

# **SPORT MANAGERS IN FINLAND**

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this Master's thesis is to study the profiles of the sport managers in Finland at the moment. More specifically the research aim to investigate to what extent the sport manager types defined by Laakso (2016) can be applied in the sport management field in general. For this purpose, a quantitative survey was conducted. An email-survey was sent to 633 managers working in leading sport positions in different sport organizations in Finland. In total 284 answers were received resulting in a response rate of 44.9 percent.

As a theoretical framework, Laakso's (2016) model of sport manager types and paths was used. In general sport managers in Finland have long and versatile careers in sports and are either chosen for the position because of their management background or because their strong sport background has played a significant role in selection. Results of this study revealed six Finnish sport manager types: *chosen*, *sportsman*, *politician*, *bureaucrat*, *educator*, *drifter* and *amateur*. Subsequently five sport manager paths can be labelled as: *the story of growth*, *the story of drifting*, *the story of coincidence*, *the story of pursuit* and *the story of business*.

In earlier studies sport managers have been found to have high education, educational degree in sport, competitive sport background and on average, 48 years of age. The number of female sport managers has been increasing in recent years, yet still most of the sport managers are men.

The results of this study give a comprehensive picture of sport management and managers in Finland, which can be used to develop educational programs as well as a new foundation for future research.

Keywords: sport managers, sport management, career paths, Finland

## Tables and Figures

Table 1 - Research population by type of employer.....	30
Table 2 - Respondents by type of employer.....	37
Table 3 – Sport manager job titles.....	38
Table 4 – Age groups by gender.....	38
Table 5 - Gender by the sectors.....	39
Table 6 - Age groups by the sectors.....	39
Table 7 - Education by gender.....	40
Table 8 - Education by the sectors.....	40
Table 9 - Education by age groups.....	41
Table 10 - Education of the respondents with and without degree in sports by the sectors.....	42
Table 11 - Top ten sports.....	42
Table 12 – The level of competitive sports by the sectors.....	43
Table 13 – Tasks within the sport.....	44
Table 14 - Sport manager types by the sector.....	46
Table 15 - Sport manager paths by the sectors.....	50
Figure 1. Three-sector model of sport (adapted from Hoye et al. 2018, 8).....	10
Figure 2. Trends affecting sport industry (adapted from Kosonen 2014, 13). .....	15
Figure 3. Sport organizations in Finland 2019 (adapted from Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 23)....	17
Figure 4. Sport manager types.....	45
Figure 5. Sport manager paths.....	49
Figure 6. Sport types and paths in Finland.....	63

## Table of contents

1 INTRODUCTION .....	6
2 SPORT MANAGEMENT .....	9
2.1 Sport industry and management .....	9
2.2 Special features of sport .....	12
2.3 Defining sport manager .....	13
3 SPORT MANAGEMENT IN FINLAND .....	14
3.1 Sport industry in Finland .....	14
3.2 Sport organizations in Finland.....	16
3.3 Sport managers' and management research in Finland .....	21
3.4 Sport manager profiles – theoretical framework .....	26
4 METHODOLOGY AND DATA .....	29
4.1 Research method.....	29
4.2 Data.....	30
4.3 Data collection.....	33
4.4 Data analysis.....	35
5 RESULTS .....	36
5.1 Background information.....	36
5.1.1 Age and gender of the sport managers .....	38
5.1.2 Education of the sport managers .....	40
5.1.3 Sport background.....	42
5.2 Sport manager types .....	44

5.3	Additional sport manager types .....	46
5.4	Sport manager paths .....	49
5.5	Additional sport manager paths .....	50
6	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....	53
6.1	Discussion.....	53
6.1.1	Sport manager in Finland .....	53
6.1.2	Sport manager types and career paths in Finland .....	58
6.2	Sport manager types and paths in Finland.....	63
6.3	Ethical issues .....	65
6.4	Reliability and validity of the study .....	66
6.5	Suggestions for further studies .....	67
	REFERENCES .....	70
	APPENDICES .....	76

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In Finland, the sport industry is one of the key segments of the economy (Fasandoz 2016, 109; Laine & Vehmas 2017). The role of sport in society has become more important, which implies a growing significance also in the sport-related labour market and the role of sport in a range of different organizations (Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 27; Vasankari & Kolu 2018).

According to recent studies about sport management in Finland, there seems to be a prevailing consensus on the lack of managerial expertise in Finland (e.g. Nenonen 2013; Laakso 2016; Lipponen 2017; Aalto-Nevalainen 2018). To develop the competence level of the Finnish sport management as a whole there is a need for more information and discussion about Finnish sport managers' backgrounds and about the ways of how the managers have progressed into their leadership positions. Research carried out over a wide-ranging sample would increase the knowledge of the reality of the sport management in Finland. (Laakso 2016, 168, 171.)

There are different ways to become a sport manager in Finland. Some people rise within sport organizations into management positions, and often the journey is more about drifting or ending up as sport managers by coincidence. For others it is about actively pursuing and aiming towards sport management positions. According to the interviews of sport managers in Finland, a prerequisite of a long-lasting career within sport or otherwise being a well-known personality seems to be the strongest legitimate route to become a sport manager. Substantial knowledge is highly appreciated in the Finnish sport management setting. Besides a background in sports, politics, management skills and gender are central factors on a pathway to become a sport manager in Finland. (Laakso 2016.)

Previous studies (e.g., Nenonen 2013; Laakso 2016) about sport managers in Finland have been mostly conducted as qualitative studies. In this study however, the aim is to examine Finnish sport management by using quantitative research methods. Aiming to create a comprehensive picture of how Finnish sport management is situated currently. This study investigates the Finnish sport manager types and narratives that were first presented by Laakso (2016). The

purpose of this study is to test the theoretical model presented by Laakso (2016) at the quantitative level and continue on Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) review on sport management and sport managers' career paths in Finland. While Aalto-Nevalainen (2018) investigated gender differences in sport management in Finland, this study focuses on a comparison of managers between different sport sectors. The theoretical framework of this study is built upon Laakso's (2016) and Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) studies as well as other literature focusing on sport management in Finland.

The research aims to answer the following research questions:

- What is the profile of sport managers in Finland?
- To what extent can Laakso's (2016) Finnish sport manager types be applied to Finnish sport management field in general?

This study is structured as follows: After the introduction the focus is shifted to the literature review. General sport management internationally is reviewed in chapter two to illustrate the environment where sport managers work. Key concepts and dimensions are presented, and the most important definitions of this study are introduced. Chapter three reviews Finnish sport management literature. Sport industry and organizations are presented together with previous sport management research in Finland. In its own sub-chapter Laakso's (2016) sport manager profiles are introduced. The fourth chapter deals with methodology and data. The fifth chapter consists of results of the study, which are further analysed, discussed and concluded in chapter six. The sixth chapter also includes the presentation of further research possibilities.

This study offers significance to various reference groups. First of all, this study illustrates possible paths towards sport management in Finland. Understanding these is important for both educational facilities as well as for those individuals who wish to become sport managers.

Secondly, this study highlights the differences between private, third party and public sport sectors. While traditionally sport management in Finland has focused on third party and public

sectors, the importance of the private sector of sport in Finland is increasing. This implies the increasing need to understand also the private sector better.

Lastly, this study offers a foundation for future sport management studies in Finland. Creating a comprehensive picture of how the Finnish sport management field is situated. Furthermore, the study provides an opportunity to make more in-depth analysis of different phenomena within the field. Different suggestions for further studies will be discussed in more detail in the last chapter.

## **2 SPORT MANAGEMENT**

This chapter reviews sport management literature in general. First the sport industry and environment are defined and described. Secondly, special features of sport are visited. Thirdly, sport manager, as seen in light of this research, is defined.

### **2.1 Sport industry and management**

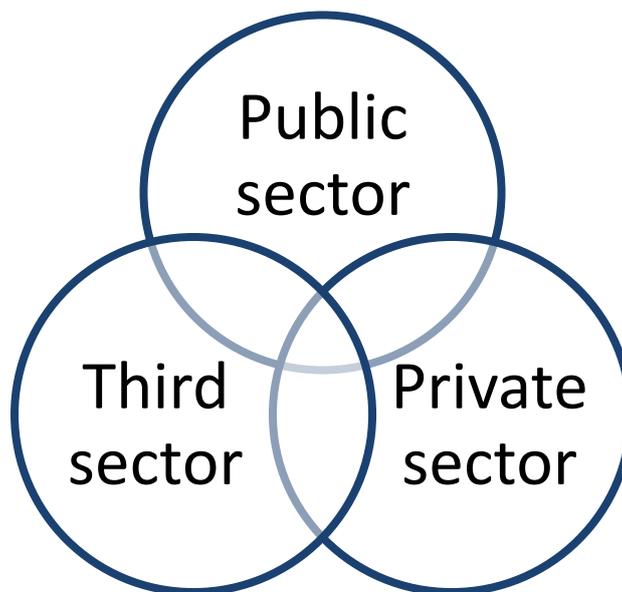
The worldwide business of sport is booming. Sport industry is growing faster than overall GDP and the future of the industry remains positive. Different estimations on the size of the sport industry have been made. In 2011 the net worth of the global sport industry was estimated to be between 350 and 450 billion euros. (Collignon et al. 2011.) Within the EU sport related gross domestic product was estimated to be 280 billion euros in 2012. In addition, it is estimated that 5.67 million people work within sports in the EU. (Sport Satellite Accounts 2018.) Sport industry, as defined here, is a market where sport products are offered to buyers. These products can be sporting goods, services, people, places or ideas. (Pitts & Stotlar 2002, 4.)

In the last decades, the sports industry has undergone a number of transitions. If this transition is examined from big screen, the business environment has shifted through trends such as commercialization, professionalization (Shilbury & Ferkins 2011), globalisation (Chadwick 2009) and changes in technology (Hoye et al. 2015, 7). The importance of leadership in the sport industry has been recognized since the 1970s. Since then, the range of academic literature has explored different themes related to sport management. (Peachey et al. 2015; Laine & Vehmas 2017.)

Globalization and internationalization have been major drivers of change within the sport industry. Through new technology sport organizations can reach their audiences wider and faster than ever. New forms of technology allow sport to reach new markets, which means both possibilities and challenges for sport organizations if they can make the most out of new markets and are able to claim new customers. There are challenges, for example if organizations struggle with ever-changing business environments and if they cannot meet the demands of the

toughening competition. The intensifying competition has also highlighted commercialization and professionalization within sport organizations. Sport organizations hire more employees than ever before for tasks that were previously fulfilled by volunteers. More and more sports organizations nowadays have professional management. This means that sport organizations have paid employees to do their administrative activities. Professionalization of sport management positions has created the need to also develop sport management curricula. Universally the role of sport managers is to meet the demands of the new dynamic global sporting environment. (Shilbury & Ferkins 2011; Hoye et al. 2018, 6-7.)

The environment of sport can be described as three distinct sectors. Those sectors are public, third and private sector. Sectors are outlined in the following Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Three-sector model of sport (adapted from Hoye et al. 2018, 8)

The public sector of sport includes national, regional and local governance working with sport policies, funding and enabling of sporting activities. The third sector, which can also be described as the nonprofit or voluntary sector, involves associations ranging from national and international sport governing bodies to local sport clubs. Actors within the third sector of sport

are responsible for providing sport and physical activity opportunities. Associations are by nature nonprofit and based on voluntary work. The last part of the three-sector model of sport is the private sector. Which includes all commercial actors and businesses working within the sport environment. This can range from professional teams to sport retailing and to other commercial operators. (Vehmas & Ilmanen 2013; Hoye et al. 2018, 7-8.)

As can be seen from Figure 1, sport sectors do not work in isolation and overlap with each other. This means that some sport organizations can have features from multiple sectors. The trend of blurring boundaries between different sectors is described as hybridization. All three sectors are adopting features from each other. Previously, different sectors were seen as distinct but the definitions are no longer so clear. In the public sector blurring of boundaries is best seen in the privatization of certain functions and transferring responsibility from service production to the third sector. In turn, the third and private sector need to be able to adapt to these new responsibilities. (Billis 2010, 3; Heinonen 2012, 13–15; Sipponen 2016, 21–24; Hoye et al. 2018, 7-8.) While this study focuses on organized sport, in addition to three sector model there exists sport that is unorganized. Most Finns are not affiliated into any organized sport system but rather are moving independently. This self-organized sporting activities can be of many sorts ranging from commuting to hanging out with friends. (Rikala 2013, 3; Hasanen 2017.)

The environment where sport organizations operate, differs from other business environments (Hoye et al. 2018, 4-8). Despite the differences, business organizations have a lot to offer for sport management, and vice versa. Traditionally, sport organizations have adopted management practices from business models (Slack 1998), but business organizations have awakened to imitate models from sport organizations (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala 2000; Wolfe et al. 2005; Burnes & O'Donnell 2011). Sport organizations can be beneficial for business organizations to learn multilevel evolution, competitive advantage, stakeholder management and working with teams (Burnes & O'Donnell 2011). However, special features of sport should be taken into consideration when investigating sport management (Fink 2013) and these special features will be outlined in the following sub-chapter.

## 2.2 Special features of sport

From the perspective of sport management, sport has traditionally been perceived through two contrasting philosophical approaches. From the first point of view, sport is a unique cultural institution where traditional business practices do not function, because they do not acknowledge special features of sport. This viewpoint highlights the specialty of sport management as a field and it should not be regarded through generic business principles such as profit maximization. Secondly, sport can be seen from the viewpoint of the generic business environment, which follows the same basic rules of business as any other business entity. (Smith & Stewart 1999.) Over the years, the distinction between the aforementioned approaches has been fading, and nowadays sport is seen as something between these two thoughts. Sport management has become its own academic discipline. Yet still, sport is seen as a challenging area of expertise, because of its hybrid nature where two competences, sport and management, are combined. (Costa 2005; Smith & Stewart 2010.)

Smith and Stewart (1999) listed ten unique features of sport that should be acknowledged in the case of sport management. These unique features include the ability to develop irrational passions, performance evaluation, competitive balance, variable quality product, brand loyalty, vicarious identification, a high degree of optimism, reluctant to new technologies and lastly, limited availability. Revisiting special features, Smith and Stewart (2010) challenge their previous ideas and state that many of the previous features can be found also in other knowledge industries, for example from areas of culture and hospital management. Out of the previous ten features, they conclude four features that clearly distinguish the sport field from business. Firstly, the quality of sport product is not uniform. As sport performance varies between different events, so does the quality of the sport product. Managers need to work to ensure the most revenue is generated in spite of a varying product quality, which they can rarely affect. Secondly, competitive balance remains in the center of sport. A cooperative behavior among rival sport clubs can be observed, that if compared to co-operation between rival companies in the business world, would be against anti-competitive laws. In sport however, this is tolerated. Thirdly, sport players are placed under such scrutiny and held up to standards that would not be tolerated by employees in other business areas. Fourth and last aspect that distinguishes sport from other businesses, is that players' rights are very different in comparison to employees'

rights. Players are an income asset for professional teams, which is probably best seen in player transactions between teams. The tight constraint that is placed on players behaviors, would be rare to see in other business enterprises. (Smith & Stewart 2010.)

Despite how special features of sport are combined, they create an unique environments that sport managers need to deal with. In the next subchapter, the concept of sport managers will be defined.

### **2.3 Defining sport manager**

The definitions of sport management and sport managers vary. On one hand, sports management is seen as managing sports. This includes management practices that involve actual sporting activities. On the other hand, sport management is defined as all management practices in the sport industry. (Pitts & Stotlar 2001, 3.)

According to Soucie (1998), sport managers are involved in a wide range of management activities. These activities aim at producing and marketing sport services for clients whose personal goals and needs are diverse. This goes in line with Pitts and Stotlar's (2002) view of sport management where all management practices in the sport industry are regarded as sport management. This broader view of sport management is also used within this study. Sport management can thus be defined as a leadership targeting all people, functions, businesses, and organizations that can still be linked to the production, management, enabling, or marketing of a sports product (Pitts & Stotlar 2002, 3).

### **3 SPORT MANAGEMENT IN FINLAND**

This chapter reviews sport management literature in Finland. Firstly, the sports industry is described in the context. Secondly, the Finnish sport organization field is presented. The third sub-chapter deals with the literature review on sport management in Finland. Lastly, in the fourth sub-chapter, Laakso's (2016) theoretical model is presented.

#### **3.1 Sport industry in Finland**

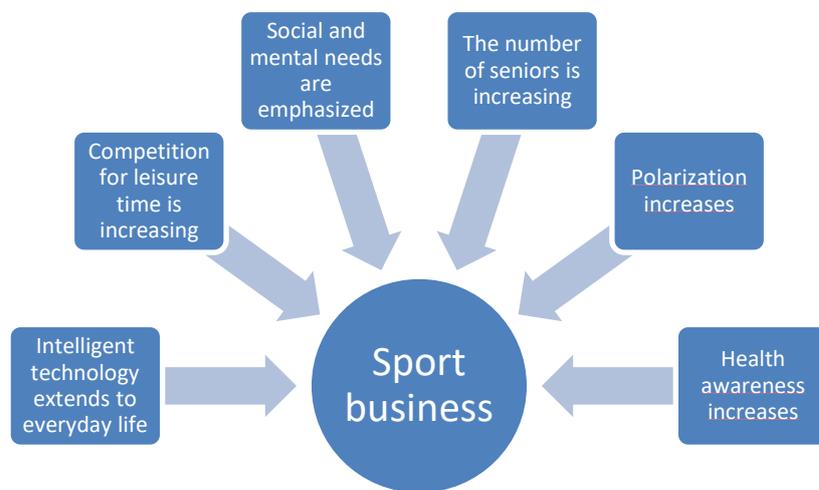
The sport industry in Finland can be considered as momentous. From the Finnish national economy's point of view, sport industry is seen as one of the key economic segments in the country. The share of sports in the total economy has been increasing since the 2000s. In 2014, the size of the sports industry in Finland was estimated to be around 5.5 billion euros. From the industry's point of view, Finnish sports business is shifting from basic manufacturing to a more service-oriented business field. (Alanen 2006; Kosonen 2014, 8; Fasandoz 2016, 109, 140; Laine & Vehmas 2017.)

When comparing Finland to its Nordic counterparts, the Finnish sport sector appears to be more fragmented and undergoing some major transitions (Lehtonen 2017). Traditionally, the Finnish sport sector has been built upon public and civic sectors, meaning that the responsibility for organizing sport lies with the state and municipalities (Mäkinen 2012). In the last decades, the importance of the private sector has been increasing in Finland (Huhtanen & Pyykkönen 2012; Laine & Vehmas 2017). Nevertheless, the private sports sector is relatively small in Finland (Vehmas & Ilmanen 2013). On the public level, different stakeholders are being combined striving to create a Finnish model of a national sports organization (Stenbacka et. al. 2018).

Internationally, the sports sector is experiencing a shift from an amateur, volunteer-driven world to a more professional and business-like model (Shilbury & Ferkins 2011). This professionalization movement can be recognized also in Finland. More and more Finnish sport clubs are experiencing a shift towards a professional club environment. (Koski & Mäenpää 2018.) This is in line with a view of Finnish sport managers interviewed by Kokkonen and

Pyykkönen (2011). Besides global megatrends such as professionalization, commercialization and globalization, Koski and Heikkala (2006) highlight socio-demographic changes in the Finnish society. The potential population participating in sport and physical activities is getting older. The ageing of the population will challenge sport managers in the future, with the example of a lack of voluntary people.

Kosonen (2014, 13) capsulizes the most important trends affecting sport industry in Finland. These are described in the following Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Trends affecting sport industry (adapted from Kosonen 2014, 13).

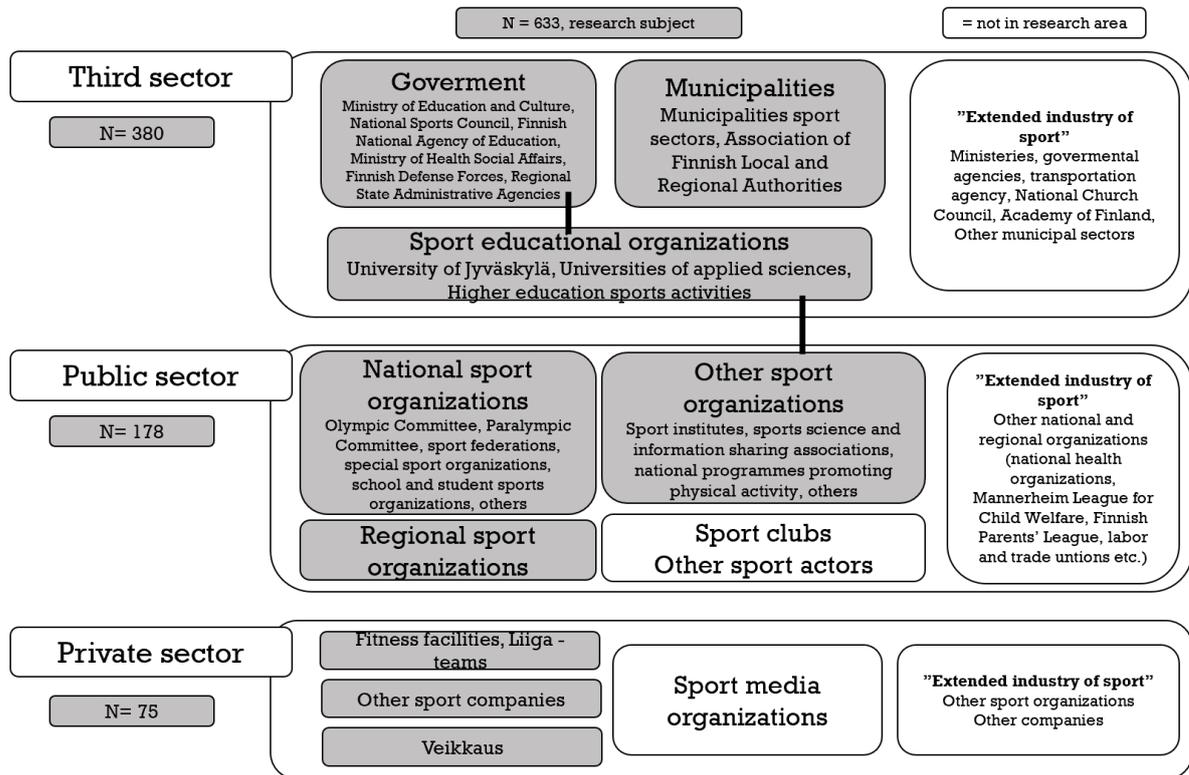
There are few sport segments of Finnish sport industry that have a clear growth potential. Those are health and well-being, tourism, events, communication, entertainment and lifestyle. The growth of previous segments is the basis of the abovementioned trends affecting Finnish sport industry, namely intelligent technology extending to everyday life. The increase in competition of leisure time emphasizing social and mental needs, growth in senior population, increase of polarization and health awareness. (Kosonen 2014, 13.)

The trends described above shape the sports industry in Finland. Besides challenges in the general environment, sporting culture in Finland is also undergoing a change towards a more professional environment. Part of the cultural shift in the sport setting is seen in the movement from a traditional towards a more individualistic view of sport. Before sports club members were committed to associations for the long run, now commitment is mainly project-based. The Finnish sport club culture is also shifting from serving only its own members to producing sport services to larger groups. The focus is shifting from member emphasis towards a broader customer and service emphasis. These cultural shifts bring challenges to the organizational interaction, integration of functions and coordination mechanisms, in practice for sport management. (Koski & Heikkala 2006, 9-10.)

The social significance of the sport industry has increased in Finland during recent years, as the benefits of a physical lifestyle for learning, working life and health are increasingly understood (Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 27). Sports' ability to reduce physical inactivity and its side effects is an example of sports' social significance. Physical inactivity causes costs to Finnish society of approximately 3.2 – 7.5 billion per year. This results in extra expenses and losses of productivity (Vasankari & Kolu 2018). As can be seen in the municipal level, the overall promotion of physical activity has been positive in recent years. Sport is mentioned more often in municipal strategies, and activities that promote physical activity have increased. (Hakamäki et al. 2016.)

### **3.2 Sport organizations in Finland**

In this sub-chapter the Finnish sport organization field is outlined as presented in research in 2019. The framework of Finnish sport organizations is presented in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Sport organizations in Finland 2019 (adapted from Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 23)

The Finnish Sports Act (Liikuntalaki 2015) defines responsibility areas the different sport organizations in Finland have. The central government’s role is to be responsible for the overall leadership, coordination and development of sport policy and for the establishment of general conditions for physical activity at a governmental level. The main actor on behalf of the government is the Ministry of Education and Culture. In addition, the Finnish National Agency of Education, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and Finnish Defense Forces play a significant role in national physical activity. At the regional administration level governmental sport activities are handled by the Regional State Administrative Agencies. (Liikuntalaki 2015, 4§; Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 23-24).

National Sports Council acts as an expert body for the Ministry of Education and Culture. Their role is to examine Finnish sport policies from a strategic point of view, to evaluate the impact of governmental physical activity interventions and to guide the overall physical activity

enhancement efforts. Practical implementation on governmental sport policies occurs in cooperation with local municipalities, NGOs and other sport actors. (Liikuntalaki 2015, 4, 6§.)

On the local level, municipalities are responsible for sport and physical activities. Depending on the size of the municipality, sport services are organized differently. The sport in municipalities can be conducted in the specialized sport sector focusing on sport activities or sport can be incorporated alongside larger entities and in cooperation with other sectors. The core role of the municipalities is to produce sport services, construct and maintain sport facilities, and to provide support for individual citizens and sport clubs. (Liikuntalaki 2015, 7§; Aaltonen 2016, 78-84.)

Sport educational organizations are a central part of the Finnish sport system, but because of their different legal person status it is difficult to position them on any specific sector of sport. In Finland, higher education in the field of sport is offered at university level in the Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences at the University of Jyväskylä, and in level of universities of applied sciences by Kajaani, Rovaniemi and Haaga-Helia's unit in Vierumäki. (Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 24-25.) In this study, the organizations providing higher education in sports are placed in the public sector because of their public function as public educational institutions

The third sector in sport aims for non-profit, social and societal goals. While as government and municipalities organize and create possibilities to perform sports, the role of the third sector is to produce the actual sport and physical activities. The main actors of the third sector are sport clubs, associations and foundations. (Itkonen et al. 2000, 112; Liikuntalaki 2015, 4§.) Sport organizations operating in the third sector can be categorized into national federations, regional federations, associations and foundations operating in their midst and to sport clubs and other local actors. Within this study the focus is on national and regional levels of third sector parties.

At the national level the Finnish Olympic Committee has a central acting role. In Finland, it is closest to what could be called the national central sport organization. However, it does not fully qualify for the national central sport organization as organizations such as sports institutes

and regional sports organizations are not subject to it. In the beginning of 2017, the Finnish Sports Confederation Valo and the National Olympic Committee merged and in addition to top-level sports, the new Olympic Committee also formed to be the children's and youth's physical activity's central organization. The National Olympic Committee works together with other national sport organizations such as federations, special sports organizations, school and student sports organizations. Other national sport organizations include organizations such as national outdoor organization Suomen Latu (Stenbacka et al. 2018.) The Finnish Paralympic Committee represents the Finnish top athletes with disabilities (Paralympia 2019).

The other sport organizations operating in the Finnish third sector of sport include sport institutes, communities related to sports science and information sharing, national programmes promoting physical activity, as well as other sport associations and foundations (Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 26). There are 14 sport institutes in Finland of which 11 are national and three regional institutes. The role of sport institutes is to produce physical activity, well-being and health education as well as supportive education and training for local sport clubs (Aaltonen 2016, 106-107.) Sport organizations related to information sharing, education and enhancing physical activity include sports medicine centres, Finnish Center for Integrity in Sports (FINCIS), Finnish Society of Sport Sciences, Research Centre for Physical Activity and Health (LIKES), Research Institute for Olympic Sports (KIHU), UKK Institute - Centre for Health Promotion Research (Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 26). National programmes promoting physical activity include Schools on the Move, Strength in Old Age -programmes (OKM 2019). Other associations and foundations working in sports sector include the Network of Finnish Cycling Municipalities and The Stadium Foundation, which manages the Olympic Stadium in Helsinki (Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 26).

Local actors in the third sector of sport involve sport clubs and other associations operating at the local level. Despite the changes in Finnish sport system, sport clubs have remained as the backbone of the system. Ownership of sport clubs is based on membership and they are by nature non-commercial actors. In the previous couple of decades, the number of sport clubs has been increasing. Similarly, physical activity within sport clubs has been increasing. Depending on the definition of a sport club there are currently 6 000 – 13 000 sport clubs in Finland. (Koski 2013; Vehmas & Ilmanen 2013; Mononen et al. 2016.)

Sport companies in the private sector of sport operate in a different range of businesses including gyms, sport centers and other sport service producers, as well as sport clothing and retailing. Despite the fact that the sports private sector has been growing in Finland during the last decades, the activities are still relatively small in respect to the whole sport sector. In 2011 there were estimated 5 000 sport-related companies in Finland. Of these 95 percent were micro-enterprises, involving less than ten employees. Out of all micro-enterprises, the majority were practitioners employing less than two people. (Koivisto 2010; Kosonen 2011; Huhtanen & Pyykkönen 2012; Vehmas & Imanen 2013; Lith 2013; TEM 2014; Laine & Vehmas 2017.)

The four largest areas in the private sport sector by revenue include sport goods retail and wholesale trade; fitness facilities and sport clubs operating as limited companies (Laine & Vehmas 2017). Out of these, fitness facilities and sports clubs are directly in touch with sport, while wholesale and retail have an indirect connection. Fitness centers have been the most profitable part of the private sport sector and the number of facilities has been increasing steadily. From the beginning of 2000's, the number of facilities has tripled. At the same time the largest players in the market have been expanding and the market has concentrated. When it comes to sport clubs as companies, they have not been as profitable as fitness-centers. Out of the Finnish sport leagues, only the highest level of men's ice hockey can be considered professional. In the season 2014-2015 only three out of 14 clubs succeeded to be profitable. Despite constant losses, the revenues generated by ice hockey league clubs can be considered relevant in case of Finnish sport sector. (Lith 2013; Hänninen & Kössö 2016; Laine & Vehmas 2017.)

The private sport sector in Finland includes sport media organizations and the Finnish government-owned betting agency Veikkaus. Sport media organizations act as the mediator of sports information and creator of its meaning (Laine 2011, 42-44; Valtonen & Ojajärvi 2015). The largest media players have their own sport unit that is responsible for all sport and physical activity-related information and activities. The national lottery Veikkaus is an important actor in the sports field as its profits are transferred to the Ministry of Education and Culture that further re-allocates money to the culture and sport sectors. (Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, 27.)

A number of organizations, besides the ones mentioned before, also have a function in sport. These organizations were pictured as “Extended industry of sport” in Figure 2 as presented before. Although acting as part of the sports sector, sport is not the core objective of these organizations and thus they are not included in this study. The Finnish sport system has been built upon government municipalities and federations. Previously mentioned sport actors perform as the key sporting organizations in Finland and are therefore the focus of this study.

### **3.3 Sport managers’ and management research in Finland**

Different studies during the years have examined sports management in Finland from different perspectives all with a different sport manager focus. Studies have included both paid and non-paid sport managers (Koski & Heikkala 2006), sport “elite” managers (Laakso 2016), influential individuals working in sport organization (Heinilä & Kiviaho 1968; 1970), boards of central organizations, sport policy work groups (Lehtonen et al. 2016) and leaders of sport activities in sport organizations (Aalto-Nevalainen 2018, this research). Further Nenonen (2013) calls for more business-oriented studies that are lacking in Finnish sport management literature. The difficulty of defining a sport manager seems to be occurring also in Finnish sport management setting.

Heinilä and Kiviaho (1968; 1970) first examined Finnish sport managers and the sport management in Finland in the 1960’s and 1970s. Research was two-fold. The first part consisted of building a picture of Finnish sport managers. The aim was to reveal what kind of sport managers exist in Finland. (Heinilä & Kiviaho 1968.) The second part aimed to map and describe the attitudes and opinions of Finnish sport managers towards the goals and task of sport and sport organizations on society (Heinilä & Kiviaho 1970). Research data consisted of 1666 Finnish sport managers from Finnish-speaking national sport federations. According to the studies, a sport manager was defined as an influential individual working in a sports organization. (Heinilä & Kiviaho 1968, 1-4; 1970, 2.)

Heinilä (1989; 1998) further examined sport club management in Finland. According to this study, Heinilä found out that most sport club managers had some former background in

management, as well as merit and experience from positions of trust. In organizations that were achievement oriented, management came most often from the business world and more rarely from the pedagogical or social side. (Heinilä 1989, 69.)

In their study on elite sport athletes' worldviews and ideology, Heikkala and Vuolle (1990) touched upon sport managers, in the section focusing on elite sports and politics. From the elite sports perspective, sport managers are seen as politicians that have the role of creating possibilities for elite sports. Elite athletes feel that sometimes they are taken advantage of within this political game. Despite having the same basic ideology, actions and thoughts between elite athletes and sport managers can cause confrontation. (Heikkala & Vuolle 1990, 118-122, 136.)

One of the latest phenomena in the sports industry that regards sport management is the increasing importance of the private sector (Huhtanen & Pyykkönen 2012; Laine & Vehmas 2017) and which can further be seen as a development of sport entrepreneurship. Sport entrepreneurship and its development trends were examined by Heikkala and Koivisto (2010). Entrepreneurship in sport is seen as multifaceted and it is hard to draw a line between wellness, entrepreneurship and sport entrepreneurship. A clear definition might not even be needed because often new innovations are found just on those interface areas. To be able to work on sports entrepreneurship in future demands a broader understanding of the sports industry and other industries that it relates to.

Kokkonen and Pyykkönen (2011) examined Finnish sports managers in transition. It seems that sport managers in Finland are not appreciated as well as they were in their "golden ages" 1970s and 1980s. The role of sport management has traditionally been sport-centered but due to increasing professionalisation the need for governance has also increased in Finland. The urge for change within sport management is highlighted by Kokkonen and Pyykkönen (2011) but as they state, there is no other profession that includes so much uncertainty and confusion as sport management does.

What is then required from sport management professionals? Coming to the 21st century Koski and Heikkala (2006) studied competences of Finnish sport managers. The subjects of the

research were leaders of Finnish sport organizations at national and regional level. On the management level the study focused on chairmen and paid leadership positions. The theoretical framework for competences was built upon Quinn's (1988) competence model in addition to Koski and Heikkala's (1998) RRO model. Results of the quantitative study revealed that the role of 'facilitator' was most common among leaders. Important facilitators here are human relationships and organizational flexibility. Researchers interpret this to be quite natural for NGO leaders as they do not have similar controlling instruments in their hands as do their business counterparts.

Later on, Nenonen (2013) interviewed sport managers in Finland and gathered the five most commonly mentioned areas subject to sport management. Firstly, understanding sport context, the need to understand the special features that take place in the sport management environment. Secondly, lack of resources Sport managers act under limited resources from which they need to make the most of. Thirdly, the need for a wide range of competences. A Sport manager's work covers multiple different areas and as such sport managers need a range of different skills and knowledge to succeed. Fourthly, separation of emotions from business. Highlighting the importance of understanding the most important special feature of sport, generating emotions, and how these emotions should not affect the management too much. Lastly, volunteer management, was illustrated before, sport organizations often consist of both volunteer and paid workers and sport managers need to be able to manage both of them.

Despite the existing sport management literature, there seems to be a lack of literature in defining sport managers in the Finnish setting. Kreuz (2014) interviewed seven Finnish sport managers in order to examine their perceptions of sport managers' role in Finland. Based on his interviews, Kreuz was able to categorize two different definitions of Finnish sport manager. The first one relates to the leader of a sport organization, whose task is to manage and enable the processes and activities necessary for the organization to operate in a competitive sports environment. The second definition refers to the person whose job is to manage and lead individual athletes' career, finance and brand. (Kreuz 2014, 46.)

In the last couple of decades there have been few studies reflecting gender differences in sport managers. Aalto (2003), Kukkonen (2010) and Aalto-Nevalainen (2011; 2018) all examined the position of Finnish female sport managers from different perspectives. Out of these studies, Aalto (2003) was the first to highlight the low proportion of female managers in sport leadership positions, and that the number of female managers is even less than within many other industries. Aalto-Nevalainen (2011) examined the cultural shift and saw that the proportion of women at the highest levels of sport management in Finland is increasing, but slowly. Following studies Kukkonen (2010) and Aalto-Nevalainen (2018) explored the path that female managers need to take in the world of sports. Female managers have the possibility to succeed but they need to work more in order to do that than their male counterparts. Despite being more highly educated, female sport managers are paid on average less. Studies conclude that career success in sport management Finland is not equal in all respects. (Kukkonen 2010; Aalto-Nevalainen 2018.) A Similar phenomenon is also seen in other countries such as Norway (Skille 2014). A Change towards a more equal management environment is on the Finnish Olympic committee's agenda. One example of that is a new educational program "Johtaa kuin nainen" that was launched in June 2019, which aims to increase know-how and knowledge of Finnish female sport managers (Olympiakomitea 2019)

Besides the gender differences, Finnish sport management has been examined from the networks structure perspective. Lehtonen et. al (2016) analyzed central organization boards and states policy working groups from 1993-2014. Results show that during the period under review the power-elite has been narrowing year by year. Whilst there have been organizational changes it seems that Finnish sport management the power-elite is both narrow and stable. (Lehtonen et. al 2016, 304.)

Reflecting on elite sports, Lipponen (2017) criticizes the whole sport management system in Finland as inefficient and the management skills as low. The growth, commercialization and professionalization of the sport sector calls for more sport management education in Finland. Sport science related university education in Finland links to physical education, social sciences of sports, specialty sports, sports history and sociology. There seems to be a lack of business perspective in sport management university education. While universities of applied sciences

are pioneering with sport management related education, there is a need also for university level education. (Nenonen 2013, 2.)

Furthermore, in the case of sport management studies in Finland, Pitkänen (2017) examined “Transition to working life and benefits of education as experienced by the graduates of an International Master’s Programme in Sport Management”. Altogether 38 responds were received from graduates. Findings concluded that the employment situation within graduates was very good, with almost 80 percent being employed full-time at the time. Study participants reflected that the educational programme was beneficial for their current career. The programme participants received important skills for work life such as communication skills, organisational skills, leadership skills and an international atmosphere which were all seen as important factors.

Similar to Pitkänen’s (2017) study, Laine and Ilmola (2016) examined graduate students, this time from the Finnish-language degree programme in the social sciences of sport. Questionnaire was sent to MSc graduates from 2000-2014 and total of 87 responds were received. Again, the employment rate of graduates was high with 86 percent of respondents being employed at the time. Of those employed, the majority (70 %) were employed in the sport sector and the rest in other fields. The results of the study show that over the years the share of the public sector as an employer of graduates has been decreasing while the third and private sector have been increasing. Traditionally, the degree program was educating students for sports public administration tasks but over the years the program has evolved to take into account the needs of the private sport sector as well. In the case of sport managers, the study revealed that 37 percent of those who shared their professional title worked as some sort of sport manager. Thus, it can be concluded that the programme is one of the paths to become a Finnish sport manager.

Studying sport management is not the only way to end up being a sport manager in Finland. The pathways of Finnish sport management careers were examined by Laakso (2016), through analytical perspectives on manager narratives. The central finding of the study was that long-term experience or a well-known role within the sport field are the most likely paths to leadership positions. Within the field this path is considered as a cultural norm and a

prerequisite to act as a sport manager. Other paths can be built through multiple ways, such as through positions of trust, success in sports or political careers. On study, management knowledge did not really play a major role in succeeding to be a sport manager. The study concluded that the Finnish sports industry needs knowledge of the importance of leadership and professionalism in management. In the study, Laakso (2016) was able to categorize Finnish sport managers into four distinctive categories by their career pathways. Identified as sport manager categories and types which will be further examined in the next chapter.

### **3.4 Sport manager profiles – theoretical framework**

Laakso (2016) interviewed 16 Finnish “elite” sport managers, focusing on their path to become sport managers. Based on the narrative analysis, four sport manager types found: chosen, politician, sportsman and bureaucrat. Laakso’s (2016) theoretical model will be used in this research to describe the current state of sport management in Finland and different manager paths within the industry.

Chosen type sport managers have long and versatile careers in sports. They are well-respected within the field and known to be knowledgeable and capable. Chosen type sport managers have a background in the field of management. The common factor is that chosen managers are requested to apply for sport management positions and thereafter selected for sport manager positions.

The politician sport manager type is involved with politics and has a professional political background and being in a position of trust within sport organizations is more or less a hobby. The key element is first and foremost a politician, which is supported by the sport manager positions.

The sportsman comes from inside the sport. They act on an operational management level in sport organizations. The urge to continue in the sports world is the main motivator in continuing a sports manager career. The sportsman feels an inner calling to work in the field.

Bureaucrats work in governmental positions. They have experience in organizational activities and their work is politically controlled. In fact, politics and political guidance are central to the work of the bureaucrats.

Different sport manager backgrounds and profiles can be identified also within the sport media discourse. According to Maijala's (2004) study reflecting upon discourse regarding the presidential election of the Finnish Olympic Committee, three different media interpretations were found. Based on the research, it seems that market discursive arguments highlight contemporary sport management discussions. Furthermore, this call for managers is similar to the chosen type. In turn the study concluded that candidates with a political background were found to be useless in relation to the demands of modern elite sports. Reflecting on sports organizational discursive arguments, it seems that a strong background in sports can be seen as both beneficial and disadvantageous for sport manager applicants. The transition occurring in Finnish sports management can be seen in light of this discussion. The utility of a sports background was seen as negative when too stuck on a given sport.

Besides the sport manager types, Laakso (2016) also identified different growth story narratives of sport managers. They portray how sport managers came to receive their positions and through what kind of situations and events the career of the sports leader elite has been built and what kind of plot sports leaders build on their stories. Equally to manager types, four growth story narratives were found: the story of growth, the story of drifting, the story of coincidence, the story of pursuit.

The story of growth is a hierarchical path of individuals through different stages of sport organizations. Being part of sport organization cultures and growing within them, eventually reaching management positions is the core of the growth narrative. Also described as the "natural way" of rising through the organization to top positions over the years.

The story of drifting emphasizes external control of one's path. The impulse to pursue a career in sport management comes from the outside. Acting for a sports management career can be

seen as passive from the individual's perspective and an outside person or persons have a significant guiding influence on the career advancement and direction of the sports manager.

The story of coincidence builds upon unexpectedness in career choices. Coincidence or an otherwise surprising event brings one into the sport management world towards the sports leader elite. Coincidence is a turning point in one's career.

The story of pursuit highlights the high desire to work as a sport manager. All choices are made in the pursuit to achieve sport manager positions. As a counterpart to the story of drifting the pursuit narrative impulse to a sport management career comes from strong intrinsic motivation whereas a drifting narrative emphasizes extrinsic factors.

Types and career paths presented by Laakso (2016) illustrate heterogeneity amongst Finnish sport managers as well as the social reality of Finnish sport management. Becoming a Finnish sport manager seems to be a multifaceted phenomenon where individuals have multiple pathways to choose from when aiming for sport management positions. At least that seems to be true on a qualitative study basis. Further in this research we will use Laakso's (2016) theoretical framework and aforementioned types and career paths to describe Finnish sport management in a more comprehensive manner.

## **4 METHODOLOGY AND DATA**

This chapter reviews methodology and data used in the research. The first sub-chapter presents research methods used in the study. In the second sub-chapter data and research population areas are examined in more detail. Lastly, in the third subchapter the methods of how research data were collected will be presented.

### **4.1 Research method**

This research was conducted as a quantitative survey. The purpose of the research was to test the usability of Laakso's (2016) Finnish sport manager categories with a larger sample and to profile Finnish sport managers' backgrounds. Quantitative and qualitative methods should not be seen as counterparts but rather complementary research methods. With a qualitative study, such as Laakso's (2016) study, the aim is to understand certain phenomena and build frameworks around them. With quantitative study, such as this one, qualitative studies can be taken further for testing previous findings and frameworks with wider samples to aim at generalization. Furthermore, the quantitative method is suitable for building a basis on the previously unknown academic fields, and for highlighting special features of given populations. (Hirsjärvi et al 2009, 136-137, 195; Skinner et al 2015, 248.)

Traditionally, quantitative research method has been dominant in international sports management research (Amis & Silk 2005). However, in the case of Finnish sports management research, qualitative research methods have been more prevailing (e.g., Nenonen 2013; Kreuz 2014; Laakso 2016). From this perspective, quantitative research methods can be seen as refreshing for the academic field of Finnish sport management.

In order to collect data for the study, internet-based questionnaires were sent to the e-mails of Finnish sport managers. The selection of those sport managers will be discussed in the following chapter. Internet-surveys, such as the one in this case, have the benefit of reaching wide populations with ease and cost-efficiency. They are easy to send and they are relatively

easy for receivers to act upon, and to allow collection of large data samples that are further easy to analyze. (Skinner et al 2015, 255.)

## 4.2 Data

Data consisted of managers from Finnish sport organizations on all three sectors of sport. The total population of the study was 633, of which 388 were men (61 %) and 245 women (39 %). Distribution of research population by type of employer is highlighted in Table 1.

**Table 1 - Research population by type of employer**

Employer type	Managers	
	N	%
Public sector	380	60
*Government	28	4
*Municipalities	343	54
*Universities	9	2
Third sector	178	28
*Sports Federation	66	10
*Other national sport organization	23	4
*Regional sport association	15	2
*Sport institutes	62	10
*Other non-profit sport organization	13	2
Private sector	76	12
*Ice hockey teams (Liiga)	56	9
*Fitness centers	20	3
Total	633	100

From the public sector of sport, research included sport managers from governmental and municipal level as well as from sport educational organizations. At the governmental level the research population included the Ministry of Education and Culture, the National Sports Council, the Finnish National Agency of Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Finnish Defense Forces and Regional State Administrative Agencies. From the responsible department of sport within the Ministry of Education and Culture this study included the head of department, the executive director of sport and from the National Sports Council secretary-

general. The Regional State Administrative Agencies' study included the senior officer and other officers responsible for sporting activities. From the Finnish National Agency of Education, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and Finnish Defense Forces study included officers who mainly responsible for sporting activities within organizations.

At the municipal level research data consisted of a heterogeneous group both in terms of working titles and responsibilities. In this study, a sport manager in municipalities was defined as a person with the highest ranking responsible for sporting activities. Depending on the size of the municipality, positions and responsibilities varied greatly. In the largest municipalities there was a specific sector focusing on sport and physical activity, whereas in small municipalities there could be only one person in charge. In the smallest municipalities the sport manager was also involved with producing actual sport activities, often with title of leisure or sports instructor. From the ten largest municipalities in addition to the head managers there were heads of the different sport sub departments (sport facilities, outdoors, sports associations etc.) included in the study. Depending on the number of these sub departments one to five sport managers were chosen from those ten largest municipalities.

In the public sector of sport, research included sport educational organizations. Namely the Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences in University of Jyväskylä and the sport educational departments in universities of applied sciences in Rovaniemi, Kajaani and Vierumäki. These educational organizations had their own sport departments whose director and vice-directors were selected for this study. In addition to these, the study included managers responsible for the physical activity and sports for students and staff, if organizations had paid employees in these positions.

On the third sector of sport, research consisted of national and regional sport organizations as well as some other sport organizations. Of these organizations the focus was on the key leading personnel. The national sport organizations included the Finnish Olympic Committee from where all members of the executive team were selected. This was due to the importance of the Finnish Olympic Committee as one of the main governing bodies in the Finnish sport system. From the Finnish Paralympic Committee. The Secretary General and Sports Director were

selected to the research population. Still included in National sport organizations, from sport federations, special sport organizations, school and student sport organizations the head manager of the given organization was chosen, if that position was paid. In regional sport organizations the regional leader or operative manager was chosen from each regional organization. Other sport organizations in the third sector of sport include sport institutes and other sport associations. Sport institutes can be seen as important actors both on national and regional level. From sport institutes the head of organization and head of sport substance area were chosen as research subjects. Other sport associations are, for example national programmes promoting physical activity, sport medicine centers and other sport information sharing associations, The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. From these organizations the head manager responsible of sport and physical activity was included in the study.

The importance of the private sector has been increasing in recent years and thus it was also included in this study. From the four largest business areas in the private sector of sport, in regard of revenue, two were included in this study. These were fitness facilities and sport club companies. The other two areas, sporting goods retail and wholesale trade, were not included in this study because they are not in direct connection with actual sport activities. From fitness facilities, senior management of the top ten largest organizations were chosen (Suomen Asiakastiето 2018). In the case of sport clubs working as limited companies we focused on the only league that can be considered professional in Finland, the men's highest league in ice hockey called Liiga. From each Liiga team's Chief Executive Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, Chief Sales Officer and Sport Director were included, if one could be found..

The research population of this study was multi-level and a lot of balancing was needed when selecting sport managers. This process of collecting data and sources of the research population is highlighted next.

### 4.3 Data collection

E-mails to collect research data were acquired from the organizations' websites. Collecting sources was time-consuming. In many cases needed to be analyzed what could be considered as the highest-ranking person responsible for sports and physical activities in given organizations. This was especially true in the case of municipalities and their management of physical activities and sport. Defining the sport manager in a given organization was challenging. The sport managers in different organizations had very different job descriptions and tasks. In the end the aim was to produce as uniform research data as possible from range of heterogeneous sport organizations.

The research population was limited at the level of both organizations and managers. In the case of organizations, some of the sports educational organizations were excluded from the study. For the purposes of physical education, there was no special unit in the organization and thus no sport manager. Despite their importance to the Finnish sport system, sport clubs were excluded from the study. This is due to the fact that despite the professionalization of sports clubs, the clubs are still comparatively low in number of paid employees. Fulltime paid employee can be found approximately in every fifth sport club (Koski & Mäenpää 2018, 67). This particular study focused on paid managers. Besides sport clubs, some sport organizations within the field do not have paid management. Managers of those organizations were not included in this study.

Some other sport companies, besides fitness facilities and Liiga ice hockey teams, were also not included in this study. Whilst the importance of the private sector of sport has increased in Finland about half of the companies are private entrepreneurs, and one third of the companies employ less than two people (TEM 2014). In light of this research, having a single employee cannot really be considered as sport management rather than being an entrepreneur. While sports media organizations are interlinked with sport, their work situates more on the media sphere than the sport world. Because this study focused solely on sport organizations, sport media organizations were excluded from the research population.

The questionnaire was designed with an internet-based Webropol-tool. Both the questionnaire and covering letter are found in Appendix 1. The language of the survey was chosen to be Finnish because that is the native language for the majority of the research population. The first part of the questionnaire namely questions 1-16., were based on the survey made by Aalto-Nevalainen (2018) for her dissertation. Slight modifications were made to fit questions specifically to this study. As the research population is also based on the Aalto-Nevalainen (2018) dissertation, it was natural to collect background information about the Finnish sport managers on similar regards. Questions 17 and 18 were created by using Laakso's (2016) dissertation results and presented sport managers categories and paths. Question 19 was constructed on the basis of benchmarking the German study on sport manager competencies, Kaiser (2004). Before launching the survey, it was tested by several sport managers as well as researchers. On the basis of testing and their comments, last modifications were made.

The internet survey was sent through email to the research population (N = 633) on Thursday morning 2.5.2019. Specific dates and times were chosen so that answers could be gathered early enough before the Finnish summer holiday season begins. Morning was chosen as the time of the day because that is considered a fruitful time to answer emails before rush hours at work. The chosen time can be considered as successful because within the first hours 85 answers were collected. The response pace kept going and the first full day resulted in 127 answers which is around 20 percent of the whole population. Out of the sent emails, only one was sent back with automatic holiday notification and no error email addresses were recorded. This can be interpreted that date before the holiday season was accurately chosen and that the manually gathered email address list resulted in less change of wrong emails.

After the first day, the answer rate dropped to only a few per day. The first reminder notification was sent a week after initial e-mail, four days before the closing of the survey. During the course of the day after the reminder was sent, 56 more answers were collected. The last reminder was sent on Sunday 12.5.2019 and it was decided that the survey will stay open until Monday evening. The last few days gathered 50 more answers. Altogether 284 answers were received, and 44.9 percent response rate achieved.

#### **4.4 Data analysis**

Data was analysed by using SPSS Statistics 24.0 data analysis programme. The aim of the analysis was to present the background profiles of the sport managers in Finland. In order to achieve this aim, frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulations were used to describe comparisons and conclusions of different features. Cross-tabulations were specially built to illustrate the comparison of different features against gender and the sector that the manager is working on. This was to examine whether differences between gender and sectors exist amongst given features.

Additionally, a content analysis was partly used when examining effectiveness of Laakso's (2016) model and open-ended questions related to that. Content analysis is especially relevant when textual data in qualitative research is categorized. Categorizing involves finding patterns and clustering similar entities together. When using content analysis, it is important to recognize the challenge on how text is interpreted. Text itself is open to interpretation can have reflect multiple meanings. (Given 2008.)

To report effect-size of age means, Cohen D is indicator was used. Calculating Cohen D, the mean difference is divided by the weighted standard deviation. The difference can be considered significant if Cohen D equals 0.8 or more, medium-sized when being around 0.5 and small if 0.2 or less. (Cohen 1992.)

## **5 RESULTS**

This chapter presents the results of the study. At first, the background information of the Finnish sport managers will be described. Secondly, Finnish sport manager categories and paths to become sport manager in Finland will be presented, in respect to Laakso's (2016) categorizing.

### **5.1 Background information**

The representation of the respondents corresponds to a large extent to the whole population that the survey was sent to. This is best seen when comparing Table 2 distribution of respondents to the distribution presented earlier on Table 1. As can be interpreted from the table, the answers were collected broadly from different sectors and organizations. While the distribution is similar to a large extent, some slight changes can be found. The third sector is slightly overrepresented whereas private sector is slightly underrepresented within the respondents. Twelve percent of the whole research population were associated with the private sector and seven percent of the final answers collected. The third sector overrepresentation is not explained by just one particular kind of organization. It appears that response rates simply are slightly higher in the third sector of sport than in the public or private sector.

**Table 2 - Respondents by type of employer**

Employer type	Responders	Total research population	Responders	Total research population
	N		%	
Public sector	173	380	61	60
*Government	16	28	6	4
*Municipalities	151	343	53	54
*Universities	5	9	2	2
Third sector	90	178	32	28
*Sports Federation	36	66	13	10
*Other national sport organization	16	23	6	4
*Regional sport association	8	15	3	2
*Sport institutes	24	62	8	10
*Other non-profit sport organization	6	13	2	2
Private sector	21	76	7	12
Total	284		100	

Respondents represented Finland as a whole and relatively broadly, with the exception of Åland Islands (“*Ahvenanmaa*”) from where only one answer was gathered. Given that questionnaire was sent to all 16 municipalities in the Åland Islands region more answers could have been expected. Since the language of the survey was Finnish and region’s official language is Swedish, the lack of responses could be explained with prevalent a language barrier.

The most common job titles, as shown in Table 3, relate to the heterogenous research population. Because the survey was conducted in Finnish, the original job titles in Finnish are left in brackets. A wide range of different job titles are present and only Executive director (“*toiminnanjohtaja*”) is mentioned in more than ten percent of answers. It is worth mentioning that because of the way a sport manager is defined in this study, sport manager job titles include a myriad of managers with secretary and instructor job titles who, by the definition, are the head of sports in a given organization.

**Table 3 – Sport manager job titles**

Title	n	%
Executive director (" <i>toiminnanjohtaja</i> ")	31	11
Secretary for sports (" <i>pääsihteeri</i> ")	18	6
Chief executive director (" <i>toimitusjohtaja</i> ")	16	6
Secretary for recreation (" <i>liikuntasihteeri</i> ")	16	6
Chief of sports (" <i>liikuntapäällikkö</i> ")	10	4
Director of sports (" <i>liikuntajohtaja</i> ")	9	3
Sport service manager (" <i>liikuntapalvelupäällikkö</i> ")	8	3
Secretary general (" <i>pääsihteeri</i> ")	8	3
Sports instructor (" <i>liikunnanohjaaja</i> ")	7	2
Regional director (" <i>aluejohtaja</i> ")	6	2
Sports director (" <i>urheilutoimenjohtaja</i> ")	6	2

### 5.1.1 Age and gender of the sport managers

Out of the all respondents, 173 were men (61.8 %) and 107 women (38.2 %). This is in line with gender composition in whole research population. Four answers were missing, and it was noted in the open comments section that the survey could have included the third gender as an option. Regarding age of Finnish sport managers, the average came to 48 years. Male sport managers were slightly older than their female counterparts with an average age of 49.7 years for men and 45.3 years for women (Cohen D = 0.435028). The overall age of the respondents in this study ranged between 24 and 66 years. When it comes to age groups and gender, the largest groups were men ranging 45-54 and over 54 years. Female managers belonged mostly to the age group 35-44. Respondents categorized by age groups and gender are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4 – Age groups by gender**

Age groups	Men		Women		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Under 35	16	6	18	6	34	12
35-44	35	13	35	13	70	26
45-54	59	21	28	10	87	31
Over 54	63	22	26	9	89	31
Total	173	62	107	38	280	100

As far as gender distribution 92 (54.4 %) of the respondents in the public sector were men and the remaining 77 (45.6 %) female. In the third sector gender distribution is 62 (68.9 %) for men and 28 (31.1 %) for female. When it comes to the private sector, 19 (90 %) out of the 21 respondents of the sport managers from private sector were men and only two (10 %) female.

**Table 5 - Gender by the sectors**

Gender	Public		Third		Private	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Men	92	33	62	22	19	7
Women	77	27	28	10	2	1
Total	169	60	90	32	21	8

When comparing age groups of the respondents by sectors, the representation seems to be rather equal between public and third sector of sports. The proportion of managers in each age group increases with the age, largest one being the group of managers over 54 years old. The private sector differs from the other two by not involving similar proportions of managers of over 54 years old and their biggest age group is managers with ages between 45 and 54 years old. Comparing means of age in each respective sector it can be seen that the public sector has an average of 48 years, the third sector an average of 49 years while the private sector's average age falls three years behind by being 45 years. Eventhough Cohen's D being 0.29 (public) and 0.39 (third) against private sector, the effective difference between average ages is considered small (Cohen 1992)

**Table 6 - Age groups by the sectors**

Age groups	Public		Third		Private	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Under 35	23	8	8	3	3	1
35-44	42	15	23	8	6	2
45-54	50	18	29	10	9	3
Over 54	58	20	30	11	3	1
Total	173	61	90	32	21	7

### 5.1.2 Education of the sport managers

The respondents had either undergraduate (43 %) or graduate (42 %) level education. One percent of the respondents had only primary education and eight percent secondary education. Out of all respondents, six percent had a doctoral or licentiate education. The proportion of women sport managers with high education was slightly higher compared to men. In total, 47 percent of the men had a higher degree or doctoral education, whereas among the women the share was 51 percent. Respondents' educational levels by gender are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7 - Education by gender**

Education level (degree)	Men		Women		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Primary or secondary	16	6	7	3	23	9
Bachelor's	76	27	44	16	120	43
University Master's or doctoral	80	29	54	19	134	48
Total	172	62	105	38	277	100

Comparing educational levels by sectors of sport, the highest proportion of managers with higher education is seen in the third sector with 63 percent. Corresponding proportions were 43 percent in the public sector and 29 percent in the private sector. The private sector seems to be by far the most even, when it comes to managers from different educational levels. However, it needs to be mentioned that the number of participants in the private sector is not sufficiently high enough as though strong assumptions could be made. Respondents' educational levels by sectors are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8 - Education by the sectors**

Education level (degree)	Public		Third		Private	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Primary or secondary	10	4	9	3	5	2
Bachelor's	86	31	24	8	10	4
University Master's or doctoral	73	26	57	20	6	2
Total	169	61	90	31	21	8

When examining educational levels by age groups, they seem to follow equal representation except for the group of under 35 year-olds. Within other age groups the proportion of managers with lower high degree education is around 40 percent but in the group of under 35 the same educational level covers 62 percent of the whole age group. It could be interpreted that managers under the age of 35 still have a career left to continue their education further. Respondents' educational levels by age groups are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9 - Education by age groups**

Education level (degree)	Under 35		35-44		45-54		Over 54	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Primary or secondary	3	1	8	3	5	2	8	3
Bachelor's	21	7	28	10	35	12	36	13
University Master's or doctoral	10	4	35	12	48	17	43	15
Total	34	12	71	25	88	31	87	31

Out of the respondents 131 (48 %) had an education in sport and the rest 143 (52 %) in other subjects. After a sport degree, the next largest group of 32 (12 %) consisted of respondents with a business education. When considering respondents with a sport degree in comparison to without a sport degree, it is notable that while 52 percent of the respondents within the public sector have a sport degree of any level and 47 percent in the third sector, only 10 percent of the sport managers in the private sector have a sport degree. In the latter, an educational background in the business sector was most dominant. Ten respondents from the private sector had an educational background in business. Respondents' educational levels with and without a degree in sport by sectors are shown in Table 10.

**Table 10 - Education of the respondents with and without a degree in sport by the sectors**

Education level	Public		Third		Private	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Primary or secondary	2	1	4	2	1	1
Lower high degree	50	18	9	3	0	0
Higher high degree or doctoral	37	13	27	10	1	1
Other than sport degree	80	29	45	16	18	6
Total	169	61	85	31	20	8

### 5.1.3 Sport background

When discussing current sport-related hobbies of sport managers in Finland, gym and fitness activities are the most frequently mentioned sport activities. After that come traditional Finnish recreational outdoor sports such as cycling, walking, cross-country skiing and running. In between there is also jogging (“*lenkkeily*”) which is here categorized in its own section because we cannot be sure if people who mentioned this meant walking or running. Either way, traditional sports and gym being are on top, while the top ten sports of the respondents also include golf, ice hockey, football and swimming. The top ten sports that managers participate in are shown in Table 11.

**Table 11 - Top ten sports practiced by sport managers**

Sport	n	%
Gym	106	37
Cycling	86	30
Walking	74	26
Jogging	63	22
Cross-Country Skiing	62	22
Running	55	19
Golf	36	13
Ice-Hockey	23	8
Football	17	6
Swimming	16	6
Total	284	

When looking at the level of competitive sports by sectors it seems that an international career within sport seems to be more common with third and private sector managers than with public sector managers. When international and national careers are combined, within the public sector it includes 50 percent of the respondents while in the third sector and private sector the same number is 76 percent. Thus, the level of competitive sport seems to be higher with third and private sector compared to public. The level of competitive sports background of the respondents by sectors shown in Table 12.

**Table 12 – The level of competitive sports background of the respondents by the sectors**

The level of competitive sports	Public		Third		Private	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
International	19	7	28	10	8	3
National	66	23	39	14	8	3
Regional	48	17	12	4	4	1
Recreational	37	13	8	2	1	1
No sport background	2	1	1	1	0	0
Total	172	61	88	31	21	8

The sport sector involves various different tasks and positions. These include tasks such as coaching, administrative work, being referee or educating sport officials. Table 13 shows in which tasks the managers have acted as volunteers. The majority of the respondents have acted in all different positions. It seems to be particularly common to do other voluntary work (88 %) and acting as instructor in the sports (81 %) respondents are already involved in. Less common is to act as a referee, but still 47 percent of the respondents have done that as well.

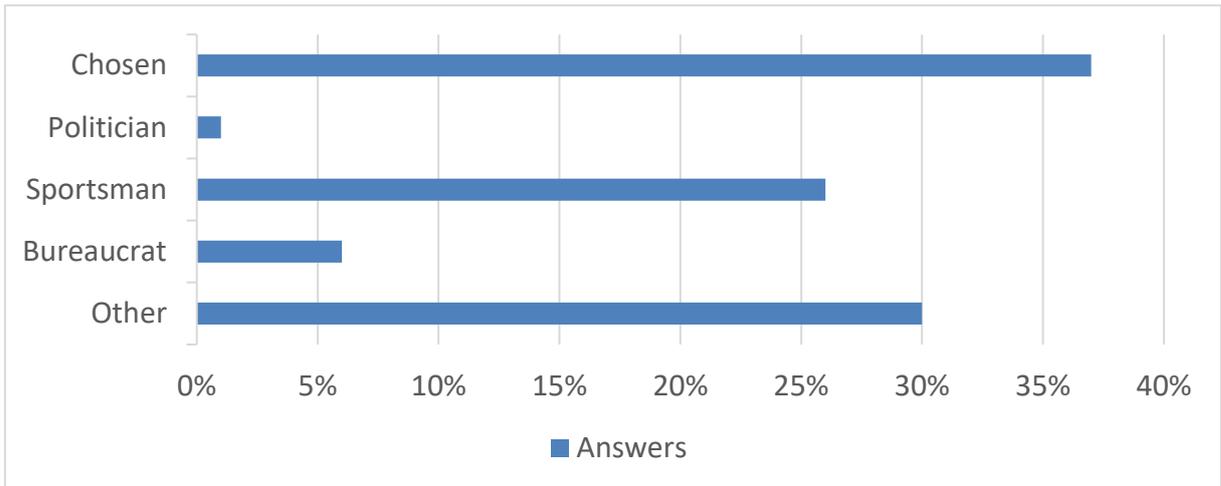
**Table 13 – Sport managers different tasks within the sport**

Task	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
Coach	187	70	82	30
Instructor	219	81	51	19
Referee	117	47	133	53
Educator	163	63	95	37
Person of trust	167	66	85	44
Other voluntary work	231	88	33	12
Total	282		282	

When asked about leadership positions of trust within the sport sector 56 (20 %) of the respondents had currently one or more positions. One position was held by 28 (10 %) of respondents and the remaining 28 (10 %) respondents had two or more positions with a maximum of seven.

## 5.2 Sport manager types

Sport manager types, defined by Laakso (2016), were examined with the purpose of examining how sport managers in Finland fall into these categories. As seen in Figure 4, the type in which the description matched most with the respondents' answers was the *chosen* sport manager type with a share of 37 percent. Slightly over a quarter (26 %) of the respondents identified themselves with the *sportsman* type. The shares of *bureaucrat* and *politician* sport manager types accumulated less than six percent. If sport managers did not identify themselves in the previous categories, there was also an option to choose *other* and describe it further. This option was *chosen* by 30 percent of the respondents. The most commonly mentioned open-ended replies were categorized into six possible new modifications to Laakso's (2016) categories.



**Figure 4.** Sport manager types

When approaching previous sport manager types through the different sectors of sport, differences between sectors can be detected. In the public sector, approximately one third of the respondents identified themselves as *chosen* sport managers, but also approximately one third of the respondents did not identify themselves with any of the mentioned categories. The share of *other* was largest within the public sector. Notable is also that only two answers regarding the *politician* sport type came from the public sector. In the third sector, the largest share of respondents identified themselves as *chosen* type. This is 46 percent of the third sector respondents. *Sportsman* and *other* sport manager type each made up a little bit less than 30 percent of the answers within the third sector. In the private sector, *sportsman* sport manager type dominated with 60 percent of the respondents. Remaining answers went to either *chosen* (25 %) or *other* (15 %) types. The distribution of different sport manager types by the sectors is shown in Table 14.

**Table 14 - Sport manager types by the sector**

Sport Manager type	Public		Third		Private	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Chosen	57	20	41	15	5	2
Politician	2	1	0	0	0	0
Sportsman	36	13	26	9	12	4
Bureaucrat	14	5	2	1	0	0
Other	59	21	21	8	3	1
Total	168	60	90	33	20	7

### 5.3 Additional sport manager types

This subchapter gathers open-ended answers from respondents who chose *other* as sport manager type. Original replies were made in Finnish and translated and categorized here by the researcher to the following: working with *children and youth*, *municipal perspective*, *assigned tasks*, *from teacher to sport manager*, *from hobby to profession*, and *versatile background*. Each of these modifications will be examined separately in the following.

*”desire to promote the health and well-being of children and young people”*

*”professional background in youth work and social work”*

Promoting the development of children and youth is separately mentioned in the Finnish Sports Act (Liikuntalaki 2015, 4§). A background in youth work and working with children also appeared in some of the participants’ answers. These answers were categorized as *working with children and youth*. Answers were reflecting an interconnection between physical activity and youth. Consequently, it can be noted that individuals who set out to become sport managers might end up in the youth work field and vice versa. These answers do not really fit any of the current sport manager types presented by Laakso (2016)

*”activities in MUNICIPAL administrative duties. Past experience in organizational activities, which can be considered as a requirement for success at work. Politics and political guidance are central to work”*

All together 151 answers were received from sport managers in municipalities. That makes up 51 percent of all answers and highlights the importance of municipalities when describing the sport management environment in Finland. Based on this and the previous quote, *municipal perspective* was included into the sport manager types. While the bureaucrat sport manager type covered governmental administrative sport managers, it failed to include the municipal perspective. None of the interviewees from Laakso (2016) were from the municipal level. However, in the present study it was within the focus. Results of the study at hand indicate that some of the respondents, especially from the public sector, struggled or failed to identify themselves with any of Laakso’s (2016) sport manager types.

*”the duties of the sports manager have been assigned to me in addition to other tasks”*

*”the profession requires responsibilities also in sports sector”*

Many sport managers have other responsibilities besides sport and managing sport might just be a side activity that has simply been assigned to them; often additionally to their routine work. Abovelisted quotes were utilized to describe these *assigned tasks*. The managers who made those comments did not pursue any sport management practice. It can be seen from the comments that these individuals do not identify themselves strongly with sport management or being sport managers, but they ended up working in positions that can be regarded as such. Those answers also do not specifically match any of the Laakso’s (2016) sport manager types.

*”from teacher to manager”*

*”classroom teacher specializing in exercise”*

In Finland, there also seems to be a path to becoming a sport manager with an educational background. It can be identified through previous quotes categorized here as *from teacher to sport manager*. Therefore, regardless of the lack of background in either politics, bureaucrats, elite sport or general management, there is still a tendency for teachers to specialize in sport management. The answers also do not fit any of the Laakso's (2016) sport manager types.

*"hobby and profession"*

*"still competing in sports. I get food for the table in the industry. Acting in the sport federation I try to grow the sport and its visibility from within."*

There seems to be a thin line between where sport is one's hobby and where it becomes a profession. The previous quotes, categorized as *from hobby to profession*, describe this phenomenon. Managers with these answers could have a background in competitive sports, such as with sportsman type, but also recreational sport can become a profession. It seems that sport is a way of life, more than merely a hobby that happens to provide an income for some as well. The answers do not fit any of the Laakso's (2016) sport manager types.

*"a versatile background for both sports and business"*

*"versatile education and experience, training in the field of sports, knowledge of the field of sports"*

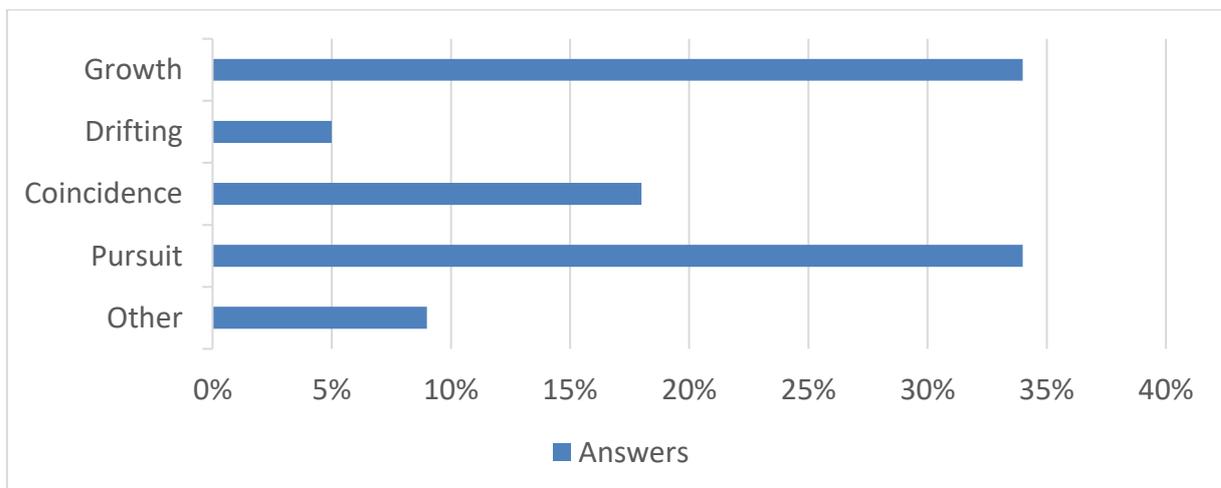
*"active sports background, work experience in the commercial sector with procurement, and four years of experience in organizational activities."*

Something that came up more often than anything else was highlighting the versatile background of sport managers. These quotes reflecting versatility were categorized as *versatile background*. Seeing that participants highlight their versatile backgrounds and inability to just choose one type could also be regarded as a counter argument to the categorization of sport managers into different types as a whole. It seems that at least some managers do not see

themselves fit for either of the presented categories because they find elements of several categories within themselves. This seems to be especially true for sport managers whose background is in business, as can be devised from the previous quotes. These answers fit best with Laakso's (2016) chosen sport manager type but could also be seen as an argument against the profiling.

#### 5.4 Sport manager paths

Distribution of different types can be seen in Figure 5. Both the story of growth and the story pursuit were identified by 34 percent of the respondents. Out of the respondents 18 percent chose *the story of coincidence* and five percent *the story of drifting*. Similar to sport manager types, it was also option to choose *other* and describe the career path in their own words. This option was chosen by nine percent of the respondents.



**Figure 5.** Sport manager paths

When approaching previous sport manager paths by sectors some differences can be detected between the sectors. *The story of pursuit* and *the story of growth* are the largest group in the public sector, both having a share of more than 30 percent of the respondents within the sector. *The story of pursuit* is mentioned slightly more often with 36 percent than the 31 percent of *the*

*story of growth* within the public sector. The third most-mentioned type in the public sector is *the story of coincidence* (20 %) before *other* (10 %) and *the story of drifting* (2 %). When it comes to the third sector of the sport, again the *story of the growth* and *pursuit* are the most - mentioned sport manager paths, with shares of 43 percent for *the story of growth* and 32 percent for *the story of pursuit*. *The story of coincidence* (12 %), *the story of drifting* (7 %) and *other* (6 %) make up the remaining shares. In the private sector of sport, the distribution amongst different sport manager paths is most equal in terms of shares, each of the manager paths' share ranging between ten percent and 30 percent of the respondents within the sector. The distribution of different sport manager paths by the sectors is shown in Table 15.

**Table 15 - Sport manager paths by the sectors**

Sport manager paths	Public		Third		Private	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Growth	53	20	38	14	4	1
Drifting	4	1	6	2	3	1
Coincidence	33	12	11	4	6	2
Pursuit	61	22	29	10	5	2
Other	18	6	5	2	2	1
Total	169	61	89	32	20	7

## 5.5 Additional sport manager paths

This subchapter gathers open-ended answers from respondents who chose *other* as sport manager type. Again, open-ended questions were categorized, this time resulting in three different categories: *change in the job description or change in the organization, extended story of drifting, business perspective, from love to sport*. These categories will be examined in more detail next.

*”organizational restructuring”*

*”sport/physical activity are one part of the task field, became part of responsibilities during career development”*

*”development of work tasks”*

As mentioned earlier, the Finnish sport system is undergoing a transition. Previous quotes, categorized as *changes in the job description or change within the organization*, underline this phenomenon. The changes to the sport managers job or organization mentioned in the above quotes illustrate aspects of both the *drifting* and the *coincidence story*. However, since respondents did not choose either one specifically, it can be argued that these could be additions to the career path descriptions or simply new combination including aspects of both career paths. Either way, change as described by these quotes does not specifically fall into any of the categories, presented by Laakso (2016)

*”my interest in exercise and well-being and health (and their promotion) drove me to study the field. Sport as such has never really been one of my brightest interests.”*

*”through medical expertise”*

Previous quotes show that Laakso’s (2016) original sport manager path description for *the story of drifting* could be extended further. These quotes were categorized into the *extended story of drifting*. While *the story of drifting* in Laakso’s (2016) model focuses on an outside person and their guidance, it could also be the case that interests or chosen professions drive people towards sport management. It is not necessarily so, that these people chose to be sport managers because *“sport as such has never really been one of my brightest interests”* but they have drifted to the position.

*”my own background of the sport together with business education. In the current job description, one can take advantage of both.”*

*”business perspective”*

A need for more business emphasis in Finnish sport management is highlighted by Nenonen (2013). Thus, previous quotes were categorized as *business perspective*. Similarly to sport

manager types with versatile backgrounds, also career paths with an emphasis on business came up. While the business perspective is not excluded by any of the presented paths, it is not really included in either of them. It seems that these participants want to highlight and differentiate their background from specializing only in sport to emphasizing the meaning of business and business education in their paths.

## **6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In this chapter previously-highlighted results are analyzed in more detail and in respect to existing knowledge and academic literature. Also, conclusions based on the analysis will be made. Together with analyzing the results, reliability and validity will be discussed. The chapter ends with presenting future research suggestions.

### **6.1 Discussion**

For the discussion part the results of the Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) dissertation we will especially compare to. When it comes to sport manager types and paths, Laakso's (2016) theoretical model based on qualitative data will be discussed in relation to quantitative results from this study. The distribution of the managers according to the model will be discussed as well as propositions made for modifications and additions to further edit the model.

#### **6.1.1 Sport manager in Finland**

The first research question aimed to answer the following question:

- What is the profile of sport managers in Finland?

The representation of the research population by sectors in this study is alike to that of Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) study. This study includes also seven percent of respondents from the private sector of the sport, which was not included in Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) study. Even though the representation of the private sector is not too large within this study, it provides an opportunity to reflect differences between the public, third and private sectors. After all, the importance of the private sector has been increasing in recent years (Laine & Vehmas 2017).

Most common job titles of the sport managers represent the diversity amongst the sport management in Finland. The variety of different job titles can be partly explained by a different

choice of words (e.g. manager – leader – chief), but not all titles have similar meanings. Some titles, such as executive director or chief executive director are common within strategy level management in general organizations. Some titles, such as secretary for sports, secretary for recreation or secretary general emphasize more hands-on administrative work. The administrative and bureau level sport managers could be categorized as the first type of sport manager that Kreuz (2014) defined as the one enabling sport processes on an organization level. Then there are titles such as chief of sports, direct of sports, sport service manager, sports instructor or sports director that have a more direct connection to working with sport itself, rather than overall administration. Sports instructor as a title refers more to working directly towards sport product provision rather than managing anything. Previous titles could be categorized as the second type of sport manager by Kreuz (2014) who work directly with athletes and sport. After all, all previous titles are considered sport managers within the framework of this study because they are in leading positions of sport activities within given organization.

There is a range of literature that covers sport management in Finland, but it seems that there is no consensus about the definition of sport management and a sport manager. It seems that both, according to the results of this study as well as to already existing literature on the field, the Finnish sport management field appears fragmented. There is no consensus of who can be defined as sport manager in Finland, but there seems to be a range of different positions that could fall under the term. Therefore, the academic field could benefit from a better definition of sport manager in the Finnish sport environment.

Gender representation in this study is alike to that of Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) study at the general level. In this study 61.8 percent of the respondents were men and 38.2 percent women, compared to similar shares of 62.3 percent for men and 37.7 percent for women in Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018, 144) study. Thus, no notable changes in gender distribution of sport managers in Finland are seen in overall research population during the time the two studies were conducted from 2013 to 2019. However, it is notable that this study differs from Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) study by involving the private sector of sport, where 90 percent of respondents were men. If we examine only the third and public sector of the research population, 59.5 percent of the respondents were men and 40.5 percent of the respondent's

female. This shows a slight shift towards equal gender distribution when comparing this and Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) study.

Studies such as Aalto-Nevalainen (2011) indicate that the number of female sport manager has been slowly increasing during this century. Comparing the results from sport federations to the ones from Koski and Heikkala (2006, 27), the share of female leaders in sport federations has increased from 11.8 percent to 30.5 percent between the studies. The phenomena of an increasing number of female sport managers can be noted from this study but only when considering the third and public sector of the sport. When it comes to the private sector of sport however, it still appears as heavily masculine-dominated, at least according to this study. It needs to be noted that only Liiga teams and Fitness facilities management were considered in this study and is therefore, not a full representation of the private sector. Future researchers could therefore examine if the private sector truly is so much more masculine than the two other sectors. Further studies will be needed to examine this phenomenon more.

The average age of sport managers in Finland seems to have remained the same over the last years. The average age was 48.0 years in this research in comparison to 48.8 years in Aalto-Nevalainen (2018, 282) study. In fact, the average age of sport managers in Finland seems to have remained the same during the 20th century if we are also including the Koski and Heikkala (2006) study, which examined paid operative managers of sport federations. In Koski and Heikkala's study (2006, 27) the average age was 47.7 years, compared to an average age of 47.8 of sport managers in sport federations examined in the Aalto-Nevalainen (2018, 199) study and then lastly, 47.7 years in this study.

The results of this study support the fact that female sport managers are younger than their male counterparts, as was also found out by Aalto-Nevalainen (2018, 164). Results of this study suggest that the average age of sport managers in Finland is 49.7 years for men and 45.3 years for women. The average age is remaining quite at the same level and the average age fell only by 1.4 years compared to Aalto-Nevalainen (2018) study where average age was 51.1 years. Notable difference between this study and Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018, 164) results is a more equal distribution of gender in different age groups. Whilst females still have relatively more

managers in age groups under 45 years of age (50 % compared to 29 % among males), the effective number of male managers especially in the age group under 35 has been increasing. In the Aalto-Nevalainen (2018, 199) study there were 21 female managers versus seven male managers in the group of under 35 year-olds. This study however, included 18 female managers and 16 male managers in the age group of under 35. The number of young sport managers represents the future of sport management in Finland. The deduction by Aalto-Nevalainen (2018) that the number of female sport managers increases in the future still exists, and the gender distribution will become more equal. However, the shift is not seen as quite as significant as before.

The slight differences in the average ages in this study and Aalto-Nevalainen's (2018) study could be explained by the addition of the private sector to this study. While the average age in the public and third sector comes up to 48-49 years of age, the average age of respondents from the private sector is 45 years. As was described, the private sector sample was also more masculine compared to the other sectors. Given that the sample size of the private sector is relatively small, the differences between the sectors cannot be considered significant either. With the average age remaining stable over the years, there seems to be a natural manager turnover. This seems to strengthen the perception presented by Lehtonen et al. (2016) regarding the perfusion in Finnish sport organizations when examined broadly. Besides that, this study cannot take a stance on when it regards to narrow power-elite on Finnish sport organizations that is a central finding in the Lehtonen et. al (2016) research.

The results of this study show that sport managers in Finland are on average more educated than Finns in general (Statistics Finland 2018). Female managers are more educated than their male counterparts, as it was seen also by Aalto-Nevalainen (2018, 165). However, the difference between the amount of higher level university degrees (master's degree) was smaller in this study than compared to earlier results. In this study, 51 percent of the female sport managers had a master's degree, as opposed to 55 percent in the Aalto-Nevalainen (2018, 165) study. In opposition to that, 47 percent of the male sport managers in this study held a higher level university degree in comparison to only 39 percent in the Aalto-Nevalainen study. Furthermore, the results show that sport managers are more educated when working in the third sector of sport and after surpassing the age of 35.

A degree in sport seems to be more relevant in the third and public sector than in the private sector. Only two respondents out of 22 in the private sector had a degree in sport. While lacking distinctive sport degrees, ten respondents of the private sector had backgrounds within business education. In the public sector, 52 percent of the managers had a sport degree of some sort and 47 percent in the third sector. Other degrees, such as administrative, medicine, and law had representatives among the respondents, but their volume was not remarkable.

The most practiced sports in the managers' free time, reflect the overall situation in the Finnish population rather well when examining sport participation and comparing it to recent survey results. Traditional sports such as walking, gym and cycling are in the top three practiced sports both among sport managers and the general population. When examining differences, it is notable that while golf is on the top-seven-seed of the most practiced sports among sport managers, it falls to number 17 among the general population. (Mäkinen 2019.) Traditionally, golf has been seen as an elitist sport for citizens in the executive positions (Julkunen & Tuominen 2013). It seems that higher education and moreover, increasing possibilities of higher income result in a greater expenditure on physical activity which is in turn needed to practice more expensive sports such as golf (Kataja et. al 2017). At least this seems to be true in the case of golf and sport managers in Finland.

Sport managers seem to have a strong personal background in competitive sports. It is not a surprise that while 82.3 percent of the whole population practices some sport (Mäkinen 2019) only two percent of the respondent sport managers practice sport less than once a week. Within all three sectors, more than 50 percent of the respondents had either a national or international level competitive sport background. In the third and private sectors the share was even higher. The sports substance knowledge and general know-how of the sport is seen as a traditionally important competence when it comes to sport managers in Finland (Nenonen 2013, 36-37; Laakso 2016, 161-165). Personal background in sport appears to be commodity in order to work in sport management. According to Laakso (2016), legitimacy to act as a sports manager is achieved through sport and this seems to be true also in light of this research when examining competitive background of sport managers.

To conclude findings from sport managers in Finland. The average age of sport managers has remained steady over the years, but gender composition has slowly shifted towards a more equal representation. Female sport managers are younger and more educated than their male counterparts. The sport managers in Finland operate with various different titles, which makes it hard to define the sport manager as a position. Sport managers have a number of different educational degrees. In most cases, a degree in sport appears to be rather significant in Finnish sport management as it counts half of the research population. Sport managers in Finland have a strong competitive background and their hobbies align with the general Finnish population, with small exceptions of ice hockey and golf.

Results of this study suggest that the private sector differs significantly from the other two sectors of sport when it comes to the background of its sport managers. Sports managers in the private sector are more often younger men with business education and a strong personal background in sports, compared to their counterparts in the third or public sector. However, since this study only examined the private sector of sport within the dimensions of fitness facilities and men's professional ice-hockey teams, it remains for future studies to examine whether such a difference between sectors really does exist and if so, to what extent.

### **6.1.2 Sport manager types and career paths in Finland**

The second research question aimed to answer the following question:

- To what extent Laakso's (2016) Finnish sport manager types can be applied to the Finnish sport management field in general?

Sport manager types and career paths presented by Laakso (2016) do not represent the entirety of sport managers in Finland. Thirty percent of the respondents chose none of the presented types and nine percent could not identify themselves with Laakso's sport manager career paths. While Laakso's (2016) theoretical model was based on merely 16 interviews and specifically on the sport management "elite", it is not surprising that representation with a larger sample model is not fully congruent. Despite the fact that the model as such does not represent the

whole sport management field in Finland, some representative observations can be made by using this model. Using answers to open-ended questions on sport manager types and paths, researchers can include possible additions and modifications to further edit the model.

Different interviews of the sport managers in Finland (e.g. Kukkonen & Pyykkönen 2011; Nenonen 2013; Laakso 2016) highlight the importance of a sport background when becoming a sport manager. Similarly, for example in Germany, one's knowledge as an insider is seen as a requirement for sport management positions (Pfister & Radtke 2009). Results of the current study reinforce this perception, since the two most common sport manager types come from within the sport. It seems that most commonly, sport managers in Finland have a background in both management and sport and they have been asked to work as sport managers. The chosen type of sport manager was identified by 37 percent of the respondents. In total 26 percent of the respondents identified themselves with the *sportsman*, that is a sport manager type that is characterized by a strong competitive sport background. That is the second most common sport manager type, if we exclude the *other* option with 30 percent among the respondents.

While not that many, there were a few sport managers who identified as the *bureaucrat* (6 %) sport manager type. For the *bureaucrat* sport manager type, it is possible that the survey was not appealing to municipal sport managers as it could have been. This was pointed out in some answers to the open-ended questions. The way that *bureaucrat* was phrased by Laakso (2016) as it described focusing on activities within the state administration and not within the municipal administration. However, none of the interviewees in Laakso's (2016) study were working on the municipal level as it was the case in this study so, there are definite differences between the studies and their results. Rephrasing the *bureaucrat* sport manager type to include also municipal administration could have made it more appealing for sport managers in the municipal sector. Considering this however, even after including the municipal bureau into the *bureaucrat* sport manager type their share would have not been significantly larger. The *other* sport manager type option was chosen only slightly more (34 %) amongst the municipal sector than it was by respondents in general (30 %).

Only few (1 %), identified themselves as the *politician* sport manager type. The number of sport managers classified as the *politician* type seems to reflect Maijala's (2006) observation that political discourse is rather worthless in the current sport management environment. A background in politics is seen as more of a weakness than a strength. While Maijala's (2006) observations are specific to the election of the Finnish Olympic Committee chairmen, results of this study show that a career path through politics is not a particularly fruitful but still a possible way to become a sport manager.

There seems to be a tendency to become a sport manager in Finland through working with children and their education. A background of working with youth and children is a sport manager type that was not identified by Laakso (2016). Again, as Laakso (2016) focused on the sport manager "elite", this manager type does not seem to appear in that setting. It does however, appear in this study after expanding the view to a wider perspective and the general Finnish sport management environment. Physical activity is seen as a significant factor in youth's development progress. Besides development of physical abilities, physical activity reinforces social skills and further connections have been found between good physical abilities and good school performance. (Fogelholm 2011, 76-87.) Promoting the development of children and youth is also separately mentioned in the Finnish Sports Act (Liikuntalaki 2015, 4§). Understanding the importance of children and youth development in Finnish sport it sounds reasonable for one to become a sport manager through working in such a significant sector of the sport environment. As far as different degree titles of the respondents in this study, 13 sport managers had a Master's degree of Science in Education out of which nine were working in the public sector. However, the amount of sport managers with background in educational studies could be significantly higher than seen in results. For example, Studying sport pedagogy, one will receive a general degree in sport sciences and not specific pedagogical degree. Based on the data of this study we cannot separately examine how many managers with a sport degree had a background in sport pedagogy specifically. This examination remains for future studies.

Laakso's (2016) sport manager types did not include options where the sport management position was not pursued or even applied to but rather where sport management positions and tasks were simply assigned to the person. These particular answers were found among the answers to the option *other* on sport manager types. Generally, the appreciation of sport

managers is observed as not high (Kukkonen & Pyykkönen 2011). The fact that sport management tasks are assigned to people who already have a different management focus reflect upon the low appreciation of sport management. Transferring sport management tasks can also be seen as representations of a transition in the Finnish sport management environment on a larger scale. Commercialization, among others, drives different organizations to improve cost efficiency, which can result in less resources that then need to be allocated better. As Nenonen (2013) pointed out, sport managers need to deal with limited resources. One of these limited resources is time, that they effectively can spend on sport management duties, while also assigned to other administrative work.

From hobby to profession could be seen as an addition to *sportsman* type, but since the other option was chosen it was assumed that these managers define hobby as a wider concept than the actual discipline. According to Heikkala and Koivisto (2010, 9) entrepreneurship in sport is multi-dimensional and captures a wide range of different business activities, that are linked to sports. Reflecting on this view, a hobby within sport can be of many sorts other than the discipline. With examples ranging from event production, physiotherapy to sport photographing. Either one of these hobbies could be turned into a profession and further could become a path to becoming a sport manager. The manager type of going from being simply an amateur to becoming a sport manager is not included in Laakso's (2016) model.

A versatile background is needed for sport managers as Nenonen (2013) interpreted through interviews of Finnish sport managers. According to Nenonen (2013), a broad range of different skills are required for modern managers. The results of this present study reinforce the view. A broad range of different skills do not really fit into Laakso's (2016) model, which aims more at categorizing different backgrounds and additional skills. It could be argued whether it makes sense to build such a model, if sport managers need versatile background that is often combination of many different sport manager types. In light of this research, these multitalented sport managers do not exist in high numbers and those who have versatile backgrounds are able to choose a manager type that is the best fit for them, even though they might have features of many.

Laakso (2016) states that it seems to be a custom, almost a norm, in Finnish sport management that managers come from the field of sport. There seems to be some truth to that as 34 percent of the respondents identified *the story of growth* as their path to sport management. *The story of growth* was the most identified path in the third sector, but equally mentioned on all three sectors. Results of this study seem to strengthen the perception that a common way to become a sport manager in Finland is through growing within sport.

Equally with *the story of growth*, 34 percent of the respondents identified *the story of pursuit* as their path to a sport management position. The story of pursuit highlights that despite the fact that appreciation of sport management has declined from the “golden ages” (Kukkonen & Pyykkönen 2011) there seem to be quite a few managers who had a high desire to work specifically in sport management positions. In light of these results, it seems rather controversial that there is a strong need for sport management education in Finland (Nenonen 2013) that is not fulfilled. Out of the respondents who identified themselves with the *story of pursuit* 61 percent had a sport degree which is above average. High desire to specialize in the sport field can be seen also through this perspective. It seems that there are people who have a high desire to specialize in sport management, but according to Nenonen (2013) review there is lack of specific university education towards this goal in Finland.

Besides growing up in the sport or pursuing the sport management position, it seems, according to this study that a relatively large number of managers end up in their management position by accident, as 18 percent of the respondents identified coincidence as their path to sport management. The existence of sport managers that ended up in their positions as coincidence is not that big of a surprise, as it was also observed within Koski and Heikkala’s (2006) and Laakso’s (2016) studies. It seems that managers especially in the private sector end up in their current positions by accident, because coincidence is the most commonly identified path from Laakso’s (2016) sport manager career paths within the sector. It could be interpreted that whilst sport managers in the private sector have less sport specific degrees than in other sectors it is more likely that these managers have not pursued work in the sport management sector but rather ended up there, often through coincidence.

Five percent of the respondents identified *the story of drifting* as their path to sport management position. This type of sport management path emphasizes outside impact on one's career. Considering answers to open-ended questions, it seems the proposition for *the story of drifting* could be changed. Currently it does not suit very well when examining a larger sport manager population. The *story of drifting* as presented by Laakso (2016) focuses on a person's external force rewriting one's sport management career. In order to better adapt the model to a wider sport management population this view could be broadened. The model could include an external force in a larger perspective so that it encompasses all sport managers who did not choose to be sport manager in the first place. Rather these sport managers drifted to the position by the influence of an external impact.

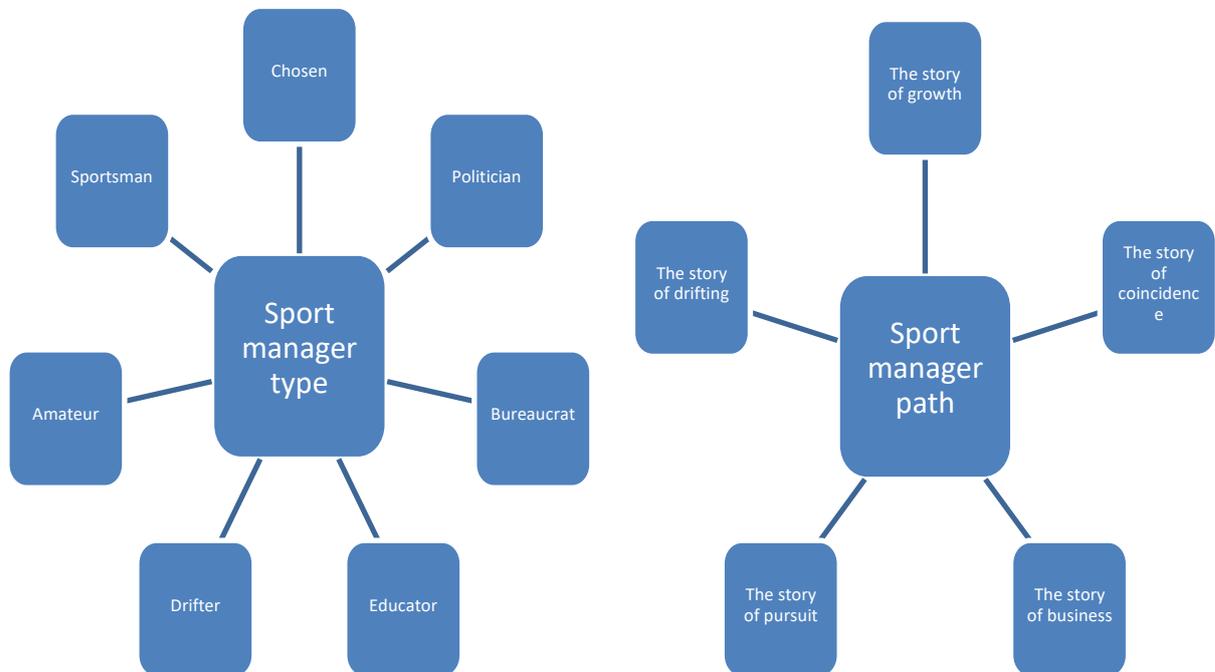
External impact can also occur in form of change in job description or as a organizational change. This was described by a few of the open answers. Sport managers identified that their career path was not comprised of pursuing the position, growing within the sport or a coincidence but a certain change made them sport managers. It could be argued whether these sport managers that drifted to their position are less motivated to do actual sport management. Nevertheless, this is what they do.

The business perspective as a career path towards sport management was something that was not found on Laakso's (2016) model. While it could be that any of the current career paths presented involve business education, they do not do that specifically and this was pointed out by the open answers. It seems important to these managers to emphasize business as their path towards sport management. As Nenonen (2013) argued, business emphasis is not strong in Finnish sport management education, so, it makes the path from general business education more valid. As seen before, business education seems especially relevant when working in the private sector of the sport, but it is also found in other sectors.

## **6.2 Sport manager types and paths in Finland**

This sub-chapter presents modification suggestions for Laakso's (2016) model for it to represent sport managers in Finland on a larger scale and not just the sport manager "elite".

Suggestions are made by using results of this study that were opened in previous chapters. Figure 6 visualizes the modified Laakso (2016) model for sport manager types and paths in Finland.



**Figure 6.** Sport manager types and paths in Finland

The sport manager types and paths in Finland model include six sport manager types: *chosen*, *sportsman*, *politician*, *bureaucrat*, *educator*, *drifter* and *amateur*. *Chosen*, *sportsman* and *politician* sport manager types are kept same as they were introduced by Laakso (2016). *Bureaucrat* is supplemented with municipal administration. In Laakso’s (2016) model, the *bureaucrat* sport manager type was defined to work in governmental positions. Based on results of this study the proposition will be extended to include also municipal administration. Besides change in the *bureaucrat* sport manager type, three more types: *educator*, *drifter* and *amateur* are introduced.

*The Educator* sports manager type includes managers who have a background working with youth and children. This involves both teaching and other youth work. Characteristic for sport managers as *drifter* type is that their current positions and tasks as sport managers are assigned to them. Managers of this type did not pursue to be sport managers, but rather the position was given to them, often through some organizational changes. *Amateur* sport manager type is for sport managers who have a background in sport as a hobby other than the actual discipline. This hobby has developed into a profession and later on led to a sport management position.

The modified Laakso model includes five sport manager paths: *the story of growth*, *the story of drifting*, *the story of coincidence*, *the story of pursuit* and *the story of business*. *The story of the growth*, *coincidence* and *pursuit* are kept as they were presented by Laakso (2016). Additionally, *the story of drifting* is edited to include not only the impact of external persons but rather external forces in a wider perspective. Through this *the story of drifting* covers all managers whose career path was affected by external factors. *The story of business* is a new sport manager path added to the existing ones. The emphasis in this one is on business as career path towards sport manager positions.

### **6.3 Ethical issues**

Ethical issues are present with all kinds of studies and as such, important also in sport management research. Understanding and considering research ethics in the given subject is important because the aim of research is to do more good than harm. Appropriate use of ethical principles means aiming to prevent unnecessary harm. (Skinner et. al 2015, 44.)

McMillan and Schumacher (2006, 142-145) outline five principles when conducting ethical research. Firstly, researcher should ensure ethical treatment of all research subjects. Secondly, study subjects should be comprehensively informed of the purpose of the study and possible benefits, risks and timeframes involved with it. Thirdly, subjects of the study must acknowledge being informed of previous benefits and risk, thus confirming voluntary participation to the study. Fourthly, research information should be kept confidential and fifthly, privacy issues should be considered as such that no possible benefits are denied from subjects.

In the case of this research, ethical considerations are two-fold. Firstly, study subjects were informed about the research and ethical considerations in the covering letter that was sent together with the link to the research. Study subjects were informed that information gathered will be dealt with confidentiality and presented as entities out of which no individual is identifiable. Secondly, information gathered will be stored in such a manner that it will be kept private also in the future.

#### **6.4 Reliability and validity of the study**

When it comes to research design there are a few things that should be taken into consideration and evaluated. These are reliability and validity of the study. The reliability refers to the consistency of the given research. In other words, it means the ability of how well the study can be re-created with the same measurements and get similar results. On the other hand, the validity of the study refers to the extent that the questions asked match the given concept and give a realistic viewpoint on the research subject. (Skinner et. al 2015, 255.)

While the advantages of a survey generally in the ability to collect large amount of data cost-efficiently, it also has disadvantages. Firstly, we cannot be sure of how truthfully the participants have been answering to our questions. There is also the possibility of misunderstanding the questions, especially if the respondents do not have full knowledge of the subject area to which the questions refer. Especially good knowledge and understanding of the subject is needed from the researcher to build a functioning research pattern. Lastly, something that should be thought of when doing surveys is the response rate. If there is case of high level of unresponsiveness, that affects the validity of the research. (Hirsjärvi 2009, 195.)

Most parts of the questionnaire of this study had been used and tested in previous studies (e.g Aalto-Nevalainen 2018). Additionally, this particular study was sent to a couple of sport managers and researchers who gave their comments according to which the survey was further modified. Both of these factors increase the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. When it comes to the participants' point of view, the research population is rather heterogenous. This means, that also their general knowledge of the sport management subject varies. However, as

most of the questions in this survey examined participants' backgrounds and were mainly considering general information, participants were expected to be able to answer questions on their own behalf without special knowledge on sport management field.

One of the most challenging parts was to gather a response rate that would be high enough. Eventually, the study received 288 answers, which equals the response rate of 44.9 percent. The response rate can be considered being good for a survey while it falls only slightly from average (Baruch & Holtom 2008). Factors of why the response rate fell from average can be many. In case of this particular study, probably one of the factors was participants' ability to identify themselves as sport managers, since some participants did not interpret their daily work as such. As stated before, participants represented a heterogenous group of people whose job positions, titles and daily tasks vary. Some people see themselves more as sport managers than others. Another possible factor affecting response rate is language. While the vast majority of the participants were Finnish native speakers, the questionnaire was sent also to areas where Swedish is the native language. At least one participant informed that to be the reason why he did not answer the survey. Third reasoning specifically in regard to this study refers to over-surveying. Over-surveying reflects the phenomena where a growing number of areas are flooded with different questionnaires (Weiner & Dalessio 2006). Finnish sport managers are situated in a field full of surveys and while this survey was taking place, it is known that at least one other survey was present with partly the same target group.

While the response rate fell slightly from average, results of the study can be still seen as representative. The Finnish sport management field is relatively small, which allowed questionnaire to be sent to a wide range of representatives. Strong generalizations should be dealt with with caution however, but overall interpretations of Finnish sport management setting can be seen.

## **6.5 Suggestions for further studies**

Further studies could focus on defining sport managers in a specifically Finnish sport management setting. While studies such as Kreuz (2014) exist, perhaps a more quantitative

level study could try to build a comprehensive picture of how sport management is defined in Finnish setting. Creating or finding a comprehensive definition of sport managers in Finland could benefit all future sport management studies and make them more coherent.

Modifications to Laakso's (2016) model were presented to discussion as result of this study. However, these modifications need further testing. As a result of this quantitative testing of Laakso (2016) model and modifications, next studies could take this implication back to the qualitative level and further develop sport manager types and paths to correspond to the sport management setting in Finland.

Different career paths explored and discussed in this study could be in focus of further studies. Example of this could be more detailed research on the path from teacher to sport manager. Since this study failed to recognize how many of the sport managers have an education background it could be relevant to analyze how often teachers end up working in sport management and if they qualify more through their career as teacher or through other social paths.

A few interesting outcomes of this study require further research. Results of this study show that the private sector has different features than the other two sectors. The share of the private sector, however, was not too large in this study and thus it calls for more studies relating to the private sector. A wider quantitative study specifically on the private sector in Finland could clarify the existing interpretations made based on this study. On the other hand, more in-depth qualitative study could benefit the understanding of why the private sector seems to be different from other two sectors.

Qualitative and quantitative studies are counterparts (Hirsjärvi 2009, 136-137), and this should be reflected more in future studies. While the essential purpose of this study was to examine how Laakso's (2016) model works on a larger scale, the natural next step would be to take results of this study back to the qualitative world. As we could see from the results of this study, types and paths presented by Laakso (2016) are not the whole story behind Finnish sport managers. Some possible new types and modifications to existing ones could be made also

based on this study, but if we want to build a more comprehensive categorization of Finnish sport managers, more in-depth qualitative interviews are needed.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Covering letter and questionnaire

Covering letter 2.5.2019

Arvoisa vastaanottaja,

Lähestyn Teitä kyselyllä, jonka avulla tutkitaan suomalaisten urheilujohtajien taustoja sekä tärkeäksi tunnistamia johtamisen kompetensseja. Teidät on tämän tutkimuksen viitekehyksessä määritelty urheilujohtajaksi, vaikka varsinainen työnimikkeenne voi ollakin jokin muu. Yhteystietonne on kerätty manuaalisesti internetsivuilta (joten tämä sähköposti on tarkoitettu koskemaan juuri Teitä). Tutkimuksen kohteena ovat organisaatioiden ylimmät palkatut urheilun parissa toimivat henkilöt, urheilujohtajat, julkisella sektorilla, järjestöissä, säätiöissä, korkeakouluissa sekä urheilun yksityisen sektorin parissa.

Liikunta-alan johtajien taustoja sekä kompetensseja on Suomessa tutkittu vähän, kyseisessä viitekehyksessä ja laajuudessa ei lainkaan. Vastaamisellanne on tärkeä merkitys urheilujohtajien taustojen tunnistamisessa, koulutusohjelmien kehittämisessä sekä pohjana tuleville tutkimuskysymyksille.

Tutkimus on osa tutkimusprojektia, josta syntyy gradututkielmat Jyväskylän yliopiston – Liikuntatieteelliseen tiedekuntaan, sekä Turun Kauppar korkeakoulun Porin yksikköön. Tutkimusprojektin sekä molemmat tutkielmat toteuttaa kauppatieteiden kandidaatti Kari-Pekka Seppänen. Jyväskylän Yliopiston gradun ohjaajana toimii yliopiston lehtori Hanna Vehmas ja Turun Kauppar korkeakoulun gradun ohjaajana toimii professori Tomi Kallio. Kyselyyn on helppo vastata, koska se sisältää pääasiassa valmiiksi luokiteltuja kysymyksiä. Vastaaminen vie Teiltä aikaa noin 5-10 minuuttia. Kaikki annetut tiedot käsitellään ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti, eikä niiden perusteella ole mahdollista tunnistaa yksittäisen vastaajan henkilöllisyyttä ja vastauksia. Tulokset raportoidaan isompina kohderyhmäkokonaisuuksina.

Pyydän vastaustanne kyselyyn sunnuntaihin 12.5.2019 mennessä.

Tarvittaessa annan mielelläni lisätietoja tutkimuksesta.

Kiitos etukäteen vastaamisesta.

Kari-Pekka Seppänen    Sähköposti: karipekkaseppanen@hotmail.com Puhelin: 044 0806943

Pääsette vastaamaan kyselyyn alla olevasta linkistä:

[https://link.webpolsurveys.com/R/ΨΨREDIRECTION\\_LINKΦΦ](https://link.webpolsurveys.com/R/ΨΨREDIRECTION_LINKΦΦ)

**PERUSTIEDOT**

**1. Mikä on syntymävuotenne?**

**2. Oletteko**

Mies

Nainen

**3. Millä suuralueella työskentelette?**

Helsinki-Uusimaa

Etelä-Suomi

Länsi-Suomi

Pohjois- ja Itä-Suomi

Ahvenanmaa

**4. Onko työnantajanne:**

Valtio

Kunta tai kuntayhtymä

Yliopisto tai korkeakoulu

Lajiliitto

Muu valtakunnallinen liikuntajärjestö

Alueellinen liikuntajärjestö

Liikunnan koulutuskeskus (urheiluopisto)

Muu yleishyödyllinen yhteisö

Liikunnan yksityisen sektorin yritys (urheiluseura, liikuntayritys)

Joku muu, mikä?

**5. Tässä kysymyksessä ylimmällä johdolla tarkoitetaan liikunnasta vastaavan**

**yksikön/toimialan ylintä johtajaa.**

**Oletteko:**

Ylin johtaja (esim. toiminnanjohtaja, liikuntatoimenjohtaja tai -sihteeri, vapaa-aikajohtaja,

liikuntayksikön johtaja)

Muussa johtavassa asemassa (esim. johtajan varahenkilö, yhteysjohtaja, viestin-täpäällikkö,

erityisasiantuntija, kulttuuriasiainneuvos)

Jokin muu kuin kumpikaan edellisistä

**6. Mikä on työnimikkeenne?**

**KOULUTUS**

**7. Mikä on ylin koulutuksenne?**

Perusaste (peruskoulu, aikaisempi keskikoulu ja kansakoulu)

Keskiaste (ylioppilastutkinto ja ammatilliset tutkinnot)

Alempi korkea-aste (entiset opistotutkinnot, amk-tutkinnot ja yliopisto-jen alemmat korkeakoulututkinnot)

Ylempi korkea-aste (ylemmät amk-tutkinnot ja yliopistojen ylemmät korkeakoulututkinnot)

Tutkijakoulutusaste (lisansiaatin ja tohtorin tutkinto)

**8. Mikä on ylimmän tutkintonne nimike (esim. liikuntatieteiden maisteri, kauppatieteiden tohtori)?**

**9. Minä vuonna valmistuitte ylimpään tutkintoonne?**

**LIIKUNTA-AKTIIVISUUTEEN JA –ALAAN LIITTYVÄT TAUSTATIEDOT**

**10. Kuinka usein harrastatte vapaa-ajan liikuntaa vähintään puoli tuntia niin, että ainakin lievästi hengästytte ja hikoilette?**

Päivittäin

4-6 kertaa viikossa

2-3 kertaa viikossa

Kerran viikossa

2-3 kertaa kuukaudessa

Muutaman kerran vuodessa tai harvemmin

En voi vamman tai sairauden vuoksi harrastaa liikuntaa

**11. Kuinka monta minuuttia kävelette tai pyöräilette työmatkoillanne? Huom. tarkoittaa meno- ja tulomatkaan yhteensä käytettyä aikaa.**

Työskentelen kotona

Kuljen työmatkan kokonaan moottoriajoneuvolla

Alle 15 minuuttia päivässä

15-30 minuuttia päivässä

30-60 minuuttia päivässä

Yli tunnin päivässä

**12. Mitä liikuntalajeja tai -muotoja harrastatte eniten (nimetkää korkeintaan kolme)?**



Muuna vapaaehtoistyöntekijänä      Kyllä /En

**15. Toimitteko tällä hetkellä luottamusjohtajana liikunta-alalla?**

Kyllä, monessako tehtävässä?

En

**16. Liikunnan ja urheilun seuraaminen**

**Tässä ei tarkoiteta omien alaikäisten lasten harrastamisen seuraamista.**

**Mitta-asteikko:**

**1 En lainkaan, 2 En juuri lainkaan, 3 Satunnaisesti, 4 Usein, 5 Säännöllisesti**

Käyn katsomassa urheilun sarjapelejä (esim. kotimaiset palloilusarjat)

Käyn katsomassa urheilukilpailuja (esim. suunnistus, yleisurheilu tai ralli)

Käyn katsomassa liikuntatapahtumia (esim. juoksutapahtumat, voimistelun suurtapahtumat)

Luen urheilu-uutisia painetusta tai sähköisestä mediasta (esim. HS, Kaleva,

Iltasanomat)

Luen liikunnan harrastamiseen tai liikunnalliseen elämäntapaan liittyviä

kirjoituksia ja lehtiä

Katson tv:stä urheilu-uutisia (esim. Urheiluruutu)

Katson tv:stä urheilua

Katson tv:stä liikunnan harrastamiseen ja liikunnalliseen elämäntapaan

liittyviä ohjelmia

Keskustelen urheilusuorituksista, -tuloksista ja -tapahtumista

”kahvipöydissä” ja vapaa-ajalla

Keskustelen liikunnan harrastamisesta ”kahvipöydissä” ja vapaa-ajalla

### **17. Mikä seuraavista väittämistä kuvastaa parhaiten taustanne urheilujohtajana?**

Taustaa johtajana työskentelystä tai työskentelystä muutoin johtamisen alalla. Pitkä ja monipuolinen tausta liikunnan ja urheilun parissa. Urheilujohdon tehtäviin sinua on ensin pyydetty ja edelleen valittu.

Ammattipoliitikon tausta. Liikunnan ja urheilun luottamusjohdossa toimiminen on enemmän harrastuspohjalta. Toiminta politiikassa ja liikunnan ja urheilun parissa tukevat toinen toisiaan

Ominaista kilpaurheilutausta ja halu jatkaa alalla kilpauran jälkeen. Sisäinen kutsumus alalla toimimiseen.

Toiminta valtionhallinnollisissa tehtävissä. Aiempaa kokemusta järjestötoiminnasta, minkä voidaan katsoa olevan työssä onnistumisen vaatimus. Poliitiikka ja poliittinen ohjaus vaikuttavat keskeisesti työssä.

Muu, mikä?

### **18. Mikä seuraavista väittämistä kuvasta parhaiten kasvuaanne urheilujohtajaksi?**

Yksilön kasvu ja kehittyminen liikunnan ja urheilun parissa lapsuudesta saakka. Urheilun sisällä eri tasojen ja tehtävien kautta tapahtuva johtajana kehittyminen kohti urheilujohdon eliittiä

Ulkopuolisella henkilöllä tai henkilöillä on merkittävä ohjaava vaikutus urheilujohtajan uran etenemiseen ja sen suuntaan.

Sattuma tai yllättävä tapahtuma, jonka seurauksena siirtyminen urheilujohtajan uralle

Vahva halu ja tahto toimia liikunnan ja urheilun parissa sekä pyrkiminen ja haasteutuminen urheilujohtajaksi

Muu, mikä?

### **19. Urheilijohtamisen kompetenssit. Kuinka tärkeänä pidätte seuraavia kompetensseja urheilujohtajan toimensa?**

**Mitta-asteikko: 1 En lainkaan tärkeä - 5 Erittäin tärkeä**

Kirjanpito-osaaminen

Kustannuslaskentataidot

Rahoituksen asiantuntijuus

Sponsoroinnin asiantuntijuus

Henkilöstöhallintotaidot

Materiaalin hankintataidot

Palveluiden tuottamistaidot

Varastonhallintataidot

Asiakkaidenhankintataidot

Tuotekehitysosaaminen

Jakelun organisointitaidot

Verkostoitumisen taidot

Markkinoinnin asiantuntijuus

Hinnoittelutaidot

Turvallisuusosaaminen

Tapahtuman järjestämistaidot

Kiinteistöhuollon ja rakentamisen taidot

Urheilun asiantuntijuus

Verotuksen asiantuntijuus

Juridiikkaosaaminen

Informaatiohallintataidot

Vieraiden kielten osaaminen

Itsensä johtamisen taidot

Psykologian asiantuntijuus

Sosiologian asiantuntijuus

Taloustieteen asiantuntijuus

**20. Vapaa palaute kyselystä**