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ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DUAL CAREER AND THE MEDIA – A SCOPING LITERATURE REVIEW

O RAZMERJU MED DVOJNO KARIERO IN MEDIJI – PREGLED LITERATURE

ABSTRACT

This paper starts from the recognition that the media plays an important role in the context of dual career (DC) and seeks to establish the starting points and foundations for further research through a scoping review of the existing academic literature dealing with the relationship between DC and the media. 14 scholarly articles are analysed in more detail and classified into three basic groups according to their main focus: (1) media representations, (2) media consumption, and (3) social media. The analysis of the articles in the first group problematizes one-sided media coverage that emphasizes the sports context but neglects all others, and draws attention to comprehensive and multi-layered media representations. The media consumption group highlights specific media functions that are useful at the level of understanding and decision-making regarding the promotion of DC. The articles in the third group highlight the mechanisms and techniques of effective communication in social media, taking into account the aspect of content co-creation and interactivity. The overview can be seen as a foundation from which we can draw in further efforts to raise awareness of the concept of DC through the media, just as it can serve as a base from which we can continue to think about the connection between DC and the media and the useful potentials that the media can offer to DC.

Keywords: dual career, student athlete, media, social media, literature review

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IZVLEČEK

Članek izhaja iz razumevanja medijev kot pomembnih v kontekstu dvojne kariere (DK) ter za oblikovanje izhodišč in temeljev nadaljnega raziskovanja pregleda obseg obstoječe znanstvene literature, ki naslavlja razmerje med DK in mediji. Podrobneje je analiziranih 14 znanstvenih člankov, ki jih glede na njihov temeljni fokus razdelimo v tri temeljne skupine: (1) medijske reprezentacije, (2) medijska potrošnja in (3) družabna omrežja. Analiza člankov iz prve skupine problematizira enostransko medijsko poročanje, ki ob izpostavljanju športnega konteksta zanemara vse druge, ter nas usmeri proti medijskim reprezentacijam, ki so celostne in večplastne. Skupina medijske potrošnje izpostavlja specifične funkcije medijev, ki so koristne na ravni razumevanja in odločitev glede promocije koncepta DK. Članki iz tretje skupine pa izpostavijo zlasti mehanizme in tehnike učinkovitega komuniciranja na družabnih omrežjih, kjer je potrebno upoštevati predvsem vidik soustvarjanja vsebin in interaktivnosti. Pregled lahko služi kot osnova, iz katere je moč črpati v prizadevanjih za osveščanje o konceptu DK prek medijev, prav tako pa lahko predstavlja izhodišče v nadaljnjih premislekih o razmerju med mediji in DK ter koristnimi potenciali, ki jih mediji tej ponujajo.

Gljučne besede: dvojna kariera, študenti športniki, mediji, družbena omrežja, pregled literature

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the research field and at the level of promotion of dual career, i.e., the combination and coordination of education and elite sport involvement. The dual career (DC) is no longer understood as a rare opportunity or privilege that some organizations and institutions might grant to athletes, but has been articulated as a right of athletes that allows and facilitates their holistic development and an easier transition into the labour market after the end of their sport career (European Commission, 2007; International Olympic Committee, 2014, 2021; Tessitore et al., 2021). The manifestation and exercise of this right is not uniformly regulated and varies between countries, cultures and existing social contexts (Stambulova & Ryba, 2014). In the European context, athletes are now recognized as having an important social role, and the term "dual career" of athletes was first introduced in European Commission's White Paper on Sport (European Commission, 2007). Currently, there are several different national approaches and regulations in Europe for DC (Aquilina & Henry, 2010; Kuettel et al., 2020; Morris et al., 2020). Furthermore, sport has been shown to be a valuable social sphere that has a positive impact on the economic sphere (Kleissner & Grohall, 2015). Therefore, the European Parliament (2015) and European Commission (2012, 2014) support and promote DC actions at national level, cooperation between different DC stakeholders and the implementation of DC services at sport as well as at educational level (Capranica & Guidotti, 2016). From the perspective of scholarly contributions to DC, an emerging and multidisciplinary academic conversation on different aspects of DC of European student athletes and a methodological diversity of studies on DC in the European context have been identified and highlighted (Guidotti, Cortis & Capranica, 2015; Stambulova & Wylleman, 2015, 2019; Tessitore et al., 2021). However, despite the fact that academia has already made some important breakthroughs addressing the introduction and promotion of the need for successful coordination between educational and sport careers (contributions have already addressed some micro (individual), meso (interpersonal), macro (social) and global (policy) dimensions of DC (Guidotti, Cortis & Capranica, 2015), a deeper understanding of the relationship between DC and the media is still lacking.

The media play an important role in society. As Schudson wrote, "journalists not only report reality but create it" (Schudson, 2011, p. xiv). This does not mean that nothing factual happens in the absence of media, but it does mean that by selecting, framing, highlighting, and shaping stories, media contribute to the formation of public opinion about which events in and for society are relevant and important and which are not. As the standard definition of framing

states, framing means “selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution,” (Entman, 2004, p. 5). Journalists work as producers of information about events that are of public interest and in this regard have a paramount role in democracy. Without the media, there is no way to establish the public sphere, public opinion and the public itself, which means that the media have an impact on social and political events (Kaluža & Slaček Brlek, 2020a). It is true that, in addition to some benevolent effects such as promoting public debate and active audience participation, and creating space for previously unheard voices, the digitization of media also brings with it the rise of problematic communication practices such as fake news, forms of propaganda, hate speech, and surreptitious advertising, but the role of media as a socially important activity nevertheless remains solid (Kaluža & Slaček Brlek, 2020b). If anything, the importance of quality and professional journalism is strengthened rather than weakened in such circumstances (Splichal, 2020, p. 180).

In this respect, the media also play an important role for DC on at least two levels. On the first level, the media is the means by which the concept of DC can be presented to and solidified in the public, and on the second level, the media is an important actor contributing to the formation and dissemination of public debates about DC. The questions of whether the media report on DC at all and, if so, how the media report on DC, i.e. what image of DC they shape, whether they present DC in a positive or negative light, etc., are therefore of paramount importance in efforts to raise awareness of the role of DC among both athletes and the various DC stakeholders as well as the general public. The answers to such questions can also make an important contribution to the development of DC. Adequate understanding of the image of DC created by the media is therefore crucial to achieving the goals of its successful implementation.

Before examining the frequency and quality of media coverage and writing about DC, it is useful to first review and analyse the existing scholarly literature on the subject. Systematic literature reviews are becoming increasingly common “to make sense of rapidly expanding bodies of available research” (Hawker et. al., 2002, p. 1284), as they can provide a condensation and summary of an otherwise diffuse and diverse body of knowledge. The benefit of such research is therefore not in some new insights or in the development of new theories, but in the ability of this approach to reduce larger amounts of data and other findings into a useful and transparent tool that can serve as a starting point for further research. However, due to the relative novelty of the chosen topic and the general lack of academic literature dealing with such a narrowly defined relationship, this article uses a similar approach, i.e. a scoping literature

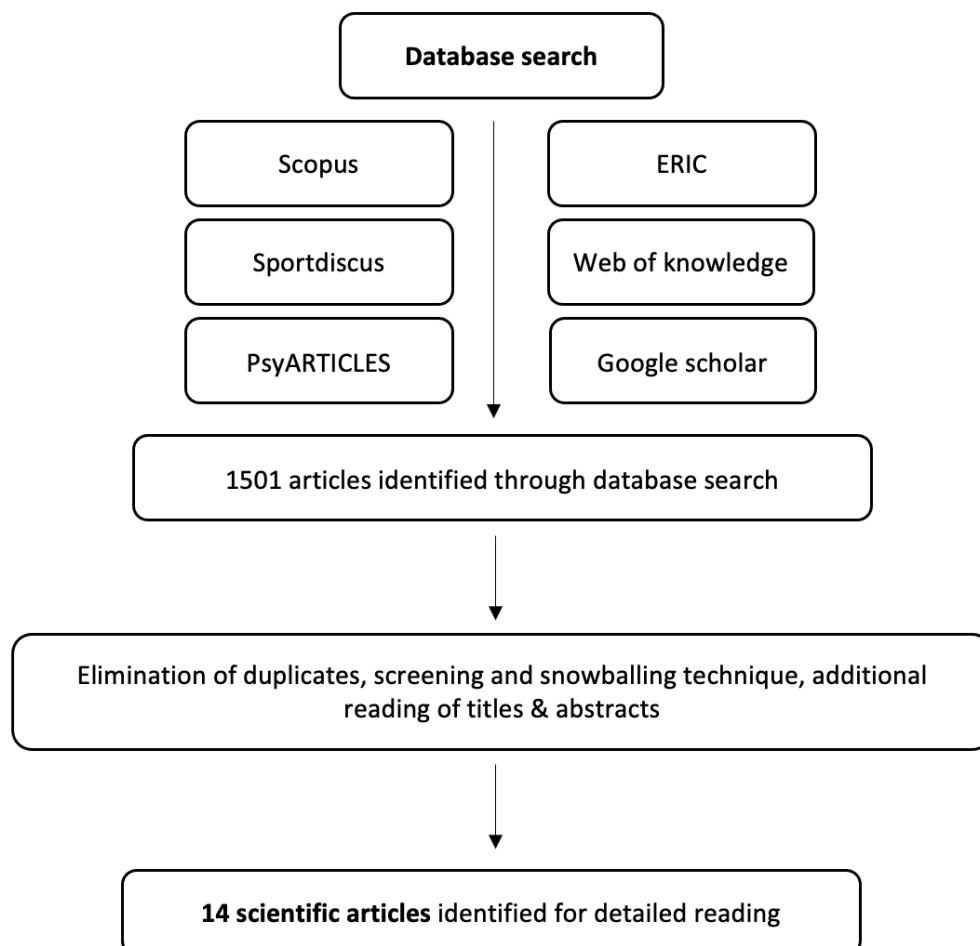
review, the specifics of which are presented in the methodological section of the text. A comprehensive analysis of scholarly articles addressing the relationship between media and DC was also identified as one of the initial goals of the EdMedia project (supported by European Commission, project number 603456-EPP-1-2018-1- LT -SPO-SCP) and as the empirical and theoretical basis for its further development. More specifically, the results of the present study formed one of the foundations upon which an online educational platform for athletes, sport organizations, and the media was later established and implemented to promote more positive attitudes toward dual careers among student-athletes. The main ambition of this article is therefore to identify, collect, systematise and analyse the most appropriate scientific articles, i.e. articles dealing with the relationship between DC and the media.

METHODS

For the adherent, relevant and useful scoping literature review on the relationship between DC and the media, the detailed procedure for its main phases has been established. The steps for conducting a systematic review as described by Khan et al. (2003) served as a basic framework for working on an existing task in the first phase. In their article, they identify and set the guidelines by suggesting five key steps in a systematic review as follows: (1) formulating questions for a review, (2) identifying relevant papers, (3) assessing the quality of studies, (4) summarizing the evidence, and (5) interpreting the results (Khan et al., 2003). With respect to the first criterion, the object of inquiry addressed was specified in the form of several structured questions, the basic one being: "In what ways has scientific field thus far examined the relationship between DC and the media?" Because this relationship frames the context of DC very narrowly, we expanded it to include additional questions that also included social media and public relations in the inquiry. To be considered eligible for this scientific literature review, articles had to meet the following criteria: 1) they had to relate to DC athletes, 2) they had to relate to the relationship between DC and the media, 3) they had to relate to the relationship between DC and social media, and 4) they had to be journal articles. The publication period or time interval for the publication of scientific articles determined to be relevant to the task was set to the years 2000 to 2019. The main databases used as data sources were Scopus, Sportdiscus, PsyARTICLES, Web of knowledge, ERIC and Google scholar. The chosen language was English, but the research was not limited to it, as each of the countries participating in the EdMedia project also researched articles in their own language (German, Romanian, Italian, Lithuanian, Spanish and Slovenian).

By determining the keywords and their combinations, we then aimed to identify and compile a list of scientific contributions that were potential hits for further research. The search combinations used were as follows: “dual career” AND “media representation” AND “sport”; “dual career” AND “media representation” AND “physical activity”; “dual career” AND “mass media” AND “sport”; “student athlete” AND “mass media”; “dual career” AND “sport journalism”; “dual career” AND “journalism” AND “sport”; “student athlete” AND “journalism” AND “sport”; “dual career” AND “social media” AND “sport”; “student athlete” AND “social media”; “dual career” AND “tv news” AND “sport”; “dual career” AND “printed media” AND “sport”; “student athlete” AND “printed media”.

Figure 1. Flow chart of the literature research.



The sum of all combinations and all searches (for English-language articles) yielded 1501 hits. After examining their potential relevance and taking into account the elimination of duplicates, the screening technique for minimum acceptability (screening of titles and abstracts to determine a list of relevant papers for further quality assessment) and the snowballing technique (to allow identification of relevant papers not identified by the electronic search), 33 English

articles were identified, which formed the basis for further selection, together with 12 Spanish, 9 German, 9 Romanian, 4 Italian and 2 Lithuanian hits. Additional reading of titles and abstracts determined a final selection of 14 articles that most closely met the requirements of our objective for more detailed reading and quality assessment. Furthermore, as we read the titles and abstracts, we realised that such a narrowly defined relationship, that is, the relationship between the media and a dual career in sport, had not yet been addressed, so we adapted the research framework to scoping review before reading the articles in detail. As Munn et al. (2018, p.2) suggest, "Scoping reviews are useful for examining emerging evidence when it is still unclear what other, more specific questions can be posed and valuably addressed by a more precise systematic review." In this regard, the scoping review is useful for identifying and mapping existing research and knowledge gaps, as well as adapting to broader and less specific questions to inform field practice, clarify key concepts, and serve as a precursor to a systematic review (Munn et al., 2018).

RESULTS

After the selection process, 14 articles were identified that best met the criteria of this literature review on the relationship between DC and the media. It seems worthwhile to emphasize that the scholarly literature dealing with such a specifically adapted relationship is rather limited. One of the most surprising results of our search for previous scholarly work on this topic was that we could not find a single scholarly article that directly addressed the relationship between DC and the media. In other words, none of the identified articles address the questions of how the media frames the issue of DC, how DC is represented in media narratives, what impact the media's portrayal of DC may have on key stakeholders, etc. However, we have singled out scientific articles that either relate to the aforementioned context in a more indirect way (e.g., articles that do not directly address the issue of DC but focus on the athletes' retirement process and its media portrayal) or that are informative and useful for answering our questions due to shared structural similarities of their content (e.g., they address issues related to student athletes' use of social media). 14 articles identified for more detailed reading were first organised and divided into three basic groups based on their common central focus. We were not interested in generating topics according to quantitative criteria, but rather in cataloguing the broader variety of topics covered by the articles. These groups are named and presented in Table 1 as follows: (1) media representations, (2) media consumption, and (3) social media. In the following discussion, we will present the main findings from each group.

Table 1. The main classification of articles.

Author(s)	Title	Year of publication	Central focus
Beamon & Bell	“Going Pro”: the deferential effects of high aspirations for a professional sports career on African-American student athletes and White student athletes	2002	Media representations
McGannon, Curtin, Schinke & Schweinbenz	(De)Constructing Paula Radcliffe: Exploring media representations of elite running, pregnancy and motherhood through cultural sport psychology	2012	Media representations
Cosh & Crabb	Motherhood within elite sport discourse: The case of Keli Lane	2012	Media representations
Cosh, Crabb & LeCouteur	Elite athletes and retirement: Identity, choice, and agency	2013	Media representations
Cosh, Crabb & Tully	A Champion out of the pool? A discursive exploration of two Australian Olympic swimmers’ transition from elite sport to retirement	2015	Media representations
Stan	Unique or double standard to aging is sports? Case of retired gymnasts	2017	Media representations
Lee & Browne	African American Student Athletes and Sports Media Consumption	2009	Media consumption
Moore	Reading, Watching, and Tweeting About Sport-News Retention	2018	Media consumption
Hull	#Fight4UNCWSwimandDive: A Case Study of How College Athletes Used Twitter to Help Save Their Teams	2014	Social Media
Filo, Lock, & Karg	Sport and social media research: A review	2015	Social Media
Ruihley, Pratt & Carpenter	The Role of Public Relations in College Athletics	2016	Social Media
Yan, Pegoraro & Watanabe	Student-Athletes’ Organization of Activism at the University of Missouri: Resource Mobilization on Twitter	2018	Social Media
O’Hallarn, Shapiro, Wittkower, Ridinger & Hambrick	A model for the generation of public sphere-like activity in sport-themed Twitter hashtags	2019	Social Media
Sanderson, Stokowski & Taylor	#Trending in the Right Direction: A Case Study Analysing Temple Football’s #SpringBall18 Campaign	2019	Social Media

DISCUSSION

The common focus of the articles in our first group (media representations) was their dealing with media representations. The DC as such was not addressed in these articles, however, articles analysed media representations of post-retirement athletes (Cosh, Crab & LeCouteur, 2013; Cosh, Crabb & Tully, 2015; Stan, 2017) or media representations of athlete identity in combination with motherhood (Cosh & Crabb, 2012; McGannon et. al., 2012). Thematizations of both relationships mentioned are useful and transferable to the discussions on DC, since issues related to the retirement of an athlete are also issues that directly touch on the topic of DC, in order to facilitate an easier transition of athletes into the labour market. In addition, in this group we have also analysed an article that deals with the problem of obsessive pursuit of the sports career at the expense of all other individual developments, which is also partly caused by mass media narratives (Beamon & Bell, 2002).

Mass media is one of the means through which we gain insight into a particular culture and its perceptions, just as it is involved in the construction and articulation of our experiences in the world. In this regard, it is useful to examine the sociocultural and discursive context of media narratives, which some of the identified articles did. As their findings showed, media narratives that reported on post-retirement experiences consistently constructed athletes' identities in terms of an athlete's identity to the exclusion of all other identities (Cosh, Crabb & Tully, 2015). Furthermore, media representations attributed responsibility for transition difficulties to individuals and neglected broader social contexts (Cosh & Crabb, 2012; Cosh, Crabb & Tully, 2015). Rather than translating social conditions into political ones, such media constructions simplify, individualise, and depoliticize issues that are broader and social in nature. By delegating responsibility exclusively to individuals, sport organisations and other social institutions are relieved of the need to address the obstacles that athletes face during and at the end of their careers. To make matters worse, the media also constructs the identity of athletes in such a way as to ascribe to them no role other than that of athlete. When the role of athlete is portrayed as mutually exclusive with any other individual role, e.g., educational, parental, etc. (Cosh & Crabb, 2012), this can contribute to or suggest that the exclusive pursuit of a single career is something universally desirable. Media narratives that reproduce hegemonic cultural perceptions in which it remains difficult to combine more than one social role can also negatively impact perceptions and images of DC. Thus, the obsessive pursuit of a sports career at the expense of all other educational and intellectual developments of an individual may in turn be the result caused in part by media narratives (Beamon & Bell, 2002). From the

perspective of DC and from the standpoint of encouraging athletes to combine their sport careers with educational careers, such media representations are problematic because athletes who exhibit an exclusive sport identity are more vulnerable to transitional difficulties (Cosh, Crabb & LeCouteur, 2013). As identity integration occurs through constant negotiation of sociocultural constructs defined in part by the media (McGannon et. al., 2012) and its shaping of the public sphere, it is important to analyse media representations, raise awareness, and encourage media actors to shape more holistic narratives to contribute to better athletes' development. DC is precisely one of the directions that can help athletes in these efforts and provide them with a wide range of experiences. Quality journalism can further encourage them to follow this path if it is primarily concerned with the welfare of the athletes rather than, for example, capturing the audience through the interweaving of facts and speculation, emotionally charged speech, the use of manipulative forms, and so on (Amon Prodnik, 2020). Media portrayals of DC and DC athletes should be holistic and gender-neutral, i.e., they should not use different approaches and ways of writing depending on the gender of the sources, as noted in the article addressing stereotyping in media discourses about retired athletes (Stan, 2017).

Studies that focused on media consumption attempted to measure the use of media for sports information among student athletes (Lee & Browne, 2009) and to examine from which media audiences, particularly college students, obtain the most sports-related information (Moore, 2018). TV was identified as the primary source of sports information, followed by the use of multiple sources, i.e., the combination of the Internet, newspapers, and a very limited use of radio (Lee & Browne, 2009). Similar findings were confirmed by another article in this group, which identified TV as the preferred source of sports information, followed by social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter) and print news (Moore, 2018). Knowledge of media consumption preferences could be useful in making decisions about where to focus the promotion of positive attitudes on DC. In addition, it is possible to design a DC promotion strategy depending on the type of media and in relation to the basic goals of promotion: for example, if we are interested in retaining media stories, the most effective choice is print media, as print media is still the most reliable when it comes to retention (Moore, 2018). On the other hand, if we want to communicate effectively through social media, whose key advantage is that it creates a space of active interaction, then the use of visuals is recommended (Moore, 2018). These findings are important for guidelines on what kind of media we should choose and how we should design stories to better retain them and achieve the most efficient results.

In this regard, social media perspectives on DC have been additionally useful as social media is increasingly important as a source of information and a space for its dissemination. Social media also allows us to interact with users and thus can provide feedback on our content. For similar reasons, social media is becoming increasingly important for journalistic practices and traditional media (Kaluža & Slaček Brlek, 2020b). The articles identified in this category focused mainly on studying the efficiency of social media communication. We further divided the scholarly contributions from this group into those that focused on student athletes and their use of social media to pursue various purposes (Hull, 2014; Sanderson, Stokowski & Taylor, 2019; Yan, Pegoraro & Watanabe, 2018), one that established the connexion between social media and the public sphere in the context of sport (O'Hallarn et al., 2019), one that addressed the relationship between social media and sport management (Filo, Lock & Karg, 2015), and one on social media in the context of public relations and college sports (Ruihley, Pratt & Carpenter, 2016).

As can be seen from the analysis of the articles in question, social media can be used to raise awareness of certain concerns. Hull (2014) addressed and analysed the case of student athletes using Twitter to help their teams from being eliminated. He identified several techniques that the student athletes used to successfully achieve their goal: alerting as many people as possible was achieved through consistent tweeting, opinion leadership, engaging celebrities, and using weak connexions to get followers of other accounts (Hull, 2014). The effectiveness of weaker ties in information dissemination lies in the fact that weaker ties act as a link between different groups and are crucial in introducing new information to the group. Therefore, using Twitter or other social media can be a way to organize and unify certain messages, as well as a way to reach a larger number of people. Similarly, the systematic study of social media's organizing capacity for activism on social issues was addressed in the analysis of the football players' strike on Twitter, where Twitter acted as a venue for organizing the protest (Yan, Pegoraro & Watanabe, 2018). From this perspective, modern technology can serve as an important communication tool for student athletes, providing them with networking opportunities that were previously more limited. Collective actions that share a similar purpose can also be mutually reinforced on digital platforms. More broadly, social media - just as it can be used as a tool for fake news, propaganda, manipulation and hate speech, the spread of homophobia, sexism, racism, etc. - can also serve as an arena and motivation for improving democratic processes and establishing a Habermasian public sphere (O'Hallarn et al., 2019). Society's passion for and consumption of sport, together with the unique architecture of social media, can

promote behaviour akin to public sphere (O'Hallarn et. al., 2019) - hashtags, in particular, are understood as a potential mechanism through which public opinion can be formed. Furthermore, and as social media is a complex enterprise, it can also be used as a branding, marketing and recruitment tool. An examination of one particular campaign that took place to market and promote an intercollegiate athletics program showed that players' participation led to several positive outcomes:

Thus, it is crucial for intercollegiate athletic departments to foster educational opportunities for student-athletes on these platforms /.../ social media efforts that collaboratively involve student-athletes and athletic department personnel offer meaningful teaching opportunities, along with potentially generating favorable media coverage for the athletic department, as these social media partnerships are infrequent. (Sanderson, Stokowski & Taylor, 2019, p. 109)

In the context of sports marketing, this leads to the conclusion that social media is something to embrace and that departments and students can collaborate in social media campaigns. The visibility of student athletes on social media creates the opportunity for fans and others to connect with them, which in turn can increase the visibility of student programs (Sanderson, Stokowski & Taylor, 2019).

The existing literature on social media and sport management, focusing on specific social media characteristics that cultivate more meaningful exchange relationships, offers us insights into the issues of optimizing social media use from strategic and operational perspectives (Filo, Lock & Karg, 2015). The article that analysed the existing literature on this topic did not mention student athletes as a separate category, but it could be useful for understanding the role of social media in the promotional context. Social media proved to be particularly important as a cultivator of relationships between brands on the one hand and users on the other, with interaction and content co-creation, i.e. user engagement, playing a central role (Filo, Lock & Karg, 2015). Effective and efficient communication is important, even more so in times of heightened concern for educational programs, increased media exposure, and high budgets (Ruihley, Pratt & Carpenter, 2016). Social media strategies can be used as a way to communicate strategically and effectively. As defined by Ruihley, Pratt, and Carpenter (2016), such a strategy needs fluency with its language and audience, as well as an understanding of how to use social media to connect, inform and motivate.

CONCLUSION

In summary and following Schudson's quote from the introduction to this article, the authors of scientific papers in our first group were aware of the fact that the media not only report on reality, but also actively (co-)produce it. Mass media is one of the most useful tools and privileged means to learn about a particular culture, social contexts, social values, norms, preferences, etc., and the representations in the media are as much a mirror of social events as an active participant contributing to the formation of the image in that mirror. Therefore, it is important to study media representations as they can help us understand different aspects on different topics. In our case, we saw that the main problem was a one-sided coverage that presented sporting aspects but neglected all others. Moreover, the omitted aspects occurred not only at the individual level but also at the level of the broader social context. The appropriate media portrayals on DC, i.e. the representations that are holistic, gender neutral and attentive to multiple aspects, are therefore all the more necessary and important to avoid or at least minimize the problems that athletes may face later in life and to create a social environment in which not only the sporting but also the educational efforts are recognized and encouraged. The knowledge we have gained from the articles in our second group could be instructive in making decisions about where to focus the promotion of positive attitudes on DC. More than decisions about a particular type of media, the studies were important in helping us understand the specific functions of media. Retention of information, as we have seen, is still best achieved in print media, while a focus on social media requires recognition of the interactional aspect. Effective communication via social media was addressed in more detail by reviewing scholarly articles in our third group. We have mentioned and reviewed various mechanisms that can help us communicate more effectively and have also seen that involving student athletes is helpful in raising awareness and promoting various events, programs, etc. Features that are characteristic of social media and should be considered when designing messages on them are interactivity and co-creation of content. Based on these results, we can say that the involvement of student athletes should also be considered when promoting DC through social media.

Attempting to cast DC in a brighter light, recognising its value and making it a topic that is talked about more frequently and also in more everyday discussions, benefits athletes. If the field of sport is in principle relatively straightforward and results there are relatively easy to measure, the same is not true of the everyday social world. It is therefore necessary to prepare athletes for the time after the end of their sporting career, when they become a larger part of environments where paths are not always clear, where the recipe for effectiveness often does

not exist, and where routines are insufficient. This overview can be seen as a foundation from which we can draw in further efforts to raise awareness of the concept of DC through the media, just as it can serve as a base from which we can continue to think about the connexion between DC and the media and the useful potentials that the media can offer to DC.

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The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that might appear to influence the work reported in this paper.

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