Overcoming Inertia: Considering the Catalyst and the Role of Facilitators in Gender Allyship in Sport Organizations

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An extensive literature base has investigated the low representation of women in decision making positions with sport organizations, yet women’s access to these positions remains limited. To get more women into decision making positions, a new approach is needed. This paper presents gender allyship as a paradigm that involves both men and women to reconsider and revise the role that gender plays within sport organizations. Utilizing a combination of grounded theory and critical discourse analysis, this paper identifies the existence of gender allyship within sport organizations and discusses the initiating factor of awareness and the facilitators of women’s agency and ally experience. These results provide interesting theoretical empirical implications, specifically how allyship can create change within organizational contexts and the role of men in the gender leadership within sport management. Additionally, gender allyship provides a strategy for sport organizations looking to increase the number of women in leadership positions.