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Socio-cultural Friday, May 30, 2014 20-minute oral presentation (including questions) (Conference Center B)

Abstract 2014-121 10:45 AM

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of sport for delivery programming evaluation within one established program in Gansbaai, South Africa through a critical, independent participant-driven evaluation. The Football Foundation of South Africa (FFSA) in Gansbaai, South Africa served as the research context of this study. This organization's established sport for development program offers social integration, conflict resolution, education, and health awareness programming to participants from three distinct communities in the surrounding area. The findings from this empirical case study address a common call from researchers (Coalter, 2009; Frisby & Hayhurst, 2010; Levermore, 2008, Spaaj, 2009) to fulfill the need for empirical evaluation within sport for development programs.

Drawing on the research work of Guest (2009), Levermore (2008), and Darnell (2007), issues regarding local context (how are local community needs addressed?), social impact (what social impact does such programming deliver for participants?), and bias (how do administrators’ assumptions, beliefs, and biases affect program delivery and outcomes?) were explored onsite at the FFSA over a 3-week period, from late August to September, 2012. Such exploration included the collection and analyses of interview, direct participant observation, and organizational document data sources to evaluate how the FFSA sport for development programs are structured and delivered to participants. Interviews were conducted with 17 individuals; five administrators and 12 coaches. The data sources were analyzed according to Brinkman and Kvale’s (year) analysis methods of meaning coding, condensation, and interpretation; subsequent themes and patterns from these data sources emerged and were identified. Emergent themes were triangulated with further analyses of direct participant observations and organizational documents to ensure trustworthiness.

Findings included emergent themes of espoused administrators’ goals, the program’s social impact on participants, and FFSA evaluation procedures. First, FFSA administrators reflected various goals, distinguished as: primary (i.e., education, increased opportunity, social integration); secondary (i.e., life skill development, reduction of crime); and, tertiary (i.e., development of coaches, expansion of the FFSA). Second, social impact included components such as the relationship between players and coaches, the impact of coaching on social integration, and the importance of building trust between coaches and participants. Third, administrator perceptions on evaluation components and procedures were reflective of those in which the FFSA is currently or has formerly engaged. Further, findings included the emergent themes of participants’ life skill development, participants’ emphasis on the importance of competition within programming, and the FFSA’s influence program participants’ home life and social integration. While FFSA administrators are successful in some areas, other areas particularly related to program evaluation require further administrative attention to ensure accurate outcomes for participants.

These findings contribute to both FFSA administrators, as well as to the Sport for Development academic literature. For FFSA administrators, the findings contribute a more comprehensive understanding of program shortcomings and commensurate recommendations for improvements toward more effective program development and delivery. For sport for development researchers, the findings contribute to a further understanding of evaluation in Sport for Development organizations and specifically in how evaluation processes are created and sustained. In this presentation, a discussion of the findings will be shared as well as implications and recommendations for FFSA sport for development program improvements.