



# Master's degree thesis

**IDR950 Sport Management**

**A systematic review (meta-analysis) of the possible reasons behind the dropout of children/adolescents in organized sport.**

Shapna Akter

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# Preface

This thesis concludes my two-year-long journey in the Master of Science in Sport Management program at Molde University. It has been a challenging and exciting journey that has given me immense experience, knowledge, and skills. It will always be the most remarkable journey of my life.

First, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my parents, who love me the most, and my only brother, who unconditionally supported me through my Norway journey. My parents never wanted me to go far from them, especially from Bangladesh to Norway. If my brother were not beside me and convinced my parents, my dream would never have come true.

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Lastly, thanks to myself for holding the courage to stay in Norway without family for a long time and complete my study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Shapna Akter

# Abstract

A context analysis theory was used to systematically review adolescents' reasons for dropping out of organized sports based on three supporting questions; (1) Differences in dropout rates based on individual or team sports; (2) Differences in dropout rates based on gender? And (3) The dominant scientific fields in delivering this knowledge about dropouts. Keyword searches for the population, context, and constructs of interest (i.e., dropout) identified articles from the entire contents of the following databases: MEDLINE, PsycINFO Sage Journals, ScienceDirect, and SPORTDiscus, from 2010 until March 2022. The initial search yielded 692 potential studies; however, only 13 met the selection criteria. Most studies were undertaken in Europe (Norway (3), Sweden (2), Germany, Spain, and France), and others were from the USA (3), Canada, and Australia. The most frequent reason for dropout was sports enjoyment and time demands. Age was also positively associated with sport dropout, and the dropout rate is highest at the age of 15-17 years old. Individual sports athletes feel more performance pressure and, eventually, have a higher dropout rate than team sports athletes. On the contrary, Female athletes have deeper psychological intensity than male athletes, leading to higher dropout rates than male athletes. However, most of these athletes in the reviewed articles did not "drop out." Instead, they chose other leisure-time activities or individual sports that were more personally meaningful and satisfying to them over time, implicitly their basic psychological needs. The psychological research field is significantly dominant in sociological research when identifying why to drop out of sports. Furthermore, evidence shows that socioeconomic status (SES) is associated considerably with sport enjoyment, social identity, peer effect and dropout.

Keywords: Adolescents; Children; Athletes; Organized sports; Dropout; Systematic review.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Dropout in Youth Sports

Sport plays a vital role in developing psychological and social well-being and promoting positive health behaviors among children and youth (Annesi et al., 2007; Gore et al., 2001, Found in Crane and temple, 2014, p115). Participating in various activities and sports from an early age is an accepted part of childhood development in most countries. However, it is generally accepted that children participate in sports for a multitude of reasons. Significant motives for participation include having fun, improving skills, making friends, or getting/staying in shape (Gill, Gross & Huddleston, 1983, Salguero, Gonzdlez-Boto, Tuero & Mirquez, 2003a found in Salguero et al., 2006 p216). However, the same motives do not always emerge in all studies. It has been demonstrated that participation motivation may change or depend upon factors such as age, gender, perceived ability, sport type, and level, or the influence of family, peers, and coaches (Martin & Dodder, 1991; Molinero et al., 2006). Thus, the term “dropout” is quite frequently used in relation to youth sports. A significant level of dropout from sports has been examined by researchers during adolescents (Guzmán and Kingston, 2012). According to Crane and Temple (2015), only half of the research between 1982 and 2011 clearly defined dropping out. Furthermore, the existing dropout definition lies between ‘activity specific dropout’, where individuals discontinue a specific sports activity while continuing other sports activity, and ‘domain-general dropout,’ where athletes permanently withdraw themselves from all sports activities (Butcher et al., 2002; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2018: 228; Gould, 1987, found in Eliasson and Johansson 2019). Dropout is used when (in this particular case) a male or female youth ceases to play a sport permanently. Research across countries like, German, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Canada, and the USA has shown that dropout rates increased during certain age ranges (Baron-Thiene, 2015; Carlman et al., 2013; Enoksen, 2011; Guzmán & Kingston, 2012; Monteiro et al., 2017). Sisjord (1993) claims that the reasons behind the dropout rate in competitive youth sports must be considered a natural trial-and-error process since some athletes decide to quit sports willingly. In contrast, some have no choice but to withdraw from competitive sports (Found in Enoksen 2011). The decline in youth sport participation starts at the age of 13, and continues until late adolescence (i.e., 17-18 years) when only approximately 30% of all youths still participate in organized sports (Swedish Sports Confederation, 2011; Wagnsson, 2009 found in Carlman et al., 2013). According to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (2022), across the seven sports

categories tracked by SFIA team sports participation, approximately 2 million fewer people participating in team sports in 2021 than 2019. SFIA data shows that the total number of Americans participating in a team sport dropped by 3.8 million players in 2021. Though it was in the covid-19 pandemic situation. However, no matter the situation, there is always a decline in both team sports and individual sports. In addition, the attrition rates from sports are much higher for girls than for boys, and girls tend to withdraw from athletic participation at earlier ages than boys (Kirshnit, Ham, & Richards, 1989, found in Slater and Tiggemann 2011 p456).

## 1.2 Reasons of Sports Dropout

Research shows that Adolescent or individual sports athletes are more likely to play their sport for goal-oriented reasons instead of for fun when compared to their counterparts participating in team sports. Pluhar et al. (2019) said that among young athletes, anxiety and depression are more common in those who play individual sports than those who play team sports. In addition, the teenage period is when everyone experiences biological changes and maturation that leads to many changes that could result in performance slumps at the end of puberty because there are no more extended performance gains due to biological development (Baron-Thiene & Alfermann, 2015). Several reasons were found for the dropout, such as "lack of interest," "no time to study," or "fear of public appearance at a younger age," "very little motivation," and "Age effect." These mentioned reasons would allow children and youth to explain how their sports experience shaped their motives to drop out (Crane & Temple, 2015). More and more children nowadays are engaged in multiple sports to have fun or be a part of school activities. However, focusing on one sport with high levels of practice intensity or the focus on early age specialization can cause **overuse** and **burnout** problems for young people (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008). This burnout does not necessarily occur on a physiological and psychological level, with concentrated stress building up over time (Harris & Watson, 2014).

It must also be acknowledged that among these reasons for dropout, gender and age differences should also be considered (Møllerløgkken et al., 2015). Most of the reviewed literature in this study shows that females are more likely to drop out from sports at an early age than males (Enoksen, 2011; Keathley et al., 2013; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015; Eliasson & Johansson, 2019; Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). This attrition is explained as the effects of teasing, coaching, and study pressure. Interviews with former soccer players by While Keathley et al. (2013)

showed that time was an issue for both genders; however, the coach was a slightly more critical factor for the girls than boys. According to several studies of young people aged 10 to 20 years, girls seem to withdraw from the sport more frequently and earlier than boys do (Enoksen, 2011; Møllerløgken et al., 2015; Trondman, 2005), found in Eliasson and Johansson 2019

There are several potential reasons for the observed gender differences in adolescent sport participation, including differences in the availability of sporting options and gender role expectations. Body image concerns are common among women of all ages. They are especially prevalent during adolescence when most girls experience body image dissatisfaction and express a desire to be thinner (e.g., Attie & Brooks-Gunn, 1989; Grigg, Bowman, & Redman, 1996; Thompson, Coovert, Richards, Johnson, & Cattarin, 1995, found in Slater and Tiggemann 2011). It was expressed by some of the participants of Slater and Tiggemann's 2011 research that being 'cool' or feminine is not a part of female athletes in sports. Female athletes feel embarrassed about being watched, affecting both the frequency and quality of their participation in the male-dominated sports industry (Slater & Tiggemann, 2011).

Female athletes also reported being teased by same-sex and opposite-sex peers (This is in line with Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) found in Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). Therefore, the social context is an integral part of girls' sports experiences and predicts their desire to continue participation (Murray & Sabiston, 2021). From the study, it can say that most of the dropout is voluntary dropouts who want to engage in other interests and activities (Enoksen, 2011)

The current results support theory (Scanlan, Carpenter, Simons, et al., 1993) and empirical evidence (Gibbons, 2014), indicating that the social context is an essential part of girls' sports experiences and predicts their desire to continue participation (Murray & Sabiston, 2021)

### 1.3 Research Questions

The purpose of the review is to see the possible reasons behind the dropout of children or adolescents in organized sports in recent years from a theoretical perspective. Dropout reasons are a broad range of study; therefore, the focus to narrow down the research raises more sub-questions to discover the reasons behind dropout from organized sports.

The sub-questions to answer the main question are-

1. Whether are there differences in dropout rates based on individual or team sports?
2. Whether are there differences in dropout rates based on gender? And
3. What scientific fields are dominant in delivering this knowledge about dropouts?

## 1.4 Thesis Structure

This master thesis comprises six chapters: Introduction, Theory, Research Design, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion. Firstly, the introduction describes the background of the research topic and the purpose of the research. It will present a theoretical framework and literature on the topic in the second chapter, Theory. The third chapter, Research Design, presents the methods and strategies used in this research for data collection and synthesis. The fourth chapter is about the data analysis and results. In contrast, the fifth chapter is a discussion of the result. The last chapter, Conclusion, summarizes the findings, limitations and further research recommendations.

## 2. Literature Review

According to Edward Bradford Titchener(1927), A theory that define words or ideas relies on available context or mental imagery, bring in some aspects of the context(Urpo Kovala, 2014) correlated with a particular finding contextual theory. This theory of context provides us with different guidance to the dichotomy problem by way of accounts of reading. A radical solution to the problem is to conceptualize both texts and contexts as parts of networks with no prominent center (such a configuration, the interpreting subject is also presented not as something apart but as part of a network.

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

Interpretive philosophers and sociologists seek to understand social reality's very basis and source. They often delve into the depths of human consciousness and subjectivity in their quest for the fundamental meanings which underlie social life (Burrell & Morgan, 2017)

#### 2.1.1 Sociological & Psychological Research in Sports Dropout

### 2.2 Dropout Literature

The literature for the review selected based on all the inclusion criteria described in Research Design chapter. Special focused were on dropout or intention to drop out, organizational sports

and age. Here Table 1. illustrate the initial literature that collected by following all the measures of data extraction and synthesis

Relevant Research in Dropout	Research area
Murray & Sabiston, 2021	Dropout reasons, Adolescent Girl Athletes
M. Bentzen et al., 2021	A longitudinal study on organized sport in Norway
Eliasson & Johansson,2020	The disengagement process among young athletes
Pluhar et al. 2019	Anxiety or Depression Individual and team Sport Athletes
Lagestad & Sørensen 2018	changes in sports enjoyment
Thiene & Alfermann, 2015	Personal characteristics, dual career
Keathley et al., 2013	Gender similarities and differences
Delorme et al., 2011	Relative age effects
Slater & Tiggemann, 2011	Gender differences, teasing, self-objectification, and concerns
Armentrout & Kamphoff, 2011	Organizational Barriers and Factors

Table 1. Initial literature with its research area.

On the other hand, for more search of the Literature, few studies were found by cross-sectioning in reference lists (Table 2)

Relevant Research in Dropout	Research area
Carlman et al., 2013	Causes and consequences
Guzmán & Kingston, 2012	Motivational analysis as a function of age and gender
Enoksen, 2011	Drop-out rate and reasons, Norwegian track and field athletes

Table 2. Literature was found in the reference list with its research area.

A concise summary of the selected literature is presented below-

### [Murray and Sabiston, 2021](#)

Social environment plays a vital role in athletes' experiences of their enjoyment of the sport, and these experiences, in most cases, influence athletes' decision about continuation or dropout from sport. This study aimed to examine associations between social identity, sport enjoyment, and sports dropout. Adolescent girls (N= 150) who participated on a community sports team completed a questionnaire assessing social identity with their team and enjoyment of the sport. Furthermore, their sport participation status was measured one year later. A mediation model was run to examine descriptive statistics and correlations between study variables where participants' age and socioeconomic status (SES) were included as covariates in the mediation model. Social context (social identity) was included as a predictor of enjoyment, which predicts sport dropout. The average age of the sample was 15 years (age= 12-18). The descriptive

analysis indicates no significant differences in age and social identity between the girls who dropped out or remained in sports. However, the girls who dropped out reported lower levels of sport enjoyment,  $t(63) = 3.06$ ;  $p < .01$ , compared with the girls who did not drop out. Age was not significantly associated with sports enjoyment but positively associated with sport dropout. The mediation model revealed that socioeconomic status (SES) was significantly associated with sport enjoyment but not dropout from sports. Data showed that a higher level of social identity gives higher levels of enjoyment of the sport, and enjoyment relates to a lower likelihood of dropping out of the sport in the following year, supports previous studies (Scanlan, Carpenter, Simons, et al., 1993, Gibbons, 2014).

#### [M. Bentzen et al., 2021](#)

This study aimed to understand the complex process involved with sport attrition among Norwegian adolescents by employing a prospective cohort design (Mann, 2003). The core finding of this study indicates that all adolescents had gone through a decision-making process over time to determine whether they should continue or quit. The focus group was the potential athletes who decided to quit playing handball for their team during the project period. These athletes were invited to participate in an individual open interview. However, the results revealed a broad variation within individual perception and interpretation of what each adolescent experienced as meaningful. From the individual interviews, the data revealed three main reasons that influenced the participants' decision to quit: 1) Fun toward seriousness and development, (2) Struggles with balancing study, sports, and other leisure-time activities, (3) richness of upper secondary school.

When adolescents moved from children's sports to youth sports and began collaborating with a part-time paid coach, the focus changed toward seriousness and skills development. To some athletes, team handball was a valuable break from school and meeting old friends, whereas some athletes had different perspectives. Several participants who took the game seriously wanted to improve their skills and win handball matches. Conflicts between the athletes who wanted more flexible participation and to have fun with their friends and those who wanted to give their best and win handball matches created dissatisfaction among the athletes. Furthermore, some participants claim they needed help finding a balance between the team handball demands, increasing school requirements, and leisure time with other friends. With

increasing age, athletes develop a greater awareness regarding their level of performance and preferences. Different kinds of feelings from different athletes greatly affected the meaningfulness of their life and being in the handball team, like "Cannot be master of it," 'less exciting,' 'Not a serious sport,' 'interest in trying new things,' 'expanded social life' and so on. By giving equal importance to the athlete's situation and need, the youngsters not only took their sports experiences into account when quitting the organized sport but considered their evaluation of meaningfulness in other areas of life.

However, most of these athletes did not "drop out." Instead, they deliberately chose other leisure-time activities or individual sports that implicitly satisfied their basic psychological needs as more personally meaningful to them over time.

#### [Eliasson and Johansson 2020](#)

In Sweden, floorball is the second most popular sport in terms of the number of activities in sports clubs. Even though many young athletes drop out of floorball, like in other sports in Sweden, few studies have been conducted on withdrawal from floorball. This study aimed to analyze and describe the initial stages of teenage girls' sport disengagement process based on data from semi-structured interviews on Ebaugh's sociological theory of disengagement. The sociological theory of disengagement is a four stages process of analyzing the withdrawal from a role: (1) first doubts, (2) seeking alternatives, (3) the turning point (Dropout), and (4) creating the ex-role. The participants were 12 girls who dropped out from floorball, aged 12-17, and their parents. The girls and the parents went through the individual interview and asked a series of questions containing the following seven themes: (1) background; (2) involvement (values, feelings, and expectations when participating); (3) first doubts; (4) the decision process (who was involved, interactions, duration of the process); (5) the final decision to withdraw (critical factors inside and outside sport, freedom of choice); (6) after the decision (announcement, contact with team); and (7) potential prevention (what could have persuaded the girls to continue).

The data reveals that most girls looked positively during their initial time playing floorball. The girls and their parents expressed having fun, coaching, team cohesion, and feelings of belonging to the floorball community. Despite these positive experiences, all the girls in this study withdrew from the sport. At first, conflicting comments from the coach, not being selected to play games, and putting more focus on performance enhancement caused the girls

to question their own skill levels, ambitions, and efforts. Several girls expressed that the increased study, practice demands, team changes, new groups, new coaches, focus on sports performance, and age differences created a negative feeling and insecurity and made the sport less enjoyable.

Further, the girls experienced increased focus on results by the new coach and less attention to their feelings and needs. On the other hand, girls expressed doubts and started questioning themselves about their skills and ambitions. Becoming the best in the sport is different from the goal for everyone. Therefore, it was not possible to play just for fun when other teammates had the highest expectation of the performance. In the disengagement process, some athletes were involved in other sports or leisure activities, and some were looking for their other passions.

Participants stated that reaching their decision to quit was difficult in the beginning. However, the mentioned situations triggered the athlete's doubts and led to eventual discontinuation and dropout. The three identified changes connected to the sports organization were 'increased performance and result orientation, 'new team compositions', and 'new coaches.' The three salient factors connected to the athletes were 'other interests,' 'lack of time,' and 'high demands on themselves, correspond to previous research on reasons for dropping out (Carlman et al., 2013; Crane & Temple, 2015). During the disengagement process. The consequence of a 'silent process' is a dropout from the sport. After the decision-making stage, the athletes saw mixed feelings about not playing floorball. It was expressed as a relief for some athletes; however, some girls stated that they might have reconsidered their decision if someone had contacted them during their silence or after the discontinuation of the sport.

The present study shows that exiting is not always what the athlete wants.

[Pluhar et al. 2019](#)

The study's objective was to determine whether 1) the proportion of athletes with mental health diagnoses and 2) athlete motivations for playing differ between team sports and individual sports. In this paper, we focused on the second research question and will present data according to the same question. A cross-sectional study of 756 athletes aged 18 years and younger (6-18) included in these analyses who went through an injury prevention evaluation (IPE), at a sports injury prevention center between April 2013 and February 2018. Pearson's Chi-square or Fisher's exact test was used to compare the categorical variables. Here, the reason for playing was coded into thematic categories. The result illustrates that among the athletes,



depression and anxiety were more common in those who play individual sports than in team sports. In addition, individual sport athletes were more likely to play their sport for goal-oriented reasons instead of for fun when compared to their counterparts participating in team sports who play their sport primarily for fun-oriented reasons. Among the participants, a higher proportion of female athletes only participated in individual sports than in team sports. Athletes who took part in Individual athletes felt increased pressure to perform since they overly focused on their own preparation and outcomes. Therefore, dedicate all their energy to mega sports events. As a result, shame after failure significantly affected individual sports athletes more than team sports athletes. A higher proportion of adolescent individual sports athletes also reported that they trained year-round for only one sports event a year. This consistent attention to one sport for one sports event puts them into a dilemma, suggests a challenging investment in a single activity, and makes single-sport athletes more vulnerable to anxiety and depression compared to team sports. Furthermore, a proportion of individual sports athletes reported more anxiety or depression (13%) than team athletes (7%). However, the study shows no significant difference in anxiety and depression between athletes who mainly played for fun compared to those who played goal-oriented (8.1% vs. 7.8).

### Lagestad and Sørensen 2018

It is a longitudinal study on the evolution of enjoyment in organized sports and factors associated with the enjoyment of sports from a longitudinal perspective. This study aimed to evaluate self-reported enjoyment in sports training and competitions and which factors are associated with enjoyment in sports training and competitions. This study employed quantitative data (questionnaires) to measure the enjoyment in sports and sports competitions, VO<sub>2</sub>peak, PA level, participation in unorganized PA and sports, height, and weight among 116 adolescents (47 participated in sport) aged 14 ( $14 \pm 0.5$ ) years in six randomly selected groups. These variables were assessed at six measurement times, at the end of each school year, from 14 years of age to 19 years of age.

The tasting result showed that the enjoyment in sports competitions stays the same, while enjoyment in organized sports training decreases from the age of 14 to the age of 19. Furthermore, enjoyment in training increases with the frequency of sports participation, physical activity level, and enjoyment in sports competitions at the age of 14. In contrast, it increases with participation in unorganized physical activity and enjoyment in sports

competitions at 16. However, at 19 years of age, enjoyment increases only with enjoyment in sports competitions. Correlation analyses also indicate that the enjoyment of sports competitions increases with the frequency of sports participation. Participation in physical activities and being overweight showed no association with gender and enjoyment in training or sports competitions for any measure of time. While 81.4% of the adolescents included in the analyses reported perfect enjoyment in the beginning, 19 years girls reported 8.7% poor enjoyment of sports enjoyment with sports competitions. Hence, girls have a significant dropout level compared to boys in sports enjoyment in sports competitions. Three of the six independent variables (overweight, VO<sub>2</sub>peak, gender) presented bivariate associations with the enjoyment of sports competitions enjoyment about sports competitions at 14 years of age. At 16 years of age, none of the seven independent variables show bivariate associations with the enjoyment of sports competitions.

In comparison, only participation in sports showed bivariate associations with the enjoyment of sports competitions at 19. The results also showed that adolescents experience very good and good levels of enjoyment in organized sports, during lower secondary and high school, both in training and competitions. However, enjoyment decreased at the secondary school level (age 14-19). There was a significant difference in the enjoyment of sports in the pre-test related to training and competitions between the adolescents who did not drop out from organized training and those who did drop out. The results showed that the dropout adolescents reported a lower level of enjoyment in participation in sports and the considerable ages between 14 and 19. While 93% of the participants recruited to the study participated in organized sport at 14 years old, 75% participated in sports at 16, and (only) 48% participated at 19. It was reasonable to see that adolescents who did not enjoy competitions were more vulnerable to dropping out of the sport. The findings indicate that enjoyment of sports competitions is the main predictor of sports continuation or dropout.

#### [Thiene & Alfermann 2015](#)

This study aimed to identify the personal characteristics among the athletes that predict dropout versus continuation from different sports who attend sports schools in Germany. These schools provide an optimal environment for athletes to combine an academic education with a sports career. At the end of the 10th grades school year, 125 (52 girls, 73 boys) active athletes followed until the end of grade 11 from five out of six sports schools in Saxony, Germany, completed a standardized questionnaire for measuring personal characteristics deemed

essential for a successful career e personality traits (Freiburger Persönlichkeitsinventar, FPI), goal orientation (Sport Orientation Questionnaire - SOQ), and volitional skills (Volitional Components in Sport - VKS). Participants received a booklet containing four sets of questionnaires for demographic and biographical personality tests using FPI-R (Freiburg Personality Inventory-Revised). The seven subscales were presented to measure life satisfaction, social orientation, achievement orientation, exhaustion, physical complaints, worry about health, and openness. Among 125 athletes, 69 (55%) participated in individual sports such as track and field, swimming, and diving in the summer and cross-country skiing, biathlon, and ice skating in the winter. The remaining 56 (45%) student-athletes participated in team sports such as basketball, handball, soccer, and volleyball.

One year later, in grade 11, approximately 30% ( $n = 37$ ) were no longer actively competing in their sport and had dropped out. The majority of the dropouts were females ( $n = 23$ ). Among the 37 dropout athletes, 31 had been involved in individual sports (20 winter and 11 summer sports), and only 6 athletes had been participating in team sports. A multivariate analysis of variance with the seven subscales of the FPI revealed significant gender differences; female student-athletes outscored male athletes, reporting increasingly physical complaints. Female athletes were more likely to drop out of competitive sports than male athletes. The multivariate analysis of the SOQ revealed that even during their active career, before dropping out, these athletes were less motivated to compete than were their non-dropout peers. However, there were no gender differences on the other five subscales of the personality inventory. Female athletes were less likely to participate in individual sports than male athletes. Among the participants were more female athletes than male athletes and more individual sports athletes than team athletes who resigned from the sport after grade. In addition, those athletes who dropped out had experienced a shorter sports career than the non-dropouts, even though they did not differ in chronological age. Whereas the dropouts had been active in their particular sport for 5.8 years ( $SD=4.44$ ), the non-dropouts had started 8.3 years before the first measurement point ( $SD = 3.2$ ). This result suggests that the active athletes in the sample had a more extended sports history and higher training loads than the dropouts. This research found differences in the probability of dropping out between athletes involved in individual sports compared to those involved in team sports. Such differences may result from differences in the psychological situations of the two types of sports. For example, while in team sports, it is difficult to attribute success or failure to individual athletes, in individual sports, an athlete generally receives the credit for success and the blame for failure.

Consequently, the probability that losing in a competition will facilitate an athlete's decision to quit competitive sports is higher in individual sports than it is in team sports. Many dropouts participated in winter sports and attended the same sports school, indicating significant peer effects.

### [Keathley et al. 2013](#)

This research aimed to investigate reasons for sport continuation and withdrawal in male and female athletes playing high-level competitive soccer. They did an investigation between both active players and former players. They interviewed 22 youths (mean age = 16) who had played soccer since approximately age 5; half had left the sport an average of two years previously, and half had maintained their commitment. Whereas former players responded to questions about their reasons for leaving the sport, current players discussed perceived benefits and challenges of participation and also the impact of gender on their soccer experiences. Primary reason Inductive that athletes perceived the time demands of competitive soccer to be a for discontinuation (former players) as well as a significant challenge (current players). Furthermore, Girls were more likely than boys to attribute the decision to leave soccer to negative coaching experiences and to view the social rewards of playing soccer as a primary benefit, suggesting a stronger relational orientation among female than male athletes. Coaching was the most frequent explanation among girls for leaving soccer than time. However, only one boy even mentioned coaching as factor boys and girls also were quite similar in their beliefs about two other primary challenges of the sport: performance pressure and frustration with losing. Both issues speak to the psychological intensity of the sport for athletes, irrespective of gender coaching emerged as such a critical factor to girls because they placed greater emphasis on relationship issues when sizing up the overall merits of their sports experience than boys. Gender difference in the relative importance of social connections extends far beyond initial interest in sports. When questioned about participants' own views of gender differences in soccer, only the girls described psychological differences between male and female athletes. There were some psychological gender differences in sports enjoyment and claim that boys have more fun playing soccer than girls. When evaluating the overall merits of their sports experience, coaching emerged as a critical factor for girls. Girls described psychological differences between male and female athletes. The two genders were more similar than different regarding time demands and performance pressure. Both gender experience difficulties and become psychologically stressed when losing challenging games. It was a frequent practice among athletes that they had to be perfect, staying at that high level for every

game and keeping it at that high level all the time. Losing challenging games created a disturbing emotional impact. Athletes felt like they should have spent their time wisely since they worked so hard, and it did not pay off. Across all participants, the three most frequently cited reasons for discontinuing soccer were time (mentioned by 72% of players), the coach (55%), and conflicts with other sports (45%). The following most prevalent reason for leaving soccer was traveling, and the demands of other sports were rated as important by girls (four) than boys (one). Participants who participated in more than one sport felt a need to choose between sports, a decision that was related to the time demands of soccer. A few parents believed female teams were given fewer resources, which they felt could contribute to lessened competitiveness. Some parents also felt female soccer players were more sensitive and emotional than males. There are more groups on the girls' teams, especially between those that go to the same school. It was sometimes unintentional, but other team members felt left out and discontinued the practice.

#### [Delorme et al. 2011](#)

The current research aimed to investigate the relative age effect (RAE) as a factor of French basketball dropout. Birth dates of all licensed athletes (Male =544,498), Female =530,147) during the season 2005-2006 but not 2006–2007 collected from the database of the French Federation of Basketball (FFBB) at the end of the season 2006–2007. Several studies indicated differences in the RAE according to the level of practice: the higher the level of practice, the larger the RAE

In this research, the overall dropout rate was slightly higher for boys than girls (29.42% & 28.15%, respectively).

Data illustrate that at the age of 7–8 and 15–17, there was no significant difference between the observed and the expected theoretical distributions. Concerning girls, there were a significant biased distribution in the “9–10 years old,” “11–12 years old,” “13–14 years old,” and “15–17 years old” categories. There was an overrepresentation of dropouts among players born in Q3 and Q4 and an underrepresentation of players born in Q1 and Q2. Similarly, the same asymmetry showed an underrepresentation of dropouts among male players born in Q1 and Q2 and an overrepresentation among those born in Q4 in the “9–10 years old,” “11–12 years old,” and “13–14 years old” categories and in the first year of the “15–17 years old” category. The distribution of dropout was the most biased by height differences, that is, the “13–14 years old” for boys and the “11–12 years old” for girls. It was likely more susceptible

to frustration that the effect observed occurs among the “intermediate”- level players. An absence of biased distribution of dropouts had also observed among 16- and 17-year-old girls and boys. For both genders, it was in the “15–17 years old” category that the dropout rate was the highest (36.72% and 37.14% of dropouts for male and female players, respectively). The lowest dropout rate was observed in the “13–14 years.

### [Slater and Tiggemann 2011](#)

This research aimed to investigate gender differences in adolescent participation in sports and other physical activities and experiences of teasing, and body image concerns specific to the physical activity environment, using the theoretical framework of Objectification Theory. The 714 participants (332 girls, 382 boys) ranged in age from 12 to 16 years and from secondary schools of medium socioeconomic status in Adelaide, South Australia. All sports and activities were classified as either ‘aesthetic’ (Strong emphasis on appearance or thinness (ballet, gymnastics, swimming, diving, aerobics, ice skating, and all types of dances) or ‘non-aesthetic.’ The gender differences in participation in sports and physical activity were significantly visible. The girls (66.1%) currently participated in an organized sport, and the most popular sports played were: netball, volleyball, and tennis. However, more boys (78.5%) currently participated in an organized sport; the most popular sports played were: football, cricket, soccer, and basketball. Surprisingly, 62.8% of the girls engaged in other fitness activities, and nearly a quarter reported exercising at a gym.

On the contrary, over half the boys engaged in other fitness activities, and a smaller number (15.4%) exercised at a gym. Gender differences in perceptions of teasing, Girls reported significantly higher overall levels of teasing experiences than boys. While playing sports or doing other physical activities: girls more frequently felt that people were staring at them because of their appearance than boys. Girls reported more experiences of being made fun of/laughed at because of their appearance than boys. Girls also reported more teasing for being uncoordinated than boys and more experiences of being called names regarding size or weight. It appears that girls reported being teased approximately equally by same-sex and opposite-sex peers (i.e., both girls and boys), whereas boys are teased disproportionately more by same-sex peers. In order to examine the influence of playing sports on body image concerns, body image and disordered eating variables had a significant main effect for several sports played for girls but not boys. Many girls think belongingness in sports is not cool or feminine for them, and embarrassment about being watched affects both the frequency and the quality of their sports

participation. Follow-up analyses indicated that girls who exercised at a gym had higher levels of body shame than girls who did not exercise at a gym. These experiences may contribute to eating disorders, depression, and sexual dysfunction in girls. However, while there was no significant main effect for boys, individual analyses demonstrated that boys who exercised at a gym had a significantly higher drive for muscularity. Most of the girls and boys who participated in an activity classified as 'aesthetic' were also participating in 'non-aesthetic activities. It was not possible to categorize participants in this way. Rather, correlations between the amount of time spent on aesthetic and non-aesthetic activities and body image concerns. It revealed no significant differences between the time spent observed for the girls and the boys.

#### [Armentrout and Kamphoff, 2011](#)

The purpose of this research was to gain an understanding of organizational barriers and personal reasons that may lead youth hockey athletes to discontinue participation. Parents (N = 237) whose children discontinued participation in hockey were surveyed using demographic and open-ended questions. The authors tried to figure out the perceptions of the organizational barriers, personal reasons that caused their child to discontinue, and the changes that could lead their child to continue involvement. Youth ice hockey parents or guardians were targeted instead of the youth for three reasons. First, the parent makes the ultimate decision to sign them up. Second, the MN Hockey administrators were concerned that the youth might not be involved in decision-making regarding participation because it is too expensive. Thirdly, parents may be more aware of the lack of structure in practice or the politics and organizational barriers than the youth. The demographic information was analyzed through descriptive statistics such as percentages and distributions. The factors parents liked about the youth sports organization were 'Fun & enjoyment, friendships, Personal & character development, Well run organization, and Learning skills.' However, many parents indicated multiple reasons for their children quit playing hockey. Among all the reasons, the top five reasons they stopped playing are 'Too much time, wants to do other things/activities, Financial, not fun anymore, and Lack of interest/did not like it.' The findings revealed that youth hockey players' attrition ranged from 4 to 17 years old, with an average attrition age of 10 which is a much younger attrition age than previous research. In previous studies, (Ewing and Seefeldt, 1989) The attrition peaked at 13-14 years old. Close to 27% of the youth discussed by the parents were girls, while approximately 73% were boys. This attrition occurs for requiring too much time, travel

commitments, or training at an early age. The findings revealed that the critical factor the parents liked is that youth had fun, enjoyed playing, and learned new skills.

### [Carlman et al., 2013](#)

This study aimed to examine distinct types of dropouts (sport-specific or domain-general), dropout reasons with demographic variables (gender, age, and ethnicity), sports, physical activity, and underlying motivational processes. Data collected from pupils residing in schools, western and middle parts of Sweden, and 712 participants who dropped out of organized sports were included in this study. The dropout age group was divided into three age groups: a) dropout before 11 years old, b) dropout between 11-13 years, and c) dropout after 13 years old. MANOVA a multivariate analysis of variance, was performed for each variable with the 12 dropout reasons (not fun, other leisure activities, more time for friends, other sports, more time for school, too much pressure, not good enough, did not like the coach, did not like the team members, did not get to play/compete enough, long distance to training place, too expensive ) as dependent variables. Commonly dropout sports were football 57%, handball 17%, floorball 14%, and martial arts 14%.

The MANOVA variable analysis revealed overall gender differences in dropout. Boys placed greater emphasis on “Other leisure activities” than girls. There were no significant differences between girls and boys regarding sport-specific or domain-general dropouts or physical activity after domain-general dropouts. The univariate analyses illustrate that the dropout reason below 11 years old were “Not fun” and “Not good enough” became less important with age. Between the ages of 11-13, the motive of “Too much pressure” and “Did not like the team members” was significantly important. Finally, the results showed that the dropping out due to the coach was significantly higher rated among the over 13 years age group compared to the youngest age group. The univariate analyses in ethnicity showed significant effects in dropout for “Have more time for school”. Time related reasons were the primary causes for dropping out. However, no significant multivariate difference was seen in girls between Scandinavian and foreign backgrounds. Hence, this motive was significantly more important for boys with foreign backgrounds than Scandinavian boys.

Further analysis showed no differences in dropout types (i.e., sport-specific or domain-general dropout) between athletes with Scandinavian and foreign backgrounds. However, girls with foreign backgrounds were significantly more in the domain-general dropout group (67% vs. 42%) dropped out over 13 years old, whereas boys with the same environment leveled in the



sport-specific dropout group (33% vs. 58%). However, Girls with foreign backgrounds were found to be less physically active after dropping out of organized sports. Athletes with low versus high levels of perceived physical competence dropped out to a greater extent because of experiencing too much pressure. Athletes reported low versus high social competence in dropouts because they did not like their teammates at the age 11-13. The MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate difference between team sports and individual sports concerning dropout reasons. Athletes who dropped out of team sports scored higher in “Not good enough” and “More time for school” than dropouts from individual sports. For individual athletes, “Costs” and “Long distance to training place” scored higher than team sports dropouts. However, no differences were found in dropout frequency when comparing between team sports and individual sports in relation to sport-specific or domain-general dropout.

#### [Guzmán and Kingston, 2012](#)

This paper aimed to evaluate a model grounded in a self-determination theory (SDT) to describe competitive sport dropout as a function of age and gender to predict sport dropout. Variables included in the model were: psychological need satisfaction, self-determined motivation, perceived conflict between sport and study, and intention to practice sport and drop out. A prospective study was performed for 19 months. The sample comprised 857 athletes aged 11-19 (mean=15.3). Specifically, three age groups were considered for this study: 11-13 years old, 14-16 years old, and 17-19 years old. After 19 months, 26.7% of athletes (N=229) had dropped out, and 73.3% of athletes (N=628) persisted. A factorial analysis of variance revealed significant effects for dropout in psychological need satisfaction, self-determination index (SDI), intention to practice sport, and perceived conflict were the dependent variables. This regression path was proposed based on the suggestion that psychological need satisfaction influences motivation and other factors, such as well-being, which could determine the intention to practice sport and persistence/dropout. Results of the inter-subject effects test indicated that persistent athletes with higher need satisfaction and SDI had a lower perception of conflict between sport and study and higher levels of intention to practice sport. This previously supported research suggested substantial consequences of psychological need satisfaction on emotions, cognitions, and behaviours (Standage et al., 2003, 2005, 2006). An initial MANOVA was conducted to examine whether dropout, gender, and age, or interactions between them, had any significant effect on the dependent variables considered in the study. With age, SDI was considerably declining, and less intention to practice sports. This new

regression path indicates that, although self-determined motivation positively predicted the intention to practice sport, the effects were lower compared with studies that did not consider the direct effects of psychological need satisfaction on the intention to practice sport (Sarrazin et al., 2002). This result suggests that emotional variables related to psychological need satisfaction could be more critical than self-determined motivation in predicting the intention to practice sport and, consequently, the dropout of sport. It is essential to consider that the relationship between self-determined motivation and perceived conflict was negative and significant.

### Enoksen 2011

It is a longitudinal study of 25 years (1975-2000). The study aimed to identify the total dropout rate and dropout reasons within a group of promising track and field athletes. 300 talented Norwegian track and field athletes aged 16 and  $\pm 2$  years participated in this study. The participants were primarily students and defined as potential elite athletes involved in a training program oriented towards the development of national-caliber performers. The 25 years started with collecting questionnaires administered in 1975, 1983, and 1989 and in-depth interviews were conducted in 1989 and 2000. Afterward, a chi-square test was administered to see the differences between male and female athletes dropping out and the most significant reasons that influenced the athletes' decision to drop out from competitive track and field sports activities. The dropout rate significantly increased over time, from phase to phase, and it was higher among female than male athletes. In the paper, the three most mentioned reasons for dropping out through the longitudinal study were injuries 24.3%, school priority 21.4%, and lack of motivation 20.7%. There were no statistically significant differences between male and female athletes. However, the dropout rate increased over time, and it was higher among females (87.5%, n=28) than males (67.3%, n=66) in 1983. Because of sex differences in physical maturity, girls reach their potential performance level before boys. Therefore, boys are more active in competitive sports than girls when they were at 14-16 years old. Hence, too early specialization and intensive training loads in track and field sports cause a dropout among female track and field athletes.

The study also showed that track and field sports are characterized by high aggression, boldness, high self-efficacy, and high performance, which is a traditional pattern of male sex roles. In puberty, adolescents become dependent on behavioural expectations from friends.

There is an expectancy in society, friends, and surroundings that girls should show feminine attributes and values when they grow. Therefore, the traditional sex role is one of the reasons for dropout for grown female athletes. The interview data also show a variety of responses underlining the risks of injuries, the lack of professional motivation, and medical treatment leading up to premature dropout in competitive track and field. The results of this study indicate the total dropout rate due to school priority during the 25-year study was 21.4%. A genuine effort regarding a future professional career depends on this phase of life. When one needs to spend a great deal of time on demanding training to achieve high performance, extensive travel activity, and competitions, it often conflicts with school duties. Many of the social factors in the athletic environment influence athletes' careers, especially family and training environments. The results from 1975, 1983, and 1989 showed that more than half of the athletes said their family played a significant role in their decision to participate in track and field sports. Following the analysis, data from 1989 and 2000 showed that the pressure from a coach and lack of closer follow-up led to quitting the sport. Furthermore, 4% of athletes drop out of sports for several reasons, especially when they start working and building a family.

### 3. Research Design

It is a qualitative systematic review and meta-analysis that combines research on a topic. Drawing the findings together builds a complex, holistic picture by analysing words in qualitative research methods (Creswell, 1998; found in Eliasson & Johansson, 2020).

This chapter of the master thesis will explain the research design, process of data sourcing, and analysis. After choosing the research topic, reviewing the literature, developing a conceptual framework, and defining the research question.

It is time to plan the research strategy. The research question will be the primary basis for the strategy to follow.

‘A systematic review (meta-analysis) of the possible reasons behind the dropout of children/adolescents in organized sport.’

## 3.1 Resource Criteria

### 3.1.1 Data Sources

A computerized keyword search strategy was executed to identify articles from the following databases: MEDLINE, PsycINFO Sage Journals, ScienceDirect, and SPORTDiscus, from 2010 until 2022. Keywords for the population were: ‘adolescent/adolescence,’ ‘child/children,’ and ‘youth.’ The extended term for the population was ‘gender,’ ‘boys,’ ‘girls,’ ‘male,’ and ‘female.’ The context keywords were: ‘sports,’ ‘organized sports,’ ‘individual sports,’ and ‘team sports,’; and keywords associated with the construct of interest were: ‘dropout,’ ‘attrition,’ and ‘participation.’ Peer-reviewed English language-published journal studies are considered for this review.

### 3.2.2 Inclusion/ Exclusion Criteria

The research article will be included in this review if it meets the following inclusion criteria: (a) the research is empirical (qualitative or quantitative evidence); (b) the focus is on children and/or youth aged between 10 to 19 years (flexible in age criteria); (c) dropout or intention to drop out is assessed, and (d) the context is organized sports.

## 3.3 Data Extraction and Synthesis

A data extraction form was used to obtain: (a) general information: study title, authors, journal title and publication date; (b) specific study characteristics: recruitment procedures, participant characteristics (age, sex and level of soccer played), study design, variables examined, validity and reliability of measures, and methods of analysis and (c) the definition of ‘drop-out’ or ‘intention to drop-out’ used. Key study characteristics and findings for each study were tabulated and the overall proportion of studies exhibiting key characteristics (such as publication year, world region, participant age and sex, and sample size) were computed. Consistent with PPCT model (Process–Person–Context–Time), the person, context and time variables associated with drop-out (or intention to drop-out) were synthesized

### 3.3.1 Search Strategy

A strategy of three terms has been set up to collect the research materials with a few more additional conditions where it was needed. The first term contains the conditions 'dropout', 'attrition,' and 'participation.' The second term was about the population like 'dropout,' 'attrition,' and 'participation.' Hence, the final term was 'sports,' 'organized sports,' 'individual sports,' and 'team sports.' In some databases, these pieces of information were not enough, so I had to be more precise and extend the terms from 3 to 4 and use gender as a new term, whereas the search strategy for the population was 'gender,' 'boys,' 'girls,' 'male,' and 'female.' While searching for relevant studies, the age group was also controlled from age (0-29). The initial search has been done in Ovid Database (MEDLINE, PsycINFO) Sage Journals, ScienceDirect and SPORTDiscus. The focus of this systematic review is to analyse the result of the most recent research. Therefore, the time period was controlled from 2010 to the present (March 2022). There is no denying fact that the journals must be peer-reviewed and published in English-language journals that are compatible with this review. Furthermore, three additional studies that met the inclusion criteria were found by searching the reference lists of the identified papers. Eventually, 13 studies were included in this review.

### 3.3.2 Data Collection

The initial search yielded 692 potential studies. A total of 682 studies is excluded for the following reasons: 662 were unique hits where 26 were duplicates, 604 did not meet the population criteria, and/or the context is not about the dropout from organized sport. In the fullness, 58 studies are included for the further cross section review including 8 reviewed articles. After excluding reviewed articles, only 10 research meet the inclusion criteria. 3

additional studies that met the inclusion criteria were found by cross-searching the reference lists of the identified papers. Eventually, 13 studies were included in this review.

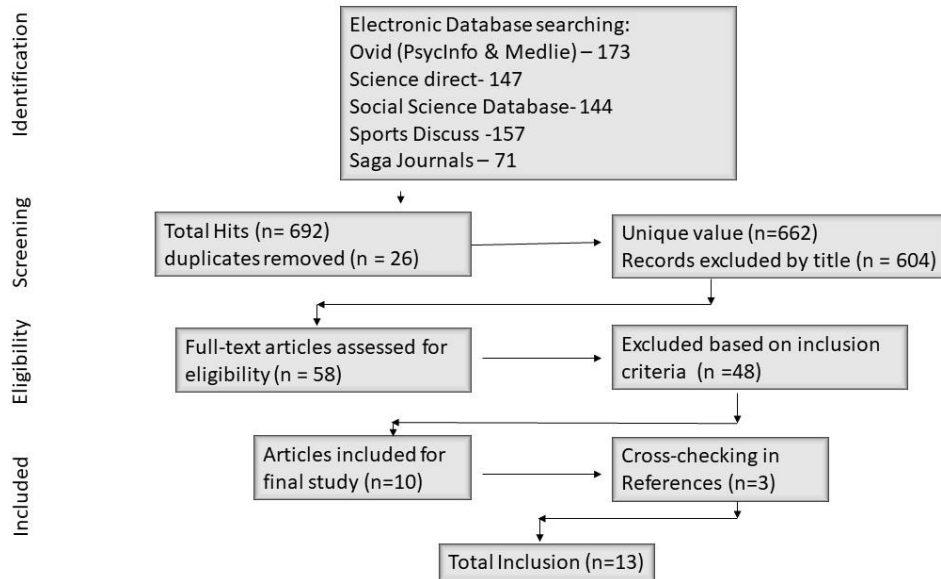


Figure 1. Flow diagram of the studies that underwent review process.

## 4. Results

Thirteen relevant papers published in the period 2013-2022(March) were selected based upon the inclusion and eligibility criteria. Basic information like country, number of participants, gender, sports category, and Research method/design is presented on Table-3. Three of these selected studies were conducted in Norway, and three were from the USA. In contrast, the other included studies were from Canada, Australia, Sweden (2), Germany, Spain, and France. The focus group of the eleven research papers was both male and female along with two articles concentrated on only female.

Aurthor	Country	No of participants (N) Age	Gender Male/female	Team sports/ Individual sports	Research Method/ Design
Murray and Sabiston, 2021	Canada	N= 150 Age=12-18	Female	Both	Quantitative method/ Longitudinal cohort study Questionnaire, Mediation model was examined

M.Bentzen et al., 2021	Norway	N=10, (5M, 5F) Age =14-16	Both	Team Sports Handball	Qualitative method Prospective cohort design Semi-structured interview, Inductive content analysis
Eliasson and Johansson,2020	Sweden	N= 24 Age= 12 - 18 Athelets and Parents	Female	Team Sports Floorball	Qualitative Research method Interviews
Pluhar et al., 2019	USA	N=756 Age=18 years and younger Mean age=13.5 ± 2.5 years	Both	Both	Quantitative method A cross-sectional study Chi-square, Fisher's exact test was used
Lagestad and Sørensen, 2018	Norway	N=116 Age=14-19	Both	Both and physical activities	Mixed method Longitudinal research Questionnaires
Thiene & Alfermann, 2015	Germany	N=125 Age= 15-18 (one student is 19) All 10th graders	Both	Both	Quantitative method One-year followup Survey/questionnaires Binary, logistic regression analysis
Keathley et al., 2013	USA	N=22 Age= 15-17 Parents of each participant	Both	Soccer	Qualitative method Semi-structured Interview high-level competitive soccer player, playing from age 5
Carlman et al., 2013	Sweden	N=712 Age = Below 11- more than 13 (m=14.4)	Both	Both	Quantitative method Retrospective data MANOVA test ANOVA test & Chi-square test
Guzmán and Kingston, 2012	Spain	N=857 Age=11-19	Both	Both	Quantitative method Self-determination index (SDI) MANOVA test
Delorme et al., 2011	France	N=74645 7 age category. Less than 7 till more than 18	Both	Basketball	Mixed method RAE Analyse Birth months in four quarters

Armentrout and Kamphoff, 2011	USA	237 parents Age= 27-58	Both	Team Sports Hockey	Qualitative method Open-ended questions Descriptive statistics and thematic coding
Slater and Tiggemann, 2011	Australia	N=714 332 girls, 382 boys Age=12-16	Both	Both and physical activities	Quantitative method Followup and analyze focus groups, Questionnaires
Enoksen, 2011	Norway	N=300 Age- 16 ±2	Both	Track and Field	Mixed method Chi-square test Open answer questionnaires in 1975, 1983, and 1989. Interviews were conducted in 1989 and in 2000

*Table 3. General data from the reviewed articles.*



Findings from the reviewed articles are presented in Table-4. The most mentioned reasons for dropout from sports were ‘less enjoyment, more seriousness.’ Five research papers out of thirteen explain that young athletes are highly affected by the seriousness of the practice or early specialization process. Since being specialized was not a core goal for all the participants (Murray & Sabiston, 2021; M.Bentzen et al., 2021; Eliasson & Johansson, 2020; Lagestad & Sørensen, 2018; and Keathley et al., 2013). Other remarkable reasons that were mentioned in the articles are less time to practice, struggles with balancing increased study pressure, collide with other leisure-time activities or sports, expanded social life, complex with new team compositions, dislike coaching, doubt on self-passion and skills, dislike teammates, training environment, appearance anxiety, family, and socioeconomic status.

Though the focus was not age, it came out as a significant dependent variable positively associated with sport dropout in 8 out of the 13 research papers. (Murray & Sabiston, 2021; Lagestad & Sørensen, 2018; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015; Carlman et al., 2013, Guzmán & Kingston, 2012; Delorme et al., 2011; Armentrout & Kamphoff, 2011, and Enoksen 2011. The result shows that age positively affects athletes’ sports careers and dropouts. The dropout starts from different age categories, specifically from 13; however, it was in pick in both male and female genders and among 10th graders. Hence, the dropout rate was the highest for male and female players in the “15–17 years old” category (Delorme et al., 2011; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015). Twenty-five years of longitudinal research by Enoksen 2011 showed the same age effect on dropout, and the dropout rate was highest when the athletes were 17 years old. On the contrary, in Hockey, 70% of participants indicated that teammates did not play a role in their child's decision to stop playing, whereas close to 19% said that teammates (Armentrout & Kamphoff, 2011). Competing in other sports was also a reason for dropout in both team sports and individual sports (Armentrout & Kamphoff, 2011; Keathley et al., 2013; Slater & Tiggemann, 2011)

There is a significant dropout rate between team sports and individual sports. Individual athletes feel increased pressure to perform in an individual sport than athletes in team sports (Pluhar et al., 2019). Shame after failure or unexpected results in highly competitive matches had a more significant effect on individual sports athletes than team sports athletes since performance depends only on the athlete. Individual athletes reported more anxiety or depression (13%) than team sport athletes (7%) (Pluhar et al., 2019). It results in more dropouts in individual sports than in team sports (Pluhar et al., 2019; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015)

Several potential research was done to see gender differences in adolescent sport attrition. Most of the reviewed literature in this study shows that females are more likely to drop out from sports at an early age than males, and the dropout is also higher than male athletes (Enoksen, 2011; Keathley et al., 2013; Carlman et al., 2013; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015; Eliasson & Johansson, 2019; Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). Girls have more psychological intensity than boys; therefore, coaching was one the most highly affected reason mentioned by female athletes than males. Coaching was a more prioritized issue than time conflicts in dropout reasons among girl athletes. Girl athletes with a foreign background had a higher dropout rate than boy athletes with the same background (Carlman et al., 2013). Female athletes who dropped out had been predominantly active in individual sports in their 10th grade (Thiene & Alfermann, 2015). They reported significantly higher levels of teasing experiences and appearance anxiety than boys (Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). Overall higher attrition among female athletes was explained as the effects of dislike of coaching, academic pressure, teasing, appearance anxiety, training environment, other activities, and social status (Enoksen, 2011; Keathley et al., 2013; Carlman et al., 2013; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015; Eliasson & Johansson, 2019; Slater & Tiggemann, 2011).

Aurthor	Aim/Research question(s)	Findings
Murray and Sabiston, 2021	To explore whether social identity relates to sports dropout one year later in adolescent girl athletes.	Socioeconomic status (SES) was significantly associated with sport enjoyment. Sport enjoyment was significantly negatively associated with sport dropout. Age was positively associated with sport dropout. No significant differences in age and social identity. Dropped-out girls reported lower levels of sport enjoyment.
M.Bentzen et al., 2021	Why participants had decided to quit playing handball for their team, the data analysis involved a three-step process of inductive content analysis.	Change of priority & flexibility and fun toward seriousness and development, Struggles with practice, study, and other leisure-time activities, Richness of upper secondary school athletes, expanded social network. Participation in regular practice reduce social life.
Eliasson and Johansson,2020	Describe teenage girls' sport disengagement process. Which experiences on the part of girls and parents become decisive for girls to enter and continue the disengagement process?	Increased focus on sports performance, less enjoyment. The girls experienced less attention from the coaches on their feelings and needs. Lack of motivational action from coach and teammates after announcing quitting. Involved in other sports or leisure activities. The consequences of a 'silent process' moved toward the decision to quit. No action from the organization though some athletes wanted to replay it in their minds.
Pluhar et al. 2019	1) the proportion of athletes with mental health diagnoses and 2) athlete motivations for playing differ between team sports and individual sports	Individual athletes feel increased pressure to perform in a particular sport than athletes in team sports. Shame after failure had a more significant effect on individual sports athletes than team sports athletes Individual athletes reported more anxiety or depression (13%) than team sport athletes (7%).

Lagestad and Sørensen 2018	Self-reported enjoyment in sports training and competitions, and factors that are associated with enjoyment in sports training and competitions.	Age was positively associated with sport dropout. Decreases sports enjoyment during 14 to 19 years of age Enjoyment related to competitions stays the same. 93% of the participants participated in organized sports at 14 years old, 75% participated in sports at 16, and (only) 48% participated at 19.
Thiene & Alfermann 2015	Identify the personal characteristics that predict dropout versus continuation among dual career athletes from different sports who attend sports schools	More female athletes resigned from sport after 10th grade than male athletes. Female athletes who dropped out had been predominantly active in individual sports. Athletes who dropped out had experienced a shorter sport career. Active athletes in the sample had a longer sport history and higher training loads than the dropouts Significant predictors of dropout; physical complaints, self-optimisation, win orientation Many of the dropouts were in winter sports and attended the same sports school.
Keathley et al. 2013	Investigate reasons for sport continuation and withdrawal in male and female athletes playing high-level competitive soccer	Three most frequently cited reasons were time (72%), the coach (55%), and conflicts with other sports (45%) Coaches affected in the girl's dropout decision more than boys. Coaching more prioritize than time conflicts in dropout reasons. Girls have more psychological intensity than boys. Psychologically stressful for both males and females when losing challenging games. Boys have more fun in general playing soccer than girls

Carlman et al., 2013	Dropout reasons and various types of dropouts in relation to demographic variables, various types of sports, physical activity, and underlying motivational processes	<p>Dropout sports were football (57%), handball (17%), floorball (14%) and martial arts 14% of</p> <p>Time-related reasons were the primary causes for dropping out. dropout rates, 37% at &lt;11 years; 50% at 11-13 years, and 65% for &gt;13 years</p> <p>“Not fun” and “Not good enough” became progressively less important with age.</p> <p>“Did not like the coach” became significantly higher with age.</p> <p>Athletes reporting low versus high social competence withdrew to a higher extent because they did not like their teammates.</p> <p>Girls with a foreign background had a higher rate of dropouts compared to boys with the same background.</p>
Guzmán and Kingston, 2012;	the aims of the study were: (1) to test a predictive model of sport dropout based on SDT that incorporates perceived conflict between sport and study; (2) to study the invariance of the model as a function of age or gender; and (3) to analyse group differences in the dependent variables.	<p>Relationship between self-determined motivation and perceived conflict was significant.</p> <p>A direct effect of psychological need satisfaction on practice or discontinuation.</p> <p>Higher level of satisfaction, experience a lower level of conflict between sport and study</p> <p>MANOVA results showed no differences related to gender</p> <p>A decrease in self-determined motivation and intention to practice sports associated with age</p>
Delorme et al. 2011	To examine the distribution of birth dates of young French basketball participants who have dropped out of this sport during or at the end of the 2005– 2006 season to see whether the RAE may play a role in the dropout of this sport.	<p>The higher level of practice, the larger the RAE effect</p> <p>Dropout rate was for boys than for girls(29.42% vs 28.15%)</p> <p>the distribution of dropout was the most biased by height differences, at “13–14 years old” for boys and the “11–12 years old” for girls.</p> <p>The dropout rate was the highest at “15–17 years old” category, for both genders</p> <p>The lowest dropout rate was observed in the “13–14 years</p>

<p>Slater and Tiggemann 2011</p>	<p>Investigate gender differences in adolescent participation in sport and other physical activities as well as experiences of teasing specific to the physical activity environment, using the theoretical framework of Objectification Theory</p>	<p>Significantly more adolescent boys than girls reported participating in organized sports.  Girls reported significantly higher levels of teasing experiences than boys in sports.  More girls than boys reported partaking in other fitness activities such as running, walking, and swimming laps, and workout at a gym.  Both girls and boys report being teased by same-sex peers, but in addition, girls also report being teased by opposite-sex peers.  Girl has more appearance anxiety than boys.  Girls who exercised at a gym had higher levels of body shame.  No significant main effect for boys participating in other physical activities, only muscularity.</p>
<p>Armentrout and Kamphoff, 2011</p>	<p>Understanding of organizational barriers and personal reasons that may lead youth hockey athletes to discontinue participation from parents.</p>	<p>The average attrition age of youth hockey players in this study was 10 years. Younger attrition age because of too much time, travel commitments, or training at an early age.  Coach did not play a vital role in the child's decision to discontinue playing hockey (67%)  70% of participants indicated that teammates did not play a role, but 19% said the opposite.</p>

Enoksen 2011	The aim of the present study was to identify the total drop-out rate and drop-out reasons for a group of promising track and field athletes	<p>The drop-out rate was highest when the athletes were 17 years old.</p> <p>The results showed that females were clearly dropping out at a higher rate than males.</p> <p>Total drop-out rate due to school priority was 21.4%</p> <p>Athletes' career influenced by especially family and training environment</p> <p>Most mentioned reasons for dropping out were injuries 24.3%, school priority 21.4%, and lack of motivation 20.7%.</p> <p>Competing in other sports was ranked as the fifth most-important drop-out reason</p> <p>4% of the athletes dropout for other reasons like military services, marriage, family and work.</p>
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*Table 4. Results from the reviewed articles.*

Only a few research was done on the sociological effect of dropout among teenage athletes (Table 5). The psychological research field is significantly dominant in sociological research when identifying why to drop out of sports. Evidence shows that socioeconomic status (SES) was significantly associated with sport enjoyment and significant differences in social identity, enjoyment, and peer effect (Murray & Sabiston, 2021; Carlman et al., 2013). It is visible that among thirteen research articles, all of them were done under the psychological research area, and only three were combined with sociology.

Aurthor	Used Theory	Scientific research area
Murray and Sabiston, 2021	Social identity & sports enjoyment, Disengagement	Phycology and Sociology
M.Bentzen et al., 2021	Alignment of Integrated career change and transition (ICCT) framework and Self-determination theory SDT	Phycology
Eliasson and Johansson,2020	Ebaugh's Disengagement theory	Phycology
Pluhar et al., 2019	Modification of Achievement goal theory Self-determination theory	Phycology
Lagestad and Sørensen, 2018	Self-reported enjoyment	Phycology
Thiene & Alfermann, 2015	Freiburg Personality Inventory Revised (FPI-R) Sport psychology	Phycology
Keathley et al., 2013	Inductive content analyses on motivation	Phycology
Carlman et al., 2013	Competence Motivation Theory	Phycology
Guzmán and Kingston, 2012	Self-determination theory	Phycology
Delorme et al., 2011	Relative age effect (RAE)	Phycology
Armentrout and Kamphoff, 2011	Content Analysis	Phycology and Sociology
Slater and Tiggemann, 2011	Objectification Theory	Phycology
Enoksen, 2011	Content Analysis	Phycology and Sociology

Table 5. Research area in the scientific field.



## 5. Discussion

Globally, one-third of participants dropped out during or at the end of the examined year for all age categories (Delorme et al., 2011)

The three most common variables significantly predictive of dropout in a sports career were physical complaints, self-optimization, and win orientation. Fewer physical complaints, higher self-optimization, and higher win orientation contributed significantly to sports career continuation, whereas more physical complaints, lower self-optimization, and lower win orientation were predictors of dropout (Thiene & Alfermann, 2015). This systematic review analysis found differences in the probability of dropping out between athletes involved in individual sports compared to those involved in team sports. Such differences may result from differences in the psychological situations of the two types of sports. For example, while in team sports, it is difficult to attribute success or failure to individual athletes, in individual sports, an athlete generally receives the credit for success and the blame for failure. Consequently, the probability that losing in a competition will facilitate an athlete's decision (Keathley et al., 2013) to quit competitive sports is higher in individual sports than it is in team sports (Pluhar et al., 2019; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015). A one-sided t-test by Nixdorf et al. 2016 revealed significant differences in depressive symptoms between team sports and individual sports. The report reveals that athletes from individual sports have higher levels of depressive symptoms ( $M = 11.55$ ;  $SD = 7.67$ ) than team sports ( $M = 9.47$ ;  $SD = 6.80$ ). Furthermore, Higher levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms in individual sports were shown for the factor of negative attribution after failure that leads to burnout. Conflict of thinking in having fun or winning game among teammates causes dropout in team sports (Carlman et al., 2013; Pluhar et al., 2019; Eliasson & Johansson, 2020). In line with Butchers and her colleagues (2002), these findings indicate that individuals who perceive themselves to be highly physically and socially competent have greater opportunities to change to other sports when faced with a context that does not fully satisfy their needs or when they find other more enjoyable alternatives to choose between (Found in Carlman et al., 2013).

Butcher, Lindner, and Johns (2002) surveyed a large sample of tenth graders, asking them to rate the importance of twelve possibly reasons for their decisions to drop any sport in which they had participated in the previous ten years. Males and females agreed on their top three reasons: not enjoying the sport, wanting more time for non-sport activities, and interference from other sports. However, the two genders were more similar than different in terms of time

demands and performance pressure; and both gender experience difficulties and become psychologically stressed when losing challenging games (Keathley et al., 2013).

In this review study, more female than male athletes dropped out of their sports careers. (Enoksen, 2011; Keathley et al., 2013; Carlman et al., 2013; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015; Eliasson & Johansson, 2019; Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). However, one study shows that the overall dropout rate was slightly higher for boys than for girls (29.42% vs 28.15%) (Delorme et al., 2011). Allender, Cowburn, and Foster (2006) highlighted enjoyment as one of three primary reasons for participation in youth sports. The experience of enjoyment in sports is vital in creating good physical health and lifelong enjoyment of the physical activity and preventing dropouts from sports. The female athletes who dropped out had lower sports enjoyment and higher physical complaints (Keathley et al., 2013; Carlman et al., 2013; Thiene & Alfermann, 2015; Eliasson & Johansson, 2019; Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). The relationship between teasing experiences and appearance anxiety was significantly more robust for the girls ( $r = 0.55$ ) than for the boys ( $r = 0.40$ ) (Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). Girls faced higher levels of teasing, and related body image concerns could plausibly influence girls' decisions about whether to continue participating in training or quit. Both girls and boys nominated same-sex peers as a significant source of teasing. However, girls also reported being teased by opposite-sex peers (i.e., boys, in line with Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) found in Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). Furthermore, girls described psychological differences between male and female athletes; girls were more likely than boys to believe they were not good enough, to perceive performance pressure, and to desire more time for academics and other desires. Girls with a foreign background had a higher rate of dropouts compared to boys with the same background (Carlman et al., 2013).

However, most of these athletes did not "drop out." Instead, they chose other leisure-time activities or individual sports that were more personally meaningful to them over time, implicitly satisfying their basic psychological needs (M. Bentzen et al., 2021). Findings also shed some light on the fact that exiting is not always what the athlete wants (Eliasson and Johansson 2020), but they choose because of the social and organizational aspects.

The richness of upper secondary school athletes expanded their social network. Since evidence shows the direct effect of psychological need satisfaction on practice or discontinuation, most of the research on dropout was done based on psychological elements. According to Enoksen 2011, the athletes' careers were influenced by especially family and training environment.

There is also evidence that athletes with a foreign background had a higher rate of dropouts compared to Scandinavian backgrounds, and athletes who dropped out had experienced a shorter sports career (Carlman et al., 2013.) Upper secondary school's richness and regular practice participation reduce athletes' social life (M.Bentzen et al., 2021). Athletes reporting low versus high social competence withdrew to a greater extent because they did not like their teammates and it significantly shows that sport enjoyment, social identity, and peer effects rely on socioeconomic status (SES) (Murray & Sabiston, 2021; Carlman et al., 2013)

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Implications

The review of this study provides a better understanding of practical implications that sports organizations and other sports administrators could use to maintain or boost youth participants or influence their return to participation. A lot of studies can be seen on coaching. However, only a few research can be available on administration or administrators. More research should have been done on the social perspective, which can play a vital role in dropping out girls' athletes from individual sports, team sports, or any kind of physical activity. The current results support theory (Scanlan, Carpenter, Simons, et al., 1993) and empirical evidence (Gibbons, 2014), indicating that the social context is an essential part of girls' sports experiences and predicts their desire to continue participation (Murray & Sabiston, 2021)

### 6.2 Limitations

Even though the result was in line with the previous research, the number of research papers was small, and only a few studies have been done on specific research areas. For better insights, more research can be done at the individual, sports club, sports federation, and national sport confederation levels. The dropout result in this reviewed paper was not always an actual dropout; instead, it was a movement of individual choice from one sport to another. So, from

a personal perspective, an athlete can drop out from a specific sport but still be active in another sport. Therefore, it is challenging to analyse actual dropouts from sports.

### 6.3 Conclusion

In summary, Adolescent athletes struggle to balance the sports demands and their reasons for participating. Shame after failure or unexpected results in highly competitive matches had a more significant effect on individual sports athletes than team sports athletes; therefore, individual athletes feel anxiety and more pressure to perform in a particular sport than those in team sports. Eventually, individual sports have a higher dropout rate than team sports. On the contrary, Female athletes have deeper psychological intensity than boys; reported significantly higher levels of anxiety and teasing experiences lead to higher dropout rates than male athletes. Overall, higher attrition among female athletes is explained by the effects of dislike of coaching, academic pressure, peer teasing, appearance anxiety, training environment, other activities, and social status. However, most of these athletes did not "drop out." Instead, they chose other leisure-time activities or individual sports that were more personally meaningful to them over time, implicitly satisfying their basic psychological needs. Findings also shed some light on the fact that exiting is not always what the athlete wants. Still, they choose because of the social and organizational aspects. The psychological research field is significantly dominant in sociological research when identifying why to drop out of sports. Evidence shows that socioeconomic status (SES) was significantly associated with sport enjoyment, social identity, peer effect, and finally dropout.

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