



Entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial approach to innovating sports services

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Abstract

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<p>Sports services are one of the most rapidly developing services in recent years. Due to the changing economic situation all over the world and a pandemic that led to adjustments to the consumers' lifestyle, there is a need to innovate and tailor to new preferences.</p> <p>While entrepreneurship is a widely known subject, intrapreneurship is still a niche to be discovered for many. The intrapreneurial efforts are being appreciated more and more by employees, as they seek new innovation methods. Sport services are the market that ties customer service with building experiences for the end customer, while at the same time having a direct impact on the well-being of the individual which makes it interesting to observe how it can develop through actions of entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs within their respective companies.</p> <p>This thesis is aimed to introduce both concepts of entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial approaches in innovation to be used in sport services, based on a survey for entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs in sports and its results analyzed by observing market tendencies and behaviours.</p> <p>The outcome of the thesis is to showcase clear results of the conducted survey and an example of the trends/ideas that were most prominent in among the respondents and showcase potential steps to be taken to implement those ideas.</p>
Key words Entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, sport services, sports management

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1 Introduction

This thesis is a research-based thesis for the Degree Program in Sports Coaching and Management taught at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, particularly for the Management specialization of this Degree Program. The Introduction chapter of this thesis acquaints the reader with the topic based on the current situation of the market of sports services and explains its connection to entrepreneurship in a general sense. Introduction presents the aim as of why the author has decided to research this topic further and pick this specific topic as the research material, supporting the reader with definitions of main concepts used throughout the paper to ensure clear delivery.

Sports services are one of the fastest growing elements of the wellness market (Dini & Pencarelli, 2022). The ever-changing economic situation, a feeling of uncertainty among the consumers, and a worldwide pandemic have led the clientele to adjust their approach regarding purchasing different types of services, meaning there is a clear need for innovation from the companies providing such services, as the needs are significantly different from before. External factors like these create a need to take up the entrepreneurial mindset into daily practice while designing those experiences for the customer.

When such mindset is taken into the account, there is opportunity to leverage the direction of the market fluctuations and development. Especially in moment like this. Whether it is corporations or sports services, when innovating and strategizing, these entities will need to turn their focus from solely execution of the task to innovation and development, and from organization centricity to customer centricity. (Uotila, Kairikko, Koskinen, Suonpää, Ilger & Yaroulina, 2019) To be able to make this a reality, there are steps to be taken (chapter 5.2. Recommendations) and the strategy of the companies have to align with the values that both entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship present, yet it is not impossible.

This thesis is aimed to familiarize the reader with the concepts of entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial ways to innovate sports services and present the results of a survey conducted by the author towards the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs in sports. The results of the survey are key takeaways in this research to provide examples of trends and behaviours of industry professionals and showcase how to implement these into practice.

Hereby, the author believes that there is a need for presenting such results to the wider public in order to raise awareness about different practices conducted by sports businesses. By presenting the results of the survey and describing the potential implementation of the behaviours and trends the author hopes to improve the industry's approach and give a wider public an available resource to look and learn from. With such resource, the businesses and organizations will be able to

structure their services more effectively and tailor to the needs of their customers more efficiently – be able to innovate their services in a more productive and efficient way.

1.1 Research Question

The objectives of the thesis are to introduce the concepts of both entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship to the reader, showcase how they fit into the world of sports services and present the results of the survey conducted by the author with the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs of the industry. The key concepts aid the reader to grasp the topic in more depth and apply the knowledge to each specific case. The research question (RQ) illustrates the ways in which the selected business professionals innovate and develop the products and services in different sports ventures and how these trends and methods can be used by other sports businesses in order to fit the market's ever-changing needs. Thus, the research question that guided this thesis is:

RQ. What are the current trends and methods used to innovate sports services?

The investigative questions (IQ) are the assistance questions for the research question to help the author learn information about the topic of interest, in this case being the sports services professionals and their methods of innovating the sports services in their respective companies. The questions are part of the survey presented to them regarding the main research question (RQ) and are presented in the Table 1 below.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Investigative question	Theoretical Framework	Research Methods	Results (chapter)
IQ 1. Are you an entrepreneur or an intrapreneur (corporate/organizational entrepreneur inside the company)?	2.1., 2.2.	Survey	4
IQ 2. In which sector of the sports service industry is your company based?	2.2.,2.3.	Survey	4
IQ 3. What methods are you using while designing	2.2., 2.3., 2.4.	Survey and professional literature	4.

products/services in your business/organization?			
IQ 4. Are there any market trends that you have discovered and successfully implemented within your company/organization?	2.3., 2.4.	Survey and professional literature	4
IQ 5. How effective have your methods have been so far?	2.3., 2.4.	Survey	4
IQ 6. Are you following the innovation trends in your business field of choice?	2.2., 2.3., 2.4.	Survey and professional literature	4
IQ 7. What trends would you like to try in the future in order to improve your results?	2.2., 2.3., 2.4.	Survey	4

1.2 Key concepts

Entrepreneurship is best described as discovering opportunities and creating new economic ventures which leads to innovating the market. Setting up a business (or businesses), taking a risk financially in investing in an endeavour one hopes to be successful by creating a new organization (Reynolds, 2005). In this scenario, the entrepreneur, from French, merchant or trader is a self-employed go-getter who initiates and moves the process of change.

Intrapreneurship is inherently a form of corporate entrepreneurship, i.e., entrepreneurship process that happens in an already-existing organizations. It is not as burdensome to the person taking up the venture, as the risk of personal financial loss is much smaller than in the entrepreneurial case (Gapp & Fischer, 2007). Both are action-driven and aim to create value to the stakeholders, however, the intrapreneur is intrinsically more dependent on the organization's resources, may experience less pressure from the environment and the risk of the venture is more controlled compared to the entrepreneur's efforts (Uotila et al., 2019).

What is important to mention about entrepreneurship is that its definition varies according to the context. Most types of entrepreneurs involve the focus on technological and product-market innovation, engaging in new venture creation development (Lumpkin and Dess. 1996). These activities have always been ingrained in the operations of sports-related businesses, as they are an integral part of any functioning business, yet the topic of entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship in sports are still relatively new to many, as the readers might not be aware of the accurate meaning of these terms. Difference between entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship in the sports context could be compared to an individual setting up their own business venture in the field of sport, for example, a company focusing on personal training, a fitness studio or skill coaching camps, while the intrapreneur can be a member of a department who was tasked with re-inventing a current way of doing things, setting up new operations principles or redesigning the structure of already-offered products.

2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this thesis presents the research and the investigative questions in a cohesive way to explain them further. Figure 1 below explains the structure of the thesis and creates a detailed list of concepts the author will describe in the different parts of this chapter.

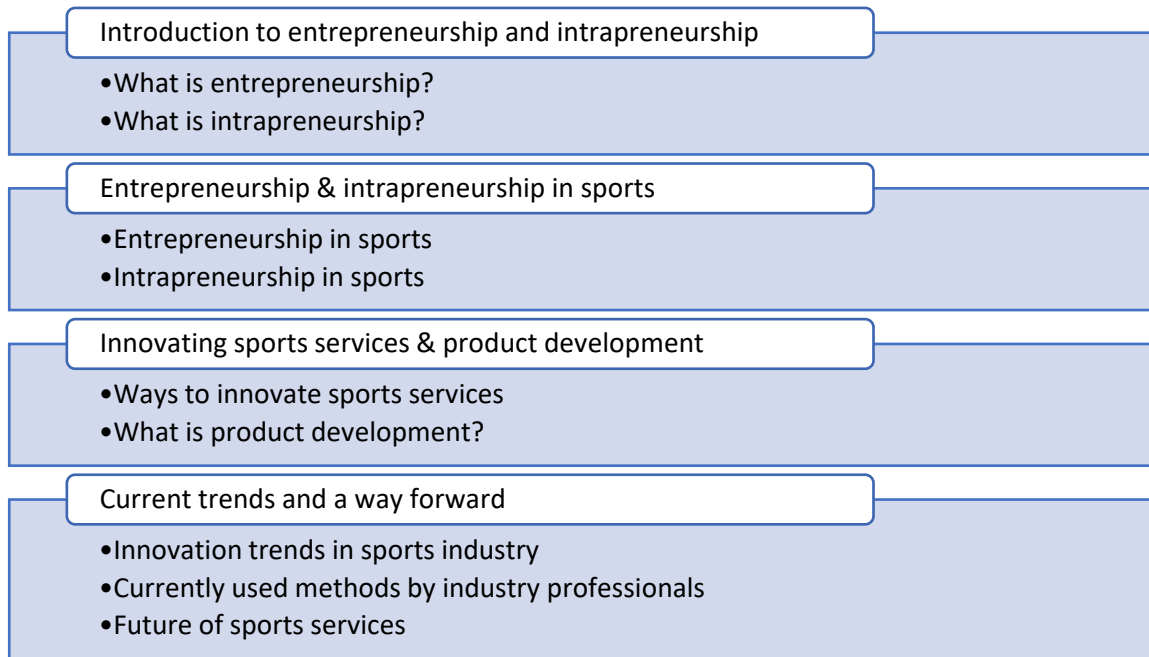


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction to entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship

Entrepreneurship, as Miller (1983) describes it, is an action taken by an individual that exhibits a behaviour focused on innovation, risk-taking and proactiveness to create new opportunities. An entrepreneur can be also characterized as the initiator who pursues ventures (Stevenson and Jarillo, 1990). His or her main goal is to establish a business of sort and be responsible for its development in different areas, making an impact on the society, economy, and the environment (Welter et al., 2017).

Entrepreneurship is usually described as a lone-man's road, where the person in charge is the key decision maker, the operations are relying on their decisions, there is a pressure to earn money from the venture and the job security is not that high (Dilli et al., 2018). There is a chance for the entrepreneur to be original, be the change and create ground-breaking products, yet, the mistakes might risk in serious loss and the time spent building the business might be lost and widely unsuccessful (Miller, 1983; Stevenson and Jarillo, 1990). These terms have been quite straightforward,

and the definition has been precise since the early 1980s, thus the references might seem aged, yet these are the still used proper terms described in the professional literature.

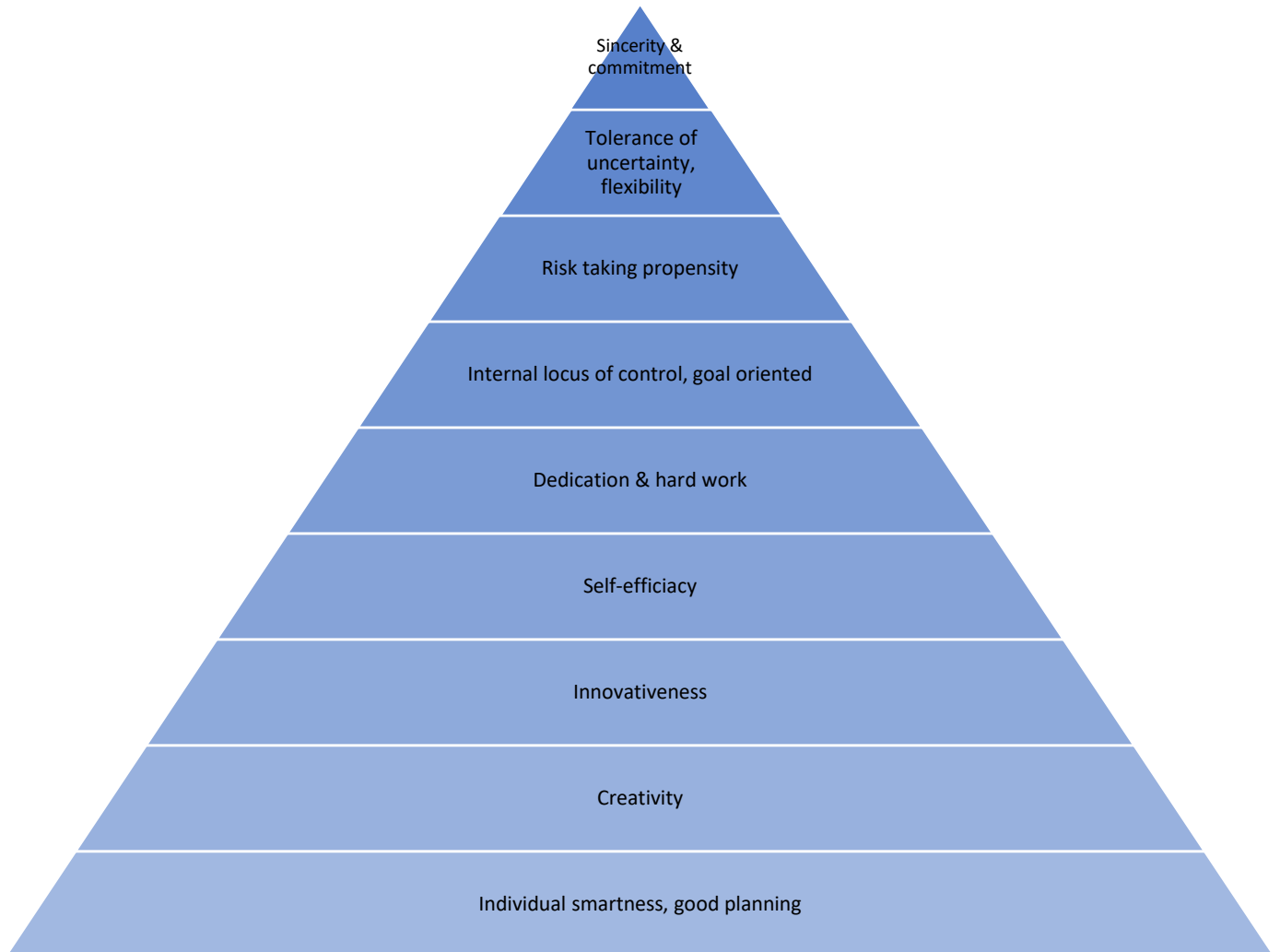


Figure 2. Traits of an entrepreneur adapted from Singh & Ratvi (2013).

Figure 2 presents the traits of an entrepreneur distinguished in the paper of Singh & Ratvi, from the International Journal of Scientific Research published in November 2013. These findings have been adapted by the author into a graph to help the reader visualize the most important qualities an entrepreneur should possess in order to succeed in their venture.

Individual smartness is a trait that can best describe a self-aware and well-rounded individual who is able to make decision for oneself and think logically in order to complete one's tasks (Singh et al., 2013). It can also mean the ability to distinguish between good and bad, right, or wrong.

Creativity is best described as being able to use one's imagination to invent, develop or reinvent a thing, be it metaphorical or a physical (Singh et al., 2013). This skill can aid the entrepreneur to find their niche and discover the gap in the market that their business can benefit. This applies to being able to come up with a business plan that leverages the market, a marketing plan that successfully gain the business a fair number of customers or in general designing a product from idea to prototype.

Innovativeness is a noun that is most often associated with being an entrepreneur, since they are the people who create new things and question the current ways of doing things – this entails business ventures and the world order in general (Chen et al., 2010). To be innovative is to be creative, to see things many people don't, to be brave and make decisions many would not – embark on a journey of uncertainty and believe in their venture.

Self-efficacy is self-belief, the ability to believe in oneself and the journey or venture one is embarking on. It is a quality that each entrepreneur should possess in order to be ready for their journey, be able to control one's actions, behaviours, and motivation (Piperopoulos & Dimov, 2015). Through the impulses the person is receiving from the environment, they are self-confident, self-reliant, and able to persevere, even during hardships.

Dedication and hard work go hand in hand when it comes to being an entrepreneur (Feldman, 2013). Not only does the person have to be committed to their idea, dedicate their time to grow the ideal into prototype and then functioning product, they also need to put a lot of hard work and long hours without having a tangible proof that their idea would be successful (Piperopoulos & Dimov, 2015). This self-belief and drive are traits that is necessary to be able to maintain this type of ventures.

Internal locus of control is key to be able to stay on the course. The entrepreneur has to have an internal compass, ability to stay focused and on the task. Something that will keep the idea afloat and alive, even though the hardest moments, lack of progress and doubt (Uotila et al., 2019). The control is like an invisible steering wheel that leads the entrepreneur like a lone man at the sea.

Without risk taking entrepreneurship would not exist. This is an essential factor of all business ventures, as the capital put into the business, as well as the one being generated by the business is at risk through the outside factors (Bandera, Collins & Passerini, 2018). This can mean the economic situation of the business sector the enterprise is in, the economic situation of the region/country and the overall situation worldwide. An entrepreneur is aware of the risk, he or she analyses the risk that the venture might be put under prior to establishing it and monitors it through the venture, making the adjustments if necessary.

Following the pattern of risk taking, the feeling of uncertainty might be another element of the entrepreneurial puzzle. The venture seeker might not be sure whether his or her venture will succeed or turn into a profitable business (Bandera et al., 2018). As much as the economical prognosis or a risk analysis can help them into deciding to pursue the business or not, it cannot protect the entrepreneur from the actions in the economics, global politics, or an outbreak of a worldwide pandemic. The uncertainty can be both a motivational motor for the entrepreneur to pursue the venture or the reason they lie awake at night wondering whether they will succeed or not (Uotila et al., 2019).

Sincerity & commitment are the steppingstones that build the house of entrepreneurship. They allow the person to be able to make good decisions, be rational, endure the hardships the journey might bring and ensure that they continue. In order to achieve the goal, the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs are required to have a strong sense of commitment (Fayolle, 2007). The commitment to the cause or project is enabling the venturers to succeed.

Intrapreneurship, on the other hand, happens in a more controlled environment. Usually, the person involved in the process is an employee of a corporation or organization, has a secure position within the company and gets an opportunity to practice their entrepreneurial skills inside the company's operations (Parker, 2011). The resources are given to the person and their ability to make the venture happen is not putting them at risk in case the venture does not succeed. As mentioned previously, intrapreneurship is simply the entrepreneurial way of working within a specific organization or company.

There are plenty of common characteristics that these two styles of innovating businesses share, including the certain traits of an entrepreneurs presented in the Figure 2. There are also plenty of differences between these two, as the environments they operate are significantly distinctive. The intrapreneurs act within an existing business in order to renew a business, which might not be as easy as implementing the change as it is in the entrepreneurial ventures who are in their own business. This process can be impacted by different variables of the corporate culture, mostly impacted by these four causes: the lack of communication, internal competition, hierarchies, and the size of the company (Malek & Illbach, 2004).

The size of the company impacts its operations the most, since it affects the organizational structure of the business - the size of each department and the potential financing of each of those departments. Majority of the operations led by intrapreneurs are financed from the general budgets and are part of their specific department's operations, which allows the intrapreneur to have a clear budget through the project's duration and distribute it evenly (Morris, Kuratko & Covin, 2013).

When an intrapreneur works within a large organization, his or her efforts might be limited due to the lack of communication between the different departments and by an internal competition that happens because of the corporate hierarchy and how the system has been created to impose competition within the employees (Morris et al., 2013). Furthermore, a lack of communication can happen due to the size of the company and the number of departments. This phenomenon can also happen due to the lack of sufficient means of communication within the company or using too many different ones (e.g., Microsoft Teams or Slack).

The internal competition in the corporate environment may impose the sense of clashing between the employees, especially when an intrapreneur aims to change the structure or the different ways of doing business and the other person refuses to share their knowledge. There should be clear communication when an intrapreneur is pursuing a venture for the whole company so that when information is needed, the person can easily outsource it from other departments.

Hierarchy in an organization might impact the flow of task completion significantly (Reitzig & Maciejovsky, 2015). The complexity of different organizational structures can lead the employees to think that some tasks are above or below their job description and can stop the development of the assigned projects. An intrapreneur might feel challenged with a certain organizational model, although it shouldn't be a deciding factor whether he or she decides to pursue the projects.

Table 2. Similarities and differences between intrapreneurs and entrepreneurs adapted from Morris, Kuratko & Covin, (2013).

Similarities	Differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to recognize opportunities and have willingness to seize them • Requires knowledge about business and market recognition • Drive to create and innovate • Balancing vision and pragmatism • Creativity and innovation as key driving factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of personal capital loss (entrepreneurship) versus loss is finances by the organization (intrapreneurship) • Full ownership of the business (entrepreneurship) versus organization owning the idea (intrapreneurship) • Lack of room for error without a loss (entrepreneurship) versus flexibility to adjust when a mistake (intrapreneurship)

Table 2 presents the comparison between the two arts of doing business in two different environments and shows how similar and different they both are. Intrapreneurs have an already-made organizational structure and a set number of hours, entrepreneurs are able to be their own bosses

and have more independence. Intrapreneurs face less financial pressure and are able to practice their skills in a controlled environment, while entrepreneurs face a bigger challenge with outsourcing their clients, looking for funding and supporting their business. Both models have their advantages and disadvantages, and both can generate ideas that can impact business to create a better tomorrow.

2.2 Entrepreneurship & intrapreneurship in sports

Sports entrepreneurship can have many different meanings, depending on the context of the conversation. In this thesis, the author focuses on the entrepreneurial operations of different organizations, business owners who provide sports services to their end-customers. These services can vary, from leisure, travel, wellness to marketing and national associations or federations (Pedersen & Thibault, 2014).

Entrepreneurship in sports is not only providing those services, but it also relates to innovation and creation of the products, maintenance, and further development of them. The aforementioned qualities of an entrepreneur are key to the success of the ventures the companies or organizations are developing. Entrepreneurs are simply members of the similar environment or industry (Fayolle et al., 2010), in this case, it is the organizations or companies share sports as a common factor.

The sports industry has been developing quite significantly in the recent years, even during the times of the pandemic, when the customers were seeking new ways to stay active and be involved in sports even when the gyms were closed (United Nations, 2020). One of the key research groups in this thesis were business owners specialised in physical training and activity and they have unanimously said that digitalisation of their services was one of the most significant success factors in approach to innovate and grow their company.

Using social media platforms to connect with the customers, inform them about the online classes and building a virtual community has been a big component of the companies' profit. Another positive change that was introduced was the digitalisation of their services by introducing virtual classes and challenges for the clients – onsite gym users (García-Fernández et al., 2022). By recentring their focus and tailoring their offer of services the respondents of the survey were able to not only retain the current users but also gain new ones. A minor investment was able to bring them their revenue goal even during the time where their main revenue source – the gym and its facilities was not in use.

Entrepreneurship in sports is not just gyms and facilities, it is so much more than those two categories. Figure 3 presents the different sectors of the industry based on the web study guide by Paul M. Pedersen & Lucie Thibault.

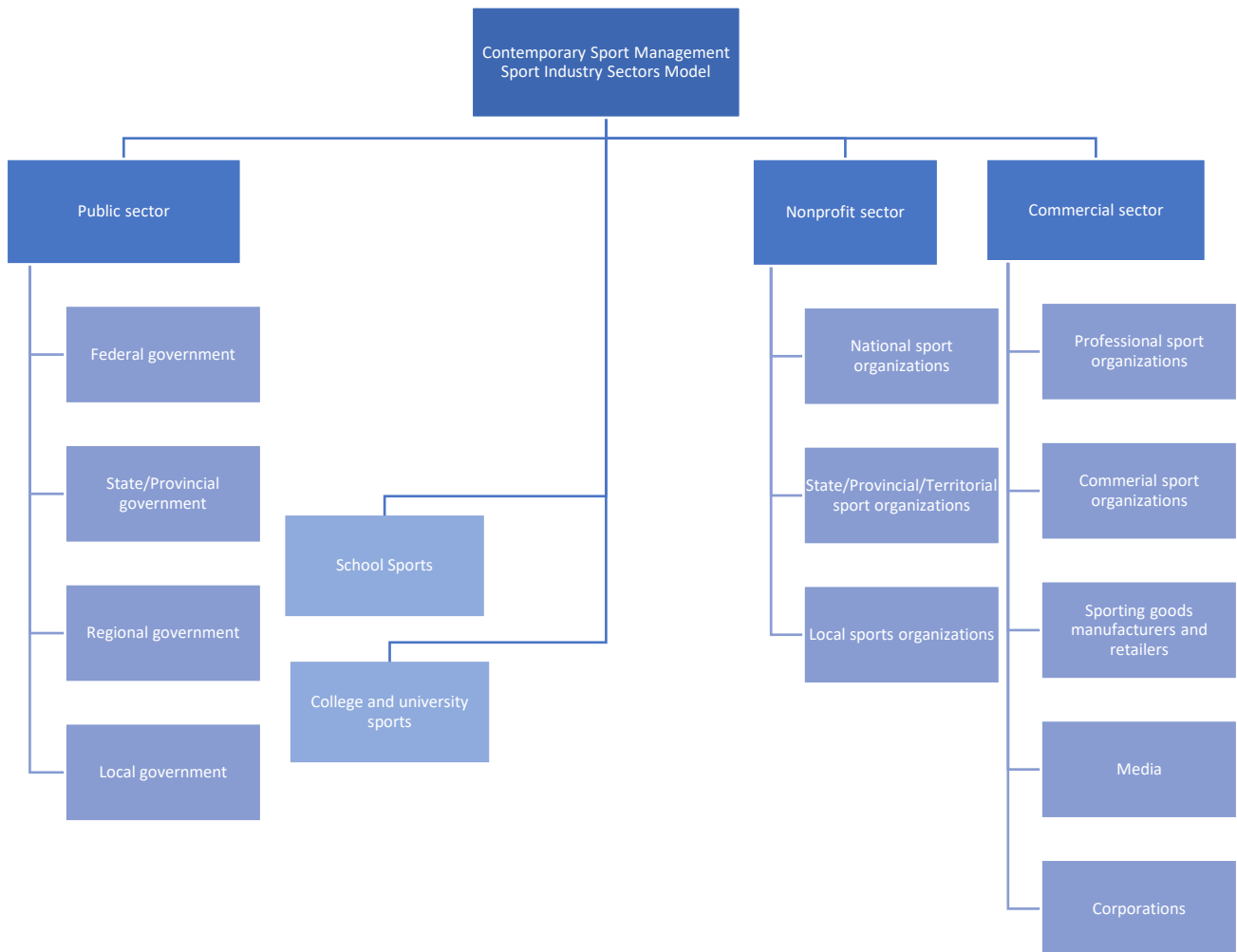


Figure 3. Contemporary Sport Management Sport Industry Sectors Model adapted from Pedersen & Thibault (2014).

The public sector includes the federal, state/provincial, regional, and local governments. These institutions are supporting the sport industry by funding different projects and initiatives in the designated area. Thanks to the public sector entities many grassroots projects and local initiatives can happen, they also support the non-profit sector – national, state/provincial/territorial and local sport organizations by providing funding to their operations. Facilities, such as parks, outdoor gyms or spaces for physical activity are usually funded by the private sector – they are created to use of the citizens to keep active. Aside from providing physical spaces for the citizens, governmental agencies are also often ideating and establishing different types of policies for less privileged societal groups such, ensuring they have access to sports in a safe environment (Pedersen & Thibault, 2014).

School sports and college and university sports sections, according to the model, fit somewhere between the public and non-profit sector, as the school are most often publicly funded, which

means that the sports activities provided by school belong to this sector as well. The non-profit activities in the schools such as additional sports activities, Sports Days, school visits by national associations or athletes are also part of two of these categories. Any sort of governmental programs or initiatives that support the development of sports in educational sector also belong to this section. This section is also responsible for the facilities for children and young adults to perform sports, take care of the curriculum taught in schools and education of staff to ensure proper development of the students (Pedersen & Thibault, 2014).

The non-profit sector, as the name suggests, does not generate profit and many of these organizations focus on different social issues, for example education or culture (Pedersen & Thibault, 2014). The organizations have members who are elected to serve a purpose – from a committee to a board of directors. People elected for those duties create a strategy for the organization and the operating principles in order to ensure the sole goal of the non-profit is achieved (Ciucescu, 2009). As shown in Figure 3, this sector consists of national, state/provincial/territorial and local sport organizations, such as International Olympic Committee, Finnish Ice Hockey Association or Canadian Cycling Team to name a few.

The commercial sector, which is a main focus of this thesis, is a sector of organizations created solely to make profit. Those are businesses and enterprises, companies that are ranging from sport manufacturers, media, leagues, different retailers to companies who sponsor these entities and support the development of sports (Pedersen & Thibault, 2014). Companies included in the commercial sector are the ones who provide these experiences to the general public. This sector includes both entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs who work to innovative and improve the services provided by their organisations. They are a key piece in the puzzle that is sports business and share common traits (Pedersen & Thibault, 2014). The difference between the two is mainly situational – entrepreneurs are usually own business owners while intrapreneurs work in the organizations that take ownership of their actions (Morris et al., 2013).

Intrapreneurship in the commercial sector, or any other sectors mentioned above, usually happen in the different departments and is project-based. The intrapreneurs are tasked with innovating already-existing projects, gaining new customers, or opening new possibilities to the current client base. They see the potential in the market and know which changes to undertake in order to improve the current state of things.

Many of the workers might not realize that they are presenting intrapreneurial behaviours, as it is still a newer term, yet any action related to innovation or improvement of the current state of an organization can be considered as intrapreneurship. The research presented in this thesis

investigates this phenomenon further and helps to demonstrate how people in these roles develop and innovate their services.

2.3 Innovating sports services & product development

Similar to other business ventures and commercial institution, the route to innovating sports services and the art of product development follows a resembling path. Where there is a need, there is a willingness to discover new ways of connecting to the customer and making their life easier.

A theoretical framework mentioned in the work of Taalbi (2017), What drives innovation, was previously presented by Levinthal (1997), Frenken (2000, 2006) and Arthur (2009) depicts innovation as a search for new combinations, as well as the finds of Schumpeter (1947) and Antonelli (2011, 2015) that suggest innovation is a creative response to events. This allows the division of four different factors contributing to innovation and development: problem-driven, opportunity-driven, and institutionalized (Taalbi, 2017).

The results of the research conducted by Taalbi (2017) show that innovation can be described as both a response to change in policies, economic or social crisis and a long-term interplay with economic mechanisms and prospects of growth.

Product development is a process where a product is innovated or developed (Miranda et al., 2019). It differs from product design – it is a complete cycle of the product, not just a part of it, like in the product design case. Product development according to the Asana methodology showcases 6 key stages of this process and can be incredibly useful for early-stage innovations (Murphy, 2022). In the Figure 4 below the Product development process created by Asana presents the potential route for the intrapreneurs and entrepreneurs to take when designing or redesigning their sports services, as it can be implemented in different industries and sectors of business.

Idea generation is an innovation stage where the brainstorming happens. Product or service is created with the attention to customer needs, market research and analysing own resources (Raeburn, 2022). Methods that aid this process could differ from SWOT analysis to researching already existing products. This stage is key to define the need for the product and form a proper business case (Raeburn, 2022).

Product definition puts focus on refining the product strategy and its concept (Raeburn, 2022). At this stage, business analysis mapping and value proposition should be made – in order to proceed with the product or service and creating a prototype, a clear vision and strategy has to come in place (Raeburn, 2022). The prototype allows to build the minimum viable product (MVP) and allow the service to take shape.

Prototyping can have a different meaning to different businesses – some might already have an experience in their field and innovate an already existing product by prototyping, some might be at this stage by following the previous two steps. In this stage, it is important to work on the feasibility analysis – determining workload and costs, market risk research – identify the risks connected to the product for own business/organization, development strategy – how to bring the idea further and the MVP – a product/service that has the necessary features to be launched or presented to the group of customers or released to the market (Raeburn, 2022).

Initial design stage serves the product or the services with creating the mockup of the MVP (Raeburn, 2022). Sourcing the materials for the products can mean anything from raw materials to appropriate software, but it helps to build the product and make it more viable – this often also means that there is a need to connect with the stakeholders who provide these materials or are also customers and advisors, thanks to their opinion the product or services can develop on the right track and be more useful once released (Raeburn, 2022). For sports services industry entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs this can mean creating new courses for customers to promote physical activity or developing a new coaching program targeting a specific muscle group and gain some initial feedback from more frequent users or stakeholders involved in the prototype creation.

After the initial feedback, the next step is to release the product or service. This is the stage where it is being validated and tested by a wider range of customers, but not yet to the public, the testers are given the access to the product, they look at the concept and can contribute to develop it further (Raeburn, 2022). This stage is also perfect time to test the marketing plan and see if it appeals to the customer and if not, adjust accordingly (Raeburn, 2022). In the sports services industry this stage is a preparation for the main launch by presenting the service to the range of trusted customer and users by presenting all the features that were developed in the previous step and see what their reaction is. After the feedback has been gathered, analysed, and implemented it is time to launch the product or service.

The last part in the process modelled by Asana is commercialization – the official launch of the product. In this step, after implementing the feedback from the customers the product should be ready and released to the customers as well as implemented in the ecommerce environment – if sold online (Raeburn, 2022). It is important to monitor the results of sales and the feedback from customers and adjust the product or service accordingly for it to develop further. Thanks to the methodology developed by Asana and similar tools available, the intrapreneurs and entrepreneurs of sports services industry are able to create the value for their customers, connect with them better and get the results that they are aiming to achieve.

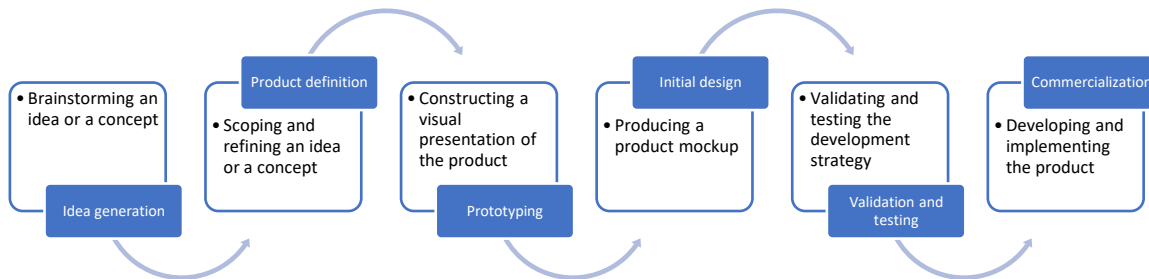


Figure 4. Six stages of the product development process model by Asana, adapted from Raeburn. (2022)

2.4 Current trends and a way forward

Trends define the background movements of society and the underground that might not be visible to us as customers (Erner, 2016). Trends are new patterns or examples of customer behaviour that can be observed – their fundamental needs and desires (Mason et al., 2015). Thanks to trends companies can tailor their services to those two fundamental matters and ensure that those are met – making their product a success.

As it was stated by Mason and his peers (2015) “shifts are the long-term, macro changes (such as urban transition, aging populations, and climate change) that play across years or even decades. [...] triggers are more immediate changes that drive the emergence of a trend. These can include specific technologies, political events, economic shocks, environmental incidents, and more” (Mason et al., 2015).

Current trends in the sports services are shaped by the customer demand, the competition between the companies and the state of the political, economic, and environmental events that take place. For example, the pandemic and its results of people staying at home, having little to no motivation sparked the ideas for gyms or wellness business owners to provided digitalised workout classes or on-demand programs that can be done with no equipment in the comfort of their own home.

In the Deloitte report, *2022 Sports Industry Outlook*, published in 2022, the organisation has pointed to digitalisation as a key trend for the sports industry and its subordinates. Digitalisation in sports can be named the merge of the physical and virtual (Deloitte, 2022).

The trend can involve the use of wearables (smart watches, heart rate monitors etc.), introduction of Virtual Reality (VR) or Augmented Reality (AR) to increase the experiences for the fans during the game, including introducing those elements to gaming or betting platforms (Deloitte, 2022). Adding the digital enhancements can improve the experience and make it more remarkable for the fans, making them more likely to come back – following the trends can improve the customer experience and with that, customer retention percentage that later translates to improved revenue.

An example of this can be the recent collaboration between an online game platform, Roblox¹, and the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA), creating FIFA World, a virtual environment where the players can get to know football better (FIFA, 2022). The collaboration includes not only the platform itself but potential games for the Roblox users to enjoy.

Well-being is listed as another key components of the Deloitte report and the sports industry per se. Deloitte describes the years of 2022 and beyond as the time where organizations focus even more on welfare of the athletes, coaches, and the society, not only as something that could potentially help them improve the brand value but also long-term viability of the industry (Deloitte, 2022).

In sports, mental health has been an issue that raised a lot of eyebrows in the past. Not being talked about enough, being considered a taboo subject for some. Having some of the greatest professional athletes speaking about publicly about their difficulties and struggles to stay on top, often mentioning personal issues, family issues, media pressures the organizations responsible for their respective sports have decided to look into this matter and start programs to avoid burnout and improve the mental health of their athletes and other staff in order to create safe environment (Deloitte, 2022).

One of these organizations mentioned in the report was NBA, National Basketball Association of the United States, who has appointed the teams to have mental health professionals to monitor the quality of wellbeing of the players starting from the 2019 season (Pinto, 2019).

¹ Roblox is an online gaming platform. Roblox, 2022, For parents: What is Roblox? URL: <https://corporate.roblox.com/parents/>. Accessed: 29 October 2022.

When speaking of societal welfare and actions connected to climate change, the Climate Pledge Arena based in Seattle, WA, home of WNBA's Seattle Storm and the Seattle Kraken team from the National Hockey League was created to be the first net zero arena in the entire world – being completely carbon neutral already in the first year of operations, taking sustainability pledges to the next level (Deloitte, 2022; Climate Pledge Arena, 2022).

These two trends have been a significant element in the research, or rather, in its results. The entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs have presented their reasoning of using those trends in their own organizations and how effective they have been, which can allow the reader to take appropriate steps in innovating and developing the current or future sports services. The Discussion part of the thesis presents a more practical approach to the implementation of aforementioned trends and provides the reader with recommendations on the key doings that can contribute to its success.

3 Research Methods

This chapter explains the methods used for the different phases of the research and the research design. It explains the topic, the methods used to research the topic and how it relates to the research question and the investigative questions. The data collection part explains the data that was to be collected, how did it happen, what was the period of the data collection and its success rate. This chapter also focuses on participants and the reliability and validity of the research.

3.1 Research design

The research method of the thesis is based on professional literature, theories and working models regarding entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial operational methods and the survey for the sports service's professionals. The idea of a research regarding the entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial approaches to innovating sports services came from the author's previous studies and background in business. The idea was to apply the knowledge and the experience in various corporate organizations to the sports industry and see how it relates.

The research relies mainly on the survey and the results, as they are the key findings to be implemented by the readers in their organizations after reading or giving the readers an idea on what can possibly be done to improve the operations based on the real-life examples of entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial practices. The research that has been done so far has been done quite thoroughly, yet, the author wanted to give more of a personal touch to the topic by interviewing actual entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs who work in their organizations to develop and innovate their currently offered products and services.

This thesis has been done with the use of qualitative research methods, which means the methods focused on obtaining the data were open-ended and required conversational or direct communication (Silverman, 2016). The chosen method allowed the research to be more personalised and aligned with the target response group to get topical answers and reliable results. The survey created by the author has been sent out to over 200 working professionals, out of which around 50 have answered. The people who responded come from various fields in the sports industry (the exact categories are listed in the participants section below), which means that they were an accurate representation of the target group and fit to the topic of the research. Questions that were asked in the survey are the representatives of the investigative questions (IQ) asked to support the research. These questions are also an integral part of the theoretical framework (Figure 1. Theoretical Framework), which explain the questions further and allows the author to develop the topics further – as seen in the Table 1, Overlay Matrix. This formulation allows to oversee the correlation

between the research question, the investigative questions, the theoretical framework, and the survey.

3.2 Data collection

The data collection started when the survey was live and ready for the respondents to answer. The survey was created to learn how the industry professionals approach innovating sports services, get to know their background, their current role and the trends and methods that they have used in the organizations and businesses they work with. As mentioned in the previous section, the research was mostly quantitative, with survey being the method of data collection. The survey was made out of the investigative questions that support the main research question, which aligns with the theoretical framework and makes the research adequate and cohesive.

The survey was created by using the online survey tool, Webropol, which is provided for students and employees of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences by license of the institution. Webropol is available for the students and employees by logging in through the school's Intranet and there are unlimited ways for the student to create the survey. The survey related to the entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial approach to innovating sports services constructed of six (6) questions that were exactly the same as the investigative questions with some being open-ended answers and some being multiple choice in order to bring more clarity to the research question.

The investigative questions (IQ) are divided into the following:

IQ 1. Are you an entrepreneur or an intrapreneur (corporate/organizational entrepreneur inside the company)?

IQ 2. In which sector of the sports services industry is your company based?

IQ 3. What methods are you using while designing products/services in your business/organization?

IQ 4. Are there any market trends that you have discovered and successfully implemented within your company/organization?

IQ 5. How effective have your methods been so far?

IQ 6. Are you following the innovation trends in your business field of choice?

IQ 7. What trends would you like to try in the future in order to improve your results?

Question 1 was multiple choice with an addition category of Other (please specify) in case there is another field of entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship that was not mentioned in the previous choices. Question 2 was another multiple-choice question that was relating to the different sectors of sports services, it also had the Other (please specify) category, as there might be an industry sector that was not mentioned. Question 3 asked the participants to describe different types of design thinking methods that they use, also containing the Other (please specify) category in case the individual was using another method. Question 4 had the professionals describe the type of market trends they have used or are planning to use and has a comment section for the participants to describe the trend more thoroughly and give them the space for their own personal experience when introducing the trend. Question 5 was a single-choice question that asked about the effectiveness of the methods and trends used by the participants of the survey. Question 6 was asking about innovation trends in their business field of choice – their niche in the sports services industry, it was a single-choice question and focused mainly on the yes or no derivatives. Question 7 discussed the potential implementation of other trends that they have not had the chance to try out but perhaps would like to, it was a multiple-choice question and included the open-ended option with an option to comment, by using the Other (please specify) category.

Survey was open for around two weeks, from October 3rd to October 17th, 2022, and has collected 50 responses total. While the amount might not sound as favourable, the results provided by the industry professionals were unanimous and brought a lot of clarity to the author, as they were a confirmation of the trends observed in the reading material used by the author to create the theoretical framework, the research base and even when choosing the subject of this thesis. Overall, the survey has served its purpose and provided the results the author has intended to receive. Thanks to the aid of the participants, it is possible to analyse the entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial approach to innovating sports services.

3.3 Participants

Purposeful sampling was used to recruit participants. The respondents could have both intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial roles in their respective organizations and companies. They are working to innovate the services and improve the operations by tailoring the services to suit customer needs, align with the strategy and remain sustainable for both the company and the environment/industry the company is based in.

The industry segments of the participants vary, ranging from entrepreneurs who have their own companies, are co-founders or co-owners to intrapreneurs working in a corporate environment (corresponding to the commercial sector of the Figure 3 sectors model) and organizational environment (corresponding to both non-profit and public sectors showcased in Figure 3).

The respondents came from various industry sectors:

- team/league/federation management
- team/league/federation coaching
- leisure and travel
- personal/private coaching and training
- marketing, advertising, and sponsorships
- facilities and services
- multimedia and internet

This amount of variety allowed the author to widen the perspective of the research and be able to see how professionals from different sectors approach innovating their respective businesses and/or organizations that they work for.

3.4 Data analysis

After closing the survey in the Webropol the results were downloaded by the author and transferred into an Excel file. Each question was turned into a graph with the open-ended answers serving as an aid for the questions. Special attention was put to questions four and seven, as they examined the trends that the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs were currently using and/or were planning to use. Additionally, question seven marked the potential routes that the respondents would like to take in the future, which might signal a way forward for the sports industry as a whole.

The survey did not focus on gender of the respondents, their racial or religious background, not even their age (although all of the respondents were of working age) specifically to showcase that they are all professionals and their opinions are valid, no matter the experience or background.

3.5 Reliability and validity

Considering the limitations of the research (section 5.3), such as the focus on the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs who have answered the survey and the idea to aid industry professionals to discover ways to develop and innovate sports services in their organizations, issues of reliability and validity are worth mentioning.

Research validity refers to the “measure what is intended to be measured” (Field, 2005), it explains how the data author has collected covers the actual area of research and investigation (Ghuri & Gronhaug, 2005). Research reliability refers to the measurement that supplies the consistent results with the equal values (Blumberg et al., 2005), it evaluates the stability of measures that were administered to the same individuals at different times, can be also described as the equivalence of items from the same test, as per Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008). In order to establish the

validity of the research and support the data that was retrieved in the survey, applicable evidence from existing literature was used in the theoretical framework and to present the results.

When it comes to reliability of the research, it has been carried out with the survey to which each of the respondents had the same access, the same questions were asked to all participants, and they had the freedom to write their own opinions and experiences – equal opportunities were created and given to them throughout the conduction of the survey. During the analysis phase of the research, the author found out that the voices of the participants, although their roles were significantly different from each other, were similar when it comes to their approach of innovating sports services.

4 Results

This part of the thesis will showcase the results of the survey, where each of the questions was also an Investigative Question that was mentioned in the Methods section of the thesis. The results provide an insight into the current way of innovating sports services by different entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs and provide a way forward to predict future trends.

The first question of the survey, which is also Investigative Question 1 (IQ 1) of this research, was 'Are you an entrepreneur or an intrapreneurs (corporate/organization entrepreneur inside the company)? (Select one). Out of all 50 respondents, 38% of them were entrepreneurs (own business owners), 13% were entrepreneurs (co-owners or co-founders), 30% were intrapreneurs working in the corporate commercial sector inside the company, 17% were intrapreneurs who were working in organizations from the public and non-profit sectors and 2% of the respondents marked their position as Other (please specify) category.

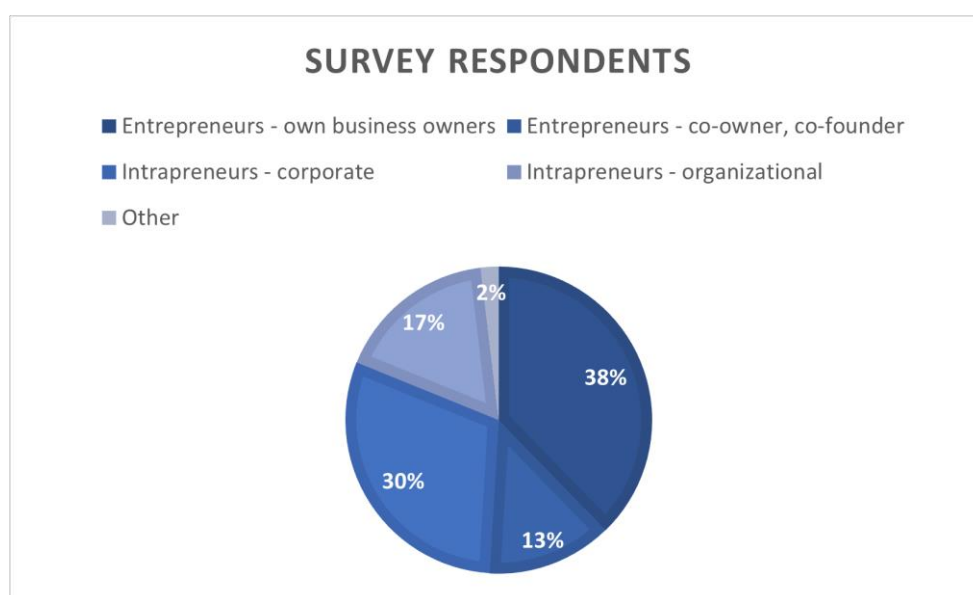


Figure 5. Profile of the survey respondents and the percentage division of each category

The second question, and the correlative IQ 2, 'In which sector of the sports services industry is the company/organization based?' (Select those which apply), has multiple choice answers and the respondents were allowed to pick different answers, as those industries often overlap and/or have departments which are responsible for. Majority of the respondents were from the team/league/federation management field (n = 16), personal/private coaching (n = 13), team/league/federation coaching (n = 11) and leisure & travel and marketing, advertising, and sponsorships (n = 10). Other options were facilities & services, multimedia & interned (n = 6) and

Other (please specify) – community sport and physical activity (n = 2). IQ 2 allowed to pinpoint the most significant industries of the respondents and establish certain limitations of the research.

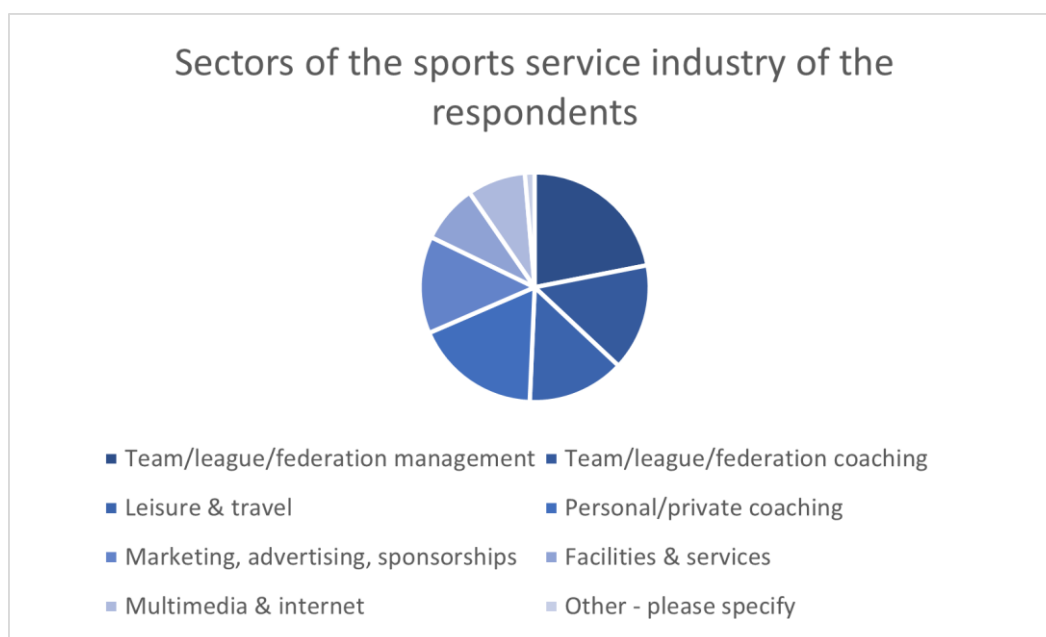


Figure 6. Sectors of the sports service industry of the respondents

The third question, and the IQ3, 'What methods are you using while designing products/services in your business/organization?', had again multiple-choice questions that has allowed the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs to select the methods that they use themselves and also allow them to write their own experiences that were not listed in the Other (please specify) category. The most prominent answer was re-designing already existing products (n = 45), which seems like the most viable choice for many companies, as the innovation will not be as financially binding and do not require a lot of changes at the beginning of the implementation. The second most frequent answer was market research (n = 35), the third, almost-tie with the market research was rival analysis (n = 34). These two options are also very easy to implement and do not require additional financial help for the department to start the research process and product development. The other answers were: the Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, test methodology (n = 4), the blue ocean strategy (n = 9), wireframe & prototype (n = 4) and other (please specify) – (n = 2). The first one was regarding the fact that product are tailored to customer's needs, the second was based on the fact that the products and services the company offers are co-designed with the local government and health service.

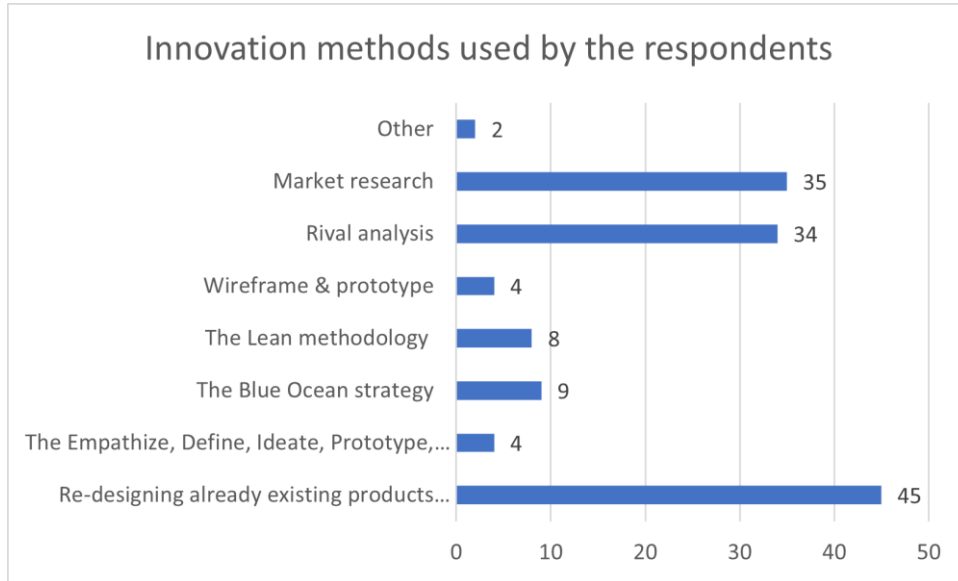


Figure 7. Innovation methods used by the respondents

The fourth question, and the corresponding IQ 4, was related to the successful implementation of the market trends the entrepreneur or intrapreneur has discovered. The astonishing number of 78% respondents have said that they have implemented those market trends successfully, 18% have not yet started the process of implementation, while 2% have not implemented them at all. In the open-ended section of the survey the respondents also have mentioned the market trends of sport services.

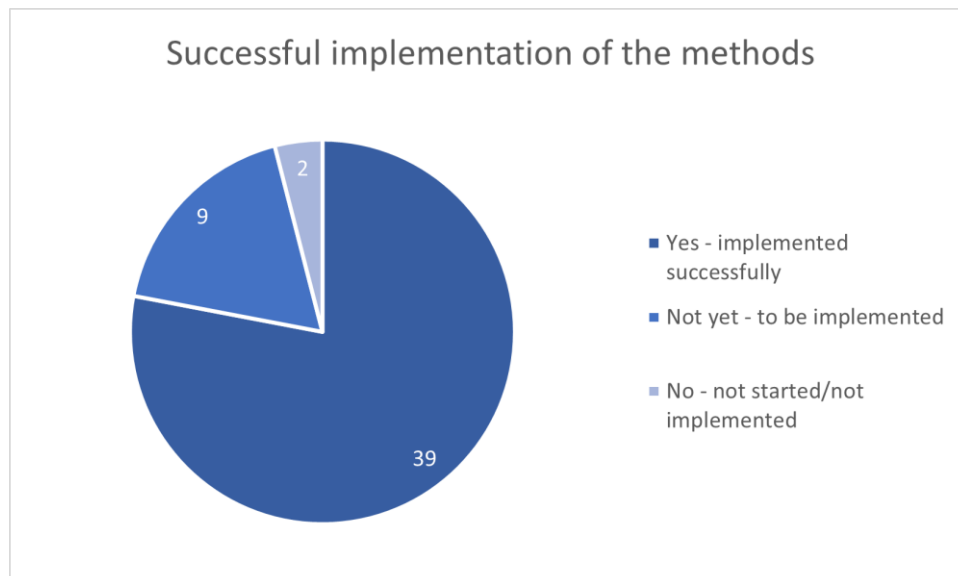


Figure 8. Successful implementation of the methods

The vast majority of the respondents have talked about the digitalization of the services, using social media as a channel to provide the services remotely, offering web services for the customer

via software, offer packages, different customer tiers (subscription methods), communication platforms for customers and wellbeing – as a social trend and recognition of impact on society, communities and on an individual. This question has confirmed the author’s theoretical framework and prior research done for this thesis.

The fifth question, being the IQ 5, mentioned the impact and effectiveness of the trends and methods used to implement the changes and innovations. Out of all respondents, 40% have admitted that they have been very effective, 48% have named them effective, 10% said they were quite effective, and 2% of the respondents said that their methods have not been too effective. None of the respondents have said that their methods were ineffective.

As mentioned before in the Table 2. adapted from Morris, Kuratko & Covin, (2013). and the paper by Malek & Illbach (2004), project implementation might have certain difficulties depending on the profession – entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs could be facing different challenges and have different motivation to conduct such innovation processes.

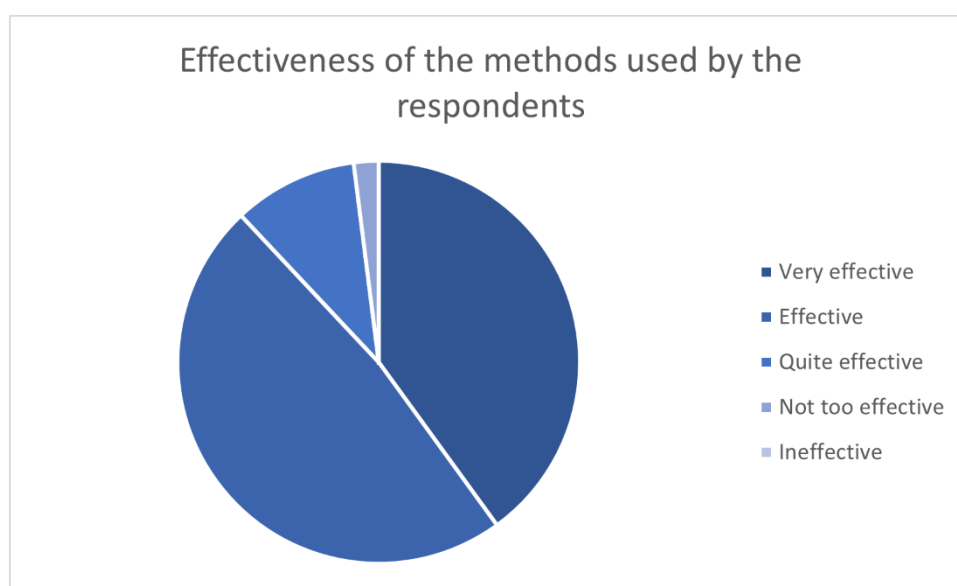


Figure 9. Effectiveness of the methods used by the respondents

The sixth question, IQ 6, discussed whether the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs have been following any innovation trends in their business field of choice. About 52% respondents have said that they do research those often, 46% have said that sometimes, 2% respondents said they rarely follows the trends. None of the respondents have said that they do not follow the trends or that they do it not too often. This shows that there is a genuine interest in innovation in the target group of the research and that the sports business and service professionals are keen on improving and developing the currently offered services.

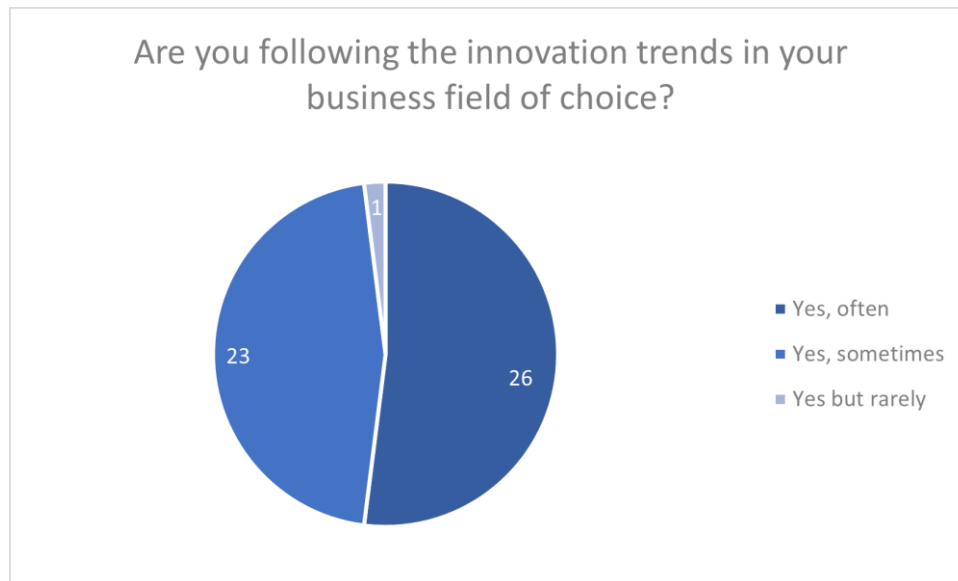


Figure 10. Following the trends by the respondents

The seventh question, IQ 7, related to the potential future trends that the entrepreneurs and intra-preneurs would like to implement in their organizations. As the previous questions of the survey have been discussing the already existing or implemented innovations by the respondents, this question directs the future operations of the respectable companies of the respondents. Question 7's intention was to showcase the potential routes of development not only for the surveyed but also the readers and potential innovators in their companies or organisations that they work for. It was a multiple-choice question, the most popular answers regarding the trends were new ways to connect with the customer ($n = 40$) and new product design processes ($n = 34$). The other answers were relating to new marketing methods ($n = 16$), internal team's connection ($n = 10$) and the two remaining were open ended answers with the option of Other – please specify. The answers were commercials / marketing chances via LED cube and in using sport as a help to communities, trying to get to those who are hard to reach. Finding ways to do so effectively and sustainably is an ongoing challenge, requires collaborative work with local government, health and social care and the voluntary sector.

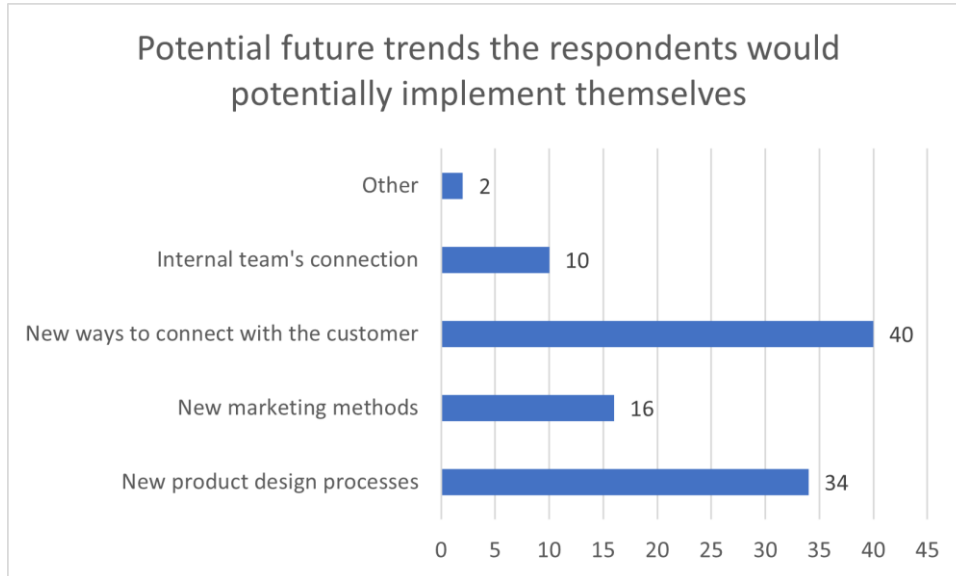


Figure 11. Potential future trends the respondents would potentially implement themselves

With the answers to the investigative questions being so thorough and detailed from the participants of the survey, the results have allowed the author to proceed with the discussion on the research questions and discover the ways in which the innovation for sports services can be made.

Additionally, the trends mentioned by the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs can help the researcher and later the reader to pinpoint the way forward for organizations from the non-profit and public sector as well as the commercial one.

5 Discussion

This part of the thesis presents the key findings from the survey and connects them to the research and investigative questions, showcases the recommendations when implementing those findings, assesses the reliability and validity of the research, and author's reflection on learning.

5.1 Key findings

In conclusion, the research and investigative questions are answered. What are the current trends and methods used to innovate sports services?

Trends, from the socio-economic point of view, are crafted based on the current social, economic, and environmental situation and the consumer trends are ever-changing and ever evolving. The world of sports is no exception. The most recent example of how the current events have impacted the customer behaviours is the COVID-19 pandemic where, for example, the gyms had to close, people were forced to spend time inside their own houses which has forced many commercial companies, such as personal training entrepreneurs to digitalize their services and tailor them to the customer needs – forcing entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs to look for ways to innovate their services in order to adjust to the market. Current trends used for innovating sports services are digitalisation, sustainability, and wellbeing of the customer. These are the key factors that drive the development of this sector and that can be successfully implemented, as per the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs that have completed the survey.

There is a clear interest and need for innovation, as almost 94% of the respondents have claimed that they research trends in their field actively and with a wish to implement those changes. As it was stated before, the drive for the innovation comes from the deep inkling of the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs to create better services for the end-customer and make an impact on the environment – both commercial and non-commercial, the additional rise in revenue is definitely a motivating factor. Majority of the respondents have pointed out that they are actively looking for new ways to innovate the services they provide by looking at trends in the commercial sector of sports and are actively applying them in their own businesses or organisations and companies that they work for. When applying these results to sports services context and the operations of the commercial organizations there are many similarities that can be observed. Based on the survey conducted as research for this thesis and the analysis of the responses from the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs in question, similar results can be concluded.

Digitalisation has helped the customers to stay connected through the hardships of the pandemic and has been a key factor of innovating sports services, shaping how sports are commercialized

and how can it be experienced by the general public (specifically meaning the customer). It also allows the entrepreneurs to broaden their market of services and builds more effective ways of communicating with the customers. It can have a positive impact on the relationship and build more significant connections, fostering a positive customer experience and improve the likelihood of them coming back.

Meanwhile majority of the respondents were using digitalisation as a tool for their services, as mentioned previously, big federations like FIFA are looking for ways to discover new customer groups by collaborating with large digital media entities and introduce their sport to crowds that was not aware of them before. Digitalisation can also happen in more creative ways, one of the respondents mentioned using a digital and social media as a way to foster partnerships in the sports commercial sector and help sports influencers connect with brands related to the niche that they are posting about and sharing with their audience.

Well-being and sustainability are a close tie to this example, one of the respondents has mentioned that there is a societal trend that is building on the growth of sport for development. It is important to recognize that there is an impact that sports can have for communities, society in general and an individual's well-being. In this sense, sustainability can be relating to human sustainability, not just societal or environmental.

Sports services can benefit from the concept of well-being, not only can it be used as a way for community members to improve their personal mental health and become more confident using sports as a way of life/development, or even using wearable devices (such as smart watches, sleep trackers etc.) as a way to track progress and have a significant way to improve their well-being. Many of the sports organizations are working on diminishing the stigma of talking about mental health and the results of the survey show that the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs are interested on implementing methods that will support their customers' wellbeing in a sustainable manner.

As the respondents have said, majority of the projects that they have worked on were completed with a rate of over 90%, which gives the positive vision for the future and a successful implementation of the aforementioned trends. Of course, the completion depends on many external factors that are not related to the potential that those trends possess, more so to the capabilities and availability of resources for the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs.

By enabling the customer to be the sounding voice and finding new ways to connect with them, the commercial and non-commercial organisations are able to improve their services and lead the innovation that is both beneficial for the business and the clients. The entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs are incredibly keen on finding new ways to connect with the customer, with over 80% of the

respondents choosing this as the trend that they would like to improve their results in the future. A way forward for the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs in the sports services industry is to approach the innovation without fear and with a focus on the human side, focusing on the needs of their customers and creating the drive towards an unforgettable customer experience that will differentiate their products and services from other providers.

5.2 Recommendations

Entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs that have participated in the survey aim to innovate sports services and many of them have built an approach that works for their respective companies and organizations. They have experience in developing and designing those services due to the years of experience, as well as close following of the trends that shape the industry. To those who are part of the industry but have not yet decided to grow their business or innovate, there are few points of advice that could possibly contribute to the success of these ventures:

- discovering the strengths and weaknesses of the individual as an entrepreneur or intrapreneur
- self-development to strengthen the traits of an entrepreneur/intrapreneur through books, podcasts, and other means of media
- researching the current market trends and future prognosis
- creating products, services and experiences based on the customer experience and needs
- frequent follow-ups whether the currently offered products work or should they be updated with the team (including sales, marketing, and the operations department) and the customers (through focus groups, board of client advisors or feedback sessions – online, in person or through questionnaires)

Innovation happens when there is a clear need or lack of something in the market or the old ways are no longer enough. Most often, the innovation derives from an already-existing concept that has been re-designed or re-invented in some way in order to tailor the everchanging needs of the customer. The entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs who aim to innovate their services but have not many sufficient funds could start the process by simply looking at their products, make an analysis of the current state – including revenue, costs of production, accuracy to the company's mission, vision and values etc. This is a low-cost solution that could encourage the organisation's executives to be more encouraged to implement those changes – this can be conducted in the intrapreneurial case. For entrepreneurs such analysis can also be beneficial, yet they should be the ones deciding whether or not they should be making such changes.

The next step for the target group is to voice the innovative idea. While the case for entrepreneurs is quite straightforward and they are the decisionmakers in their companies. They still might want

to pitch their idea to investors and get funding for those ventures, nonetheless they have the most say in which ideas move forward. Intrapreneurs who work in the commercial sectors, more specifically in the corporate realm might face more difficulties and opposition from their supervisors and might require more preparation in pitching the idea to them. This is a more complex process and can happen in different circumstances – at status meetings, in a separate session with the supervisor or board, all depending on the organisation's structure and way of internal communication.

The two most prominent trends are digitalisation and well-being. These trends are very versatile and could be possibly implemented in various ways, depending on the company's sector. For example, a personal coaching company could encourage their clients to use wearables as a tool for monitoring progress, stadiums could use augmented reality apps to bring children's favourite characters to the field during the breaks of the games and so on.

5.3 Assessment of reliability and validity

Sport entrepreneurship, in this specific case, are operations conducted by several different organizations and/or individuals who aim to provide activities and experiences for the end-customer, to present the results of the survey conducted by the author and showcase the findings. The limitations of the thesis are based on the demographics of the respondents of the survey and their personal experiences that were expressed in the answers, as well as their sector of employment in the sports services industry.

The survey was conducted with sports services experts in Finland and abroad– entrepreneurs owning their own businesses and intrapreneurs who work in different organizations (including government organizations, non-governmental organizations, and privately owned businesses) and was limited to around 50 responses, which gave author an insight of the potential trends that are currently used in innovating sports services and potentially lead a way forward in the development of the aforementioned trends.

This thesis was created to help sports business professionals to discover ways to develop and innovate sports services in their organizations/own businesses and familiarize them currently used methods and present a way forward.

5.4 Further research

Both entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial approaches present an excellent pool of opportunities for further research and to bring more awareness to the differentiation between these two fields. The survey was an interesting way to showcase how these two separate fields are working on

innovating sports services and what methods are they currently using, how effective they are and what are the future ways that they would like to continue the development.

Supplementary research can also be done on the sports services trends and how they compare to the whole industry of sports, and how different the processes are in the various sectors (non-profit, public and commercial). Researching those topics more could allow the different organizations to create successful methodologies of innovation that would work for their specific industry.

5.5 Reflection on learning

This thesis and the research that came with it helped the author to see how different entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs approach the innovation of sports services. An insight to their daily work through the distinct sectors aided the author in discovering a new definition of innovation in the sports services industry and aid the target group in creating their own approaches in order to succeed. The research has also pinpointed the future trends that are on the rise, unravelling what it is to come for the industry and what can be expected.

After a thorough analysis of the results, together with the theoretical framework, the author has gained a deeper understanding of the subject and expertise on how the entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs approach innovation of sports services that could be implemented in various sectors of the sports industry other than services.

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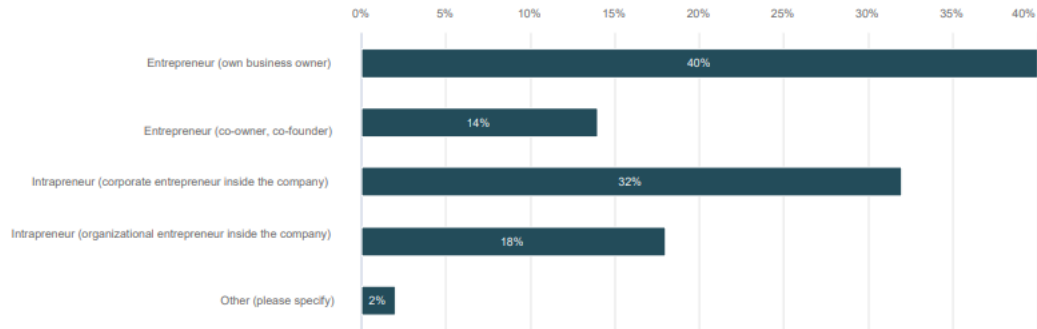
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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey

1. Are you an entrepreneur or an intrapreneur (corporate/organizational entrepreneur inside the company)? (select one)

Number of respondents: 50 , selected answers: 53



	n	Percent
Entrepreneur (own business owner)	20	40.0%
Entrepreneur (co-owner, co-founder)	7	14.0%
Intrapreneur (corporate entrepreneur inside the company)	16	32.0%
Intrapreneur (organizational entrepreneur inside the company)	9	18.0%
Other (please specify)	1	2.0%

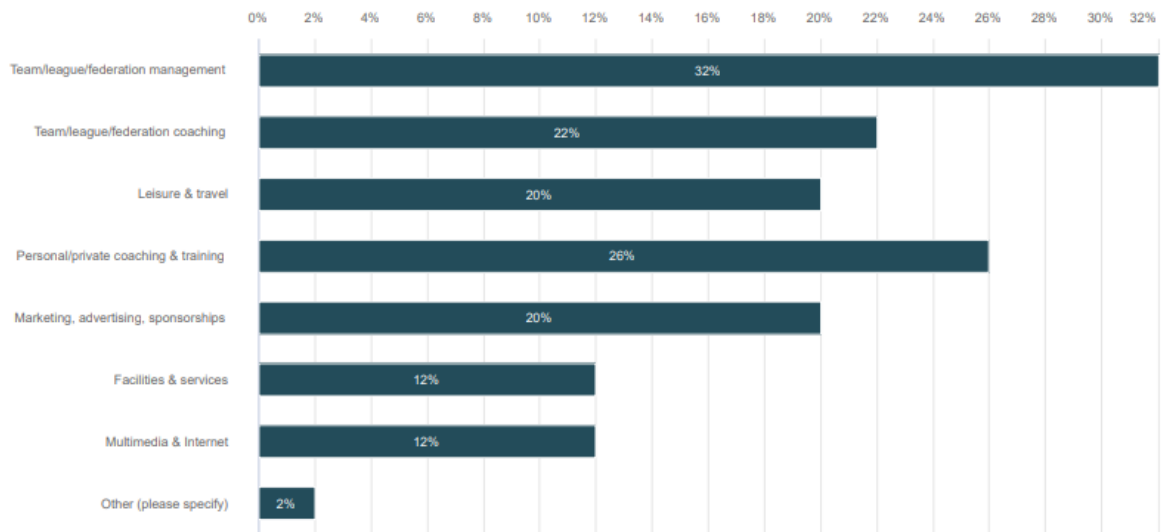
Answers given into textfield

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Option names	Text
Other (please specify)	National team coach

2. In which sector of the sports services industry is the company/organization based? (select those which apply)

Number of respondents: 50 , selected answers: 73



	n	Percent
Team/league/federation management	16	32.0%
Team/league/federation coaching	11	22.0%
Leisure & travel	10	20.0%
Personal/private coaching & training	13	26.0%
Marketing, advertising, sponsorships	10	20.0%
Facilities & services	6	12.0%
Multimedia & Internet	6	12.0%
Other (please specify)	1	2.0%

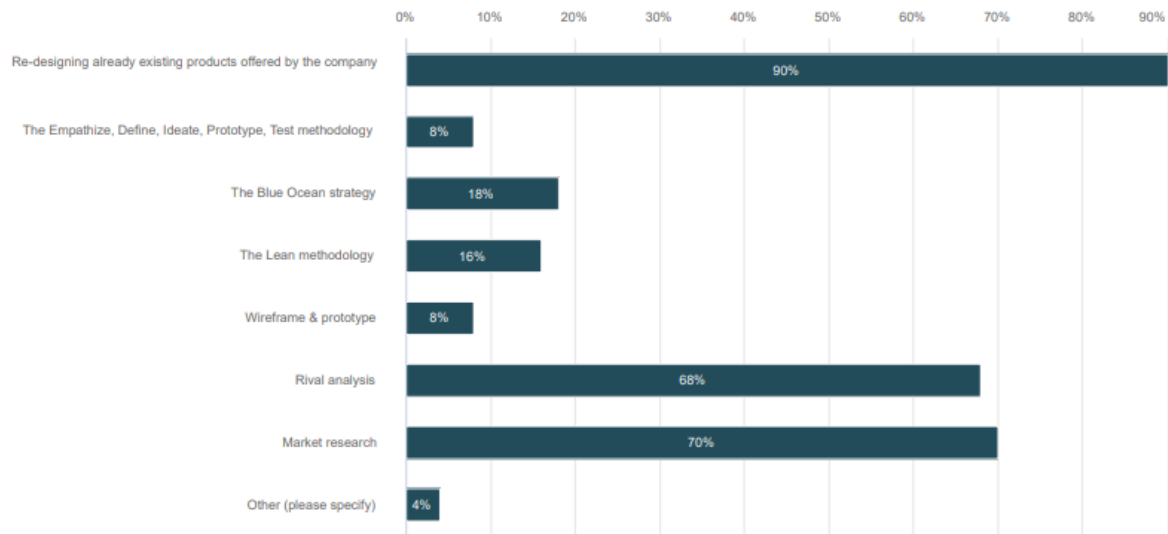
Answers given into textfield

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Option names	Text
Other (please specify)	Community sport and physical activity

3. What methods are you using while designing products/services in your business/organization? (select those that apply)

Number of respondents: 50 , selected answers: 141



	n	Percent
Re-designing already existing products offered by the company	45	90.0%
The Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, Test methodology	4	8.0%
The Blue Ocean strategy	9	18.0%
The Lean methodology	8	16.0%
Wireframe & prototype	4	8.0%
Rival analysis	34	68.0%
Market research	35	70.0%
Other (please specify)	2	4.0%

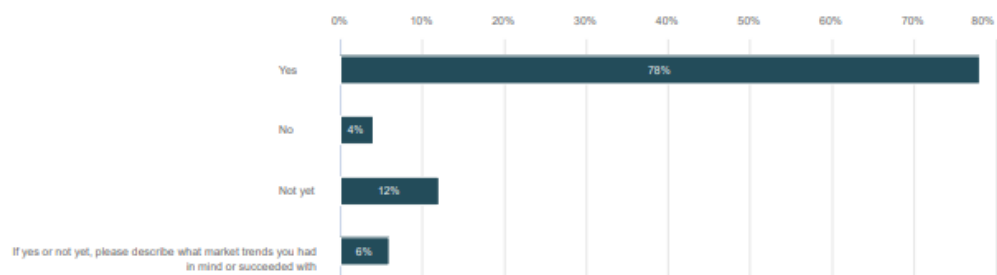
Answers given into textfield

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Option names	Text
Other (please specify)	Products are tailored to the customer needs
Other (please specify)	Co-designing with local government and health service

4. Are there any market trends that you have discovered and successfully implemented within the company/organization?

Number of respondents: 50



	n	Percent
Yes	39	78.0%
No	2	4.0%
Not yet	6	12.0%
If yes or not yet, please describe what market trends you had in mind or succeeded with	3	6.0%

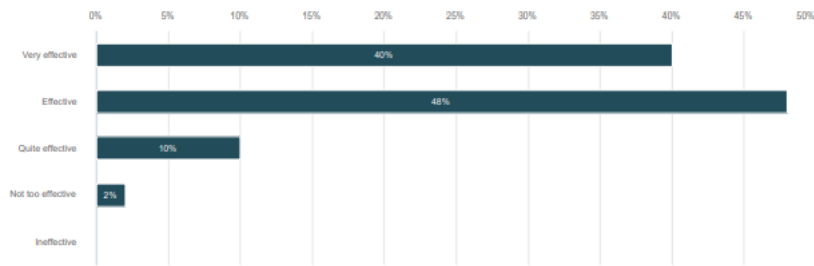
Answers given into textfield

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Option names	Text
Yes	social media as channel for remote coaching services
Yes	Digitalisation of services
Yes	Digitalization of services
Yes	Digitalisation of the services and webinars
Yes	Web marketing and sponsorship platforms
Yes	Social media and Digital sport partnerships
Yes	Offering web services
Yes	Instagram as a method to communicate with the customers and direct email marketing
Yes	Offer packages, different customer tiers
Yes	Webshop
Yes	Digitalisation of services
Yes	Communication platform for customers
Yes	digitalisation of services
Yes	EShop / e-Ticketing / LED Hockey rink wall
Yes	Digital platform for services
Yes	Digitalisation of services
Yes	It's a societal trend really and that's building on the growth of sport for development - recognising the impact that sport can have for society, communities and on individual wellbeing
Not yet	Planning - redesigning based on digitalisation
Not yet	To be decided
Not yet	Not applicable
If yes or not yet, please describe what market trends you had in mind or succeeded with	Social media content and content shared from a website to social media

5. How effective have your methods have been so far?

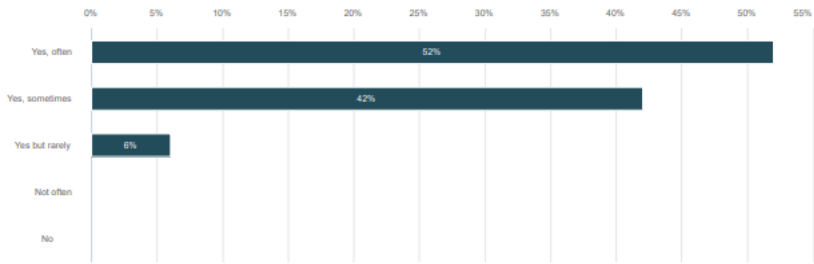
Number of respondents: 50



	n	Percent
Very effective	20	40.0%
Effective	24	48.0%
Quite effective	5	10.0%
Not too effective	1	2.0%
Ineffective	0	0.0%

6. Are you following the innovation trends in your business field of choice?

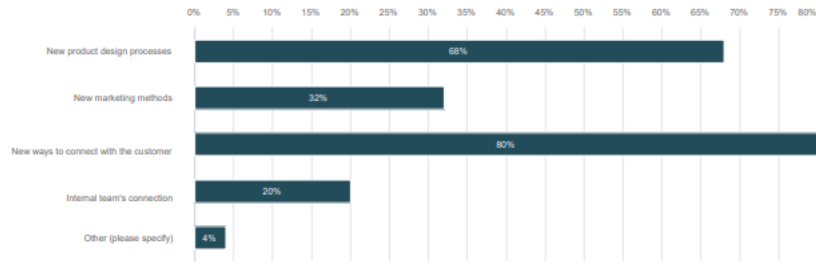
Number of respondents: 50



	n	Percent
Yes, often	26	52.0%
Yes, sometimes	21	42.0%
Yes but rarely	3	6.0%
Not often	0	0.0%
No	0	0.0%

7. What trends would you like to try in the future in order to improve your results?

Number of respondents: 50 , selected answers: 102



	n	Percent
New product design processes	34	68.0%
New marketing methods	16	32.0%
New ways to connect with the customer	40	80.0%
Internal team's connection	10	20.0%
Other (please specify)	2	4.0%

Answers given into textfield

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Option names	Text
Other (please specify)	Commercials / marketing chances via new LED cube
Other (please specify)	In using sport as a tool to help communities, quite often you are trying to help those who are hardest to reach. Finding ways to do so effectively and sustainably is an ongoing challenge and requires collaborative working with local government, health and social care services and the voluntary sector.