

What Advantage Do Student-athletes Expect in Japanese New Graduates Job Market?

Tsukahara, Fumio¹; Sawai, Kazuhiko²; Funahashi, Hiroaki³; Yokota, Masatoshi⁴; Nakamura, Yusuke⁵ and Murashima, Natsumi⁵

1: Division of Integrated Sciences, College of Health and Welfare, J. F. Oberlin University; 2: Faculty of Commerce, Meiji University; 3: Faculty of Sport Sciences, Waseda University; 4: Faculty of Sport Management, Nippon Sport Science University; 5: Athlete Planning Co., Ltd.

tsukahar@obirin.ac.jp

Aim, Background, and Research Question

College athletes get better jobs, compared to non-athletic students. This myth has been investigated in many economic/educational discourses since the mid 1920's until recent days (Tsukahara, 2008; 2011). Traditionally, balancing academic and sport (A/S) ('bunbu-ryodo' in Japanese) has been viewed very important, and that cultural restrain might function to maintain or reinforce the myth that being college athletes helps their 1st job search success, namely Student-Athlete Premium (SAP), in Japanese new graduate job market.

Recently, due to over-supply of educational opportunity by colleges/universities and the growing competitive environment for its management, the student-athletes who especially need systematic supports for both academics and career development have been increasing (Tsukahara, 2008). However, unlike the United States where there is a relatively well-established tradition of supporting student athletes (e.g., life skills program; academic support; website of NCAA), the current Japanese system offer only limited support (Grant, et al., 2015; Miyata, 2016; College Sport Consortium Kansai, 2018). Understanding their specific needs, consciousness for A/S balance and career development is certainly important as a fundamental research.

The purpose of the current study was to explore the relationship among student-athlete's profile/achievement, their consciousness of A/S balance, and what advantage they expect in the new graduate job market (i.e., SAP).

Literature Review

In our study, we define "student-athlete" as a student who belongs to a sport club that his/her college/university "officially" manages, which means we exclude "circles" or temporary groups that voluntarily play infrequently from our study. Takamine (2010), a survey report on student-athlete's academic/sport life and career [in Japanese], shows that approx. 40% of student-athletes have responded that they haven't known how to study, and also only 10% of them have thought about their career development or have already started preparing after quitting their athlete life. On the other hand, Kanamori (2017) infers from her empirical data that student-athletes should keep A/S balance appropriately so as to develop non-cognitive skills for life-long success after graduation. Although these articles help us understand the current difficulty faced by student-athletes generally, we are unable to recognize what segments of them do hope to be supported, nor what kind of support system is seriously needed for their employment. Therefore, this study attempts to describe the tendency of Japanese college-athletes' expectations for SAP as well as their consciousness of A/S balance, by relating to their profiles and achievement such as college/university's prestige, academic level at the college/university they belong to, admission selection methods, and best sport performance during their college days.

Methodology

We conducted questionnaire survey for 3,556 student-athletes who have come to joint job fairs or events held 6 times during this spring (from the end of January until the middle of March) by Athlete Planning Co., Ltd., which has supported student-athlete career development as a prior business for over a decade in Japan. After data cleaning, 1,299 student-athletes engaged in team sport (male: 929; female: 370) became subject to statistical analysis. First a factor analysis has been executed to find factors lying behind the college athlete's expectation for SAP, so that we gained 3 factors as follows: the 'Social Network' factor (introduction by OB/OG, coach, etc.), the 'Competency' factor (leadership, followership, time-management, goal-setting, etc.), and the 'Environment' factor (eligibility for using career support systems customized especially for student-athletes, etc.). Then, regression analyses for each factor score have been carried out to reveal a structure forming the student-athletes' expectation for SAP from their profile and achievement (college/university's prestige; admission selection method; academic level; sport performance level) and the consciousness of A/S balance in Japanese new graduate job market. Japan is a highly gendered society, especially in this research's context such as new graduate's labor market and college's/university's official sport club membership, so our data was also analyzed by gender.

Results, Discussion and Conclusions

The main results were as follows: 1) the variables associated with expectation for SAP were significantly different by gender; 2) for male, those who passed the entrance examination based on their athletic skills and whose A/S balance were biased to sport expected their SAP more in terms of Social Network and Environment, but NOT Competency; 3) for female, we couldn't find any variables related to their expectations for SAP. Summarizing the above, sport-oriented male students expect more to their SAP than the females. Japanese intercollegiate sport system might NOT be elaborated for student-athletes to value exquisite A/S balance and to behave enhancing their own competency through their well A/S balanced college days.

References

- Tsukahara, F. (2011a). "The Origin of "TAIKUKAIKEI" Employment — The Useful Bodies that Corporations Wanted: With a Description of "JITSUGYOU NO NIHON" as a Clue," *Journal of Japan Society of Sports Industry*. 2011a, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp.149-168 [in Japanese]
- Tsukahara, F. (2011b). "A Study on TAIKUKAIKEI's Employment in a Hokkaido Private University," *Comprehensive Journal of Sapporo University*, Vol. 32, pp.183-196, 2011b [in Japanese]
- Takamine, O. (2010). "A Survey Report on Student-athlete's Academic-Sport Life and Attitude for Career Development," *Liberal Arts Journal of Meiji University*, Vol. 452 (1) [in Japanese]
- Tsukahara, F., et al. (2017). "Japanese Student-athlete's, "TAIKUKAIKEI's," Employment in the Middle of 2010s: A Survey on the Relationship between Particular Sport and Unofficial Job Offer (Naitei) from a Company listed with 1st Section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange," *Journal of Sport Science*, vol. 14, pp.13-28, 2017 [in Japanese]
- Kanamori, F. (2017). "The Influence of Sport Participation during College Days onto Life-long Success after Graduation: Focusing on the Contrast between College/University's Official Sport Team and Informal Sporting Circle," Conference Proceeding of 68th Japan Society of Physical Education, Health and Sport Science, pp.129-134, 2017 [in Japanese]
- Grant, R., Leadley, J., & Zygmunt, Z (2015). *The Economics of Intercollegiate Sports*, 2nd Edition, World Scientific, 2015.