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Satisfaction of volunteers in sports clubs in Europe: individual and structural factors

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Voluntary work is still the most important resource that allows sports clubs to exist and to offer interesting programmes to their members. However, sports clubs often have difficulties in having enough qualified volunteers. Therefore, the question arises what characterises clubs that are successful in recruiting and retaining volunteers. In this context, volunteer satisfaction is a crucial factor for long-term commitment of volunteers (Schlesinger, Egli & Nagel, 2013). The aim of this paper is to analyse which individual and organisational factors play a role for the volunteer satisfaction. The analysis is guided by the multilevel model for the analysis of sport clubs (Nagel et al., 2015) and the concept of volunteer job satisfaction in sport clubs (Schlesinger et al., 2013). The empirical analysis is based on the research project "Social Inclusion and Volunteering in Sports Clubs in Europe" (SIVSCE) which consists of comparative data from ten European countries. For this paper the data collected on the club (n= 642) as well as on the member level (n=13,082) were connected in a multilevel design.

The comparison of the satisfied with the unsatisfied volunteers demonstrates that the most relevant factor is recognition (volunteer work is appreciated). The factors leadership (feedback and information) and support of volunteers show also relevant effects for volunteers' satisfaction whereas material incentives as well as interesting tasks and autonomy play a less important role. The size of the club (number of members) as well as having a paid manager have no significant effect on the satisfaction of volunteers.

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Sports clubs as a medium for integrating immigrants

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Sports clubs play an important role in integration policy debates. This raises the question of the extent sports clubs deal with the issue and actually provide integration services for immigrants. The focus of research is the objectives and measures at a club level, as well as the perceived integration of members. Based on a research design that considered the individual and organizational level, 50 sports clubs and 780 sports club members (mean age = 21.0 years; 9: 37.7%; immigrants: 38.2%) in Switzerland were examined by a written questionnaire. Nearly half of the football, basketball, martial arts, gymnastics, mountain and snow sports clubs indicate less than 10% migrant membership, and the other half of the clubs between 11% and 75% migrant membership. The following results should be noted: For 60% of sports clubs "openness to all population groups" is a very important goal; 48% have volunteers with a migrant background; discrimination and serious problems due to cultural diversity hardly occur. Sports club members are relatively well integrated socially, regardless of their migration status. Immigrants of the first generation sometimes have lower values of social inclusion than the third generation and natives. Initial analyses suggest that structural features of clubs like a high proportion of migrants, active integration work, and communication on integration issues can support the social integration. Thus, sports clubs can make an important contribution to the integration of young immigrant people. Nonetheless, inclusive efforts are needed at member and club level.