Examining Effective Mission Statement Construction in Sport for Development and Peace Organizations

Incheol Jang, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Mina Woo, Illinois State University
Jon Welty Peachey (Advisor), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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A mission statement can be defined as “a broadly stated definition of the organization’s basic business scope and operations that distinguish it from similar types of organizations” (Daft & Marcic, 2009, p. 158). A clear and effective mission statement is essential to effectively establish objectives, formulate strategies, devise policies, allocate resources, and motivate employees (Cochran, David, & Gibson, 2008).

While there are studies that analyze mission statements in for-profit (Law & Breznik, 2018) and non-profit organizations (Pandey, Kim, & Pandey, 2017), there is very little scholarship that has investigated mission statements of sport for development and peace (SDP) nonprofit organizations (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011; Svensson & Woods, 2017). Svensson and Woods (2017) examined organizational mission statements of SDP organizations, finding that the majority of organizations did not provide a formal mission statement. However, their study did not investigate how effectively these statements were constructed or how they might vary based on an organization’s geographic location. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine how effectively SDP organizations construct their mission statements and how this construction might vary based on an organization’s geographic location.

Mission statement theory (David, David, & David, 2014) is being utilized to guide this study. Mission statement theory suggests that mission statements should be clear, concise, encouraging, and informative to not only employees but also customers (David et al., 2014). David and colleagues (2014) advanced several essential components of an effective mission statement: Customers, products or services, markets, technology, concern for survival, growth, profitability, philosophy, self-concept, and concern for public image. Previous studies employing mission statement theory have found that good mission statements include key components, philosophy, and services (Gunasekare, 2016), and are positively related to nonprofit organizations’ performance (Wang & Lyn, 2011).

Research Questions
RQ1: How effectively are SDP organizations’ mission statements constructed?
RQ2: In what ways does mission statement construction differ based on geographic location of the SDP organization?

Method
To examine SDP organizations’ mission statements, content analysis methodology is being utilized. Content analysis has been an effective method for examining mission statements (Bolon, 2005). Organizations are being identified through the organizational lists on the Sportanddev.org, and Beyond Sport websites. A total of 1700 organizations are being examined. A priori, thematic coding is being utilized (Creswell, 2012) based on the components of mission statement theory (David et al., 2014). Intercoder reliability is being established through checking the level of Cohen’s Kappa (Viera & Garrett, 2005).

Preliminary Findings and Discussion
While this study is ongoing, preliminary findings reveal that the majority of mission statements do not include all components, but some key components, customer focus, and services are highlighted. SDP organizations’ mission statements are very concerned about social responsibility and impact regardless of organizational location. In addition, findings indicate organizations in North America have more specific and effectively constructed mission statements than organizations in Asia, South America, Oceania, and other locations. Theoretical implications and future research directions will be discussed as well. The study will be completed prior to NASSM.