

Coach Migration: Emigration or Job Migration?

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Aim

The purpose of this study is to examine the factors of labour migration among sport coaches. In this exploratory study, we seek to capture the positive and negative aspects for Italian sport system of their individual migration context, what their individual perceptions are of the social, economic, cultural and personal factors affecting their professional careers in the context of migration. Specific factors, influencing the migration probability, are investigated in the context of public sport system in Italy.

Theoretical Background

The majority of research on sport migration has focused on athletes and much less research attention has been given to coaches (Carter, 2011). Several theories have been advanced to explain international labor migration, such are dual labor market theory, neo-classic economic theory, world system theory, migration network theory, migrations systems theory (Massey et al., 1993); In recent study coach migration has been observed with the lens of the push and pull framework (Wicker, P., Orłowski, J., & Breuer, C. 2018).

Methodology

The empirical analysis consisted of two main steps. First, a procedure of systematically acquiring and recording information about the members of the population. In this study the coach is defined as a worker predominantly employed in sport coaching. Second, one regression model was estimated to analyze the determinants of coach emigration, immigration and job migration. To examine the migration variables of coaches primary data were collected using an online survey (Qualtrics) addressed to Sport Federations. The final sample considered 314 cases (SPSS 19), during the data cleaning 37 coaches had to be removed for several reasons (missing values on core questions, federations did not recognize the as part of the staff).

Results

The results of this study confirm the trends already highlighted in the literature. The main differences in the coaches' population are more evident in the backgrounds than in education or experience. The income is the main variable in choosing sport and international or national. An interesting result is the nature of income; a large number of coaches are P.E. teachers of or military, for these the coaching is a full time job and they consider themselves coaches but their salary is paid for other functions. Private contracts are not regulated and at the medium-low levels there are no guarantees of social assistance. The official number of coaches is 8585, stable during the last 3 years. This number doesn't match with the Federations numbers. The high qualified coaches have migrated within national system and sometimes to other countries (EU are not in top list). The high-performance coaches moves to non-coaching jobs, mainly teaching in public schools and lead their own club.

Conclusions

Considering that migrants are bodies moving through space, it seems crucial to return migrants to space-based models of movement thereby advocating a theoretical model that takes into account the complexly dynamic relationships between migrants, institutions, and

places. Volunteering remains widespread and the numbers on coaches' employment do not emerge clearly, it is presumable to assume that unpaid work hides large sections of black market jobs.

There is still a gap in the definition of professional coach (team sport vs individual sport) and migration. The future step could be the analysis of job migration and the developing of a model based on vocational training theories.

The present study adds to the body of literature on labour migration in sport by shedding light on an under-researched area that is coach job migration. The findings of this study have implications for sport managers at national sport associations, they are advised to recognize that there is a global market for coaching talent (De Bosscher 2015). It is recommended that policy-makers reconsider the working conditions for high performance coaches in Italy. The main findings are that coaches have a standard (formal) education concerning the soft skills and a non-formal education about hard skills. There are managerial implications in the possible solution concerning the mismatch between part-time and seasonal workers. Not potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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