

Who's Got the Power?: Examining the Differences and Similarities Between Sport Participants and Sport Administrators in the Expected and Obtained Benefits of Sport Participation

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Obesity prevention. Peace. Crime reduction. Political engagement. Community development. Educational attainment. The UN Millennium Goals outline various social ills that should be redressed in moving forward as a global community with sport being hoisted as a panacea for redressing social ills (Beutler, 2008; Coalter, 2010; Donnelly, 2008; Kidd 2007, Levermore, 2008). There is no lack of literature and popular press on the stated benefits of sport participation (Coleman, 1961; Le Menestrel & Perkins, 2007; Zarrett, Fay, Li, Carrano, Phelps, & Lerner, 2009). The immense federal, state, and local attention and funding towards decreasing the social disparities stresses the growing interest in, and significance of, creating sport programs that lead to benefits for targeted populations (Vail, 2007). Despite the claims of benefits, and interest in creating sport programs, we lack evidence regarding how sport produces benefits, who receives this benefits, and under what conditions (Coalter, 2007; Spaaji, 2003). The increase use of sport as an intervention for personal and community development also emphasizes the urgency in understanding the factors of sport programs that contribute to their success in providing the intended benefits.

In sport-for-development there are two main actors: those who are doing the developing and those who are being developed. In creating sport-for-development programs, administrators have been guided by political agendas, personal desires, and social ideologies about the group being developed. The influences of these factors have been attributed to the ambiguity around the purpose and nature of sport-for-development programs and consequently the inconsistency in sport providing the benefits intended.

Yet, what remains consistent is the role of the government and other large organizations (e.g., UN, FIFA, Nike) in the role of the developers. While the means in which these organizations develop targeted groups through sport requires further investigation, the question of how these bodies to obtain the position in which they are able and needed to develop a group of people must first be raised. The relationship between these political organizations and the populations being targeted with their programming suggest a power dynamic that privileges the former group in being able to determine what development is and how it will be accomplished. These organizations are able to control the means of development though the resources, namely funding and access to regulating political bodies, they possess to enforce their perspective and their use of these resources to promote their agenda as beneficial for the society as a whole. On a micro level, this scenario is seen in the class differences between sport administrators and players, as the administrators are often from a higher socioeconomic class which provides the aforementioned resources to gain positions that control who and how groups with less resources can participate in sport. These sport roles are maintained by the continual distribution of resources that favor those who already have resources. The underrepresentation of ethnic minorities and women in sport administration speaks to how race and gender discrimination intertwine with class to increase the resource gap (Ingham & Loy, 1993; Rhoden, 2006) and deny these groups input in structuring their own sport opportunities. Though participant-run, bottom-up approaches have increased in popularity in resistance to the top-down approaches, the lack of consistent funding and political power to justify these programs has often made them unstable and unsustainable. These programs succumb to larger political and structural isomorphic forces that cause them to become more like the top-down structures or dissolve (Sage, 1990; Gruneau, 1999). This power, Lukes(2005) suggests, allows these administrators to shape and control how sport is used for development by limiting, if not completely shutting out, the voices of those with competing interests (cf., Guttman, 1994).

The denial of these voices helps maintain the power dynamic. The expectations and desired sport programming benefits of sport administrators are privileged over those of their participants. According to Lukes(2005) this

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constant struggle between what sport administrators provide and what participants may actually want is an example of latent conflict. Coined in Lukes(2005)' work concerning social development, latent conflict refers to the contradiction between the interests of the group employing power and the real interest of a second group, which has been excluded. In regards to sport-for-development,the conflict is latent given the lack of avenues for those targeted for development to participate in the implementation of sport or acknowledge their desires for their sport participation. The lack of data from these populations further complicates the state actors' ability to include them in the implementation of sport-for-development programs as their perspectives are often not expressed and/or identified in the larger dialogue. Implications from Lukes(2005)' concept of latent conflict demand that more empirical research is needed to promote the use of these voices in determining their true interest and making visible the possible conflicts between them and those exercising the power to develop.

The purpose of this study is to examine the different perspectives that affect sport implementation and evaluation. This study seeks to uncover the differences between sport participants and sport and administrators in their perceptions of benefits expected and obtained from sport participation. This study builds on previous work (Olushola, Jones, Dixon, & Green, in press), which examined the role of intentionality in high school basketball programming as providing benefits consistent with administrators' goals and participants' expectations. Based on the Expectancy Value Theory (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), data from this work along with literature on the benefits of sport participation were used to create a questionnaire to examine the benefits players expect and obtain from their sport participation. A similar questionnaire was created for administrators to measure their perceptions of what benefits players expect and obtain from their programs. Demographic factors that influence this response, namely, race, gender, and social class will also be obtained. Permission from the IRB was obtained to distribute electronic surveys to coaches and players around the United States. Study participants were contacted through each state's high school basketball associations' database and basketball recruiting websites. Participants will receive an email with a link for the administrators' survey and a link for players. Informants will be asked to send the links to coaches and players that could also provide more insight on this topic.

Recognizing the different factors that shape the benefits expected and obtained from sport participation, a repeated measures ANCOVA will be employed to observe the difference in benefits expected and obtain from players' sport participation (cf. Tabachnick & Fidell, 1982). Sport role (administrator and participant), gender (female and male), and race/ethnicity (African-American, European-American, Hispanic, and Asian-American) will serve as the independent variables, the types of benefits as the dependent variables, and class as a covariate. Analyses will look for the influence of class values on administrators and players' perspectives on expected and obtained benefits. The goal of this research is to begin bridging the gap between bottom up and top down approaches to sport programming by acknowledging differences and similarities in the means in which administrators implement sport and the reasons for which players participate. Implications from this research will inform sport administrators of the role of intentionality and one's personal world views in sport programming. Furthermore this research seeks to add the voices of participants that are often marginalized in program development and evaluation research.