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The house of sport entrepreneurship – a conceptual framework for understanding the interplay of sport and entrepreneurship

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Abstract: Research on sport entrepreneurship as the interplay between sport and entrepreneurship still needs a unified understanding, as it is an interdisciplinary field with inimitable characteristics. This article categorised the research to date based on a systematic literature review of 30 publications. First, we provide a descriptive overview of previous definitions, methods, and content focus. Second, we introduce the comprehensive framework – the house of sport entrepreneurship – incorporating four levels (conceptual work, sport to entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship to sport and sport entrepreneurship ecosystem) to classify the previous literature. Third, against this background, we highlight relevant research directions. Our study contributes to the literature on the interface of sport and entrepreneurship by advancing the understanding of sport entrepreneurship and laying a theoretical basis for future research.

Keywords: sport entrepreneurship; conceptualisation; systematic literature review; entrepreneurship; sport.

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Small Business Management, Journal of Cleaner Production, Journal of Business & Information Systems Engineering, and the International Journal of Innovation Management. He presents his work at international conferences such as the Academy of Management, European Academy of Management, and ACERE.

1 Introduction

At the interface of entrepreneurship and sport management, sport entrepreneurship has become an emerging, increasingly important area of research and practice (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2020b; Pellegrini et al., 2020; Ratten and Jones, 2020; Hammerschmidt et al., 2022, 2023). Due to the unique characteristics of sport, there have been many attempts to conceptualise and define the term sport entrepreneurship (Ratten, 2010; Hammerschmidt et al., 2019; Pellegrini et al., 2020; Hammerschmidt et al., 2022). Based on Ratten's first definition in 2010, Hammerschmidt et al. (2022, p.7) recently defined it as the "identification and exploitation of opportunities to create new value through the medium of sport." Regardless of the definition, there is broad agreement that sport entrepreneurship can play an important role for both business and role for society at large, for example regarding employment, economic and social development, or physical and mental health (Sheikhzadeh et al., 2016; González-Serrano et al., 2017; Hammerschmidt et al., 2022).

Overall, sport is one of the fastest-growing industries globally, valued at over 500 billion USD (Company, 2020) and, in Europe, accounts for more than 2% of total GDP and almost 3% of employment (ESSA-Sport, 2019). Further, sport encompasses a range of sub-sectors and connects to several other industries (Ratten, 2018b). Within this industry, which is mainly characterised by a high degree of uncertainty and is permanently influenced by incremental innovations (Hoeber and Hoeber, 2012; Hammerschmidt et al., 2021; Hemme et al., 2021), emerging trends, such as digitalisation or climate change, are currently changing the interactions with and consumption of sport (Pizzo et al., 2018) and are therefore causing societal challenges within the sport industry. These are twofold: on an organisational level, there is a certain pressure to innovate due to the dynamic and competitive field of sport. Especially in sports, anecdotal evidence has shown that technological innovations and digital transformations can spur economic growth and productivity of actors in this industry (Hayduk, 2019). This causes the ongoing challenge of adapting to new and uncertain circumstances and rethinking their business model in order to remain competitive in the long-term (Radaelli et al., 2017; Pizzo et al., 2018; Hammerschmidt et al., 2021, 2022). Doing so requires certain competencies and an attitude toward change that sport entrepreneurs are equipped with (Ball, 2005; Radaelli et al., 2017). Hence, sport entrepreneurship might be a way to respond to the ongoing changes in the dynamic and competitive field of sport, to explore innovations in an entrepreneurial way and thus remain competitive in the long term (Santomier, 2002; Jones et al., 2017; Hammerschmidt et al., 2019; Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2020a, 2020b). This applies to professional sports clubs and organisations in sports and non-profit organisations, such as grassroots clubs, that primarily seek to create social value and drive local and regional development (Audretsch and Belitski, 2021).

On an individual level, dealing with the described challenges requires acquiring the necessary competencies. González-Serrano et al. (2017) note that the sports industry increasingly demands graduates with entrepreneurial skills due to the characteristics of this sector and the current economic market. Further, sport entrepreneurship is also important on an individual level in terms of entrepreneurship as an alternative career option. This is supported by the frequent phenomena of former athletes having a dual (Ramos et al., 2021) or second career (Kovačić et al., 2017; Case, 2020; Ramos et al., 2021) as entrepreneurs or more sports graduates are taking entrepreneurial career paths (Ratten, 2018b).

Despite the established research areas of entrepreneurship and sports management as disciplines closely related to sport entrepreneurship, research on the growing field of sport entrepreneurship needs a common definition and, consequently, a unified understanding, as it is an interdisciplinary field with inimitable characteristics (Pellegrini et al., 2020; Cardella et al., 2021; Hattink and Wichers, 2021; Smith and Stewart, 2021; Ratten, 2022). In order to create a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of sports entrepreneurship and its interplay with the closely related disciplines of entrepreneurship and sports management and to structure it, an integrative overview is required. For this purpose, this article provides the conceptualisation of *the house of sport entrepreneurship* as a framework that affords a structured and comprehensive overview of the different directions shaping the field: *sport to entrepreneurship* (research addressing how sports affects starting and running a business) and *entrepreneurship to sport* (research addressing how entrepreneurship characteristics shape the sports industry) as the two main pillars. The *sport entrepreneurship ecosystem* displays the roof of the house as it contains research addressing influences on and consequences of sport entrepreneurship. The framework is based on *conceptual work sport entrepreneurship* (research dealing with the merger of the two areas) as the foundation of the house. This framework is based on a systematic literature review and completed with an extended and comprehensive understanding of sport entrepreneurship. Systematic literature reviews are valuable to understand and map newer, growing fields of research (Fosso Wamba et al., 2015; Snyder, 2019) while integrating both academic and practical perspectives (Davenport and Ronanki, 2018; Kraus et al., 2020). From this review, our framework supports a comprehensive understanding of this relatively new research field while considering seminal literature work, current scholarly discussion and the different directions shaping this field of research. Consequently, this article is primarily led by the question of how the field of sport entrepreneurship can be comprehensively conceptualised and defined, considering existing literature and influences from related disciplines.

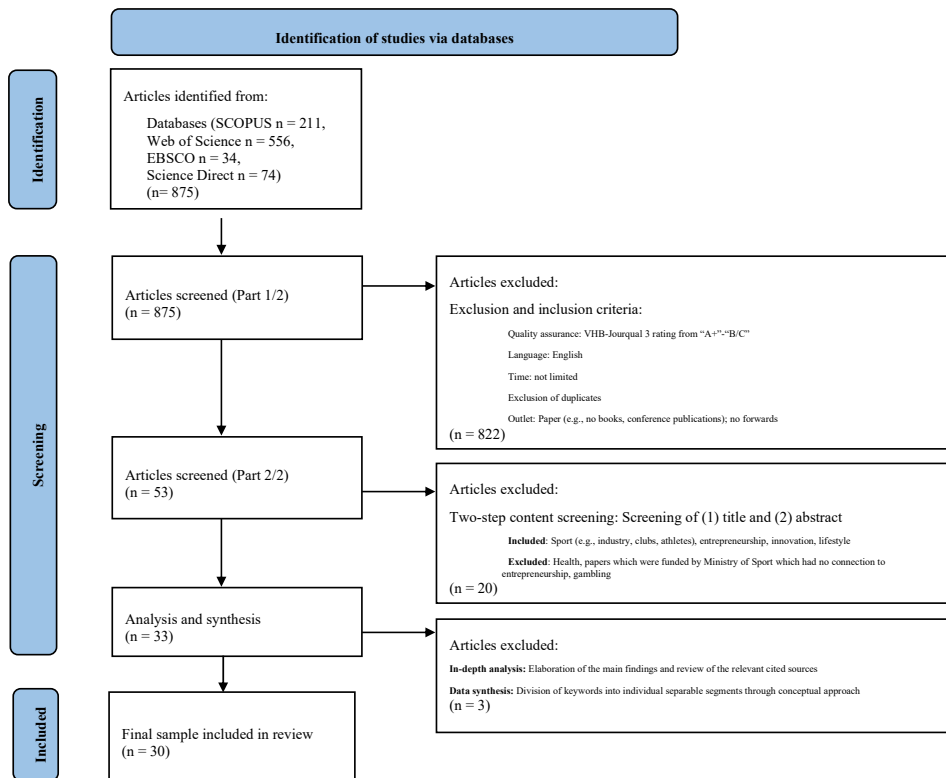
We contribute to the existing literature on sport entrepreneurship in multiple ways. First, by following the process of Tranfield et al. (2003) for conducting the systematic literature review, a comprehensive and current overview of research on sport entrepreneurship is presented. Second, we develop a framework – the house of sport entrepreneurship – based on the categorisation of the existing literature. This contributes to a better understanding of the research field, its structure, and the directions shaping it and, thus, the concept of sport entrepreneurship. Hereby, we identified two important directions of impact to understand the concept of sport entrepreneurship: *sport to entrepreneurship* and *entrepreneurship to sport*. Consequently, *the house of sport entrepreneurship* further includes conceptual work on the field and the ecosystem of sport entrepreneurship. Third, we contribute to theory by developing an extended and

comprehensive understanding of the term. Based on the systematic literature review and the development of the framework, we conclude by highlighting interesting opportunities for future research in the growing field of sport entrepreneurship.

2 Research methodology

Based on the methodological approach of systematic literature reviews (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009; Fisch and Block, 2018), we followed four steps to identify the relevant literature on the intersection between sport and entrepreneurship. We present this process in a PRISMA diagram (see Figure 1), as this is a commonly used and appropriate way of mapping out the number of records identified, included and excluded, and the reasons for exclusion (Page et al., 2021).

Figure 1 PRISMA flow diagram showing the process of identifying the relevant literature on the intersection between sport and entrepreneurship (see online version for colours)



First, we used the most comprehensive databases concerning sports and entrepreneurship literature: SCOPUS, Web of Science, Business Source Premier via EBSCO host, and Science Direct (Bjärsholm, 2017; Kraus et al., 2020; Kollmann et al., 2021). Within these databases, we searched for articles containing both the keywords 'sports', the Boolean operator 'AND', and the term 'entrepreneur*' in the title, abstract, keywords, or main part, which yielded 875 articles. We used an asterisk symbol when searching for

‘entrepreneur’ to include all relevant terms, such as ‘entrepreneurship’ or ‘entrepreneurial’. Second, we eliminated duplicates and excluded papers not written in English or published in peer-reviewed academic journals (e.g., no books, conference publications, etc.) to conduct an initial quality assessment. Moreover, we considered an additional quality threshold by selecting only peer-reviewed papers published in journals that are at least assigned to category B/C according to the VHB-JOURQUAL3 rating, leading to a sample of 53 articles. By following this approach, sport-specialised journals are excluded because they do not meet the criteria. Renowned journals, such as, e.g., the *European Sport Management Quarterly*, are not VHB-ranked. Table 1 provides an overview of inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 1 Overview of inclusion and exclusion criteria

<i>Inclusion criteria</i>	<i>Exclusion criteria</i>
Peer-reviewed papers published in journals ranked from ‘A+’-‘B/C’ according to VHB-JOURQUAL3 rating	Articles published in peer-reviewed journals ranked lower than B/C
English written articles	Articles published in peer-reviewed journals not ranked in VHB-JOURQUAL3 rating
Thematic focus on sports (e.g., industry, clubs, athletes), entrepreneurship, innovation, and lifestyle	Articles not published in peer-reviewed journals (e.g., no books, conference publications)
	Articles not written in English
	Studies without a thematic link to sports, entrepreneurship, innovation, and lifestyle (e.g., health, gambling in sports or articles from the sports ministries)

Third, we screened the articles’ titles and abstracts to check the thematic fit. We considered all papers with a thematic focus on sports (e.g., industry, clubs, athletes), entrepreneurship, innovation, and lifestyle. Studies without a thematic link to these criteria were excluded. For example, articles that primarily examined health-related aspects were funded by sports ministries or analysed gambling in sports. Finally, we conducted an in-depth analysis by assessing whether the paper explored the intersection between sport and entrepreneurship. To ensure that we included all relevant articles, we further screened the references of the remaining papers and included additional articles when the references aligned with our aforementioned inclusion criteria. In addition, we started with the data synthesis based on the identified keywords. By clustering the keywords, we could identify segments that serve as the basis for our framework (see chapter 4). Our final sample consists of 30 articles. These articles were elected from the following nine journals while the number of included articles is in parentheses: *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal* (13), *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Venturing* (5), *Journal of Business Research* (4), *European Journal of International Management* (2), *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* (2), *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* (1), *Journal of Small Business Management* (1), *Public Administration* (1), and *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* (1). Table 2 states more detailed information related to our final sample.

Table 2 Detailed overview of the articles included in the final sample (N = 30)

<i>Title</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of research</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Research methodology</i>	<i>Most important findings</i>
Entrepreneurship and human capital in professional sport: a longitudinal analysis of the Italian soccer league	Radaelli et al.	2017	Empirical	Investigate whether sport directors with greater entrepreneurial orientation (EO) toward the acquisition of new players outperform rivals.	Longitudinal analysis of the Italian Serie A	"While soccer organizations with better roster quality and accomplished managers achieved superior rankings, the acquisition of new players had nonsignificant effects and was moderated negatively by accomplished managers." (p.70) They "[...] argue that entrepreneurs risk with 'too many' talents while conformity mechanisms attenuate the entrepreneurial opportunities offered by human capital." (p.70)
Sport entrepreneurship: challenges and directions for future research	Ratten	2012	Conceptual	Structure of the emerging field of research and develop suggestions for future research	Literature review	Future field of research might be "[...] factors and conditions that produce an entrepreneurial mindset." (p.66) Theories from sport management and entrepreneurship (e.g., "[...] social networks, effectuation) can be integrated to conceptualise [...]" (p.68) entrepreneurship in sports.
Does size matter? Entrepreneurial orientation and performance in Spanish sports firms	Núñez-Pomar et al.	2016	Empirical	Analysis of "[...] relationship among EO, firm size, and business performance of Spanish sport service firms." (p.5336)	Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis	"[...] Neither EO nor company size are necessary conditions for success [...]" (p.5340) or failure. Small companies in the sports services sector perform well with the "[...] innovation + proactivity + risk-taking [...]" (p.5341) model, while large companies do not.
Professional football clubs and empirical evidence from the COVID-19 crisis: time for sport entrepreneurship?	Hammerschmidt et al.	2021	Empirical	"[...] Investigate the responses of professional football clubs to the COVID-19 pandemic." (p.1)	Exploratory multi case study	Sport entrepreneurship has a potential to overcome the crisis, e.g. by exploiting opportunities "[...] by entering new or existing markets with new or existing goods or services [...]" (p.8)
Sport entrepreneurship and value co-creation in times of crisis: the COVID-19 pandemic	Ratten et al.	2021	Empirical	"[...] Exploration of the association between networks, value co-creation and crises in sport entrepreneurial ecosystems." (p.265)	Semi-structured interviews	Co-creation is an important attribute of sport entrepreneurship. The sports industry can be seen as inherently partnership-based because it is characterised by a high degree of public-private partnership.
Converting sporting capacity to entrepreneurial capacity: A process perspective	Hindle et al.	2021	Conceptual	Similarities of managing a personal sporting career and conducting an entrepreneurial initiative	Literature review	In entrepreneurship research, "[...] there is growing literature on the entrepreneurial process and entrepreneurial capability as the key driver" (p.198), on the explanatory modelling of the process as a whole and the capability as a sub-process and the generic model of the entrepreneurial process.
Economic performance in Spanish sports clubs: Entrepreneurial orientation of professional and non-professional teams analysed through ISQCA	Escamilla-Fajardo et al.	2021	Empirical	"[...] Analysing the associative sports environment from an economic perspective" (p.214)	Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis	"[...] EO has an impact on the economic performance (EP) of sports clubs, with proactivity being the most important dimension and innovation the least important." (p.214)
Entrepreneurial ecosystems for developing the sports industry in European Union countries	González-Serrano et al.	2021	Empirical	"[...] Analyze the the influence of different indicators related to innovation in European Union countries' shared sport-related GDP [...]" (p.667)	Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis and qualitative comparative analysis	Introducing entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship education in sports education is essential.

Table 2 Detailed overview of the articles included in the final sample (N = 30) (continued)

<i>Title</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of research</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Research methodology</i>	<i>Most important findings</i>
The dynamics of de-delegation: a principal-agent explanation of the reversal of private authority in international sport governance	Cecneret and Drieskens	2020	Empirical	The development of a five-step process "I..." that nuances the traditional explanation of delegitimation." (p.156)	Case analysis	"I..." The process leading to equal representation of government and sport stakeholders in WADA's decision-making bodies would have failed if any of the conditions in the five steps developed had not been met." (p.168) The plausibility of the model is also supported by results in the case of match-fixing.
Click clack: examining the strategic and entrepreneurial brand vision of under Armour	Miloch et al.	2012	Empirical	Analysis of "I..." the entrepreneurial strategies implemented by Under Armour [...] (p.42)	Interviews	"I..." Synergy and entrepreneurial spirit [...] (p.48) have a meaning in the process of brand development and five brand development methods emerged.
Still playing the game?	Neergaard and Krueger	2012	Empirical	Explore "I..." the contribution of various forms of capital to the development of the entrepreneurial venture." (p.18)	Quantitative dataset triangulated with qualitative data derived from an open-ended survey	The majority of entrepreneurs have neither general nor specific leadership experience. One CEO explained that he often based the leadership of his company on logic as a national Frisbee player and his experience on the competition. Participation in competitive sport is a mechanism that can influence individuals on their path to entrepreneurship and beyond.
Guest editor's introduction: Sports entrepreneurship: towards a conceptualization	Ratten	2012	Conceptual	Develop a concept for entrepreneurship in sports focusing "I..." on the role of innovation and regional development" (p.1)	Literature review	"Three key components of sports entrepreneurship [...] (p.1) are developed in line with the objectives of the article: "I..." Opportunity recognition, dynamic capabilities and entrepreneurial competence." (p.1)
Towards negotiation: a RAMESES narrative review of social enterprise to support sustainability in sport for social change (S4SC)	Richmond et al.	2021	Conceptual	"I..." Consider the different angles of thought regarding social enterprise" (p.1)	Systematic narrative review	There are many approaches, one of which is the link between social enterprises and non-profit organisations. Five themes emerged: social enterprise, context of social entrepreneurship and S4SC, purpose, typology and S4SC and purpose and external environment.
Sport-based entrepreneurship: towards a new theory of entrepreneurship and sport management	Ratten	2010	Conceptual	"I..." Develop a theory of entrepreneurship in sports management by investigating the relationship between entrepreneurship and sport." (p.57)	Literature review	There are many types of entrepreneurship in sport, "I..." including community-based entrepreneurship, corporate entrepreneurship, ethnic entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurship, institutional entrepreneurship, international entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, technological entrepreneurship and women's entrepreneurship." (p.63)
Sport entrepreneurship: a synthesis of existing literature and future perspectives	Pellegrini et al.	2020	Conceptual	Systematization and identification of the intellectual structure and research themes	Bibliometric analysis and systematic literature review	A 4-cluster structure emerges from the following areas: "I..." theoretical definition and internal factors" (p.795) that promote it, environmental factors, "I..." pedagogical approaches and education" (p.795), impact from community development and social benefits.
Entrepreneurial orientation in sports entrepreneurship – a mixed methods analysis of professional soccer clubs in the German-speaking countries	Hammerschmidt et al.	2019	Empirical	Analyse "I..." EO and performance in professional sports" (p.839)	Mixed-method	Entrepreneurial orientation was significantly positively related to the "I..." financial and sporting performance of football clubs in German-speaking countries in the 2017/2018 season." (p.839) Cooperation was considered a "I..." promising strategy" (p.839). Innovativeness showed a significant positive correlation with financial and sporting performance. Proactivity and sporting performance show no correlation.

Table 2 Detailed overview of the articles included in the final sample (N = 30) (continued)

<i>Title</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of research</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Research methodology</i>	<i>Most important findings</i>
Top athletes' psychological characteristics and their potential for entrepreneurship	Steinbrink et al.	2019	Empirical	Investigate "[...] the personality traits of top athletes practicing low-risk and high-risk sports" (p.859) and compare "[...] them to those associated with entrepreneurship" (p.859)	Quantitative study with ANOVA	Significant difference between the comparison groups in terms of neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness and risk-taking.
Mapping the strategic factor market for sport entrepreneurship	Hayduk and Walker	2017	Empirical	Chart the trends of sport-related transactions by private equity and venture capital firms between 1988 and 2016	Descriptive statistics in regards to transactions and ordinary least squares and logistic regression techniques	Paradoxes in the way "[...] private equity and venture capital firms invest in and divest from sport-related entrepreneurial ventures." (p.705) Most of the transactions were in the media and digital media segment.
Relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and social performance in Spanish sports clubs. The effect of the type of funding and the level of competition	Núñez-Pomar et al.	2020	Empirical	Analysis of "[...] the relationship between EO in sports clubs and their social performance (SP) and the effect that management variables such as the type of funding (public vs private) and the competition level (national vs regional) may have on this relationship." (p.981)	Qualitative comparative analysis	There is "[...] a direct impact of EO dimensions on the SP." (p.981) The most important condition for high SP is a high level of innovation and risk-taking and a low level "[...] of proactivity in national sports clubs." (p.981)
New challenges in sport entrepreneurship for value creation	Ratten and Jones	2020	Conceptual	"The role of digital transformation in influencing value co-creation activities in sport." (p.961)	Literature review	It is also about how the design thinking approach can be used to develop strategies for future potential innovations in sport.
Leveraging sport mega events for international entrepreneurship	Hayduk	2019	Empirical	Stimulation of entrepreneurial rent-making in host nations by sport mega events (SMEs)	Observations of macroeconomic data by World Bank Group (WBC)	Developing "[...] nations can use SMEs to" (p.857) foster entrepreneurship
'Just want to surf, make boards and party': how do we identify lifestyle entrepreneurs within the lifestyle sports industry?	Wallis et al.	2020	Empirical	"[...] Understanding of the identity of lifestyle entrepreneur [...]" (p.917) within the lifestyle sport industry	Mixed method	Two types of entrepreneurs. "[...] Those for whom sport is important both in their entrepreneurial pursuits and in their leisure time (the engaged) and those whose entrepreneurial actions have nothing to do with the sport they do in their leisure time (the enablers)." (p.925)
Impact of lifestyle oriented-motivation and corporate social responsibility on multi-adventure sports firms' performance	González-Serrano et al.	2020	Empirical	"[...] Discover what combinations of corporate social responsibility behaviours generate high and low levels of objective and subjective performance for these sports lifestyle entrepreneurs and to analyse whether objective and subjective performance are related to their intention to operate their firm for a long time." (p.935)	Qualitative comparative analysis	"[...] Lifestyle-oriented motivation is of particular importance for subjective performance." (p.935) Only "[...] subjective performance was related to the intention to [...]" (p.935) run a business in the long term.

Table 2 Detailed overview of the articles included in the final sample (N = 30) (continued)

<i>Title</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of research</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Research methodology</i>	<i>Most important findings</i>
Performative entrepreneurship: identity, behaviour and place in adventure sports Enterprise	Dobson and McLuskie	2020	Empirical	"[...] Explore entrepreneurial identity and place in adventure sports within sports entrepreneurship" (p.879)	Qualitative study with interviews	Including "[...] non-human actors such as the landscape (the place) with which the performance of entrepreneurial identity [...] is performed and therefore enables entrepreneurial action." (p.893)
Looking for God, meaning, physical fitness and beyond: the religious and spiritual space in sport entrepreneurship	Toledano	2020	Conceptual	Rethought sport entrepreneurship "from it's religious and spiritual dimensions [...]" (p.897) with special attention to the fitness sector	Literature review	Four theses were formulated taking into account the religious dimensions within the framework of Slow Fitness Entrepreneurship.
Does sport affect the competitiveness of European Union countries? An analysis of the degree of innovation and GDP per capita using linear and QCA models	González-Serrano et al.	2019	Empirical	"[...] Analyse relationship between innovation performance and the GDP per capita of EU countries and how sport-related indicators and different innovation-related indicators influence the innovation performance and GDP per capita if the EU countries" (p.1343)	Hierarchical regression model and qualitative comparative analysis	GDP per capita and the innovation performance of the countries studied are highly positively and significantly correlated. Increasing the level of innovation of EU countries influences their economic growth and vice versa. For each country, the level of innovation, sports practices and exports of sports products were the predictor variables, but not the variables related to innovation. EU countries should invest in the promotion of sports practice and in the sports industry to encourage its growth, as these are factors that influence the level of innovation in EU countries.
Sport, fitness, and lifestyle entrepreneurship	Jones et al.	2020	Conceptual	"[...] How sport entrepreneurship is related to fitness and lifestyle entrepreneurship." (p.783)	Literature review	The fitness industry is highly cyclical and can be an ideal environment to explore and test entrepreneurial phenomena (iteration and rapid prototyping).
Sports entrepreneurship during COVID-19: Technology as an ally to maintain the competitiveness of small business	González-Serrano et al.	2023	Empirical	Analysing the effectiveness of different personal characteristics and actions on COVID-19's impact on their business	Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis	In addition to strategic orientation before the pandemic and adjustments to the own business model in response to COVID, a high level of resilience and innovation by sports entrepreneurs and increased use of technology are important to remain competitive.
From athletes to entrepreneurs: Participation in youth sports as a precursor to future business endeavors	Pervun et al.	2022	Empirical	"[...] Relationship between participation in competitive sports during formative years and the propensity [...] (p.1) to become an entrepreneur	Analysis of biographies from American executives	Active participation in competitive sports in childhood increases the propensity to become an entrepreneur. This relates to participation in individual sports but not in team sports and underlines "[...] the importance of individualized coaching and supervision." (p.25)
A sport-based social entrepreneurship: what do we need?	Navidi et al.	2023	Conceptual	"[...] Development of a model for social entrepreneurship in Iranian sport sector" (p.1)	Systematic approach with in-depth interviews	The main factors contributing to social entrepreneurship in sport were identified, and a social entrepreneurship model in the Iranian sport sector was developed. The three main factors are individual, contextual and institutional factors with three, two and three sub-factors, respectively.

3 Research in sport entrepreneurship: the development of the field

In 2010, Ratten was the first to shape the term ‘sport entrepreneurship’. Ever since, there have been many attempts to provide a comprehensive and common understanding of this term at the interface of sport management and entrepreneurship. We summarise these numerous definitional attempts in Table 3. When first talking about sport-based entrepreneurship, Ratten (2010) defined it as “[...] a sports-related organization acting innovatively in a business context” (p.559). Followed by several small additions, mainly done by Ratten, the definition nevertheless had a strong reference to the business context (see Table 3). It showed a stronger reference to the process of creating value by defining sport entrepreneurship as “[...] the process of creating value. This value includes the innovativeness, proactive nature and level of risk-taking inherent in the activity” (p.316). Doing so created a first link to the existing literature on entrepreneurial orientation (EO), mainly characterised by innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996).

Table 3 Overview of existing definitions of sport entrepreneurship in the current literature

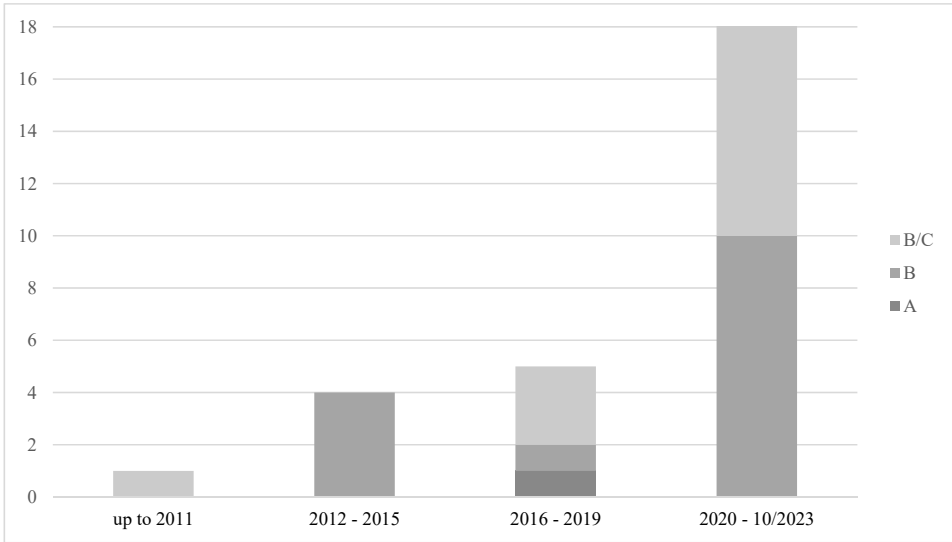
<i>Authors</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Ratten (2010)	“[...] is a sports-related organization acting innovatively in a business context.” (p.559)
Ratten (2011a)	“[...] is therefore the result of a process in which an organisation involved in sport acts entrepreneurially.” (p.315) “[...] is the process of creating value. This value includes the innovativeness, proactive nature and level of risk taking inherent in the activity.” (p.316)
Ratten (2011b)	“[...] any form of enterprise or entrepreneurship in a sport context.” (p.60)
Ratten (2012)	“[...] is the entrepreneurship leading to the establishment of new sports-related enterprises and the continued innovation of existing sport organizations.” (p.2)
Ratten (2012b)	“[...] is described as the mindset of people or organizations actively engaged in the pursuit of new opportunities in the sports-context.” (p.66) “[...] is any innovative activity that has a sports objective.” (p.67) “[...] is the set of values that influence an organizations or individuals propensity to create and develop innovative activities.” (p.67)
Ratten and Ferreira (2016)	“[...] is innovative, risk-taking and proactive behaviour in the sports-related industry.” (p.244)
Ratten (2018)	“[...] is defined as developing new start-ups or ventures that engage with sport.” (p.13) “A more refined definition [...] is the exploitation of opportunities within the sports sector to create chance.” (p.13)
Hammerschmidt (2021)	“[...] can be defined as the process by which individuals acting in a sports environment, pursue opportunities without resources currently controlled.” (p.842)
Hammerschmidt (2022)	“[...] the identification and exploitation of opportunities to create value through the medium of sport.” (p.7)

Nevertheless, definitions mainly still made by Ratten so far remain on an organisational level and lack a consideration of sport’s influences and unique characteristics. It was not

until Ratten (2012, p.66) defining sport entrepreneurship as “[...] the mindset of people or organisations actively engaged in the pursuit of new opportunities in the sport context” that the individual level was considered for the first time. This resulted in a new definition by Hammerschmidt et al. (2019) that focuses on an individual perspective and existing literature on EO in the sports context. In particular, to highlight the influence of sports on the field of sport entrepreneurship, Hammerschmidt et al. (2022, p.842) further define sport entrepreneurship as “[...] the process by which individuals, acting in a sports environment, pursue opportunities without resources currently controlled”. Table 3 shows an overview of existing definitions of sport entrepreneurship in the current literature. Our synthesis follows by developing the framework.

The time horizon of publications on sport entrepreneurship only covers the last 12 years and thus represents a very short period compared to other research areas. This field’s research is still fragmented (Pellegrini et al., 2020). Figure 2 presents the characteristics of the final sample of our systematic literature review. These include the year of publication and the quality of the peer-reviewed journal, here again, according to VHB-JOURQUAL3 ranking.¹ Although many articles from the overall sample were not included in the final sample due to the lack of VHB-JOURQUAL3 ranking, given the periods between publications, it becomes evident that there has not only been an overall increase in the number of higher-quality publications but that the shortest and latest period (2020–10/2023) in particular has led to the most valuable publications for this review.

Figure 2 Publication date and VHB-JOURQUAL3 ranking of the final literature sample for this review



The number of articles in the final sample is 30. Most articles were published in journals classified by the VHB JOURQUAL 3 ranking as B (15), followed by 14 B/C-categorised articles and one publication in an A-journal. In total, the final sample represents nine different peer-reviewed journals. Here, it is interesting to note that all publications in the

final sample were published in journals covering the fields of entrepreneurship, management, or business but not in sports.

The majority of publications in the final sample were empirical work. Only four publications were conceptual works that attempted to explain sport entrepreneurship as a merger between sport management and entrepreneurship disciplines. Table 4 shows the distribution of articles across thematic subcategories.

Table 4 Categorisation of articles per subcategory

	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Conceptual</i>	<i>Empirical</i>
Sport entrepreneurship ecosystem	Influences	Ratten and Jones (2020), Toledano (2020)	González-Serrano et al. (2022), Hammerschmidt et al. (2021), Ratten et al. (2021), González-Serrano et al. (2021), Dobson, McLuskie (2020)
	Consequences	Jones et al. (2020), Navidi et al. (2023), Richmond et al. (2021)	Gonzalez-Serrano et al. (2019), Hayduk (2019), Núñez-Pomar et al. (2020)
Entrepreneurship to sport	EO		Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2021), Núñez-Pomar et al. (2016), Radaelli et al. (2018)
	Methods and techniques		Miloch et al. (2012)
	Financing		Hayduk, Walker (2018)
Sport to entrepreneurship	Individual	Hindle et al. (2021)	Pervun et al. (2022), Steinbrink et al. (2020)
	Team/Group		Neergaard and Krueger (2012), Wallis et al. (2020), González-Serrano et al. (2020)
	Organisational		Geeraert and Drieskens (2021), Hammerschmidt et al. (2020)
Conceptual work on sport entrepreneurship	Conceptual work	Ratten (2011, 2012), Pellegrini et al. (2020)	

4 The house of sport entrepreneurship: a conceptual framework and comprehensive understanding

Following the understanding of a systematic literature review as a ‘knowledge map’ (Frank and Hatak, 2014) and with a “[...] goal of summarizing and categorizing knowledge” (Fisch and Block, 2018), we developed the house of sport entrepreneurship as a conceptual framework (see Figure 3) that not only summarises and categorises existing knowledge on sport entrepreneurship but also builds an extended and

comprehensive understanding of the field based on the existing groundwork of our predecessors (see Tables 3 and 4). For this purpose, the *conceptual work on sport entrepreneurship* builds the house's foundation, including all literature explaining the intersection between sport and entrepreneurship. Based on this, the framework considers the two main directions shaping the field of sport entrepreneurship that emerged from the systematic literature review and, therefore, form the two main pillars of the house. The first pillar, *sport to entrepreneurship*, includes research addressing how sports affects starting and running a business (for example, personal experiences or capabilities acquired in sport or distinct characteristics of the sport's field). *Entrepreneurship to sport*, as the second pillar, includes research that addresses how entrepreneurship characteristics shape the sports industry (for example, constructs from research such as EO or entrepreneurial techniques). The *sport entrepreneurship ecosystem* completes this as the roof of the house, including research that addresses either the influences on sport entrepreneurship, for instance, environmental factors promoting the occurrence of sport entrepreneurship, or the consequences of sport entrepreneurship, such as its impact on social development. By doing so, we provide an extended and comprehensive understanding of sport entrepreneurship at the house's core.

4.1 *Conceptual work on sport entrepreneurship*

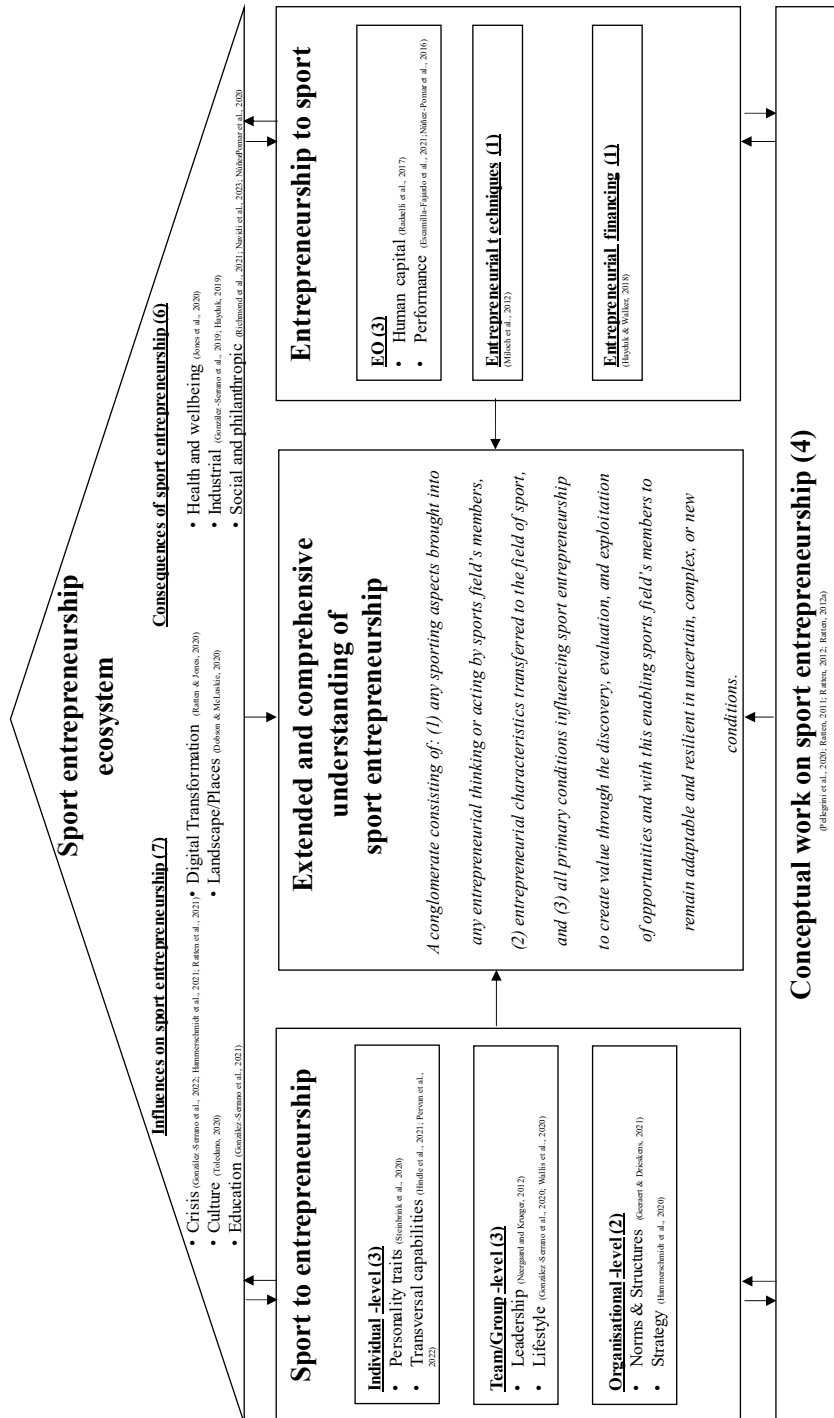
Articles forming the basis of this category are all those in the final sample that have attempted to explain the merger of sport and entrepreneurship or to conceptualise sport entrepreneurship. It has been suggested to integrate theories from the fields of sports management and entrepreneurship (e.g., effectuation and social networks) (Ratten, 2012) and to examine the relationship between sport and entrepreneurship to develop a theory of sport entrepreneurship (Ratten, 2010).

Building on this initial conceptual work, Pellegrini et al. (2020) have shown through a bibliometric analysis, which is suitable for displaying the current state of structure and trends with-in a research topic or field (Donthu et al., 2021), that a 4-cluster structure can represent the field of sport entrepreneurship:

- 1 theoretical definitions and internal factors promoting it
- 2 environmental factors that encourage it
- 3 education in this field
- 4 its' impact from a societal perspective.

In particular, the results of the work from Cluster 1 show that professional athletes are more likely to choose the alternative or second career path as entrepreneurs (Jones et al., 2014) and overall might have a "[...] higher entrepreneurial intention and orientation than average" [Pellegrini et al., (2020), p.21]. Here, for example, the use of discipline (Ratten, 2015), a higher level of locus of control (Kenny, 2015), and overall prerequisites developed through training such as rigour, discipline, and perseverance are highlighted, enabling athletes to develop these qualities off the field (Jones et al., 2017).

Figure 3 Conceptual framework and an extended comprehensive understanding of sport entrepreneurship based on the SLR



Note: The number of articles per category in the final sample is indicated in parentheses per each case.

4.2 Sport to entrepreneurship

In our framework, the *house of sport entrepreneurship*, we included research addressing how sports affects starting and running a business under one of the two main pillars, *sport to entrepreneurship*. Here, we distinguish between different levels: first, the individual level, i.e., research focussing on characteristics affecting the *individual*; second, the *team or group* level, i.e., research focussing on factors affecting the interpersonal relations; and third, the *organisational* level, i.e., research focussing on the distinct characteristics of sport organisations.

On an individual level, research shows that due to their comparatively short careers, most athletes need a second career, and many increasingly choose entrepreneurial pathways (Moustakas and Kalina, 2021). The propensity to become an entrepreneur is increased for people who participated in competitive sports in childhood, especially those who participated in individual sports (Pervun et al., 2022). In this context, athletes are said to be equipped with certain transversal skills, i.e., skills acquired in sports that make them particularly well-suited for becoming entrepreneurs. This is reasoned with personality traits of athletes that are usually associated with entrepreneurs (Steinbrink et al., 2019) or by the comparability of sports career management and the entrepreneurial process as two closely related processes (Hemme et al., 2021; Hindle et al., 2021).

The transferability of experience and capabilities from participating in competitive sports is also assigned to the team or group level, addressing *lifestyle* and *leadership*, i.e., things you transfer from sports experiences to your leadership behaviour. For the choice of innovative, strategic and leadership practices, socialisation is highlighted here, which among other things results from the participation in competitive sports and is an essential type of human capital (Neergaard and Krueger, 2012). Results show that most of the executives interviewed participated in competitive or elite sports in their youth. They drew on and transferred the logic and insights from their active time in competitive sports (e.g., team spirit, competitive spirit, perseverance and strategic thinking) when managing the company. In this context, participation in competitive sports is highlighted as a mechanism that can influence individuals on their path to entrepreneurship and beyond. Further, two articles deal with the role of one's lifestyle and how it relates to start-up motivations and groupings within lifestyle entrepreneurs. Wallis et al. (2020) identified and distinguished them into two groups (enabler vs. engaged), depending on the role of sport in their entrepreneurial pursuits. A high level of lifestyle motivation, i.e., a higher importance of aspects related to lifestyle when it comes to continuing entrepreneurial activity, determines the performance of lifestyle companies.

Regarding the organisational level, articles found deal with *norms and structures* as well as the strategy of sports organisations. As the sports industry is comprised of many stakeholders, such as fans, managers, athletes, and government (Hammerschmidt et al., 2019), it can result in the information asymmetries that the principal-agent-problem refers to Geeraert and Drieskens (2020). Professional sports clubs are often compared to SMEs due to the characteristics associated with SMEs, such as turnover or entity size (Moore et al., 2012). Striving for sporting rather than economic success distinguishes professional sports in terms of its strategic orientation. Coopetition as “[...] a strategy that combines cooperation and competition” [Morris et al., (2007), p.1] positively related to innovation in general (Gast et al., 2015) and encouraged by EO-behaviours (Kauppinen and Escamilla-Fajardo, 2020), can be further seen as a distinct characteristic of sports. Hammerschmidt et al. (2019) analysed the relationship between EO and performance in

professional sports using the example of professional soccer. They also suggested coopetition as a promising strategy and managerial approach for professional soccer clubs to succeed.

4.3 *Entrepreneurship to sport*

The second main pillar of the framework is *entrepreneurship to sport*, i.e., research addressing how entrepreneurship characteristics shape the sports industry. Here, we also distinguish between categories we could classify based on the systematic literature review, i.e., *EO*, *methods and techniques* and *financing*.

The majority of articles included in this second pillar deal with EO. Radaelli et al. (2017), in the only A-ranked publication included, focus on human capital and investigate whether Italian Serie A sport directors with a proactive, risk-taking, innovative, and aggressive orientation perform better in the acquisition of new talent than competitors with comparable human capital. Here, they focus on the flow rather than the existence of human capital. The results show no significant correlation between EO (as measured by new talent discovery) and performance. Using the example of Spanish sports service firms, it was found that neither EO nor company size are necessary conditions for success or failure. While small companies in the sports service sector perform well with EO, this is different for large companies. EO thus appears to be a sufficient condition for performance for small Spanish sports service firms, but not for large firms (Núñez-Pomar et al., 2016). Also investigating Spanish clubs, Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2021) not only associated EO with economic performance as in previous studies but also found a difference in sports clubs regarding their legal and organisational structure using the example of 13 professional and 13 non-professional clubs. Thus, EO impacts the economic performance of sports clubs, with proactivity being the most and innovation the least important dimension.

The topics of methods and techniques have also been considered in studies, particularly concerning how and why innovative techniques and methods are used in the context of sports. Miloch et al. (2012) used the example of Under Armour to show that various methods of modern brand development and non-traditional brand strategies are used in sports marketing to achieve rapid market presence. Even studies assigned differently in our framework due to their focus address methods and techniques that are usually known from the context of innovation and entrepreneurship, such as design thinking. For example, Ratten and Jones (2020) examine how the design thinking approach can be used to develop strategies for future potential innovations in sports.

Entrepreneurial firms, seen as drivers for employment and economic development, usually need to raise capital to grow (Bellavitis et al., 2016). For this purpose, they can use traditional external debt sources, including bank financing (Robb and Robinson, 2014), or alternative financing options such as venture capitalists (VCs) or business angels. Due to the role of sports in society, research describes sports as a predestined area for economically motivated entrepreneurial ventures (Hayduk and Walker, 2017). However, despite the popularity of the sports industry, financial investors are cautious in the early-stages of sports ventures. Hayduk and Walker (2017) show that sport-related transactions by both private equity and VC firms within the last 20 years were mostly taken in the media and digital segments. This shows that the market for the strategic factor of sport entrepreneurship has grown steadily over the past seven years.

4.4 Sport entrepreneurship ecosystem

Research in the roof of the house addresses environmental factors that display influences on and consequences of sport entrepreneurship.

Three of the seven articles representing the roof of our House of Sport Entrepreneurship deal with crises as an environmental factor influencing entrepreneurship. Organisations with an entrepreneurial profile can achieve above-average performance in economically challenging times for example, by exploiting opportunities by entering new/existing markets with new/existing goods or services. Further, sport entrepreneurs equipped with high levels of resilience, innovation and digital competencies as well as a strategic orientation and adaptability in terms of their business model are helped to remain competitive during crisis (Gonzalez-Serrano et al., 2023). Sport entrepreneurship can thus potentially overcome crises (Hammerschmidt et al., 2021). For this purpose, the sports industry, characterised by its collaborative nature (Bjärsholm, 2018) and high level of public-private partnerships, can leverage its unique entrepreneurial ecosystem to foster proactive collaboration (Ratten, 2019) for shared value creation (Ratten et al., 2021). Against this backdrop, Ratten (2020) describes crises more as sources of inspiration from which sport entrepreneurs benefit by developing techniques to create opportunities (Ratten, 2018a).

Due to the increasingly important role of the sports sector and its contribution to a country's GDP, the entrepreneurial ecosystem approach was first applied to sports by González-Serrano et al. (2021). In this context, they show different combinations of conditions that lead to high levels of sport-related GDP and particularly emphasise the importance of a country's educational and research activities. Therefore, their proposed guidelines for developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem in sports describe the introduction of entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship education in sports education as essential and suggest investing financial resources in developing education and research as well as infrastructure to promote entrepreneurship education in sports.

Furthermore, developing technological capabilities in this sector is also seen as crucial, which can be supported by the fact that trends such as digitisation and, as a result, the use of new technologies are also influencing the sports industry and, consequently, the access, perception, and consumption of sport (Pizzo et al., 2018). The digital transformation, therefore, also influences value-creation activities in sports (Ratten and Jones, 2020).

According to Dobson and McLuskie (2020), including human and non-human actors, such as the landscape or place, is necessary to understand what makes entrepreneurial action possible. They examine "[...] entrepreneurial identity and place in adventure sports within the emerging field of sport entrepreneurship" (p.879) within their research.

Five articles in our final sample address the impact of sports entrepreneurship on different levels of society and, therefore, the *consequences of sport entrepreneurship*. These can be assigned to the content focus areas of health and well-being, industrial, and social and philanthropic.

With increased connectivity and significantly more people accessing sport and fitness (Jones et al., 2017), a broader understanding of how sporting activity impacts health and well-being emerges. Therefore, a link between sport and fitness and lifestyle entrepreneurship can be made (Jones et al., 2020). Two studies included here show that sports entrepreneurship has an industrial impact. González-Serrano et al. (2019) have shown in a study that the increase in the level of innovation of EU countries affects their

economic growth and vice versa because the GDP per capita and the innovation performance of the countries studied are significantly positively correlated. Hayduk (2019) focussed on the effect of sports mega-events on inciting entrepreneurial rent-making for host nations. Indeed, hosting these types of events has led to increases in this regard for the host nation's firms, except for developing countries.

The literature also describes sport as a firmly rooted cultural phenomenon (Smith and Westerbeek, 2007) that is social by nature (Morrow and Senaux, 2013). Therefore, research targeting the field of sport entrepreneurship is often associated with social entrepreneurship (Richmond et al., 2021). The social performance of sports clubs is directly affected by their EO dimensions. The most critical conditions for high social performance are a high level of innovation, risk-taking, and low proactivity in national sports clubs. Variables such as funding type and competition level also influence this relationship. Using Spanish sports clubs, it is clear, that clubs with public funding show higher predictive power for social performance (Núñez-Pomar et al., 2020).

4.5 Extended and comprehensive understanding of sport entrepreneurship

Given the various attempts to define sport entrepreneurship with partially different foci (see Table 3), the growing field of sport entrepreneurship is still fragmented (Hammerschmidt et al., 2022). It needs a widely accepted definition and, consequently, a common understanding. We, therefore, qualitatively analysed current sport entrepreneurship definitions applying an inductive content analysis approach (Dahlsrud, 2008) and followed the precedent of published work to offer an integrated understanding. Based on the systematic literature review, the developed framework, and the analysis of current definitions, we offer the following extended, comprehensive and integrated understanding of sport entrepreneurship.

We understand sport entrepreneurship as a conglomerate consisting of:

- 1 any sporting aspects brought into any entrepreneurial thinking or acting by sports field's members
- 2 entrepreneurial characteristics transferred to the field of sport
- 3 all primary conditions influencing sport entrepreneurship to create value through the discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities and with this enabling sports field's members to remain adaptable and resilient in uncertain, complex, or new conditions.

5 Discussion

Given the interest in a systematic and holistic understanding of sport entrepreneurship as an emerging and significant research stream, this study takes stock of current work and extends this to a conceptual framework to support future work in this area. Despite the increasing importance and quantity of research on sport entrepreneurship and, as a result, many attempts to define and understand it in relation to both sport management and entrepreneurship (Ratten, 2010; Radaelli et al., 2017; Hammerschmidt et al., 2019; Pellegrini et al., 2020), there is no common understanding of the term sport entrepreneurship (Hammerschmidt et al., 2022). Based on a systematic literature review

following a multi-step approach (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009; Fisch and Block, 2018) and using in-depth-analysis, the present study offers a conceptual framework including an extended and comprehensive understanding of the term sport entrepreneurship, systematically reviewing what is known about related areas shaping this field and their interplay. With this, we follow Pellegrini et al. (2020), suggesting a systemisation of the contributions and extending existing research in this field. Our findings indicate that for a comprehensive understanding of sport entrepreneurship, it is necessary to consider what characteristics each direction (i.e., sport to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship to sport) brings to the field, what influences exist promoting the emergence of sport entrepreneurship and what consequences sport entrepreneurship might generate. Although existing definitions do not reveal a common understanding of sport entrepreneurship, their evolution (see Table 3) indicates that they nevertheless revolve around many of the same core components (innovative, risk-taking, and proactive behaviour, the process of value creation and the developing of new start-ups or ventures).

5.1 *Theoretical and practical implications*

Our findings contribute to existing theory in several ways. First, by developing *the house of sport entrepreneurship*, we provide a systematisation and categorisation of different knowledge streams around the relatively young research field of sport entrepreneurship. In contrast to previous reviews, which, for example, have focused on providing insights into main sub-streams within the field (Pellegrini et al., 2020), we have created a foundational framework to enable a better understanding of the field as an interplay between sport and entrepreneurship. Second, we can thus further contribute to the literature and extend prior findings by identifying a framework that both unifies the main directions shaping the field of sport entrepreneurship and influences as well as consequences of sport entrepreneurship activities. This allows us to gain a deeper understanding. Thus, likewise compile the key insights in an extended and comprehensive understanding of the concept of sport entrepreneurship (see Figure 3). Third, by providing this, we follow the request for specific models and concepts highlighting how sport entrepreneurship can contribute to the field of sport management (Ciomaga, 2013).

By developing the framework, we also offer potentially valuable insights for practitioners. This refers practitioners in a broad sense, and not only includes entrepreneurs or managers, but also practitioners working in sport entrepreneurship education. As described at the beginning, the sports industry is increasingly asking for graduates with entrepreneurial capabilities due to its specificities (González-Serrano et al., 2017), and more graduates as well as athletes are choosing entrepreneurial career paths (Ratten, 2018b). As educational institutions (such as universities) are often the last step before entering the workforce, educators should try to raise awareness among students and athletes about their potential as entrepreneurs, especially since they often already possess many valuable entrepreneurial characteristics to be (Steinbrink et al., 2019; Hindle et al., 2021). They can use our insights to develop appropriate educational events in the curricular and extracurricular areas accordingly.

5.2 *Limitations*

In this study, we aimed to simplify a broad body of knowledge in the still fragmented research field of sport entrepreneurship and present it concisely in a framework. Despite the contributions of theory and practice, which are quality features for literature reviews, we have to acknowledge some limitations regarding the depth of the results. Following Palmatier et al. (2017), a quality literature review is characterised by rigour and depth. Therefore, although we had determined an appropriate strategy for article selection and, thus, data collection for quality assurance reasons, only a small portion of the original sample ($n = 875$) was included in the final sample ($n = 30$). Thus, it may be that articles that were not included because of the selection strategy would have provided helpful insights and would have been valuable as we move toward an extended and comprehensive understanding of the term as a second aim of our study. In line with that, we have expanded the current understanding of sport entrepreneurship based on existing definitions (see Table 3). We did not research all publications in the final sample for definitions but rather relied on the work of our predecessors, ultimately supplementing it with the results of the literature review and thus extending the current understanding of sport entrepreneurship comprehensively. However, since the understanding of a phenomenon may be reflected both in definitions and other parts of respective articles, that could further enrich our findings.

5.3 *Avenues for future research*

The present study reveals that sport entrepreneurship is a very young and still fragmented but emerging field of research, with only a few articles published in journals with ratings ranging from A+ to B/C until now (see Figure 2). Moreover, current definitions are only characterised by two authors, Hammerschmidt and Ratten, which might lead to fewer perspectives on the understanding of the term. Further, most current publications in our final sample were empirical papers (see Table 4). As a result, future paper to do well to develop further conceptual ideas, including around definitions, understandings, processes and education. As we understand sport entrepreneurship as the interplay between sport and entrepreneurship, future empirical research should examine the characteristics these two areas bring into the field, the influence, and the consequences of the emergence of sport entrepreneurship. One interesting avenue for future research might be sport entrepreneurship education. As sportspeople seem to be equipped with certain traits and capabilities usually assigned to entrepreneurs (Steinbrink et al., 2019; Hindle et al., 2021), research in this context is scarce (Ratten and Thukral, 2020). Therefore, it might be interesting to investigate what appropriate entrepreneurship education for sportspeople looks like and the long-term effects, as well as disentangle the interplay between sport and entrepreneurship in the education context. We see initial efforts in this area in the literature, but more work needs to follow in this area (Cohen and Peachey, 2021; Moustakas and Reynard, 2023). Also, in connection with recurrent topics from the general entrepreneurship or sports management literature, such as gender and diversity, female entrepreneurship (Minniti, 2010; Cromie and Hayes, 2011) or role models (Bosma et al., 2012; Scherer et al., 2017), interesting avenues for future research emerge. Although research on role models and their effects already exists in sports (Mutter and Pawlowski, 2021), there has not been any connection to research on sport entrepreneurship. In addition, most research has taken place in the so-called Global

North, and there is a need to integrate voices, definitions and data from varied socio-cultural contexts.

Further, one of the characteristics of sports organisations mentioned in the literature is their strategic focus, which, in contrast to conventional SMEs with which they are often compared (see chapter 4), is usually victory rather than profit-maximising and thus more product-centric. Therefore, another promising field for future research is the question of what sports organisations can learn from entrepreneurship and how they, as often very traditional organisations, can change their mindset and strategic focus. Anecdotal evidence shows that professional sports clubs increasingly collaborate with start-ups in this context. While there is already research on corporate start-up collaborations in the general management literature (Steiber and Alänge, 2020; Rigtering and Behrens, 2021), this area is still largely underrepresented in sports.

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Notes

- 1 The VHB-JOURQUAL3, a rating of business-related journals assessed by VHB members, is published by the Association of University Teachers of Business Administration. Link to VHB-JOURQUAL3: <https://vhbonline.org/vhb4you/vhb-jourqual/vhb-jourqual-3/gesamtliste> (retrieved: 23-01-10).