

Does Less Extensive Sport Management Education More Often Lead to Unemployment?

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Aim

The situation in management education in 9 countries in 2017 within the Erasmus + project New Age of Sport Management (NAS ME) is mapped and compared with the situation in 2004, which was the first year of the AEHSIS Thematic network. The recommended curriculum at that time for bachelor in sport management should consist of minimum 90 ECTS and hopefully 120 ECTS in sport management related subjects. Therefore, our research question was: 1. Does the minimum requirements recommended for sport management studies have been achieved? 2. Does less extensive sport management education more often lead to the unemployment of sport management graduates?

Background and Literature Review

The reasons for starting sport management education can vary and they are not mapped in this NASME project. Sport management as a study program is a fairly recent development in higher education in Europe. Since 1995, which showed 31 institutions in all Europe (Friedrich, 1995) there was an increase to 168 in 2002-2003 as stated by Hovermann (2005). The exact figure to-day we do not know because of the lack of respective register. We have witnessed expansion, but lately also some reductions in numbers of sport management study programs due to unemployment of graduate students. Therefore, we want to look into possible reasons for this development and the NASME project can give ideas of how this can be done in order to be prepared for the new competencies required in the sport management field. When it comes to the unemployment / employment of the graduates some countries have tracked their sport management graduates as for example Germany and Belgium (Taks et al, 2003; Packheiser and Hovemann (2015) and Norway (Skirstad, 2004; Skirstad et al 2018) but generally there is a lack of information regarding the employment figures of Sport Management graduates.

Method

Each participant country (9 altogether) had to describe the sport management education in their country and people in the four sectors (local sport managers in a city or municipality, non-profit sport clubs, professional clubs and private enterprises) were taking part in a survey on sport managers' competences today and in the future. Thus, we have the results on which competences are the most wanted in the future, and this information can guide the future of the education program. The results will be completed by end of June and then the in - depth interviews will be conducted with representatives from the four sectors mentioned above. In addition, the mapping of sport management graduates unemployment was conducted at national levels referring to very different sources.

Results

Only two private universities in Spain, Cologne University in Germany and the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences fulfill the recommended requirements of a solid sport management education at Bachelor level. On master level Cologne has a solid program, Real Madrid Europe University in Spain has an online education in sport management MBA, and the Norwegian School of Sport sciences has a two-year study with 80 ECTS on sport

management directly. Most of the universities in this investigation is applied universities or university colleges and that can maybe count for the difference. The bachelor study consists of from 10 to 35 % sport management topics, which is too little.

If the sport management contents are too small in the education, the students will probably not have enough specific competence to have sport management jobs when they graduate. The national sub-reports dealing with employment/ unemployment of sport management graduates referred to different sources and different degrees of specificity. The employment of sport managers is not tracked separately in Employment in sport, Eurostat, 2017. The most favourable situation exists in the Lithuania where the employability of Sport Management graduates after one year after the graduation is provided by official website (www.karjera.lt) and managed by the Consortium of Lithuanian Universities created in 2014. Denmark has also statistics from the Ministry of Higher Education of professional bachelor graduates in sport management for 2011-2013. This weakness in the monitoring system is corrected in almost all countries (except the Greek) by particular research activities that are tracking the employment of sport management graduates from the respective universities.

Conclusion

It is still necessary to strengthen the curriculum in sport management topics in order to call the study sport management, and that will also have an effect upon the employment rate, when the persons to be hired with sport management education have more relevant sport management topics and also competences which are required in the future, which this research shows. Only on the base of correct data regarding the employment of sport management graduates it will be possible to proceed in the endeavour to achieve the match between the sport management curricula and labour market needs – which is the ultimate goal of the NASME project.

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