Types of professionalisation in Swiss national sport federations

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Introduction

Organisational typologies...

... have not gained much attention in sport management research so far
... „provide a conceptual basis for understanding organisational change”
(Kikulis, Slack & Hinings, 1995, p. 69)

State of development is different in Swiss national sport federations

→ Types of professionalisation are probable
→ Analysing the diversity in organisational design is meaningful

Research deficits:

– Nearly no quantitative analyses of design types in sport organisations
– No research covering a whole institutional setting
– No multi-dimensional conceptualisation of professionalisation
Research questions

1) Which types of professionalisation exist in Swiss national sport federations?

2) How can the identified types be described with regard to the federations’ organisational characteristics?
Forms of professionalisation in sport federations: a multi-dimensional framework

Ruoranen et al. (2016)
Operationalisation: Dimensions and factors

**Dimension «strategies and activities»**
- Growth orientation
- Quality and service orientation

**Dimension «structures and processes»**
- Formalisation of strategy
- Formalisation of marketing and communication
- Formalisation of HRM

**Dimension «persons and positions»**
- Proportion of voluntary staff in the federation, in relation to paid staff
- Absolute number of paid executives (management board, executive office and committees)
- Proportion of paid staff in the sport sector (e.g. paid coaches, athletes), in relation to paid executives

Ruoranen et al. (2016)
Design

Sample

> Online survey of Swiss national sport federations
  — N = 85
  — Response rate: 100%
  — 16 cases excluded: sample size 69 NSFs (81%)

Data analysis

> Hierarchical cluster analysis (Ward’s algorithm, SED)
> Analysis of organisational characteristics
  — Description of the clusters and external validation
  — E.g., size of organisation, financial resources, ... (Nagel, Schlesinger, Bayle, & Giauque, 2015)
Results: Four clusters

**Cluster 1 (n=14; 20%)**
Formalised federations managed by paid staff

**Cluster 2 (n=13; 19%)**
Federations managed by volunteers and a few paid executives

**Cluster 3 (n=17; 25%)**
Federations with differing formalisation and paid staff in the sport sector

**Cluster 4 (n=25; 36%)**
Moderately formalised federations managed by volunteers
## Organisational characteristics of the clusters

<table>
<thead>
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**Characteristics:**
- **Cluster 1:**
  - Large federations
  - Solid financial basis
  - 93% Olympic sports
  - High performance values

- **Cluster 2:**
  - Middle sized federations
  - Relatively scarce financial resources
  - 8% Olympic sports
  - Low performance values

- **Cluster 3:**
  - Rather small sized federations
  - Relatively solid financial basis
  - 82% Olympic sports
  - Average performance values

- **Cluster 4:**
  - Small sized federations
  - Scarce financial resources
  - 16% Olympic sports
  - Low performance values
Forms of professionalisation & organisational characteristics

**Formalised federations managed by paid staff**
- Large federations
- Solid financial basis
- 93% Olympic sports
- High performance classification

**Federations managed by volunteers and a few paid executives**
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**Federations with differing formalisation and paid staff in the sport sector**
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**Moderately formalised federations managed by volunteers**
- Small sized federations
- Scarce financial resources
- 16% Olympic sports
- Low performance classification
Discussion / Conclusion

**Discussion**
Congruence with findings of Nagel et al. (2015) and situational approach (Kieser, 2006)

Organisational characteristics (e.g., size of organisation, financial resources, Olympic vs. non-Olympic sport) appear to explain forms of professionalisation

**Managerial implications**
- Evaluation of a federation’s organisational set-up
- Consultation in professionalisation process

**Limitations**
Quantitative design restricts data collection

**Future research**
Combining the quantitative approach with qualitative, in-depth case studies
Thank you!
