**13th European Association for Sociology of Sport Conference, May 4th – 6th 2015, Copenhagen (Denmark)**

**“To be more professional!” - Analyzing the professionalization process of Swiss Orienteering Federation**

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**Abstract**

Sports organizations are confronted to various challenges due to a changing environment. To meet these challenges professionalization take place which means an organizational transformation towards business-like management. Against this, the question arise which forms of professionalization could be observed and what are the triggering causes and the leading consequences? Analyzing professionalization, Nagel et al. (2015) elaborated a multi-level model which provides the larger explanatory frame addressing the forms in the context of causes and consequences at three level (organizational, internal and external environment). Regarding the forms, Ruoranen et al. (2016) differentiated between three dimensions: (1) strategy and activities, (2) persons and positions, (3) structures and processes.

According to this approach, a case-study design is used for longitudinal analysis of the professionalization process of Swiss Orienteering, an international successful federation in Switzerland. During the last decade, Swiss Orienteering is on the track to become more professional in their structures and activities. The federation is dealing with following issues: elaboration of a long-term strategy (1), establishing an operative management office (2), competence improvement of volunteers and recruitment of paid staff (3).

Results indicate, that these issues were mainly external triggered by the national umbrella association to improve performance. However, the process was carried out independently by the federation and leaded in the short run to organizational restructuring which mainly improved management and administration tasks at federation level, but no trickle-down effect yet to their member organizations.

References

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