

**EDITORIAL:**

**Sport Management and Marketing: Overview and Recommendation for Future Research  
(Gestión y marketing deportivo: Revisión y recomendación para investigaciones futuras)**

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The sport industry is a large and fast growing industry. The U.S. market accounted for as much as \$400-435 billion in 2012 (Plunkett's Sport Industry Almanac). The conventional definition of the sport industry includes "the products offered to its buyers are sport, fitness, recreation, or leisure-related and may be activities, goods, services, people, places, or ideas" (Pitts & Stotlar, 1996, p.3). Today, the sports market is extending its boundaries by encompassing the entertainment industry and becoming a global cultural phenomenon (Gillentine, 2012).

Reflecting the industry's growth, the academic field of sport management is now in strong demand to educate professionals in the sport industry. Specifically, the special task force of the U.S. National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) defined sport management as "the field of study offering the specialization, training and education necessary for individuals seeking careers in any of the many segments of the industry" (NASSM, n.d.). Since the Journal of Sport Management was first published in 1987, 15 scholarly journals emerged to accommodate the demand for effective communication specifically targeted toward such specific domains of research in sport management as marketing, communication /media, law and policy, finance/economics, organizational theory/behavior, and tourism. At the same time, the growing market size of the sport industry as a cultural phenomenon received scholarly attention from other disciplines such as psychology, management, marketing, advertising and economics (Gillentine, 2012). An early example is Cialdini et al.'s (1976) work, *Basking in Reflected Glory*, which provides a fundamental theoretical background for understanding sport spectator behavior. It is not uncommon to find that scholarly conferences in the business field offer sport as a separate research division.

Today, sport management faces a serious challenge to establish its own identity as an independent academic discipline; whether sport management be a unique academic discipline or a sub-discipline of home disciplines (Chalip, 1990, 2006). Recently, intensive discussions over this issue have been provided by leaders of the field (e.g., Chalip, 2006; Zeigler, 2007),

yet the future direction of sport management remains uncertain. Even among leaders, the opinions are split whether this may be healthy growing pains for a young academic discipline or a serious extinction crisis which requires a quick paradigm shift (Costa, 2005; Gillentine, 2012). In fact, the current status of sport management is similar to the identity crisis experienced by other preceding disciplines such as consumer behavior. Scholars in consumer behavior and marketing fields discussed similar issues and proposed future research directions and the role of academic research in the business field (Calder, Phillips & Tybout, 1981; Clader & Tybout, 1999; Lynch, 1999; Simonson, Carmon, Dhar, & Drolet, 2001; Wells, 1993; Winer, 1999).

It is important to develop a clear understanding of the current status of sport management and rethink our commonly shared future directions and goals. Below is a summary of several suggestions made by leaders in sport management regarding: Approach, Domain, and Goal for sport management scholars.

*Approach*

The major critique for sport management as a unique academic field is related to the contribution to theory. Similar to other young academic disciplines, the sport management researchers borrow existing theories from other established academic fields such as psychology by applying them to the sport context. However, to survive as a unique academic field, the sport management field may need to go beyond mere application. By addressing this issue Chalip (2006) suggests two approaches to improve the theoretical contribution of sport management: (a) the Derivative Model and (b) the Sport-focused Model. The Derivative Model affirms the importance of application of existing robust theories to sport specific contexts. Since sport is such a specific context, application may lead to identifying boundary conditions or lack of relevant theory (Chalip, 2006). On the other hand, the Sport-focused Model emphasizes sport phenomena and constructs/theory that is grounded in the management and marketing of sport. Although the Sport-focused Model is more difficult to establish, this type of research is needed to enhance the significance and value of sport management research.

This ongoing debate about the identity of sport management will remain for a while. As Slack (1998) argued, we need to be more self-critical about what we do and continue to advance the scholarly tradition of sport management by using sport as a test of existing theory and as a site to extend the theory.

### *Domains*

As with many young academic disciplines, sport management is a multidisciplinary field (Pitts, 2002; Shilbury, 2012; Shilbury & Rentschler, 2007). It is inevitable for sport management researchers to be influenced by topical trends and terminologies in each home discipline; rather, it is recommended that sport management scholars should reach out to utilize neighboring concepts and problem solving approaches (Funk, Mahony, & Havitz, 2003). It is particularly true for research domains, where sports provide significant influence and value. In the discussion of the future direction of the sport management field, Chalip (2006) suggested focusing on five sport specific research domains: health, salubrious socialization, economic development, community development, and national pride (Chalip, 2006). While insisting of its legitimacy, Chalip emphasized that those domains are not sport exclusive, but instead a distinctive sport management field that can only be fostered by exploring and identifying sport's link to other sectors (e.g., public health, education, and media). For example, with sports marketing alone, Shannon (1999) identified 18 topical categories in *Sport Marketing Quarterly* (i.e., advertising/promotion, case studies, collegiate sports, consumer behavior, economic impact of sports, event management, facilities/services, international, licensing, market segmentation/target marketing, professional, relationship marketing, research - general, research - spectators, participants and fans, sponsorship, sport marketing education, technology, women in sports, and miscellaneous). Each category has its own different home discipline and it is important to clearly identify and understand the home discipline to communicate with both sport management scholars and the scholars in home disciplines because the terminologies, common constructs, theories, and methodological approaches may differ among academic disciplines. While emphasizing the unique contribution of sports, it is important to clarify the link with other sectors and find a common ground for communication. With appropriate communication, the diversity of methodological approaches of other disciplines and its multidisciplinary contributions could be a great strength of sport management.

### *Goals*

Since its introduction in the 1960s, the sport management field experienced rapid growth and entered an era of reflection, assessment, and refinement. Sport management programs started evaluating the status of sport management academic preparation through a formal accreditation process (Gillentine, 2012). Gillentine asked who we are as sport management scholars; whether we are researchers, educators or professional development vehicles for the sport industry. I strongly believe that those are all our missions. We should continue to closely engage sport management practice and test our theories and models to provide practical implications (Irwin, 2001; Weese, 1995), while fostering development of new theories (Chalip). Zeigler (2007) also emphasized the importance of understanding fundamental social purpose of sport management and noted, "...the mission of sport management globally relate to the mission of the various professional associations that are primarily involved in the professional education of future sport managers" (Zeigler, 2007, p. 305). In particular, agreeing with Zeigler's (1992) recommendation, Frisby (2005) called for more critical sport management research that helps broaden our research and teaching agenda and encompasses improvement in the quality of our life in a global society. Setting common goals for each role, as a researcher, is necessary for the further development of sport management as a unique discipline. Along with this direction, it should be our mission to produce high impact academic work which has multiple disciplinary contributions. Given that the field of sport management and marketing is fast growing, it is imperative to develop an academic tradition through improving the quality of sport journals. A common method of evaluating scientific journals is citation analysis, such as impact factor or social sciences citation index (SSCI). Simply said, the more often a journal article is cited, the higher probability a journal can attain SSCI status.

In sum, it is very important to continue to produce sport specific theories through a variety of methodological tools to further solidify sport management as an academic discipline. In this process, scholars need to embrace a variety of issues and problems associated with diverse segments of sport and multiple stakeholders' perspectives. At the same time, sport management scholars need to effectively communicate their research agenda with related fields. Then, as Gillentine (2012) claimed, we have our own unique contributions that set us apart from other academic disciplines while sharing commonalities with them.

Scholars in our field should not only conduct cutting edge research using their own work in scholarly journals, but also reach out to the journals in the parent fields to enrich and enhance the quality of their research and improve the impact factor of their journals. Ultimately, the collective efforts will help cultivate academic traditions of sport management while providing a foundation for the best practice for sport managers.

Revista Internacional de Ciencias del Deporte (RICYDE; International Journal of Sport Science) has been providing forums for sharing research outcomes and contributed to the establishment of the field of sport science. A variety of academic sub-disciplines within sport science have their own mother fields. To expose and exchange these languages and approaches will also be a fundamental step for the sport management field. I trust that this sheds new light on both sport science and sport management.

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