



Safety in Sports Facilities from the Standpoint of the Sports Manager: The Case of Heated Swimming Pools for Collective Use

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Abstract

This study examines the issue of safety in sports facilities from the standpoint of sports management and focuses on the particular case of indoor heated swimming pools for collective use. Sports management encompasses and unifies multiple spheres of action. However, safety-related aspects in sports facilities tend to be addressed from the standpoint of each safety expert, while studies from the perspective of the actual world of sports are in the minority. For this reason, we conducted a set of studies on this topic. As the topic is new, the first study is exploratory and qualitative: a document review covering a broad spectrum of documents in the field of safety in sports facilities (463 documents of different types: legislative, technical regulations, research, professional documents and specific topics) and lays the groundwork for subsequent studies. Notations and a classification table were created specifically. The study reaches conclusions attesting to the broad regulatory and informational dispersion, the division of professional disciplines into types and the lack of a consolidated corpus of research-based knowledge. The following four studies are descriptive and quantitative. The first one focuses on indoor swimming pools for collective use, and a tool to analyse safety and accessibility (a validation questionnaire or checklist) for both investigational and professional use is developed and validated. This tool was then used to conduct a study on a clearly-defined set of facilities. The previous results were subsequently complemented with a study on swimming pool users' perception of safety, to which end a perception questionnaire was developed and validated. The studies performed conclude with the development of a safety indicator based on the tools used. The purpose of this doctoral thesis is general, although the scope of the study focused on heated municipal swimming pools for collective use in the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia, presenting a ranking of these facilities based on the studies conducted.

Keywords: sports management, sport, safety, sports facilities, heated swimming pools, perception of safety