimed at presenting them the advantages and benefits they can obtain if they follow a dual career.

CHAPTER 6. The main study

6.1. Prerequisites of the main study

The approach strategy of the main study assumed as an exploitation direction the perception of the notion of dual career of the 12th grade students of the High Schools with Sports Program in the Moldavian Zone. Since the selection base of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport (for the specializations Physical Education and Sports, respectively Sport and Motor Performance) is mainly made up of students of High Schools with a Sports Program, we want them to understand this concept, so that later they could join.

6.2. Research hypotheses, objectives and subjects

To carry out the main study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Main Hypothesis: *An effective dual career education strategy relies on mass media.*

Secondary hypothesis 1: *The print media is not an opinion maker in informing about "dual career".*

Secondary hypothesis 2: *Social communication channels (Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Tik-Tok, Twitter) contribute to the formation of a representation of "dual career".*

The objectives of the main study are the following:

- a. Hypothesis formulation;
- b. Establishing subjects for final research;
- c. Creating and applying questionnaires;

- d. Analysis and interpretation of the obtained data;
- e. Hypothesis testing;
- f. Elaboration of conclusions.

Research variables: the study looked for possible relationships between the dependent variable (dual career) and the independent variables (social communication channels and print media).

The subjects of the research are 12th grade students of High Schools with a Sports Program in Moldova (Iasi, Onești, Suceava, Roman, Focșani, Botoșani, Bacău, Piatra Neamț, Vaslui). 477 students participated in the first part of the main study, and the interaction with them took place during their weekly leadership lessons.

To carry out the main study, in its first stage, a questionnaire composed of 11 items was used, grouped into two categories, depending on the research objectives: mass media and "dual career". The questionnaire used has been pre-tested so that there is no doubt about the understanding of the terms it proposes.

6.3. Research methodology

In the research carried out, groupings of items were made, in order to analyze and interpret the answers obtained to the questions.

Interpretation of the responses involved, among other things, the use of the *Chi-square Test of Independence*. It determines whether there is an association between categorical

variables (it analyzes whether the variables are independent or associated) and is a non-parametric test (McHugh, 2013).

The t (Student) test for independent samples compares the means of two independent groups to determine whether there is statistical evidence that the means of the associated populations are significantly different.

Levene's test for equality of variances

Recall that the independent samples t-test requires the assumption of homogeneity of variance—that is, both groups have the same variance. This can be done using Levene's test for equality of variances.

Correspondence Factor Analysis (AFC)

This method is applied, according to Pintilescu (2022), if we want to study the relationship between two qualitative (non-numerical) variables. In this sense, AFC will realize a system of factorial axes that compresses the information in an easy to interpret graphic form.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was another statistical method we used in the main study. It allowed the analysis of the links that exist between a quantitative variable and one (or more) categorical (qualitative) variables.

6.4. Hypothesis testing

To test the hypotheses, the answers to the questionnaire items were used, items that were built on the two research directions: mass media and "dual career". Since it emerged from the study of the specialized literature that for the population included in the study (young people aged 17-19) the print media

is no longer a source of interest, secondary hypothesis 1 is built on this paradigm.

6.4.1. Testing the secondary hypothesis 1

For testing secondary hypothesis 1, the main set of items is represented by the following questions:

I.1 Do you know what the term "dual career" refers to in a sporting context?

*I.4 Would a written material, in which the notion of "dual career" is explained, help you?
together with*

I.2 The notion of "dual career" has recently been introduced into public discourse to indicate:

I.4 Would a written material, in which the notion of "dual career" is explained, help you?

We are interested in the existence of a statistical relationship between those who have knowledge about the term "dual career" and their interest in written material that develops the notion of "dual career". Through this association, we want to know if the use of written media channels would be suitable for disseminating and popularizing information about "dual career" among our target population - students studying in High Schools with a Sports Program.

The answers that the students gave to the respective items were interpreted statistically in table 5.

Table 5. Results of applying the Chi-square Test of Independence

	Value	Degrees of freedom	Level of statistical significance
χ^2	3.419 ^a	1	.064
Correction required ^b	2.980	1	.084
Odds ratio	3.327	1	.068
Linear association+	3.412	1	.065
Sample volume	477		

For this association analysis, we consider the probability associated with the null hypothesis to be 6.4%, and if we consider a risk of 5%, we do not reject the null hypothesis, so *the variables are independent*.

Under these conditions, we can say that the way subjects respond if they know what the term "dual career" refers to in a sports context, is independent of their opinion regarding the usefulness/help that a written material about this term provides it. Therefore, the statement that the written material is not suitable for those who declare that they know or do not know what the term "dual career" represents, is supported by the results obtained.

In conclusion, we can say that, for the target audience, the written way of popularizing the term "dual career" is not the right one, in other words, *secondary hypothesis 1 is confirmed*.

6.4.2. Testing the secondary hypothesis 2

To begin with, the associated items were represented by the following questions:

I.1 Do you know what the term "dual career" refers to in a sporting context?

*I.3 Which do you think is the most appropriate social media channel to promote the quality of being a sports student?
together with*

I.2 The notion of "dual career" has recently been introduced into public discourse to indicate:

I.3 Which do you think is the most appropriate social media channel to promote the quality of being a sports student?

The first aspect that we want to test with the help of the statistical analysis of the answers to the questionnaire applied to the students, is related to the social networks (as part of the mass media) presented in the study. According to the analyzes presented in the theoretical part (aspects highlighted by the specialized literature) and if we take into account the studied population (high school students, from the 12th grade, from Romania), the most appreciated social networks (implicitly those that we have considered in the study), are Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter and TikTok.

The subjects answered item number 3, which, in the subsequent analysis, turned into 5 distinct questions, for which points were awarded to each of the 5 social networks. The mean scores obtained at the sample level are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Indicators of central tendency and dispersion for scores of appreciation of social networks

Social Network	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation
<i>Instagram</i>	3.74	1.025	0.27
<i>Youtube</i>	3.74	1.125	0.30
<i>TikTok</i>	3.58	1.208	0.33
<i>Facebook</i>	2.99	1.115	0.37
<i>Twitter</i>	2.32	1.136	0.48

We see quite a wide variation between the average scores, but we're not that surprised by the results. The above results justify us, as in the next stage of our analysis, to consider only the first 3 social networks.

With the help of the t-Test, we will check (table 7) whether there are significant differences between the mean score for each of the 3 social networks (Instagram, Youtube and TikTok).

Table 7. Probabilities associated with the t-test for the 3 analyzed social networks

Social Network	Null hypothesis significance level
<i>TikTok</i>	0,736
<i>Youtube</i>	0,046
<i>Instagram</i>	0,450

If we consider a 5% risk, we reject the null hypothesis only when testing the mean for Youtube. This result justifies us to state that, for a 5% risk, only in the case of Youtube those who say they know what the term "dual career" refers to in a sports context and those who say they do NOT know what it refers to the term "dual career" in a sports context, behave differently.

In the sense of what was presented above, we can conclude that if we analyze the significant differences identified, the most suitable social network to promote the term "dual career" is the YouTube network. This can be explained by the fact that access to this network is not based on authentication, does not require personal data and is completely free.

The associations that followed, and which involved the analysis of the Youtube platform alongside the questionnaire items, presented different values, but which can help us draw some conclusions.

The results are obvious: the students who indicated the right YouTube to promote and present "dual career" are also those who allocate a sufficient amount of time for success and are aware of what they need to use to develop from an educational and sports point of view.

If we become aware of the fact that the students who claim that they "know" what "dual career" means are determined about the educational - sports direction they have to follow after finishing high school studies, the decision-makers can implement programs that present (or strengthen) the phrase "dual career" in the subconscious of the 12th grade student (and not only), in order to maximize the priorities of the education system in our country.

Immediately after the application of the first questionnaire, the survey subjects were presented with general notions of what dual career means.

The discussions had a general character, in which the emphasis was placed on the presentation of links, respectively websites about the notion of a dual career in the life of athletes:

- <https://www.lsu.lt/en/international-cooperation/projects/erasmus-projects/media-as-a-channel-of-athletes-dual-careers-promotion-and-education/>
- <https://edu.empatiasport.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/AUAS-et-al-dual-career-services-in-Europe.en .pdf>
- <https://morethangold.eu/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JF5V38N1ko>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmggGtwr3pM&t=7s>

At an interval of 3-4 weeks (depending on the distance and availability of the students), the research subjects answered the second questionnaire. Since after the application of the first questionnaire, the answers of the subjects revolved around the interaction of the notion of a dual career and the YouTube platform, the questionnaire applied later focused on aspects related to the content that the students would like to find on that platform, in order to better understand what constitutes a dual career for athletes.

The IBM SPSS 21 program was used to analyze the responses provided by the research subjects, numbering 433.

The use of the YouTube platform by young people is a well-known fact, reinforced by the specialized literature. According to the subjects' answers, 37.6% use it daily, and 30% weekly. We can conclude that 67.6% of respondents often access the platform to watch content related to education and sports. In

other words, one can use this media communication channel to explain, present and promote the dual career characteristics for athletes.

If we analyze the answers obtained for items 10 and 11, we notice the preferences of the subjects in relation to what they would like to see on Youtube regarding dual career. Thus, 41.3% consider that a partnership with athletes who already have a dual career represents the ideal solution (figure 6.20.), and 38.3% of them (figure 6.21.) believe that a video-blog is which would be attractive to watch and easy to understand.

To determine whether there are *statistically significant associations* between the items of questionnaire 2 of the main study, we can use the method of factor analysis of correspondences (AFC).

The analyzed answers show the distribution of the perception that education can be achieved through video materials according to the preferred source of information. Of the total number of respondents who prefer video tutorials or informative clips as a source of information, given that the channel used is YouTube, 42% believe that education through video materials can be achieved "quite often", and 43.9 % of those who want interviews with athletes are of the opinion that education can be done quite often with the help of video materials.

If we analyze items 5 and 11, we can state that the students who considered that education can also be achieved through video materials, consider vlogging as the most appropriate way of attracting to that channel.

In the continuation of the research, we want to highlight the possible differences that exist between the time spent on Youtube (in general and with a view to personal development) according to the way the students answered other questions in the questionnaire. This approach can be done with the help of analysis of variance (ANOVA), by combining the answers of two questions. Based on the results, we can say that the number of hours spent on Youtube differs significantly depending on the respondents' perception of the fact that education can be achieved through video materials. So there is a link between time spent on Youtube and how students perceive video materials as appropriate for education.

In conclusion, if we consider all the presented aspects, we can say that secondary hypothesis 2 is partially confirmed.

Conclusions of the main study

Following the completion of the main study, a series of conclusions can be drawn which are supported by the interpretation of the results of the factor analysis of correspondences and the analysis of variance.

In order for the notion of "dual career" to reach the consciousness of the subjects, the opinion of the students was investigated regarding the ways they prefer to interact with this concept. The results obtained are obvious, namely: the students do not consider the written media a solution for promoting dual career among them and would not consider it useful to create written materials for disseminating information.

In this sense, the direction of the research concerned the relationship of 12th grade students with online media, respectively the most used social communication channels in Romania. Their answers, after the first applied questionnaire, indicated the YouTube social network as their preferred information platform.

To be sure of the usefulness of using the YouTube platform for dual career education and promotion, in the second questionnaire, the subjects indicated what they would prefer to watch on this channel. Their answers ranged from video tutorials and informational clips to interviews with athletes who have dual careers or how they use their time to be successful outside of sports. However, the most meaningful association was with vlogging (video journal), which can transform information in an informal context.

In the sense of the above, we can conclude that today's young people want the accumulation of new information and knowledge, which can also aim at a dual career, but they choose the way of interaction to be a friendly one, which overcomes the teacher-student barrier or coach - student.

The conclusions of the research

The research aimed to analyze, in addition to the association of the mass media with the dual career, the information held by the students of the High Schools with Sports Program in the area of Moldova regarding the concept of "dual career" for athletes. In Romania, the phrase is not found in the media discourse and this influences its promotion, so that the

target group of the study is deprived of important information that can contribute to educational development.

In the first part of the paper, in order to establish whether the students of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport in Iași were aware of what dual career means (and for this reason continued their educational evolution), an investigative approach was carried out that analyzed this situation. The obtained results justify us to believe that no student was influenced by the aspects that dual career proposes, and the fact that an athlete attends a college is based on a series of practical motivations.

The preliminary study was carried out together with media specialists, with the aim of synthesizing their opinions in connection with the notion of dual career in general and that for athletes in particular. In this sense, an interview guide was used that included the following important aspects of the research: "Dual career", "Mass-media", "Mass-media tools", "Profile of the champion".

The Chi-square Test of Independence used in the data processing demonstrated that mass media has the quality to promote dual career and at the same time it can also influence the profile of the performance athlete. This conclusion must be properly analyzed because the model of a champion is an example to follow for the younger generation and this presentation in the public space can create a direction of evolution for the character of a student.

The strategy for carrying out the main study involved two different stages. The research carried out with the help of questionnaires targeted the selection base for the Faculty of

Physical Education and Sport in Iași (specializations in Physical Education and Sports, along with Sports and Motor Performance), which is mostly made up of students who graduated from High Schools with a Sports Program.

In the first stage of the main study, the ways in which the research subjects interact with the phrase "dual career" were analyzed. The results are conclusive: students do not consider the written press an effective channel for accumulating new information and all their attention goes to social communication channels. The same conclusion emerged from the responses of those working in the media: a percentage of about 90% recommends using social communication channels to raise awareness among young people about dual careers.

The analysis continued with the association of the questionnaire items in order to identify the most effective social communication channel to promote dual career from the point of view of the research subjects. Although Facebook leads in the general preferences of the platforms used in Romania, it has been demonstrated that students consider YouTube ideal for fulfilling the presented purpose: educating and promoting dual career for athletes.

The second part of the analysis for the main study also wanted to highlight the concrete aspects that the research subjects want to be presented in relation to the dual career on Youtube. The associations of the answers received, statistically demonstrated, led to the conclusion that a certain type of content (Vlogging) is the preferred one, in proportion to 38.3% and recommended to be used as a source of information about dual career. Moreover, in this type of video, 37.2% of study subjects

indicate that they would be interested in how great athletes combine their training with other activities.

This content suggestion was not the only proposed solution. If educational videos could be found on the YouTube platform explaining the benefits, but also the challenges, that the dual career implies, 46% of the subjects would declare themselves satisfied.

After carrying out the research and analyzing the obtained results, I considered it necessary to create a YouTube page, which should be addressed to those interested in the dual career of athletes. The page, which can be accessed for free at the link <https://www.youtube.com/@ionutonose4235>, aims to provide the content requested by the target group of the study.

Since in Romania there is no Youtube page dedicated exclusively to the dual career of athletes, we considered that its creation is a useful thing for 12th grade students who want to view current materials about dual career. We want it to be promoted and accessed all the time, because the Youtube platform constantly associates searches for a topic with other similar searches on the network, and in this way additional information about the dual career can be obtained.

Dynamic themes according to user requirements can highlight followers' preferences. For this reason, the Youtube page will be in constant change, dictated by further scientific research, which will indicate new approaches for the dual career of athletes.

After analyzing the results obtained both in the preliminary and in the main study, we can conclude that *the proposed hypotheses were confirmed in whole or in part and*

thus we can affirm that the mass media can represent an effective channel of promotion and education for the dual career of athletes .

Future research directions

As a result of the creation of the Youtube page dedicated to the dual career of athletes, in the near future we want to develop the platform based on scientific criteria. At the same time, the promotion of the page can also be achieved through the lens of a large number of "followers".

Creating live sessions with different athletes who have used dual careers in their development is another item on the future work agenda. This can attract new discussions to improve the content of the page.

The research can be extended to more High Schools with a Sports Program in the country. The answers of several 12th grade students can highlight the state of affairs regarding the knowledge of the phrase dual career.

Of course, producing and analyzing scholarly articles on dual careers is one way to improve knowledge in an ever-evolving field. The research can also be developed at the secondary level, to highlight the type of student that the field of sports pursues, in line with the objectives of the dual career.

Limits of research

The analysis included a high number of subjects for the first part of the questionnaire in the main study (477), only to later decrease to 433 for the second part. This situation was caused by the absence of students from conducting classes, the moment most often used to apply questionnaires.

Another important aspect was represented by the total disinterest of some students regarding the presented subject. An alarmingly high number of them have expressed their intention to leave both the sports and educational fields to enter the labor market.

Since the preliminary study used a qualitative analysis, the synthesis and objectivity of the information depended on the experience of the researcher.

The number of scientific researches in the field of dual careers in Romania is low. However, recently there has been an increased number of EU-funded projects aimed at presenting/promoting the notion, which makes us hope that the subject will not be left out in the near future.

Last but not least, the pandemic caused by SARS – COV2 has affected and hampered the data collection process, which has sometimes been interrupted due to restrictions imposed by the authorities.

Dissemination of results

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Acknowledgements

The thesis was developed within the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași - Doctoral School in Sport Science and Physical Education, based on the Scientific Research Program approved by the Doctoral School Council.

This work was co-financed by the European Social Fund, through the Human Capital Operational Program 2014-2020, project number POCU/993/6/13/153322, with the project title "Educational and training support for doctoral students and young researchers in preparation for insertion on labor market"

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