

## Evaluación de las publicaciones científicas en el campo de la gestión deportiva: un estudio bibliométrico basado en la base de datos Web of Science

### Evaluating scientific publications in the field of sports management: a bibliometric study based on the Web of Science database

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**Resumen.** Este estudio tiene como objetivo evaluar la investigación en gestión deportiva desde una perspectiva más amplia, considerando su alcance, calidad e impacto. Utiliza el análisis bibliométrico, un método que cuantifica y evalúa los estudios académicos, para revelar las tendencias, temas, métodos y brechas en este campo. El análisis bibliométrico aplica métodos matemáticos y estadísticos para analizar las actividades científicas, y puede mostrar las tendencias, los temas candentes y las relaciones y colaboraciones entre países, regiones, instituciones, campos de investigación y autores mediante el examen de la investigación académica realizada en diversos países, universidades y publicaciones. Los datos para este estudio se recopilaban de la base de datos Web of Science (WoS), que se eligió para la revisión de la literatura porque es una fuente más autorizada y extendida que otras bases de datos, y ofrece revistas de alta calidad y una estructura de datos completa para el análisis bibliométrico. La búsqueda en la base de datos WoS se realizó utilizando palabras clave relacionadas con la gestión deportiva, como «economía deportiva, industria deportiva, finanzas deportivas, deporte y economía, organización deportiva, gestión deportiva, medios deportivos, tecnología deportiva, innovación deportiva, política deportiva, patrocinio y club deportivo, negocio deportivo» y así sucesivamente. Los datos se analizaron con el programa RStudio y se realizó el análisis bibliométrico. Los resultados muestran que el número de estudios en gestión deportiva ha aumentado continuamente desde 1991 hasta 2023. Además, el contenido de los estudios en este campo ha cambiado con el tiempo. Por ejemplo, mientras que la palabra «deporte» era más común en los primeros años, la palabra «deportes» se ha vuelto más frecuente en los últimos años. Esto indica que el deporte ha evolucionado en un concepto multidisciplinario que abarca diferentes ramas deportivas. Sin embargo, la mayoría de los estudios en gestión deportiva no abordan adecuadamente la dimensión económica de la gestión deportiva. Por lo tanto, existe una necesidad de más y más amplias publicaciones científicas en este campo. Los hallazgos sugieren que la investigación en este campo está creciendo con el tiempo, pero todavía hay muchas brechas de investigación en economía deportiva.

**Palabras clave:** Análisis bibliométrico; Economía deportiva; Industria deportiva; Gestión deportiva; Web of Science

**Abstract.** This study aims to evaluate the research in sports management from a broader perspective, considering its scope, quality and impact. It uses bibliometric analysis, a method that quantifies and assesses academic studies, to reveal the trends, topics, methods and gaps in this field. Bibliometric analysis applies mathematical and statistical methods to analyse scientific activities and it can show the trends, hot topics, relationships and collaborations among countries, regions, institutions, research fields and authors by examining academic research conducted in various countries, universities and publications. The data for this study were collected from the Web of Science (WoS) database, which was chosen for the literature review because it is a more authoritative and widespread source than other databases and it offers high-quality journals and a complete data structure for bibliometric analysis. The search in the WoS database was conducted using keywords related to sports management, such as “sports economics, sports industry, financial sports, sports and economy, sports organization, sports management, sports media, sports technology, sports innovation, sports policy, sponsorship and sports clubs, sports business” and so on. The data were analysed with RStudio program and bibliometric analysis was performed. The results show that the number of studies in sports management has increased continuously from 1991 to 2023. Moreover, the contents of the studies in this field have changed over time. For instance, while the word «sport» was more common in the earlier years, the word «sports» has become more prevalent in recent years. This indicates that sport has evolved into a multidisciplinary concept that encompasses different sports branches. However, most of the studies in sports management do not adequately address the economic dimension of sports management. Therefore, there is a need for more and more comprehensive scientific publications in this field. The findings suggest that the research in this field is growing over time, but there are still many research gaps in sports economics.

**Keywords:** Bibliometric Analysis; Sports Economics; Sports Industry; Sports Management; Web of Science

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## Introduction

The development of sport management as a scientific discipline has attracted increasing scholarly attention, with research in this area growing significantly over the years. Sport management has established itself as a vital component of the academic community (Schnitzer & Kopp, 2018). Scholars emphasize the importance of scientific research in sport management to enhance understanding of its global significance, improve academic curricula and develop managerial skills (Teixeira, 2022). This growth is evidenced by the expanding influence and rapid development

of sport management research as a recognized discipline (Hammerschmidt et al., 2023).

The origins of sport management research can be traced back to the 1980s and 1990s, marking its evolution into an independent and respected field of study (Skinner & Cornett, 2018). Leading scholars have highlighted the successes of sport management in terms of infrastructure, recognition as a legitimate field of study and the overall advancement of knowledge within the discipline, while also acknowledging the need for continuous improvement (Doherty, 2013). Furthermore, sport management academia seeks to understand the societal role of sports and its potential impact on

various sectors of society (Zaharia, 2017). Sport management has emerged as a legitimate area for scholarship and theory development, contributing significantly to sport populations (Nite & Singer, 2012). Efforts have been made to establish a distinctive research agenda that will further solidify sport management as a unique and recognized discipline (Chalip, 2006). The expansion and transformation of sport management as an academic field have been considerable over the past few decades (Perry et al., 2022).

The North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) has played a crucial role in embedding sport management within academia, leading to its recognition as an area of academic merit (Cuneen, 2004). Despite the impressive scholarly progress, questions remain regarding the extent to which research efforts effectively contribute to the establishment of sport management as a distinct academic discipline (Zhang, 2015).

Sport management encompasses various subfields, including sports economics, which focuses on the economic aspects of sports and involves business management functions such as planning, organizing, leading and controlling (Pott, 2023). The economic significance of the sports sector has been highlighted in international comparisons, revealing changes in the production, consumption and management of sports (Koroknay, 2020). Moreover, the application of multisource big data mining technology in sports economic management analysis has been proposed to predict relationships within sports economic data, leading to better management practices in the sports industry (Li, 2022).

The growth of the sports industry, the diversification of sports organizations, increased competition, and the globalization of sports have elevated the importance of research in sports management. These developments in both academia and industry have led to the rapid expansion of sport management as a distinct discipline (Rozo Rondón et al., 2022). The sports industry now stands as a significant sector, not only in terms of competitive activities but also from an economic perspective (Keskin & Ulusay, 2023: 362). This industry encompasses a variety of sectors, including sports organizations, sports facilities, media broadcasts, sponsorship agreements and sports tourism, all of which are intricately connected to the world of sports (Keskin et al., 2023: 278).

Sport management as a field examines the economic dimensions, impacts, and challenges of sports, alongside its social, cultural and political aspects. It involves the planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of teams, facilities or sports programs to ensure they meet their objectives (Nuñez et al., 2023). As both a theoretical and empirical science, sport management explores the intersection between sports sciences and economics, aiming to develop optimal strategies and approaches as an applied discipline that addresses the economic aspects of sports (Cerrahoğlu, 2016).

The North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) defines sport management as "a core body of knowledge that intersects in sport management and relates

to management, leadership and organization, behavioral dimensions of sport, ethics in sport management, sport marketing, communication in sport, sport finance, sport economics, sport business in a social context, legal dimensions and professional preparation for sport management" (Franco et al., 2023).

Sports economics, a significant component of sports management, holds great potential due to the growth and globalization of the sports industry, even though it remains an emerging and underdeveloped field (Cerrahoğlu, 2005). Even in countries like Germany, which are credited with institutionalizing sports economics, substantial research gaps remain. Research in this area can contribute to sports policies and decisions by revealing the economic impacts, problems and solutions in sports. Therefore, further research is needed to assess the quality and impact of studies in this field.

Scientific progress is achieved by following developments within a field and addressing existing gaps. Understanding and supporting advancements in a scientific field requires close attention to ongoing research. In this context, bibliometric analysis allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the scientific literature. Bibliometrics has wide applications across various disciplines, including sociology, history of science, business, management and research policy (Zhao, 2011) and is increasingly applied to fields beyond these (Karafil & Akgül, 2021).

A review of the literature reveals numerous studies related to sport management, with bibliometric analyses identifying trends in sports management journals, thematic orientations and the intersection of sports and education management (Karafil & Akgül, 2021). However, many of these studies do not simultaneously consider the subfields of sport management, such as sports economics, often focusing on a single subfield. The aim of this study is to conduct a bibliometric analysis of academic research in sport management with a focus on encompassing the subfields as comprehensively as possible. Bibliometric analysis, which enables both quantitative and qualitative evaluations of scientific publications can reveal trends, topics, methods and gaps in this field, providing a broader perspective on the scope, quality and impact of research in sport management.

## Method

In this study, which aims to review the publications in the field of sports management, reveal the internal structure and development trends of the research, the bibliometric research method was used. This method, which analyses scientific activities with mathematical and statistical methods is a quantitative method used to reveal the trends, hot topics and relationships and collaborations among countries, regions, institutions, research fields and authors by evaluating academic research conducted in various countries, universities and publications (Laengle et al. 2018; León-Castro et al. 2021; Morell-Santandreu et al.

2020; Wan Hussain, 2023). The methodological framework of the study is shown in Figure 1, which was created by being inspired by the figure formed by Pan and others (2023) in their studies.

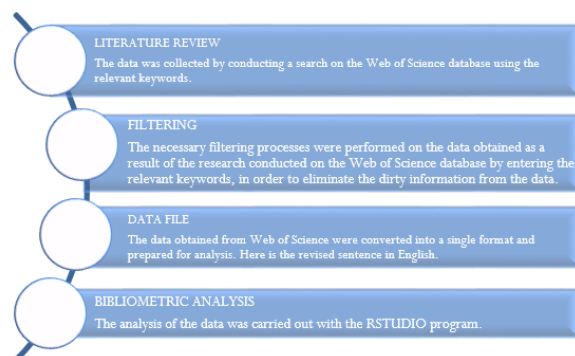


Figure 1. Methodological Framework of the Study

In order to collect the data consisting of the studies conducted in the field of sports management, Web of Science (WoS) database was preferred to perform the literature review. WoS database is a more authoritative and widespread source than other databases and it offers high-quality journals and a complete data structure for bibliometric analysis (Singh et al., 2021). Key words in the field of sports management were used when searching in the WoS database. These are; "sports economics, sports industry, financial sports, sports and economy, sports organization, sports management, sports media, sports technology, sports innovation, sports policy, sponsorship and sports club, sports business" and so on. The search results were filtered not only within the framework of keywords but also using the features provided by the WoS database later. With this filtering, only the studies belonging to the field of sports sciences were included in the analysis and it was prevented to go beyond the scope of the subject. While filtering, only the inclusion and exclusion criteria were changed in terms of subject. Other than that, no other restrictions were made in terms of processing as much data as possible. Then, the obtained results were converted into a single excel format and the data were created. The data were analysed with RStudio program and bibliometric analysis was performed.

The data collection process in the WoS database is as follows:

✓ On 25.04.2023, the keywords "sport economy or sport industry or sport finance or sport and economy or sport organisation or sport management or sport business or sport media or sport technology or sport and technology or sport organisation and management or sport policy or sponsorship and sport club or sport club or sport club and profit or sport club and economy or labour in sport or labour force in sport or sport unemployment or sport employment or sport innovation or sport marketing" were entered into the WoS database.

✓ Subsequently, the document type was filtered to include only articles to refine the results. This filtering was necessary because the number of other document types was

insignificant compared to articles, making them unsuitable for inclusion in the analysis. Another filter was applied to exclude irrelevant studies in both macro and micro subject categories, ensuring that only topics aligned with the selected keywords were included. No additional filters were applied beyond these.

## Findings

### General Information

A total of 11612 documents were obtained by 17646 authors from 1748 different sources covering publications in the field of sports management between 1981 and 2023. The number of documents increased by an average of 13.05% annually and the average age of the documents was 7.25 years. An average of 14.56 citations were received per document and there were 7237 Keywords Plus and 18613 Author's Keywords in the documents. Each document in the field of sports management had an average of 2.58 authors. The international co-authorship rate was 24.35%.

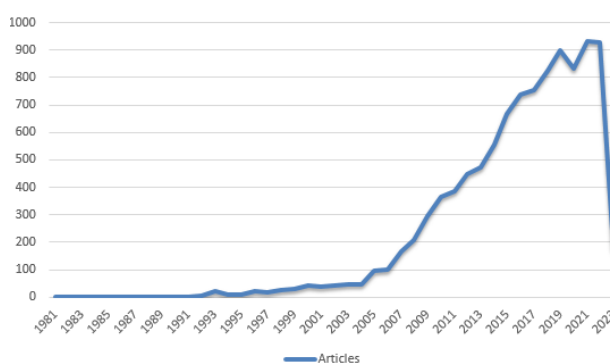


Figure 2. The Situation of Publications in the Field of Sports Management by Years

Figure 2 shows the distribution of articles published in the field of sports management between years. While the growth rate of the studies conducted from 1981 to 2005 was stagnant, it increased rapidly after 2005. It is seen that the most studies in the field of sports management were published in 2021.

### Information on Authors

Figure 3 shows the most prolific scholars in the field of sports economics within the Web of Science database. Among these authors are Christoph Breuer, Pamela Wicker, Veerle De Bosscher, Brad R. Humphreys, Norm O'Reilly, Vanessa Ratten, Geoff Dickson and Daniel Funk. Christoph Breuer is the most published author in the areas of sports economics and sports management; Pamela Wicker focuses on sports management, sports economics, sports sociology and sports policy; Veerle De Bosscher specializes in sports policy, elite sports, sports management, sports impact and SPLISS (Sports Policy factors Leading to International Sporting Success); Brad R. Humphreys works on sports economics and sports management; Norm

O'Reilly specializes in sports business; Vanessa Ratten focuses on entrepreneurship and innovation; Geoff Dickson specializes in sports management, sports marketing and sports governance; Daniel Funk focuses on sports marketing, sports management and sports tourism; Barrie Houlihan specializes in sports policy; Milena Parent in sports management and Laura Misener in sports management.

"Authors' Production Over Time" shows the number of publications of authors in a study area over time. This section is important for understanding the productivity and effectiveness of authors in a study area. Laurence Chalip, who is among the most influential names in the field of sports economics also one of the oldest authors in this field. It is seen that Chalip, who started his first studies in the field in 1995, has done studies in the field of sports economics at certain intervals until 2022. It is understood that the most influential authors in the field started to work in the field of sports economics from 2010 and managed to become one of the most influential authors with many publications in a short time. Figure 4 shows the information on the studies published by the authors by years.

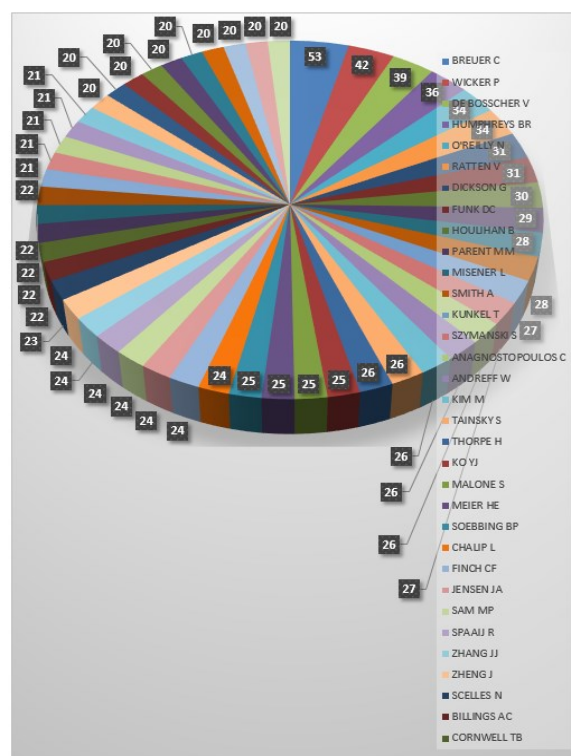


Figure 3. Scientists with the Most Publications in the Field of Sports Management

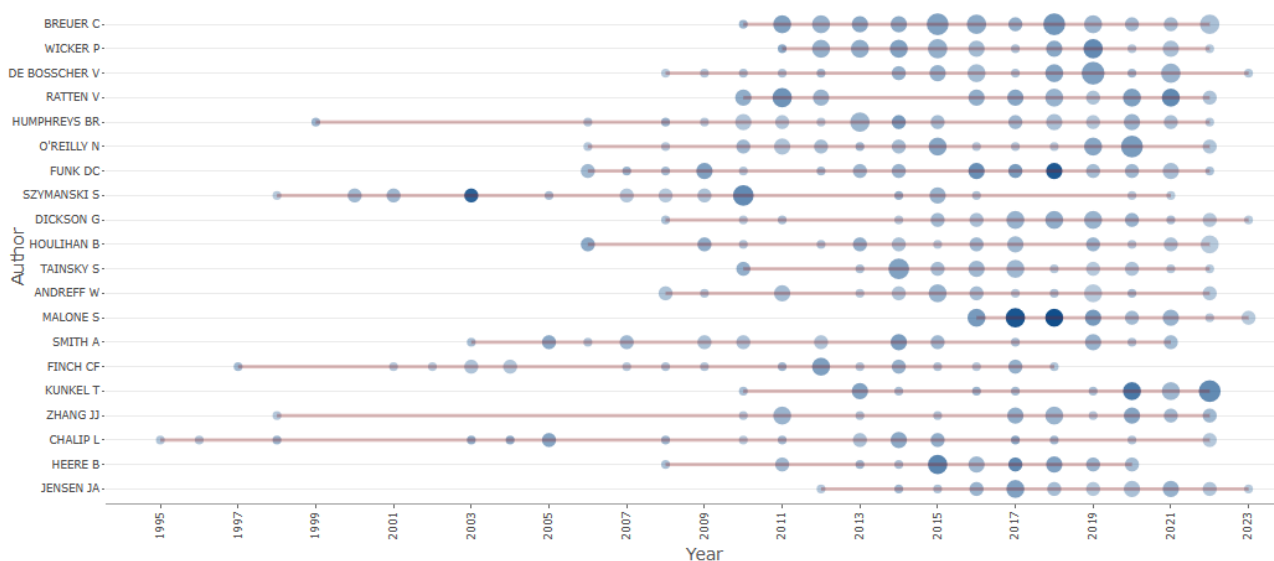


Figure 4. Information on the studies published by the authors by years

### Information on Journals

It is seen that most of the studies in the field of sports management are published in journals such as Sport In Society (464), Journal of Sport Management (336), International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics (325), Sport Management Review (304) etc. (Figure 5).

The Bradford Zone, shown in Figure 6, is a method that allows grouping journals by the number of articles.

Accordingly, the journals in the data set are divided into

three regions: The first region covers the 15 journals with the most articles. These journals contain 32.8% of the articles in the data set. Table 1 shows the journals in the first region.

The second region covers the second 15 journals with the most articles. These journals contain 21.3% of the articles in the data set. The third region covers the remaining 1718 journals. These journals contain 45.9% of the articles in the data set.

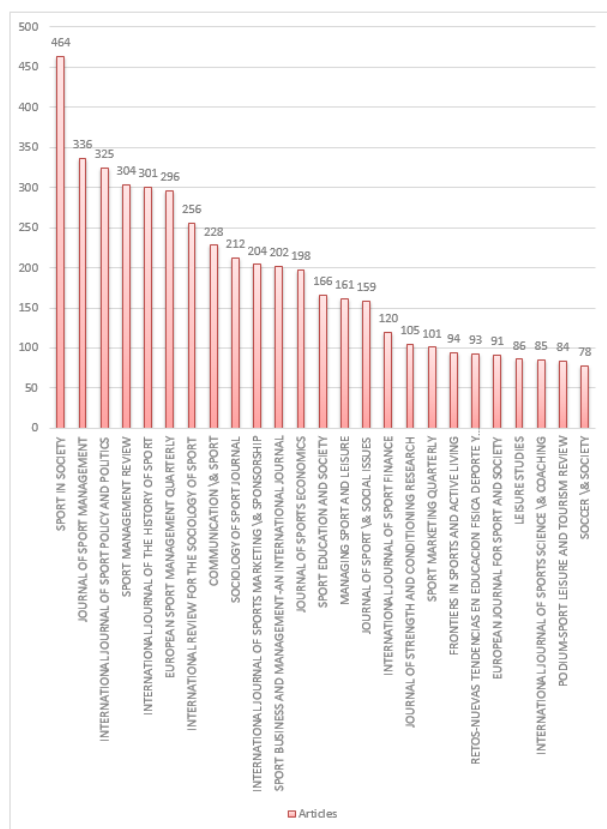


Figure 5. Journals Publishing in the Field of Sports Management

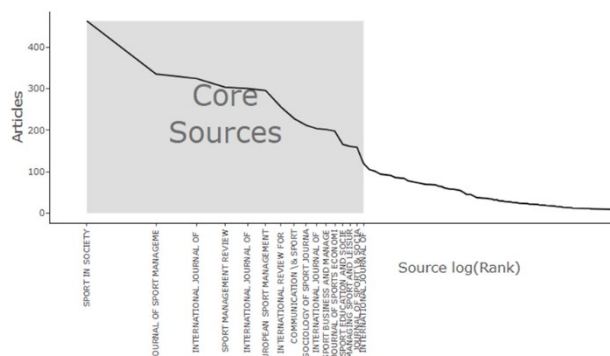


Figure 6. The Bradford Zone on Journals in the Field of Sports Management

### Information on Citations

An average of 14.56 citations were received per article. The most cited article was published in 1986 (107). This is an article by J. Cairns, N. Jennett and P.J. Sloane in the Journal of Economic Studies. The article is a literature review on the economics of professional team sports, covering various regions of the world and revealing both theoretical and empirical aspects.

Figure 7 shows that the average number of citations by year for 11612 publications was the highest in 2003. The five years with the highest average number of citations are 2003, 2005, 2000, 2001, 1995 and the five years with the lowest average number of citations are 2023, 2022, 2021, 2019, 2018. There is a negative correlation between the average number of citations and the number of articles published, as the share of citations per article decreases as more

articles are published. As more articles are published, the average number of citations decreases.

| SO  | Rank | Freq | cumfreq | Zone   |
|---|------|------|---------|--------|
| SPORT IN SOCIETY  | 1    | 464  | 464     | Zone 1 |
| JOURNAL OF SPORT MANAGEMENT                             | 2    | 336  | 800     | Zone 1 |
| INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SPORT POLICY AND POLITICS      | 3    | 325  | 1125    | Zone 1 |
| SPORT MANAGEMENT REVIEW                                 | 4    | 304  | 1429    | Zone 1 |
| INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY OF SPORT           | 5    | 301  | 1730    | Zone 1 |
| EUROPEAN SPORT MANAGEMENT QUARTERLY                     | 6    | 296  | 2026    | Zone 1 |
| INTERNATIONAL REVIEW FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT         | 7    | 256  | 2282    | Zone 1 |
| COMMUNICATION & SPORT                                   | 8    | 228  | 2510    | Zone 1 |
| SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT JOURNAL                              | 9    | 212  | 2722    | Zone 1 |
| INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SPORTS MARKETING & SPONSORSHIP | 10   | 204  | 2926    | Zone 1 |
| SPORT BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT-AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL  | 11   | 202  | 3128    | Zone 1 |
| JOURNAL OF SPORTS ECONOMICS                             | 12   | 198  | 3326    | Zone 1 |
| SPORT EDUCATION AND SOCIETY                             | 13   | 166  | 3492    | Zone 1 |
| MANAGING SPORT AND LEISURE                              | 14   | 161  | 3653    | Zone 1 |
| JOURNAL OF SPORT & SOCIAL ISSUES                        | 15   | 159  | 3812    | Zone 1 |
| INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SPORT FINANCE                  | 16   | 120  | 3932    | Zone 1 |

Figure 7. The Journals in the First Region

Figure 8 shows the most influential studies in the field of sports management from our data set. The most cited studies are Bart et al. (2005), Franke and Shah (2003), Szymanski (2003), Faigenbaum et al. (2009) and so on.

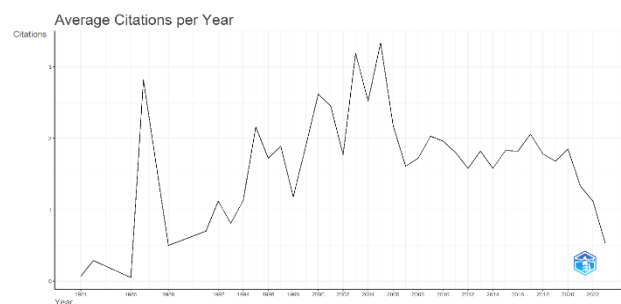


Figure 8. Average Number of Citations by Year

The study by Bart et al. (2005) reveals that the effects of Web site and consumer characteristics on trust and trust on behavioral intention vary significantly across Web site categories and customer groups. In information-intensive sites, such as sports, portal and community sites, navigation is the most important driver of trust. These factors are directly related to the flow structure and perceived ease of use of the Web site and increase usability, appropriateness and reliability. The effect of navigation and presentation on trust may differ across Web sites. Consumers usually surf a sports-related website to quickly obtain information about their favourite activities, athletes or products, so navigation and presentation are important. Brand strength is also an important determinant of online trust for sports sites. The best example of this can be given as Nike.

The study by Franke and Shah (2003) investigated the role of user communities that use sports-related consumer products in creating innovation. The researchers examined how community members collaborated to develop and improve new products and how this affected the innovation creation process. The study found that user communities played an important role in creating innovation. Communities facilitated the innovation process by providing users with information, support and feedback. They also increased the effectiveness of creating innovation by accelerating the innovation process and reducing the innovation risk. The results of the study provide important insights on

how we can use user communities to help improve the innovation creation process.

The study by Szymanski (2003) aims to review the sports literature using the contest/tournament theory on the economic design of sports competitions. It analyses issues such as prize structure, revenue sharing, competitive balance and organizational structure in individual and team sports. The study emphasizes the need to define an optimal welfare function and conduct comparative institutional analysis. The study touches on important financial and personal issues for both sports organizers and fans.

The study by Faigenbaum et al. (2009), which examined the benefits and methods of resistance training for children and adolescents, emphasized that resistance training, when done properly, improved the health, fitness and sports performance of children and adolescents and reduced the risk of injury. Resistance training programs should be designed according to individual needs, maturity level and sports goals and should be implemented and supervised by certified professionals.

The study by Speed and Thompson (2000) examined the impact of sponsorship activities on consumer attitudes and behaviors within the framework of classical conditioning. The study evaluated the attitudes of 195 university students towards four different sponsor-event matches. The study showed that factors such as consumer attitudes towards the sponsor, the event and the sponsor-event fit, as well as perceived sincerity, prevalence and event status, affected the sponsorship response. It also examined the interaction effects between fit and personal preference and fit and event status. The study concluded that classical conditioning occurred in sponsorship and provided a consistent model for determining the sponsorship response. The implications of this study for sponsors and event managers were discussed and directions for future research were suggested. The study shows that both sponsorship and event managers need to understand the attitudes of their audiences well to maximize the value of sponsorship, they need to choose among alternative events in the sponsorship selection decision, they need to do additional promotion in sponsorship leverage and promotion that conveys sponsor-event fit or sponsor sincerity can increase the response to sponsorship.

In a meta-analytic study conducted by Coble et al. (2009), it was found that the relative age effect emerged consistently, albeit in a small way. The effect size of relative age differences showed a linear relationship with the distance of the age groups from the cut-off date. This showed that the advantages of relatively older athletes varied according to age groups. The study also identified three moderator variables that determined the effect size: age category, skill level and popularity of the sport. The relative age effect was most evident in males aged 15-18 at representative level (regional and national) and in sports with high popularity. The authors of the study emphasized that the relative age effect is a social injustice in sport and can significantly affect the experiences and opportunities of athletes. They suggested direct interventions at policy, organization

and practice levels to reduce and eliminate this effect.

Bourdon et al. (2017) conducted a study to identify the benefits, challenges and best practices of monitoring training load in athletes. The study stated that training load is an important research area in sports science, that scientists and coaches routinely monitor training loads using multidisciplinary methods that the development of data collection and analysis methods has led to an increased interest in empirical and applied studies. It also emphasized the need for continuous evaluation and improvement of training load monitoring systems, effective sharing and feedback of training load data with stakeholders and individual, multidisciplinary and contextual training load monitoring practices.

The study by Babiak and Trendafilova (2011) examines the motivations and pressures for adopting corporate social responsibility practices in the professional sports industry. Survey and interview data reveal that sports managers use environmental sensitivity as a tool to both provide strategic benefits and increase their legitimacy. The article discusses that environmental corporate social responsibility can contribute to improving the image, customer loyalty and competitive advantage of organizations in the sports industry but also carries the risk of resource scarcity and conflict with other social responsibility areas. In this context, it is suggested that future research should focus on the questions of how environmental corporate social responsibility can be implemented in the sports industry and how this practice can be optimized for organizations.

The study by Cummins et al. (2013) systematically examines the use of GPS and micro technology sensors in team sports. It is seen that GPS and micro technology sensors are effective in measuring player position, speed and movement patterns in team sports but there are some problems with the comparability, accuracy and reliability of different devices. The study also provides suggestions on how these technologies can be used for performance assessment and feedback and identifies gaps for future research.

The aim of the study by Fauchart and Gruber (2011) is to examine the identities, behaviors and actions of 49 firm founders in the sports-related equipment industry, based on social identity theory. The study shows that the founders have three different types of identities that can be classified as Darwinians, Communitarians or Missionaries and that these identities affect how the founders define their business ideas, interact with their business partners and manage their businesses. The study argues that founder identity is an important variable in the field of entrepreneurship and has implications for entrepreneurship education and policies.

The study by Franke et al. (2006) used a user and user innovator sample from the extreme sport of kite surfing to analyse the relationship between the commercial attractiveness of user-developed innovations and the intensity of the lead user characteristics exhibited by these users. Lead users have two main components of high expected benefits and being ahead of the trend. Component 1, which is the dimension of high expected benefits, predicts the likelihood of innovation and component 2, which is ahead of the trend



dimension, predicts both the commercial attractiveness of a specific set of user-developed innovations and the likelihood of innovation due to a new proposed innovation supply side effect. In the empirical study of user modifications in kite surfing equipment, it was found that both components independently contributed to identifying commercially attractive user innovations. These findings are important for manufacturers to find ways to selectively identify user innovations that they will find as the basis for commercially attractive products in the collectivity of user-developed innovations.

The study by Piller and Walcher (2006) created an internet-based idea contest platform with Adidas to develop products and services, which is a new way for manufacturers to access innovative ideas and solutions from users. These platforms are built on the nature of competition as a tool to encourage users to participate in an open innovation process, inspire their creativity and increase the quality of submissions. Adidas's idea contest platform was found to be an effective tool to enable user participation in the new product development process. However, there are some challenges to increase the usability of the platform and make the process of identifying lead users more effective. If Adidas can overcome these challenges, it can make the idea contest platform a permanent part of the new product development process.

Sponsorship is a marketing communication tool that businesses use to support sports, arts or social events to promote their brands. Sponsorship can affect consumer brand perception and behavior, but this process is not fully understood. Cornwell, Weeks and Roy (2005) present a theoretical model of how consumers process sponsorship-linked marketing communications. The model examines the influence of individual, market and management factors on the mechanics of sponsorship processing and explains the nature of sponsorship outcomes. The model includes outcomes such as brand awareness, brand attitude, brand purchase intention and brand loyalty. The model provides strategies for businesses to attract consumer attention and

associate them with sponsorship to increase the effectiveness of sponsorship communications.

Kidd (2008) conducted a study on the use of sport for development and peace. Hightower, Brady and Baker (2002) investigated the impact of the service environment on consumers' behavioral intentions for leisure activities. Sjöblom and Hamari (2017) explored why people watch eSport online. Issurin (2010) argued that the traditional training periodization model is not sufficient for planning the training of high-performance athletes and that the block periodization model is advantageous instead. Cunniffe et al. (2009) conducted a study on the physiological demands of elite rugby union using GPS tracking software technology. Berezina et al. (2016) aimed to evaluate the impact of categories (sports, hotel, etc.) used by satisfied and dissatisfied hotel customers in their online reviews on hotel choice and recommendation by analysing these categories with text mining method in their study. Fülle et al. (2007) examined user innovations in online consumer communities for basketball shoes in their study. Filo et al. (2015) addressed the subject of analysing social media research in sports management from the perspective of service dominant logic in their study. Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) provide some important suggestions that can help make sport-based development programs more effective. Lüthje (2004) aims to reveal the profiles of innovative consumers, the types of innovations they make and the innovation processes by examining the innovative behaviors of consumers who use sports-related products. The findings show that innovative consumers are high in terms of product knowledge, creativity and social networks and also benefit from various sources in the product development stage.

### ***Publication Status of Countries in the Field of Sports Management***

In any field, it is accepted that the higher the number of publications of a country, the higher its scientific impact in that field. The findings show that the country with the most publications in the field of sports management is the USA and then respectively UK, Australia and Canada (Figure 9).

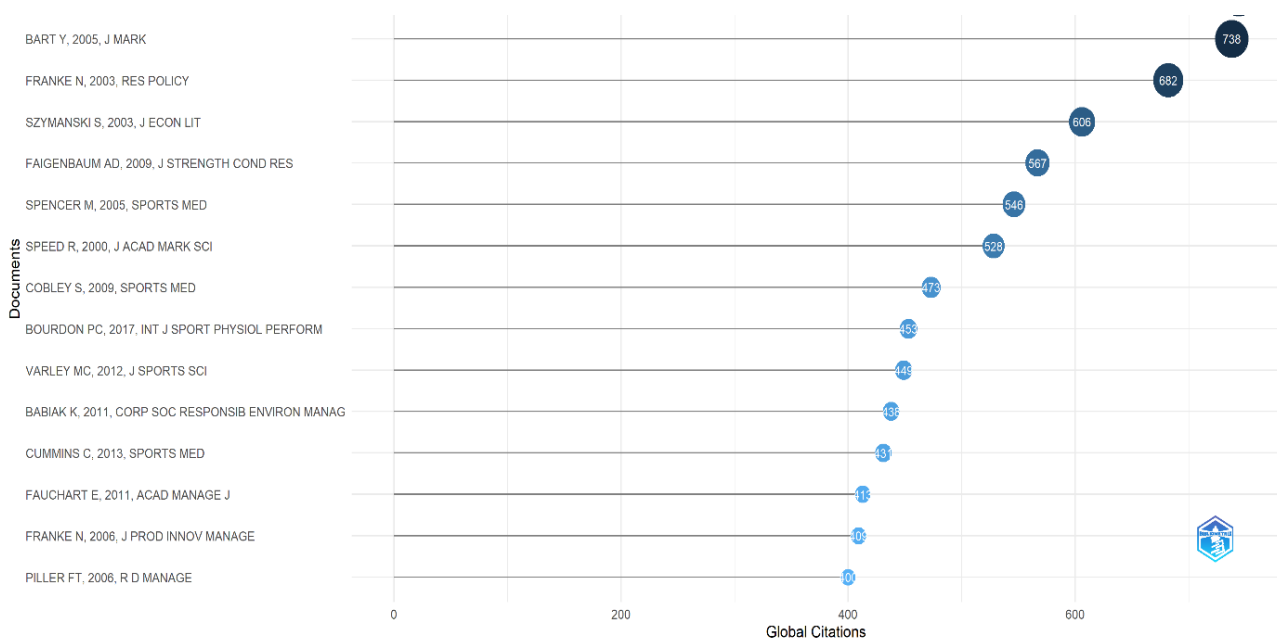
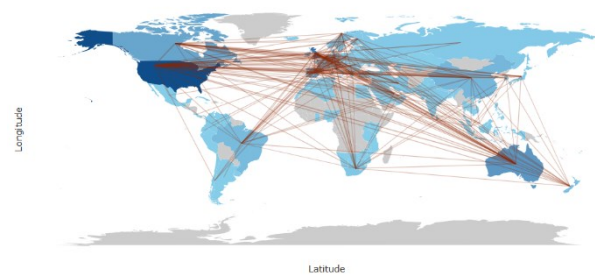


Figure 10 shows the collaborations between countries. There have been 215 collaborations between the USA and Canada, 168 between the USA and Australia, 185 between the UK and Australia and 186 between the USA and the UK. These are the highest frequency levels in the data. There is a very strong collaboration between the USA, Canada and Australia. There are also many collaborations in Europe. Especially the UK, Germany and France often collaborate with other European countries. In Asia, China, Korea and Singapore are important collaboration partners. China also collaborates with Europe and Oceania. The countries that Turkey has collaborated with the most are respectively USA, England, Spain, Pakistan, Portugal, Italy, China, Japan, South Africa, Norway, Mexico, Greece, Finland and Croatia.



*Key Word*

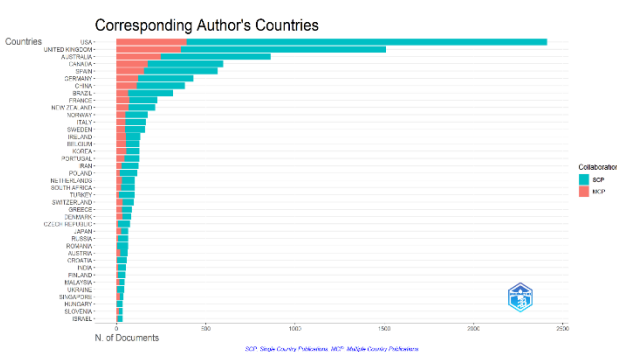


Figure 11 shows the institutions with the most publications in the field of sports management.

Sports management is a branch of science that examines the economic aspects and impacts of sports. Sports management studies cover topics such as the effects of sports in different sectors, sports management and policies, the behaviors of sports consumers and producers, the structure and functioning of sports markets, the performance and management of sports organizations, the social and cultural dimensions of sports, the effects of sports on health and education, the role of sports in international relations and many more. Figure 12 shows the most frequently used keywords in studies in the field of sports management. Concepts such as performance, impact, quality, satisfaction, loyalty, demand, consumption, participation, identification, involvement, engagement express the economic, social, psychological and cultural dimensions of sports. Concepts such as management, policy, governance, organizations, leadership, strategies, innovation, partnerships, stakeholders show the factors that determine and influence the management and policy of sports. Among these factors are different actors and stakeholders such as sports federations, clubs, leagues, players, coaches, referees, fans, media, sponsors, governments, international organizations. Concepts such as media, social media, technology, internet, globalization, crisis, sustainability, legacy indicate the issues that sports



need to adapt and contribute to the changing and developing world. Among these issues are important topics such as the relationship between sports and media and technology, the participation and impact of sports in the globalization

process, the resilience and solution of sports against crises, the sustainability and legacy of sports.

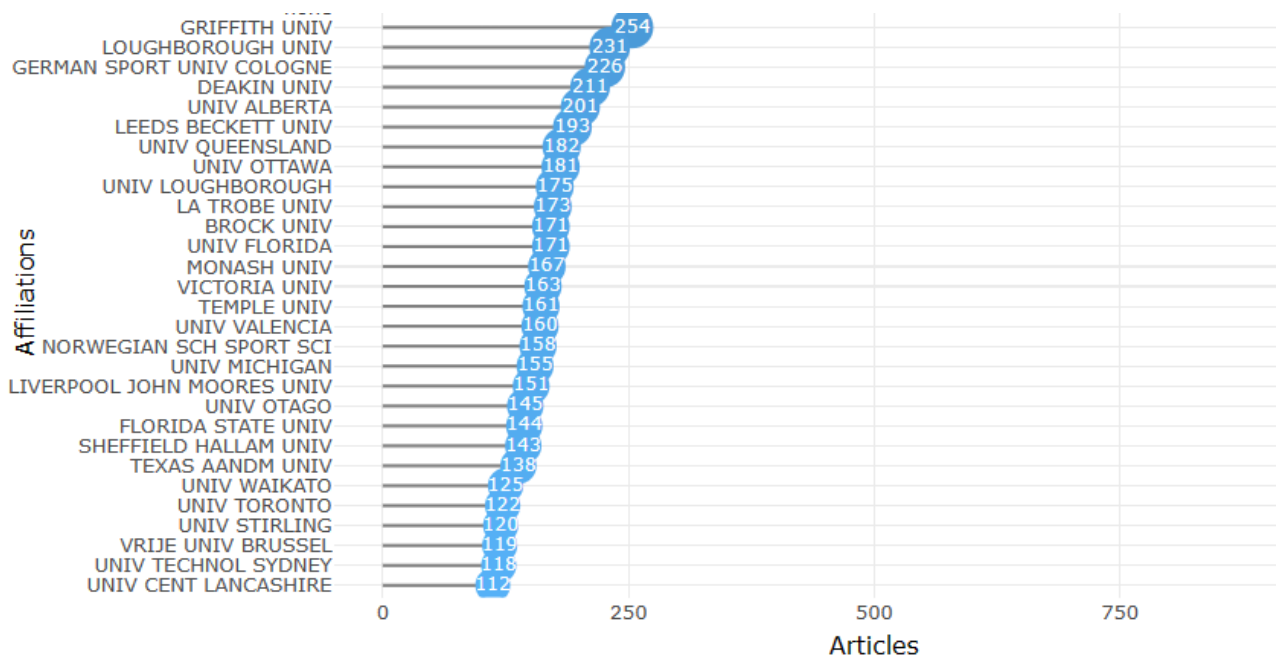


Figure 12. Most Publications in the Field of Sports Management

The interplay between various concepts in sports, such as quality, satisfaction, leadership and stakeholder involvement, significantly influences the economic aspects of sports organizations and events. The concepts of performance, impact, quality, satisfaction, loyalty, demand, consumption, participation, identification, involvement and engagement in sports are intricately linked to sports economics. These concepts not only have social, psychological and cultural dimensions but also significant economic implications. For instance, the economic impact of sports events plays a crucial role in generating income from trading around sports facilities, creating job opportunities and contributing to tax revenues Rahayu et al. (2020). The quality of sports services and facilities directly influences consumer satisfaction, which in turn affects loyalty and demand, ultimately impacting the economic viability of sports organizations (Komskienė & Švagždienė, 2013; Yilmazoglu, 2023).

Leadership styles within sports administration can also have economic ramifications, as effective leadership can steer sports departments towards achieving both athletic success and economic sustainability (Ajeigbe et al., 2021). Moreover, the role of passion in the quality-value-satisfaction-intentions chain for athletes contributes to understanding consumer decision-making processes, which are essential in shaping the economic aspects of sports (Hervás et al., 2019). Additionally, the wellbeing valuation approach highlights the monetary value of sport participation and volunteering, emphasizing the shift towards assessing not only tangible economic impacts but also intangible and non-economic impacts of sports (Thormann et al., 2022).

In the realm of sports economics, the relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty is paramount. Studies have shown that perceived service quality directly influences customer satisfaction, which, in turn, impacts loyalty and behavioural intentions in sports settings such as fitness centres and sporting events (Sevilmiş et al., 2022; Theodorakis et al., 2014; Yu et al., 2014). Furthermore, the effects of social media on sporting event satisfaction and word-of-mouth communication underscore the importance of sports marketing and service quality in enhancing spectators' experiences and maintaining successful sports events (Du et al., 2020).

It is seen that the word "football" is among the most frequently used words. Football is a sector that involves many people and organizations and has intense competition. It is a sport that about 270 million people actively participate in and create a great economic and social impact (Louzada et al., 2016). Moreover, FIFA aims to interest more than 60% of the world's population in football by 2026 (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2020). These features, along with new technologies and globalization, make it widely used for different educational and social purposes because it is a sport recognized worldwide. The data obtained confirm that football, one of the most important sports in the world, is reflected in academic studies.

Figure 13 shows the usage of the most frequently used keywords by years. It can be said that there is a relationship between the word IMPACT and words such as POLITICS, GENDER, TOURISM, ECONOMICS, POWER, HEALTH, because they have similar usage frequencies. The impact of sports on these areas or the impact of these areas

[illegible]

When evaluated by years, it is seen that the total usage frequency of all words increased continuously between 1991 and 2023. This shows that the number and diversity of academic publications in the field of sports increased. The year with the lowest increase rate is 1992. In this year, the total usage frequency of all words increased by only 4%. The reason for this low increase is that the number and diversity of academic publications in the field of sports was low in 1992. Other years with low increase rates are 1994, 1997, 2000, 2004, 2007, 2011, 2014, 2017 and 2020. In these years, the total usage frequency of all words increased by a rate between 10% and 20%. These increase rates, although lower than other years, are striking in terms of the progress in sports research.

Figure 1 is a line chart showing the cumulative occurrences of the 15 most frequent terms in the literature on digital marketing from 1984 to 2023. The Y-axis represents 'Cumulative occurrences' (0 to 1100) and the X-axis represents 'Year' (1984 to 2023). The terms are: BEHAVIOR, MARKETING, TECHNOLOGY, CONSUMER, DIGITAL, MARKETING, TECHNOLOGY, CONSUMER, DIGITAL, MARKETING, TECHNOLOGY, CONSUMER, DIGITAL, MARKETING, TECHNOLOGY, CONSUMER. The chart shows that the cumulative occurrences of these terms have increased significantly over time, with 'BEHAVIOR' having the highest cumulative count, reaching nearly 1100 by 2023. Other terms like 'MARKETING', 'TECHNOLOGY', and 'CONSUMER' also show significant growth.

The distribution of the most frequently used keywords in the field of sport management over the years is shown in Figure 15. Another important dimension of the studies in the field of sports management is the issues related to market and economy. Market, with 191 frequency, has been one of the most researched topics. Most of the studies on market were done between 2011 and 2019. Economy, with

Another important aspect of the studies in the field of sports management is the issues related to behaviour and organization. Behaviour, with 259 frequency, has been one of the most researched topics. Most of the studies on behaviour were done between 2014 and 2020. Organization, with 209 frequency, has a close frequency to behaviour. Most of the studies on organization were carried out between 2015 and 2020. Other important topics related to behaviour and organization are commitment, self-esteem, feedback, tournaments and employment. The frequencies of these topics are respectively 112, 25, 13, 19 and 40. Most of the studies on these topics were carried out between 2010 and 2018.

In the field of sports management, between 2010 and 2021, significant changes were observed in the frequency of use of some words. Some of these words are: Economics, Media, Technologies, Participation, Management, Market, Performance, Behaviour, Employment, Labour-market, Market-efficiency, Players labour-market and Organizations. The years with the highest increase and decrease in the frequency of use of these words are as follows:

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highest decrease was 11% between 2019 and 2020. The frequency of use of the word Behaviour was 261 in 2014, while the highest increase was 18.4% between 2017 and 2018. The highest decrease was 13.4% between 2020 and 2021. The frequency of use of the word Employment was 40 in 2010, while the highest increase was 25% between 2017 and 2018. The highest decrease was 20% between 2018 and 2019. The frequency of use of the word Labor-market was 63 in 2010, while the highest increase was 23% between 2014 and 2015. The highest decrease was 14.3% between

2019 and 2020. The frequency of use of the word Market-efficiency was 18 in 2010, while the highest increase was 28.6% between 2017 and 2018. The highest decrease was 22.2% between 2018 and 2019. The frequency of use of the word Players labour-market was 18 in 2010, while this word's frequency of use remained constant over the years. The frequency of use of the word Organizations was 220 in 2015, while the highest increase was 18.2% between 2017 and 2018. The highest decrease was 12.7% between 2020 and 2021.

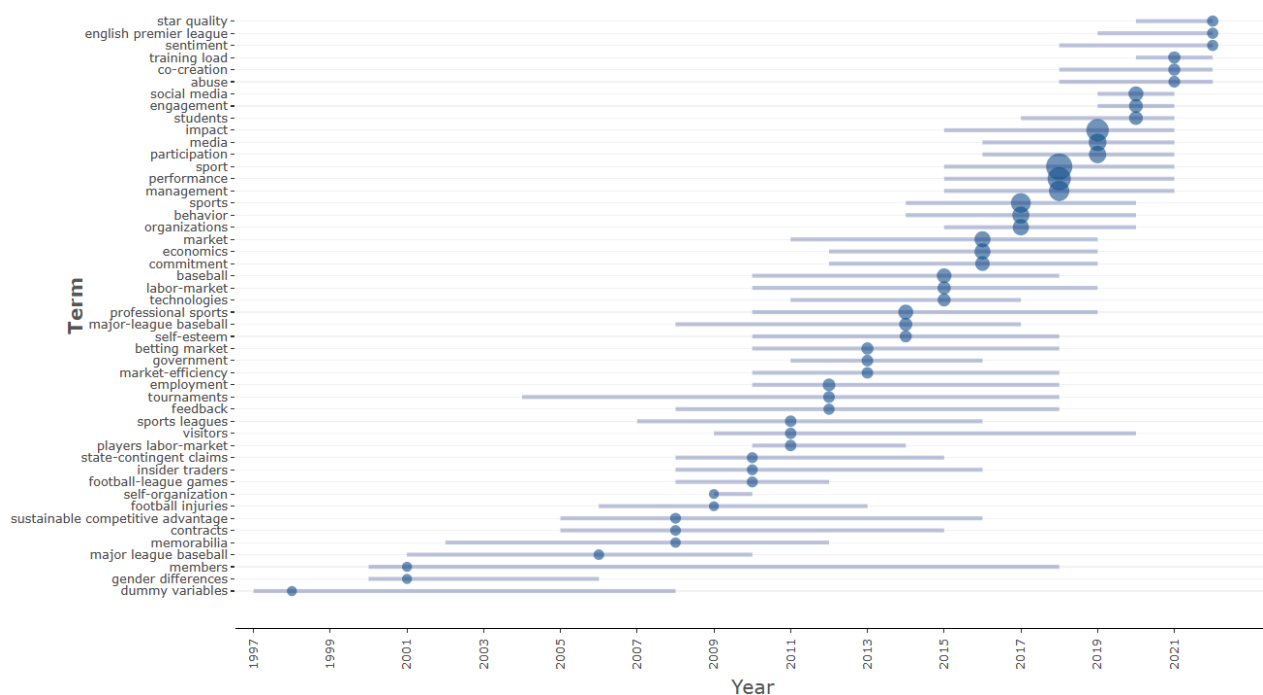


Figure 15. Diversity and Development of the Studies in the Field of Sports Management

As can be seen from these data, words that examine sports performance, impact, management and modelling are used more frequently, while words related to sports policy, sports media and sports participation are used less frequently. This reflects the research trends and needs in the field of sports management.

## Discussion

Considering the chronological development of the publications published in the field of sports management, a rapid increase is seen since 2005. This increase is more noticeable after 2015. Similarly, Huertas González-Serrano et al. (2020), in their bibliometric analysis study on sports entrepreneurship, which is a topic that enters the field of sports economics, found 2015 as a turning point. In a study on social media in sports management, a decrease between 2017 and 2018 and an increase again between 2018 and 2019, on the other hand, a turning point was observed between 2013 and 2014 (Lopez-Carril et al., 2020). Supporting these findings, the results of this study in the field of sports management show similarities, but differently, there is not an increase but a decrease again between 2018 and

2019. It is seen that Breuer and Wicker, the two most influential authors in the field of sports management, are German. Christoph Breuer, who has the most publications, is a Professor of Sports Management at the German Sport University Cologne. There is an increasing interest and demand for sports economics education in Germany (Cerrahoğlu, 2016). The authors with the most publications in the field of sports management are respectively Christoph Breuer, Pamela Wicker, Veerle De Bosscher, Brad R. Humphreys, Norm O'Reilly, Vanessa Ratten, Geoff Dickson, Daniel Funk, Barrie Houlihan, Milena Parent. Authors such as Barrie Houlihan, Jonathan Grix, Veerle De Bosscher, Stenling and Christoph Breuer are among the first in the field of sports policy, which is a field that enters the field of sports economics, as well as in the list of authors with the most publications in sports economics. In a study by Moradi et al. (2023), the most influential authors in the field of sports policy are "Houlihan (11), Grix (7), De Bosscher (7), Stenling (7), Breuer (7), Scheerder (7), Harris (6), Fahlén (5), Van Bottenburg (5), Downward (5)" respectively (Moradi et al., 2023). In the field of sports tourism, the most influential authors are "O'brien D (13), Misener L (28),

Schulenkorf N (17)” (Jiménez-García et al., 2020). Moreover, in the field of social media in sports, which is a related field to sports management, the authors with the most publications are Pegoraro (5), Abeza (4), Hambrick (4), Sanderson (4), Thorpe (4), Billings (3), Hutchins (3), O’Reilly (3), Séguin (3), Shapiro (3) and Wang (3) (Lopez-Carril et al., 2020)<sup>4</sup>. These authors are in the list of authors with the most publications in sports management as “O’reilly N (34), Thorpe H (26), Billings AC (22), Pegoraro A (15), Abeza G (13), Sanderson J (10), Seguin B (10), Hambrick ME (8), Hutchins B (6), Wang X (3)”.

The institutions with the most articles published in the field of sports management are respectively “Griffith University (254), Loughborough University (231), German Sport University Cologne (226), Deakin University (211), Alberta University (201), Leeds Beckett University (193), Queensland University (182), Ottawa University (181), Loughborough University (175), La Trobe University (173)”. “La Trobe University” is one of the most publishing institutions in the field of sports entrepreneurship (Huertas González-Serrano et al., 2020), “Loughborough University, German Sport University Cologne” are among the most publishing institutions in the field of sports policy (Moradi et al., 2023). Loughborough University also stands out in the field of entrepreneurship and innovation in football (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2020). In the field of sports management and sports marketing, “Griffith University, Temple University, The University of Florida” are seen as the most influential institutions (Hammerschmidt et al., 2023).

The countries with the most publications in the field of sports management are the USA and then respectively UK, Australia, Canada, Spain, Germany, China, Brazil, France. Similarly, in the field of sports policy, the countries with the most publications in the “International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics” are respectively UK, USA, Norway, Australia, Canada, Germany (Moradi et al., 2023). As a result of a bibliometric analysis on the WoS database related to the field of sports marketing, it is seen that countries such as USA, Brazil, Australia, Canada and UK have more publications (Shekhar and Shah, 2023). In another study on sports management and sports marketing, USA, Australia and UK are the most effective countries (Hammerschmidt et al., 2023). In terms of social media in sports, USA, Australia, Canada, Ukraine and Spain (Lopez-Carril et al., 2020), in terms of sports entrepreneurship, USA, Australia, Spain, UK and France (Huertas González-Serrano et al., 2020) and in terms of entrepreneurship and innovation in football, UK, USA and Germany (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2020) are the countries with the most publications.

Bibliometric analysis is a proficient tool for identifying the most influential journals based on publication and citation trends (Baumgartner and Pieters 2003; Martínez-López et al., 2018). The journals with the most articles published in the field of sports management are respectively “Sport in Society, Journal of Sport Management, Interna-

tional Journal of Sport Policy and Politics, Sport Management Review, International Journal of The History of Sport, European Sport Management Quarterly, International Review for The Sociology of Sport, Communication & Sport, Sociology of Sport Journal, International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship”. Journal of Sport Management, Sport Management Review, European Sport Management Quarterly, International Journal of Sport Marketing & Sponsorship and Sport Marketing Quarterly are known as the top five journals in the field of sports management (Hammerschmidt et al., 2023). Journal of Sport Management, European Sport Management Quarterly, Sport in Society, Leisure Studies are also among the most influential journals in the field of sports tourism (Jiménez-García et al., 2020). International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics, Journal of Sport Management, European Sport Management Quarterly, Sport Management Review etc., are among the most influential journals in the field of sports entrepreneurship (Huertas González-Serrano et al., 2020). European Sport Management Quarterly, which stands out in many fields, also stands out in the field of entrepreneurship and innovation in football (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2020). Communication & Sport, Sport Management Review are among the prominent journals on media in sports (Lopez-Carril et al., 2020). As in the field of sports management, the journals that stand out in the study by Shekhar and Shah (2023) on sports marketing are “Journal of Business Research, Marketing Intelligence & Planning, Revista Brasileira De Marketing, Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing”. The third most influential journal in the field of sports management, “International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics”, was founded by Barrie Houlihan in 2009 to encourage the analysis of sports policy. The journal took its current name in 2011 to give more space to sports and politics research. The current editor-in-chief of this journal is Professor Jonathan Grix, who teaches courses on sports policy and politics. Barrie Houlihan and Jonathan Grix are also among the most prominent authors in the field of sports economics (Moradi et al., 2023).

Sports is one of the largest industries in the US. Sports is an important industry in the United States, both in terms of participation and economic impact (Shekhar & Shah, 2023). The first systematic study of the economic dimension of sports started in the US (Cerrahoğlu, 2016). While sports economics was not yet fully institutionalized as a scientific discipline, since 1984, the “Journal of Sport Management” magazine, published by an academic organization called the North American Sports Management Association (NASSM), has been one of the most important publications in the field of sports economics. In 1993, the European Sports Management Association (EASM) published the “European Journal of Sport Management” magazine (Heinemann, 1998). This journal, which is one of the oldest in the field of sports economics and published its first article in 1993, is also the second journal with the most articles in the data set.

The number of studies conducted in the field of sports management shows that it has increased continuously from 1991 to 2023. It is also seen that the contents of the studies conducted in this field have changed over time. For example, while the word “sport” was used more frequently in the first years, the word “sports” has been used more frequently in recent years. This situation can be interpreted as sports being considered as a multidisciplinary concept that covers different sports branches.

### Results, Limitations and Future Research Lines

The research results help us to understand the current situation and developments in the field of sports management. It is important to provide a general overview of the most published and cited publications, authors, countries, institutions and journals in the field of sports management based on the analysis of 11612 studies. The research results offer a comprehensive overview of the current situation and developments in the field of sports management, which is a multidisciplinary field that covers a variety of topics related to the economic, social, psychological and cultural aspects and impacts of sports.

The field of sports management has witnessed a significant increase in the number and diversity of academic publications over time, reflecting the progress and development of sports research. However, some topics still have gaps and limitations in the existing knowledge and understanding and some emerging or under-researched topics need further investigation. Future studies should examine how sports respond to and influence the global and technological changes in the world and conduct in-depth and comprehensive research on various topics related to the economic, behavioural and organizational aspects of sports, as well as some emerging or under-researched topics such as sustainability, innovation, diversity, ethics and social responsibility in the field of sports management.

Data can change over time, revealing different trends and outcomes. Therefore, the findings of this study are limited to the specific time period and database used. Since the study only analysed documents indexed in the Web of Science database, the results cannot be generalized to other databases or sources. Bibliometric analysis is a method that combines qualitative and quantitative aspects of studies. In this study, only quantitative features are used in the evaluation of studies in the field of sports economics within the context of sports management.

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