



FOSTERING FEMALE MANAGEMENT LEADERS IN SPORTS

**SPORT CURRICULA FOR FEMALE SPORT MANAGERS
IN SPORT MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, ACCOUNTING
AND TRAINING**



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Research results

The FAMS Final Research Report underlines a dramatic situation in the sport management female component in all the countries surveyed (Belgium, Romania, Serbia, Italy, Croatia, and Bulgaria). The research has been done by survey female athletes, National Sport Federations and stakeholders through questionnaires investigating the participation of women in sport organizations, management roles covered by women, services related to gender gap, and policies to contrast discrimination within and without the sport sector between women and men. The results that the research ended up with describe a bleak scenario where women are underrepresented both in small as well as big sport institutions and federations with exception in sports considered as “women-driven” as dance, skating, and gymnastic, keeping on with perpetuating a stereotype. Policies and active measures to contrast gender gap in management positions and in salaries are not present in every country and when present they are poor. Another important data to underline is the fact that women in the sport sector seem to be not conscious of the policies regarding these themes and neither are aware of the presence (or absence) of women in managerial positions among Sport federations.

In Belgium, the survey revealed that only 1 out of 5 women are employed as elite-level coaches and only 1 out of 3 teams are female. Belgian sport women are not updated about the proper actions conducted to guarantee gender balance from federation (3 out of 11 said to know them). The results regarding NFS reveal that they did not take into account the gender-balance aspect when hiring personnel and only the 36% design programmes specifically for female athletes.

In Bulgaria, the 100% of the women interviewed assess that they are involved actively in their organizations, but their roles in managerial roles (21%) is far lower than their work as athletes (36%) and this 21% is primarily covered by women working in “women-driven” sports. Only few federations (25%) have roles regarding gender balance in Boards with positive results, while the others do not comprehend this actions in their policies, neither in the hiring ones. Only the 27% of them have educational programmes designed to women.

In Croatia, the 40% of respondents say that there is just one woman employed in their sport organizations, the others are volunteers. In Croatia, 89% of the 35 sports federations have a male president, and only four (11%) federations have a female president (state the source). There is only one woman among the vice presidents. Registered trainers make up 22%, and elite level trainers 13% of all registered trainers. Only 2 federations have a specific written policy for progress towards equality between women and men in their sport, while 1 has gender equality mentioned in its long-term plans. 2 respondents took measures to employ or increase the number of women in elected and appointed decision-making positions in their sport. 4% took measures to increase the number of female trainers.

In Italy, the survey revealed data similar to the previous ones. Moreover, the data show that in the sport sector, out of 44 Italian federations, 43 are headed by men. Gender equality in sport is therefore far away in Italy also according to other data: According to Censis, of the 4,708,741 registered athletes in the various federations, just 28% are women. Among the operators they are even less: only 19.8% are female coaches, 15.4% are company managers. According to CONI (Italian National Sport Federation) less than the 10% of leadership positions in sport are covered by women (Censis Institute, 2019).. These data confirm how women are still more likely to be minority in Italy than in other nations, according also to other data on the proportion of women in sport leadership.

In Romania, although it has a participation of women in decision-making, in the field of sports, close to the average registered at the EU level, it must be noted that the representation of women in these decision-



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making structures is still far from that of men, and improvements are still needed in order to reach a gender balance regarding participation in the decision. A national comparative analysis based on EIGE data between the field of sports and 6 other fields regarding the participation of women in decision-making has been carried out. The data regarding gender gap in the national sport field are the followings:

Area	Women	Men
Sports		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members in the decision-making structures of COSR (2019) 	36,80%	63,20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members in the highest decision-making structures of the national sports federations for the Olympic sports with the highest funding (2018) 	20,9%	79,1%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members in the decision-making structures of the national sports federations for the most popular Olympic sports (2018) 	12,2%	87,8%

recording a weaker participation of women in decision-making in the sport field. Regarding the questionnaire carried out, the most relevant information highlighted was the general (60-70%) lack of knowledge of women in knowing if their NFS have women in the board or act towards gender equality. The 70% revealed that gender-balance measures are not taken into account when hiring personnel from the Federations and the 70% confirms that there are not special educational programmes for women. These data were later confirmed by NFS where the large majority of them does not have any police regarding gender equality and only a half of them implement special educational programmes for women.

In Serbia, the NFSs surveyed do not have appropriate gender policies in place. In terms of the composition within governing bodies and decision-making positions, the negative trend continues with the insignificant presence of women. The responses from the NFSs stakeholders are rather conflicting, while acknowledging that they are women involved in the work of NFSs (66.6% responses), all of the respondents (100%) indicates that there is no formal policy in place involving women in governing bodies and decision-making positions. To contribute, most of the athletes (60.8%) responded that they are not engaged, or they (70%) are unaware if any of the women are involved in the work of the NSF. Similarly, the sport's stakeholders are in majority confirmed (83.3%) that the NFSs do not have a specific written policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at involving women in its policy processes and 77% of the stakeholders underlined that the NFSs do not have written policy aimed at encouraging the equal access to representation for women and men in all stages of the decision- making processes or written policy. As per educational programs, 61% of stakeholders confirmed that there are no specific programs for female athletes which comply with findings from the secondary data.

All these data confirm the need to act towards a general improvement in women's knowledge of sport management, to make them able to fight for their rights and impose their presence to sport organizations and Federation boards, fighting for gender equality.



Sport Management skills

Independently from the role in the organization (accounting manager, marketing manager, coaches responsible...) there are some life skills that are mandatory to have when starting a career in the sector in management positions. Here there are some of them

Soft skills

- **TASK MANAGEMENT**

Managers are called to comply with procedures, prepare documents, organize the general work of the company, talk to employees and customers and attend many meetings. Order and organization are absolutely vital when working with people. Employees must rely on managers who have to control their work, their emotions and their preparation thought their all-working life. Managers are also responsible for the economic performance of the company and this is particularly important for sport organizations that, many times are called to manage public funding. Being able to manage a calendar, keep the order of documents and payments, and manage software and databases are mandatory in this sector.

- **Relationship Building**

Building and nurturing relationships with athletes, coaches, staff, sponsors, and other stakeholders to foster collaboration and cooperation.

- **Adaptability**

Ability to adapt to changing circumstances, handle unexpected challenges, and make quick decisions in a dynamic sports environment.

- **Problem Solving**

Analytical thinking, critical reasoning, and the ability to identify and resolve issues and conflicts that arise within the sports organization.

- **Emotional Intelligence**

Understanding and managing one's emotions, as well as empathizing with others' emotions, to build positive relationships and handle interpersonal dynamics effectively.

- **Time Management**

Organizing and prioritizing tasks, managing deadlines, and handling multiple responsibilities efficiently.

- **Networking**

Actively engaging in professional networks, attending conferences, and building connections within the sports industry.

- **COMMUNICATION**

Managers are the spokesmen/women of the company in front of public institutions, customers, communities and are the reference for internal employees and collaborators. Managers have to develop a proper oral and writing communication, be able to convince and persuade. They have to



advertise their company and manage conflicts internally and externally. A proper communication, able to exploit also emotive intelligence is at utmost importance.

- **LEADERSHIP**

Managers are leaders. Been a leader means to be able to be a reference for all collaborators, be responsible for decisions and be able to suggest to collaborators the most important decisions. Leaders are called to solve conflicts and see the impact of decisions and strategic choices. A leader needs a good level of stress management because they must have the control of the situation without stress or blame their collaborators.

- **TEAM WORK**

Even if managers are leaders, they constantly work with people. A manager cannot take decision on his own. They are constantly involved in a cooperation environment that force them to take into account another's opinions and suggestions even if the last responsibility lays on their shoulders. A manager has to be able to create a relaxed framework of work, listen to people and appreciate their contribution. Team working skills are also vital to take better decision by confronting their ideas with others' ones.

Hard skills

- **Financial Management**

Understanding financial principles, budgeting, revenue generation, sponsorship management, and financial analysis.

- **Event Management**

Planning, organizing, and executing sports events, including logistics, scheduling, venue management, and operations.

- **Marketing and Promotion**

Knowledge of marketing strategies, branding, sponsorship activation, social media management, and fan engagement.

- **Sports Law and Regulations**

Familiarity with sports contracts, intellectual property rights, compliance with governing bodies, and legal aspects of the sports industry.

- **Data Analysis**

Ability to gather, interpret, and analyze data related to fan behavior, ticket sales, sponsorship ROI, and athlete performance.

- **Facility Management**

Knowledge of facility operations, maintenance, safety protocols, and maximizing the utilization of sports facilities.



Curricula

1. Sport Management Curriculum

Experience and Topics

- **Sport Management**

Management in economy is a subject that focuses on the company organization, teams' management and business strategy. The Manager is responsible for the strategic decisions of the company. In the classic economical literature, they have two main functions: maximize the yield of the company and be able to make compromises among all the stakeholders, taking into account the well-being of the company first. In the sport sector, managers are not only involved in the strategic planning of the company /team, federation, association, league...) but also in the general organization of the team, its development and empowerment, the acquisition of new athletes, and the relation with external stakeholders. The module of sport management will encompass the general elements of management (concepts of efficiency and effectiveness, the company, Business canvas model, and sponsorship) and the principles of the specific elements of sport management (team management, travel management, sport economy and market, and fundraising).

- **Funding management**

The sport sector is, mostly, involved in the non-profit sector, that part of the market that sell or deliver products or services in the open market, but, at the same time, able to exploit public funding, volunteers work and private donation thanks to its objectives that are not to maximize the net profits but to achieve a social purpose through an economic activity. Moreover, many times, this sector would not achieve a financial equilibrium because of the high costs of production and a market response that many times is not enough. That is why a manager in this (sometimes) fragile sector has to find resources in different ways. First of all, managers have to think about how to maximize their internal resources, guaranteeing both an achievement of the social/sporty objective and the financial and economic equilibrium. That is why the module will encompass cost management subject, that will teach how to maximize the revenues, minimizing the costs. Then, managers have to look for external resources. Here, the module will be based on fundraising, encompassing crowdfunding, EU funds in the sport sector, microcredit, sponsorship and donations campaigns, and public funds.

- **Strategy**

The strategy of a company is its projection to the future. In the strategic vision, the manager is the one that is able to foresee the difficulties and has the tools to overcome them. These abilities are part of their talent from one side, and, on the other side, raise from precise tools that the economy delivers them during their studies. The module wants to deliver them these tools giving a more precise overview on the 5 strengths of porter, Swot analysis, PESTEL analysis, Business planning, Strategy Mapping, and OKR Objective and results taking into account the precise difficulties of the sport market

- **Project Management**

Our economy is more and more project-based. This is particularly true for the sport sector. We can see matches or championships as project. They have a start and an end, an objective and an number of resources dedicated to its achievement. Moreover, the delivery of resources of the



public sector are given to precise projects and to the measurability of their impact. Thus, this module delivers the principal knowledge of project management and design such as: project design, theory of change, work breakdown structure, Gantt diagram, budget management, and Project cycle management.

- **Sports Governance and Policy:**
Understanding governing bodies, regulations, policy-making processes, and the role of sports organizations in shaping the industry.
- **Sports Facility Management:**
Principles of facility operations, venue management, event planning, safety protocols, and maximizing facility utilization.
- **Sports Event Management:**
Planning, organizing, and executing sports events, including logistics, scheduling, event promotion, and operations.
- **Sports Leadership and Organizational Behavior:**
Developing leadership skills, understanding organizational dynamics, team management, and effective communication within sports organizations.

LEARNING GOALS

- Acquisition of fundamental concepts in specific, sport management core content areas.
- Development of a knowledge of ethics and professional obligations including diversity and global awareness.
- Development of "higher order learning skills" such as critical thinking, creative problem-solving, oral and written communication skills and quantitative analysis.
- Development of interpersonal skills requisite for successful professional collaboration.
- Development of "technological literacy" with materials/resources supporting managerial communication, data-acquisition and organizational decision-making.

2. Marketing and PR management curriculum

Experience and topics

- **Marketing**
Marketing is much more than social media communication and advertising. Marketing is, first of all, knowing your audience and customize your offer for your targets with proper communication channels and touch points. This strategic competence is vital in particular for the non-profit sector and the sport one, due to their fragilities and features. The marketing module will give learners basic information regarding: The marketing model for the sport market, the consumption of sport services, the value proposition, the relation with other business (corporate support, product placement, celebrity endorsement...), the segmentation of the demand, and the targeting process.



- **Brand Management**
Brand is vital to start a relation with the audience and customers' loyalty. Brand is an intangible asset of the company able to attract or drive away customers. Being sport related to the sense of identity, well-being, social inclusion and active participation of people, intangible communication and brand loyalty assume a great importance. It is possible to think about the logo of the NBA, the colour of national teams, the hymn of teams screamed in the stadiums. The brand management part deals with the value of the brand, the creation and development of a brand, the management of the brand, the communication of a brand, and brand strategy.
- **Pricing**
The price is an index that connects supply with demands. It reflects the production processes and the brand importance of a company. For a consumer is a consideration for choosing a product instead of another one. For a company is a way to choose its market and consumers too. Sport organizations have also to take into account their social values for the community and understand how they can offer high-quality services in relation to their market and leaving them accessible to people (that is way public fundings are important). In this module it is possible to see how to understand price values, how to determine the minimum and maximum price, the pricing methods, and the pricing strategy.
- **Web and offline communication**
Marketing has to intercept target customers. That is why a deep knowledge of them is vital. Once understood the target is it possible to think about how to communicate with them though online (social media, web marketing, websites, emailing...) and offline (shops, advertising, flyers, info points...) tools. In this module an overview of the channels of communication will be given though these lessons: How to manage a communication campaign, paid channels (advertising, promotions, distribution channels), owned channels (social media, events, websites), earned channels (PR relations, reviews, viral marketing, and guerrilla marketing), and customer relationship management.
- **Sports Marketing and Sponsorship**
Strategies for marketing sports products, sponsorship activation, fan engagement, and leveraging brand partnerships.
- **Sports Media and Communication**
Exploring the role of media in sports, sports journalism, public relations, social media management, and effective communication strategies in the sports industry.
- **Sports Sponsorship and Sales**
Strategies for acquiring and managing sponsorships, developing sales skills, and negotiating sponsorship agreements.

LEARNING GOALS

- Be aware of and comply with law and regulations in the field of public relations, advertising, brand communication, marketing communication, persuasive communication, communication management, corporate communications.



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- Approach the dynamics of the field with an integrated perspective
- Explain main concepts and the relationships of these concepts
- Be informed of, both practically and conceptually, in the field of public relations, advertising, brand communication, marketing communication, persuasive communication, communication management, corporate communication which were equipped lesson materials which included newest information and other resources.
- Recognize and adapt to communication style of different cultures.
- Comply with social, scientific, professional and ethical values in the stages of data collection, interpretation, introduction and implementation of the related field.
- Develop positive attitudes and behaviour towards lifelong learning.

3. Financial Management curriculum

Experience and topics

- **Accounting management**

Accountability is a basic and vital instrument in a company life. It is helpful to control economic, financial and social matters regarding company's management and communicate the results internally and externally. The accounting manager is the responsible of accounting records writing and control. They have to oversee the whole accounting procedures and elaboration being careful of counts, contracts and fiscal matters. The module relies on delivering general knowledge regarding accounting management functions and responsibilities, accounting records, discal matters regarding the sport sector, the contracts and labour rights in the sport sector.

- **Accounting records**

Accounting records are the documents that assess the economic, financial and monetary sustainability of a company. This module offers the proper description and features about them and how to implement them properly. In particular regarding: how to understand accounting records, principles of accounting records, double entry scheme, income statement, balance sheet, Financial and economic performance indicators in the sport sector

- **Social accounting**

Accounting records explain us the economic and financial sustainability of a company but they do not say anything regarding its social and environmental one, the achievement of its mission objective, details regarding its governance and employee's well-being. To answer all these questions, social reports are necessary, in particular in sport organizations where the mission's objectives are at the utmost importance. For this reason, an introduction to social records has to be given regarding: social records, international standard for social records, how to implement a social record in the areas of social and environmental sustainability, governance and personal matters, sport objectives.

- **Financial Management in Sports**

Principles of financial management, budgeting, revenue generation, ticket sales, sponsorship management, and financial analysis.



- **Sports Economics**

Examining the economic principles and concepts specific to the sports industry, including revenue streams, market analysis, and economic impact studies.

LEARNING GOALS

- Participants will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- Participants will demonstrate knowledge of the legal and ethical environment impacting business organizations and exhibit an understanding and appreciate of the ethical implications of decisions.
- Participants will demonstrate an understanding of and appreciate for the importance of the impact of globalization and diversity in modern organizations.
- Participants will demonstrate an ability to engage in critical thinking by analysing situations and constructing and selecting viable solutions to solve problems.
- Participants will demonstrate an ability to work effectively with others.
- Participants will demonstrate knowledge of current information, theories and models, and techniques and practices in all of the major business disciplines including the general areas of Accounting and Finance, Information Technologies, Management, Marketing, and Quantitative Analysis.

4. Coaches and Training Curriculum

This resource is an overview of how to support and train coaches in utilizing the curriculum in their coaching process. This is not an exhaustive list for coach training, but rather a list of focused recommendations for building coaches' skill set in using the curriculum.

Curriculum Study: For all subjects and grades that the coach supports, the coach should complete a curriculum study to deepen his/her understanding of the materials. This can be done side-by-side with teachers, depending on your training model. Coaches should learn:

- **Scope and Sequence:** Coaches should have knowledge of the grade level standards and how the standards progress in the curriculum throughout the year in all content areas and grades that they support.
- **Unit Plan and Assessment:** Coaches should have knowledge of the standards covered in the current unit, as well as the rigor and question types that will be assessed at the end of the unit in the materials.
- **Understanding of Expectations for Use, Planning, and Pacing:** Coaches should be experts on the school's decisions around how teachers will use and adjust the materials. Coaches should be ready to answer teacher questions on these topics. For the lesson plan specifically, coaches should understand how the lesson plan is structured and how it covers key knowledge and skills.
- **Pedagogical aspects of coaching:** Sport Pedagogy offers an essential starting point for anyone who cares about sport, education and young people. It offers invaluable theoretical and practical guidance for studying to become an effective teacher or coach, and for anyone who wants to inspire children and young people to engage in and enjoy sport for life. The book also focuses on you as a learner in sport, prompting you to reflect critically on the ways in which your early learning experiences might affect your ability to diagnose the learning needs of young people with very different needs.



Sport Pedagogy is about learning in practice. It refers both the ways in which children and young people learn and the pedagogical knowledge and skills that teachers and coaches need to support them to learn effectively. Sport pedagogy is the study of the place where sport and education come together.

- **The importance of coaches:** One crucial way coaching helps individuals is by helping them to see themselves more clearly. A coach provides space and structure for the reflection that is necessary for learning and growth. They help you understand what your values are and where your actions diverge from your values or stated goals. A good coach can help you reconnect with what you love about your life and your work.

Here's a look at some key areas of growth for individual coaching:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Resilience
3. Collaboration
4. Self-Efficacy
5. Communication
6. Work Life Balance
7. Increased and stable mental health

- **Training methods**

1. **Autocratic Coaching:** Autocratic coaching can best be summed up by the phrase, "My way or the highway." Autocratic coaches make decisions with little to no input from the player or players. The autocratic coach articulates a vision for what the players need to accomplish, and the players are expected to perform. Autocratic coaching is victory-focused and typically features inflexible training structures.
 2. **Democratic Coaching:** Democratic coaching is exactly what it sounds like: Instead of dictating to their athletes, coaches facilitate decision-making and goal-setting with input from them. The democratic coaching style is athlete-centered, and the athletes shape their own objectives under a framework outlined by the coach. When utilizing democratic coaching, coaches give a lot of autonomy to players and teams, who are active collaborators in their own development and direction.
 3. **Holistic Coaching:** holistic coaching is founded on the theory that a happy team naturally becomes a successful team. When employing holistic coaching methods, coaches offer very little in terms of structured training or positive feedback. Instead, the holistic coach works to create an environment in which players feel comfortable exploring and pursuing skills development on their own time and in their own way. In a holistic coaching approach, the coach does not act as a central authority, and instead allows the team members to set their own agenda.
- **Coaching and NFE:** Education through sport (as a methodological approach) is most frequently used in non-formal education programmes (setting). With our training module for sport educators, we focus on this specific section of the overall spectrum of sport-based educational activities.

Sports and NFE key principles:

1. Values and integrity
2. Inclusivity and accessibility
3. Voluntary participation
4. Learner based and centered



5. Ownership and proactivity
6. Competences and holistic approach
7. Experiential learning
8. Group knowledge and information sharing in the mean of support
9. Appreciation, Respect and empathetic

LEARNING GOALS

- presentation and public speaking
- project and time-management skills
- written and verbal communication
- decision-making and problem-solving skills
- research and data analysis
- information technology
- leadership
- mentoring
- numeracy.

Program learning outcome

- Participants will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of fundamental principles requisite for professional success in the sport management profession.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate the ability to make sound ethical decisions in the sport management profession.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate the ability to solve problems inherent in the sport business industry.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in oral formats utilized in the sport management profession.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in written formats utilized in the sport management profession.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate the ability to articulate the global scope of sport.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate the ability to recognize diversity issues in sport management.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate the ability to use technology effectively in the application of sport management practice.

