

**ATTITUDES TOWARD LEARNING AND INVESTMENT IN EMPLOYEE  
DEVELOPMENT IN SPORT ORGANISATIONS**

by

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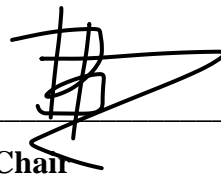
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## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to my cherished family, whose unwavering support and love have been my guiding light throughout this journey.

Their endless encouragement has not only sustained me during the challenging periods of academic rigor but also inspired me to strive for excellence in every endeavour.

Furthermore, this paper is devoted to all the passionate and committed individuals in the world of sports—both active and retired professional athletes—who continuously seek to enhance their personal and professional growth. May this research serve as a valuable resource in guiding your development initiatives and fostering a lifelong commitment to self-developing.

It is my hope that the insights drawn from this study contribute to fostering environments that emphasize the importance of continuous education and development in sports organizations. Here's to breaking new grounds and pushing the boundaries of what we can achieve, both on and off the field. Your resilience and dedication to improving not just your own skills, but also the standards of your professions, are what truly inspire this work.

To all who dare to dream big and work tirelessly to turn those dreams into reality— this is for you.

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A heartfelt acknowledgment goes to all members of the sports community who participated in this research. Your willingness to share your experiences and practices has not only enriched this study but also underscored the importance of continual learning and development within the sports industry.

Thank you to each one of you for your invaluable contributions to this journey.

**ABSTRACT****ATTITUDES TOWARD LEARNING AND INVESTMENT IN EMPLOYEE  
DEVELOPMENT IN SPORT ORGANISATIONS****DEJAN LANINOVIĆ, 2024**

Dissertation Chair: dr. Minja Bolesnikov

Sport, a global phenomenon, encompasses a vast market valued at \$388.3 billion in 2020, projected to reach \$599.9 billion by 2025. Managing the sport business, laden with unique attributes, requires adept handling of perishability, unpredictability, and the intersection with various industries. A critical factor in the success of sport organizations is their human resource. However, little research has been directed towards learning readiness and managerial attitudes towards employee development within sports organizations.

This study delves into the readiness of employees to learn and the attitudes of managers towards learning in sports organizations. As 90% of companies reshape jobs and automate

roles, the workforce faces significant challenges. While many organizations prefer re-skilling their existing workforce, sports organizations lag in allocating consistent budgets for employee training. The research aims to address this gap by investigating the attitude of managers towards learning, the readiness of employees to learn, and the investment in employee development within the unique context of sports organizations.

The theoretical foundation emphasizes the value of employee development, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between organizational success and employee growth. Acknowledging the shift from viewing organizations merely as task-oriented entities to intelligent systems managing knowledge the research seeks to explore the specificities of sports organizations.

The research will employ primary quantitative methods, utilizing online questionnaires to assess employee learning readiness and managerial attitudes towards learning. The study will be conducted in Switzerland within international sports organizations and Croatia within national and club-level sports organizations. The data will be analyzed using SPSS software, incorporating descriptive statistics.

In addressing a void in the literature, this research contributes to the understanding of employee development and attitudes towards learning in the unique context of sports organizations. The findings aim to inform strategic decisions, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and ensuring the long-term success and prosperity of sports organizations in an ever-evolving landscape.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Sport is a global product and service in which a large number of people around the world enjoy playing, watching or participating. The intensity with which the consumer follows sport is elusive for the vast majority of products of other industries, and we can say the same about the value of the market.

“The global sports market reached a value of nearly \$388.3 billion in 2020, having increased at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.4% since 2015. The market declined from \$458.8 billion in 2019 to \$388.3 billion in 2020 at a rate of -15.4%. The decline is mainly due to lockdown and social distancing norms imposed by various countries and economic slowdown across countries owing to the COVID-19 outbreak and the measures to contain it. The market is expected to reach \$599.9 billion by 2025, and \$826.0 billion by 2030” (Researches and Markets, 2021).

The sport business has a number of attributes that make it an interesting and challenging business to manage. These attributes include (Isaac,L. 2021):

- Sport industry leaders are household names
- The industry evokes great passion in consumers of the sport product
- The sport product is very perishable, i.e. a live sport performance can never be a live sport performance again once the final whistle has blown

- The sport product is unpredictable, you can never be sure of what you are going to get
- Millions of people put their labour into the industry for free to create the sport product
- The sport product is used by other industries as a vehicle to promote their own product
- The sport product is consumed by people from a very young age
- The sport product is highly valued by television and other media organisations who pay very large sums of money to televise some sports.
- The sport industry causes major events to occur where many thousands of people gather from all over the world.
- Sport industry leaders are given high status in society, honoured, and treated often as role models
- The sport industry often has its own government ministry, and millions of tax payer funds are distributed to organisations to assist them produce a better sport product

The survival and prosperity of a sport organisations, like any business, depends on its human resource. This includes officials, organisation paid staff, management committee personnel and coaches but also volunteers and helpers.

While organisations in the past have been viewed as compilations of tasks, products, employees, profit centres and processes, today they are increasingly seen as intelligent systems designed to manage knowledge (Halal, 1997).

“When you strategically invest in employees, you attract and keep all the best candidates, and you also build a strong work culture unafraid of innovation, change, failure and success. Some of the top reasons why employers should invest more in employee development, and thus, company success are attracting and retaining great employees, increase of innovation and performance, possibility of upward mobility for promotable employees and boost of employer reputation” (Craig, 2018.)

## **1.2 Research Problem**

With 90% of companies redesigning jobs, and nearly one-third doing so substantially, C-suite executives are wrestling with several pressing workforce issues, including how to transition newly automated jobs into technology-driven roles. Roughly a quarter are looking at ways to “transition to the future of work”, redesigning jobs and re-skilling their current workforce. Most believe that bringing in new talent is not the right direction with 77% indicating they would rather train current employees to address these ongoing personnel challenges (Leadr, Deloitte, 2020).

Learning is a complex and continuous process that arises from the experience and cognitive elements of the individual with the aim of acquiring new knowledge, and in order to strengthen or change his existing behaviour (Radonjic, 1992).

Development of employees has been recognised as added value to both organisations and employees. Such development suggest formal education but also trainings and coaching and allows organisations to deliver better quality service and products with fewer resources.

Sport and recreation organisations need to invest in providing training and developing their human resource. Many sports organisations fail to allocate any budget for training of employees. Any expenditure on training is often spasmodic, and there is an absence of longer-term planning when money is spent on training.

The subject of the research is to examine the readiness of employees to learn and the attitude of managers towards learning in sports organisations,. It is also important to see how much money do sports organisations invest in the formal education of their employees and whether they organise trainings for specific skills's development.

### **1.3 Purpose of Research**

Based on theoretical knowledge and parameters on the specificity of sport, objective is to investigate attitudes towards learning and investments in employees 'development in sport organisations.

The attitude of managers towards learning and knowledge is of primary importance. Without the active attitude of managers towards the training and training of employees, there is no improvement or changes in the organisation.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study encompasses several dimensions, each of which contributes to the enrichment of both academic discourse and practical effects in the sphere of sports organizations.

#### **Contribution to academic knowledge**

On a scientific level, this study seeks to advance existing knowledge by delving into the dynamics of attitudes toward learning within sports organizations. By exploring the perspectives of both employers and employees, the research aims to contribute nuanced insights that deepen our understanding of the symbiotic relationship between



organizational development and employee education. Furthermore, research on demographic variation and regional differences adds a layer of complexity, enriching academic discussions of organizational behavior, human resource management, and cross-cultural considerations.

### **Practical implications for sports organizations**

From a practical standpoint, the findings of this research have direct relevance to sports organizations struggling with the challenges of employee development and organizational growth. The identification of prevailing attitudes among sports clubs and federations, especially through the lens of human resource managers, offers useful insights. Such insights can inform the design and implementation of targeted training and development programs that are aligned with the perceived needs and expectations of those organizations.

### **Resolving differences and improving organizational performance**

The study's emphasis on uncovering potential differences in attitudes, both between employers and employees and across different organizational structures, serves as a catalyst for organizational introspection. Understanding and correcting these disparities is key to fostering a harmonious work environment, increasing employee satisfaction, and ultimately optimizing organizational performance. This aspect of the research contributes

to a practical toolkit for sport management professionals seeking to create inclusive growth-oriented organizational cultures.

### **Benchmarking and best practice**

A regional analysis of the research, comparing attitudes between Europe and Switzerland, as well as differences between Eastern and Western European contexts, provides a basis for comparison and establishment of best practices. Recognizing the influence of regional and cultural factors on learning attitudes provides sport organizations with the knowledge to adapt their strategies to specific contexts. This aspect of the study therefore contributes to the wider discourse on the internationalization of sport management practices.

### **Improvement of cooperation and organizational culture**

Finally, the significance of the study extends to fostering improved collaboration and alignment between HR departments, management and employees within sports organizations. By shedding light on attitudes toward learning, the research offers a foundation for fostering a culture that values continuous development. This in turn contributes to creating an organizational ethos that attracts and retains talent, fostering a positive cycle of growth and innovation.

In summary, this study encompasses an area of academic enrichment and practical utility, with implications for organizational development, human resource management, and the broader discourse on international sports management practices. The multifaceted contributions of this research aim to shape and advance scientific and applied areas within the field of sports management.

### **1.5 Research Purpose and Questions`**

In the dynamic environment of modern sports organizations, the key role of employee development is gaining more and more importance. The continued evolution of the sports industry requires a strong focus on fostering a culture of learning within these organizations, ensuring that employees are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary for sustained success.

This research embarks on a comprehensive investigation of attitudes towards learning and investment in employee development within sports organizations, with a particular focus on clubs and national federations, explores prevailing attitudes towards educational initiatives within sports organizations, with the aim of uncovering the intricacies that shape organizational perspectives and employee experiences and which are the perspectives of human resources (HR) managers, as well as the employees themselves.

The research seeks to uncover the motivations, challenges and perceived benefits associated with educational initiatives within the unique context of sports organizations.

The multifaceted nature of sports organizations encompasses a diverse array of roles and responsibilities, from athletes to management. In this intricate ecosystem, the importance of investing in employee education and development cannot be overstated. As the sports industry becomes increasingly competitive and complex, the need for a skilled and adaptable workforce becomes imperative

The primary objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To assess the attitudes of sports organizations, specifically clubs and national federations, towards employee education.
2. To understand the perspectives of HR managers in sports organizations regarding their role in employee education.
3. To investigate the attitudes of employees towards educational opportunities provided by their respective sports organizations.

#### Secondary Objectives

1. To determine if there is a significant difference in attitudes between employees and employers within sports organizations.

2. To explore potential variations in attitudes between clubs and national federations.
3. To investigate differences in attitudes between national and international sports federations.
4. To assess whether there is a disparity in attitudes based on the age of employees and employers.
5. To examine potential differences in attitudes towards education between European and Swiss sports organizations, as well as distinguishing between Western and Eastern European regions.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

#### **Sport Organisations**

A sport organisation is a social entity involved in the sport industry; it is goal-oriented, with a consciously structured activity system and a relatively identifiable boundary (Eksteen, 2014.). Legal Information Institute of Cornell University defines the term “professional sports organisation” as a person or governmental entity or a league or association of persons or governmental entities that sponsors, organises, schedules, or conducts a competitive game in which one or more professional athletes participate. Structure of model of sport in Europe is different than in Unites States. For the purpose of this Thesis, only structure of European model will be taken into consideration.

European model of sport is traditionally described as monopolistic pyramid (Picture 1), with one federation per sport and per country. In 1998 the Commission published a consultation document that said: ‘[t]here is a European model of sport with its own characteristics. [...]Sport in Europe has a unique structure. For the future development of sport in Europe these special features should be taken into account’ (European Commission, 1999). This document rejected the free market model for the future of European sport, resisting the pressures of ‘Americanisation’ which is seen as the ultimate

evil of excessive commercialism leading to destruction of European sporting values, the only true sporting values (Halgreen, 2004).

But, challenges to the organisational structures are the increasing commercialisation and the emergence of new stakeholders outside the sports (such as aspiring private promoters) and inside the sports (such as FIFPro, ECA, and EPFL in football). This supplied another reason for the shift from policy that strongly supported vertical pyramid model to the appreciation of the necessity for a decentralised model that might be more appropriate given the prevailing empirical reality (Pijetlovic, 2018). Sports federations strive to maintain monopoly via the market restrictions in their statutes and other rulebooks designed to prevent the emergence of a rival, or make difficult the operation of an existing competitor, on the organisational market for sporting events (Pijetlovic, 2018).



**Picture 1.** Pyramidal structure of European model of sport

Source: ASOIF

## **Challenges through Changes**

Francesco Ricci Bitti, President of Association of Summer Olympic International Federation (AOISF) in their Yearly Report in 2019 said that in a fast evolving world, sport is increasingly subjected to technological, socio-economic and geo-political developments that all sports governing bodies must anticipate and be prepared to respond to. Other authors and experts' reports (Reynolds, W., Wang, J., Li, J., Coroyannakis, L., 2019, Hutton, P., 2020, PwC Sports Industry Survey 2019, 2020, 2021) are agreeing that current challenges for the world of sport are fast development of media technologies, changes in consumption behaviours, evolution of sponsorships, e-sport in a rise, athlete autonomy

So it is obvious that need for analytical capabilities in order to understand what consumer really wants and how to engage younger consumers, as well as understanding viewership demographics, who are the athletes of tomorrow, future of media consumption and what are the implication and risks of collecting and sharing such an amount of athlete's data. That being said means International federations will need to develop a more proactive, creative, commercially driven and collaborative mind set, will need to embrace digital in earnest, transforming business models, organisational design and cultures. More entrepreneurship will be needed (ASOIF, 2019).



The same tone can be found in PwC Sports Industry Surveys and Reports (2019, 2020, 2021) as their expert team are underlining transformation and innovation as essential for the future of sport.

Innovation requires structure, but people are key to success.

Peter Hutton (2020), Director of Global Live Sports Partnerships and Programming at Facebook pointed out sports federations need to step up their performance if they are to continue playing a central role in the governance and development of their sports. To do so, they should establish focussed strategies, with clarity concerning the way they are facing the market. They should turn to partnerships to ensure they have the right capabilities on hand to deliver. They need to embrace innovation so as to be in the position to bring the products and services demanded of them to market. Ultimately, as the world around them accelerates, sports federations need to act sooner rather than later to keep pace and avoid being left behind.

### **Importance of Investing in Employees' Development**

Since mid 1980's Human Resource Management (HRM) has gained acceptance in both academic and commercial circle. HRM is a multidisciplinary organisational function that draws theories and ideas from various fields such as management, psychology, sociology and economics. There is no best way to manage people and no manager has formulated how people can be managed effectively, because people are complex beings with complex

needs. Effective HRM depends very much on the causes and conditions that an organisational setting would provide. Any organisation has three basic components, People, Purpose, and Structure.

Training and Development: is one of HRM functions and it involves an organised attempt to find out training needs of the individuals to meet the knowledge and skill which is needed not only to perform current job but also to fulfil the future needs of the organisation.

The survival and prosperity of a sport organisations, like any business, depends on its human resource. This includes officials, organisation paid staff, management committee personnel and coaches but also volunteers and helpers. While organisations in the past have been viewed as compilations of tasks, products, employees, profit centres and processes, today they are increasingly seen as intelligent systems designed to manage knowledge. (Halal, 1997). Even in non-profit organisations (NPOs), questions of performance have become increasingly important in the world of practice, as government and philanthropic funders, clients, and the public exert increased pressure on NPOs to demonstrate their impact on complex social problems (Sowa, Selden & Sandfort, 2004).

Truitt, D.L. (2011) found a direct relationship between one's positive training experiences and attitudes and one's proficiency. Development of employees has been recognised as added value to both organisations and employees. Such development suggest formal education but also trainings and coaching and allows organisations to deliver better quality

service and products with fewer resources. “When you strategically invest in employees, you attract and keep all the best candidates, and you also build a strong work culture unafraid of innovation, change, failure and success. Some of the top reasons why employers should invest more in employee development, and thus, company success are attracting and retaining great employees, increase of innovation and performance, possibility of upward mobility for promotable employees and boost of employer reputation” (Craig, 2018.)

Sport and recreation organisations need to invest in providing training and developing their human resource. Many sports organisations fail to allocate any budget for training of employees. Any expenditure on training is often spasmodic, and there is an absence of longer-term planning when money is spent on training. One of the most frequently encountered human capital development interventions is training” (Campbell & Kuncel, 2001, p. 278). Training is seen as relevant to fostering a positive relationship between learning satisfaction and the effectiveness of applied learning (Liu, 2002; Wang, 2001). As an aside, even though authors have suggested that training programs are vital to organisations (Knoke & Kalleberg, 1994; Liu, 2002; Wang, 2001), training programs are often the first to go (Young, 2008). Employees with good communication skills gather more information concerning procedures and technologies related to job performances, thus assuming greater accountability and subsequent responsibility, both of which effect improve proficiency (Adams, 1989; Gordon, 1977). Rowden and Shamsuddin (2000) and

Rowden and Conine (2005) argue that the most thoroughly trained employees will better satisfy the needs of their customers and employees.

### **Employees Readiness and Attitude**

Employee readiness is defined as the extent to which employees are ready or willing to attend and participate in training (Baharim and Van Gramberg, 2005). It is also identified as a necessary element in training to influence employee learning and has become the subject to be studied (Salleh, N.K, Amin W.A., Mamat, I., 2017). Noted by Noe (1993), employee readiness for training is whereby they have the personal characteristics such ability, attitudes, belief and motivation. An organisation must concern employees' readiness factor in ensuring the workers attend the training and must use what have been acquired from training (Chonko, 2004).

Attitude is defined as an individual's view of something or his conduct on the matter (Nollen and Gaertner, 1991). Hughey and Mussnug (1997) identified the behaviour under consideration will be stronger when having more positive or favourable attitude and subjective norms toward behaviour and greater perceived behavioural control.

According to Kram, Ting et al. (2002), learning from everyday opportunities at work is most effective. This learning will become beneficial if it is utilised by employees in their day-to-day activities. As such, Noe (1993) defined transfer of training as trainees

effectively and continually applying what they have learned in training to their jobs. Yadapadithaya, and Stewart, 2003 also detailed up that transfer of training as the extent to which employees are able to apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired during any HRD intervention into the job context. Proper investment in resources, outstanding organisation, training programs and materials and professionalism is stated as the all key factors for the transfer of training (Chang and Chiang, 2013).

### **Organisational Commitment to Invest**

Every organisation needs and want to be effective and efficient in order to be sustainable. Usually, organisational performance is seen as a combination of effectiveness and efficiency within the organisation (Madella, Bayle & Tome, 2005; Mouzas, 2006). Effectiveness refers to the relationship between the initial goals set by an organization and the extent to which they have achieved them in their results. Humans are needed for the successful use of material and material resources of sports organisation which makes them one of the most important resources. Employees make or break business success (Peek, 2023). Investing in human resources' training and development is an important part of that success.

Organisational commitment includes employee acceptance and belief with organisational goals and values (Mowday, Porter et al., 1982). In past decades, organisational commitment was commonly identified as one of nine factors mostly examined in training

transfer issue (Cheng and Ho, 2001). Referring to DeCotiis and Summers (1987), many studies have found positive relationship between organisational commitment and motivation to transfer. They assumed the higher the level of organisational commitment, the greater would be the motivation to transfer of the workers relatively with those who have lower organisational commitment.

Literature research showed that while there is a couple of researches on employees development and attitudes towards learning in companies in various industries, there is a lack of researches conducted within sports organisations. Therefore, author believes that his research on attitudes toward learning and investment in employee development in sport organisation will help see the real situation and confirm need of further and higher investment in education.

## **2.2 Theory of Reasoned Action**

Employee development is a strategic investment that sport organizations make to ensure sustained competitiveness and organizational success. Within this context, the attitudes of organizational stakeholders toward learning and development initiatives play a critical role in shaping the effectiveness and outcomes of such programs. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) provides a valuable framework for understanding how these attitudes influence decisions related to employee development investments.

The Theory of Reasoned Action, developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), posits that an individual's behavior is directly influenced by their intention to perform the behavior, which is in turn influenced by their attitude toward the behavior and the subjective norms surrounding it (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In the context of sport organizations, this theory suggests that the attitudes of managers and employees towards learning and development, as well as the prevailing norms within the organization, will significantly impact the commitment to and the implementation of development programs.

### **Attitude Toward the Behavior**

Attitude in TRA is defined as the individual's positive or negative feelings about performing a behavior. It is formed by the beliefs about the outcomes of the behavior and the evaluation of these outcomes (Ajzen, 1991). For sport organizations, this means that if managers and employees believe that investing in employee development will lead to positive outcomes such as improved performance, career advancement, and increased job satisfaction, their overall attitude towards these initiatives will likely be positive. Research in sports management has shown that positive attitudes towards employee development are linked to increased investment in such programs (Cunningham & Sagas, 2004).

## **Subjective Norms**

Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure to engage or not engage in a behavior. This includes the influence of peers, supervisors, and the overall organizational culture (Ajzen, 1991). In sport organizations, if influential stakeholders, such as senior management and key employees, value and support employee development, there is likely to be a stronger organizational commitment to these practices. Conversely, if there is a perceived indifference or negative sentiment towards development, this may hinder investment in such initiatives.

## **Application of TRA in Sport Organizations**

### **Assessing Attitudes and Norms**

To effectively apply the TRA in sport organizations, it is essential to assess both the attitudes of individuals towards employee development and the subjective norms influencing these attitudes. Surveys, interviews, and focus groups can be effective methods for gathering this information. This data can help management understand the prevailing attitudes and norms, which can be crucial for tailoring development programs that are well-received and supported.



### **Enhancing Positive Attitudes**

Once attitudes and norms are assessed, sport organizations can undertake targeted strategies to enhance positive attitudes towards employee development. This could involve communicating the benefits of development programs more effectively, aligning development initiatives with personal and professional goals of employees, and showcasing success stories of those who have benefitted from such programs.

### **Shaping Subjective Norms**

To positively influence subjective norms, sport organizations can engage in normative restructuring. This might involve leadership openly endorsing and participating in development programs, embedding learning and development into the organizational culture, and recognizing and rewarding those who commit to their own development and support that of others.

By focusing on both individual attitudes and the broader subjective norms, sport organizations can more effectively foster environments that support and promote continuous employee development, ultimately leading to enhanced organizational performance and success.

## **2.3 Human Society Theory**

### **Affective Organizational Commitment (AOC)**

The connection between an organization offering training opportunities to its employees and the potential influence of these opportunities on the employees' commitment to the organization can be understood within the framework of social exchange theory. (Bashir & Long, 2015).

The offer of training opportunities by the employer can be seen as a reciprocal interaction between the employing organization and its workforce.(Maurer et al.2002;Newman et al.,2011).

The provision of training opportunities signifies the organization's commitment to investing in its employees, fostering a heightened sense of loyalty and obligation towards the company.(Ocen et al., 2017; Shore et al., 2006)

Based on social exchange theory, offering ongoing training to employees sends a message that the organization values and recognizes their contributions. Consequently, within this framework, training opportunities not only improve employee performance, but also address the emotional dimensions of the organization-employee relationship. As a result, employees are likely to show increased emotional attachment and commitment to the organization. (Bashir & Long,2015; Bulut & Culha,2010; Dhar,2015; Ling et al.,2014; Newman et al.,2011; Ng & Dastmalchian,2011)

### **Perceived benefits of training by employees**

The inherent advantages arising from any organizational training program can be most effectively analyzed through the lens of the norm of reciprocity, as these advantages are directed towards both facets of the employment relationship (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). When employees perceive that their engagement in training activities is advantageous for both themselves and the organization, their willingness to participate in such activities may increase. These training initiatives are anticipated to yield positive outcomes (Dhar, 2015), encompassing direct enhancements in overall organizational performance (e.g., cost reduction, heightened service and production quality) and indirect benefits (e.g., diminished employee turnover, bolstered reputation, and increased social capital) (Aguinis and Kraiger, 2009).

Regarding the advantages accruing to employees through training initiatives, such programs have the potential to enhance self-confidence, foster creativity, and cultivate a willingness to embrace change. They can also facilitate increased interaction among employees, positively impact their behavior and attitudes, and elevate their commitment and satisfaction with the organization (Donovan et al., 2001; Muñoz Castellanos and Salinero Martín, 2011). In a similar vein, Phillips and Stone (2002, p. 210) posit that "the most successful training programs result in some intangible benefits. Intangible benefits are those positive results that cannot be converted into monetary values" Newman et al. (2011) contend that heightened commitment to the organization is one such intangible

benefit arising from training, attributed to employees' growing enthusiasm for engaging in more training activities. Consequently, it can be posited that employees who perceive personal benefits from training programs are likely to be motivated to continue and actively participate in the training opportunities provided by their organization (Bartlett & Kang, 2004).

Employee perceptions of the benefits of training can be categorized into three main areas: job-related, career-related, and personal benefits, as suggested by Nordhaug (1989). These perceived benefits are believed to manifest in employees' work-related attitudes and enhanced emotional attachment to the organization (Ahmad and Bakar, 2003; Dhar, 2015). Job-related benefits (PRBs) specifically refer to the utility of acquired skills and knowledge for the employee's current job advancement. These benefits foster positive relationships between employees and their supervisors, empowering them to effectively manage their work responsibilities, as noted by Dhar (2015) and Noe & Wilk (1993).

On the other hand, perceived career-related benefits (PCRB) are related to an employee's future career, where training programs help acquire the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in upcoming roles. Consequently, career-related benefits measure the extent to which employees believe that their engagement in training programs helps them define and achieve their career goals, offering avenues for exploring new career paths (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007; Bulut & Culha, 2010).

Perceived personal benefits (PPRBs) encompass outcomes that directly or indirectly affect the work context, including psychological, political, and social consequences. Individuals assess personal benefits by considering the extent to which participation in organizational training programs facilitates networking, contributes to personal development, and improves overall performance (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007; Bulut & Culha, 2010). Consequently, employees who have positive feelings about their involvement in training programs believe that the results will be beneficial for their work, career advancement, and personal growth.

A belief among employees that their participation in training programs will prove beneficial to both themselves and the organization is likely to produce favorable training outcomes and increase their willingness to engage in future training opportunities. Furthermore, the perception that they can apply acquired skills and knowledge in the workplace is crucial for achieving positive outcomes from training programs and encouraging greater participation in subsequent training opportunities (Bulut & Culha, 2010).

### **The Relationship Between Employees' Training Perceptions and Affective Organizational Commitment**

Numerous studies have explored the connection between employees' perceived training benefits and affective organizational commitment (AOC). Al-Emadi and

Marquardt (2007) established a positive relationship between perceived training benefits and AOC, with career-related benefits demonstrating a significant positive correlation, while personal-related benefits were also positively associated. In contrast, job-related benefits showed no correlation with AOC. Ahmad and Bakar (2003) emphasized the significant contribution of three types of training benefits—career, personal, and job-related—in fostering and sustaining employees' commitment to their organization. Notably, these benefits exhibited a stronger correlation with AOC compared to other forms of organizational commitment.

Bartlett and Kang (Citation2004) reinforced these findings, revealing that employees perceiving personal, career, and job-related benefits displayed a significant positive correlation with AOC. Recognition of training program benefits for career, job, or personal life was linked to higher affective commitment. Al-Emadi and Marquardt (2007) also supported this, indicating that career- and personal-related benefits significantly correlated with AOC, while job-related benefits exhibited a positive but insignificant correlation. Personal-related benefits, age, and years of service emerged as the most potent antecedents to employees' AOC.

Similarly, Bulut and Culha (2010) and Riaz et al. (2013) reported that employees anticipating job-, career-, or personal-related benefits were more likely to exhibit affective commitment. The positive correlation between the three types of training benefits and AOC was a consistent finding. Studies by Almodarresi and Hajmalek (2015), Bashir and Long

(2015), Dhar (2015), and Silva and Dias (2016) concurred that employees perceiving training as beneficial for their job, career, and personal growth were more likely to form strong emotional bonds with their organization.

The awareness of training benefits, particularly those related to personal, career, and job aspects, emerges as a crucial factor in enhancing employees' affective commitment to their organization. Recognizing and communicating the positive outcomes of training programs can contribute significantly to fostering emotional attachment and commitment among employees.

## **2.4 Summary**

Sports organizations serve as fundamental pillars within the dynamic field of sports, acting as goal-oriented social entities structured around specific activities. The European sports model, particularly characterized by its monopolistic pyramidal structure, has traditionally anchored itself with one federation per sport per country. This approach, as stated by the European Commission in 1999, was a deliberate move to maintain distinct European sporting values, countering what was seen as the overbearing commercialism of the American sporting model.

However, the very fabric of this model faces increasing challenges. The rapid commercialization of sport, together with the emergence of new stakeholders inside and

outside the sector, is redefining its boundaries. Entities like FIFPro, ECA and EPFL in football are an example of internal changes, while the influence of private promoters indicates external pressures. Such complexities prompt a re-evaluation, a shift from a staunchly vertical pyramid to a more decentralized model that fits the current reality.

The sports arena of the 21st century represents a multitude of transformative changes. Technological leaps, evolving consumption patterns and the growing importance of e-sports are reshaping the very foundations of the industry. The 2019 report by Francesco Ricci Bitti from the Association of International Summer Olympic Federations (AOISF) highlights the imperative for sports governing bodies to remain agile, proactive and responsive. Echoing this sentiment, insights from the PwC Sports Industry Surveys highlight the criticality of innovation, strategic alignment and adaptability.

At the center of this discourse is the irreplaceable role of human resource management (HRM) within sports organizations. With roots dating back to the mid-1980s, HRM has developed as a multifaceted discipline, bringing together principles from management, psychology, sociology, and economics. The vitality of this function is palpable, with the very survival and progress of sports organizations being inextricably linked to their human capital — including officials, staff, volunteers and coaches.

In this context, the emphasis on training and development appears to be the most important. These components of HRM are not just add-ons, but core strategies, ensuring



alignment with current imperatives and future trajectories. As Craig (2018) succinctly articulated, strategic investments in employee development yield multiple dividends—from attracting and retaining talent to fostering a culture resilient to change and innovation.

Yet the narrative delves deeper, exploring the nuances of organizational commitment versus employee development. This commitment, characterized by alignment with organizational goals and values, serves as a catalyst, fosters motivation, and facilitates the smooth transfer of training into tangible results within the work environment.

Intriguingly, despite the richness of these discussions, a discernible research gap looms large - particularly within the niche of sports organizations. The call is clear: rigorous research into employee attitudes toward learning and development is imperative, offering insights that could recalibrate strategies and strengthen future efforts.

In short, the contours of the sports industry are undergoing seismic shifts. Adapting to these nuances requires a combination of strategic foresight, innovative strength and a firm commitment to human capital development. Those in the vanguard, who use these principles, are ready not only to navigate, but also to flourish in the dynamics of the development of the sports landscape.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Overview of the Research Problem

In today's business environment, it is hard to ignore the fact that the vast majority of companies are changing their business structures, and almost a third are making significant changes.

Delving deeper into the world of learning, it's clear that it's not just a one-time thing; it is a long and complicated process. When it comes to employees, organizations see value in their development. This is not just about formal education, but also includes practical training and coaching. The idea is that this type of development allows organizations to deliver superior services and products without spending too many resources.

When we talked about the sports sector. There is an obvious need for employee training here, but many organizations don't seem to see the value of such programs. Training budgets are volatile, and there is a noticeable lack of long-term planning when it comes to investing in upskilling their workforce.

So what is at the heart of the research problem?

What is the employee's willingness to learn? We want to examine how ready and willing employees in sports organizations are when it comes to accepting learning opportunities.

What are the managers' attitudes towards learning? We are interested in how organizations and their leaders view and approach the entire scenario of learning and development in the sports sector.

Investing in formal education: How much are sports organizations willing to invest in the formal education of their employees?

Training initiatives for specific skills: What training programs are there and do they really make a difference? Investigate the nature and impact of specific skills training conducted by sports organizations.

In summary, this research is concerned with uncovering the complexities of employee development, understanding how organizations approach learning, and shedding light on the challenges and opportunities that sport organizations face in today's ever-changing sports environment

### **3.2 Research Purpose and Questions**

Primary quantitative research will be conducted.

Two online questionnaires that can be found in Appendix D and E will be used to test the hypotheses, one will be test of Employee's Learning Readiness and second will be test of Managers's attitude towards learning.

Both tests were published in the book Orbimetrics - Metrics of organisational behaviour (Gutic, Laninovic, 2018) and have a form of questionnaire with a Lickert scale. Second

test (Appendix E) will have a section of seven extra questions about sports organisations' investment in learning.

The study will be conducted in Switzerland within international sports organisations and Croatia within sport organisations on national and club level. Once the data collection will be completed, the analysis will be done with SPSS Software after which researcher will conduct descriptive statistics.

### **3.3 Research Design**

I did not engage in the analysis of extensive datasets; rather, I concentrated on qualitative data within a delimited framework.

I opted for a qualitative approach for several reasons: to capture the voices emanating from the workplace, to comprehend the perspectives of the workforce and their leaders, and to delve into diverse viewpoints on identical issues.

The methodology encompassed the deployment of two questionnaires one directed towards employees and another towards organizations. Both questionnaires encompassed similar queries, albeit with a shift in perspective to facilitate comprehensive analysis from varying angles.

### **3.4 Population and Sample**

Central to this research are two carefully designed online questionnaires designed to test the proposed hypotheses.

The questionnaires were answered by 202 employees of national and international associations and clubs and 61 members of organizations who are responsible directly or indirectly for the development of educational programs within the aforementioned organizations.

The first questionnaire was strategically designed to assess the readiness of employees to learn within the organizational context. Using a Likert scale format, this instrument is structured to measure employees' levels of readiness to accept and engage in learning initiatives within their professional environments.

In parallel, the second questionnaire was intricately designed to assess managers' attitudes towards organizational learning paradigms. Using a Likert scale, this tool seeks to capture the nuanced perspectives, insights and predispositions of managerial staff towards fostering a culture of continuous learning within their organizational frameworks.

In essence, these two questionnaires serve as the backbone of this quantitative research endeavor. Using the analytical capability embedded in the Likert scale format and drawing insights from respected academic literature, this study seeks to uncover deep

insights, correlations, and patterns that highlight the symbiotic relationship between readiness to learn, managerial attitudes, and organizational effectiveness.

### **3.5 Participant Selection**

The primary target population for this study consists of two different groups:

Employees in sports associations: This group provides insight into the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of those who are directly involved in the daily operations of sports associations.

Human resources managers (HR managers) of sports associations: As key decision makers responsible for employee education and development, HR managers offer a key perspective on organizational policies, priorities and practices related to employee growth.

### **3.6 Instrumentation**

The Employee Attitudes Survey on Learning was designed to assess the opinions and perceptions of employees within a sports organization.

The survey consists of 15 statements, and 3 close questions related to age, location and amount of education each of which requires participants to select a number on a scale

from 1 to 5, where 1 represents strong agreement and 5 represents strong disagreement.

The interpretation of the scale is as follows:

1: I completely agree

2: I mostly agree

3: I have no opinion

4: I mostly disagree

5: I do not agree at all

The statements cover a range of learning-related topics, including perceived benefits of learning, attitudes towards sharing knowledge with colleagues, concerns about assessment, age, demographic and applicability of learning and preference for formal education over practical training.

Company's attitudes towards education and trainings.

This questionnaire is intended for people working in human resources.

The survey consists of 16 statements, and 7 close questions related to age, location and amount of education each of which requires participants to select a number on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents strong agreement and 5 represents strong disagreement.

The interpretation of the scale is as follows:

1: I completely agree

2: I mostly agree

3: I have no opinion

4: I mostly disagree

5: I do not agree at all

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

Both surveys were distributed electronically to ensure broad accessibility and facilitate ease of response. Utilizing a secure, completely anonymous, and user-friendly online survey platform, participants had the flexibility to complete the questionnaire at their convenience.

This electronic distribution method not only allowed for widespread access but also facilitated the prompt collection of responses, thereby enhancing the overall efficiency of data collection.

The distribution of both questionnaires electronically was carried out through email communication and links to the online survey. Clear instructions were provided to participants on how to access and complete the survey. To ensure a robust number of responses and a diverse range of perspectives, the data collection period spanned a pre-determined timeframe.



Prior to survey distribution, participants were briefed on the research's purpose, its voluntary nature, and assurances of confidentiality. Each participant granted informed consent, and anonymity was rigorously maintained throughout the data collection process.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

The collected data from both questionnaires were subjected to statistical analysis to identify patterns, trends, and significant relationships. Descriptive statistics, such as means and frequencies, were used to summarize participant responses. Comparative analyses between employee and HR perspectives were also conducted to derive meaningful insights.

The Likert scale responses, ranging from 1 to 5, provided a numerical basis for statistical analysis. The average scores and frequencies of responses were calculated to quantify the overall sentiments and trends within each group. Comparative analyses were conducted to explore the differences and similarities between the perspectives of employees and HR professionals.

Descriptive statistics, such as means and frequencies, were employed to summarize the data. This allowed for a clear presentation of participant opinions on the importance of employee education, perceptions of its impact, and the extent of organizational support for learning initiatives.

The statistical analysis also facilitated a deeper understanding of the relationships between variables, such as the correlation between perceived importance of education and organizational success.

### **3.9 Research Design Limitations**

The success of any research study is significantly influenced by the quality and response of participants. In the context of this study, which aims to investigate attitudes towards learning and investing in the development of employees in sports organizations, the process of selecting participants encountered specific challenges and nuances that should be mentioned

From the preliminary stages of this research, it became obvious that reaching out to employees and representatives of human resources within sports associations presents certain challenges. Despite assurances of anonymity and the academic nature of the study, there appears to be reluctance among potential participants to participate. This pattern, consistent across various clubs, national federations and international federations, suggests a degree of reluctance that could potentially skew the findings or limit the depth of insights gained.

**Reasons for restraint**

Several factors contribute to this hesitancy:

**Theme sensitivity:**

The topic, which revolves around attitudes towards education and investment in employee development, could be considered sensitive or potentially controversial within an organizational context. Participants may fear consequences or misinterpretation of their answers that could affect status within the organization.

**Perceived risk:**

Despite guarantees of anonymity, participants may have concerns about the potential risks associated with revealing organizational attitudes or personal beliefs. This fear could stem from past experiences, organizational culture or general caution and concern about accepting the work environment if the results come to light.

**Time and priorities:**

Given the nature of sports organizations and the multitude of responsibilities that employees and HR managers face, the perceived benefit-to-effort ratio of participating in research may not always be favorable from their perspective.

**Implications for the study**

The observed pattern of reluctance requires careful consideration of the research methodology and its potential limitations:

**Sampling strategy:**

Recognizing the challenges faced, the sampling strategy was slightly contributed in the way that the questionnaires were sent to direct contacts to several different addresses and positions within the associations.

**Data interpretation:**

When analyzing the collected data, it is crucial to be aware of potential biases or limitations arising from the participant selection process.

Triangulation of findings with existing literature, qualitative insights, or alternative data sources could help contextualize and validate the results.

The process of selecting participants for this study highlighted specific challenges related to engaging employees and HR representatives within sports federations.

By acknowledging these challenges, understanding their root causes and proactively addressing them, this research seeks to effectively overcome the complexities inherent in studying attitudes towards employee learning and development. Moving

forward, a thoughtful, adaptive approach to participant engagement will be critical in ensuring the validity and relevance of study findings

### **3.10 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter on methodology comprehensively details the investigative framework designed to explore attitudes toward learning and investment in employee development within sports organizations across various geographic and demographic contexts. This study utilizes a robust combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to uncover insights into how different sports organizations globally value and implement educational and training initiatives. Central to this examination are two meticulously designed online questionnaires, targeted at employees and managers, structured to capture the complexities of learning readiness and leadership approaches to professional development.

The international scope of this study allows for an analysis that encompasses a wide range of sports organizations across different countries. This geographic breadth provides the opportunity to examine how cultural, economic, and regulatory environments influence organizational behaviors and attitudes toward learning and development. Additionally, demographic variations among respondents, including age, educational background, and professional roles within the organizations, will enable a more detailed understanding of how these factors correlate with learning and development attitudes and investments.

The methodological choice of using a Likert scale in both questionnaires is pivotal for measuring attitudes and perceptions effectively, facilitating a nuanced analysis that is sensitive to subtle differences in respondent opinions. This approach not only allows for robust quantitative analysis through statistical tools like SPSS but also provides a qualitative depth that enhances the understanding of the underlying dynamics driving these attitudes.

Despite the thorough design of the methodological approach, inherent challenges such as potential biases, diverse response rates across different regions, and the representativeness of the findings are acknowledged. Strategies to mitigate these issues include anonymous and secure survey distribution, careful participant recruitment to ensure a diverse and representative sample, and comprehensive data analysis techniques that address both the breadth and depth of the collected data.

As the research progresses into the data collection phase, the methodologies outlined here are designed to provide deep insights into the interplay between organizational learning strategies and their practical implementation across different demographic and geographic contexts. The findings are expected to contribute significantly to the academic discourse on organizational learning and offer practical, context-sensitive recommendations for enhancing training practices within the sports industry.

Overall, the methodological framework detailed in this chapter is meticulously aligned with the study's objectives to elucidate the dynamics of learning attitudes and investment in employee development within sports organizations, taking into account both geographic and demographic nuances. This comprehensive approach ensures that the research can provide valuable insights that will aid sports organizations in fostering environments that promote continuous learning and development, ultimately leading to enhanced organizational performance and employee satisfaction across various sports settings.

## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

### **4.1 The samples of respondents**

Two hundred sixty-two respondents participated in the research, of which 201 were employees and 61 were managers. Table 1 describes the sample by age. In the group of employees, there is a slightly higher percentage of younger respondents.

In contrast, in the group of managers, there is a higher percentage of those who are 35+, which is expected considering the position. Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents by the country in which they are employed, and Figure 2 shows the distribution of managers in relation to the sports organization in which they are employed. Based on Figure 1, which shows the percentage share of respondents regarding the country in which they work, it can be seen that the sample of employees and managers is uniform and that the majority of respondents work in one of the countries of the European Union, while a slightly smaller number work in European countries that they are not in the Union. Regarding the level of the organization, 44% of managers are managers in international-level federations, while 28% of managers work in clubs or national-level federations.



**Table 1.** *The distribution of the respondents by level of the employment and age categories*

Age categories	Employees		Managers	
	Frequenc		Frequenc	
	y	Percent	y	Percent
18-24	7	3.5	0.0	0.0
25-34	53	26.4	7	11.5
35-44	69	34.3	26	42.6
45-54	58	28.9	18	29.5
55-64	14	7.0	9	14.8
65+	0	0.0	1	1.6
Total	201	100.0	61	100.0

**Figure 1**

*The distribution of the respondents by country of employment. The upper diagram denotes employees, and the lower denotes managers.*

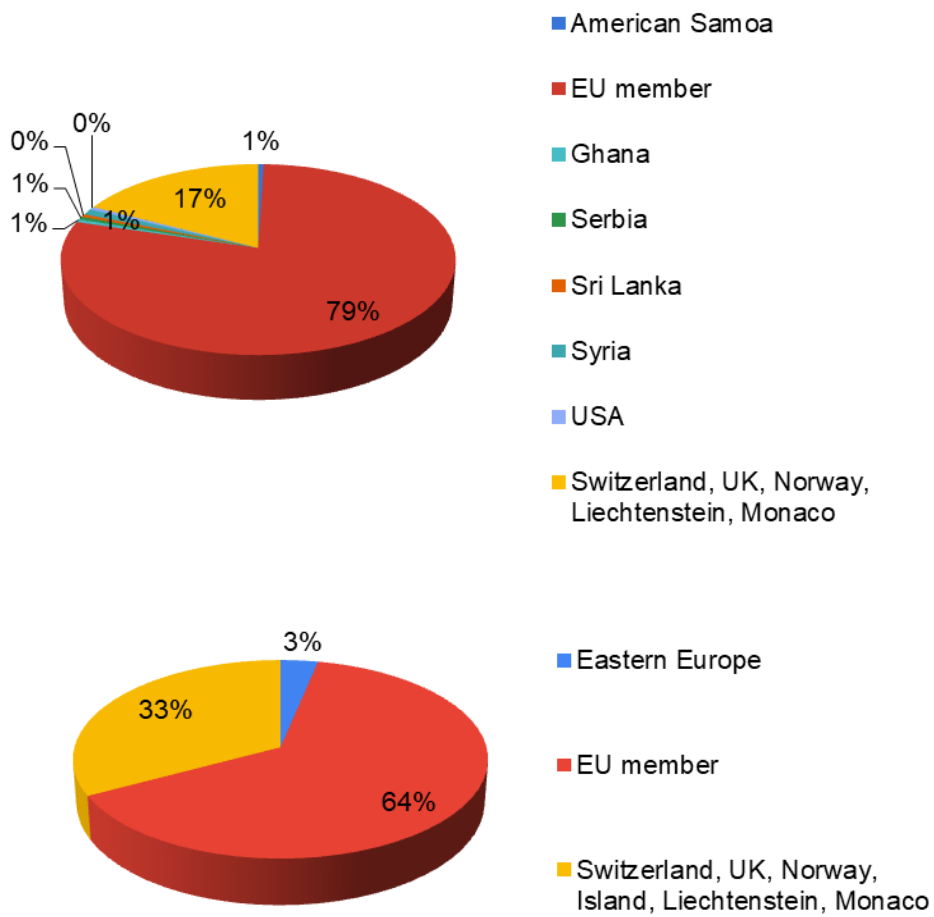
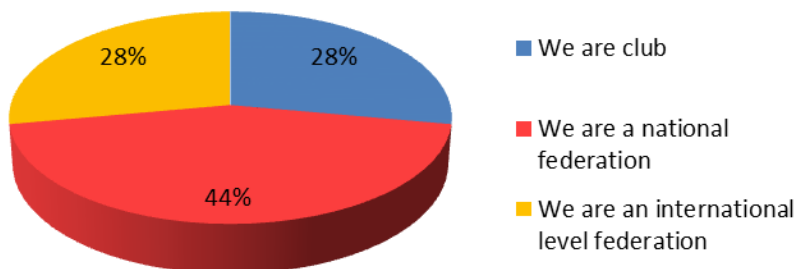


Figure 2. *The distribution of the managers by the levels of the organizations*



## 4.2 Research Question One

### Attitudes toward education

The first research question was related to the examination of attitudes toward employee education. Three questions were common in the questionnaires distributed to employees and managers, which examined the general attitude about how vital employee education is, whether it contributes to the organization's progress and whether the organization in which they are employed conducts training for employees. Respondents chose the degree of agreement on a five-point scale (for the first two questions), that is, on a three-point scale (on the third question). The questions, i.e., the descriptive statistics of the answers to these questions, are shown in Table 2. As a higher number indicated a more significant

agreement with the statement, based on arithmetic means, it can be seen that both employees and managers, to a high degree, believe that employee education is important, with no significant difference in their responses, as tested by the Mann-Whitney U test (a non-parametric substitute for the t-test, as response distributions, were not normal). The same was noted for the second question; employees and managers agree that employee education affects the organization's operations. However, when looking at the answers to the third question, it can be seen that both answered that their organization only occasionally organizes employee training. In other words, despite the importance of education, organizations only sometimes conduct employee training.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the answers on questions regarding the importance of the employee's education with nonparametric difference U test and p values

<b>Importance of education questions</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Min-Max</b>	<b>Mann-Whitney U test</b>	<b>p value</b>
How important you think employee education is?	employees	201	4.42	0.66	5	3-5	5848	0.54
	managers	61	4.41	0.88	5	1-5		
Employee education affects the results of the alliance.	employees	201	4.23	0.68	4	3-5	5646	0.31
	managers	61	4.33	0.70	4	3-5		
Does your organization have training for its employees?	employees	201	2.13	0.66	2	1-3	5415.5	0.13
	managers	61	1.97	0.77	2	1-3		

Notes: N – number of respondents; SD – standard deviation; Min – minimal value; Max – maximum value

When it comes to the connection between the attitude towards education and investment in employee development, a sample of managers examined the connection between attitude towards employee education and investment in employee development. Namely, the assumption was that those organizations that have a more positive attitude will invest more resources in development and that they will more often send their employees to formal education. Spearman's correlation test was performed to test this assumption, and the results are shown in Table 3. The percentage that the organization allocates from the budget on an annual basis, as well as the frequency of sending employees to formal education, are associated with a positive attitude towards employee education. In other words, the more positive the attitude toward employee education, the more funds the organization invests annually for employee education ( $\rho = .425, p < .001$ ) and more often sends them to formal education ( $\rho = .402, p < .001$ ). In addition, the frequency of sending employees to formal education is highly correlated with the organization's investment in education ( $\rho = .63, p < .001$ ).

Figure 3 shows the managers' answers to how much the organization annually allocates for employee education and how often it sends its employees to formal education. It can be seen that 41% of organizations do not allocate funds for employee education at all, and 54% of companies never send their employees to formal education. Only 3% of organizations set aside 5-10% of their annual budget for education, while 13% of organizations send their employees to education regularly, that is, every year.

**Considering these results, it can be concluded that the hypothesis "If employees in sports organizations have positive attitudes toward learning, then there will be a significant increase in investment in employee development programs" is accepted.**

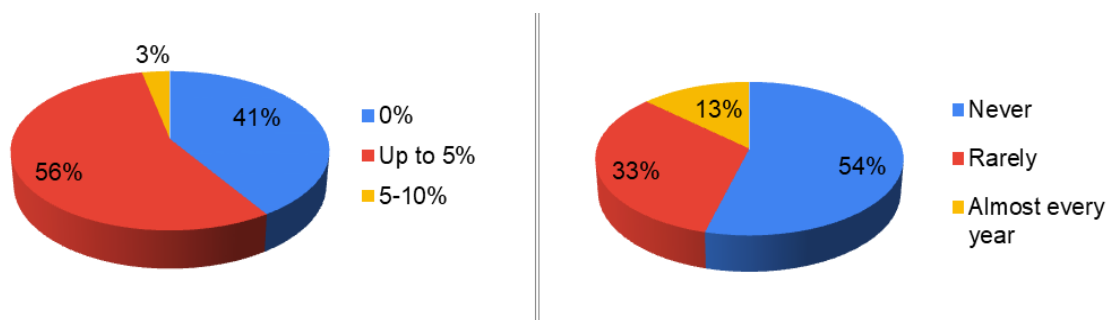
Table 3. *Intercorrelation matrix for the attitude toward education and percent of investments in education and frequency of sending employees to formal education studies*

	1	2	3
(1) How important you think employee education is?	1	.425**	.402**
(2) What percentage per year does your organisation allocate from the budget for employee education?		1	.630**
(3) Do you send your employees for formal education - BA, MBA, DBA?			1

*Notes:* \*\* -  $p < 0.001$ ; Respondents were managers (N = 61)

Figure 3. *Investments of organizations in employees' education according to managers.*

Left panel represents the percentage per year that organization allocates from the budget for employee education. Right panel represents the frequency of sending employees for formal education.



### Cluster analysis of questionnaire for employees

In order to test the second hypothesis, the answers to the questionnaire needed to be summarized. Thus, the hierarchical cluster analysis was applied to the 13 items related to employees' attitudes toward learning and education using the nearest neighbor method and squared Euclidian distance as a measure. This analysis was applied since descriptive analysis showed that answers were not normally distributed. The analysis ended with a four-cluster solution. Figure 4 shows a list of questions with their clusters' membership. Although the analysis ended with four clusters (right panel of Figure 4), the third and fourth clusters were gathered since the dendrogram analysis (right panel of Figure 3) shows that



these clusters are grouped together. The cluster analysis was a guide for summarizing the items into latent dimensions. So, the first cluster, based on the items, signifies a lack of motivation for education. The second cluster gathered items that signify external motivation for education (only if it leads to success at work). The final cluster represents internal (intrinsic) motivation for education. In later analysis, the items from three clusters were summarized and used as variables in further analyses.

Table 4 shows descriptive statistics of the cluster scores (the scores were calculated as the mean score of a set of items gathered in each cluster). It should be mentioned that the answering scale of this questionnaire ranged from 1 to 5, where 5 denoted the greater agreement with the statement. We can see that the mean value for cluster 1 (the lack of motivation for education and negative attitude toward learning) was 1.85 (SD = .59), meaning that most employees did not mean they did not need further education. The mean values of the second (external motivation for education) and the third cluster (internal motivation for the education) were similar and around 3, denoting that employees, on average, have medium agreement with the items from these two clusters.

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Figure 4. Hierarchical cluster analysis membership, based on the analysis (left panel) and dendrogram (right panel)

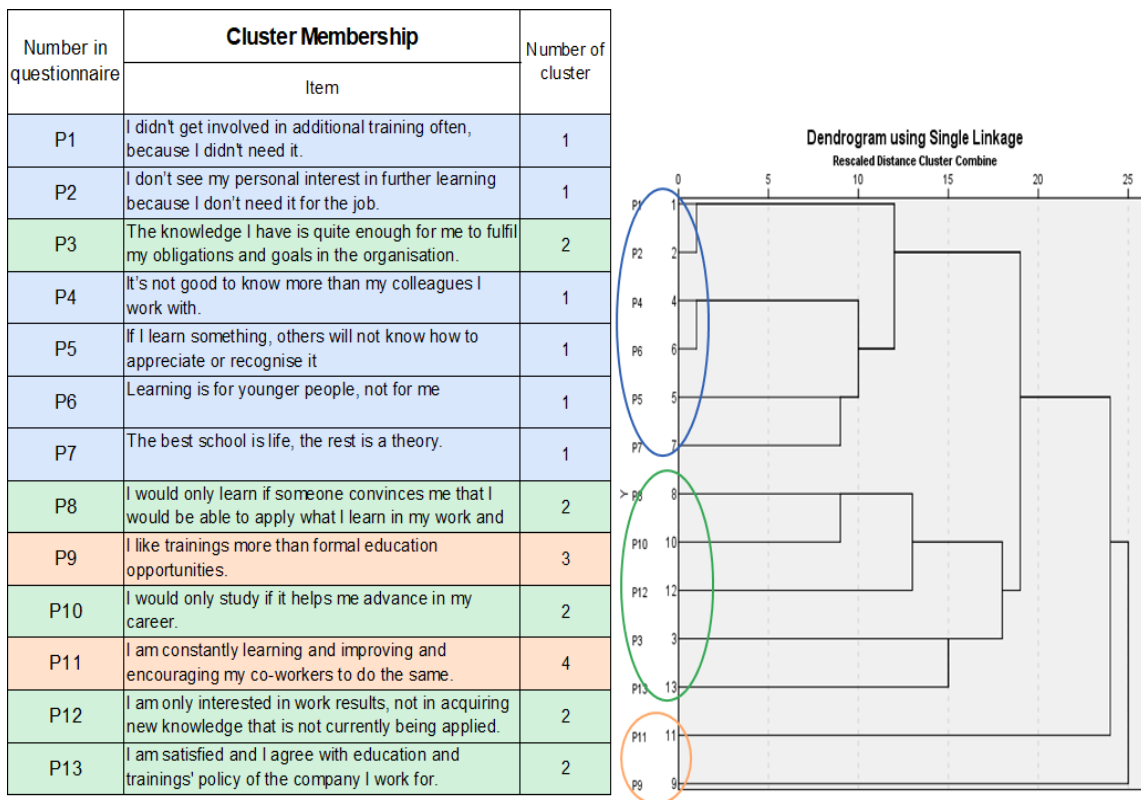


Table 4. Descriptive statistics of cluster scores

		cluster1	cluster2	cluster3
N	Valid	201	200	201
	Missing	0	1	0
Mean		1.8648	3.0330	3.0597
Median		1.8333	3.0000	3.0000
Mode		1.50	2.60 <sup>a</sup>	3.50
Std. Deviation		0.58935	0.72702	0.80710
Skewness		0.391	-0.212	-0.542
Std. Error of Skewness	of	0.172	0.172	0.172
Kurtosis		-0.532	-0.326	0.068
Std. Error of Kurtosis	of	0.341	0.342	0.341
Minimum		1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		3.67	4.40	4.50

*Note:* Cluster 1 – lack of motivation for education;

Cluster 2 – external motivation for education;

Cluster 3 – internal motivation for education

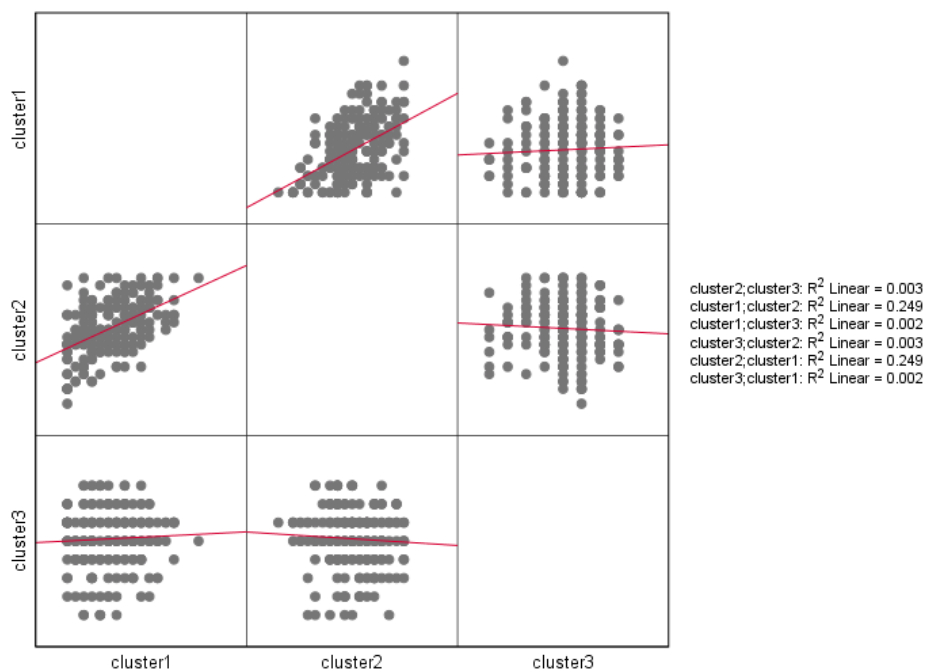
### **4.3 Research Question two**

#### **Perceived Benefits of Employee Development Influence Attitudes Toward Learning**

To test the hypothesis related to the second research question: "If employees perceive significant benefits from participating in employee development programs, then their attitudes toward learning will be positively influenced", the Pearson correlation between three cluster scores was correlated. Namely, the first cluster denotes a negative attitude toward education, and the second and third cluster denotes motivation (external and internal). Although internal motivation for education is more desired in any organization, we expected that internal and external motivation would negatively correlate with a negative attitude toward education. Figure 5 shows the scatterplots between cluster scores and the  $r^2$  values. The only significant correlation was observed between cluster 1 and cluster 2:  $r = .50$ ,  $p < .001$ , meaning that negative attitude toward education and learning positively correlates with the external motivation for education. Thus, employees who are negative toward learning also have the utilitarian motivation for the same ("If education leads me to greater results, then I will invest my energy in it.").

According to the results, this hypothesis is partially confirmed. On the one hand, employees are willing to learn new things if there is a work-related goal. Otherwise, they are not interested.

Figure 5. Scatterplots of cluster scores from the employee's questionnaire



### **Employee Engagement Mediates the Relationship Between Attitudes Toward Learning and Investment.**

To test whether there is relationship between the investment in employee development (defined through question if the employees' organizations provide the trainings) and their attitudes toward learning and their engagement, we used Spearman's correlations.

Table 5 shows correlations between the investment, and scores on the cluster 1 (negative attitude toward learning and education) and 3 (internal motivation for learning and education), cluster 2 (external motivation) and cluster 3 (internal motivation).

The only correlation that was significant was the one between the investment in education (defined as frequency of trainings provided by organization) and the negative attitude toward the learning and education ( $\rho = -.156, p = .027$ ), denoting that the employees whose organization invests in education has more positive attitude toward learning, which is in accordance with the hypothesis.

Table 5. Correlations between the organizational investments in education (defined as frequency of trainings provided by organization) and employees' attitudes towards learning defined through clusters of items from the questionnaire

	cluster1 (Negative attitude toward learning)	cluster2 (External motivation for learning)	cluster3 (internal motivation for learning)
Does your organization have training for its employees?	-.156*	0.065	0.052

*Notes:* \* -  $p < .05$ ; coefficients in tables are calculated as rang correlations (Spearman's Rho)

### **Organizational Culture Affects Attitudes Toward Learning and Investment**

For testing the hypothesis "If sports organizations foster a culture that values continuous learning, then there will be a positive impact on both attitudes toward learning and investment in employee development," we correlated the scores on questions related to emphasizing the value of learning, with the questions that are related to attitudes toward learning and investment in education. For this purpose, the manager's answers were analyzed. The questions related to the value of learning show whether the organization sends their employees on training, i.e., whether the organization has incorporated the cost of learning in their budget. Four such items (listed in Table 6) refer to a positive learning culture. Thus, the scores for these statements were averaged into one score, reflecting a positive learning culture. Descriptive statistics for these items and the calculated score are presented in Table 6

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for the items representing the organizational culture toward learning, and for the average score for these items, representing overall positive culture toward learning

Items	Mean	Median	SD	Skewness	SE of Skewness	Kurtosis	SE of Kurtosis	Min-Max
Do you send your employees for formal education - BA, MBA, DBA?	1.59	1.00	0.72	0.80	0.31	-0.62	0.60	1-3
Does your organisation have training for its employees?	1.97	2.00	0.77	0.06	0.31	-1.31	0.60	1-3
We plan the needs of additional training of all	2.03	2.00	0.80	-0.06	0.31	-1.41	0.60	1-3



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employees in the organisation.									
All study expenses are fully recognised for all employees, as well as absences from work for clas	1.62	2.00	0.6 6	0.60	0.31	-0.62	0.60	1-3	
Positive culture toward learning (average score of four items)	1.80	1.75	0.6 3	0.25	0.31	-0.99	0.60	1-3	

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*Notes:* SD – standard deviation; SE – standard error; Min-Max – minimal and maximum score

The calculated score, reflecting the positive cultural values toward learning, is correlated with the items related to attitudes toward learning and investing in education. The results are presented in Table 7. Rows colored in green show correlations with the items representing attitudes toward the investment in education, and those colored in orange

represent correlations with the items related to attitudes toward education. The highest correlation is recorded between a positive culture toward education and organizations' readiness to approve additional training costs. The positive cultural values for learning are also positively correlated with the perspective that the learning expenses represent the best investments but negatively correlated with those that negate the value of education. The positive cultural values about learning are also related to a more positive attitude toward education overall (the correlations colored in orange, Table 7).

These results entirely support the hypothesis, meaning that when sports organizations foster a culture that values continuous learning, there is a positive impact on attitudes toward learning and investment in employee development.

Table 7. Spearman's correlations between positive culture toward learning and the items reflecting attitudes toward education and investment in education

Items	Positive culture toward education	
	Spearman's correlation	p value
We do not allow, as a rule, associates and employees to be absent from work to attend classes or	-0.192	0.137

<b>Learning expenses are not a cost but the best investment.</b>	<b>.391**</b>	<b>0.002</b>
<b>We are happy to approve the costs of additional training for all associates and employees</b>	<b>.857**</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>I don't see benefit of learning today, as all the knowledge is free and available online</b>	<b>-.359**</b>	<b>0.005</b>
<b>The best school is life, the rest is a theory</b>	<b>-.361**</b>	<b>0.004</b>
Employees like trainings more than formal education opportunities.	0.223	0.084
Employees would only study if it helps them advance in their career.	-0.041	0.755
<b>How important you think employee education is?</b>	<b>.328**</b>	<b>0.010</b>
<b>Company's development is based solely on the acquisition of new knowledge, abilities an skills of</b>	<b>.442**</b>	<b>0.000</b>

### 4.3 Research Question three

#### **Effect of Leadership Support on Attitudes Toward Learning and Investment**

The hypothesis related to this research question is: “If employees perceive strong leadership support for learning initiatives, then there will be a positive impact on attitudes toward learning and subsequent investment in employee development”. To test this, we divided employees on two groups, the one that works in organizations that organizes trainings and those work in firms that do not provide trainings. Namely, if organization provide the trainings for the employees, it means that organization give the support for its employees and has a positive attitude toward learning. Further, we tested the differences using scores obtained in the cluster analysis, previously described. To remind, the first cluster gathered the items denoted no need for education and trainings, the second cluster denoted external motivation for education, and the third cluster denoted the internal motivation for learning. We run t test for independent samples, and the results of the analyses are in Table 8, together with the descriptive statistics. The only statistically significant difference ( $t(88) = 2.11, p < 0.05$ ) was recorded for the negative attitude toward the education, where employees working in the organizations that do not organize trainings had more negative attitude ( $M = 2.02, SD = 0.63$ ) compared to employees whose organization provides the trainings ( $M = 1.74, SD = 0.57$ ).

**The results confirmed the hypothesis, thus, employees who perceive strong leadership support for learning initiatives, has positive attitudes toward learning.**

Table 8

Differences in attitudes toward the education between employees who works in organizations that do not provide trainings, and who works in firms that provide trainings regularly

		Does your organization have training for its employees?		N	Mean	SD	t test	p value
No need for education	Never			32	2.02	0.63	2.11	0.04
	yes, on regular basis			58	1.74	0.57		
External motivation for education	Never			32	2.76	0.82	-1.60	0.11
	yes, on regular basis			58	3.02	0.68		
Internal motivation for education	Never			32	2.97	0.83	-0.68	0.50
	yes, on regular basis			58	3.09	0.85		

Notes: N – number of employees in each group; SD – standard deviation

### **Demographic Factors Influence Attitudes Toward Learning and Investment**

To test the hypothesis “If there are demographic differences among employees in sports organizations, then these differences will have a significant impact on attitudes toward learning and investment in employee development,” we run separate analyses over the sample of employees and a sample of managers. Within each group, we selected participants who work in EU countries and those who work in European countries outside the EU since most respondents come from these regions, and other countries are represented to a much lesser extent. We explored the region differences over all the variables used in both questionnaires. In the next section, the analysis of the sample of employees is presented.

#### **Demographic differences toward learning among employees**

The difference tests using Mann-Whitney U test (nonparametric analog for t test) with p values and descriptive statistic for each variable is presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Demographic differences toward learning among employees with descriptive statistics by countries and with Mann-Whitney U test

Variables	Countries	N	Mean	SD	Mann-Whitney test	U	P value
<b>No need for education</b>	EU countries	159	1.91	0.57			
	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	35	1.65	0.60	2023.00		<b>0.01</b>
External motivation for education	EU countries	158	3.10	0.67			
	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	35	2.83	0.86	2257.50		0.09
Internal motivation for education	EU countries	159	3.06	0.79			
	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	35	2.94	0.89	2575.50		0.48
	EU countries	159	4.36	0.67	2206.50		<b>0.03</b>

<b>How important you think employee education is?</b>	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	35	4.63	0.55		
Employee education affect the results of the alliance.	EU countries	159	4.21	0.69		
	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	35	4.43	0.61	2314.50	0.09
<b>Does your organisation have training for its employees?</b>	EU countries	159	2.07	0.66		
	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	35	2.43	0.65	1983.50	<b>0.00</b>

Bolded variables and p-values denote significant differences between countries. Three significant differences were recorded in attitudes toward education (cluster 1 score denoting “no need for education”), the importance of education and the frequency of training for employees. From the mean values of each country group, we can see that



employees from EU countries, compared to ones that work in European countries outside the EU (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco), to a more considerable extent mean that there no need for learning and education in organizations. Further, employees from European countries outside the EU (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco) agreed to the larger extent that education is essential, and their organizations provide training more often.

**These results confirm demographic differences between organizational cultures toward learning and education, denoting that organizations from European countries outside the EU (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco), by the meaning of their employees, have more positive attitudes compared to organizations from EU countries.**

#### **Demographic differences toward learning among managers**

The same analysis (Mann-Whitney U test) was applied for the sample of managers. However, the manager's questionnaire was different, so there are many more variables in Table 10. Again, the significant differences between countries were bolded. The orange rows refer to attitudes toward education, and the blue ones refer to the investments or the attitudes toward the investments in education. For each of the tested variables, there was the difference in the advantage of managers who work in European countries outside the EU (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco). Managers outside the EU had more positive attitudes toward education; their organizations invested more in learning,

had an annual budget for education and training, and believed more in benefits for organizations that come from well-educated employees.

**As with previous analysis, based on the employees' answers, the analysis of managers' answers also confirms the progressive attitudes of countries like Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Monaco compared to EU countries.**

Table 10. Demographic differences toward learning among managers with descriptive statistics by countries and with Mann-Whitney U test

Variables	Country	N	Mean	SD	Mann-Whitney U test	p value
<b>How important you think employee education is?</b>	EU countries	39	4.18	1.00		
	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	20	4.80	0.41	236.00	<b>0.01</b>

	EU countries	39	4.15	0.7		
				4		
<b>Employee education affects the results of the alliance.</b>	Other countries (Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)		Europe (UK, 20)	4.70	0.4	233.00 0.01
				7		
<b>What percentage per year does your organization allocate from the budget for employee education?</b>	EU countries	39	1.38	0.4		
				9		
	Other countries (Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)		Europe (UK, 20)	2.05	0.3	154.50 0.00
				9		
<b>Do you send your employees for formal education - BA, MBA, DBA?</b>	EU countries	39	1.41	0.6		
				8		
	Other countries		Europe (20)	2.00	0.6	206.00 0.00
				5		

	(Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)					
					0.7	
	EU countries	39	1.64		1	
<b>Does your organization have training for its employees?</b>	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)					130.00 0.00
		20	2.60		0.5	
					0	
					1.4	
	EU countries	39	2.10		3	
We do not allow, as a rule, associates and employees to be absent from work to attend classes or	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)					297.00 0.09
		20	1.40		0.6	
					8	

<b>Learning expenses are not a cost but the best investment.</b>	EU countries	39	3.77	1.0		
				4		
	Other countries (Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)				243.50	<b>0.01</b>
	Other Europe countries (UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	20	4.40	0.9		
				9		
<b>We are happy to approve the costs of additional training for all associates and employees</b>	EU countries	39	1.44	0.7		
				2		
	Other countries (Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)				65.00	<b>0.00</b>
	Other Europe countries (UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	20	3.30	0.9		
				8		
<b>I don't see benefit of learning today, as all the knowledge is free and available online</b>	EU countries	39	1.85	1.0		
				4		
	Other countries	20	1.15	0.3	243.50	<b>0.01</b>
			7			

	(Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)					
	EU countries	39	2.64	1.2		
				5		
	Other Europe countries				265.00	<b>0.04</b>
<b>The best school is life, the rest is a theory</b>	(Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	20	1.95	1.0		
				0		
	EU countries	39	3.26	1.3		
				7		
Employees like trainings more than formal education opportunities.	Other Europe countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)				288.00	0.09
		20	3.90	0.8		
				5		

	EU countries	39	4.13	1.2		
				0		
Employees would only study if it helps them advance in their career.	Other Europe countries				371.50	0.75
	(Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	20	4.05	1.1		
				9		
<b>Company's development is based solely on the acquisition of new knowledge, abilities and skills of</b>	EU countries	39	3.72	0.8		
				9		
	Other Europe countries				218.50	<b>0.00</b>
	(Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	20	4.40	0.6		
				0		
<b>All study expenses are fully recognized for all employees, as well as</b>	EU countries	39	1.38	0.5		
				9		
	Other Europe countries	20	2.15	0.4	142.50	<b>0.00</b>
				9		

<b>absences from work for classes or exams</b>	(Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	UK,				
					0.6	
	EU countries		39	1.64	7	
<b>We plan the needs of additional training of all employees in the organization.</b>	Other countries (Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco)	Europe				
						82.00
						<b>0.00</b>
					0.4	
			20	2.80	1	

*Notes:* The significant differences between countries are bolded. Blue rows represent the investments or attitude toward the investments in learning and education. The orange rows represent the attitude toward education.

We implemented descriptive and inferential statistical methodologies for data analysis. Specifically, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Rho) was used as a non-parametric alternative to Pearson's correlation coefficient. This choice was made because



many responses were measured on an ordinal level, which often involves correlational analysis.

Moreover, when assessing differences between groups, we applied either the independent samples t-test or its non-parametric counterpart, the Mann-Whitney U test. The latter is used when the prerequisites for the t-test—such as normality of distribution and homogeneity of variance—are not met or when there are significant differences in the number of subjects in the groups.

Furthermore, hierarchical cluster analysis was used as an additional technique. This analysis was instrumental in examining how the items in the employee survey were grouped. The goal was to group the responses into a smaller number of variables, which simplifies the data structure and facilitates a more concise interpretation of the results.

## **4.2 Summary of Findings**

### Summary of Research Findings

#### Sample Overview

The research involved 262 respondents, with a majority being employees (n=201) and a smaller portion managers (n=61). The age distribution revealed a younger demographic among employees, while managers were predominantly aged 35 and above. Geographically, respondents were primarily based in European Union countries, followed by non-EU European nations. Managers were mostly associated with international federations, indicating a high level of managerial representation at significant organizational levels.

### **Research Question 1: Attitudes Toward Education**

The study explored attitudes toward education through a series of questions aimed at understanding the perceived importance of education and its impact on organizational progress. The findings suggested a strong belief among both employees and managers in the significance of education for organizational success. However, despite recognizing its importance, the frequency of organized training sessions was notably low.

### **Investment in Employee Education**

Further analysis revealed a positive correlation between positive attitudes toward education and actual financial investment in educational programs. Organizations with a favorable outlook on education were more likely to allocate budget towards formal training. However, the general trend showed low investment, with many organizations not dedicating funds or regularly sending employees to formal education.

### **Research Question 2: Perceived Benefits of Employee Development**

The study applied cluster analysis to employee questionnaire data, identifying three main attitudes towards learning: lack of motivation, external motivation, and internal motivation. Significant findings indicated that perceived benefits from employee development programs positively influenced attitudes toward learning, especially when linked to job-related outcomes.

### **Mediation by Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement appeared to mediate the relationship between investment in development and attitudes toward learning. Organizations that invested in training tended to foster more positive attitudes among their employees towards learning and development.

### **Organizational Culture's Effect**

A strong organizational culture that values continuous learning was shown to positively impact both attitudes toward learning and the extent of investment in employee development. This culture was associated with greater readiness to incur additional training costs and a general acknowledgment of learning expenses as valuable investments.

### **Leadership Support and Employee Attitudes**

Leadership support for learning initiatives was found to significantly affect employee attitudes. Employees in organizations that provided regular training exhibited more positive attitudes towards education compared to those in organizations without such support.

### **Demographic Differences**

The study also highlighted demographic differences, particularly between employees and managers working within and outside the EU. Employees from non-EU countries showed a higher valuation of education and more frequent organizational training than their EU counterparts. Similarly, managers outside the EU demonstrated more progressive attitudes toward education and higher levels of investment in learning

## 4.2 Conclusion

The research findings indicate a strong recognition among both employees and managers of the importance of education in enhancing organizational progress. However, there exists a notable gap between this recognition and actual organizational investment in educational programs. Many organizations show infrequent training sessions and a low allocation of budget for educational purposes.

A significant impact of organizational culture and leadership on educational attitudes and investment was also observed. Organizations that cultivate a culture valuing continuous learning are more likely to approve additional training costs and view learning expenses as beneficial investments. Furthermore, strong leadership support is crucial in fostering positive attitudes toward learning, with employees in organizations that regularly organize training exhibiting more favorable educational attitudes.

The analysis revealed demographic differences, particularly between respondents in EU and non-EU countries, with those outside the EU displaying more progressive attitudes toward education and a higher organizational commitment to learning and development.

The correlation between positive educational attitudes and higher financial investment in education underscores the role of organizational perspective in shaping the extent of resource allocation toward employee development.

Implications for practice suggest that sports organizations can enhance their developmental strategies by enhancing organizational culture to support continuous learning, leveraging leadership to bolster positive educational attitudes, and recognizing demographic influences to tailor educational initiatives effectively.

Future research should explore the longitudinal impact of these factors on organizational performance and employee satisfaction and examine these dynamics in different cultural and organizational contexts outside of sports to understand the generalizability of the findings.

Study emphasizes the critical interplay between employee attitudes, organizational culture, and leadership in shaping effective educational and development policies. By fostering an environment that values and supports learning, sports organizations can enhance individual and organizational performance, ensuring sustainable development and competitive advantage in the increasingly complex sports industry landscape.

## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

### **5.1 Discussion of Results**

The research conducted on the attitudes towards education within sports organizations has yielded insightful findings that underscore the complexities and discrepancies between the perceived importance of education and the actual practices within organizations. By examining a sample of employees and managers across various sports organizations primarily in European Union (EU) and non-EU countries, the study highlighted significant differences in attitudes and organizational practices concerning employee education.

#### **Interpretation of Key Results**

##### **Valuation of Education Across Demographics:**

The results indicate that employees and managers in non-EU countries exhibit a stronger commitment to education, as reflected in more frequent training opportunities and a higher valuation of educational initiatives compared to their EU counterparts. This could be attributed to cultural differences in organizational management and leadership styles prevalent in these regions. The data suggests a need for EU-based organizations to reevaluate their educational strategies to enhance competitiveness and employee satisfaction.

**Impact of Organizational Culture and Leadership:**

A supportive learning culture within an organization correlates positively with greater investments in employee education and more favorable attitudes towards learning. This finding supports the notion that the ethos of an organization, particularly as it relates to the value placed on continuous learning, plays a critical role in shaping educational policies and practices. Furthermore, leadership support was found to be a pivotal factor in promoting a positive educational environment, highlighting the role of top management in fostering an organizational culture that prioritizes and actively supports learning.

**Discrepancies Between Attitudes and Practice:**

Despite recognizing the importance of education, many organizations do not frequently conduct training sessions. This gap between belief and action suggests potential barriers such as budget constraints, lack of strategic planning, or undervaluing the immediate benefits of employee development. Addressing these barriers could lead to more effective implementation of educational programs.



### **Motivational Factors Influencing Education:**

The cluster analysis revealed different motivational orientations towards education among employees—ranging from lack of motivation to intrinsic motivation. This diversity in motivational factors suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach to training may not be effective. Tailoring educational programs to address specific motivational needs could enhance engagement and outcomes.

### **Implications for Practice**

The findings of this study have several implications for the management of sports organizations:

- A. Enhanced Training Programs** - Organizations should increase the frequency and quality of training programs to bridge the gap between the perceived importance of education and its actual implementation.
- B. Cultural Shifts in Learning** - There is a need for EU sports organizations to cultivate a culture that not only values education but also systematically invests in it, drawing lessons from non-EU counterparts.
- C. Leadership Development** - Develop leaders who not only support but actively participate in learning initiatives, ensuring that their support is visible and impactful.

**D. Customized Educational Strategies** - Develop educational strategies that cater to different motivational needs, enhancing the effectiveness of learning interventions.

### **Future Research Directions**

Further research could explore the underlying causes of the discrepancies between the value placed on education and the actual educational practices within organizations. Additionally, longitudinal studies could assess the long-term impacts of educational investments on organizational performance. Investigating the role of technological advancements in facilitating educational opportunities could also provide valuable insights into more efficient and engaging learning environments.

### **Conclusion**

These results underscore the crucial role that education plays in the development and success of sports organizations. By bridging the gap between attitudes and practices, fostering a positive organizational culture, and recognizing demographic and motivational differences, sports organizations can significantly enhance their educational initiatives and overall organizational effectiveness.

## 5.2 Discussion of Research Question One

Research Question One interrogated the attitudes towards employee education and compared these attitudes against the tangible organizational commitment to providing education in the form of training programs. The salient discovery from this inquiry is the high valuation of employee education across both employees and managers within sports organizations. This nearly unanimous valuation, as evidenced by the mean scores on related survey items, suggests an organizational acknowledgment of the strategic importance of employee development as a lever for improved performance and competitive advantage.

The high regard for employee education amongst managers is consistent with the literature that links educational investment to organizational success. Managers are often positioned to witness firsthand the benefits of an educated workforce, including increased productivity, innovation, and a more dynamic organizational culture. This recognition, however, seems to face an incongruity when reflected against the actual practices of organizations.

Notably, the data unearthed an intriguing paradox: despite the strong espoused belief in the importance of employee education, many organizations fall short in actualizing this belief into systematic training for their employees. The responses to whether organizations conduct training for employees revealed that both employees and managers

perceive the provision of training as sporadic. This inconsistency suggests a potential gap between the espoused theories of organizations — what they say is important — and their theories-in-use — what they actually do.

The statistical insignificance revealed by the Mann-Whitney U tests for all questions further complicates this discussion. The lack of a statistically significant difference between employees' and managers' responses could indicate a homogenized organizational culture that values education but may lack the resources, strategic focus, or institutional frameworks necessary to implement consistent training programs.

This discrepancy could also be symptomatic of deeper issues within the sports sector. It may point to budgetary constraints, differing strategic priorities, or a lack of understanding of how to effectively translate the acknowledged importance of employee education into structured, budgeted, and regular training programs. Additionally, the preference for investing in certain types of education, such as formal degrees over continuous professional development, may reflect an outdated approach to learning, not aligned with the fast-paced and evolving demands of the sports industry.

The positive correlations found between the attitudes toward the importance of education and the percentage of the budget allocated to employee education and frequency of sending employees for formal education (BA, MBA, DBA) speak to the positive

outcomes of these attitudes. However, they also highlight the discrepancy between what is espoused and what is enacted.

Indeed, the observation that a sizable percentage of organizations do not allocate any budget for employee education and rarely send employees to formal education programs is alarming. This reveals a critical misalignment between the perceived importance of ongoing learning and the practical commitment to educational programs. Such misalignment may lead to missed opportunities for organizational learning and growth, potential employee dissatisfaction, and a failure to keep pace with sector innovations.

In conclusion, while there is a shared belief in the value of employee education, sports organizations appear to struggle with implementing consistent and structured training programs. This points to a need for a strategic realignment, where organizations not only advocate for the importance of education but also commit to investing in it. There needs to be a more robust translation of this valued concept into budgetary allocations and strategic planning to foster a culture of continuous professional development. Only then can the well-recognized benefits of employee education be fully realized within the dynamic environment of sports organizations.

### **5.3 Discussion of Research Question Two**

Research Question Two probed deeper into the fabric of attitudes towards learning and education among employees in sports organizations, with the intent to consolidate these sentiments into identifiable clusters. The utilization of hierarchical cluster analysis provided a structured approach to understand the latent dimensions of these attitudes. The segmentation into clusters revealed nuanced patterns of motivation towards education within the organizational setting, which can be pivotal for developing targeted employee development programs.

#### **Interpretation of Clusters:**

The emergent cluster designations—representing a lack of motivation, external motivation, and internal motivation—paint a comprehensive picture of the motivational landscape within sports organizations. The first cluster's low mean value suggests a cohort of employees disengaged with the concept of further education, which could indicate either a contentment with current levels of expertise or a possible disconnect with the perceived relevance of further training.

The similarity in mean values for the second and third clusters indicates a balanced interplay between external and internal motivations among employees. This duality of motivation is significant; it highlights that while employees are internally inclined towards

self-improvement and skill enhancement, they also value the external rewards and career successes that education can facilitate.

### **Implications of Motivational Clusters:**

The existence of a cluster signifying a lack of motivation for education is a critical concern for organizational leaders. It suggests that despite the available educational opportunities, a segment of the workforce might not be fully engaged or might not perceive these opportunities as relevant or beneficial. This presents a challenge for organizations to design and communicate the value of educational initiatives in a manner that resonates with this group.

The balanced mean scores of the external and internal motivation clusters suggest that employees do see the value in education when it aligns with their personal and professional goals. However, the moderate level of agreement (around the midpoint of the scale) indicates that there may be underlying factors or barriers that prevent these motivations from translating into higher levels of engagement with learning initiatives.

### **Strategic Implications:**

For sports organizations, these findings emphasize the necessity of a dual approach in educational strategy. It is not enough to offer education; the offerings must be

strategically aligned with both the intrinsic values and extrinsic rewards that employees associate with learning. Organizations may need to invest in understanding the individual and collective goals of their workforce to tailor educational programs that can tap into these dual sources of motivation.

The delineation into motivation-based clusters also indicates the potential for differentiated strategies to engage each cluster. For instance, employees categorized under the cluster showing a lack of motivation may benefit from awareness campaigns that highlight the personal and professional advantages of continuous learning. In contrast, those with external motivations could be incentivized with clear career progression pathways tied to educational achievements, and those with internal motivations could be engaged through opportunities that promise personal growth and fulfillment.

The cluster analysis in Research Question Two has elucidated the complex interplay of motivations impacting employee attitudes toward education within sports organizations. It has uncovered a multifaceted motivation profile that requires sports organizations to adopt a more sophisticated approach to employee education—one that not only offers learning opportunities but does so in a manner that is congruent with the diverse motivational drivers of their workforce. This nuanced understanding of employee motivations can inform the development of more effective, engaging, and personalized educational strategies that resonate with the varying needs and desires of the organization's human capital.



#### **5.4 Discussion of Research Question Three**

The hypothesis concerning the impact of leadership support on employees' attitudes toward learning and organizational investment in employee development brings to light a critical dynamic within sports organizations. The underlying presumption that leadership endorsement of learning initiatives will engender a positive attitude towards learning among employees has significant implications for organizational strategy and culture.

The division of employees into two cohorts — those from organizations that offer training and those that do not — provides a clear dichotomy to assess the influence of perceived leadership support. The finding that employees from organizations lacking in training provisions demonstrate a statistically significant more negative attitude towards education adds credence to the pivotal role leadership plays in shaping employee perceptions.

This result reinforces the theory of transformational leadership, which posits that the attitudes and behaviors of leaders have a profound effect on their followers' beliefs and actions. Leaders in sports organizations are not only tasked with the day-to-day management of their teams but also with fostering an environment conducive to learning and development. When leaders actively support training initiatives, they signal to employees that their growth and development are valued. This, in turn, can positively affect

the organization's investment in such initiatives, thereby creating a culture of continuous improvement and learning.

The data suggests a direct correlation between the provision of training opportunities and employees' attitudes toward learning. This is a critical insight for sports organizations aiming to cultivate a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. It is apparent that merely recognizing the importance of employee education is not sufficient; organizations must actively invest in learning initiatives to positively impact employees' attitudes.

Moreover, the statistical significance of the negative attitudes towards education among employees from organizations that do not provide training speaks volumes. It highlights a risk for organizations that fail to support learning initiatives: the potential development of a culture resistant to education, which can hinder organizational growth and adaptation in an industry characterized by rapid change.

The confirmed hypothesis emphasizes the need for strong leadership commitment to learning initiatives as a catalyst for positive employee attitudes towards learning and increased investment in development programs. Leaders in sports organizations must champion educational opportunities, demonstrating through action — not just rhetoric — that they value their employees' development.

Leadership support for learning initiatives is not just a philosophical stance but a pragmatic strategy that can influence the entire trajectory of an organization's development. Sports organizations that understand and act upon this premise are likely to see not only enhanced attitudes towards learning among their employees but also increased investments in development programs, leading to a more robust, innovative, and competitive organization.

### **5.5 Discussion of Research Question four**

The exploration of demographic factors and their impact on attitudes towards learning and investment in employee development within sports organizations sought to understand the regional nuances that may influence these attitudes. The hypothesis under investigation posited that demographic differences would significantly affect both the perception of the importance of education and the actual investments made towards employee development.

The methodological approach involved a bifurcated analysis that examined responses from employees and managers working within EU countries against those from several non-EU European countries. This division allowed for a direct comparison to ascertain if regional differences were indeed a factor in shaping attitudes and investments.

The analysis uncovered that demographic factors do play a role in influencing attitudes towards learning and development initiatives. One of the most striking findings from this comparison was the differentiation in the perceived need for education between the two regions. The study found that employees from EU countries exhibited a significantly higher agreement with the statement indicating no need for further education. This suggests a potential complacency or a sense of sufficiency with the current level of skills and knowledge within these organizations.

In contrast, employees from non-EU countries such as Switzerland, the UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Monaco displayed a more pronounced recognition of the value of education, with their organizations also reflecting this through more frequent training provisions. This difference not only underscores the value these regions place on continuous professional development but also translates into a tangible investment in such initiatives.

The regional disparities could be indicative of broader cultural and economic factors at play within the respective areas. EU organizations might be operating within a different set of economic pressures or cultural expectations that do not prioritize continuous education as highly as their non-EU counterparts. Alternatively, non-EU countries may have different frameworks or policies that support and encourage ongoing professional development.

These findings are consequential for sports organizations across Europe, suggesting a need for a strategic reevaluation of how employee development is approached. EU organizations, in particular, might consider adopting new policies or cultural shifts that emphasize the importance of continuous learning, aligning more closely with the emerging trends in non-EU regions.

Moreover, the regional differences highlighted by the study accentuate the importance of contextualizing employee development programs within the cultural and demographic realities of each region. Organizations that tailor their strategies to the specific attitudes and expectations of their workforce are likely to see more engagement in learning initiatives, leading to a more dynamic, innovative, and adaptable organizational culture.

In summary, the research substantiates that demographic factors play a critical role in shaping organizational attitudes toward learning and investment in employee development. Recognizing and responding to these regional differences can provide sports organizations with the insights needed to foster a more educated, skilled, and competitive workforce, which is vital in the evolving landscape of the sports industry.

### **5.5.1 Demographic differences toward learning among employees**

The analysis based on the Mann-Whitney U test reveals that demographic factors indeed play a significant role in shaping attitudes toward learning and organizational investment in employee development across European sports organizations. The statistical examination has brought to light the contrast between employees in EU countries and their non-EU counterparts in how they perceive and value education and training within their organizations.

Employees from EU countries tend to agree more with the statement that there is no need for additional education. This perspective might indicate a belief that the current educational offerings are sufficient or may suggest a lack of recognition of the ever-changing demands of the sports industry that require ongoing professional development.

In stark contrast, employees from non-EU countries, such as Switzerland, the UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Monaco, place a higher importance on education, as reflected by their higher mean scores and the statistically significant p-values. Furthermore, organizations in these countries are also more committed to providing training, suggesting a cultural and strategic prioritization of professional development. Such attitudes are indicative of a proactive approach to learning and an acknowledgment of its importance for organizational success and individual career progression.

These findings have substantial implications for the strategic direction that sports organizations might take towards learning and development. For those in the EU, there may be a critical need to reevaluate and possibly intensify the emphasis placed on continuous learning to meet the demands of an evolving industry. This could mean developing new policies or initiatives that encourage ongoing professional development, thereby fostering a culture that values and supports educational growth.

The research confirms the hypothesis that demographic differences, particularly regional distinctions, have a considerable impact on attitudes toward learning and investments in employee development. The differences underscore the need for sports organizations, especially within the EU, to reassess their approaches to professional development. Embracing the progressive attitudes towards education held by non-EU organizations may involve integrating comprehensive training programs and promoting a culture that embraces lifelong learning. Such a strategic shift is essential for organizations aiming to maintain agility and competitive advantage in the global sports landscape.

### **5.5.2 Demographic differences toward learning among managers**

The research delineates a clear and statistically significant difference in attitudes toward education and investment in employee development between EU countries and non-EU European countries (Switzerland, UK, Norway, Liechtenstein, Monaco), as discerned through the analysis of responses from managers in these regions.

Managers from non-EU countries exhibit a notably stronger belief in the importance of employee education, as reflected in higher mean scores and statistically significant p-values. This conviction is paralleled by their organizations' commitment to funding educational initiatives, with a greater percentage of the budget allocated for this purpose. Moreover, these managers report a higher frequency of sending employees to formal education programs, indicating a strategic emphasis on structured professional development.

Conversely, EU countries display a more conservative approach to investment in employee education. The data suggests that EU managers are less inclined to see learning expenses as a worthwhile investment and are more hesitant to allocate substantial funds or support absences from work for educational purposes. This is particularly telling in the context of an evolving workplace, where continuous learning is increasingly integral to maintaining competitiveness.

A salient point of divergence is the recognition of study expenses and support for training. Managers in non-EU countries are significantly more inclined to approve additional training costs, suggesting a cultural norm where education is considered an essential investment rather than an optional expenditure. They also disagree more strongly with the notion that the ubiquity of free online knowledge diminishes the value of



structured learning, highlighting an appreciation for the unique benefits of formal education that cannot be replicated through online resources alone.

This divergence extends to perceptions of learning as part of one's career trajectory. Non-EU managers less commonly agree with the statement that “the best school is life, the rest is a theory,” implying a recognition of the limitations of experiential learning and the value of formal education. They also appear more proactive in planning additional training needs for all employees within the organization, indicating a holistic and inclusive approach to professional development.

The contrast in findings between EU and non-EU managers is emblematic of broader cultural and possibly systemic differences in how learning and development are valued and integrated within sports organizations. The results underscore the need for a more proactive, well-funded approach to employee education in EU countries, suggesting that embracing the attitudes and strategies of their non-EU counterparts could prove beneficial. By aligning more closely with these progressive attitudes, EU sports organizations could enhance their capacity for innovation, adaptability, and overall success in an industry where knowledge and skills are crucial drivers of performance.

## CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Summary

Through a survey of 262 respondents, including 201 employees and 61 managers. The survey collected data on demographic details, attitudes towards education, and organizational investment in employee development.

**Demographics and Distribution:** The study revealed that younger employees dominate the employee group, whereas older individuals more commonly occupy managerial positions. Most respondents work within the European Union, with a smaller fraction from non-EU European countries. Managers are predominantly employed at international-level federations, indicating a skew towards higher organizational levels in the sample.

**Attitudes Towards Education:** Both employees and managers acknowledged the importance of education for enhancing organizational performance. The survey data showed a robust agreement on the value of employee education across both groups, with no significant difference in their perceptions as measured by the Mann-Whitney U test. Despite this acknowledgment, it was noted that organizations only sporadically organize training for their employees.

**Investment in Employee Development:** The study identified a positive correlation between the pro-educational attitudes and the actual investments made towards employee development. Organizations with a more positive outlook towards employee education tend to allocate a higher percentage of their budget to such initiatives and more frequently send employees to formal education programs. However, the overall investment levels are low, with a significant number of organizations allocating no funds at all for employee education.

**Cluster Analysis of Employee Attitudes:** Through hierarchical cluster analysis, three main clusters were identified among employee responses: lack of motivation, external motivation (contingent on job success), and intrinsic motivation for education. This analysis helped highlight the varying levels of educational motivation among employees, suggesting that while some are intrinsically motivated to learn, others see educational efforts as worthwhile only if they directly contribute to job success.

The findings from this study paint a complex picture of the current state of attitudes toward learning and investment in employee development within sports organizations. While there is a general consensus on the importance of employee education, this is not consistently translated into practice, with many organizations failing to regularly invest in such initiatives.

## **6.2 Implications**

The implications of the findings from this study are crucial for various stakeholders within sports organizations and potentially beyond. Here are the detailed implications based on the key findings:

### **A. Strategic Alignment and Organizational Performance:**

**Organizations' Leadership:** The study shows a disconnect between the positive attitudes toward education and the actual investment in training programs. Leaders in sports organizations should consider realigning their strategic objectives to include a stronger focus on regular and structured employee development programs. Such alignment could enhance organizational performance by ensuring that employees' skills and motivations are continuously updated and aligned with the organization's goals.

### **B. Policy Development for Continuous Learning:**

**Policy Makers and Sports Federations:** Given the sporadic nature of training initiatives reflected in the findings, there is a clear need for policies that advocate and enforce regular training and development initiatives within sports organizations. Federations and governing bodies could establish guidelines or benchmarks for training frequency and

investment, ensuring that sports organizations adhere to a standard that promotes continuous employee development.

### **C. Cultural Shift Towards Learning:**

HR and Organizational Development Professionals: The data suggests a need for sports organizations to foster a culture that values continuous learning. This could involve integrating learning and development into the core values of the organization, visibly supported by top management. HR professionals might focus on developing initiatives that not only offer training but also incentivize learning and make it a regular part of the organizational routine, thereby enhancing the intrinsic motivation among employees.

### **D. Investment in Employee Development:**

Financial Planners and Executives: The positive correlation between attitude towards education and investment in development suggests that increased financial allocation to training could be beneficial. Executives and financial planners should consider revising budget allocations to increase the funding for educational programs, reflecting the organizational commitment to employee growth and development.

**E. Inclusion of Education in Performance Metrics:**

Organizational Strategists and Performance Managers: Including educational engagement as part of performance metrics for managers could ensure a more systematic approach to training. This strategy would encourage managers to not only support but actively participate in the educational growth of their teams, aligning individual and organizational performance evaluations with educational achievements.

**F. Enhanced Communication of Benefits:**

Internal Communications Teams: To bridge the gap between the recognition of the importance of education and the actual engagement in training programs, internal communications should highlight the tangible benefits of continuous learning. Success stories of how education has directly benefited job performance and career progression within the organization could be regularly shared to reinforce the value of ongoing professional development.

By addressing these implications, sports organizations can potentially enhance their operational effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and competitive advantage in the industry. These strategic interventions can create a more knowledgeable, motivated, and agile workforce, capable of adapting to the evolving demands of the sports sector.

### **6.3 Recommendations for Future Research**

The findings from this study offer several avenues for further research that could enhance our understanding of the dynamics between learning attitudes and investment in employee development within sports organizations. Here are some detailed recommendations for future research:

#### **Longitudinal Studies:**

Future research should consider longitudinal studies to track changes over time in attitudes and investments within the same organizations. This approach could help identify trends, the impact of specific interventions, and the long-term benefits of consistent investment in employee education. Such studies could also explore how shifts in organizational culture towards learning influence employee retention and organizational success.

#### **Comparative Studies Across Sectors:**

It would be insightful to conduct comparative studies that include other sectors besides sports to determine if similar patterns exist in different industries. This could help in understanding whether the trends observed are unique to the sports sector or are prevalent across various types of organizations. Comparative analyses could also help identify best practices in employee development that could be cross-applicable.

**Qualitative Research:**

Incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, could provide deeper insights into why sports organizations might fail to invest in employee development despite recognizing its importance. This approach could uncover underlying barriers, motivational factors, and organizational constraints affecting investment decisions.

**Impact of Demographic Variables:**

Further studies should explore the impact of additional demographic variables such as gender, education level, and cultural background on attitudes towards learning and development. This could help tailor more effective, culturally sensitive development programs that cater to a diverse workforce.

**Effectiveness of Different Types of Educational Interventions:**

Future research could evaluate the effectiveness of different types of educational interventions in sports organizations. This includes studying the outcomes of on-the-job training versus formal education, online learning platforms, and experiential learning opportunities to determine which methods are most beneficial for improving skills and motivating employees.



**Role of Technology in Learning and Development:**

With the increasing integration of technology in workplace learning, further studies could investigate how digital tools and platforms are impacting the efficiency and reception of training programs in sports organizations. Research could also explore the potential for new technologies, like virtual reality and AI-driven simulations, to enhance learning experiences.

**Organizational Structure and Its Impact on Learning:**

Additional research is needed to understand how the structure of sports organizations impacts the implementation and effectiveness of training programs. This could include studies on the role of leadership, the influence of organizational hierarchy, and the impact of various management styles on fostering a learning culture.

By addressing these recommendations, future research can provide more nuanced insights and potentially influence policy and practice in ways that significantly improve employee development and organizational outcomes in sports and beyond.

## 6.4 Conclusion

The findings from this study highlight a significant gap between the acknowledged importance of employee education and the actual investment and implementation of training programs within sports organizations. While employees and managers both recognize the value of education in enhancing organizational performance, this recognition does not consistently translate into substantial investment or frequent training initiatives. This disconnect presents both a challenge and an opportunity for sports organizations to realign their strategies and practices to better leverage the benefits of employee development.

**Organizational Strategy and Employee Development:** It is evident that for sports organizations to fully benefit from their human capital, a strategic overhaul might be necessary. Organizations should consider making employee development a cornerstone of their strategic planning, ensuring that training and education are not just sporadic events but integral parts of the organizational life cycle. This approach will not only enhance the skills of the workforce but also contribute to greater job satisfaction and organizational loyalty.

**Policy Implications and Leadership Role:** The role of policy makers and organizational leaders becomes crucial in this context. There is a need for policies that encourage continuous learning and development, supported by adequate budget allocations and

resources. Leadership commitment to these policies will be critical in fostering a culture that values and supports ongoing learning and development.

**Cultural Shift towards Continuous Learning:** Cultivating a culture that actively promotes and values continuous learning will require a concerted effort from all levels of the organization. This cultural shift should be supported by tangible measures such as the integration of learning objectives into business goals, recognition and rewards for educational achievements, and clear communication about the benefits of ongoing professional development.

**Investment in Employee Training:** Finally, the investment in employee training needs to be more consistent and should reflect the organization's commitment to its employees. Investing in employee development is not just a cost but a strategic investment that can yield substantial returns in terms of enhanced performance, innovation, and competitive advantage.

In conclusion, sports organizations stand at a pivotal point where they can transform their approach to employee development. By aligning organizational strategies with employee education goals, enforcing supportive policies, investing in robust training programs, and fostering a culture that prizes continuous learning, sports organizations can enhance their operational effectiveness and achieve sustained success. The journey from recognizing the

importance of education to fully realizing its benefits involves a comprehensive strategy and an unwavering commitment to employee development.

## APPENDIX A

### SURVEY COVER LETTER

Dear colleagues,

My name is Dejan Laninovic and I am an ex-professional and national team volleyball player. At the moment, I work in SSBM as Academic Director for Sports Management Programs.

I am also working on my DBA. thesis about education in Sports Organisations and need your help. It will take a couple of minutes of your time to fill out one short questionnaire. The questionnaire is 100% anonymous!

#### **Employees' attitudes towards education and trainings**

This questionnaire is intended for the employees in sports organizations except for the human resources department.

Your answers to this short questionnaire will help me understand what are Attitudes toward learning and investment in employee development in sports organizations which is the topic of my doctoral thesis.

Thank you in advance,

Dejan Laninovic

## APPENDIX B

### SURVEY COVER LETTER 2 HR

Dear colleagues,

My name is Dejan Laninovic and I am an ex-professional and national team volleyball player. At the moment I work in SSBM as Academic Director for Sports Management Programs.

I am also working on my DBA. thesis about education in Sports Organisations and need your help. It will take a couple of minutes of your time to fill out one short questionnaire. The questionnaire is 100% anonymous!

#### **Employees' attitudes towards education and trainings**

This questionnaire is intended for people working in human resources. Your answers to this short questionnaire will help me understand what are Attitudes towards learning and investment in employee development in sports organizations which is the topic of my doctoral thesis.

Thank you!

Dejan Laninovic

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### Participant Instructions for Research Study on Attitudes Towards Education in Sports Organizations

##### Welcome and Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study. Your input will be invaluable in understanding attitudes towards learning and investment in employee development within sports organizations.

##### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to examine the perceptions and practices related to education and training in sports organizations. Your responses will help shape better strategies for employee development and organizational growth.

##### What to Expect

**Duration:** The questionnaire will take approximately 20-35 minutes.

**Format:** The questionnaire will be conducted either in person or via a digital platform (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.), depending on your preference and convenience.

Content: You will be asked a series of questions related to your experiences and opinions on training and education within your organization. These questions will explore both your personal attitudes and the practices of your organization.

#### Preparation

Reflect: Consider your own experiences with learning and training in your current and past roles within sports organizations.

Examples: Think of specific instances where education or training played a critical role in your work or affected your career development.

Questions: Prepare any questions you may have about the study or your participation.

#### Confidentiality

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and all your responses will be kept confidential. No personal identifiers will be linked to interview responses in any reports or publications that may result from this study. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.



### Recording

To ensure accuracy, the interviews may be recorded. These recordings will only be used for research purposes and to verify information. They will be securely stored and accessed only by the research team.

### Follow-Up

Should there be any follow-up required after your initial interview, you will be contacted with details on the next steps. We may also reach out to you to clarify or expand upon your provided responses.

### Contact Information

Should you have any questions about the research or your participation, please feel free to contact the lead researcher, Dejan Laninovic, at [laninovic@gmail.com](mailto:laninovic@gmail.com). We are happy to provide more information or assist you in any way related to the study.

### Thank You

We deeply appreciate your time and insights, which are crucial to the success of this study. Your participation is not only valuable for our research but also contributes to the broader understanding of educational practices in sports organizations.

Please distribute this guide to all participants prior to the interview to ensure they are well-informed and prepared for their session. This will help make the process smoother and more productive for both the interviewer and the interviewees.

## APPENDIX D

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

#### **Questionare 1**

Please choose the number on the scale 1 - 5 that best represents your opinion.

In this case, 1 expresses that you strongly agree, 2 expresses that you mostly agree, 3 - I don't have opinion about this statement, 4 express that you mostly disagree and 5 that you strongly disagree.

- I don't see benefit of learning today
- It's not good to know more than my colleagues I work with
- I don't know how I should complete my knowledge
- If I learn something, others will not know how to appreciate or recognise it
- Learning is for younger people, not for me
- The best school is life, the rest is a theory
- There aren't exactly areas and content that interest me much
- I'm not sure there's anything good enough I could learn and that could benefit me
- I'm going to waste a lot of time and energy on learning and I don't know what is the purpose of it
- I can make better use of my free time, instead of spending it on learning
- I would only learn if someone convinces me that I would be able to apply what I learn in my work and thus be more successful

- I like trainings more than formal education opportunities.
- I would only study if it helps me advance in my career
- I stopped learning a long time ago and now it will be difficult for me to decide to study again

## Questionare 2

1. Please choose the the number on the scale 1 - 5 that best represents your opinion.

In this case, 1 expresses not important and 5 very important

How important you think employee education is?

1    2    3    4    5

2. Please choose the the number on the scale 1 - 5 that best represents your opinion.

In this case, 1 expresses doesn't affect at all and 5 effects a lot.

Employee education affect the results of the alliance

1    2    3    4    5

3. What percentage per year does your organisation allocate from the budget for employee education?

4. Do you send your employees for formal education - BA; MBA; DBA

- a. Every year
- b. Almost every year
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

5. Does your organisation have training for its employees?

- a. Yes, regularly
- b. Rarely
- c. Never

6. If yes, in which percentage those training are

- a. Internal
- b. External

N/A

7. On which level your organisation works?

- a. International federation
- b. National federation
- c. Club
- d. Other association involved in sports industry (e.g. anti-doping, sports law)

8. Your age
- a. 18 – 24 years
  - b. 25 – 34 years
  - c. 35 – 44 years
  - d. 45 – 54 years
  - e. 55 – 64 years
  - f. 65+ years
  - g. Prefer not to say

Please choose the number on the scale 1 - 5 that best represents your opinion.

In this case, 1 expresses that you strongly agree, 2 expresses that you mostly agree, 3 - I don't have opinion about this statement, 4 express that you mostly disagree and 5 that you strongly disagree.

- I didn't get involved in additional training often, because I didn't need it
- I don't think at all about the need for my further training or any other form of learning
- I don't see my personal interest in further learning because I don't need it for the job
- I don't have free time to study because I also have too many commitments
- Additional learning (in addition to the knowledge I have) is an unnecessary waste of time
- The knowledge I have is quite enough for me to fulfil my obligations and goals in the organization

- I do not allow, as a rule, associates and employees to be absent from work to attend classes or exams
- Expenditures for employee education should be minimal and should be "cut" whenever possible
- I am constantly learning and improving and encouraging my co-workers to do the same
- Learning expenses are not a cost but the best investment
- I am happy to approve the costs of additional training for all associates and employees
- We plan the needs of additional training of all employees in the organization
- I am constantly improving myself and I believe that learning is an individual matter of an individual
- I don't care what anyone learns and what they want to achieve
- I am only interested in work results, not in acquiring new knowledge that is not currently being applied
- I am not familiar with or keep records of who and what learns in the organization
- I always figure out how to motivate employees to constantly learn and acquire new knowledge
- In rewarding, we have incorporated incentives for all employees to learn and apply what they have learned in business
- All study expenses are fully recognized for all employees, as well as absences from work for classes
- Our development is based solely on the acquisition of new knowledge, abilities and skills of all employee

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