

Impacts and Future Issues of the National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Kanoya Sporting Co-operative Education Program (SCO-OP) As an Educational Challenge

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Abstract

Co-operative and Internship Programs are implemented at physical education colleges in Japan through industry-academia collaborations for the purpose of helping students who are studying lifelong sports and sports business develop more practical professional knowledge and skills. Looking at case studies in various countries where these types of programs have a long history, one can see that the educational benefits are substantial and have a major impact on the student's career development after graduation. In Japan, these types of undertakings have come about only recently and do not always provide the student with enough educational opportunities for career training. The purpose of this study is to investigate into the educational impacts and the future issues of the Sporting Co-operative Education (SCO-OP) model program being implemented by the National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Kanoya (NIFS) for the development of the sports professions of the future. The focus of this study was on interview survey results and self-evaluation reports gathered from interns and host organizations that participated in the SCO-OP program in February 2007. The major findings were as follows:

1. Based on the self-evaluations provided by the interns, it can be said that through the SCO-OP internship, the interns were able to engage in practical training in their respective disciplines as professionals, thereby gaining a new understanding of their own skills, discovering challenges, receiving training from a social perspective, developing work values and acquiring new values.
2. The program received mostly positive evaluations from the organizations, but when considering sustainability and educational benefits, it is clear that both longer terms for the internships and pre-internship interviews to determine adaptability need to be considered.

Keywords: National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Kanoya, SCO-OP, educational impacts, issues