





STUDENT-ATHLETES AND SPORTS STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE EDMEDIA EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM FOR TRAINING AND PROMOTING DUAL CAREER ON SOCIAL MEDIA

PERCEPCIONES DE LOS ESTUDIANTES-DEPORTISTAS Y STAKEHOLDERS DEPORTIVOS SOBRE LA PLATAFORMA EDUCATIVA EDMEDIA PARA LA FORMACIÓN Y PROMOCIÓN DE LA CARRERA DUAL EN MEDIOS SOCIALES

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Student-athletes and Sports Stakeholders' Perceptions of EdMedia Educational Platform

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Abstract

Elite athletes face challenges in developing Dual Careers, despite the potential benefits for their future employment. Successful implementation of Dual Careers requires awareness of their importance by both athletes and their environments. Thus, student-athletes with strong Social Media influence should leverage their platforms to support and highlight the significance of balancing sports and academics (Dual Career), thereby enhancing their future prospects after their sports careers. In this context, the EdMedia educational platform was developed to promote Dual Careers and institutional support policies through social media, as well as to train and connect student-athletes with media specialists, coaches, and other sports stakeholders. After the implementation of the program and the platform, a quantitative approach was used through a questionnaire with previously validated scales and high reliability indexes, measuring variables such as usability, learning effectiveness, satisfaction and perception of the contents. One hundred and forty student-athletes and 111 sports stakeholders from six European countries participated in the evaluation of the platform. The results revealed how both groups perceived different aspects of online educational platform, and identified which aspects most influenced the effectiveness of the online educational experience. These findings are valuable for improving the platform's role in promoting Dual Careers through social media, increasing awareness of the importance and benefits of pursuing a Dual Career, and the support required from academic and sporting institutions. Finally, the study offers some practical implications for improving the design of online educational platforms, providing a model that combines information and academic and sports training, and highlights the importance of involving key stakeholders in the promotion of Dual Career through social media.

Keywords: Dual career, social media, edmedia project, online platform, student-athletes, sport stakeholders.

Resumen

Los deportistas de élite se enfrentan a grandes retos a la hora de desarrollar Carreras Duales, a pesar de los beneficios potenciales para su futuro empleo. Para implantar con éxito las Carreras Duales es necesario que tanto los deportistas como sus entornos sean conscientes de su importancia. Así pues, los estudiantes-deportistas con gran influencia en los Medios Sociales deberían aprovechar sus plataformas para apoyar y destacar la importancia de compaginar el deporte y los estudios (Carrera Dual), mejorando así sus perspectivas de futuro tras sus carreras deportivas. En este contexto, se

desarrolló la plataforma educativa EdMedia para promover la Carrera Dual y las políticas de apoyo institucional a través de los Medios Sociales, así como para formar y conectar a los estudiantes-deportistas con especialistas en medios de comunicación, entrenadores y otros stakeholders del mundo del deporte. Tras la puesta en marcha del programa y la plataforma, se utilizó un enfoque cuantitativo a través de un cuestionario con escalas previamente validadas y con altos índices de fiabilidad, midiendo variables como la usabilidad, eficacia del aprendizaje, satisfacción y percepción sobre los contenidos. Ciento cuarenta estudiantes-deportistas y 111 stakeholders deportivos de seis países europeos participaron en la evaluación de la plataforma. Los resultados revelaron cómo percibían ambos grupos los distintos aspectos de la plataforma educativa en línea, e identificaron qué aspectos influían más en la eficacia de la experiencia educativa en línea. Estos resultados son valiosos para mejorar el papel de la plataforma EdMedia en la promoción de las Carreras Duales a través de los Medios Sociales, aumentar la concienciación sobre la importancia y los beneficios de seguir una Carrera Dual, y el apoyo necesario por parte de las instituciones académicas y deportivas. Por último, el estudio ofrece implicaciones prácticas para mejorar el diseño de plataformas educativas online, proporcionando un modelo que combina información y formación académica y deportiva, y destaca la importancia de involucrar a los stakeholders clave en la promoción de la Carrera Dual a través de los Medios Sociales.

Palabras clave: Carrera Dual, Medios Sociales, proyecto EdMedia, plataforma online, stakeholders deportivos.



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Introduction

With the professionalization of sport, many young athletes can often see their sporting careers and their studies overlap. In general, as Capranica et al. (2022) highlight, a sports career starts at a young age, lasts into adulthood, and during its lifespan encompasses increasing volume, intensity, and organization of training and competitions organized at national and international levels. Parallel to those sporting careers, the educational demands increase significantly in academic careers from mandatory education to university (Porto-Maciel et al., 2023). Although the longevity of sporting careers depends on the type of sport, most athletes have to cope with the inevitable decline of their physical abilities at the same time as most workers start to stabilize in their professions in the world of work (Conde, 2013; Moustakas et al., 2022; Vidal-Vilaplana et al., 2024). Between 5-7% of elite athletes retire each year, and they do so at 34 years of age on average. However, the retirement age may vary depending on the type of sport (Lingam-Willgoss, 2021; North & Lavalley, 2004). Therefore, these retired athletes must find the best way to enter the world of work, and academic training is an excellent ally for this purpose (López de Subijana et al., 2015).

This situation, therefore, occurs at an early age, as athletes have to start their professional and high-performance sports careers, combining it with their studies (Mejías et al., 2021). In this way, in the European Member States, competitive sports are mainly structured at club level where talented and elite athletes are at risk of academic or sport drop outs when educational and sport systems present cultural and organizational divergences (Aquilina & Henry, 2010). Therefore, the Dual Career (DC) can only be implemented successfully if the athletes and their environment are aware of its importance (Mejías et al., 2021).

Although athletes are mainly responsible for their DC, several stakeholders have been identified as influencing the micro (e.g., the individual athlete), the meso (e.g., parents, peers, teachers/employers, coaches, sports managers), the macro (e.g., sports clubs/federations, educational institutions, and labor market), and the policy (e.g., national and European governing bodies) levels of DC paths (Guidotti et al., 2015). In this context, existing networks can contribute to the dissemination of the DC concept, its importance in the society and the need of sustainable development of this reality both for student-athletes and stakeholders (Guidotti et al., 2023; Kegelaers et al., 2024). For this purpose of increasing the visibility and echo the impact of the proper development of the DC of young student-athletes, social media (SM) plays a prominent role, as it does in the sport sector in general (Abeza et al., 2022).

SM platforms have rapidly penetrated sports, creating clear implications for various sports stakeholders (Abeza & King-White, 2023; Highfield et al., 2013). Athletes have enormous potential to promote positive values in society, as the sport is generally conceived as a good thing (Coalter, 2015). Furthermore, college athletes represent a visible demographic among which SM use has flourished (Abeza, 2023; Sanderson et al., 2015). Through SM athletes have more control over their self-presentation and expression of identity (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012) and potential benefits of using SM have been highlighted, including interacting with fans, followers, and fellow athletes, constructing a public image, and presenting both athletic and personal lives (Park et al., 2020).

Indeed, SM allows athletes to build their personal brand without much financial investment, as they are easy to use and have benefits related to reaching and accessibility (Bonsu & Anim-Wright, 2024; Geurin-Eagleman & Burch, 2016; Prasetya & Chow, 2023). Moreover, college athletes are active on various SM platforms (Abeza, 2023; Sanderson et al., 2015), and how

an athlete uses these platforms can generate certain expectations among their followers (Frederick et al., 2012). However, due to their impact on society, it is necessary to teach athletes how to use them appropriately. Thus, many athletic departments require their athletes to participate in SM education (Sanderson et al., 2015).

As highly visible representatives of their educational institutions, student-athletes' SM content generates more impact on their educational institutions than content posted by other students (Sanderson et al., 2015). Therefore, athletes should take their image on SM very seriously and be educated to take responsibility for the consequences of inappropriate messages (Javani & Karimivand, 2022).

In addition, these athletes should be aware that one of their main problems is that their sporting career ends at a relatively young age, and their entry into the labour market in the absence of adequate training is a challenging process (Conde, 2013). Even though these students also show their academic achievements, together with the difficulty of combining their high-level sports practice and their studies, they tend to use social networks to promote their sporting performance without considering their educational performance. In this way, they are missing opportunities to raise awareness of the relevance of DCs. Therefore, it is necessary to educate and train student-athletes in the correct use of SM to promote their sporting achievements and their educational achievements and thus balance their DC, so this will help the DC to be seen as something positive in their environment. This positive perception can trickle down to coaches and other educational and sporting institutions, thus helping the correct implementation of the European guidelines published by the European Commission (2012).

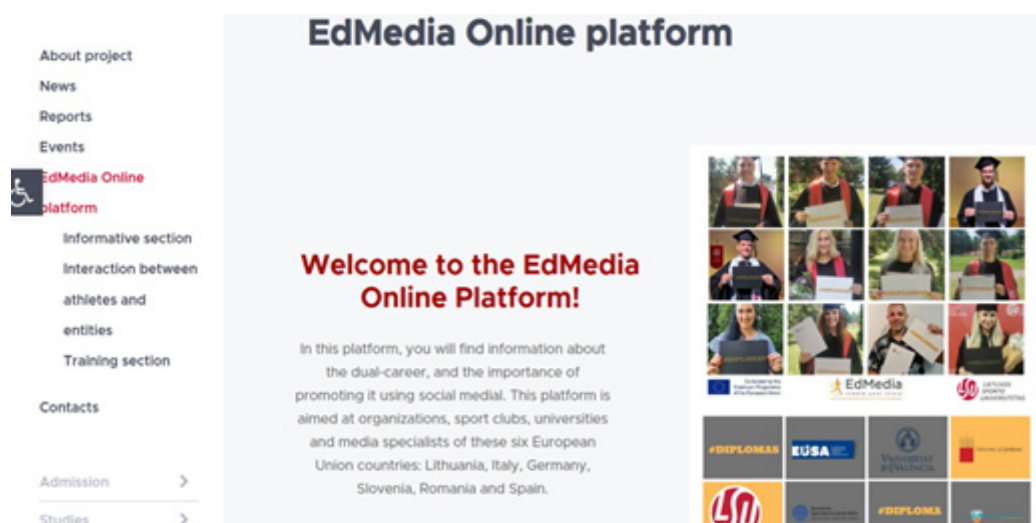
Athletes should be aware of and value their power to influence society through SM. They often have a large following on SM, which makes their publications and opinions very popular. Hence, they should use their influence to encourage society to support student-athletes and recognize their importance. The influential power of athletes should be used to encourage other athletes to pursue the DC and institutions to implement their DC support policies through student-athletes' messages on SM. For this purpose, the EdMedia educational platform was developed. The EdMedia project aimed to proactively change the attitude towards DC for athletes, promoting a positive image and thus encouraging sports organizations to implement the "EU guidelines on Dual Career for athletes". Considering what Vidal-Vilaplana et al. (2022) points out in the future implications of their bibliometric analysis, this project reinforces and serves as a showcase for the development of new materials and training courses for better development of student-athletes. Thus, this study aims to analyse the perceptions about this educational platform from both student-athletes and DC stakeholders. In the next sub-sections, the EdMedia Online Platform is presented.

Description of the EdMedia Online Platform

Specifically, the EdMedia project contributes to implementing seven of the 36 "EU guidelines on Dual Career for Athletes" (European Commission, 2012) related to communication and awareness-raising on DC for Athletes. In particular, the creation of the EdMedia platform aims to change attitudes, create the preconditions for behavioral change and encourage sports organizations to commit to the DC of athletes, based on scientific knowledge and the power of SM (see figure 1). The media play a modulating role in developing and sustaining the national culture, including the DC (Capranica & Guidotti, 2016).

Figure 1

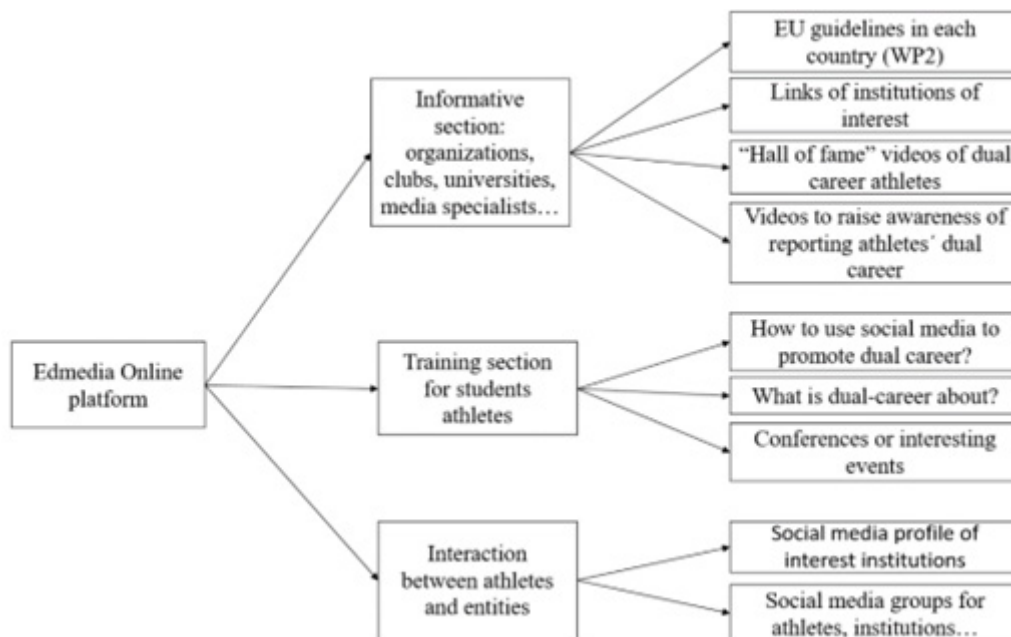
Homepage of the EdMedia Educational Program for Dual-career Promotion Through Social Media



Moreover, to help student-athletes be aware of their potential in SM and how to use it properly, the EdMedia educational program was developed. This educational platform (which homepage is shown in figure 1) comprises three main sections (see figure 2). The first section is informative for organizations, sports clubs, universities, and media specialists; the second

section is specifically for athletes using SM and DC-related conferences or events; and the third section is interactive and allows student-athletes to interact with individuals, groups, or institutions through positive SM profiles.

Figure 2
Structure of the Ed Media Educational Program for DC Promotion Through Social Media



Information Section For Organizations, Clubs, Universities, and Media Specialists

This section, shown in figure 3, aims to inform athletes' sporting and academic environments and the media about the importance of supporting student-athletes. As Vidal-Vilaplana et al. (2022) highlight, it is important to complement the individual approach to DC with a developmental, holistic, situational, and contextual perspective. In this way, for a broader perspective of this educational platform and to raise awareness among all stakeholders involved, the status of the EU guidelines in Ed Media's partner countries is published. In addition, links to academic institutions and sports bodies that support DCs are presented. Some videos of former and current German, Italian, Lithuanian, and Spanish student-athletes and policymakers discussing DCs are also presented in this first section. In general, these four main questions have been addressed: (1) "What keys would you highlight to explain your academic and sporting success?"; (2) "How do you think Social Media can help you to promote a Dual Career?"; (3) "What are your perspectives after finishing a sports career?"; (4) "What advice would you give to all athletes embarking on a Dual Career?".

Figure 3
Information Section of the Ed Media Educational Program

Informative section: organizations, clubs, universities, media specialists

Welcome to the online platform informative section! Maybe you still don't know what dual careers are all about, but don't worry, after going through this section your doubts will be cleared up. In this section you will find videos of student-athlete from different European countries that collaborate in this project speaking about their dual careers. In the second sub-section, you will find interesting videos of different university managers and EdMedia specialist talking about the importance of the dual-career. Finally, in the third sub-section, you will find links from different institution of Europe where you can also find more information about dual career. We hope that after going through this section, you will be aware of the importance of dual careers!

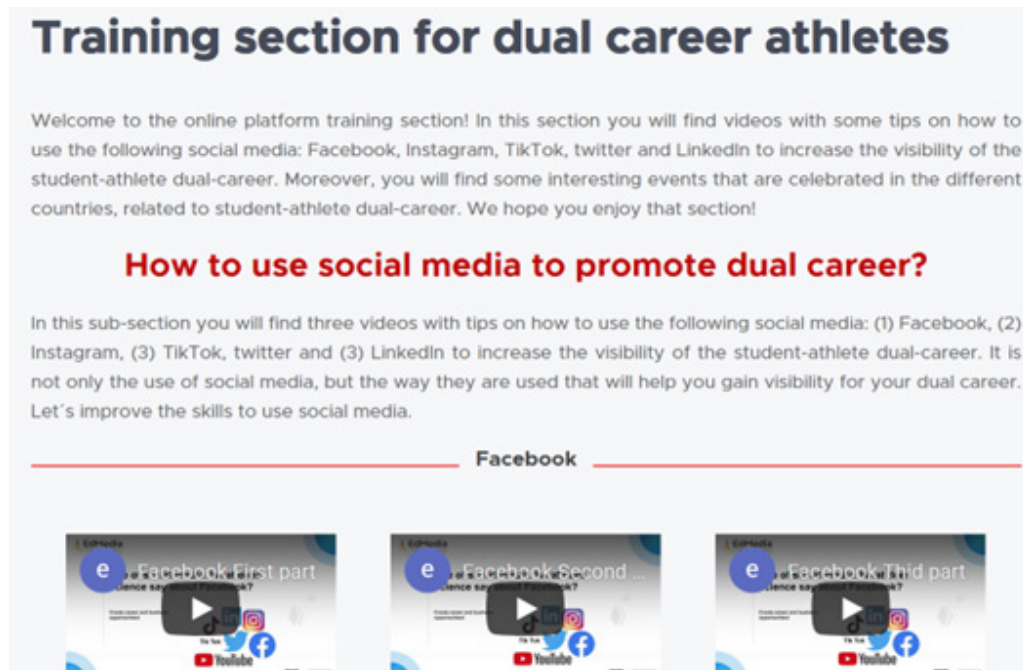
"Hall of fame" videos of dual career-athletes

In this first sub-section, you will find eight videos of student-athletes talking about what dual careers are and how important they are. Specifically, all these students from different European countries (Italy, Lithuania, Slovenia, Germany, Romania and Spain) answer the following questions:

Training Section for Student-athletes

This second section of the platform (see figure 4) aims to educate student-athletes in the use of different SM. To this end, short videos (no longer than 3 minutes) are shown to demonstrate how to use the different social networks: Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, and Twitter. Specifically, three videos have been developed for each SM to help student-athletes use SM. The information contained in the different videos is as follows: the first video explains what these different SM platforms are for and their main advantages and disadvantages; the second video presents some tips to help student-athletes attract people's attention through different SM; and the third video presents some recommendations to help student-athletes use SM to raise awareness about the importance of promoting DC.

Figure 4
Training Section of the Ed Media Education Program



The content of these videos aims to make student-athletes use the different SM to promote their DC, not only their sporting life. To this end, some specific tips are given to improve the visibility of their DC through each SM. Finally, information on relevant conferences or events related to the DC held soon in the partner countries is presented.

Interaction Between Athletes and Other Entities

Finally, the EdMedia educational platform ends with an interactive section (figure 5) where student-athletes have the opportunity to interact with different stakeholders through different SM profiles and groups.

Once this EdMedia educational platform was developed and implemented, it was evaluated by both student-athletes and other stakeholders (coaches, media specialists, etc.) to receive direct feedback from its users and to be able to improve the platform in the future. In this way, the main purpose of this study is to analyse the perceptions about this educational platform from both student-athletes and DC stakeholders, and then to determine which variables predict the effectiveness of the online educational experience.

The effectiveness of the online educational experience is an aspect that is of great importance in modern teaching-learning processes outside the traditional classroom (Peltier et al., 2003). Distance education has changed in recent years, with special emphasis on COVID-19, which was a turning point, due to the need to keep educational systems active despite the circumstances that limited face-to-face attendance (Cifuentes-Faura, 2020). In addition, the supply and demand for distance learning has increased during the last decades thanks to technological advances and the ability to reach a wider range of users without the need for a physical space for the development of the activity (Aldraiweesh & Alturki, 2023). This shift and transition to online education has been driven by the growing acceptance and popularity of online learning offerings in academic institutions around the world (Eom et al., 2006). The distance education system can be viewed, as Eom et al. (2006) argue, as a set of human and non-human entities interacting through computerized learning systems to achieve training objectives, including perceived learning outcomes and user satisfaction, which are measures of the effectiveness of online education systems.

Figure 5
Interactive Section of the Ed Media Educational Program



The constantly evolving e-learning landscape has made it necessary to assess the quality of accreditation (Panigrahi et al., 2021) and this can be assessed by measuring e-learning effectiveness. Learning effectiveness is defined as the degree of achievement of learning outcomes, which are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a learning process (Blicker, 2005). In this sense, Peltier et al. (2003) list a number of criteria that distance learning environments must meet in order to provide the highest quality and, consequently, to obtain the best effectiveness of online learning: clarity of instructions, interpersonal relationship in the learning environment, provides feedback, encourages choice and independent thinking, emphasis is placed on the quality of course content and learning experiences, stimulating and motivating academic environment is provided, clear and useful lectures are offered, there is respect for users, emphasis is placed on interaction between instructor and learners, good organization and effective use of teaching technologies such as multimedia lectures, presentation software and interactive learning tools. Thus, with the purpose mentioned above, it is evaluated how the variables analyzed determine the effectiveness of learning on the EdMedia platform in student-athletes and stakeholders of the CD.

For this purpose, the paper is structured in the following sections: in this first section, the importance and the role of the SM to promote de DC and the EdMedia educational platform are described. In the second section, the methodology used is explained, describing the sample, the instrument, the procedure, and the statistical analyses used for each of the two sub-samples (student-athletes and DC stakeholders). The third section presents the descriptive results of the variables and the scales and their reliability. Then, a correlation analysis is carried out between the variables evaluated, divided into the two sub-samples of users of this platform. Finally, this study ends with the discussion of the obtained results, some conclusions on the evaluation of the platform and future implications in this topic.

Materials and Methods

The methodology used for the data collection and subsequent analysis is explained in this section. To this end, the study sample is presented, followed by the data collection instrument, the procedure, and finally, the data analysis.

Sample

This section describes the sample of student-athletes and stakeholders who participated in this study, testing the EdMedia online platform. Firstly, the sample of student-athletes is described, and secondly, the DC stakeholders' sample.

Student-athletes

The sample comprises 140 student-athletes from different European countries (Slovenia, Romania, Italy, Lithuania, Germany, and Spain) of which 50.70% were male, 47.90% were female, and 1.40% were of mixed gender, with a mean age of

20.51 ($SD=6.35$) years. In terms of country of origin, 18.60% were from Slovenia, 19.30% were from Romania, 15.70% from Italy, 17.10% from Lithuania, 5% from Germany, and 24.30% from Spain.

DC Stakeholders

The sample comprises 111 SM specialists, coaches, and other stakeholders from various European countries (Slovenia, Romania, Italy, Lithuania, Germany, and Spain), of which 56.80% were men and 43.20% were women, their average age being 37.25 ($SD=10.39$), years. Of these DC stakeholders 1.80% were journalists, 55.90% were coaches, 4.50% were SM specialists, 23.40% were sports managers, and 6.30% were event organizers. According to their location, 16.20% were from Slovenia, 28.20% were from Romania, 8.10% from Italy, 24.30% from Lithuania, 17.10% from Germany, and 5.40% from Spain.

Instrument

A questionnaire, whose scales had been previously validated, was used as a data collection instrument. The questionnaire was structured in three sections: (a) Sociodemographic information, (b) Contents and methodology of the program, and (c) Usability and usefulness.

Student-athletes Questionnaire

a) Sociodemographic Information. In this first section, student-athletes were asked about their country of origin, gender, age, sport, and level of competition. They were also asked where they were in their sporting career, what level of education they were pursuing, whether they had received any scholarships, and whether they gave more importance to their studies or their sporting career. Finally, they were asked if they considered that the DC was well recognized in their country, how difficult it was for them to develop their DC, and how they used SM to promote their sporting life and their DC, as well as the channels they used to do so.

b) Contents and Methodology of the Program. This section was composed of six different scales, measuring the Understanding of the Fundamental Concepts [UFC] (five items that refer to the contents and concepts that were worked on in the platform, extracted from Kember and Leung, 2008); the relevance of the contents covered [REL] (five items that refer to the relevance of the contents and resources used in the platform, from Kember and Leung, 2008), the organization of the contents [ORG] (from Kember and Leung, 2008, composed of seven items that refer to the organization of the different resources and contents within the platform), the motivation towards the contents and resources [MOT] (from Kember and Leung, 2008, composed of six items that refer to the interest in the resources used in the platform), the generic competencies acquired [SKILL] (six items referring to the improvement of skills after using the platform, extracted from Byrne and Flood, 2003), and finally, the satisfaction towards the EdMedia platform [SATIS], assessed through three questions: (1) What is your overall satisfaction regarding the contents of the platform?, (2) What is your overall satisfaction regarding the methodology of the program?, and (3) What is your overall satisfaction regarding the usability of the platform?. An ascending five-point Likert scale was used to measure all these items, where one meant strongly disagree and five meant strongly agree.

Regarding the reliability of the Section 2 scales, all of them have good reliability indices according to Cronbach and Shavelson (2004). Specifically, "Understanding fundamental concepts" scale Cronbach's alpha is .82; in "Relevance" scale, the Cronbach's alpha is .88; "Organization" scale Cronbach's alpha is .94; "Motivation" scale Cronbach's alpha is .90; "Generic skills" scale Cronbach's alpha is .96; and in "Satisfaction" scale the Cronbach's alpha is .91. Moreover, in all of these scales, the correlations between the items are above .40, and if any of the items were removed, the Cronbach's alpha value would not improve.

c) Usability and Usefulness. This section was composed of three scales. The first one measured usability [USAB] (ten items that assess how easy it was to use the platform, whether they felt comfortable, and whether it had the necessary resources for their learning, extracted from Meiselwitz and Lu, 2005), the second one perceived value [PVA] (eight items that assess the grade of value they perceived from the received program, from Floyd et al., 2009) and the last one measured learning effectiveness through this platform [EFFECT] (three items that refer to whether they would recommend this platform to other colleagues, whether they had learned with this program, and whether they had enjoyed learning with the platform, extracted from Peltier et al., 2003). A five-point ascending Likert scale was used to measure all these items, where one meant strongly disagree and five meant strongly agree.

According to the reliability of the Section 3 scales, all of them have good reliability indices according to Cronbach and Shavelson (2004). Specifically, "Usability" scale Cronbach's alpha is .95; in "Perceived Value" scale, the Cronbach's alpha is .96; and "Effectiveness of the online educational experience" scale Cronbach's alpha is .93. Moreover, in all of these scales, the correlations between the items are above .40, and if any of the items were removed, the Cronbach's alpha value would not improve.

Media Specialists, Coaches and Other Stakeholders' Questionnaire

a) Sociodemographic Information. Journalists, coaches, and other stakeholders were asked about their country of origin, gender, age, and profession in this first section. They were also asked if they were aware of the term dual-career,

if they thought that social media was appropriate to promote dual careers, and if they considered that dual careers were well recognized in their country. Finally, they were asked which social media they considered being the most appropriate channel to promote dual careers.

b) Contents and Methodology of the Program. This section was composed of two scales, which measured the Understanding of the Fundamental Concepts [UFC] (five items that refer to the contents and concepts that were worked on in the platform, extracted from Kember and Leung, 2008) and the organization of the contents [ORG] (from Kember and Leung, 2008, composed of seven items that refer to the organization of the different resources and contents within the platform). Regarding the reliability of the Section 2 scales, all of them have good reliability indices according to Cronbach and Shavelson (2004). Specifically, **“Understanding fundamental concepts” scale Cronbach’s alpha is .88; and “Organization” scale Cronbach’s alpha is .95.** Moreover, in all of these scales, the correlations between the items are above .40, and if any of the items were removed, the Cronbach’s alpha value would not improve.

c) Usability and Usefulness. This last section was composed of three scales. The first one measured usability [USAB] (ten items that assess how easy it was to use the platform, whether they felt comfortable, and whether it had the necessary resources for their learning, extracted from Meiselwitz and Lu, 2005), the second one measured the satisfaction towards the EdMedia platform [SATIS], assessed through two questions: (1) What is your overall satisfaction regarding the contents of the platform? and (2) What is your overall satisfaction regarding the usability of the platform?, and the last one measured learning effectiveness through this platform [EFFECT] (three items that refer to whether they would recommend this platform to other colleagues, whether they had learned with this program, and whether they had enjoyed learning with the platform, extracted from Peltier et al., 2003). A five-point ascending Likert scale was used to measure all these items, where one meant strongly disagree and five meant strongly agree. According to the reliability of the Section 3 scales, all of them have good reliability indices according to Cronbach and Shavelson (2004). Specifically, “Usability” scale Cronbach’s alpha is .95; in “Satisfaction” scale, the Cronbach’s alpha is .84; and “Effectiveness of the online educational experience” scale Cronbach’s alpha is .90. Moreover, in all of these scales, the correlations between the items are above .40, and if any of the items were removed, the Cronbach’s alpha value would not improve.

Procedure

To collect data on the EdMedia educational platform, the partners in each of the countries participating in this project (Slovenia, Romania, Italy, Lithuania, Germany, and Spain), contacted student-athletes in their respective countries, as well as different stakeholders in the sports and SM fields. Through SM, emails, as well as different events, the target population was reached. The questionnaire was administered online through the Limesurvey platform. The student-athletes took about 15 minutes to answer the questions. In comparison, the time taken by the stakeholders was 10 minutes due to the different lengths of the questionnaire. The Helsinki protocol was followed at all times, the anonymity of the data was ensured, and the voluntary nature of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

In order to proceed with the data analysis, the data were first downloaded from the Limesurvey platform and coded so that they could be entered into the SPSS version 24 statistical package. Subsequently, descriptive analyses of the data (frequencies, percentages, and descriptive), reliability analyses (Cronbach’s alpha), Pearson correlations, and multiple linear regression were carried out. In the latter cases, values were considered statistically significant when $p < .05$. According to Cronbach and Shavelson (2004), for internal consistency, which has been estimated by Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (α), values $\geq .70$, adequate $\geq .60$, and low $< .60$ are considered high values.

Results

In the following section, the results of the platform evaluation are presented. Firstly, the results of the evaluation of the EdMedia platform by the student-athletes and, secondly, by the different stakeholders in the sports sector and SM are presented. The descriptions of all items of the scales are presented.

The descriptive analysis of the sociodemographic data and SM use (section 1), the correlations between the different variables and the platform’s effectiveness, and a regression of the variables influencing the platform’s effectiveness are presented below.

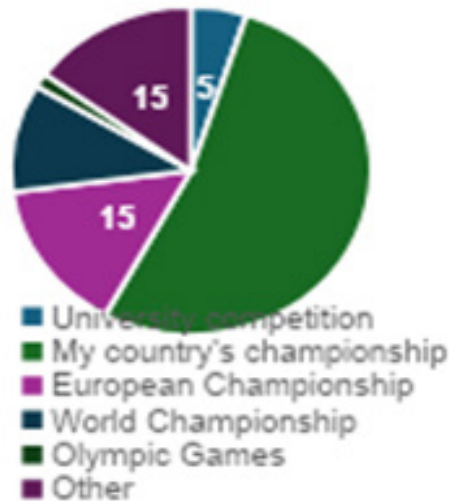
Student-athletes Results

This first section presents the results of the student-athlete sample. Firstly, the descriptive analyses of section 1 are shown, followed, secondly, by the descriptive and reliability analysis of the items that make up the scales. Subsequently, the total means of each of the variables assessed are presented, ending with a correlation and regression analysis between the different variables and the learning effectiveness of the online platform

Descriptive Analysis of the Sociodemographic Data

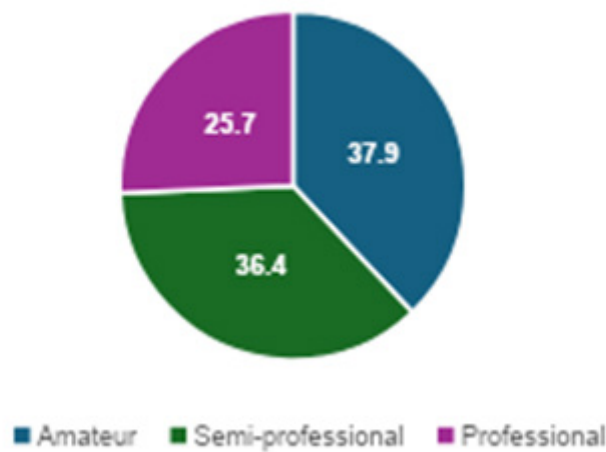
As for the level of competition in which they participated, more than half participated in their national championships (52.90%), followed by European championships (15%) and world championships (10.70%). Only a small percentage participated in university competitions (5%) and the Olympic Games (1.40%), while 10.70% participated in other competitions (see Figure 6).

Figure 6
Level of Competition of Student-athletes



Regarding their sporting level, the vast majority of them were amateurs (37.90%), followed by semi-professionals (36.40%), and finally professionals (25.70%). These results can be seen in figure 7.

Figure 7
Level of Sport Proficiency



As for the educational level at which the students were studying, 33.60% were undergraduates, followed by 32.10% were vocational students, and 27.90% were Master's students. Only 6.40% were PhD students (see figure 8). Regarding whether the students had received any scholarships, the majority of them did not receive any (58.90%), while 39.30% did receive it.

Figure 8
Level of Current Studies



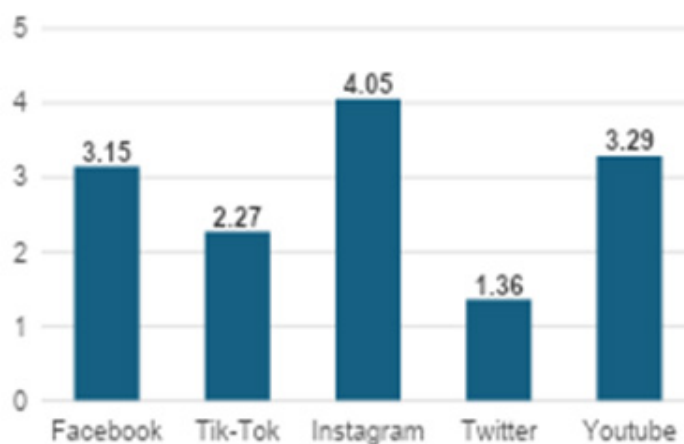
As for how student-athletes considered themselves, most of them highlighted that they were more dedicated as a student-athlete (65.70%), than as an athlete student (34.30%). Regarding what was more important for them, their studies or their sporting career, most of them indicated that their studies (65.20%) were more important than their sporting career (34.80%). In terms of the perception these students had of the importance of the dual-career in their country, the mean was 2.76 ($SD = 1.14$), on a five-point Likert scale, where one meant very little, and five meant very well recognized. Likewise, regarding the difficulty student-athletes find in combining their sporting and academic life, the mean was 3.01 ($SD = 1.10$), also using a five-point ascending Likert scale, where one meant challenging, and five meant very easy. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1
Importance of DC and the Difficulty of Combining the Sporting Life With Academic Life

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
To what extent do you think the importance of Dual Career is recognized in your country? (1 very little recognized; 5 very well-recognized)	2.76	1.14
How difficult is it for you to combine your sporting life with your academic career? (1 very difficult; 5 very easy)	3.01	1.10

An ascending five-point Likert scale was used to measure how often the student-athletes used the different SM. One meant never, and five meant every day. In terms of the most used social media, Instagram stands out in the first place with a mean of 4.05 ($SD = 1.47$), followed by YouTube with a mean of 3.29 ($SD = 1.53$), and very close Facebook with a mean of 3.15 ($SD = 1.72$). As for the SM they use the least, twitter stands out with a mean of 1.36 ($SD = 0.89$), followed by Tik Tok with a mean of 2.27 ($SD = 1.54$). Figure 9 shows the results.

Figure 9
Use Frequency of Different Social Media Channels



Moreover, regarding the use of SM to promote the DC, only 29.30% used it for this purpose, while 55.70% used it to promote their sporting life.

Descriptive Analysis of the Contents and Methodology of the EdMedia Online Platform

Among student-athletes, perceptions about all the scales used in this second section were slightly positive. All averages exceed the midpoint (3.00) of the 5-point Likert scale, so their opinions are considered positive regarding the contents and methodology of the platform. In this sense, the Relevance of the contents and resources ($M = 3.92$; $SD = 0.86$) as well as their Organization ($M = 3.82$; $SD = 0.91$) were the variables most highly valued by the student-athletes, and those with the lowest scores were Motivation towards the contents ($M = 3.43$; $SD = 0.97$) and Generic Skills developed through the platform ($M = 3.35$; $SD = 1.15$). Table 2 shows the general results of each scale and the specific results of each item.

Table 2
Descriptive and Reliability Analysis of the Items of the Section 2 Scales

Items	M	SD
Understanding fundamental concepts scale	3.57	0.88
This program concentrates on the fundamentals of the concepts of student-athlete's Dual Career	3.75	1.19
In each video the key points of using Social Media to promote dual-career were made clear	3.59	1.36
We were not overloaded with a lot of videos and information	3.47	1.27
In this program I learnt the key principles of Social Media to promote Dual Career	3.36	1.16
The number of videos which covered the using Social Media to promote dual-career was adequate	3.70	.98
Relevance scale	3.92	0.86
I could understand the relevance of what was taught	3.88	1.02
The theory was related to practical applications	3.89	1.00
Examples of student-athletes were used to show the relevance of the material	3.96	1.10
I could see the relevance of the contents because real-life examples were given	4.05	1.04
Current issues were used to make the program interesting	3.83	1.09
Organization scale	3.82	0.91
The web page was well organized	4.02	1.99
This web page was well planned	3.95	1.04
Each section was well planned	3.88	1.00
The expected learning outcomes of the program were clear	3.76	1.14
The objectives of the program were clear	3.97	1.11
The videos and the different resources helped us achieve the expected learning outcomes	3.68	1.11
This program catered well to our future needs	3.51	1.26
Motivation scale	3.43	0.97
The high expectations of this program motivated me to learn	3.36	1.18
The videos were enthusiastic	3.28	1.16
I found the resources of the program/web page enjoyable	3.55	1.15
The topic of the program was interesting	3.80	1.07
The videos encouraged us to try hard to use Social Media to promote dual-career	3.33	1.33
This was a demanding program but I learnt a lot from it	3.27	1.21
Generic skills scale	3.35	1.15
The program developed my abilities of using Social Media to promote dual-career	3.37	1.30
The program sharpened my skills of using Social Media to promote dual-career	3.32	1.22
The program helped me develop my ability to use Social Media to promote dual-career	3.29	1.26
As a result of the program, I feel confident about using Social Media to promote dual-career	3.35	1.31
The program improved my skills about using Social Media to promote dual-career	3.36	1.27
My program helped me to develop the ability to use Social Media to promote dual-career	3.42	1.29
Satisfaction scale	3.58	1.05
What is your overall satisfaction regarding the contents of the platform?	3.63	1.07
What is your overall satisfaction regarding the methodology of the program?	3.62	1.10
What is your overall satisfaction regarding the usability of the platform?	3.49	1.26

Descriptive Analysis of the Usability and Usefulness of the EdMedia Online Platform

In student-athletes, perceptions about all the scales used in the third section were also slightly positive. All averages exceed the midpoint (3.00) of the 5-point Likert scale, so their perceptions are considered positive in terms of the usability and usefulness of the platform. The Usability of the platform ($M = 3.75$; $SD = 0.95$) was the most highly valued variable by the student-athletes, and the variable with the lowest score was the Effectiveness of the online educational experience ($M = 3.58$; $SD = 1.18$). Table 3 shows the general results of each scale and the specific results of each item.

Table 3
Descriptive and Reliability Analysis of the Items of the Section 3 Scales

Items	M	SD
Usability scale	3.75	0.95
It was simple to use the web page	4.02	1.14
I can efficiently complete the course of the web page.	3.86	1.16
I feel comfortable using the web page	3.81	1.19
It was easy to learn to use the web page	4.02	1.11
The web page gives error messages that clearly tell me how to fix problems	3.44	1.26
Whenever I make a mistake using the web page, I recover easily and quickly	3.56	1.15
The support information provided with the web page (such as online help, on-screen messages and other documentation) is clear	3.76	1.12
The web page interface is pleasant	3.87	1.02
The web page has all the functions and capabilities I expect it to have	3.71	1.01
Overall, I am satisfied with the web page.	3.93	1.05
Perceived value scale	3.61	1.05
The program was challenging/stimulating	3.40	1.16
I learned something valuable	3.65	1.18
The program increased my interest in the subject	3.59	1.26
The program helped me to learn/understand the subject matter	3.68	1.10
The readings/text were valuable	3.69	1.19
The assignments added to course understanding	3.61	1.23
What I am learning in this program will be important to my future	3.61	1.27
The assignments gave me a sense of the application of this program to the "real world"	3.68	1.15
Effectiveness of the online educational experience scale	3.58	1.18
I would recommend this program to friends/colleagues.	3.61	1.26
I have learned a lot in this program.	3.50	1.32
I have enjoyed taking this program.	3.64	1.22

Correlation Analysis Between the Different Variables and the Effectiveness of the EdMedia Online Platform

Subsequently, a correlation analysis was carried out between the different scales measuring the perception of the EdMedia educational platform, to find out if they correlated with the effectiveness of the online educational experience. As can be seen in Table 4, all the variables correlated in a statistically significant ($p < .001$) and positive way.

Table 4
Pearson's Correlation Between the Different Variables and the Effectiveness of the Platform

	UFC	REL	ORG	MOT	SKILL	SATIS	USAB	PVA	EFFECT
UFC	1								
REL	.72***	1							
ORG	.71***	.80***	1						
MOT	.66***	.64***	.81***	1					
SKILL	.59***	.57***	.67***	.83***	1				
SATIS	.64***	.68***	.81***	.78***	.76***	1			
USAB	.57***	.72***	.83***	.69***	.57***	.81***	1		
PVA	.55***	.64***	.77***	.84***	.83***	.82***	.80***	1	
EFFECT	.47***	.53***	.75***	.83***	.78***	.75***	.71***	.92***	1

Note. UFC-Understanding fundamental concepts; REL-Relevance; ORG-Organization; MOT-Motivation; SKILL-Generic skills; SATIS-Satisfaction; USAB-Usability; PVA-Perceived value; EFFECT-Effectiveness of the online educational experience; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .005$, *** $p < .001$.

The strongest correlations with the effectiveness of the platform were found with the variables perceived value ($r = .94$; $p < .001$), and motivation ($r = .83$; $p < .001$). The weakest correlations with platform effectiveness were found with the understanding of fundamental concepts ($r = .47$; $p < .001$), followed by relevance ($r = .53$; $p < .001$).

Regression Analysis Between the Different Variables and the Effectiveness of the Online of the EdMedia Online Platform

Finally, a multiple linear regression model was performed to determine the predictor variables of the effectiveness of the online educational experience. In this way, a statistically significant model was obtained, which explained 87% of the variance of the effectiveness of the online educational experience (EFFECT).

Specifically, the variables UFC, REL, ORG, and PVA were statistically significant predictors of EFFECT ($p < .05$). Specifically, understanding fundamental concepts ($\beta = -.10$; $p < .05$) and relevance ($\beta = -.15$; $p > .05$), were found to do so negatively. However, the variables organization ($\beta = .27$; $p < .001$), and perceived value ($\beta = .83$; $p < .001$) were found to do so positively, the latter being the most important variable, as it had the greatest effect. The results can be seen in Table 5 below.

Table 5
Multiple Linear Regression Between the Different Variables and the Effectiveness of the Platform

	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	p	Collinearity statistics	
	β	Standard error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.080	.202		.396	.693		
UFC	-.143	.070	-.101	-2.05	.043	.425	2.356
REL	-.220	.085	-.149	-2.58	.011	.307	3.262
ORG	.367	.109	.271	3.36	.001	.158	6.316
MOT	.188	.097	.151	1.93	.056	.169	5.931
SKILL	.004	.074	.004	.05	.961	.198	5.038
SATIS	-.014	.080	-.012	-.17	.863	.210	4.764
USAB	-.132	.097	-.106	-1.36	.177	.171	5.864
PVA	.928	.099	.826	9.40	.000	.133	7.504

Note. EFFECT- Effectiveness of the online educational experience (dependent variable); Independent variables: UFC- Understanding fundamental concepts; REL-Relevance; ORG-Organization; MOT-Motivation; SKILL-Generic skills; SATIS-Satisfaction; USAB-Usability; PVA-Perceived value; $F_{(8)} = 106.604$; $p < .001$; $R = .94$; $R^2 = .88$; $R^2 \text{ adj} = .87$.

Media Specialists, Coaches, and Other Sport Stakeholders

This second section presents the results of the sample of media specialists, coaches, and other stakeholders. Firstly, the descriptive analyses of section 1 are shown, followed by the descriptive and reliability analysis of the items that make up the scales. Subsequently, the total means of each of the variables assessed are presented, ending with a correlation and regression analysis between the different variables and the learning effectiveness of the online platform.

Descriptive Analysis of the Sociodemographic Data

First, SM specialists, coaches, and other stakeholders were asked if they knew the term "Dual Career". Almost all of them answered in the affirmative (94.60%), with only 5.40% of them not knowing the term. Secondly, they were asked whether they considered SM a suitable medium to promote the DC of elite athletes, with more than three quarters (87.40%) answering yes, while 12.60% thought that SM was not a suitable medium for this purpose.

Regarding the perception these stakeholders had of the importance given to DC in their country, the mean was 3.32 ($SD = 1.03$), on a five-point Likert scale, where one meant very little, and five meant very well recognised.

Moreover, a five-point ascending Likert scale, with one meaning not appropriate and five meaning very appropriate, was used to determine which SM outlets journalists, coaches, and other sports stakeholders' thought were the most appropriate for promoting DC. In terms of the most appropriate SM, Instagram stands out in first place with a mean of 4.26 ($SD = .99$), followed by YouTube with a mean of 4.17 ($SD = 1.14$), and very close Facebook with a mean of 4.15 ($SD = .96$). As for the SM they use the least, Tik Tok stands out with a mean of 2.80 ($SD = 1.49$), followed by Twitter with a mean of 3.14 ($SD = 1.34$).

Descriptive Analysis of the Contents and Structure the EdMedia Online Platform

Among media specialists, coaches and sport stakeholders, perceptions about all the scales used in this second section were positive. All averages exceeded the 4.00 punctuation of the 5-point Likert scale, so their opinions are considered sig-

nificantly positive regarding the contents and methodology of the platform. In this sense, the Understanding of the fundamental concepts ($M = 4.17$; $SD = 0.76$) as well as the Organization of contents and resources ($M = 4.01$; $SD = 0.90$) were highly valued by the student-athletes. Table 6 shows the general results of each scale and the specific results of each item.

Table 6
Descriptive and Reliability Analysis of the Items of the Section 2 Scales

Items	M	SD
Understanding fundamental concepts scale	4.17	0.76
This program concentrates on the fundamentals of the concepts of student-athlete's Dual Career	4.09	0.91
In each video the key points of using Social Media to promote dual-career were made clear	4.34	0.83
We were not overloaded with a lot of videos and information	4.17	0.94
In this program I learnt the key principles of Social Media to promote Dual Career	4.06	1.02
The number of videos which covered the using Social Media to promote dual-career was adequate	4.13	0.94
Organization scale	4.01	0.90
The web page was well organized	4.02	1.99
This web page was well planned	3.95	1.04
Each section was well planned	3.88	1.00
The expected learning outcomes of the program were clear	3.76	1.14
The objectives of the program were clear	3.97	1.11
The videos and the different resources helped us achieve the expected learning outcomes	3.68	1.11
This program catered well to our future needs	3.51	1.26

Descriptive Analysis of the Usability and Usefulness of the EdMedia Online Platform

In media specialists, coaches and sport stakeholders, perceptions about all the scales used in the third section were also considerably positive. All averages exceeded 4.00 of the 5-point Likert scale, so their perceptions are considered positive in terms of the usability and usefulness of the platform. In contrast to student-athletes, the Effectiveness of the online educational experience ($M = 4.28$; $SD = 0.84$) was the most highly valued variable as well as the Satisfaction of this group ($M = 4.14$; $SD = 0.75$), and the variable with the lowest score, but also in a positive way, was the Usability of the platform ($M = 4.10$; $SD = 0.72$). Table 7 shows the general results of each scale and the specific results of each item.

Table 7
Descriptive and Reliability Analysis of the Items of the Section 3 Scales

Items	M	SD
Usability scale	4.10	0.72
It was simple to use the web page	4.34	0.83
I can efficiently complete the course of the web page.	4.04	0.71
I feel comfortable using the web page	4.08	0.97
It was easy to learn to use the web page	4.16	0.88
The web page gives error messages that clearly tell me how to fix problems	4.05	1.07
Whenever I make a mistake using the web page, I recover easily and quickly	3.98	0.91
The support information provided with the web page (such as online help, on-screen messages and other documentation) is clear	3.98	0.76
The web page interface is pleasant	4.07	0.95
The web page has all the functions and capabilities I expect it to have	4.21	0.89
Overall, I am satisfied with the web page.	4.22	0.92
Satisfaction scale	4.14	0.75
What is your overall satisfaction regarding the contents of the platform?	4.24	0.76
What is your overall satisfaction regarding the usability of the platform?	4.05	0.86
Effectiveness of the online educational experience scale	4.28	0.84
I would recommend this program to friends/colleagues.	4.23	0.90
I have learned a lot in this program.	4.18	0.95
I have enjoyed taking this program.	4.42	0.91

Finally, regarding the question "To what extent does this web page increase your awareness of the importance of promoting student-athletes Dual Career?" where one means not very much, and five very much, the mean was 4.16 ($SD = .79$).

Correlation Analysis Between the Different Variables and the Effectiveness of the EdMedia Online Platform

Subsequently, a correlation analysis was carried out between the different scales measuring the perception of the EdMedia educational platform to find out if they correlated with the effectiveness of the online educational experience. As can be seen in Table 8, all the variables correlated in a statistically significant ($p < .001$) and positive way.

Table 8
Pearson's Correlation Between the Different Variables and the Effectiveness of the Platform

	UFC	ORG	USAB	SATIS	EFFECT
UFC	1				
ORG	.88***	1			
USAB	.72***	.78***	1		
SATIS	.76***	.72***	.80***	1	
EFFECT	.75***	.68***	.89***	.81***	1

Note. UFC-Understanding fundamental concepts; ORG-Organization; USAB-Usability; SATIS-Satisfaction; EFFECT-Effectiveness of the online educational experience; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .005$, *** $p < .001$.

The strongest correlations with the effectiveness of the platform were found with the variable satisfaction ($r = .81$; $p < .001$), and usability ($r = .80$; $p < .001$). The weakest correlations with platform effectiveness were found with the organization ($r = .68$; $p < .001$), followed by the understanding of fundamental concepts ($r = .75$; $p < .001$).

Regression Analysis Between the Different Variables and the Effectiveness of the EdMedia Online Platform

Finally, a multiple linear regression model was performed to determine the predictor variables of the effectiveness of the online educational experience in this group of specialists. In this way, a statistically significant model was obtained, which explained 75% of the variance of the effectiveness of the online educational experience (EFFECT).

All variables in the model were statistically significant predictors of EFFECT ($p < .05$). Specifically, the understanding fundamental concepts variable was found to be the most important or influential variable ($\beta = .47$; $p < .001$), followed by the usability variable ($\beta = .47$; $p < .001$). Whereas the variables satisfaction ($\beta = .33$; $p < .001$) and organization ($\beta = -.36$; $p < .05$), were found to exert a lesser force, and moreover, the latter did so in a negative sense. The results can be seen in Table 9 below.

Table 9
Multiple Linear Regression Between the Different Variables and the Effectiveness of the Platform

	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Collinearity statistics	
	β	Standard error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-.325	.268		-1.213	.228		
UFC	.513	.125	.473	4.123	.000	.184	5.445
ORG	-.333	.114	-.359	-2.930	.004	.161	6.195
USAB	.548	.115	.472	4.768	.000	.246	4.063
SATIS	.374	.103	.334	3.626	.000	.286	3.502

Note. EFFECT- Effectiveness of the online educational experience (dependent variable); Independent variables: UFC- Understanding fundamental concepts; ORG-Organization; SATIS-Satisfaction; USAB-Usability; $F_{(4)} = 78.432$; $p < .001$; $R = .87$; $R^2 = .76$; $R^2_{adj} = .75$.

Discussion and Conclusions

The EdMedia platform is a tool that aims to raise awareness among student-athletes, coaches, media specialists, and other stakeholders about the importance of using SM to make DCs visible. It is a platform that aims, on the one hand to make DCs visible in order to raise awareness of the importance of promoting them, to train student-athletes on how to use different SM to make DCs visible, and finally, to allow student-athletes and stakeholders to interact with each other through

the use of different SM. Once this platform was created and implemented, which was one of the main objectives of the edMedia European project, the results showed very positive feedback from its users.

Thus, after analysing obtained data and existing literature in the topic, it is important to highlight different aspects in order to discuss what the results shows, both in general aspects of the importance of SM in promoting DC and the specific aspects of the online educative platform itself. As the European Commission (2012) highlight, at macro level, media and SM have a tremendous presence and power of shaping society's perceptions of athletes so that the discourse around student-athletes in the media could be particularly relevant. In fact, technology plays an increasing role in generating, communicating and sharing information, opposed to merely consuming media content (Capranica et al., 2021). However, as Hopkins et al. (2013) points out, not all media and SM use is positive and many student-athletes might not fully understand the potential risks associated with their activities and actions taken online. For this reason, education plays an important role, and the development and implementation of programs and initiatives like edMedia educational platform aligns this requirement and the need of assistance that sport organizations and educational institutions could provide to student-athletes in getting media attention for a positive intersection with their DC, which will allow them to be inspiration and example of good practice for others (Capranica et al., 2021).

Firstly, in terms of the educational platform results itself, is important to point out, first of all, that regarding the first target group of users (student-athletes), they presented very positive evaluations of all the evaluated aspects of the platform. The most highly rated variables were the platform's relevance for giving visibility to the degree course, followed by the organization of the content and its ease of use. On the other hand, the minor valued variables were the development of generic skills, motivation towards the platform, and understanding the platform's fundamental concepts. Findings also showed that the understanding of the fundamental concepts of the platform and program, the relevance and the organization of the contents and resources, and the value that they perceived of what they have experienced are key components that determine the positive effectiveness of the online educational program. This information is useful both for improving the developed program and for future projects with similar perspectives and goals. Online education is notably being improved and increased in the last decades, and brings multiple and different advantages, most of them in the line of approaching knowledge and training to broader audiences in all the parts of the world (Miller & Sisk, 2019; Wang et al., 2023). In line with this, student-athletes who face a DC, taking into consideration the complexity of their careers, are an important focus group to whom this kind of resources are very useful (İonuț et al., 2023). In this way, they have shown their perceptions of this tool, so future work has to follow the valuable information that arises from analysis, both to better development of online programs and also increasing their knowledge and skills in promoting their DCs through SM.

Secondly, concerning the second target group of users (SM specialists, coaches, and other stakeholders), they also presented very positive evaluations of all the aspects of the EdMedia platform evaluated. The most highly rated aspects were the effectiveness of the online learning experience, followed by the understanding of critical concepts. On the other hand, in terms of the worst-rated aspects of this platform, the organization and usability stand out. Finally, as to whether the website increased their awareness of the importance of promoting the DCs of student-athletes, the average was also relatively high. Attending to the different environments and the role they play in the development of DCs (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2017), the social environment plays a very important role (Mejías et al., 2020). Therefore, knowing the perceptions of the members of these environments is very important, since they can provide valuable information, not only in this case about the developed platform, but also about other aspects that the student-athletes themselves do not manage to distinguish or notify. Knowing the perception of the main stakeholders of the CD about not only the development of the career itself but also aspects such as the promotion of this through SM and how they conceive the training tools for student-athletes is of great importance for the necessary and correct improvement of the DC environments and development.

Therefore, these results highlight the value of the EdMedia platform to help making DCs visible through SM, both to student-athletes and to coaches, media specialists, and other stakeholders. It is an educational platform that both student-athletes and other stakeholders have very positively valued. Although some aspects still need to be improved, in general, they are delighted with the EdMedia educational platform. Most importantly, they seem to have gained the awareness that "what they post on their SM today can change their future".

Finally, regarding those aspects of the platform that should be improved, student-athletes highlighted generic skills and motivation towards the platform. Therefore, based on this, it might be necessary to add more videos or digital resources (Morales-Salas, 2021) on how to use SM to promote DC. In addition, perhaps finding athletes who are using SM to promote their DC and act as role models for these athletes could increase their motivation. However, in the case of SM specialists, the organization of content and usability should be improved. Therefore, consideration should be given to how the organization of the information section can be improved, to make it more visual, while trying to make the platform more interactive. The design of a more advanced website can be very useful for this.

Concluding, and as Capranica et al. (2021) explain, specifically in a social level, student-athletes rarely feature in media and, therefore, this limited representation minimizes the relevance of their academic commitment, with media not shifting the focus from their athletic achievements. Despite SM are particularly relevant to student-athletes for both athletic and self-promotion to connect with a wide variety of stakeholders, a lack of scientific interest on the role of media and SM on attitudes towards DC has been identified (Capranica et al., 2021), being edMedia an starting point to contrast this gap in sport sector and society. Coinciding in what Capranica et al. (2021) suggest, further DC research is needed to shed lighter on this DC relevant topic, which could contribute to the general awareness of the crucial role of SM and media stakeholders in and beyond Europe. In this line, the findings and the online educational program for athletes, sport organizations, and SM stakeholders could foster a positive exposure of student-athletes and a better understanding of their capability to meet the DC demands for gathering competencies that can increase future professional opportunities at the end of their competitive career (Ionuț et al., 2023).

Practical and Theoretical Implications

In view of the above, the present study, and the project developed in question, presents different implications and relevant information for future work and projects that seek to develop online educational and interactive programs, both in the field of CD and in any other field that pursues similar objectives. At a theoretical level, this study exposes which are the characteristics or components that have the greatest relationship or influence on the effectiveness of an online educational program, as well as those that users highlight less positively. Furthermore, in line with the theme and orientation of the online educational platform, i.e., the promotion of DC through SM, the study serves as a precedent for future studies and/or projects that seek to delve deeper into the issue and investigate the potential of these media in relation to student-athletes and their careers in both sports and academics.

These theoretical contributions can contribute, in the same way, at a practical level, in order to improve this reality and reach a greater number of athletes who can learn about the multiple benefits of following a DC and increase social awareness on the subject. In the same way, the present study can also serve for educational and sports institutions, as well as other stakeholders of DC to maintain attention on the improvement of the conditions required by student-athletes to be able to cope with the combination of careers and, in addition, to keep in continuous training in non-formal educational aspects that are not taught in the different levels of studies. The results of this study provide valuable insights for policy-makers, educators, and sport organizations aiming to enhance DC pathways through the strategic use of SM. Organizations could integrate similar online platforms into their communication and training frameworks, focusing on increasing the visibility and perceived value of DC among student-athletes and their environments. Moreover, stakeholders are encouraged to invest in tools that improve user experience, such as interactivity, and emphasize the training of athletes in digital literacy to maximize the positive use of SM in promoting their careers.

The findings underscore the broader societal benefits of fostering digital competence through platforms like EdMedia. Beyond the specific target group of student-athletes, the strategies and resources developed could serve as a blueprint for promoting responsible and effective use of social media across diverse sectors. By empowering individuals to leverage social media for visibility, personal branding, and constructive engagement, these tools can contribute to greater societal awareness of dual careers, highlighting their importance as a means of personal development and social mobility. Moreover, these insights could inform public initiatives aimed at improving digital literacy, bridging gaps in access to educational resources, and encouraging positive online behaviors that benefit both individuals and their communities

All in all, the study highlights the importance of SM, as well as the need for a greater degree of development of tools and resources that allow student-athletes to connect with different stakeholders and to be trained in the correct use of technological and communication advances to promote and enhance their careers and, ultimately, to achieve a fair transition to the world of work after retirement from sports.

Limitations and Future Research

While the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the development and implementation of online educational platforms like EdMedia, some limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample size was limited to specific user groups within the European context, which may affect the generalizability of the results to other regions or cultural settings. Second, the evaluation of the platform's impact was primarily based on short-term user feedback, leaving the long-term effectiveness of the platform unaddressed. Lastly, the study focused on DC promotion within the sports context, which may not fully represent the challenges faced by individuals in other fields.

Future research could address these limitations by conducting longitudinal studies to assess the sustained impact of such platforms, as well as exploring their adaptability in non-European and non-sports-related contexts. Furthermore, leveraging emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence or augmented reality, could be investigated to enhance interactivity, user engagement, and the personalization of content delivery.

Ethics Committee Statement

The study was conducted following the Declaration of Helsinki and the ethics committee was not required following the guidelines of the university where this study was conducted (University of Valencia). According to the Ethics and Human Research Committee of this university, it is not necessary to obtain approval to conduct an opinion survey on a topic or issue, professional situation or satisfaction with certain matters.

However, it is mandatory to include a preamble in the survey with information presented about the project (topic and purpose), the benefits that the information collected by the survey may bring, the willingness to participate and the anonymous treatment of the data (Data Protection Act). It is also mandatory to indicate a contact person to request further information and to include a paragraph in which the respondent voluntarily agrees to participate in the research and tacitly gives his/her consent by answering the survey. Thus, following these guidelines indicated by the Ethics and Human Research Committee of the University of Valencia to develop this type of research, all this information was added at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest. The funding entity had no influence on the design of the study, the analysis of the data, or the interpretation of the results.

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Authors' Contribution

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author (m.huertas.gonzalez@uv.es).

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