







School sport, conceptual and terminologies realities: A scoping review

Deporte Escolar, realidades conceptuales y terminológicas: Una revisión de alcance

Desporto Escolar, realidades conceptuais e terminológicas: Uma Scoping Review

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Abstract

Background: 'School sport' is a term used globally with varied interpretations, which creates barriers to thorough analysis and discussion.

Objective: This scoping review aims to clarify the concept of 'school sport' at an international level.

Design: The inclusion of 33 articles/documents comes from searches in five databases (Web of Science, SportDiscus, PsycINFO, PubMed, ERIC) and materials from five organizations (OECD, UNESCO, EU, WHO, ISF), covering publications in English from 2010 to January 4, 2022.

Results: These documents, from diverse origins, detail 'school sport' in local/national contexts, compare national experiences, and describe multinational/international scenarios. Six are policy documents that define government action. This collection highlights the global diversity of the term and its conceptual vagueness.

Conclusion: The indiscriminate use of the term 'school sport' by authors around the world encompasses various meanings, complicating interpretation. Therefore, establishing a clear definition could promote more discussions and a unified understanding of 'school sport'.

Keywords: School Sport; School Age Population; Youth Sports; Concept Formation; Scoping Review.

Resumen

Antecedentes: 'Deporte escolar' es un término de uso global con interpretaciones variadas, lo que crea barreras para un análisis y discusión exhaustivos.

Objetivo: Esta revisión de alcance tiene como objetivo clarificar el concepto de 'deporte escolar' a nivel internacional.

Diseño: La inclusión de 33 artículos/documentos proviene de búsquedas en cinco bases de datos (Web of Science, SportDiscus, PsycINFO, PubMed, ERIC) y materiales de cinco organizaciones (OCDE, UNESCO, UE, OMS, ISF), abarcando publicaciones en inglés desde 2010 hasta el 4 de enero de 2022.

Resultados: Estos documentos, de orígenes diversos, detallan o 'deporte escolar' en contextos locales/nacionales, comparan experiencias nacionales y describen escenarios multinacionales/internacionales. Seis son documentos de políticas que delimitan la acción gubernamental. Esta colección subraya la diversidad global del término y su vaguedad conceptual.

Conclusión: El uso indiscriminado del término 'deporte escolar' por autores de todo el mundo abarca varios significados, complicando la interpretación. Por lo tanto, establecer una definición clara podría fomentar más discusiones y una comprensión unificada del 'deporte escolar'.

Keywords: Deporte Escolar; Población en Edad Escolar; Deportes Juveniles; Formación de Concepto; Revisión de Alcance.

Introduction

Engaging in physical activity has numerous health-related benefits and contributes significantly to the overall well-being of individuals, especially in children and adolescents. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behavior (WHO, 2020), global estimates indicate that 27% of adults and 81% of adolescents do not meet the 2010 WHO targets for physical activity and there has been little improvement compared to the previous decade. Among adolescents, sports practice is crucial as a tool to support their development in challenging contexts such as confinement during the COVID-19 pandemic (Medina Valencia, 2023). Therefore 'School sports' play a fundamental role in the realm of physical activity within the school context. This is because schools are an environment with great potential for promoting the change of behaviors and habits, as children and young individuals spend a significant portion of their daily time in this setting. In this sense, international school sports competitions under the auspices of FISEC (Fédération Internationale Sportive de l'Enseignement Catholique) and ISF (International School Sports Federation) are the pinnacle of international competitive events where young people represent their schools and their country. However, upon careful analysis, multiple concepts of 'school sports' representing distinct national realities are revealed.

Physical activity within schools has been a concern for leaders and policymakers worldwide, as evident in the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-2030 (WHO, 2018), which highlights the evident health-related benefits and also emphasizes the impact on quality education. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2020) in the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) results acknowledges the advantages and opportunities that extracurricular activities offer in developing aspects of personality that go beyond the curriculum. This includes qualities such as persistence, resilience, and the ability to work in groups. Marques et al. (2014) indicates that extracurricular sports activities also contribute to the previously mentioned benefits and point to potential benefits related to academic success. Based on the benefits listed in extracurricular sports activities, these authors suggest that such activities should be promoted and maximized in both European and global contexts.

Coning and Keim (2021) in an article undertaken for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), argue that extracurricular sports activities share the same purpose as the objectives outlined in national physical education curricula. However, they function as extensions or complements to the specified curriculum activities, contributing to various aspects of personality and moral values. Taking the European context as an example, there exists a wide variety of extracurricular sports activities with numerous designations and encompassing various concepts (European Commission, 2013). Regarding 'school sports', the challenge persists; there is a proliferation of terminologies and concepts that hinder international discussions (Arufe-Giraldez et al., 2017; Hernández & Pardo, 2020). In many countries, the term and concept of 'school sports' fluctuate between sports for all, mass participation, and high-performance elite sports (European Commission, 2013; Ferry et al., 2013; Hernández & Grandett, 2018; Hernández & Pardo, 2020; Hogan & Stylianou, 2018; Muresean, 2013). Partnerships with sports systems, such as confederations and sports associations, are also identified, as well as the creation of specialized sports curricula in collaboration with specialized schools (Ferry, 2014; Lund, 2014).

The term 'school sports' is used in diverse ways, making it challenging to adopt a universal definition when the term encompasses a vast array of realities, contexts, and variations. This terminological inconsistency is a significant challenge to overcome because it complicates international discussions, comparisons, and collaborations. Thus, the purpose of this study is to analyze the multitude of concepts associated with the term 'school sports' in various countries, thereby contributing to its clarification on an international level.

Methods

Our protocol was designed using the PRISMA method - Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses - (Page et al., 2021) and registered on the INPLASY platform (2021100027). Furthermore, focusing on a conceptual analysis using various documentary sources, the PRISMA-ScR method for scoping reviews was applied (Tricco et al., 2018).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The predefined criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of scientific articles and policy documents from other sources aimed to create a basis for collecting information related to the understanding of the term 'school sports.' In this regard, the inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) articles from scientific databases and policy documents from other credible sources, particularly internationally recognized institutions, that directly or indirectly address the concept of 'school sports'; (2) articles and documents made available between 2010 and January 4, 2022, given that educational policies related to 'school sports' have undergone significant changes in the last decade; and (3) original documents written in the English language to ensure a broader study universality. On the other hand, articles and documents were not included if they: (1) did not address the issue of 'school sports'; (2) corresponded to books, chapters, and conference papers in the databases.

Search Strategy

Regarding the search strategy, five databases were utilized to identify scientific articles – Web of Science, SportDiscus, PsycINFO, PubMed, and ERIC. In addition, searches were carried out on the websites of five internationally recognized organizations that are important stakeholders in the realm of 'school sports' – OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), EU (European Union), WHO (World Health Organization), and ISF (International School Sport Federation). The Search Strategy within the scientific databases was based on the following fields: 'title,' 'abstract,' and 'keywords/subject.' The search terms employed were: "school* sport*" OR "sport* school*" OR "after-school sport*" OR "sport* in school* age*" OR "extracurricular sport*." For the websites of relevant international institutions, the internal databases of each organization were utilized, and searches were conducted using the same keywords or manual searches were performed.

Screening, Selection, and Study Quality

After conducting searches in the databases and on the websites of the aforementioned organizations, the data were imported into a reference management program (EndNote 20.4, 2020, Clarivate Analytics, Philadelphia, PA, USA). Duplicate articles and documents were removed using automation tools. A triangulation of titles and abstracts of the remaining documents was performed. Subsequently, the full text of each scientific article and document was independently examined by the authors to determine whether the article/document met the eligibility criteria and, if applicable, assess its relevance. Any differences of opinion were resolved through consensus and unanimous agreement. Following this screening process, the articles were included for analysis in this review.

Data Extraction, Analysis, and Synthesis

Each scientific article and relevant document were independently read by the authors to extract the following characteristics: (1) first author's name and publication year; (2) country, countries, or geographical area to which the scientific article or document refers; (3) information about 'school sports' concept; (4) keywords related to the content covered in the document. The data were extracted independently by two authors, then collectively reviewed, adjusted, and confirmed.

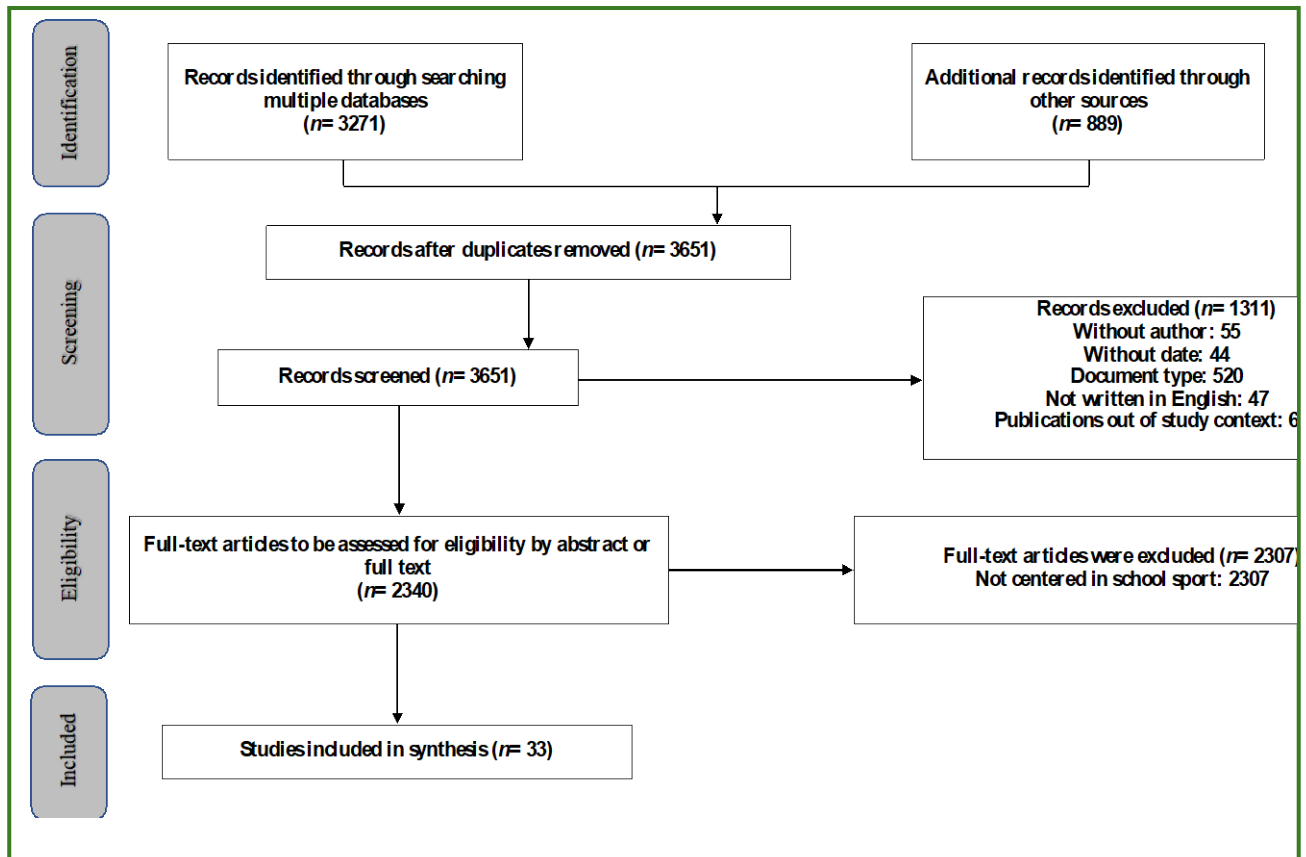


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart for study selection.

Results

Selection of Relevant Scientific Articles and Documents

As shown in Figure 1, the initial search yielded 3,271 records from scientific databases, with an additional 889 records from the previously identified organizations. Articles were excluded due to: (1) duplicates ($n = 509$), (2) ineligibility as per automation tools ($n = 666$), (3) being from publications outside the study context ($n = 645$). After analyzing the abstract or full text, a further 2,307 articles/documents were deemed ineligible as they did not address the topic of 'school sports.' This left 22 scientific articles and 11 documents from relevant international institutions for inclusion in this review, totaling 33 articles/documents.

Study Characteristics

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the analyzed documents. Concerning this review, the 33 examined documents originate from various sources and have different scopes. Eighteen documents describe contexts of 'school sports' within a local/national reality (Aoyagi et al., 2013; Aranda et al., 2011; Arribas et al., 2013; Arufe-Giraldez et al., 2017; Bosscher et al., 2016; Ferry, 2014, 2016; Ferry & Lund, 2018; Ferry et al., 2013; Flintoff et al., 2011; Heinze & Zdroik, 2018; Hernández & Grandett, 2018; Hogan & Stylianou, 2018; Kiouranis & Júnior, 2021; Lindsey et al., 2021; Lund, 2014; Muresean, 2013; Sulz et al., 2021), two documents focus on comparing two national realities (Hernández & Pardo, 2020; Pot & Hilvoorde, 2013), seven documents characterize a multinational/international context (Coning & Keim, 2021; European Commission, 2013; Holzweg et al., 2013; Marques et al., 2014; McLennan, 2014; OECD, 2016, 2020) and the remaining six are policy-oriented documents identifying realities and governmental action lines (McLennan & Thompson, 2015; UNESCO, 2013, 2015, 2017; WHO, 2018, 2020).

Regarding methodology, twenty-five documents employ qualitative methods (Aoyagi et al., 2013; Arribas et al., 2013; Arufe-Giraldez et al., 2017; Coning & Keim, 2021; Ferry, 2014; Ferry et al., 2013; Flintoff et al., 2011; Heinze & Zdroik, 2018; Hernández & Grandett, 2018; Hernández & Pardo, 2020; Hogan & Stylianou, 2018; Holzweg et al., 2013; Kiouranis & Júnior, 2021; Lindsey et al., 2021; Lund, 2014; Marques et al., 2014; McLennan & Thompson, 2015; Muresean, 2013; Pot & Hilvoorde, 2013; Sulz et al., 2021; UNESCO, 2013, 2015, 2017; WHO, 2018, 2020), five employ quantitative methods (Aranda et al., 2011; Bosscher et al., 2016; European Commission, 2013; OECD, 2016, 2020), and three report mixed methods (Ferry, 2016; Ferry & Lund, 2018; McLennan, 2014).

The examined scientific articles and policy documents portray the international diversity and conceptual ambiguity of 'school sports'. Some articles, while identifying the term 'school sport', fail to define its scope (Lindsey et al., 2021) or even address it in the course of the study (Holzweg et al., 2013).

Table 1. Characteristics of studies and documents included in the Scoping Review.

Author / Year (1)	Country / Region (2)	Information about School Sport Concept (3)	Key Words (4)
Aranda, A. et al. (2011)	Spain	Sports carried out within the school context, primarily in Physical Education classes.	Curricular; Sports For All.
Flintoff, A. et al. (2011)	England (UK)	Promoting school sports with external partnerships for youth sports opportunities.	Curricular; Sports For All.
Aoyagi, K. et al. (2013)	Japan	School extracurricular sports activities with external non-specialized coaches.	Extracurricular; Sports For All
Arribas, J. et al. (2013)	Spain (Segovia City)	Physical activity and sports by schoolchildren inside and outside school hours.	Inclusive; Sports For All.
European Commission / EACEA/Eurydice (2013)	Europe	After-school activities for school-age youth, expanding the core curriculum.	Curricular Complement;
Ferry, M. et al. (2013)	Sweden	Extended in-school training for successful extracurricular athletes with a focus on competition training through sports clubs.	Extracurricular; Performance
Holzweg, M. et al. (2013)	Worldwide	Teachers and students in PE and school sports worldwide have diverse experiences.	Educational System
Muresan, A. (2013)	Romania	Students can access sports and physical activities through PE classes, intramural sports, and school teams, with potential collaboration between schools and sports clubs for shared resources and support.	Curricular; Talent Identification
Pot, N.; Hilvoorde, I. (2013)	The Netherlands and United States of America	School-based organized sports activities, including physical education, intramural sports, and interscholastic athletics.	Comparative Study
UNESCO - MINEPS V - Declaration of Berlin (2013)	Worldwide	Daily mandatory inclusive school sports for early child and youth development with qualified instructors and safe facilities.	Sports For All
Ferry, M. (2014)	Sweden	Some students train in their leisure-time sports during the school day, with two main types of school sports: one involving a variety of activities (sports-for-all), and the other focusing on specific chosen sports.	Sports For All; Extracurricular
Lund, S. (2014)	Sweden	A system where voluntary sports activities are a collaboration between high schools and sports clubs, with an emphasis on talent selection and enrolling students with the 'right' athletic skills.	Extracurricular; Selective
Marques, A. et al. (2014)	Europe	Extracurricular sports in European schools are non-mandatory activities outside regular school hours, often organized by the Ministry of Education or Sports, and taught by PE teachers.	Extracurricular
UNESCO / third World-wide survey of School Physical Education Mclennan, N. (2014)	Worldwide	The term "physical education" encompasses "physical culture," "movement," "human motricity," or "school sport" and denotes structured physical activity in school curricula.	Comparative Study

UNESCO Mclennan, N.; Thompson, J. (2015)	Worldwide	"Extra-curricular" means structured learning beyond the regular school curriculum, often in collaboration with community sports organizations.	Curriculum flexibility; Community Partnerships
UNESCO - International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (2015)	Worldwide	As a fundamental human right, educational systems must promote physical education, physical activity, and sports, guided by a shared strategic vision to instill values like fair play, equality, integrity, excellence, commitment, courage, teamwork, respect for rules and laws, loyalty, self-respect, respect for others, community spirit, solidarity, fun, and joy.	Educational System
Bosscher, V. et al. (2016)	Belgium / Flanders	Elite sport schools in Flanders are secondary schools offering specialized support for talented young athletes to balance their education and training.	Selective; Sports Performance
Ferry, M. (2016)	Sweden	Sports activities within the regular school curriculum, including physical education and extracurricular programs, with a growing emphasis on elite sports and partnerships with local sports clubs.	Talent Identification; Sports For All
OCDE - PISA 2015 Results - Vol II (2016)	Worldwide	Extracurricular activities, such as sports activities and teams, can improve students' cognitive and non-cognitive skills.	Extracurricular
Arufe-Giráldez, V. et al. (2017)	Spain	School sports refer to sports within the school, often in the Physical Education classroom. Some are linked to sport schools or centers promoting sports, while others focus on performance.	Sports in School; Selective
UNESCO - MINEPS VI - Kazan Action Plan (2017)	Worldwide	School sports promote physical activity, social development, attendance, youth employability, and school-to-work transition. 'Grassroots Sport' refers to non-professional physical leisure activities for health, education, or social purposes, whether organized or not.	Educational System
Ferry, M; Lund, S. (2018)	Sweden	Swedish secondary schools offer three sports programs. Local programs are flexible, while regional and national elite programs specialize in developing talented athletes.	Curricular; Sports Performance
Heinze, K ; Zdroik, J. (2018)	United States of America	High school and middle school sports in the USA, or interscholastic sports, feature organized competitions between schools. Participation is voluntary, and coaches may select students based on perceived ability and available spaces.	Extracurricular; Selective
Hernández, E; Grandett, J. (2018)	Colombia	Refers to physical and sports activities in schools promoting student health, well-being, and physical and social development. These activities occur during physical education classes or extracurricular hours with an educational and inclusive focus.	Curricular Sports For All
Hogan, A; Stylianou, M. (2018)	Australia	Sporting Schools aims to boost physical activity and sport participation, promoting health. The initiative provides sports programs to primary school students before, during, and after school.	Inclusive; Sports in School
WHO -Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-2030 More Active People for Healthier World (2018)	Worldwide	School sports are a subset of physical education and active recreation in educational settings. "Grassroots Sport" refers to non-professional, regular physical activities for health, education, or social purposes, whether organized or not.	Sports For All
Hernández, Y.; Pardo, R. (2020)	Spain and France	It's a subject bridging school physical education and organized sports. It involves voluntary extracurricular physical and sports activities connected to the school.	Comparative Study; Extracurricular
Kiouranis, T. Júnior, W. (2021)	Brazil	The term is "Brazilian School Games" (BSG) in a broad sense. BSG is entirely overseen by the Brazilian Olympic Committee using a globalized model for school sports policy, influenced by various cultural aspects such as ethnicity, media, technology, finance, and ideology.	Selective; Sports Performance
OECD (2020) PISA 2018 Results (Vol V)	Worldwide	School extracurricular activities typically aim for various goals, including physical health, creativity, arts involvement, and community engagement.	Extracurricular
WHO - Guidelines on Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour (2020)	Worldwide	Recommend that schools offer safe and equal opportunities for enjoyable physical activities suitable for students' age and ability. These activities can be part of the curriculum, including physical education, active recess, and active commuting.	Educational System
UNESCO - Coning, C.; Keim, M. (2021)	Worldwide	It refers to organized sports at schools practiced outside of the curriculum.	Extracurricular
Lindsey, I. et al. (2021)	England (UK)	Competitive and non-competitive sporting activities that take place within and between schools.	Sports For All; Educational System
Sulz L. et al. (2021)	Canada	Involves organized interscholastic games and competitions sponsored by schools outside regular class hours.	Extracurricular; Selective.

Discussion

In the analyzed articles/documents, technical terms were found to be used diversely, lacking conceptual uniformity. Adding to the challenging terminological consensus, there is simultaneously a deficit of clearly presented definitions that would enable the analysis of the understanding of a specific technical term.

What has been identified, complicating not only the present study but also a broader and internationally valuable discussion, is a proliferation of terms linked to concepts that, upon analysis, raise doubts, particularly concerning their meanings. This challenge becomes even more demanding when dealing with scientific articles and institutional policy documents written in English, primarily by authors for whom English may not be their native language.

Illustrating this idea, Hernández and Pardo (2020) emphasize the need to clarify the term 'school sport' considering the array of terms associated with different concepts and the difficulty that this lack of terminological uniformity specifically generates in the context of developing European policies on sports and education.

'School Spots' as a Terminology

UNESCO (2013), in the Berlin Declaration adopted by 121 member states during the occasion of the 5th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Physical Education and Sport, referred to the term, highlighting the importance of inclusive 'extracurricular school sport' in the development and education of children and youth. This variation and inclusion of the word 'extracurricular' point to a framing of 'school sport' outside the curriculum while also being non-selective. This understanding is further reinforced by Coning and Keim (2021) later during the drafting of the UNESCO Quality Physical Education Policy, where they presented a glossary of terms defining 'school sport' as "sport organized in schools and practiced outside of school hours, that is, outside the curriculum" (p.14). In this case, 'school sport' is defined as extracurricular and developed within the school context.

The European Commission (2013), in a Eurydice report on physical education and sport in European schools, refers to programs that countries have operationalized where the term 'school sport' is frequently used, albeit often interchangeably. The main challenge in observing the use of the same term in different countries was interpreting its scope while analyzing the concept that the term delineates. However, still within the same Eurydice report (European Commission, 2013), three conceptual trends of the term 'school sport' can be identified: (1) competition and other sports events; (2) activities related to health, and; (3) measures related to active schools.

Furthermore, the same document refers to several countries, mentioning Croatia and highlighting its legally established central entity (Croatian School Sports Association) with local branches that promote the organization of various sports activities in schools. In Germany, another example, there is a foundation (German School Sports Foundation) which, together with partners, develops activities related to Olympism in the school context, thus seeking to support sports beyond mandatory education. In Spain, they point out the existence of a national program for the promotion and support of 'school sport' (PROADES) which, in conjunction with the Autonomous Communities and sports federations, aims to promote sports in a school environment. From this context, another concept of the term 'school sport' is identified, which refers to its relationship with external entities outside the educational system, which could include sports federations, clubs, or others. Specifically, with these partnerships, the school provides students and sometimes facilities, while external entities drive the sports activities, in an inclusive approach that may or may not involve teachers.

With the identification of a more selective approach, in Austria, as reported by Eurydice (European Commission, 2013), there are "School Sport Games" that focus on the best teams and athletes in 25 disciplines, incorporating cultural elements in the opening and closing ceremonies. This way, the activity is given the recognition that contributes to its prominence, and it becomes clear that there's an emphasis on performance and sports outcomes. It's also evident that there's a competitive concern and, consequently, a selective approach toward its athletes/students.

On another note, in Portugal (European Commission, 2013), a national strategy for "school sport" was identified that aims, among other objectives, to promote health, sports, physical activities in general, as well as social integration and the prevention of academic failure. In this broad description, there isn't a clear selective intention, rather it assumes a more pedagogical role, associated with complementing the physical education curriculum and involving direct teacher intervention.

Reinforcing the previous terminological uses as evident in the Eurydice report (European Commission, 2013), Ferry (2014) and Ferry and Lund (2018) indicate that the international concept of "school sport" refers to competitive sports organized within a school environment. Despite the intention to contextualize the term, the terminological and semantic doubt is not entirely dispelled as it is not possible to fully identify its scope in terms of educational/inclusive or competitive/selective concerns.

In England, a program titled "school sport partnerships" was introduced in the year 2000, where schools locally organized themselves with their own structure to provide sports opportunities for young people. These partnerships could involve up to 45 schools, and state funding was mainly dedicated to teachers allocated to these local partnerships (Flintoff et al., 2011). Involving teachers, its framework has educational and inclusive potential, thereby making competition a less significant factor. However, it is evident that schools are the focus of these partnerships as they are the places where available children/young people are seen as potential candidates for their sports and clubs.

In the study by Pot and Hilvoorde (2013) on the cultural contexts of 'school sport' in the Netherlands and the United States of America, a difference in the contextual usage of the term in the two countries is identified in advance. In the Netherlands, the term 'school sport' is uncritically used as an umbrella for all kinds of sports-related activities that have some connection to the school. Consequently, they felt the need to define the concept of the term 'school sport' to enable comparison between these two national realities. Thus, the term 'school sport' in the United States of America was defined as extracurricular sports activities in secondary schools where students are members of a sports team, competing in interscholastic leagues (off-campus). This definition is also supported by Heinze and Zdroik (2018), who emphasize the voluntary nature of student participation, but it becomes more selective by depending on the availability of spots on each team/sport. On the other hand, the term 'school sport' in the Netherlands was defined as participation in interscholastic competitions or tournaments between secondary schools (Pot & Hilvoorde, 2013). In these two definitions, the key point of connection is interscholastic competition. The same authors indicate that the different national interpretations in these two countries depend on cultural variations, so it is expected that the effects and impact of 'school sport' also differ from country to country, particularly in terms of their social recognition.

An interesting observation in the study by Pot and Hilvoorde (2013) is related to the competitiveness of interscholastic activities. In a way, these two realities represent the ambiguities and differences surrounding the concept of 'school sport'. In the United States of America, competitiveness is central and, to some extent, identifies their model, with secondary schools selecting the best students/athletes. This indicates a competitive and therefore selective nature in the United States of America. On the other hand, in the Netherlands, competitiveness is more related to rivalry between nearby schools, but it's non-selective and based on a sports-for-all idea. Other important aspects are the eligibility conditions for participation in these competitions. In the United States of America, academic requirements for participation (eligibility) exist, and sports results serve as marketing content to promote the school. In contrast, in the Netherlands, none of this happens because 'school sport' doesn't have the same social impact as it does in the United States of America.

Kiouranis and Júnior (2021), while describing 'school sport' in Brazil, contextualize it as part of an activity that, over the years, has received various names related to the sports program in which it is developed. At the time of their study, it was referred to as "School Sport Games". This activity is highly dynamic and overseen by the Brazilian Olympic Committee, which collaborates with the government (Ministry and Special Secretary) and the most well-known television network in Brazil (Globo Organizations). This collaboration has created a unique context for participation and competition. For example, this approach in Brazil is contrary to what Pot and Hilvoorde (2013) described for the

Netherlands, where 'school sport' isn't used as a marketing tool. In Brazil, it can be inferred that a competitive focus is prominent, suggesting a performance-oriented and result-driven approach. This contrast further illustrates how the concept of 'school sport' can differ significantly in terms of its emphasis and outcomes based on cultural and contextual factors.

In Colombia, Hernández and Grandett (2018), drawing on insights from other authors, identified two trends regarding the term 'school sport' in the country: (1) one trend indicates that it is developed within the framework of physical education classes, recreation, and sports (curricular), during school hours, as part of the curriculum's content, involving all students; (2) the second trend considers that 'school sport' takes place outside of physical education classes, during non-school hours, yet it is part of the educational institution's planning and serves as a complementary component to the curriculum (extracurricular). This conceptual discrepancy illustrates the indiscriminate use of the term, as well as its ambiguity, making its analysis difficult. In this specific case, even within the same country, the interpretation of the term varies.

In the same study (Hernández & Grandett, 2018) the authors chose to consider 'school sport' as activities that encompassed the following characteristics: being recognized within the framework of physical education, recreation, and sports classes; being related to the educational institution's project; being part of the curriculum planning; taking place during school hours; being led by a subject-specific teacher; and not replacing extracurricular programs that would take place at the school during non-school hours. In this definition, 'school sport' is curricular and included within physical education classes, and it could even be understood as a "sportification" of physical education. In the same study, the authors indicate that the Decanal Sports Plan for 2009-2019 mandated the promotion of 'school sport' as an organized activity to facilitate the early detection of talents, specialized practice, focus, and prioritize both state and private intervention. In other words, despite being curricular, it has selective concerns and is directed toward the sports system.

In Canada, the definition of 'school sport' that emerges from the study by Sulz et al. (2021) refers to sports sponsored by the school, practiced outside regular class hours, in which students participate in organized inter-school competitions and games. In Canada, school sport teams are coached by teachers who dedicate their time voluntarily, and in most cases, without any additional compensation. When teachers are not available, program organizers recruit community coaches to facilitate the program. Similar to what Pot and Hilvoorde (2013) and Heinze and Zdroik (2018) indicated, in Canada as well Sulz et al. (2021), 'school sport' has a predominantly competitive and selective nature regarding its participants. However, there is the possibility that coaches may be teachers, which could provide a greater educational sensitivity despite its selective nature.

In the African continent, specifically in Zambia, according to Coning and Keim (2021), sport and physical education constitute a subject (Physical Education and Sport) but there is also 'school sport' that is open to all interested students and goes beyond school hours, including competitions within the school and against other schools from different areas, districts, and provinces. An apparently non-selective and voluntary character can be identified while maintaining competition as an important element in the organizational dynamic.

Also, with an approach to the field of physical education (Arribas et al., 2013), supported by the Comprehensive Plan for Physical Activity (2010-2016) and Sport of the Higher Sports Council (Spain), defines 'school sport' as the sport practiced by children and young people, both within and outside educational institutions after school hours. From this definition, it can be understood that 'school sport' is a community-oriented, extracurricular activity, not limited to the school context, and includes the sports system. In other words, it can be inferred that the concept of 'school sport' is related to sport at school ages.

A different opinion is held by Arufe-Giraldez et al. (2017), who also rely on the understanding of the Higher Sports Council. They separate the concept in two ways: (1) 'school sport' as all sports activities developed within the school context, mainly within physical education classes, which implies a curricular scope, and (2) 'sport in school ages', encompassing activities organized outside the physical education curriculum, in schools, clubs, associations, etc., where

school-age students participate. This separation allows us to identify a differentiation in the term 'school sport' by highlighting the context in which it takes place and the educational objectives as distinct elements.

In a comparative study of the objectives of 'school sport' in Spain and France, Hernández and Pardo (2020) state that these two countries present two different models of 'school sport' in terms of concept and terminology. They justify that this understanding is related to the connections that both countries have forged with physical education and organized sports. In this study, regarding the Spanish case, they identified numerous terms and concepts of 'school sport' that are used interchangeably, detecting some terms and concepts closer to the educational system or the sports system. In France, on the other hand, there is a distinct model with a school sports federation that encompasses various sports, placing the educational system as a central and decisive element in its development. The authors defined 'school sport' as a subject of study that occupies an intermediate space between these two systems, characterizing it as physically and sportively voluntary activities practiced outside of school hours (extracurricular) with a certain connection to the school, which does not entirely delimit or clarify the conceptualization of the term.

Sweden is a country where 'school sport' has been influenced by both the educational system and the sports system. Researchers like Ferry and Lund (Ferry, 2014, 2016; Ferry & Lund, 2018; Ferry et al., 2013; Lund, 2014), have extensively studied this subject, providing a clear understanding of 'school sport' in Sweden. Traditionally, sports in Sweden have shifted between the school context with physical education and organized sports with clubs. However, this assumption has been changing as schools have taken a more active role in offering sports activities. This phenomenon of 'school sport' in Sweden can be described as sports that some students, primarily those who demonstrate more success in extracurricular sports, have the opportunity to develop and enhance their sports skills within the school environment, with the aim of achieving performance, meaning training for competition (Ferry & Lund, 2018). A major difference compared to other countries is that this model assumes students engage in competition outside the school context, representing entities other than the school itself. In other words, students train at school to compete for the clubs. Moreover, there is even the possibility for students, after reaching a certain school level and sports performance, to access training provided by the sports system (confederations, federations, clubs) with the purpose of improving their performance, i.e., with competitive and performance goals that do not necessarily align with the educational system.

Ferry (2014) identifies the existence of two types of 'school sport' in Sweden. One type involves students participating in a wide range of physical and sports activities (an approach focusing on sports for all), while the other type allows students the opportunity to dedicate themselves to a specific competitive sport (Ferry & Lund, 2018). Both of these types of 'school sport' are equally common in Swedish schools.

Thus, unlike in other countries, Sweden has a dual logic within its 'school sport' system, where the sports system provides training during school hours, and simultaneously, the school fulfills its educational and vocational role through regular education (Ferry & Lund, 2018). This partnership between the educational and sports systems may have created some issues of national curricular equity. Given Sweden's liberalized school market, 'school sport' has been used by schools as a tool for differentiation in attracting new students, without necessarily ensuring their sports improvement (Ferry, 2016; Lund, 2014). It is important to understand that in Sweden, when students choose a particular school, they provide funding to that chosen institution, following a "school voucher" logic. This explains the competition among schools to attract students and even the establishment of specific schools with study plans that include a strong curricular sports component. Examples of this effort include the existence of two programs: the National Elite School Sports Program and the Certified National Elite School Sports Program (Ferry & Lund, 2018; Lund, 2014), which, in our view, are concepts that align more closely with the sports system than the educational system. This is because they are selective in nature and focus on sports performance. To us, this concept aligns more with what could be termed 'sports in schools' rather than 'school sport'

Limitations

This scoping review has some limitations. In order to make the review more comprehensive and international, the included articles and documents were written in the English language, which didn't allow for the inclusion of many more localized sources as they often focus more on their national issues and are written in languages other than English. Furthermore, in this regard, writing in English by non-native researchers seems to give rise to terminological issues and linguistic nuances that make analysis and interpretation more challenging, where inconsistencies are acknowledged. Therefore, it appears reasonable to admit that a deeper clarification of the concept of 'school sport' can only be achieved through further studies, possibly employing content analysis methods using a questionnaire or semi-structured interviews as instruments.

Conclusions

As a result of the analysis conducted on the 33 selected scientific articles/documents for this study, it was found that there is an interchangeable use of the term 'school sport' by various authors, which makes interpretation more challenging.

International 'school sport,' as seen, fluctuates between a greater or lesser influence from the educational system or the sports system. In this greater or lesser presence of each of these systems, 'school sport' takes on a greater or lesser number of distinctive characteristics and specificities of each. However, the term 'school sport' was not found to be exclusively representative of either the educational system or the sports system. The most common and typical occurrence is to find the term and concept associated with characteristics from both systems simultaneously.

This study has shown that the uncritical use of terms associated with the concept of 'school sport' is a reality, sometimes even within the same country. Examples of this include the association of 'sport in school age,' 'sport in school,' 'sports schools,' 'physical education and sport.' Alongside this terminological variety, there are also analogous terms that carry different underlying concepts, with no international coherence in their conceptualizations.

In the global international context, with nations subject to external influences from other countries, there seem to be advantages in seeking to define the term conceptually, allowing for a more intelligible discussion and consequently a concerted understanding of 'school sport'.

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