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Modelling Identification of Factors Affecting the Development of Sports Entrepreneurship Opportunities in The Field of Sports Education and Research

*Authors' Contribution: A – Study design; B – Data collection; C – Statistical analysis; D – Manuscript Preparation; E – Funds Collection

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship development is a priority across all sectors, including the field of sports. This study sought to construct a model and determine the key factors that drive the expansion of entrepreneurial opportunities within sports education and research. Employing an exploratory-consequential approach with applied and developmental aims, the study was conducted in two phases. The qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews with ten experts comprising academics, entrepreneurs, and sports administrators selected through convenience sampling. The quantitative phase included 52 randomly selected participants from the same population. Data collection instruments consisted of semi-structured interviews and a custom-designed questionnaire utilizing a 5-point Likert scale. Data analysis was performed using partial least squares structural equation modeling via SmartPLS 4. Exploratory factor analysis identified 52 items distributed across eight constructs. All constructs demonstrated strong validity and reliability, with factor loadings and AVE values exceeding 0.70. The final structural model exhibited a good overall fit and confirmed a significant positive impact of all eight factors ($P < 0.001$). The findings underscore the critical role of these dimensions in advancing sports entrepreneurship and suggest that reinforcing them could enhance the entrepreneurial framework within the domain of sports education and research.

Keywords: Development; entrepreneurship; sports

1. Introduction

The development of sport entrepreneurship has gained significant attention due to its potential to drive economic growth, foster innovation, and improve the sports industry (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021)(Lara-Bocanegra et al., 2022). Recent studies underscore its significance in the development of sport-related products, the growth of organizational structures, and the overall advancement of the sports industry (Đoković et al., 2024). Sport entrepreneurship is particularly relevant in the field of sport education and research (González-Serrano et al., 2020), where innovative business models can create new opportunities for athletes, educators and researchers (Kauppinen & Escamilla-Fajardo, 2023). Several factors have been identified in previous studies as critical in sports entrepreneurship, including economic factors. According to Ratten & Jones (2020) access to funding, investment climate, market demand, and financial incentives play an important role in driving sports entrepreneurship.

Other studies by Ratten (2020) and Hammerschmidt et al (2023) have emphasized the role of sport entrepreneurship in driving economic progress and improving sport-related services and products. In line with Kasanrawali & Prayoga (2025) sports entrepreneurship creates job opportunities in various sectors, including marketing, event management, product development, and technology. The sports sector offers a fertile environment for entrepreneurial growth by generating demand for sports-related products and services, while simultaneously enhancing community engagement. Conversely, entrepreneurship contributes to the advancement of sports by fostering the creation of businesses involved in manufacturing sports equipment, delivering sports services, and expanding the overall sports industry (Nauright & Wiggins, 2020). However, few studies have focused on identifying the factors that influence the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in sport, especially in the context of sport education and research. For example, the design of an entrepreneurship model in sports tourism shows that cultural, social, and marketing factors are at the first level, while economic factors, sport structure, management, and entrepreneurial opportunities are at the second level in the model (Tabrizchi et al., 2020).

Recent studies in sport entrepreneurship have explored various dimensions of the field. With the rise of e-sports, virtual training platforms, and AI-based analytics, sport entrepreneurship has grown rapidly (Pizzo et al., 2022). Emerging business models, such as sports technology startups, crowdfunding for sports initiatives, and subscription-based training platforms, have been explored in contemporary research (Hautbois & Desbordes, 2023). Besides, recent global challenges have significantly accelerated the adoption of digital technologies in sports, leading to increased interest in virtual events, e-sports, and online fitness platforms (Crespo et al., 2022). These developments indicate that the landscape of sport entrepreneurship is becoming increasingly dynamic and technology-driven, creating new forms of entrepreneurial opportunities that require specific competencies, resources, and supporting environments. However, while these technological advancements have expanded the scope of sport entrepreneurship, there is still limited understanding of the key factors that systematically support the development of such opportunities, particularly within the context of sport education and research. In addition to that, although there has been some research on sport entrepreneurship, research regarding the development of sport entrepreneurship in the field of sport education and research is still very limited. Therefore, one of the gaps that needs to be addressed is the lack of studies on the factors that influence the development of sport entrepreneurship opportunities in the sport education and research sector.

Consequently, the development of entrepreneurial opportunities has become a critical focus across various domains, including the sports sector. This study, therefore, aims to construct a model that identifies the key factors influencing the growth of sport entrepreneurship opportunities within the context of sports education and research. Additionally, it seeks to evaluate the feasibility of this model as a foundational framework to guide and inform future research in this area.

2. Method

In accordance with its objectives, this study adopts an applied-developmental approach, utilizing an exploratory-quantitative research design. The study was conducted in Indonesia, specifically involving participants affiliated with universities offering sport education programs and sport-related professional environments, including academic institutions, sport organizations, and independent sport businesses. This specification ensures that the population reflects the ecosystem of sport education and entrepreneurship relevant to the research context. A total of 52 participants were selected using Cochran's formula and a random sampling technique. To implement this method, a comprehensive list of sport entrepreneurs and undergraduate students in the field was compiled, with each individual assigned a unique identification code. Using a random number table, 52 individuals

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were then randomly chosen, ensuring that every member of the population had an equal probability of being included in the sample.

Although the sample size ($n = 52$) may seem relatively small, its adequacy can be justified based on the use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is widely recommended for exploratory research and complex models with limited sample sizes. According to the "10-fold rule," the minimum sample size should be at least ten times the maximum number of structural paths leading to any construct in the model. The sample size in this study meets these requirements, which confirms its suitability for PLS-SEM analysis. Furthermore, PLS-SEM is particularly appropriate for prediction-oriented studies and theory development, which is aligned with the goal of building a model of the factors that influence sports entrepreneurship opportunities.

The inclusion criteria for participants varied by group. Sport entrepreneurs were required to have prior experience in entrepreneurial activities, while managers and experts in the sports field needed a background in sports education. Lecturers and undergraduate students were selected based on their involvement in research related to entrepreneurship, education, or training. Across all groups, participants had to express a willingness to take part in the study, provide written informed consent, and meet specific health-related conditions: they must not have had any form of addiction, must not have been using anti-anxiety or antidepressant medications, must not have received psychological services in the previous six months, and must not have experienced significant stressful life events such as divorce or the death of an immediate family member within the past six months. Participants were excluded if they failed to complete more than 15% of the questionnaire items or chose to withdraw from the study after submitting a formal request for discontinuation.

The research instruments employed in this study included a demographic information form, collecting data on participants' gender and age and a researcher-developed questionnaire designed to identify factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in the context of sports education and research. The questionnaire comprised 57 items, each rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This instrument was developed by researchers with expertise relevant to the study area, grounded in established theoretical frameworks and insights gathered through semi-structured interviews both in-person and online with ten participants, including university lecturers, alumni, and undergraduate students in sport education, sport science, and entrepreneurial management, as well as sport managers.

The validity of the researcher-developed questionnaire designed to identify factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in the domain of sports education and research was established through expert review. Specifically, the instrument underwent five rounds of evaluation using the Delphi method, involving eight selected experts and lecturers in the field of sports management. This process led to the identification of eight key categories: entrepreneurial business environment (PR, 8 items), entrepreneurial awareness (KW, 7 items), entrepreneurship education (PK2, 11 items), entrepreneurship research (PK, 8 items), entrepreneurship marketing (PR2, 7 items), infrastructure for entrepreneurship education and research (RK, 6 items), individual factors (FI, 6 items), and social networks (LK, 4 items). Content validity was confirmed by the panel of experts, while the reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient greater than 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency (see Figure 1).

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Cronbach's alpha - Mean, STDEV, T values, p values						
	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O /STDEV)	P values	
FI	0.722	0.713	0.063	11.407	0.000	
KW	0.902	0.901	0.017	54.185	0.000	
LK	0.918	0.916	0.013	70.984	0.000	
PK	0.873	0.870	0.031	28.568	0.000	
PK2	0.789	0.785	0.044	17.737	0.000	
PR	0.788	0.782	0.051	15.299	0.000	
RK	0.778	0.771	0.054	14.517	0.000	

Figure 1. Reliability Result Calculated with Cronbach's Alpha

The process of conducting the research was, after the research proposal was approved, the theoretical basis of the research was reviewed, experts were identified for interviews, then a sample was selected among them, and interviews were conducted. Based on the theoretical basis and interviews with experts, a questionnaire created by the research team titled "Identification of Factors Affecting the Development of Entrepreneurship Opportunities in the Field of Sports Education and Research" was formed. In the next stage, a quantitative sample consisting of sports entrepreneurs, managers of sports organizations, and undergraduate students of sports was identified, and sampling was conducted among them. The importance and urgency of the research was explained to the participants, and they were asked to complete the research questionnaire in full.

The researchers were committed to adhering to the research ethics agreement and upholding it throughout the study. A research team-made questionnaire to identify factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in the field of sports education and research was completed by sports entrepreneurs and undergraduate students of sports education. The researcher expresses gratitude to the participants for their participation in the study

Data were analyzed using exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modeling with the help of PLS-SEM software (SmartPLS 4 for students).

3. Result

The sample in this study consisted of sport entrepreneurs, sport organization managers, and sport undergraduate students totalling 52, whose absolute frequencies, absolute percentages, and cumulative percentages are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Absolute Frequency and Percentage of Absolute and Cumulative Frequency of Sports Entrepreneurs and Undergraduate Sports Students

Percentage of Cumulative Frequency	Percentage of Absolute Frequency	Absolute Frequency	Level	Variable
57.93%	57.93%	40	Male	sex
100%	42.07%	12	Female	
31.10%	31.10%	12	21 - 30	Age
68.29%	37.19%	20	31 - 40	
93.90%	25.61%	10	41 - 50	
98.17%	4.27%	7	51 - 60	
100%	1.83%	3	Above 60	

Based As shown in Table 1, the majority of participants were male (57.93%) and primarily fell within the age range of 31 to 40 years (37.19%). Prior to conducting exploratory factor analysis (EFA), relevant assumptions were tested and confirmed. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.81, indicating a sufficient sample size, while Bartlett’s test of sphericity yielded a value of 866.15, which was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). These results confirmed the appropriateness of applying EFA. The outcomes of the exploratory factor analysis, aimed at identifying the factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in the context of sports education and research, are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Student Ability Score

Factor	Number of Items	Loading Factor	Convergent Validity	Cronbach Reliability	Composite Reliability	Results
Entrepreneurship Business Environment	8	0.79	0.73	0.82	0.87	Suitable
Entrepreneurship Education	11	0.82	0.75	0.85	0.87	Suitable
Entrepreneurship Research	8	0.81	0.77	0.89	0.90	Suitable
Entrepreneurship Marketing	7	0.75	0.72	0.91	0.93	Suitable
Entrepreneurship Education and Research Infrastructure	6	0.73	0.71	0.88	0.90	Suitable
Individual Factors	6	0.82	0.78	0.93	0.94	Suitable
Social Network	4	0.77	0.76	0.87	0.89	Suitable
Entrepreneurial Awareness	7	0.82	0.75	0.85	0.87	Suitable

Based on the results presented in the table above, five items were removed from the researcher-developed questionnaire, as their factor loadings were below the threshold of 0.40. Consequently, the final instrument for identifying factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in sports education and research comprised 52 items, distributed across eight factors: entrepreneurial business environment (7 items), entrepreneurial awareness (7 items), entrepreneurship education (10 items), entrepreneurship research (8 items), entrepreneurship marketing (6 items), infrastructure for entrepreneurship education and research (5 items), individual factors (6 items), and social networks (3 items). All retained items demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties, with factor loadings, convergent validity (assessed through average variance extracted), and reliability (measured by Cronbach’s alpha) exceeding 0.70. Evaluation of model fit indices confirmed that the proposed model had a good overall fit, supported by a composite reliability index of 0.75, a coefficient of determination of 0.82, and a goodness-of-fit (GOF) index of 0.80.

The model for identifying factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in sports education and research is presented in Figure 1, and details of their influence are presented in Table 3.

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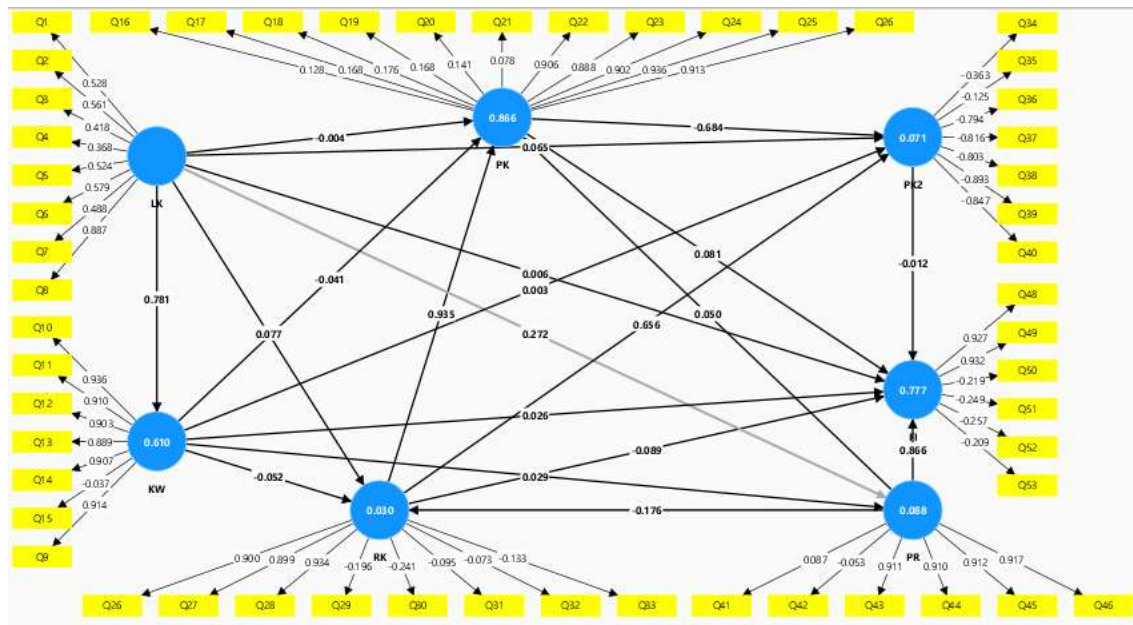


Figure 2. Identification Model of Factors Affecting the Development of Sports Entrepreneurship Opportunities in the Field of Sports Education and Research along with Path Coefficient

Table 3. Influence of the Identification Model on Factors Affecting the Development of Sports Entrepreneurship Opportunities in the Field of Sports Education and Research

Factor	Coefficient of Determination	Path Coefficient	T value	Significance	Results
Entrepreneurship Business Environment	0.77	0.75	16.34	0.001	Confirmed
Entrepreneurial Awareness	0.72	0.68	12.16	0.001	Confirmed
Entrepreneurship Education	0.68	0.59	7.86	0.001	Confirmed
Entrepreneurship Research	0.73	0.69	12.87	0.001	Confirmed
Entrepreneurship Marketing	0.80	0.79	18.02	0.001	Confirmed
Entrepreneurship Education and Research Infrastructure	0.81	0.83	22.80	0.001	Confirmed
Individual Factors	0.75	0.77	17.85	0.001	Confirmed
Social Network	0.79	0.76	17.13	0.001	Confirmed

Based on the results from Figure 1 and Table 3, the model for identifying factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in sports education and research has a positive and significant effect on each of the eight factors mentioned with a value of ($P < 0.001$).

4. Discussion

In recent years, increasing attention has been directed toward the development of entrepreneurial opportunities across various sectors, including the field of sports. Accordingly, this study aimed to construct and validate a model that identifies the key factors influencing the advancement of sports entrepreneurship opportunities within the domains of sports education and research. The findings, derived from exploratory factor analysis, revealed eight underlying factors: entrepreneurial business environment, entrepreneurial vigilance, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship research, entrepreneurship marketing, infrastructure for education and research, individual factors, and social networks. All factors demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties, with factor loadings, convergent validity (assessed via average variance extracted), and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) exceeding the 0.70 threshold. Furthermore, structural equation modelling using the partial least squares method (SEM-PLS) confirmed that the proposed model exhibits a good overall fit and exerts a positive and statistically significant influence on each of the eight identified dimensions. These results are consistent with findings from prior studies, thereby reinforcing the robustness and relevance of the model in advancing entrepreneurship in the sports education and research sectors (Mohammadpour et al., 2024; Heydari et al., 2022; Pellegrini et al., 2020; Huertas González-Serrano et al., 2020).

To outline the critical components that shape the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in sport—especially within the context of sports education and research—the following eight factors can be emphasized as key determinants.

Entrepreneurship business environment

The entrepreneurial business environment is a critical factor in fostering the development of entrepreneurial opportunities within the sports sector. These opportunities often emerge from innovative ideas that respond to evolving market demands. Organizations including private enterprises, non-profit institutions, and other stakeholders can effectively leverage such opportunities if they can adapt to the dynamics of the business environment. To succeed, entrepreneurs must consistently update and realign their ideas in response to shifts in the entrepreneurial landscape. This requires a high level of environmental awareness, analytical capability, and responsiveness to change. Moreover, entrepreneurs should acknowledge that no business idea is ever fully complete instead, ideas must be continuously evaluated and refined in light of contextual developments. Ongoing learning and knowledge enhancement in the field of business are therefore essential for sustaining entrepreneurial success.

Entrepreneurial awareness

Entrepreneurial awareness represents another critical factor in identifying and seizing entrepreneurial opportunities within the sports sector. It equips individuals with the capacity to recognize innovative possibilities, enabling them to introduce new products, services, processes, organizational models, or even untapped markets for personal or organizational advancement. This proactive mindset allows entrepreneurs to generate significant value and competitive advantage. As such, entrepreneurial alertness is widely regarded as a vital and dependable approach to addressing contemporary economic, social, and cultural challenges. In light of this, fostering entrepreneurship and enhancing entrepreneurial awareness have become pressing priorities for modern organizations aiming to thrive in dynamic and competitive environments.

Entrepreneurship education

Entrepreneurship education is a vital component in fostering the development of entrepreneurial opportunities. Entrepreneurs who rely solely on practical experience without formal training face a significantly higher risk of failure. In contrast, those who combine experience with structured education are generally more successful and demonstrate a greater likelihood of sustaining entrepreneurial ventures. The primary objective of entrepreneurship education programs is to equip learners with the essential knowledge and competencies required to achieve defined outcomes upon completion. Fundamentally, every educational program is designed to fulfill specific goals, which in turn inform educational planning and curriculum development within academic systems. The overarching aim of entrepreneurship education should be to cultivate individuals who are self-reliant, opportunity-aware, and capable of launching independent ventures. Graduates of such programs are expected to possess the resilience and decision-making skills necessary to navigate risk and uncertainty in real-world business environments.

Entrepreneurship research

Entrepreneurship research serves as a crucial driver in the development of entrepreneurial opportunities within the sports sector. Its outcomes extend beyond academic contribution, offering practical value that influences both societal advancement and the refinement of entrepreneurial processes. Moreover, such research plays a role in shaping organizational and socio-cultural norms related to innovation and enterprise. By identifying the key determinants of entrepreneurial opportunities in sports, entrepreneurship research provides valuable insights for entrepreneurs, managers, and professionals. These insights can be strategically applied to enhance entrepreneurial activity and foster growth within the sports industry.

Entrepreneurship marketing

Entrepreneurship marketing is another significant factor that influences the development of entrepreneurial opportunities, playing a vital role in both the establishment of new ventures and the sustainability of existing organizations. Its relevance continues to grow, given its direct impact on organizational success. Strategic investment in the marketing and development of sports-related products and services not only generates employment opportunities but also contributes to the expansion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This, in turn, supports broader economic growth and fosters social development, highlighting the essential role of entrepreneurship marketing in the intersection of business and societal advancement.

Entrepreneurship education and research infrastructure

Educational and research infrastructure also plays a pivotal role in facilitating entrepreneurial activities within the sports sector. Technological advancements have significantly enhanced the dissemination of information and the creation of new international markets, thereby reshaping the entrepreneurial landscape. As the digital economy continues to evolve, the reliance on physical space for entrepreneurial ventures is gradually decreasing. However, despite the transformative influence of the internet on entrepreneurial practices, the physical location and institutional environment still remain important—particularly in supporting the development and sustainability of sports entrepreneurship. Access to adequate infrastructure, both digital and physical, is therefore essential for fostering innovation and enterprise in this field.

The role of entrepreneurship education and research infrastructure highlights the strong connection between sports entrepreneurship and technological innovation, which is widely recognized as a key enabler of entrepreneurial activity within the sports sector. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) influence employment and labor market dynamics in three major ways. First, the

production of ICT-related goods and services generates substantial job opportunities. Second, ICT functions as a critical input across various industries, facilitating processes such as production, distribution, sales, and after-sales service, thereby increasing operational efficiency and attracting skilled labor. Third, and perhaps most significantly, ICT fosters the emergence of entirely new markets due to its adaptability and the wide range of applications it offers. This capacity to create diverse and dynamic economic opportunities makes ICT a powerful driver of employment and entrepreneurship in the digital era.

Individual Factors

Individual factors also have an important role to play in the development of sport entrepreneurship opportunities. Understanding how these factors influence the entrepreneurial process can help in identifying and developing opportunities, allowing researchers, managers and policy makers to gain a better understanding of how individual factors contribute to opportunity recognition. This recognition is considered one of the most crucial steps in the development of entrepreneurship in education and sociology. Therefore, these factors promote more efficient and effective decision-making in identifying and developing sport entrepreneurship opportunities.

Social Network

Another important factor is social networking, which plays a significant role in the expansion of sports entrepreneurship opportunities. The sports industry should integrate social networks into the modern business environment and utilize them to identify innovative opportunities and gain a competitive advantage. In this way, the organization can ensure its sustainability while creating profits and value for both the organization and society. Therefore, the identification of factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in sports should be analyzed within the social and cultural context in which sports activities take place.

Every study faces various limitations. The limitations of this study include the limited research population, which consisted only of graduate students, lecturers, entrepreneurs and sport managers; the use of a self-report measurement tool; the inability to find an existing tool for this purpose; and the attempt to develop a researcher-made questionnaire to identify factors that influence the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in sport education and research.

Therefore, further research is recommended to explore the factors that influence the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in sports education and research in other areas, such as sports tourism and other sectors. Another suggestion is to develop additional tools to assess the actual condition of entrepreneurial opportunities in sports education and research, so that based on existing research tools and other available instruments, the condition of entrepreneurial opportunity development in this field can be thoroughly evaluated.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

In light of the research findings, it is essential to develop and implement targeted strategies aimed at strengthening and expanding entrepreneurial opportunities within the sports sector. The model proposed in this study, identifying the key factors that influence the development of entrepreneurship in sports education and research, offers a practical framework for enhancing each of these components. By leveraging the identified factors, including the entrepreneurial business environment, entrepreneurial awareness, entrepreneurship education and research, marketing, supporting infrastructure, individual characteristics, and social networks, stakeholders can create favorable

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conditions for fostering entrepreneurship. Effectively applying these elements will support the promotion and sustainable growth of entrepreneurial activities in the field of sport.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding this article.

References