

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/exploring-the-dynamic-processes-of-identity-change-in-athletic-retirement/>

The speaker discusses their research on identity and life changes, specifically focusing on the retirement of athletes. Initially interested in workforce retirement, a collaboration sparked an interest in sport retirement, leading to the development of a social identity model of identity change (CMIC). This video model emphasizes the importance of social group connectedness during life transitions, highlighting that strong connections provide emotional and social support, facilitating better adjustments to change.

The research indicates that athletes who were well-connected pre-retirement and engaged with multiple social groups tend to navigate their transitions more successfully. Key factors identified in the adjustment process include planning for life after sports, achieving personal sporting goals, and developing a robust athletic identity.

The findings emphasize the nuanced nature of identity; while personal identity is significant, group identity, such as belonging to a team or community, also plays a crucial role. The research advocates for addressing identity management proactively through programs aimed at helping athletes recognize and cultivate their broader identities beyond sports, noting that many athletes define themselves primarily through their sport, which can hinder their transition post-retirement.

The developed program, named "More Than Sport," aims to assist athletes in managing their identity through transitional phases. The speaker calls for a collaborative effort among athletes, coaches, and organizations to support athletes in these changes and to address the mental health challenges that often accompany retirement from sport. With up to 40% of elite athletes facing difficulties during this transition, a holistic approach to identity and mental well-being is deemed necessary to mitigate struggles such as depression and maladaptive coping mechanisms.