
The Challenges Facing the Development of Sports Management and Marketing in Higher Education in Egypt: Reflections on the International Inspirations University Links Programme in Egypt

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Synopsis:

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview and reflections of the International Inspirations, University Links Programme in Egypt. It will focus on the joint work undertaken in the fields of Sports Management and marketing by the British Council, Carnegie School of Sport Leeds Beckett University, Faculty of Physical Education Assiut University, Assiut; and Boys and Girls Faculties of Physical Education at Helwan University, Cairo.

Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview and reflections of the International Inspirations, University Links Programme in Egypt. It will focus on the joint work undertaken in the fields of Sports Management and marketing by the British Council, Carnegie School of Sport Leeds Beckett University, Faculty of Physical Education Assiut University, Assiut; and Boys and Girls Faculties of Physical Education at Helwan University, Cairo. International Inspirations was London 2012's sports legacy programme, delivered in partnership with UNICEF, UK Sport, Youth Sport Trust and the charity International Inspiration (IN). It was developed from Lord Coe's promise in 2005 to inspire a generation and was the first programme of its kind conceived and implemented by a host city. The aim of the Programme was to work at 3 level, with policymakers, practitioners and directly with children and young people to enable them to take part in PE and sport and to develop new skills and fulfil their potential. The programme enriched over 25 million children and young people in 21 countries and 55 national policies, strategies and legislative changes were influenced and over 250,000 practitioners (teachers, coaches and leaders) trained (British Council, 2014)

Firstly the paper will provide an overview, background and context of the International Inspirations University Links Programme in Egypt projects aims and objectives. It will then outline some of the key challenges facing the Sports Management HE sector in Egypt. This will include a discussion of the development of academically and vocationally relevant curricula in the sports management area. Particular challenges faced by the Egyptian universities in producing graduates to meet the needs of the growing Egyptian sport labour market. Specifically it will focus on a specific issue highlighted around the difficulties faced by graduates of sports management programmes and other sports related degree programmes in accessing pathways into employment in the public and private sectors. It will also highlight the need to develop new areas and specialism within the curricula, such as, sports marketing.

The paper will outline the joint partnership working approach undertaken by the partners and the programme of joint work and knowledge sharing that was developed under the International Inspiration Programme. It will outline the purpose and the impact of Helwan University staging the first Sports Marketing Symposium held in Egypt in Cairo May 2014 that brought together academics, practitioners, employees, Sports Federations, Government Ministries and members of the media. This involved the sharing of knowledge of sports marketing in the UK, globally and the current practices and challenges faced in Egypt.

Secondly it will consider the purpose and the impact of an Employability Conference organised by Assuit University in Cairo in November 2014. This event attracted academics working in sport from a number of Egyptian Universities, Government Ministries, Sports Federations, schools and employees in the sports sector. This event sought to share good practice in embedding employability into the curriculum and student experience developed in the UK and to start the process of employees and academics working more closely together to identify the skills and experiences graduates require to access employment and to work in curriculum design, input into teaching and learning through for the example the development of work placements and authentic 'real world' tasks as part of assessment strategies. Thirdly the process of development of the first specialist sports marketing undergraduate degree programme in Egypt and North Africa developed jointly between staff at Assiut University and Leeds Beckett University. This will reflect on how this was informed by thinking about key development principles, such as the vertical and horizontal integration of the course, then need for authentic real world tasks, the development of new areas of specialism, such as digital media and the need to embed employability into the curriculum design. Further it will reflect on the challenges of developing this within the confines of existing university and national frameworks and regulations and the challenges of cross cultural working. Finally the paper will reflect on the potential long terms impacts of the work undertaken as part of the project and the benefits to Egyptian and UK colleagues of being engaged in partnerships of this nature.

References:

British Council (2014) <http://www.britishcouncil.org/society/sport/current-programmes/international-inspiration>, accessed 17/04/2015