Exploring Capacity to Serve a Sport Club Mission

Ryan Clutterbuck, Brock University
Shannon Kerwin, Brock University

Management - Organizational Capacity (Community Sport)  
virtual asynchronous  
20-minute oral presentation (including questions)  
Abstract 2020-104  
Session: Organizational Capacity

Organizational capacity is the foundation for sport club functioning (Millar & Doherty, 2016), and given the prevalence of limited budgets and the need for conservative use of resources, sport managers must understand and strategically manage their capacity (Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006). In Canada, the Canadian Sport Policy (2012) advocates a direct mandate for national sport organizations (NSOs), provincial/territorial sport organizations (P/TSOs), and club level coordination of sport delivery across the country. However, many sport clubs function with limited organizational capacity to carry out the vision, policies, and requirements of their national and provincial sport governing bodies. Therefore, it is important to examine the capacity strengths and weaknesses of clubs within sport networks to determine best practices and to ensure the efficient development and deployment of organizational resources within a larger sport system (Doherty et al., 2014; Millar & Doherty, 2016; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Wicker & Breuer, 2014; 2013). Yet, P/TSOs that operate in connection with – and may be leaders to – sport clubs that serve small (e.g., approximately 50 members) and large memberships (e.g., 1,000 or more members) with relatively few resources are notably absent from the capacity literature. Relatively little is known, for example, about the mechanisms or processes by which P/TSOs can facilitate and support development of organizational capacity with their local sport clubs. Therefore, the purpose of this project is to examine the capacity of one sport’s clubs to fulfill the mission of the P/TSO and to explore the P/TSOs efforts to build capacity with [and for] their member clubs. Stakeholder theory will be used to frame the understanding of organizational capacity in this context. It suggests that it is important to consider multiple constituency groups (e.g., sport clubs) when exploring the management of capacity of a given entity (e.g., P/TSOs). The current project is in progress and utilizes a multiple-case study methodology (Patton, 2015). Semi-structured interviews are being conducted with representatives from the P/TSO and sport club presidents to determine the clubs strengths and weaknesses in various organizational capacity domains (i.e., human resources, finances, relationships and networks, infrastructure, and planning and development capacity), and the perceived ability of the clubs to serve the mission of the provincial governing body. Findings from this research will enhance understandings of capacity and the unique relationship between entities at multiple levels of a sport system.