Types of professionalisation
in Swiss national sport federations

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Introduction

- Types have the potential to identify common patterns in organisational designs and may help to better understand professionalisation in sport organisations.

- Previously identified types refer to simplified levels of professionalisation (i.e., from low to high professionalisation) (e.g., Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1992).

- Cluster analysis may represent the distinctive patterns more precisely than the methodological approaches of previous studies.

- State of development is different in Swiss national sport federations
  - Different types of professionalisation are probable
  - Analysing the diversity in organisational design is meaningful
Study design

Sample

> Online survey of Swiss national sport federations
  — 85 national sport federations
  — 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)
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 staff off the field (management board, executive office and committees)
- Proportion of paid staff on the field (e.g. paid coaches), in relation to paid staff off the field

Ruoranen et al. (2016)
Results: Four types of professionalisation

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

**Cluster 2 (n=13; 19%)**
Federations managed by volunteers and a few paid staff off the field

**Cluster 3 (n=17; 25%)**
Federations with differing formalisation and paid staff on the field

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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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

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*Logos of various federations are shown below the table.*
Discussion / Conclusion

- Different types of professionalisation exist and their forms of professionalisation appear to be related to organisational characteristics (size, financial resources, Olympic status)

- Olympic status highly determines professionalisation

- Different designs in moderately professionalised types ("different kinds of board rooms")

- Quantitative design enables precise measurement of specific aspects, however, it restricts the data collection

- Future research
  - A follow-up study could provide data to analyse if organisations move from one type to another
  - Analysis of qualitative performance measures
Thank you very much!

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