Organizational Resources Fostering Collaborations Among Sport Clubs: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis

Arthur Lefebvre, Université Catholique de Louvain
Géraldine Zeimers, Université Catholique de Louvain
Thierry Zintz (Advisor), Université Catholique de Louvain

Management - Organizational Capacity (Sport Clubs)  
20-minute oral presentation (including questions)  
Abstract 2019-148  
Friday, May 31, 2019  
8:05 AM  
Room: Napoleon D3

Collaboration among nonprofit sport organizations (NPSOs) – that is collaboration between like-minded organizations such as sport clubs – has attracted considerable interest in both scholarship and practice (Babiak, Thibault and Willem. 2018). Organizational resources are determinants of collaboration formation (Foster & Meinhard, 2002). For instance, the availability of sport facilities can predispose sport clubs to collaborate (Wicker, Vos, Scheerder and Breuer, 2013). Previous research has only examined organizational resources separately using regression analysis (Vos & Scheerder, 2014; Wicker & Breuer, 2012). While these studies have contributed to the ongoing development of knowledge on the formation of collaboration, little is known about the interconnections of these resources. Misener and Doherty (2013) suggested that NPSOs’ resources interact “in concert”. Moreover, each sport clubs possess distinct resources that may lead to collaboration. Therefore, investigating the interconnections between organizational resources by highlighting combinations of necessary resources for collaboration is timely to understand how NPSOs manage their different resources to collaborate.

The purpose of this study is to identify the necessary combinations of organizational resources fostering collaborations among NPSOs. Therefore, this paper addresses the following research question: “Which combination of organizational resources foster collaboration among nonprofit sport clubs?”

The theoretical framework of this research draws on the concept of organizational capacity defined as “the ability of the organization to acquire the resources necessary to fulfill its mission” (Hall et al., 2003). This theory acknowledges the relevance of organizational context by supporting organizations can leverage multiple internal and external resources (e.g. human, financial, infrastructural, and cultural) (Misener & Doherty, 2013).

In cooperation with the sport federations in Wallonia (Belgium), an online survey has been sent to the presidents of all French-speaking sport clubs. This population consists of 6000 sport clubs. The survey contains questions about organizational resources (Wicker and Breuer, 2012, Misener & Doherty, 2013) as well as the 17-items collaboration scale of Thomson, Perry and Miller (2007). This scale allows measuring the degree of collaboration and comprises five key dimensions – governance, administration, mutuality, norms and organizational autonomy.

Using the software Tosmana, a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) will be conducted in the following weeks. QCA uses Boolean minimization processes to link combination of causal conditions to an outcome (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009). In this study, the causal conditions refer to the organizational resources and the outcome refers to the degree of collaboration between sport clubs.

Although findings are not yet available, the authors guarantee that they will be available for presentation at NASSM Conference in May 2019.

This study will contribute to the body of knowledge by highlighting configurations of necessary organizational resources fostering collaborations between sport clubs. Theoretically, this research will complement findings from traditional correlation methods by revealing the interconnection of different resources that lead to collaborations. Moreover, this paper will eventually show that some resources are critical or detrimental to the formation of collaborations. Practically, managers willing to collaborate with like-minded organizations should juggle with their critical assets to cope with their scarce resources.