
GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL IN LITHUANIAN NATIONAL SPORT BODIES

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Synopsis:

The aim of the abstract is to analyse the level of implementation of good governance principles in Lithuanian national sports bodies. Good governance has become important both for public and private sport organizations and thus requires exceptional attention and more extensive analysis (Henry, Lee, 2004; Hoye, Cuskelly, 2007; Houlihan, 2013). The survey involved eight out of eleven Lithuanian strategic sports federations: sailing, cycling, judo, kayak and canoe, basketball, track-and-field, swimming and modern pentathlon. A qualitative research method, namely a semi-structured interview with the secretary general or president of each sport federation, was selected for the survey. The questionnaire for the interview was designed using the adapted instrument Sports Governance Observer (developed by the Danish Institute for Sport Studies, 2013). According to the analysis, the level of implementation of all six good governance principles in Lithuanian strategic sports federations can be regarded as good (60.74 %). The survey results revealed that the level of implementation of Democratic process principle is the highest (76.44%). The level of implementation of Transparency and public communication principle was the lowest (43.33%). The survey not only enabled to identify the situation and the level of implementation of good governance principles but also revealed the limitations of planning and management. These areas should be improved at the initiative of sport organization leaders by assuming not only institutional but also personal responsibility.

Abstract:

The aim of the abstract is to analyse the level of implementation of good governance principles in Lithuanian national sports bodies.

Theoretical background. The development of Lithuanian sport system is inseparable from the ongoing national and international political, social, economic and other changes. The issue of good governance has become important both for public and private sport organizations and thus requires

exceptional attention and more extensive analysis (Henry, Lee, 2004; Hoye, Cuskelly, 2007; Houlihan, 2013). EU White Paper on Sport (2007) and Communication on Sport (2011) emphasize the importance of introducing good governance principles by developing collaborative partnerships among public administration, business and academic community with the aim to make and implement evidence-based policy. Moreover, various good governance aspects are on the agenda of the EU work plan for sport 2014-2017 with special deliverables foreseen to the experts group. International sport organizations started implementing and analysing the principles of good governance with the main aim to increase the effectiveness of performance-based activities and to emphasize the responsibility and accountability of managers (Graham, Amas, Plumtre, 2003; Chappelet, Mrkonjic, 2013). During 2011-2013 eleven (out of 103) Lithuanian strategic sports federations received more than half of the total allocations from the national budget (more than 55 %) and thus good and effective performance management is of great necessity. The good governance concept has not yet been analysed in the activity of Lithuanian sports organizations.

Methodology, research design and data analysis. The survey involved eight out of eleven Lithuanian strategic sports federations: sailing, cycling, judo, kayak and canoe, basketball, track-and-field, swimming and modern pentathlon. A qualitative research method, namely a semi-structured interview with the secretary general or president of each sport federation, was selected for the survey. The questionnaire for the interview was designed using the adapted instrument Sports Governance Observer (developed by the Danish Institute for Sport Studies, 2013). The questionnaire consists of four dimensions: Transparency and public communication; Democratic process; Checks and balances; and Solidarity. Two additional dimensions were added: Goals, vision, mission and strategy; and Identification of stakeholders and their role. All six dimensions consist of check-list factors that are important indicators of good governance. The internal consistency of the questionnaire and the internal consistency of questions in separate dimensions were checked by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the value of which was 0.938. In order to compare the level of implementation of each principle in separate six dimensions the scoring based on Likert-type scale was ranging from 0 to 4 was used (Chappelet, Mrkonjic, 2013, p. 9): indicator totally fulfilled – 4; indicator well‐fulfilled – 3; indicator fulfilled – 2; indicator partially fulfilled – 1; indicator a not fulfilled at all – 0. Results, discussion and implications/conclusions. The results analysis showed great variety of the level of implementation of all six good governance principles in Lithuanian strategic sports federations. The survey results revealed that the level of implementation of Democratic process principle is well-fulfilled (3), i.e. federations have appropriate democratic processes in place: the executive bodies are elected; general meetings of members are convened appropriately and regularly; they have adequate control measures related to internal audit, accounting, compliance with the World Anti-Doping Code; the effectively collaborate and coordinate actions with government bodies. Nevertheless the lowest evaluation was expressed to the transparent election of high-level officers by secret voting and gender balance among the staff in top positions. The level of implementation of Transparency and public communication principle was only partially fulfilled (1). The most critical, i.e. the lowest valued indicators were concerning publicly available annual activity and financial

reports, financial statements and minutes of committee meetings. Considering Solidarity principle indicator for social responsibility programme that would clearly define the policy of antidiscrimination in sport and ensure the control of allocated funds spending was not fulfilled at all. Evaluation of the Strategic planning dimension the lowest score was given to the validation and execution of strategic plan implementation assessment process based on specific and clear criteria.

The survey not only enabled to identify the situation and the level of implementation of good governance principles but also revealed the limitations of planning and management. These areas should be improved at the initiative of sport organization leaders by assuming not only institutional but also personal responsibility.

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