

Sport Management Competency: A Literature Review

運動管理技能之文獻探討

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Abstract

Every year, millions of dollars have been spent on a booming industry called sport. An increase in the demand for management personnel in the sport related settings is therefore foreseeable. However, research in sport management competency is still very scarce locally. This review not only aims at presenting some of the related findings but more importantly, tries to foment some interests in conducting this area of study locally.

摘要

隨著運動事業的蓬勃發展，運動管理人員需求的增加也是必然的。然而在本地，有關運動管理技能的研究幾乎是少之又少；本文獻探討的目的不僅為提供一些相關的研究結果而已，最重要的還是希望能夠喚起大家以本地為對象，多多進行這方面的研究。

Introduction

Sport has not only become part of an individual's life but also has emerged as one of the biggest industries. Rosner (1987) forecasted that the Gross National Sport Product (GNSP) of the United States would grow from \$52.7 billion in 1988 to \$121.1 billion in the year 2000. In his "state of the industry report", Berg (1990) reported that, "most athletic, recreation and fitness leaders see increased participation, more facilities and bigger operating budgets in their future"(p. 22). On the local scene, "nearly \$200 million annually is now allocated to the SDB [Sports Development Board] and further grants of up to \$20 million per year are available from the Arts and Sport Development Fund" ("Fok and Lan Share Vision," 1998, p. 7). In addition, millions of dollars have also been spent on the sporting goods as well as other sport related activities. This shows that our GNSP should amount to at least a few billion dollars even though there is no such official figure available yet. Such a continued trend may well result in an increased demand for management personnel in the sport related settings.

Research in the area of sport management competency was quite limited prior to 1980 (Jamieson, 1980). However, much attention has been given to it since then (Cheng, 1993; Ellard, 1984; Jamieson, 1980; Lambrecht, 1987; Parks & Quain, 1986;

Skipper, 1990; Ulrich & Parkhouse, 1982; et cetera). Research in this particular discipline is still very scarce locally. This review therefore aims at presenting some of the related research findings and at the same time, fomenting some interests in conducting this type of research locally.

Sport Management Competency

It is important to acquire adequate knowledge prior to becoming an effective sport manager or administrator. Parkhouse (1980) maintained that programs related to sport management professional preparation should not restrict the course work to the physical education discipline. Lambrecht (1991) also expressed a need to develop an interdisciplinary oriented professional preparation program for sport management. He stressed that "the curricular preparation needs for most part are housed outside the physical education department, therefore sport management curricular programs need to be interdisciplinary, drawing on theories, concepts, and understandings from identified fields of study" (p. 55).

In 1980, Jamieson conducted a study to determine the specific competencies needed by three levels of recreational sports personnel in three institutional settings. A survey instrument was developed through the use of a jury of recreational sports experts and pilot tested with 20 selected recreational sport administrators not

included in the final study. The instrument entitled "Recreational Sports Competency Analysis" (RSCA), was mailed to 300 recreational sports administrators comprising 100 each from municipal institutions within the continental U.S. with a population of 50,000 and over, four-year educational institutions with a student population of 9,000 and over, and Army military institutions around the world.

Her findings provided a list of competency areas that were deemed essential to recreational sports personnel regardless of which of the three institutional settings they belonged to. These include (in alphabetical order): business procedures, communications, facility/maintenance, governance, legality, management techniques, officiating, programming techniques, philosophy, research, safety/accident prevention, and sport science. In addition, her study revealed that the competencies most needed for entry level positions (Level I) seemed to be mainly in the areas of safety/accident prevention, programming techniques, governance, science, and philosophy. For the mid-management (Level II) positions, competencies most needed include programming and management techniques, safety/accident prevention, and to a lesser extent governance, philosophy, and facility/maintenance. At the top management level (Level III), management techniques and business procedures seemed to be of the greatest importance.

The twelve competency areas determined by Jamieson also received endorsement from the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA, 1987). The criteria for the NIRSA certification testing were actually established on the basis of her findings. It was suggested that at the undergraduate level, the core curriculum should include, in order of importance, 1. safety/accident prevention, 2. programming techniques, 3. facility/maintenance, 4. governance, 5. communications, 6. philosophy, 7. sport science, and 8. officiating. At the graduate level, the core curriculum suggested, in order of importance, were, 1. management techniques, 2. business procedures, 3. legality, 4. safety/accident prevention, 5. governance, 6. communications, 7. programming techniques, 8. facility/maintenance, 9. philosophy, and 10. research.

Ulrich and Parkhouse (1982) applied an alumni oriented approach to sport management curriculum design. Surveys were sent to 145 sport management graduates from four institutions to assess their graduate training and working satisfaction and to their employers to assess sport manager performance.

Their findings revealed sets of courses based on alumni preferences. These include: organizational management (including courses in organization behavior, management principles, research, and personnel/industrial relations), communications (including courses in broadcast journalism, public relations, sports writing, and current issues in sports), and internship.

In the same year, Montour (1982) conducted a study focusing on the analysis of the educational needs and development of a curriculum for managers of commercial physical fitness centers. Ten most crucial curricular components were identified after such procedures as reviewing of related research, mail surveying 21 university sport management program leaders, personal interviewing the patrons, part-time employees, full-time managers and the immediate supervisor of each manager of 29 commercial fitness centers, and personal interviewing 8 health-related professionals working at Florida International University. These include: exercise physiology, business management principles, marketing and promotional techniques, legal liability, knowledge in exercise equipment, knowledge in exercise techniques, basic elements of diet, nutrition and personal hygiene, ability to organize exercise classes, personnel management, and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation techniques.

Also in 1982, a study was conducted by Medalha (1982) to develop the curricular content for the preparation of sport administrators in Brazil. The study was based on the analysis of duties and problems identified by sport administrators in selected sport associations in the state of Sao Paulo. Thirty-seven sport administrators were interviewed. As a result of the study, three main areas of need: physical education, administrative, and support were recommended for the professional preparation of sport administrators. Required courses for the physical education area include research design and interpretation, supervision and management of athletics and informal activities, planning, construction, and maintenance of facilities, and healthy aspects of sport. For the administrative area, the required courses comprised business procedures, administrative and system analysis theory, personnel management, and planning and controlling. Public relations and human relations were required for the support area.

Paris and Zeigler (1983) conducted a study to determine the management competency viewed by selected educational administrators in physical education and sport in Ontario. A total number of 160 administrators were surveyed. These include the physical education and athletic administrators employed in Ontario universities, the professors teaching graduate and/or undergraduate physical education and athletic administration courses in Ontario universities, the sport and recreation chairpersons employed in community colleges offering courses in sport and recreation, the representatives belonging to the Faculties of Education Physical Education Council (FEPEC), and the heads of physical education employed in Ontario secondary schools. Their findings revealed six dimensions of management competency. They are:

Planner: Competencies which involve the identification, formulation, and the defining of goals, plans, and objectives pertaining to an educational organization.

Evaluator: Competencies which involve various aspects of the evaluation processes pertaining to an educational organization.

Educator: Competencies which involve various educational aspects pertaining to the needs of the personnel within the organization.

Fiscal Officer: Competencies which involve various aspects of the monetary processes pertaining to an educational organization.

Leader: Competencies which pertain to the directing and coordinating of tasks within an educational organization.

Communicator: Competencies which involve the preparation and delivery of information, both within and outside of an educational organization. (Paris & Zeigler, 1983, p. 28)

In 1984, Ellard conducted a study to determine the competencies needed to manage selected commercial recreational sport enterprises. A questionnaire was mailed to 930 commercial recreational sport enterprises and the managers and assistant managers were asked to rank the importance and level of proficiency needed in 62 competencies. Fifty-four competencies judged to be of average or greater importance were then grouped into five competency dimensions using cluster analysis. These five dimensions were business procedures, resource management, personnel management, planning and evaluation, and programming techniques.

Jennings (1984) conducted a similar study to that of Jamieson's (1980), but was narrower in scope, only surveying the chairpersons of the physical education and the recreation departments at 67 universities with a student population of at least 10,000 to identify the competency areas most needed for the entry level recreational sports personnel using the modified Jamieson's RSCA instrument. Chairpersons of physical education ranked the competency areas in the following order: philosophical foundations, safety/accident prevention, communications, governance, officiating, programming techniques, sports science, management techniques, legality, facilities/maintenance, business procedures, and research. Recreation department chairpersons, on the other hand, ranked them in the following order: philosophical foundations, safety/accident prevention, communications, governance, management techniques, programming techniques, legality, facilities/maintenance, business procedures, sport science, officiating, and research. Notice that the ranking of officiating is significantly different between both department chairpersons.

In the same study, he also compared the results of his survey with the competency areas perceived by the recreational sports practitioners determined by Jamieson (1980). His study revealed that the competency areas perceived by the chairpersons of physical education and the recreational sports practitioners

did not differ significantly except in the areas of safety/accident prevention and sport science. In addition, the chairpersons of recreation departments and the recreational sport practitioners did not differ significantly except in the following competency areas: safety/accident prevention, officiating, and sport science.

In their study, Parks and Quain (1986) mailed questionnaires to 200 active sport management practitioners to rate 50 areas of study according to their value in a program designed to prepare students for careers in their specific career category. These sport management practitioners were from the following areas: physical fitness, sport promotion, sport marketing, sport administration, sport directing, and aquatics management. Of the 50 areas of study, management, interpersonal communication, public relations, and budgeting were among the top 10 choices of each of the above six career categories. In addition, the respondents also echoed the importance of internship as an element of sport management curriculum.

Another study by Quain and Parks (1986) which involved 368 active sport management practitioners was conducted to determine the types of skills considered important by practicing professionals of six career areas (fitness, promotion, marketing, management, sport, and aquatics). Each group was asked to indicate from a list of eight subjectively-determined competencies (writing, personnel management, public speaking, time management, money management, human relations, personal fitness, and knowledge of sports) those required in their respective career areas. In the career of sport promotion, i.e., those involved with advertising, public relation, and/or media operations, the emphasis was more on writing (96%), public speaking (90%), and human relations (88%). For the physical fitness professionals, i.e., those involved with clinical or corporate settings or in YMCAs and YWCAs, fitness centers, health clubs, and/or community exercise programs, all but management (61%) and knowledge of sports (59%) were above the 80% range of positive responses. In the management career (i.e., which included public relation director, corporate administrator of sporting events, contract advisor, college athletic director, etc.) respondents considered all but knowledge of sports (75%) and personal fitness (64%) very important.

For the sport directors (i.e., those working in intramural sports, recreational sports, club sports, youth sports, and/or other similar activities), personnel management, money management, and time management received more than 80% of positive responses. In the sport marketing career, i.e., those dealing with the presentation of a sport organization to consumers, writing and public speaking skills were considered the most important. Emphasis was also placed on personnel and time management. In aquatics operations (i.e., those involved in teaching, coaching, operations, organizations, and supervision of aquatics activities and facilities), human relations,

personnel management, and time management were highly regarded with 93%, 93% and 90% respectively.

In the same year, Case (1986) investigated the job performance competencies for sport arena managers in the United States and Canada based on different management levels. His study concluded that budgeting, supervision, scheduling, public relations, and communication were viewed essential by all three levels of management, namely, entry, middle, and top management.

In the following year, Davis (1987) identified personnel management, business, communications, and computer science as the most important competencies necessary for future recreational sport managers in the private sectors and these competencies could only be acquired outside the physical education and recreation departments. On the other hand, first aid and safety was identified as the most important competency that could be learned through the departments of recreation and physical education. She thus concluded that future sport managers should learn their required knowledge from both within and outside of the recreation/physical education department.

A study conducted by Hatfield, Wrenn, and Bretting (1987) revealed that the most important curricular needs identified by the professional sport general managers were: business and sport law, public relations, speech communication, labor relations, and marketing. Athletic directors perceived athletic administration, speech communication, public relations, marketing, and business management as most vital for sport management career preparation.

Also in 1987, Lambrecht (1987) surveyed 284 members from the International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA) to determine the competencies needed to manage sports and athletic clubs and to find out if differences existed in required competencies in terms of organizational size. His findings showed that competencies required include: design and control, communication, sport skill, public awareness, accounting, and budgeting. There was also a difference in competencies in managing sport and athletic clubs with different size.

In order to determine the competencies of Australian sports administrators, Farmer (1989) surveyed 315 administrators employed as executive positions in sports related organizations and members of the Australian Society for Sports Administrators (ASSA). Two hundred and forty-three administrators responded and three essential skill areas for sports administrators, namely, management, communications, and business, were derived using factor analysis. The skills that formed these three main categories were: personnel/organization management, planning, public relations, communication, general business and, procurement and security.

One year later, DeSensi, Kelley, Blanton, and Beitel (1990) asked more than 1,000 employers from 14 categories of businesses and agencies to evaluate 23 curricular areas important for prospective employees in their particular setting. Majority (> 90%) of the

employers felt that within each respective business or agency, the five most important curricular areas were as follows:

1. In intramural/sport club settings - communication, administration, policy development, program planning, and supervision.
2. In private sport club settings - communication, finance, marketing, program planning, and public relations.
3. In college/university athletic settings - administration, public relations, leadership, organization/management and personnel management, and communication.
4. In professional sport settings - communication, computer utilization, motor/sport skills, budgeting, and finance.
5. In local government agency settings - budgeting, communication, finance, leadership, and personnel management.
6. In voluntary agency settings - program management, program planning, leadership, communication, and budgeting. (DeSensi et. al, p. 46)

In the same year, Skipper (1990) focused his dissertation on the determination of the competencies necessary for the performance of the managerial tasks in the role of collegiate sports facility manager. He also utilized Jamieson's RSCA with some modifications. The modified questionnaire was sent to 408 collegiate sports facility managers at colleges and universities in the U.S. with 10,000 or more student population. Eighteen competency areas were factor analyzed and resulted in six curricular areas that were essential to collegiate sports facility managers. These include: resource management/facility planning, computer utilization, facility operations, philosophy/foundations, marketing, and scheduling/event management.

In the following year in Australia, Cuskelly and Auld (1991) conducted a study to investigate the perceived importance of a range of occupational responsibilities of sport and recreation managers and to determine whether there were differences based on the organizational setting. Their findings revealed that the job responsibilities perceived as most important include: public relations, financial management, program planning and management, and interpersonal communication. Significant differences were also found between managers in different organizational settings.

In 1993, Afthinos, after modifying Jamieson's RSCA instrument, attempted to derive the perceived competencies of sports for all managers in Greece. He labeled this modified instrument as "Sports For All Management Competency Analysis" (SFAMCA). All but two of the competency areas determined by Jamieson (1980), remained unchanged. Officiating and governance were eliminated and sports-events administration was added. The survey was sent to 132 SFA managers at three organizational levels: national, regional, and local in municipalities with a population of more than 10,000.

His findings revealed that important competencies perceived by the SFA managers at the national levels include communications, management techniques, sports-events administration, and philosophy. At the regional level, important competencies perceived include communications, sports-events administration, and sport science. At the local level, the competencies perceived as most important include communication, philosophy, and sport science.

In Taiwan, Chen (1993) mailed a questionnaire that contained 33 competencies and 30 course content areas to 226 commercial sports managers to determine the required competencies. The results showed that the top five competencies selected were first aid and safety procedures, communication with clientele, employee motivation, budget preparation, and handling of customers' complaints. The top five course content areas selected include: communication skills (speaking), business management, facility design, financing, and facilities and equipment management.

In the same year, Cheng (1993), another Taiwanese scholar, surveyed 334 sport managers in Taiwan using the Chinese version "Survey of Sport Management Practitioners" to determine the competencies needed for the successful management of sport organizations. The competencies determined in ranked order include: knowledge of sport, human relations, public speaking, personnel management, writing, money management, personal fitness, time management, and others (e.g., coordination, communication, etc.).

Gouws (1993) also highlighted the sport management curricula in South Africa. For undergraduate, the core courses include business economics, business psychology, accountancy, economics, statistics, exercise physiology, health sciences, bio-kinetics, anatomy, sport psychology, sport sociology, coaching theory, sport management, practical experience and internships. Whereas the compulsory courses of the graduate program include sport management, personnel management, and strategic management. Moreover, another three courses must be chosen from (a) recreation management, (b) organizational behavior, (c) career management, (d) labor relations, (e) sport psychology, (f) sport communications, and (g) exercise physiology. Furthermore, an internship of at least 200 hours is also required.

Moore and Webb (1993) conducted a study to analyze the actual and perceived roles of the sporting development officers in New South Wales, Australia. Input was gained from both the development officers and the executive directors of various sports associations throughout the state. The results indicated that the development officers felt that they should have the following qualities: knowledge of sport, appropriate presentation and verbal communication skills, high level professional and personal qualities, the ability to work within salary, travel and time restrictions and the ability to conduct development courses.

A major development in sport management also took place in 1993. A joint task force on sport management curriculum and accreditation established by NASPE-NASSM (1993) developed

a competency-based minimum body of knowledge needed for baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. At the undergraduate level, the core content areas recommended include: (a) behavioral dimensions in sport; (b) management and organizational skills in sport; (c) ethics in sport management; (d) marketing in sport; (e) communication in sport; (f) finance in sport; (g) economics in sport; (h) legal aspects of sport; (i) governance in sport; and (j) field experience in sport management.

For the master's programs, eight core content areas were identified. They include: (a) management leadership and organization in sport; (b) research in sport; (c) legal aspects of sport; (d) marketing in sport; (e) sport business in the social context; (f) financial management in sport; (g) ethics in sport management; and (h) field experience in sport management.

With regard to the doctoral programs, background knowledge such as those required at the undergraduate and master levels are expected. In addition, doctoral students also have to possess research foundations as well as be well-versed in one of the following areas of specialization: (a) sport marketing; (b) organization theory in sport; (c) sport foundations; (d) sport finance; (e) information management; (f) managerial accounting; (g) sport law; (h) sport economics; and (i) human resource management in sport. Internship experience is also essential to them. Last, but not the least, they must also select an advanced cognate area outside of the department (program) so as to support their chosen area of specialization. A minimum of two cognate courses are required and they may be found in such areas as law, journalism, business, and physical education programs.

In 1995, Irwin, Cotter, Jenson, and White (1995) conducted a research to answer two questions, "What are the skills required by professional sports administrators for employment within the industry?" and "Do sport administration courses accommodate for, and teach these skills?". Mail questionnaires were administered to 118 sport administrators throughout Australia. The respondents indicated that it was necessary to have a greater emphasis on administrative and financial skills. Such courses as marketing, finance, law, administration, public relations and business were found to be the most important areas of study of sport administration. In essence, the most frequently used skills were policy development, communications, finance, writing skills and marketing. It was also concluded that the sport administration degrees in Australia did not fully accommodate the skills needed in the field. The tertiary courses in sport administration should therefore attempt to include the courses suggested above.

Also in 1995, Nikolaidis focused his dissertation on the determination of the courses required for a sport management career in the European Community. Questionnaires were mailed to 103 academicians and 141 practitioners of the European Community and the minimal courses required for both the undergraduate and the graduate sport management programs in Europe were highlighted. For the undergraduate programs, both

the academicians and the practitioners agreed that the following courses were important: sport management, internship, personnel management, sport law, sponsorship in sport, public relations. In addition, the academicians emphasized leisure business, management theory, leisure management, and personnel and facility management, whereas the practitioners stressed the importance of courses in negotiations, communications in sport, sport marketing, and marketing. Regarding the graduate programs, both parties felt that courses such as sport marketing, sport management, sport public relations, internship, sponsorship in sport, event management, sport facility management, and sport economics were essential. In addition to those, the practitioners also emphasized the importance of professional sport law and sport financing, whereas the academicians indicated that research methods in sport and seminar in sport management were vital.

After an extensive review of literature, content validated by an expert jury and pilot study, Toh (1997) constructed a Competencies of Sport Managers (COSM) survey instrument. The purpose of his study was to develop a sport management competency model. The final 96-statement COSM was sent to 1,334 sport managers randomly selected from a nationwide population comprising park and recreation agencies, Young Men's Christian Associations (YMCA), and private athletic clubs in the United States. The study yielded a total of 868 returns. Of those, 816 were valid and usable. The received responses were randomly split into two equal halves. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed using the first half of the data to discover a feasible factor structure. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to refine and confirm this basic model using the other half of the data. The results indicated that the sport management competency model is a 6-factor model made up of 31 competencies. These 6 factors are governance, sport foundations, budgeting, risk management, computer skills, and communications. It is also important to note that it was the first time that a CFA was employed in sport management competency research. No researcher has ever utilized such a statistical technique in related research prior to this one.

Conclusion

This literature review indicates that although the findings of many researchers have shown similar competencies for sport managers, quite a number of them still require further scrutiny. This is mainly due to the fact that the samples used in most of the studies were generally small and based mainly on convenience (Paton, 1987). In addition, the survey instruments used are often not very reliable and valid (Paris, 1983; Paton, 1987; Olafson, 1990). As emphasized by Morris and Fitz-Gibbon (1978), "assessment of the validity and reliability of a measuring instrument helps determine the amount of faith people should place in its results" (p. 130). A survey instrument that employs EFA together with CFA and uses a large enough sample size would probably give people a higher amount of faith in its findings.

There are more than 150 colleges and universities in the United States offering undergraduate and/or graduate sport management programs (Bridges & Roquemore, 1993). These include Indiana University, University of Massachusetts, University of North Carolina, Temple University, Texas A&M University, just to name a few. Such programs also exist in other countries like Canada, Spain, England, Netherlands, France, Australia, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. One should not be surprised if more countries start to follow suit given the fact that sport has already become such a huge business.

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