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Articles

Mission

ATINER is a *World Non-Profit Association* of Academics and Researchers based in Athens. ATINER is an independent **Association** with a **Mission** to become a forum where Academics and Researchers from all over the world can meet in Athens, exchange ideas on their research and discuss future developments in their disciplines, **as well as engage with professionals from other fields**. Athens was chosen because of its long history of academic gatherings, which go back thousands of years to *Plato's Academy* and *Aristotle's Lyceum.* Both these historic places are within walking distance from ATINER's downtown offices. Since antiquity, Athens was an open city. In the words of Pericles, **Athens"…*is open to the world, we never expel a foreigner from learning or seeing". (***"Pericles' Funeral Oration", in Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War).* It is ATINER's **mission** to revive the glory of Ancient Athens by inviting the World Academic Community to the city, to learn from each other in an environment of freedom and respect for other people's opinions and beliefs. After all, the free expression of one's opinion formed the basis for the development of democracy, and Athens was its cradle. As it turned out, the Golden Age of Athens was in fact, the Golden Age of the Western Civilization. *Education* and *(Re)searching* for the 'truth' are the pillars of any free (democratic) society. This is the reason why Education and *Research* are the two core words in ATINER's name.

The Athens Journal of Sports

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The current issue is the fourth of the sixth volume of the *Athens Journal of Sports*, published by the Sports Unit of the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER) under the auspices of the Panhellenic Association of Sports Economists and Managers (PASEM).

Gregory T. Papanikos, President
Athens Institute for Education and Research

Athens Institute for Education and Research
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11-14 May 2020, Athens, Greece

The Sport, Exercise, & Kinesiology Unit of ATINER organizes its **20th Annual International Conference on Sports: Economic, Management, Marketing & Social Aspects, 11-14 May 2020, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of Sports. The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers of all areas of sports. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2020/FORM-SPO.doc).

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- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
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Athens Institute for Education and Research
A World Association of Academics and Researchers

16th Annual International Conference on Sport & Exercise Science
27-30 July 2020, Athens, Greece

The Sport, Exercise, & Kinesiology Unit of ATINER will hold its **16th Annual International Conference on Sport & Exercise Science, 27-30 July 2020, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of Sports. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair a session or observer. Please submit an abstract (email only) to: atiner@atiner.gr, using the abstract submission form (https://www.atiner.gr/2020/FORM-FIT.doc).

Important Dates
- Abstract Submission: **23 December 2019**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **29 June 2020**

Academic Member Responsible for the Conference
Dr. Maria Konstantaki, Academic Member, ATINER & Senior Lecturer, Buckinghamshire New University, UK.

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Fields of Vision:
Arts and Sport Communities and Methods of Practice

By Lisa Stansbie[*]

The disciplines of arts and sport are usually divided in education, research, professional practice and cultural policy, even though in the UK they both lie within a single department of Government (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport). In the UK the relationship between arts and sports can sometimes appear awkward, with the two disciplines often only bought together for large international mega sporting events. However, links between the arts and sport can enhance strategies to increase participation in each and promote cultural citizenship, stimulate experimentation, innovation and tackle challenging topics. This paper takes The Fields of Vision Project and the associated Fields of Vision Manifesto as a departure point to propose pioneering modes of practice that cross the discipline boundaries of sports and art, whereby a dialogue and community of practice develops that encourages audience diversity, community engagement and hybrid forms of practice. Utilising precedents from contemporary visual art, propositions are expressed for new experiences and opportunities for practitioners, producers and audiences that might offer impact and legacy beyond the mega sporting event.

Keywords: *Art, Community, Culture, Olympics, Sport.*

Introduction

Collaboration and cross-disciplinary working between practitioners and participants in the fields of arts[1] and sport can open up innovative spaces for experimentation, innovation and create new audiences. Links between the two can increase participation in both and also a new space can emerge whereby art and sport are transdisciplinary.

The practice and experience of both disciplines as a participant and audience offers opportunity for new experiences and engagement internationally and locally. The promotion of access to enable participation in both within the UK falls under the remit of the government's department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)[2] with a proposed focus on participation and wellbeing:

"Everyone should be able to access and participate in the arts, heritage and sport no matter what their background or where they come from. Participation in many DCMS sectors is proven to increase health and well-being, enrich citizens' lives and promote social mobility through broadened experiences and networks. Arts

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[*]Dean, Leeds School of Arts, Leeds Beckett University, UK.
[1]'Arts' in this paper is used as a broad term to include visual art, dance, literature, poetry, performance and music.
[2]DCMS is a ministerial department in the UK, supported by 46 different public bodies and agencies.

and culture, heritage, libraries, museums and galleries and sport all have a vital role to play in this work and we believe no-one should be left behind." (DCMS 2016)

While the two disciplines sit within the same UK government department, currently there is very little collaboration whereby the two areas are truly working together. Projects where sports and arts convene, are usually attached to large sporting events. In this way arts and sport are bought together for events such as the Olympics (Cultural Olympiad), Commonwealth Games, The Tour de Yorkshire, The Tour de France, The FIFA World Cup and the ICC Cricket World Cup. Such events provide a unique opportunity for the host nation to highlight their cultural and sporting heritage. However, despite the prominence of these high-profile arts and sport projects, they rarely have a legacy of impact and a life beyond the timescale of the sports event.

It should be noted that the notion of bringing the two areas closer together is not a contemporary idea. Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the International Olympic Committee (and an educator) was particularly interested in the notion of physical and intellectual education being equally important, identifying a parity across sports and arts. This concept arose from his research around the ancient Greek gymnasium schooling whereby he saw evidence of a range of individuals working both practically and theoretically across different subjects. Ultimately this led to him reviving the ancient Olympic Games into a modern format. Interestingly de Coubertin's early ideas are described as being centred on the ability of International games to potentially broaden understanding across cultures and also promote and encourage amateur sportspersons rather than professional athletes.[3] This notion of expanding the audience and participants of sports is common today. De Courbertin was also responsible for starting the art competitions as part of the Olympics, which ran from 1912 to 1948 (Neuendorf 2016). The art competition in this format included different categories that artists could compete in and win medals: painting, sculpture, architecture, music and literature. While these early competitions could be seen from a contemporary perspective as conceptually limited, due to the fact that artists were tasked with illustrating and responding to specific sports (and architecture for example was focused on the design of stadiums and sports facilities) it is an example of a consideration (stemming from the ancient Greek ideals of a move toward the dual importance of both) of an early approach that attempted to draw the two areas together around a single focused event. However, these early attempts to draw together the two areas, did so less successfully, always retaining the distinctive boundary of each discipline, as defined by the Olympics of the time.

Research has shown that the idea of an Olympiad (Cultural events in the lead up to an Olympic Games) stems back to the ancient Greek games. It is thought that the first Olympiad started around the Hellenistic period. In the contemporary Olympic Games the original notion of Coubertin's art and sport balance has shifted significantly with the Cultural Olympiad replacing the notion of an art competition and the host country's cultural programme in the

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[3]It should be noted that some of Coubertin's definitions of 'amateur' were very much flavoured by his personal views on class.

lead up to and during the games featuring now as a prerequisite from the IOC (International Olympic Committee).

In the 2012 UK Olympics the Cultural Olympiad had a prominent place in the preceding years[4] and it appeared that the UK had moved some way toward achieving the IOC remit of encouraging a blending of the two disciplines. The IOC states that the Cultural Olympiad is a '…required element of any Olympic and Paralympic Games and is part of the International Olympic Committee's ambition to present the Games as the blending of 'sport, culture and education' (Garcia 2013).

While previous government initiatives have suggested the benefits of both arts and sport participation, there currently does not exist proposals to promote such benefits. Coalter (2007) in his research around 'the active citizen' references previous UK government initiatives that did go so far to suggest that:

> "Participation in the arts and sport has a beneficial social impact. Arts and sport are inclusive and can contribute to neighbourhood renewal. They can build confidence and encourage strong community groups."

It can also be argued that both practices share a commonality of approaches, although examples of shared philosophies are also scarce. A number of projects highlighted through this paper evidence how collaboration can foster new forms of hybrid practice for consumers, participants and producers. Social challenges can be addressed through rich partnerships across sport and cultural organisations. New approaches to both disciplines are possible by developing communities of practice, such as the *Fields of Vision*, that endeavour to promote cultural citizenship. This necessitates the forming of communities of interested parties, who will promote the value of cross-discipline working. It is possible that arts and sport can change the perception of each other and communicate with differing audiences, while opening up new spaces for cultural production engaging with activities that focus on the body.

Literature Review: Sport into Art

In contemporary writing around the potential to draw together sport and art, the aesthetic of sport is a prominent feature in attempts to draw similarities between the two. However, the lack of competition, perceived as existing within the arts, is also stated as a particular difference. It could be said that within visual art specifically the notion of competition exists in many forms, such as competitive processes for artistic commissions, funding, exhibitions, prizes and projects, many of which have a jury attached to them who are tasked with judging entries on a range of criteria.[5]

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[4]Case studies from this period are discussed later in the paper. To note also the 2012 UK Cultural Olympiad had a total funding of £126.6 million, included 40,000 artists and 5,370 new works produced.
[5]Notably in the US the competitions and exhibition call outs are called juried exhibitions.

In terms of visual art, contemporary artists have shown an increasing interest in sport(s) ranging from a focus on the body aesthetic, performance, endurance, movement, the architecture and spaces of sport and the increasing media coverage.

In the 2002 *Body Power/Power Play: Views on Sports in Contemporary Arts* contemporary art exhibition in Stuggart, Germany organized as part of Stuggart's proposal for the 2012 Olympic Games, the catalogue introduction by Andrea Jahn notes:

> "In my search for texts on sports and art, I began to suspect at some point that, at least since the 1990's the relationship between the two was one of mutual scepticism or lack of interest." (Jahn 2002)

There are notable exceptions to this statement through examples of creative practitioners who have undertaken residencies and produced work challenging and responding to sport. Recent examples include Julien Previeux's *Petite de la triche* (2015) installation for the 2015 Lyon Biennale, France. The installation discussed the relationship between sport and technological advancement and the impact this has in the design of objects and the role in which the media played in the subsequent banning of certain equipment. The Speedo *Fastskin* features as once of the (banned from 2010 in swimming events) curated objects, its technological advancement resulted in 29 world records being broken in the space of 5 days of the 2009 Rome FINA Swimming Championships and was deemed by journalists as 'technology doping' (McCullough 2010).

Martin Creed's well publicised piece *Work No. 850* (2008) involved an athlete running through the Tate Gallery, London every thirty seconds as fast as possible followed by a pause. Here running literally becomes art as the audience, who now appear on the sidelines, are exposed to the sheer physicality of the relentless act in an unlikely neoclassical gallery setting. It is at odds with the space, as running is usually prohibited in galleries. Interestingly Puma collaborated with Creed in supplying the apparel for the runners and this branding is promoted through the media exposure of the project.

It is when notions of performance are utilised that the boundaries seem to dissolve between arts and sport. Dutch performance artist Guido Van der Werve undertakes feats of running and triathlon endurance and documents them via film. *Number Thirteen: Home* (similar to Creed he numbers his works) (2008) is the film documentary of a 1200 mile triathlon he undertook. Here we see sport as art, the experience and subsequent documentation of the experience is the creative outcome.

Philippe Parreno and Douglas Gordon's film *Zidane: A 21ˢᵗ Century Portrait* (2006) is perhaps the most widely exhibited work of contemporary art that focusses on sport as it's subject. A documentary film about Zidane during one football match, which only focusses intently on him (and not the game) it is a mesmerizing contemporary portrait. It has been shown internationally at film festivals, as well as in gallery settings. It is perhaps not surprising that in surveying the landscape of sport and art exemplars it is the subject of football that features most prominently. *Futbol: The Beautifil Game* was a group

exhibition (timed in relation to the World Cup of that year) of thirty established (high profile) artists at The Los Angeles County Museum of Art in and mass spectacle as well as the shared human experience between diverse spectators. *Sport in Art* was also a large a group exhibition in 2012 at The Museum of Art of Kracow included 40 artists across a broad range of media, from illustration to conceptually dense contemporary art.

One final example is that of *L'Entorse*, *E(x)sports* project. An extensive festival that previously created biennale projects linking arts and sport in France and provided the opportunity for the practitioners of each to work together within local French communities and also overseas in the UK. The project ran over a period of 5 years and promoted the working together of arts and sports community organisations in the UK and France.

Literature Review: Art into Sport

Sport, as a media event and leisure ritual, is increasingly becoming a center of commercial and personal interest, with an ever-greater role in society, politics, and the economy (Jahn 2002).

Sport is becoming increasingly popular in the UK with a record number of individuals taking part in amateur sports. The notion of sport itself is continually expanding and like art, its boundaries and definitions are becoming increasingly blurry and pleasingly difficult to define. As Platchias (2003) writes:

> "Both art and sport appear to be open concepts in that they are unamenable to an absolute definition."

In Welsch's (2006) article discussing the possibility of sport being art he states in the introduction that:

> "…the modern transformations of the concept of art in particular allow sport's to be viewed as art.." (Welsch 2006)

He continues to describe the move within sport from ethics to aesthetics. This view that might rely on aesthetics as a common element can be seen as limited however, and it is arts continued challenge and use of the everyday experience that makes a real connection between the two disciplines. While Welsch (2006) claims that "…sport is distant from ordinary life". This notion is, however, increasingly contested, particularly with the growth of mass participation events and the rise of the 'amateur', alongside the boundaries of what is now considered sport being progressively more stretched[6].

Stephanie Merchant also writes about the rise of the aesthetic experience in sport in her article that refers to 'glow sport'. Glow sports are (usually) night time mass participation spectacle based running events, whereby lights, paint

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[6]The contemporary rise of 'esports' being an example in case, while located in videogame culture is increasingly referred to as a 'sport'.

and other glow in the dark apparatus are used to navigate and create an apparently unique visual and physical experience.

> "As the boundary between sport and leisure becomes increasingly blurry over time, we see a new branch of sporting events that not only facilitate the human expression of sporting skill, endurance, competition and speed but they also foreground and play with the ways in which spatial perception, experience, and in particular sensory experience contribute to arguably a more memorable, interesting, in short 'sensational' event experience." (Merchant 2017)

Linked to the aesthetic lure of 'glow sports' one of the most widely reviewed pieces of art inspired by the UK's Yorkshire staging in 2014 of The Tour De France was *Ghost Peleton* (2014) by Phoenix Dance Theatre and NVA, which focused on night time use of light and human movement, yet the piece was created by an arts organization with sport as it's subject. The cultural activities surrounding the Tour De Yorkshire cycle race were known under the umbrella title of *The Grand Depart*. This was intended to be a smaller-scale approach to a cultural Olympiad ahead of the Tour de France arriving in Yorkshire and *Ghost Peleton* formed part of *The Grand Depart*, alongside a series of other cycling inspired artworks. In a similar way to Merchant's descriptions, the success of the piece lay in its spectacle, with an emphasis on the aesthetics (and actually the resulting seductive photography documenting the piece). The piece involved a film and live performance with both dancers and cyclists. The cyclists were photographed and filmed travelled along some of the Tour De France (Yorkshire) route at night illuminated by wearing special NVA LED designed suits that changed colour depending on the speed and movement of the rider.

The use of aesthetics and the seductive draw of such innovative approaches to movement are limited to the visual in this example and participation for an audience is largely in many ways passive. There is potential for new knowledge through arts and sport collaboration that goes deeper than the visual via a shared theoretical base and in particular precedents in philosophy, sociology, history and culture.

Models of theory that cross the disciplines of visual arts and sport can also often focus on human performance and movement. In some ways this can be an unconscious connection, as is the case in contemporary art with works created under the umbrella of Endurance Performance Art. An obvious example would be the endurance performance art of Marina Abramovic, whose artwork seeks to test the limits of physical endurance. Abramovic's work has been prominent since the early 1970's and her 2010 piece *The Artist is Present* at the Museum of Modern Art New York was widely publicized due to the public performance which saw the artist sit still and silent for a period of 800 hours in the public gallery. Here philosophical notions of human endurance could be suggested as a common ground across arts and sport, although they are not articulated deliberately in this way and it is the author here who is drawing these parallels.

There are abundant examples across the broad spectrum of the arts where sport is the chosen topic. This is not surprisingly, more prevalent than any other

area in literature, both fiction and non-fiction. One unexpected piece that stands out is the well-known fiction writer Joyce Carol Oates writing eloquently around the topic of boxing and drawing similarities with theatre in her collection of essays *On Boxing:*

> "Each boxing match is a story - a unique and highly compressed drama without words." (Oates 2006)

Oates goes on to state that the boxer is on the stage of a ring in an act of a very public performance to demonstrate their limits physically and psychologically with the audience as vouyeurs of a kind entwined in an intimate spectacle. Interestingly Oates also writes as a runner herself around the concept of running and its relationship with the arts:

> "In running, spirit seems to pervade the body; as musicians experience the uncanny phenomenon of tissue memory in their fingertips, so the runner seems to experience in feet, lungs, quickened heartbeat, an extension of the imagining self." (Oates 1999)

One final example of the artist as sportsperson and the links between the two that a practitioner can embody is bought poetically alive in Haruki Murakami's book *What I Talk About When I Talk about Running* (2009). A personal memoir that links his writing practice to the practice of running alongside a reflection on ageing, the book reads like a graceful honest piece of wandering prose.

Findings: Transformative Models of Arts and Sports

The following case studies involving sport and arts aim to evidence impact beyond only being directly involved in the physical activity. They also seek to extend the boundaries of what might be considered 'sport' and 'arts'.

> "…while ethnographic research has generated important insights about embodiment, sport and movement cultures, there is a danger that the underlying message is that one needs to do the activity to fully understand it." (Sparkes 2017)

The *RUN RUN RUN Biennale* was an interdisciplinary programme initiated by Kai Syng Tan (2019), exploring the ways in which running could be activated as a creative material, metaphor and methodology to think through critical issues related to the body, gender, space and community. With versions of the festival from 2014 – 2018 the biennale has focussed on running as a 'tool' (an artistic one) in which considerations surrounding the body and human movement can be analysed through a lens of running activity. While there currently exists areas of research termed *Running Studies* within the discourse of the social sciences, the *RUN RUN RUN* founder noticed that there was a gap in the study of running outside this and certainly in the area of the arts and running[7]. Tan's programme

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[7]The work of Bale (2004) *Running Cultures: Racing in Time and Space* does seek to extend this

however was distinct in that it was aimed at examining running as an arts and humanities discourse in its own right. The events and seminars that have formed part of *RUN RUN RUN* have been hugely successful at drawing speakers and practitioners across arts, humanities and sports and from over 30 different institutions.

Where the physical experience can be translated into creative output to further engage other participants and audiences (other than those taking part in the physical activity) there is a real opportunity for participants to reconsider their relationship with concepts of the body, community, environment and movement in a multi-faceted way. This approach is referred to by Froggart (2016) as a 'third space' that is importantly termed, 'transformative'.

> "Art and sport are brought into a creatively unstable interaction with each other. A third space emerges in which each transforms the other in participant experience giving rise to new cultural experience." (Froggart 2016)

This description is situated around Froggart's discussion of the *Seaswim* project (2011 onwards) which formed part of the I-move Cultural Olympiad programme for the UK 2012 Olympics. I-Move was the county of Yorkshire's Cultural Olympiad programme and Froggart and her team have undertaken an evaluation of the post-games impact of the arts activities that formed this.

> "The initial aims of I-move clearly stated that its intentions were to …explore and transform people's relationship to their bodies through movement and shift the relationship between society and the moving body." (Froggart 2016)

The move to expand the notion of sport to 'movement' resulted in a broader approach to the artistic projects. Froggart describes the different models of participation in a number of selected I-move projects and discusses how they encouraged different modes of experience across both arts and sport. In her first example she describes the Additive approach. The creative work being an "add on" or added to an event, such as an exhibition accompanying a sports event. Secondly, she refers to Interactive, sport usually being the subject matter with an interaction taking place between arts and sport and in some cases methods and practice being interchanged between the two disciplines (Most examples cited in this paper up to this point would be situated in this category). Finally, she uses *Seaswim* as an example of a Transformative approach. Where the space is not sport or art and cannot be classed as either – but is a new third space with real integration and interaction that defies the discipline boundaries. The transformative space can give rise to new experiences for the participants and potentially offers expanded opportunities for participants to shape experiences.

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discourse and draws references from literature, poetry film and art.

Figure 1. *Lynne Froggart's Models of Participation in Arts and Sport (Seaswim)*
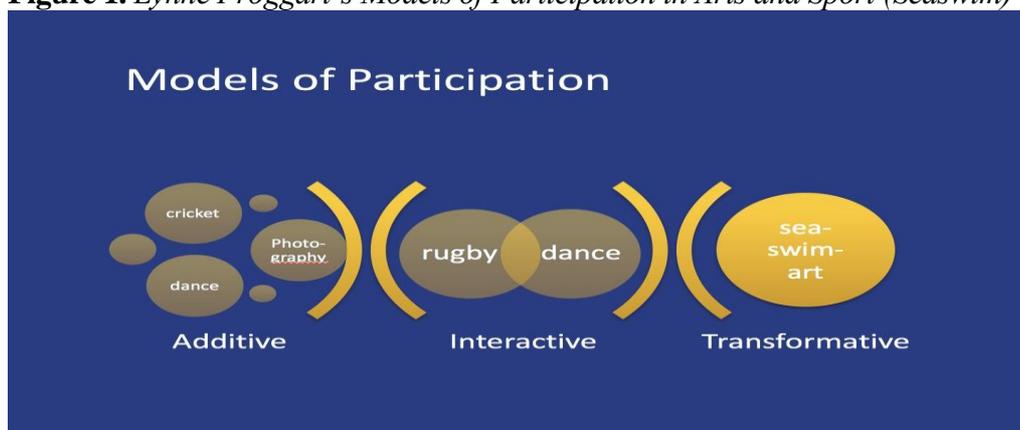
Source: Froggart (2016) Fields of Vision Seminar Presentation.

Froggart's diagram (Figure 1) above illustrates the methods that the I-move projects employed and how each arts and sport interaction led to a different level of participation from an audience and ultimately led to a variety of cross-disciplinary approaches (diagram). The *Seaswim* (2011 onwards) was a locally grown project that had a strong sense of place through its base on Scarborough beach on the North East coast of the UK. It explored the relationship between swimming in the sea and creativity. A number of works produced involved the act of swimming in the production of work. Situated around organised public swims, workshops in beach huts, performances and artist residencies it was open to all abilities and ages. It altered local people's perceptions of their environment by a direct experience with it followed by opportunities to be creative based on the physical and mental experience of the sea, which participants often described as 'liberating' highlighting the transformative effects of sea swimming, a sport which was often new to participants.

Fields of Vision: Propositions

In the UK currently art and sport are being marginalised in the school curriculum. In a school curriculum that has a focus on testing from year two in reading, punctuation, spelling and maths, Physical Education and the Creative Disciplines are seeing their subjects emphasis and time allocated shrinking. The proportion of 15 and 16 year old pupils in secondary school in the UK selecting art music and drama has fallen to its lowest in 10 years (Guardian 2018) alongside this secondary schools have reduced teaching time and resources for physical education drastically over the last five years (Hazel 2018). As such this is having an impact on the number of students wanting to pursue creative and sporting subjects at University and ultimately within the UK after graduation.

There are clear benefits to drawing connections across the two disciplines. Collaboration can result in a higher participation rate in both and innovative projects can encourage an engagement within communities that is meaningful and long lasting. In the *Fields of Vision* project Jonathan Long writes:

"The (UK) government invests in sport and the arts not just for their own sake, but for the very similar social roles they are expected to play. Nevertheless, collaboration and partnership, never mind synthesis, do not come easy." (Long 2017)

Fields of Vision is a grouping of researchers, academics, policymakers, cultural producers, artists and sports people interested in the relationship between the arts and sport. *Fields of Vision* was conceived in 2011 by Doug Sandle, then the Chair of Leeds Rugby Arts and initially developed in partnership with Jonathan Long of the Research Institute for Sport, Physical Activity and Leisure of Leeds Beckett University and later formed into a more expansive Steering Group with members Franco Bianchini and Lisa Stansbie.

"Through a network of individuals and organisations *Fields of Vision* aims to encourage collaboration between the two fields by developing the arts to express and critique sport, to highlight sport as a source of creativity in arts practice, to encourage sporting organisations and teams to use the arts in their community work and as a means to address social and cultural issues within sport." (Sandle 2018)

The original 2012 International Conference *Fields of Vision* (which subsequently started the development of a group of interested parties) was conceived and organized to coincide with the year of the Olympics staged in the UK and took place in November 2012. Convened by *Leeds Rugby Arts* (Leeds Rugby Foundation) and hosted in association with Leeds Beckett University its intentions were to bring together those interested or engaged in the historical and contemporary relationship between the arts and sport, and to facilitate interdisciplinary partnerships. In holding the event at the end of a four-year cultural Olympiad, it could situate itself as a timely review of the activities that had taken place as part of the cultural Olympiad and propose methods in which these approaches might be utilised in the future. The conference attracted academics, researchers, arts practitioners, cultural producers and policy-makers and also resulted in a series of new artworks, established through a *Fields of Vision Arts Programme* supported by the Arts Council England. Papers and creative practice presented at the conference also resulted in the 2014 book *Fields of Vision: The Arts in Sport.*

Building on this previous work the AHRC[8] funded *Fields of Vision Seminar Series* (2015 – 2017) was a project intended to expand the conversation around arts and sport across the UK and include opportunities to discuss key themes such as Participation and Audiences, Aesthetics and Representation and Well-being, social capital and cultural citizenship, all of which resulted in the publication of an arts and sport manifesto. Three seminars took place at The National Football Museum, Manchester, Headingley Carnegie Stadium, Leeds and The Watershed, Bristol. Ensuring the seminar reflected its topic, the venues were a combination of sports and arts venues. While some of the seminar presenters were also involved in the initial 2012 conference, they were able to critically evaluate their experiences

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[8]AHRC is the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council. It provides funding for arts and humanities research and postgraduate study.

since 2012, and in some cases review the legacy and social impact of the work undertaken as part of the cultural Olympiad. In particular Beatriz Garcia talked about her *London 2012 Cultural Olympiad Evaluation* (2013) and her publication *Reflections on the 2012 Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival* (2013). It also provided a platform to foster opportunities to collaborate across institutions and disciplines and potentially create new and emerging area of research.

It could be said that *Fields of Vision* in itself is a community of practice with an identified shared commitment to the arts and sport. A group sharing an interest in bringing the two disciplines together and learning through their network and relationship building how the links between the two can be improved, fostered and expanded.

Conclusions

According to Beatriz (2013) the 2012 UK Cultural Olympiad resulted in 10,940 new partnerships being formed as a result of the program. This included partnerships and collaboration across cultural organisations, businesses, educational establishments, local authorities and sports organisations. This could suggest that where there is a strong focus on programming backed by largescale funding it is possible to draw different collaborations together. It should also be stated that this included a broad range of art forms. However, keeping this momentum is difficult as 30% of organisations also stated that they would be keen to continue the work they had established as part of the Cultural Olympiad but it would be dependent on funding.

In 2016, for the first time, The International Olympic Committee itself commissioned three artists to be artist in residence in Rio during the Olympic Games 2016. They stated the importance of doing this by quoting the original aspirations of the Olympic Movement. For the Rio 2016 Cultural Olympiad it was clear that Brazil did not have the funding to support a cultural Olympiad and artistic events were as a result more spontaneous and largely took place at a local level with during the games itself, led by community arts groups. Perhaps this needs consideration for the future in terms of reflecting the aspirations and needs of the host city and it's communities.

> "A Cultural Olympiad, driven by the host city and country (while inspired and open to the contributions of the broader Olympic Movement) continues to be essential as a counterpoint to the sporting competitions and should keep growing and developing in future Games editions. All the same, having the IOC directly involved as a commissioner of art sets an excellent precedent to raise expectations and make everyone aware that this is central – not tangential – to the Olympic mission." (Garcia 2016)

It is clear that the support for arts and sports initiatives linked to world sporting events and even at local level is connected to funding streams. In order to raise the appetite for initiatives it would need arts and sports organisations and

policy makers willingness to collaborate and lobby for funding and support for joint projects.

In a report undertaken in Scotland by Glasgow Life Services (Jubb and Cutherbert 2014) *Running and Cultural Participation,* the participation of deprived communities within the Glasgow's well known running events and cultural organisations was analysed with a view to increasing the uptake in both, with a hope this might impact on wellbeing. The report suggests that access to both needs to improve and in particular the confidence of community participants who felt that cultural and sport offers were not aimed at them. Interestingly the report is split into two distinct sections – the cultural offer and the running study.

The Fields of Vision Manifesto was developed to overcome divisions and provide a proposal to bring together individuals, organisations and policy makers. The use of the term manifesto was particular, in that it was aimed to be a declaration of intentions for new possibilities and a call for action from arts and sports organisations. The manifesto sought to state that sport and art both offer potential to express cultural identity, encourage cultural experimentation and innovation. The collaboration of both can disrupt the dominate parameters of what each discipline is and offer inspirational forms of movement and spectacle. A new third space that might emerge could encourage new and different audiences spanning divides in society, while being built within local communities using familiar environments in new and unexpected ways.

Professor Jonathan Long (2017), of Leeds Beckett's Carnegie School of Sport, said in describing the intentions of the manifesto:

> "We want to challenge people not to see 'sport' and 'art' in separate boxes, but to think about the exciting, magical things that could happen by bringing them together. We hope others will share and endorse the Fields of Vision manifesto."

The Fields of Vision manifesto was intended to bridge the gap that currently exists and start a conversation around new opportunities. It was a particular stance that poses moving beyond the Cultural Olympiad model whereby art and sport co-exist as part of a mega event and develop truly innovative models of practice that have the potential to address community need. It was aimed at being the start of a longer-term conversation.

The Fields of Vision Manifesto states:

> We call upon arts and sports organisations and their communities to pursue these potential benefits through a range of positive actions:

> - creating a dialogue to explore collaboration and recognise that the search for new participants/audiences will be assisted by new hybrid forms/ practices
> - ensuring that cultural policies incorporate sport, and more generally all strategies for sport and the arts should acknowledge the other

- co-locating activities to encourage dialogue between arts, sports and other related bodies
- supporting integration not just of form, but also of provision, e.g. where community projects do not offer only sports or only arts, but can provide either as appropriate in the interest of securing community development
- ensuring that where 'partnerships' are established to address community need there is an expectation that both sport and the arts will be represented and that funding will follow
- funding organisations beyond sport and the arts to run initiatives as it is they who are often more open to ideas of integration and hybridity
- experimenting with sports-arts collaboration projects in the programmes of major festivals
- planning for the longer term not just short term ('demonstration') initiatives.

Finally, it could be said that we don't need to redefine the arts or sports or attempt to place boundaries around what each discipline is, but a third space could emerge…a new way of doing and being.

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Unsuccessful Transitions:
Understanding Dropout from the Athletes' Perspective

By Georgios Andronikos[*], Tony Westbury[±] & Russell J.J. Martindale[•]

Limited studies have investigated the experiences of athletes who did not 'make it' to elite level. To target this research gap, this study accessed and investigated this hard to reach population in order to understand the development and transition experiences of athletes who did not manage to negotiate successfully the junior to senior elite transition. A qualitative methodology was utilised and six athletes were interviewed. Inductive analysis showed that an unsuccessful transition from junior to senior level is highly individual and is attributed to a combination, rather than a single factor. The factors emerging from the work, which can increase the risk of athletes dropping out included: poor communication; inappropriate support; balancing a dual career without support or with excessive pressure; and a win focus environment during the development stage. Implications for coaches and policy makers with regards to impacting positively on both the transition experience itself and earlier foundation experiences are discussed further.

Keywords: *Dropout, Elite Sport, Talent Development, Transition from Junior to Senior Level.*

Introduction

Talent development has been shown to be complex, with the pathway towards elite level consist of multiple stages and transitions (Bloom 1985, Stambulova 1994). Successfully dealing with those transitions is of critical importance to becoming a professional athlete. The most commonly used theoretical models of 'within career' transitions are those outlined by Stambulova (2003) and Wylleman and Lavallee (2004). These models highlight the complexity of the trajectory to elite level. More specifically, in each transition, athletes are likely to face multiple demands and barriers that they need to cope with by drawing upon the necessary personal and external resources (Stambulova 2003). In addition, Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) identified a range of normative transitions that athletes may face across a number of categories including athletic, individual, psychosocial and academic/vocational. Importantly, different types of transitions may occur at the same time, something that is particularly likely around the junior to senior transition, which adds to the complexity of the challenge to be overcome. On top of this, unexpected, or non-normative transitions, increases the level of challenge that athletes have to cope with further still.

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According to Stambulova et al. (2009), the transition from junior to senior level is a normative transition defined as taking place when an athlete starts to participate in adult competitions. This transition represents the entrance to the mastery stage and is hypothesised to last between one and four years. This transition is commonly said to be the most demanding and difficult in the trajectory towards elite level in sport (Stambulova et al. 2009). As a consequence, many talented athletes stall, move to recreational sport or even dropout during the transition from junior to senior level in sport (Stambulova et al. 2009).

Research in the area of dropout however, has focused mainly on children and adolescents, finding that dropout is associated with lack of enjoyment, perceptions of competence, social pressures, competing priorities and physical factors (Crane and Temple 2015). While these factors may be relevant to the transition to elite senior status, it is difficult to generalize due to the very different nature of the elite transition as compared to performance or recreational sport. While much of the sport career transition research has previously focused on retirement, more researchers are now focusing on the relationship between dropout and quality of within career transitions (Parket al. 2013). More specifically, in the systematic review from Park et al. (2013) an association between dropout and quality of career transitions was found highlighting that athletes who dropout may experience identity problems, negative emotions (Alfermann 1995, Koukouris 2001), loss of social networks and feelings of rejection (Butt and Molnar 2009).

It is clear that more research is warranted specifically addressing dropout between junior and senior elite level, however it is important to highlight that a small number of studies have investigated this issue in UK (Gledhill and Harwood 2015, Holt and Mitchell 2006), Canada (Fraser-Thomas et al. 2008, Wall and Côté 2007) and German sport (Baron-Thiene and Alfermann 2015). Fraser-Thomas et al. (2008) compared the experiences of successful and dropout swimmers and identified that dropouts had early success, limited access to individualised coaching, pressure from the parents and lack of healthy competition. Moreover, Wall and Côté (2007) compared the development experiences of high-level players who dropped out to active youth hockey players. They showed that players who dropped out started off-ice specialised training significantly earlier than the active players did (mean age of 11.75 years versus mean age of 13.8 years) and invested significantly more time in specialised training than active players at young ages (12-13).

Gledhill and Harwood (2015) examined the experiences of talented footballers who did not manage to reach elite senior level and findings revealed that a multitude of factors may contribute to an unsuccessful transition such as external pressure from their social circle, role conflict (player vs adolescent female) and lack of development opportunities. Based on those findings the authors made the following recommendations: athletic career in sport and education need to co-exist; dual careers should be supported; social agents need to be educated on how to support athletes throughout crucial transitions; coaches need to develop players holistically. Furthermore, personal characteristics such as motivation, determination, planning, coping strategies and tangible support can differentiate successful from those who did not manage to pursue a career at elite

level (Baron-Thiene and Alfermann 2015, Holt and Mitchell 2006). In line with this, Stambulova (2017) suggested that more attention should be given to negative transition experiences and the relevant environmental/contextual factors, to enable an increased understanding of the transition from junior to senior level and consequently facilitate an effective evidenced based development of athletes.

However, it is important to recognise the potential impact previous experience may have on a transition. For example, Butcher et al. (2002) recognised the potential impact of the previous developmental experiences on career progression and dropout, suggesting that participation in deliberate play activities and sampling need to be to be part of the development programme prior to emphasizing on deliberate practice. The reason for this is that sampling (participate in multiple sports) fosters enjoyment, lifelong participation (Kirk 2005) and promotes the development of intrinsic motivation (Côté et al. 2009). On the contrary, numerous negative outcomes have been linked with early specialization such as injuries, anxiety and burnout (Hecimovich 2004). In addition to the development experiences, the motivational climate created by the coaches can affect athletes' motivation. For instance, environments that are autonomy supportive and task oriented can promote self-determination (Amorose and Anderson-Butcher 2007), through the satisfaction of basic needs competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci and Ryan 2000). On the contrary, controlling and ego-oriented environments are related to extrinsic motivation (Meyer et al. 2004). It has also been suggested that dropout is linked with low level of self-determination (Balish et al. 2014). As such, the nature of the motivational climate is vital as it affects the type of motivation of athletes, which has a strong link with career progression in the athletic career.

In summary, research has shown that development experiences, barriers and the environmental factors can influence the outcome of the trajectory to elite level. Culture itself has an effect on athletes' transitions (Ryba et al2013) and therefore the development of athletes in different cultures and environments needs to be explored (Henriksen et al. 2014). However, only a few talent development studies have examined negative experiences of talented athletes who did not manage to have a successful transition from junior to senior level. Some of this research has been conducted in Greece in relation to dropout from elite sport (Koukouris 1991, 2001, 2005). In recent years there have been no studies examining this area which limits our knowledge and understanding of the transition process from junior to senior level and of the potential impact of austerity measures on sport (Giannoulakis et al. 2017) and as a consequence on the development of athletes. As such, investigating the perspective of athletes who dropped out during that challenging phase of their career (transition from junior to senior level) will extend our understanding regarding the reasons that may lead to dropout and the potential link of development experiences with dropout. The aims of this study were a) to investigate the development and transition experiences of talented athletes who had an unsuccessful transition from junior to senior level and b) to identify environmental and individual factors that contribute to unsuccessful transitions.

Methodology

Participants

Six participants from Greece (3 males and 3 females) that had competed at national level as junior athletes and dropped out from competitive sport during the transition from junior to senior level in sport were included in the study. There was one basketball player aged 27 (participant 1), one swimmer aged 24 (participant 2), one fin swimmer aged 23 (participant 3), one synchronised swimmer aged 26 (participant 4), one track and field athlete (sprinting) aged 25 (participant 5) and one football player aged 27 (participant 6). Four of the six participants had started competing at elite senior level in their respective sport. However, the athletes who participated in this study did not manage to maintain at elite level and dropped out within the first 18 months of their transition to senior level. Two of the six participants dropped out at the beginning of the transition process from junior to senior level. Achievements of the participants include world record at senior level, gold medals in European competition, silver and bronze medals in international competitions and gold medals in national competitions.

Design

To understand the development and transition experiences of the participants, the researchers adopted thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006) following a retrospective approach, which allowed participants to reflect on previous life events (Creswell 1984). Thematic analysis is characterised by (genuine) theoretical independence and flexibility, and organic processes of coding and theme development (e.g., Braun and Clarke 2006). To understand the pathway of talented athletes and the reasons that lead them to drop out a constructionist ontology with a focus on the interpretation of participants' words and opinions to construct a theory was followed (Terry et al. 2017). A qualitative approach was deemed to be the most appropriate for the aim of the current study since it allows the researcher to examine more in depth areas linked with the research objective by utilizing probes (Guest et al. 2013) for clarification and further discussion of a specific point (Patton 2002). To maximize the chances of gaining a complete picture of the nature of the transition to elite senior level, a semi-structured interview was developed based on the theoretical models of Côté et al. (2007), Stambulova (2003) and Wylleman and Lavalee (2004). For example, 'could you describe your career within sport until you dropped out?', 'which were the pivotal points and main challenges throughout your career?' and 'from your personal experience, could you describe why you did not reach your full potential?'. The researcher conducted two pilot interviews with athletes who had dropped out from sports, which helped to the evaluation and refinement of the interview guide in order to improve the flow and the wording of some questions to generate open-ended responses (Patton 1990).

This approach was chosen in order to allow flexibility when exploring areas that may emerge during discussions with the participants (Rynne et al. 2010). The

interviews were conducted in Greek language since it was the native language of the researcher and the participants. Therefore, this enabled them to share their experiences and feelings and eliminated any language barriers during the interview. To ensure the in-depth examination of the development and transition experiences each athlete was asked the same sequence of questions, although further clarification and probing was used as required (Patton 1990).

Procedure

The study gained ethical approval from the Research Ethics and Governance Committee. Participants who fulfilled the selection criteria were recruited via a snowball sampling technique (Piereson 1983). According to Hardon et al. (2004), purposeful snowball samples allow researchers to easily find and be introduced to knowledgeable people who fulfil the inclusion criteria of the study and are able to answer informatively the research questions. Considering the unique nature of the participants and the difficulty in recruiting those individuals the snowball technique was of paramount important for the success of the study.   All the participants were informed that it is not obligatory to participate in the study and they would be able to withdraw at any moment. Consent was gained from participants prior to their interview. They also were informed that if they agree to take part in the study all the data would be anonymised and confidential as much as possible.
        Prior to the agreed date of the interview the main interview questions were sent to the participants in order to allow them to familiarise themselves with the type of the questions of the interview (Martindale et al. 2007). The rationale behind this decision was based on the literature suggesting that when participants have more time to consider their responses the data they will provide will be richer and denser (Burke and Miller 2001). Four of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and two were conducted via Skype because this was the most suitable for the participants at that time. The interviews were conducted by the lead researcher lasted approximately 64 minutes and were recorded, transcribed verbatim in Greek and then translated in English. Guidelines suggested by Patton (1990) were also followed in order to guide the interviewer away from biasing the responses of the participants. This was facilitated by the use of neutral and impartial position when probing participant responses, combined with the build of rapport, comfort and open responses (Backstrom and Hursch-Ceasar 1981).

Data Analysis

Inductive thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected from the interviews (Edwards et al. 2002). Adopting an inductive approach means that the themes that were identified were strongly linked to the data themselves (Patton 1990). The researcher followed the following phases during the thematic analysis: familiarization with the data by reading and re-reading the data and taking notes of

initial ideas, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and finally producing the report. (Patton 1990)

Moreover, the researcher used member reflections to explore any gaps in the results or similarities regarding the interpretations of the findings (Schinke et al. 2013). Following the recommendation from Shenton (2004), frequent debriefing sessions between the researchers were organised in order to reduce the potential bias of the researcher and reflect on the analysis process by discussing points that were either over or under emphasised and remove any assumptions. In addition, seeking agreement from an expert in the field and using representative quotations were techniques used to increase the credibility of the current study (Graneheim and Lundman 2004). Finally, reflective commentary was used in order to allow the research to reflect and evaluate the process of the data analysis (Lincoln and Guba 1989).

Results and Discussion

The main themes and subthemes that emerged from the data through inductive analysis form the structure of the results and discussion section, with description and representative quotes to exemplify and provide evidence for each theme presented. Findings are also linked and discussed in relation to the relevant literature. The main themes (factors contributing to an unsuccessful transition) that emerged were: 1) early success and win focus environment, 2) negative impact of coaches and different stakeholders, 3) lack of communication and support towards athlete wellbeing, and 4) challenges of combining sport with studies.

Early Success and Win Focus Environment

Early success during the development stage was a common theme amongst all the athletes of this study. Interestingly, research has shown that there is a low correlation between performances at young ages and later success at elite senior level (e.g. Barreiros et al. 2014, Brouwers et al. 2012). More specifically, participants reported that when they were young they found it easy to win the majority of the competitions they participated. This boosted their confidence and acted as a trigger for them to believe in themselves and become more interested in their sport. However, it appears that not facing defeats did not help them to develop the necessary skills for dealing with transitions and achieving excellence in sport (Collins and MacNamara 2012, MacNamara et al. 2010a, 2010b). A recent systematic review showed that psychological characteristics of self-regulation, resilience, commitment and discipline can facilitate the effective development and can differentiate elite from non-elite athletes (Gledhill et al. 2017).

'I was winning gold medals all the time, apart from a few races that I won silver medals. I was competing in regional competitions until I started high school and I was training a lot every day. During high school, I was first in my region and I was qualified for the national competition. I went and I did very well.'

Participant 5

'I believe that things get more serious around the age of 13-14 when you start competing in the national leagues. When I was 15 I won my first medal and you know… you think Wow! I am good at this and you get more interested…'

Participant 2

This early success gave the opportunity to some of the participants to become members of the regional/national youth teams. Consequently, a number of youth athletes received increased attention and gained access to better quality coaching mainly because of their successful performance at the development stages of their youth career. This process therefore can potentially create unequal opportunities amongst athletes, which may influence the development of individuals that had not managed to demonstrate their talent at that stage. The fact that talent takes time to emerge is evident in the literature (Simonton 1999) and many researchers have highlighted the need for equal opportunities during the development stages of the athletic career (e.g. Andronikos et al. 2016, Brazo-Sayavera et al. 2017).

'When I was 16 I won a gold medal in the national league, became a member of the national youth team and participated in international competitions. I finished second in the final of the European league.'

Participant 2

'When I was 12 and a half I joined the national youth team so you can imagine how fast 5 times per week became 6-7 times per week. This meant that I was training many hours per week. I remember I had to leave school early sometimes to go to the training and to competitions. When I started the high school the level and the intensity were higher so I felt that the sport was much more competitive from that point onwards.'

Participant 4

Furthermore, the win focus environments reported had a negative impact on the motivation of athletes to remain engaged in their sport. Participants reported that they did not learn to love the sport and enjoy themselves when they started competing during their development stage. 'Loving the sport' can be linked with the concept of intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan 2008), which is associated with reduced chances of drop out (Burgess and Naughton 2010). Data showed that the win focus environment of the teams and the craving of coaches to win as many games/competitions as possible at youth level have an impact on the development of athletes. Participants also described that short-term goals might include the 'sacrifice' of athletes by forcing them to compete in different categories because of their outstanding performances at that time. It is well established in the literature however, that talent development environments focusing on long-term coherent goals, while emphasizing appropriate development rather than early success,

coupled with athlete understanding and communication facilitate effective development of talented athletes (Martindale et al. 2007).

> *'The truth is that we didn't learn to love the sport, we learned to win and to play for the win because that was the mentality of the team since we were the best of our region. Therefore, the youth teams were structured with a winning focus but there was no enjoyment of the game.'*
>
> Participant 1

> *'The sacrifice to win a medal or achieve a specific target set by the coach can drain you mentally and physically. Trying to achieve that goal may lead you to burn out. If the coach registers you in three different categories the body melts, you get exhausted and this is a reason for a talented athlete not only to stop developing but even drop out from sport.'*
>
> Participant 4

Unhealthy competition within the environment of the team was another element that was highlighted by the athletes, and has been reported previously (Fraser-Thomas et al. 2008). Teammates were competing against each other rather than working hard together in order to get better as part of a healthy competition environment that fosters peer-to-peer learning and development. The nature of the environment is of particular importance as well because players in team sports such as football are expected to move from a caring and nurturing environment to a brutal and outcome-oriented environment at the senior level (Richardson et al. 2012). This reality coupled with the lack of exposure to elite senior environments (as junior athletes) may cause difficulties to their adjustment at this level (Bruner et al. 2008). Therefore, gradually introducing players to the senior squad and educating them regarding the difficulties of the transition would help them build internal resources to manage demands and seek support from others (Morris et al. 2015, 2016).

> *'We were very competitive against each other, we were thinking who will manage to 'eat' each other and be the best within a duet. We hated each other we only cared who would perform better individually.'*
>
> Participant 4

Negative Impact of Coaches and Different Stakeholders

Participants reported that there were many conflicting goals and agendas from their coaches, agents, board members and federations during their development. All three team sport athletes emphasised a significant role of agents because they believed that networking can determine which youth athlete will step up to higher levels of competition. Being part of a regional/national youth team, or knowing a coach who has a good network or having an agent that will promote the player, it is possible to create more opportunities for athletes.

'If you don't have a good agent or if you don't play for the regional/national youth team you won't progress. You will reach at a certain level and then you need to find an agent and pay him in order to progress. Essentially, you need an agent to progress; no matter who you are or how good you are if you find a good agent he will help you progress.

<div align="right">Participant 6</div>

'Despite she was the world champion she didn't participate in the Olympic Games but the athlete who won the European championship did because her father had connections in the federation. We are too 'small' to understand, it is something like politics, we are too 'small' to understand... This sport is very controversial, basically, all the sport that include judges.'

<div align="right">Participant 4</div>

One of the participants provided an example of a not so talented individual who had access to good quality coaching because of the sporting background of their family, which allowed him to significantly improve. As such, there are cases that even athletes who did not achieve exceptional performances as youth athletes but through other pathways had increased opportunities enabling them to progress at a higher pace compared to the rest. Those varied opportunities could be linked with luck or chance, which has been highlighted in the literature as another factor that may influence development (Gagne 2004). This example highlights the fact that the talent pool should be as large as possible at earlier stages of development because athletes develop at different rates (e.g., Martindale et al. 2007).

'There was a player Trifonas and when we were young he was moving away to avoid getting hit by the ball. Trifonas made individual training every summer with a particular coach, the Nureyev [expert] of Greek Basketball Petros; great player and a great coach. Trifonas had a great network and he was also coming from a sport family. His father was a referee, his uncle was the coach of the regional youth team and in general, Trifonas was supported. Eventually, he came back after summer training and he could dunk.'

<div align="right">Participant 1</div>

Athletes emphasised on the fact that some of the people who take decisions have personal agendas or promote their network or even lack knowledge in regards to the sport. Examples were reported where these influential people are mainly interested in public relations without having the skills or expertise nor the willingness to facilitate equal opportunities and effective development. For instance, board members that have limited or no experience/knowledge of a sport may take vital decisions regarding the structure of a team or the selection of athletes. Several cases of corruptions have been reported related either to competition results whereby the involved parties can be the officials and/or the athletes or non-competition focused decisions usually referred as 'management corruption' (Maennig 2005).

'Many people that are in involved in sport as board members have never participated in sport in their lives. They are there only for the public relationships. Nonetheless, these people take the decisions and influence the development of athletes. They are a variable that influences the development of athletes.'

<div align="right">Participant 2</div>

'Board members play a huge role because most of the times these are the people who because of bribing or relationships or other reasons may put aside a talented athlete to achieve their personal goals or help another athlete because is part of their network...'

<div align="right">Participant 4</div>

Lack of Communication and Support towards Athlete Wellbeing

Athletes described that in some cases coaches did not respect their athletes and their personal aspirations. Not supporting the life choice of an athlete can be a barrier for their development that may even lead to dropout from sport. According to the interviews, athletes often sought discussion and communication with coaches, because they valued their opinion. However, athletes reported often having to simply follow commands from their coaches without understanding clearly the coaches' expectations or discussing their long-term plan with them. This description is in contrast to theories such as, transformational leadership theory, which suggests that leaders build relationships based on personal, emotional and inspirational exchanges with the goal of developing followers in their fullest potential (Bass et al. 2003). This is of particular importance as transformational leadership has been linked with lower levels of burnout (Hetland et al. 2007), reduced stress (Bono et al. 2007) and increased well-being (Nielsen and Munir 2009, Nielsen et al. 2008).

'I felt that there was no communication between us. There was no discussion between me and my coach about what I wanted or about what he thought it was the best for my development.'

<div align="right">Participant 5</div>

'He didn't respect that she had a life outside from sport. He acted against her will despite she told him that she wanted to go to the exams at these specific dates because it was important for her.'

<div align="right">Participant 2</div>

In addition, bad behaviour from coaches towards athletes by offending them verbally was reported as another aspect of negative behaviours from coaches that may take place. Those negative behaviours couples with excessive pressure regarding weight management for example that is a critical aspect of some sports like synchronised swimming may affect wellbeing by even leading to eating disorders as described by the synchronised swimmer.

'We had a coach who had a very bad behaviour towards us. For instance, if you gained a kilogram he would humiliate you in front of the whole team and usually in front of other important persons. This pressure regarding our weight led some of the girls to intentionally throw up and they were coming to training with broken vessels. It is a very violent sport for the soul of a kid. Around the age of 17, I had an eating disorder likewise the most of the girls that were in the team.'

Participant 4

Moreover, an outcome-oriented environment inevitably seeks winning and money. Thus, athletes felt that their needs were neglected and the top priority was either money or winning or both without genuine interest in the athlete. This lack of interest regarding the athletes made them less satisfied with their sport and was reported to contribute to their unsuccessful transition. This point is supported by research examining successful environments, where it is highlighted that factors such as athlete welfare, communication, and achievement-orientation are necessary for an optimal talent development environment (Henriksen et al. 2010a, 2010b, Mills et al. 2014).

'They were cold-hearted and they were only interested in performance. They expected from you to win points according to the money you were getting paid. I didn't like this because I felt there was no honest interest for the athletes. I felt that the people around me coaches, athletes, board members had a completely different philosophy and I couldn't communicate with them so I thought that I didn't want to continue anymore, I fed up with this situation and I decided to stop swimming gradually.'

Participant 2

On one occasion, a coach recommended to his athlete to take anabolic steroids to increase performance in order to be successful, suggesting that this is the only way to progress. Additionally, participant 6 stated that they believed the high demands and expectations of sport push athletes to use anabolic steroids or become victims of (over) advertising, which as a consequence their wellbeing may be affected.

'I had a coach that was saying for me: "she is only competing fairly; how does she expect to be successful like this?" I have heard him saying that. He meant that I didn't agree to take anabolic drugs. The coach did not believe in me and expected from me to take illegal performance enhancing drugs. A coach that consents to give drugs to his athletes is tragic and not respectable at all. How can you trust with this behaviour and how can you let them guide you? Of course not.'

Participant 2

'Sport have lost their meaning and have the crossed the line towards "super sport". "Super sport" lead people to death by the use of anabolic steroids. Over advertising is another issue, even the biggest clubs and the greatest players are driven by companies, sponsors and money.'

Participant 6

It was reported that the attitudes of parents could also potentially impact the performance of athletes and eventually their development as well. Athletes described that parents projecting their negative feelings (e.g. parents arguing between them) to the children especially during a stressful time (e.g. a competition) can influence negatively on their concentration, may cause distress and affect the quality of their performance. Research has shown that family plays a significant role in shaping youth sport experiences both from a positive (athlete motivation levels, elite sport participation) and negative (drop-out) perspective (Sheridan et al. 2014). Similar behaviours identified in the literature are the following: being negative and critical, focusing on winning, being controlling and over pushing (Lauer et al. 2010).

> *'My parents had an argument that day and generally, my dad was pressuring me at that time very much with the things he said to me and my psychology was really bad. My dad told me that they will break up with my mom just before the big national competition and it influenced me very much.'*
>
> Participant 5

Additionally, inappropriate support, which may have two different forms: either not offering enough support or creating unnecessary pressure towards the athletes was discussed by the participants. More specifically, participant 6 acknowledged that sometimes parents did not offer as much support as required mainly because they perceived sport differently. In line with this, previous research suggests that athletes who had successful transitions had a high amount of appropriate parental involvement (Wuerth et al. 2004). It was also pointed out that when parents are shouting from the sidelines while athletes are competing, it can create unnecessary pressure, particularly taking into account the fact that young athletes are less likely to know how to cope with spectators and external pressure at a young age. Relevant research has shown that parents who demand transient results may create a fear of failure to their children. On the contrary, children with autonomy supportive parents are more likely to develop a stronger sense of personal control (Gagne 2003).

> *'My parents did not support me enough; they thought it was something secondary, just a hobby, just exercise and nothing else. But for me, it was not just exercise it meant much more to me.'*
>
> Participant 6

> *'Many players had their parents around them all the time shouting and I don't think this helped them. I was more anxious when my parents were around because at that age a kid doesn't know how to deal with this external pressure'.*
>
> Participant 1

Challenges of Combining Sport with Studies

Time constraints and physical exhaustion were the main obstacles for athletes who attempted to combine a career in sport along with their studies and/or work. Spending too many hours training (participant 3) made it challenging for him to study for school after training. Participant 2 continued participating throughout her final year of high school and as a university student stated that it was exhausting for her to cope with training and lectures at the university. This period of pressure and overlapping transitions that collides with the transition period from junior to senior level in sport has been described as very challenging (Wylleman and Lavallee 2004). Combining studies with a sport career is a common challenge in research examining within-career transitions (Fin & McKenna, 2010) and excessive pressure has also been linked with dropout (Salguero et al. 2003).

> *'Combining sport with school was very hard because we spent around 6 hours at training, 2 and a half hours in the water then after half an hour we had to go the gym for 2 and a half hours so it was quite challenging to go back home after this and study for school.'*
>
> Participant 3

> *'If you have double training and gym 3 times per week and the rest of the days just training automatically you can't attend some of the classes at the university, you can't work or even if you do work you can't work full time. I liked my course so I started going more regularly to the university and continued training 10 times per week. And I was knackered...'*
>
> Participant 2

Furthermore, athletes missed many classes because their competitions especially those participating in swimming are organised in 3-4 day tournaments. Consequently, they had gaps in certain classes and found it hard to follow up since their schools did not offer them support. Surprisingly, in one case (participant 4) despite the fact she attended a sport school no support was offered to her and she had to seek help from the Ministry of Education. Interestingly, recent studies have shown that components of life (i.e., psychosocial, academic, vocational) may act as a support to athletes, especially during challenging periods in the athletic career. (Debois, 2015)

> *'Being 12, 13, 14 and live far from your family and not going to school is tough. I was a good student and the principal of the school wanted me and another girl to fail because we had lost too many classes throughout the year. Therefore, we had to go the minister of education to get a specific permission to give exams because we were absent too many times. Imagine what I did; how much I wanted it. Take into account I was in a sport school as well.'*
>
> Participant 4

External pressure from teachers, parents and the society in general regarding the results of the national exams and the future choices for their career was a psychological load during that time. Athletes felt that everything depended on

their results for the national exams, which is something they did not like. Additionally, the existing culture in Greece, dictates that youngsters should focus on their studying and their life goals in the long term instead of chasing a career in sport. This is because the results of the national exams will determine the university they will enter so as their future professional career (at least according to the social norms). No opportunities are given to student-athletes to combine a dual career so it is up to them to take the decision to try to do both or choose in which they focus most of their efforts. Notably, the Ministry of Education in Greece has recently (2017) suggested changing the current approach in order create a more holistic educational system which will not be based solely on the results of the national exams. In addition, the EU guidelines on Dual Career of Athletes (2012), which were designed to "create the right environment for dual careers of athletes, including an appropriate legal and financial framework" were recently translated in Greek. As such, programmes like the Career Assistance Program, which was designed to help athletes to cope with a dual career in Spain (López et al. 2015) would usefully be implemented in Greece as well.

> *'During high school [Lyceum] I was pressured psychologically to decide what I want to do. I didn't have much time for training, I had private classes to get prepared for school and generally, I felt pressure about what to do with my life…'*
>
> Participant 6

> *'You have to go and study and it is sensible to continue your development as a person. From the one side, you identify your options and if it is worthwhile staying in your city and from the other hand you need to take into account that swimming and sport, in general, are good for now but will they be for the long-term? So you have to make a choice at that time.'*
>
> Participant 1

An example was given of how coaches may influence the dual career of athletes by not taking into account the student identity of the athletes by undermining the importance of exams or other commitments. Therefore, it is important that all the influential parties actively support student-athletes to effectively balance their academic and athletic career.

> *'I remember a teammate that competed at the Olympics who argued with her coach because she had exams for the university and wanted to complete her studies since she was in her final year studying in the medical school. However, her coach registered her for an international competition.'*
>
> Participant 2

General Discussion

The current study attempted to investigate the development experiences and transition experiences of talented athletes who had an unsuccessful transition from junior to senior level and to identify factors (environmental and individual) that contribute to unsuccessful transitions. Athletes in the current study did not

attribute their unsuccessful transition from junior to senior level only to one reason rather than to a combination of different factors. A variety of factors were shown to be influential for career progression in this study. More specifically, early success and win-focus environments, negative impact of coaches and different stakeholders, lack of communication and support towards athlete wellbeing, and the challenges of combining studies with sport were shown to contribute to an unsuccessful transition from junior to senior level in sport.

The originality and significance of this work is due to the lack of research with this important population and the uniqueness of the sample. More specifically the sample was unique because a) all the participants were talented athletes competing at elite youth/adult level before dropping out during the transition from junior to senior level, b) all the participants were Greek athletes developing during the economic crisis in the country. Those two reasons make the sample particularly unique as the majority of the studies examining drop out have recruited adolescence athletes (Crane and Temple 2015). In addition, only a limited number of studies have investigated dropout during junior to senior level but not necessarily at elite level nor in a Greek context. It would be beneficial for future studies to consider adopting a longitudinal approach to track down the progress of the participants; focus on only one sport; investigate different cultures or 'match' the participants which would allow comparisons between successful and less or unsuccessful peers. This methodology was recently employed by Collins et al. (2016) to examine the differences in the development pathways of 'super champions', 'champions' and 'almosts'.

The findings of the current study presented a broad picture of the experiences of athletes who were unsuccessful in the transition from junior to senior level in Greece highlighting the challenges that are likely to occur during that particular transition. On the other hand, it should be taken into account that each sport has different needs, athletes may face different challenges and their response may vary depending on their gender and their previous experiences. To facilitate effective development coaches, clubs and policy makers need to focus more on understanding the athletes, creating a task-oriented environment and focusing on long-term goals and provision for late developers. Those principles have been discussed in the literature focusing on effective talent development in various sports and cultures (English et al. 2018, Henriksen et al. 2010a, 2010b, Martindale et al. 2007). Those principles coupled with the right balance between challenge and support in terms of competition and balancing a dual career would facilitate the development of talented athletes. Considering the fact that it is practically impossible for all youth talented athletes to 'make it' to elite level, the priority should be to create positive environments for youth athletes to fail in a healthy way. This will enable them to develop holistically and acquire a multitude of psychosocial skills that can be used in various domains of their lives in the future.

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The Consistency of Learning Styles of Selected Undergraduate Sport Management Majors using Two Different Instruments

By Tim Robinson[*]

It was the ultimate purpose of this study to advance the breadth and depth of pedagogical knowledge concerning undergraduate sport management majors and their learning. More specifically, and for this study, the prime research question was: Do selected undergraduate sport management majors display consistency of preferred learning styles across institutions of varying Carnegie classifications and geographical boundaries? A testable null hypothesis was stated, H_0: there will be no significant difference in learning style preference between sport management students at the University of New England (UNE), Cleveland State University (CSU), and California University of Pennsylvania (Cal U) as measured by Kolb's LSI 3.1 and Fleming's VARK inventories. Two hundred and twelve students participated (N = 212). Secondary data were gathered and assessments were conducted. Descriptive statistics and chi-square tests were used to evaluate significance across five measures. Data analysis revealed inconsistency of learning style preference across four of the five measures evaluated. In one measure, the VARK analysis, a trend toward consistency of learning style was observed with regard to the perception of environmental information, however, this tendency was not reflected by evaluation of Kolb's perceiving dimension. As might be expected of sport management majors, additional findings indicated a higher than normal frequency of Kinesthetic learners (42%) compared to Fleming's 4-year college VARK database (22%). This trend indicates the appropriateness and value of incorporating guest lectures, demonstrations, model construction, field trips, role playing, and other experiential learning activities into the sport management curriculum.

Keywords: *Experiential Learning, Sport Management, Learning Styles, Pedagogy, Learning Preferences.*

Introduction

In 2010, West reported that higher education is currently in a state of marked transition with two related forces prompting that change. The first is the ever-increasing popularity of distance education and the transition from the traditional classroom to an Internet-based class format. The second is the move from a teacher-centered learning paradigm (the didactic, lecture-based format where the emphasis is on dissemination of information) to a learner-centered paradigm or constructivist model (one in which the emphasis is placed on the learner

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constructing knowledge while the teacher acts as a facilitator or guide) (West 2010: 1). West (2010: 128) reports that the increased attention to students needs will assist instructors in becoming a *guide on the side* instead of a *sage on the stage* in perpetuating a learner-centered environment. Remarkably, these two forces are creating a synergistic effect as the tremendous growth in Internet-based distance education has prompted educational research to focus on learner characteristics (Hills 2003, Kahn 2005). One characteristic of learners has been defined as learning style or learning style preference.

As defined by the HayGroup (as cited by West 2010: 70), learning style is simply a preferred way of learning, while Dunn (2000: 10) explains that, "a learning style is a biologically and developmentally determined set of personal characteristics that make identical instruction effective for one person and not another". Dunn and Griggs (1998: 30) claimed that, "every individual has the capability to learn, regardless of academic aptitude; however each individual learns in a different manner".

Neil Fleming is a teacher, educator, and instructor from New Zealand. He defines learning style as, "an individual's characteristics and preferred ways of gathering, organizing, and thinking about information" (Fleming 2001: 1). His popular model and assessment tool *The VARK Inventory* is based on the preferred or dominant sense learners use to acquire information about their environment. His model acknowledges the use of the three senses (*Visual, Aural, and Kinesthetic*) in learning, and the fourth construct of *Read/Write*. According to Coffield et al. (2004: 1):

> *There is a strong intuitive appeal in the idea that teachers and course designers should pay closer attention to students' learning styles-by diagnosing them, by encouraging students to reflect on them and by designing teaching and learning interventions around them.*

This construct, the matching of instruction to fit the preferred learning style of the learner has come to be known as the *Meshing Hypothesis* (Pashler et al. 2008). For example and according to the Meshing Hypothesis, a visual learner would prefer class activities utilizing charts and diagrams, while the aural learner would prefer debate and discussion.

Consistent with and supportive of the Meshing Hypothesis is the work by Gardner (2011) who in his book *Frames of Mind* posits that intelligence should not be viewed as a single generalized ability, but a range of separate capacities. Additionally, Gardner suggests that traditional education caters nearly exclusively to linguistic and mathematical intelligences. His theory of *Multiple Intelligences* differentiates intelligence into seven (now eight or possibly nine) separate modalities. According to Gardner (2011), there are mathematical/logical, intrapersonal, interpersonal, musical, spatial, linguistic, naturalistic, kinesthetic, and possibly existential intelligences. Subsequently, Gardner (2011: xvi) suggests:

> *An educator convinced of the relevance of Multiple Intelligence Theory should individualize and pluralize. By individualizing, I mean the educator should know as much as possible about the intelligence profile of each student for whom he has*

responsibility; and, to the extent possible, the educator should teach and assess in ways that bring out that child's capacities. By pluralizing I mean the educator should decide which topics, concepts, and ideas, are of greatest importance and then should present them in a variety of ways.

Peters, Peters, and Jones (2008) concede that very few recent investigations address the issue of learning styles in the sport-related disciplines of exercise science, coaching science, sport and leisure management, or outdoor recreation management. "Indeed, the research that has been published examining learning styles research in sport management programs is either dated or focused solely on physical education. . ." (Peters et al. 2008: 157).

Review of Literature

A complete review of learning style theories would easily exhaust the space limitations allotted for in this journal. Consequently, this paper will limit its review of literature to a brief history of learning style theory and related constructs, and to the two theorist and theories whose instruments were utilized in the study. Should any reader require further examination a thorough investigation on learning style theory has been offered by Coffield et al. (2004).

Coaches of athletes and instructors of sport management majors may have noticed that students differ in the ways they perceive and process information. According to Anderson (2014: par. 1), "Accounting for individual learning styles is not a new idea. As early as 334 BC Aristotle said that, 'each child possesses specific talents and skills' and he noticed individual differences in young children". In the early 1900s educational leaders and researchers displayed a passing interest in personality theories and learning style classifications. However, due to interest in student academic achievement and the rising popularity of the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test, this interest was short-lived (Anderson 2014: par. 2).

In 1927, Carl Gustav Jung took note of personality differences in the way people perceive information, make decisions, and interact (Silver et al. 1997 par. 6). Jung theorized that individuals perceive and utilize information in different ways; constructs he termed *perception* and *judgment* (Silver et al. 1997: par. 9).

Jung's model distinguished between those individuals who process sensory information in serial fashion, utilizing one sense at a time, from those who process in parallel and incorporate data simultaneously from multiple senses. Jung's theory also accounts for what individuals do with sensory information once it is internalized, a process he termed *judgment* (Myers & Briggs Foundation 2014: par. 9). Two categories of *judgers* were conceived, those who make decisions based on their heart (i.e., *feelers*), and those who make decisions based on reason (i.e., *thinkers*) (Myers & Briggs Foundation 2014: par. 8).

During the Second World War Jung's contributions underpinned the work of Katherine Cook-Briggs and daughter Isabel Briggs-Myers, who developed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (Silver et al. 1997: 22). The MBTI utilized most of Jung's typology and terminology, albeit redefining some of Jung's terms and categories. According to the Myers and Briggs Foundation (2014: par. 4), the

MBTI contains Jung's four dichotomous categories describing individual preferences in the perception and processing of sensory information. The categories are: (a) *thinkers-feelers,* (b) *sensors-intuitors,* (c) *perceivers-judgers,* and (d) Jung's implicit fourth category of *introversion* and *extroversion.* This scheme allows for 16 possible combinations of temperament (e.g., an *extroverted, intuitive, feeling,* and *judging* personality would be ENFJ, while an *introverted, sensing, thinking,* and *perceiving* typology would be ISTP). Each of these personality types has been matched to corresponding professions that allegedly demand these characteristics in their application (e.g., ENFJ's are supposedly quality educators, while ISTP's make fine architects) (The Myers & Briggs Foundation 2014: par. 9).

By 2004, Coffield et al. identified no less than 71 learning style models, typologies, taxonomies, and theories (Coffield et al. 2004: 2).

Gender Differences in Learning Styles

A review of literature concerning gender differences of learning styles reveals mixed results. In 2012, Thon et al. evaluated and compared learning style preferences of both graduate and undergraduate athletic training students via the Marshall and Merrit student learning style questionnaire, a derivative of Kolb's LSI. Of the 498 students examined 75% (n = 373) were found to be Divergent, while no significant differences existed between males and females or undergraduate and graduate status. To the contrary, Shunk-Perkins (2010) posited that freshmen student-athletes at a NCAA Division I southern university would prefer an active approach to learning. She investigated learner preferences across four dimensions (i.e., *active-reflective, sensing-intuitive, visual-verbal, and sequential-global*). In addition, she queried: (a) whether or not there were differences in learning style preferences between male and female freshmen student-athletes, (b) whether or not there were differences in learning style preferences between student-athletes who participate in team sports compared to those who participate in individual sports, and (c) whether or not there was an interactive effect between gender, type of sport (individual or team), and preferred learning style. In contrast to her original premise, empirical data revealed that the student-athletes she studied exhibited a well-balanced range of preferred learning styles across all four dimensions. More specifically, and with respect to the active-reflective dimension, 21 showed an active preference, 92 showed a balanced preference, and 92 showed a reflective preference. Additionally, the study supported the findings:

- that males and females generally learn differently,
- that there was no significant difference concerning learning style preference between those who participated in individual or team sports, and
- the fact that particular fields of study or professions favor a particular learning style.

The VARK Model

Neil Fleming is a teacher, educator, and instructor from New Zealand. He defines learning style as, "an individual's characteristics and preferred ways of gathering, organizing, and thinking about information" (Fleming 2001: 1). His model concerns instructional preferences because it deals with perceptual modes. VARK is an acronym for the *Visual* (V), *Aural* (A), *Read/Write* (R), and *Kinesthetic* (K) preferences for learning. Dunn (2003) reports, "that primary perceptual modes are those ways that learners prefer for quickly taking in new knowledge. Secondary and tertiary perceptual modes are those ways that learners use to enhance or strengthen existing knowledge" (p.30). According to Fleming (2001), "about 41% of the population who have taken the instrument online have single style preferences, 27% two style preferences, 9% three style preferences, and 21% have a preference for all four styles" (Hawk and Shaw 2007: 7). The VARK addresses all the senses with the exception of taste and smell.

The VARK inventory is composed of 13 statements that describe a situation and asks the participant to pick one or more of three or four actions that the respondent would take. Each action corresponds to a particular learning style preference (Hawk and Shaw 2007: 6). It is available free and online at www.vark-learn.com. The VARK questionnaire is self-administered, self-scored, and self-interpreted with scores for each category of learning preference ranging from 13 to 48. According to Hawk and Shaw (2007: 7):

> *Visual learners prefer maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, and brochures, flow charts, highlighters, different colors, pictures, word pictures, and different spatial arrangements. Aural learners like to explain new ideas to others, discuss topics with other students and their teachers, use a tape recorder; attend lectures and discussion groups, and use stories and jokes. Read/Write learners prefer lists, essays, reports, textbooks, definitions, printed handouts, readings, manuals, Web- pages, and taking notes. Kinesthetic learners like field trips, trial and error, doing things to understand them, laboratories, recipes and solutions to problems, hands-on approaches, using their senses, and collections of samples.*

Table 1 contains suggested learning activities intended to match the VARK learning preferences.

Table 1. *Learning Activities matched with VARK Modalities*

Visual	Aural	Read/Write	Kinesthetic
Diagrams	Debates	Books	Real Life Examples
Graphs	Arguments	Texts	Guest Lectures
Colors	Discussions	Handouts	Demonstrations
Charts	Conversations	Reading	Physical Activity
Written Text	Audio Tapes	Written Feedback	Constructing
Spatial	Video and Audio	Note Taking	Models
Arrangements	Seminars	Essays	Role Playing
Fonts	Music	Multiple Choice	
Designs		Bibliographies	

Source: Kolb (1984).

Kolb's Experiential Learning Model

David Kolb was a professor emeritus of organizational behavior at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio and is widely recognized for his groundbreaking publication *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning Development*. Kolb (1984: 26) defines learning as the "process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience". Kolb (1999) also claimed "that an appreciation of differing learning styles can help people to work more effectively in teams, resolve conflict, communicate at work and at home, and choose careers" (Coffield et al. 2004: 60).

According to HayGroup (2005), in 1975, David Kolb, along with Roger Fry, developed one of the most influential and popular learning style theories. Kolb's (1976, 1981, 1984) Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) was based on the previous work of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget. Referring to Kolb, West (2010: 31) noted, "Piaget was influential with theories of cognitive development and the tradition of experiential learning". "Piaget's theory describes how intelligence is shaped by experience . . . [and] arises as a product of the interaction between the person and his/her environment" (Kolb 1984: 12). John Dewey also influenced Kolb's work in the realm of higher education and the process that links education, work, and personal development (West 2010: 31). Dewey believed there was an "intimate and necessary relation between the processes of actual experience and education" (Dewey 1938 as cited in Kolb 1984: 20). Kurt Lewin impacted Kolb by discussing experiential learning in the environment of training and organizational development (HayGroup 2005: 2).

Kolb's model of underlying structure of the learning process is based on research in psychology, philosophy, and physiology. It stems from the work of the Russian cognitive theorist L.S. Vygotsky, who supported the notion that human development occurs from the process of learning from experience. (HayGroup 2005: 2). According to Kolb (1984):

> *Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping information and transforming it…learning, and therefore knowing, requires both a grasp or figurative representation of experience and some transformation of that representation. (Kolb 1984: 41-42)*
>
> *West (2010) explained that in Kolb's view, (a) learning is a process of adaptation as opposed to an emphasis on content or outcomes, and that (b) the acquisition of knowledge be viewed as a transformational process, knowledge being continuously created and recreated, not an independent entity to be acquired or transmitted, (c) learning transforms experience in both its objective and subjective forms, and (d) to understand learning we must understand the nature of knowledge and vice versa (Kolb 1984: 38). Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984) stresses the role of experience in learning.*

Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (ELM) proposes that learning is a two-step process. The first process is that of perceiving, inputting, or collecting of information, and the second is the processing or internalization of that information.

Kolb proposes that the perceiving of environmental information is done in an autonomic fashion relying heavily on either intuitive information (feeling) or rationally received data (thinking). Additionally, he posits that the processing of this information occurs by either doing or watching. Further, he suggests that learners have a natural inclination or preference in both the way they perceive information and the way they process it.

Kolb labeled the dichotomous poles of the perceiving continuum as Concrete Experience (CE) at one end, and Abstract Conceptualization (AC) at the other end; while suggesting that the processing of information can occur predominantly through Active Experimentation (AE) or Reflective Observation (RO). Figure 1 is an illustration of Kolb's two dimensions.

According to Cassidy (2004: 430), "The four learning dispositions form two orthogonal bipolar dimensions of learning".

Kolb envisions experiential learning as a cyclical process, one in which the learner may grasp information from the environment through the senses (concrete experience [CE]), filter information through reflective observation (RO), and analyze by abstract conceptualization (AC) or active experimentation (AE) (Hawk and Shaw 2007: 3). According to Kolb the learning cycle is continuous and the learner may enter the cycle at any point along the continuum although a learner's *preferred learning style* may predict point of entry and prominence concerning the use of that learning disposition (Coffield et al. 2004: 60). Figure 2 is an illustration of Kolb's model where individual learning styles result from a combination of two adjacent dispositions or modes (Hawk and Shaw 2007: 3).

Figure 1. *Kolb's two Dimensions of Perceiving and Processing*
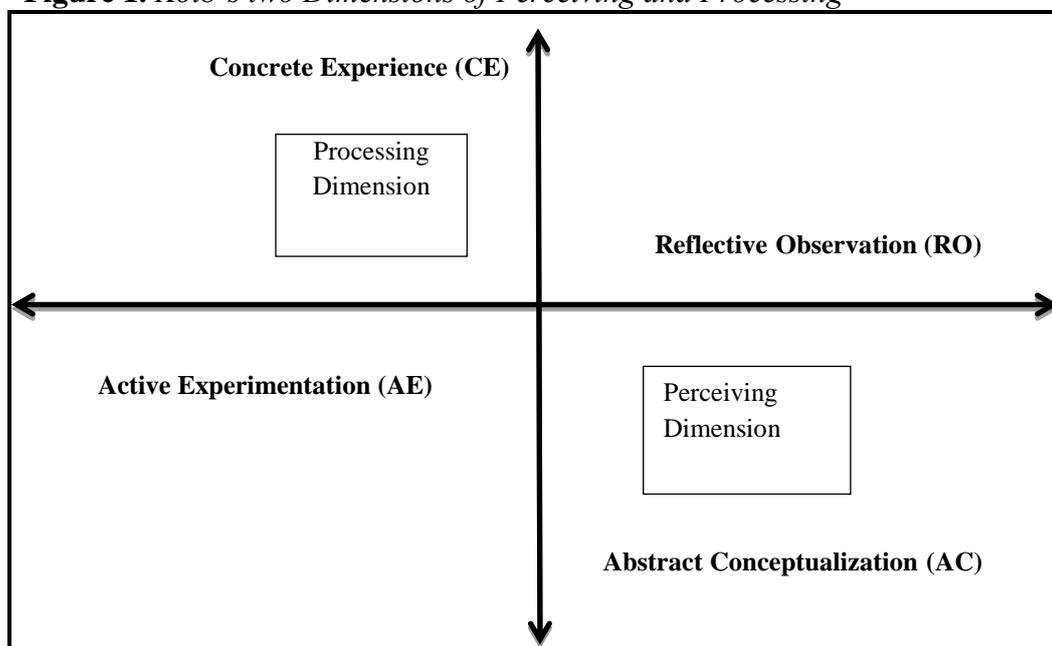
Source: Author.

Figure 2. *Kolb's Ultimate Learning Style Categories and Their Relationship to the Perceiving and Processing Dimensions of (AE-RO) and (CE-AC)*
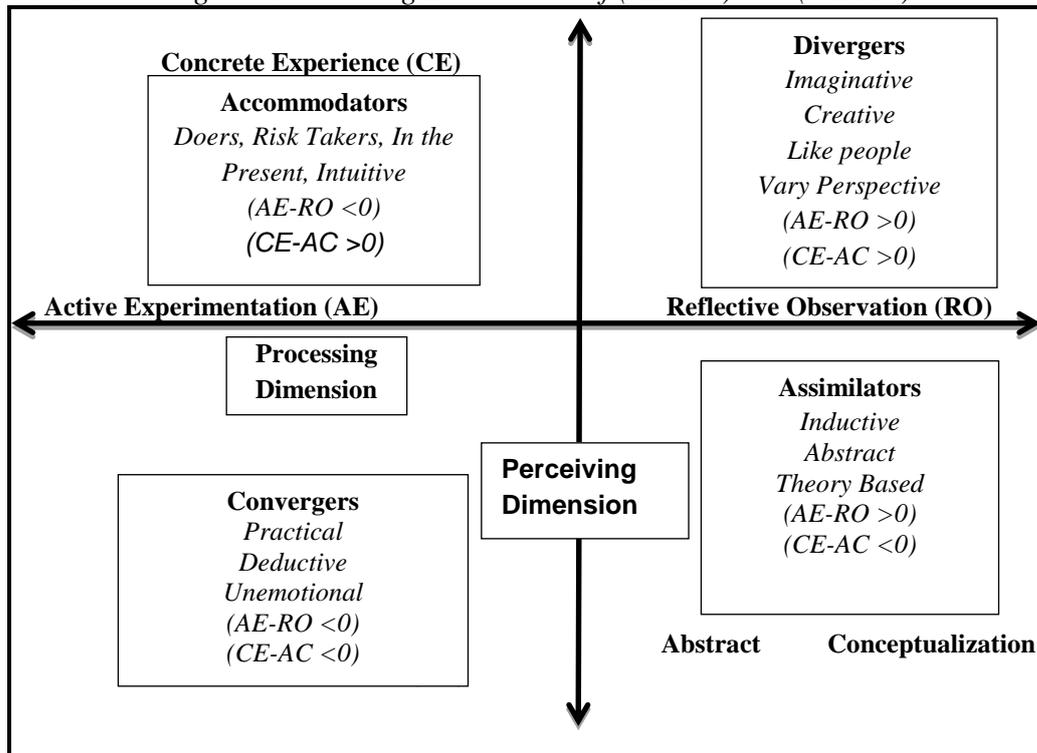
Source: Author.

For example the dispositions (RO and AC) combine to form the *Assimilator* learning style, while (AC and AE) form the *Converger*, (AC and CE) the *Accomodator*, whereas (CE and RO) form the *Diverger* type. Hawk and Shaw (2007: 4) further explain Kolb's model:

> *Divergers have a strong imaginative ability, are good at seeing things from different perspectives, are creative, and work well with people. Assimilators have abilities to create theoretical models, prefer inductive reasoning, and would rather deal with abstract ideas. Convergers have a strong practical orientation, are generally deductive in their thinking, and tend to be unemotional. Accommodators like doing things, are risk takers, are in the here and now, and solve problems intuitively.*

The Learning Style Inventory

This study utilized Kolb's Learning Style Inventory (LSI) 3.1 developed in (1976) and revised in 1984, 1999, and 2005 as one of the psychometric instruments used for the assessment of learning styles in sport management students. The LSI is a 12-question instrument incorporating a forced-choice ranking method to assess an individual's preferred mode of learning (i.e., AC, CE, AE, and RO) (Coffield et al. 2004: 64). It is described by Mainemelis, Boyatzis, and Kolb (2002: 8) in the following way:

Individuals are asked to complete 12 sentences that describe learning. Each sentence (e.g., I learn best from?) has four endings (AC = rational theories, CE = personal relationships, AE = a chance to try out and practice, and RO = observation). Individuals rank the endings to what best describes the way they learn (i.e., 4 = most like you, 1 = least like you). Four scores AC, CE, AE, and RO measure an individual's relative preference for one pole or the other of the model.

According to Coffield et al. (2004: 64) Kolb does not view a learning style as a fixed trait or as something that is used for individual selection purposes. Kolb states, "For this reason we do not refer to the LSI as a test but rather as an experience in understanding how you learn" (Kolb as quoted by Delahoussaye 2002: 30). Additionally, according to Kolb (1981: 290-291):

When it is used in the simple, straightforward, and open way intended, the LSI usually provides an interesting self-examination and discussion that recognizes the uniqueness, complexity, and variability in individual approaches to learning. The danger lies in the reification of learning styles into fixed traits, such that learning styles become stereotypes used to pigeonhole individuals and their behavior.

West (2010: 38) explains that the LSI's use has been primarily limited to educational, management, and medical settings where it has been used for a variety of training purposes. In the educational realm the LSI has benefited both instructors and students. Learners gain an understanding of the learning process and their preferences for differing educational activities, while instructors have an opportunity to design corresponding educational experiences. "The LSI has been especially useful when used by teachers and learners to develop a shared understanding of the educational venture and the contributions to it of both parties" (HayGroup 2005: 2). Numerous classroom activities have been suggested to accommodate diverse learning styles (see Table 2).

Table 2. *Matching of Classroom Activities and Kolb's Learning Dimensions*

Concrete Experience	Reflective Observation	Abstract Conceptualization	Active Experimentation
Lecture Examples Problem Sets Readings Films Simulations Laboratories Observation Field Work	Thought Brainstorming Discussions Logs Questions Personal Journals	Lecture Papers Analogies Text Readings Projects Model Building Model Critique	Lecture Examples Laboratories Case Studies Homework Projects Fieldwork

Source: Kolb (1984).

LSI's Validity, Reliability, and Popularity

Numerous studies have tested the validity and reliability of experiential learning theory (and its assessment via the LSI) with about half of the research supporting the test-retest reliability and validity of the LSI (Coffield et al. 2004: 64). It should be noted that test-retest reliability did improve over the years when successive versions of the instrument were introduced. "This caused one set of critics Veres et al. (1991) to detract their initial opinion when the question endings of the LSI were reordered to eliminate potential response bias" (as cited in Coffield et al. 2004: 149). Hawk and Shaw (2007) offered solid support for the validity and reliability of the LSI (along with the PEPS and RASI inventories) although no empirical evidence was tendered.

A more serious criticism of the LSI was levied by De Ciantis and Kirton (1996: 816) citing two substantial weaknesses with the instrument. First, they argued that Kolb (via the LSI) is attempting to assess three unrelated aspects of cognition: process, level, and style. By *process*, they mean the four discrete stages of the learning cycle through which the learners pass; by *level*, the ability to perform well or poorly at any of the four stages; and by *style*, the manner in which each stage in the learning process is approached and operationalized (De Ciantis and Kirton 1996: 817). They concluded that each stage can be accomplished in a range of styles and at a range of levels and that the separation of these three elements (style, process, and level) is a significant advance in the precision of Kolb's Model and his conflation of styles, abilities, and stages (De Ciantis and Kirton 1996: 817).

Despite the controversy surrounding the LSI, there can be no doubt as to its popularity. "In 2000, Kolb produced a bibliography of research on his Experiential Learning Theory and the LSI which contains details of 1004 studies" (Coffield et al. 2004: 65). This included 430 in the field of education, 207 in management, 104 in computer studies, 101 in psychology, and 72 in medicine.

Methodology

Statement of the Problem

It was the ultimate purpose of this study to advance the breadth and depth of pedagogical knowledge concerning undergraduate sport management majors and their learning. More specifically, and for this study, the prime research question was: Do selected undergraduate sport management majors display consistency of preferred learning styles across institutions of varying Carnegie classifications and geographical boundaries? A testable null hypothesis was stated, H_0: There will be no significant difference in learning style preference between sport management students at the University of New England (UNE), Cleveland State University (CSU), and California University of Pennsylvania (Cal U) as measured by Kolb's LSI 3.1 and Fleming's VARK inventories. Subjects were selected ($N = 212$), and

secondary data gathered ($N =101$) from a previous study (West 2010) and Neil Fleming's VARK database.

Research Questions

Once permission was obtained and the appropriate instruments were selected the following sub-problems were addressed:

1. What is the prevalence of Accommodating, Assimilating, Converging, and Diverging learning preferences, as assessed by the Kolb LSI 3.1, in sport management majors at the CSU, UNE, and Cal U?
2. What is the prevalence of Visual, Aural, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic preferred learning modalities as measured by Neil Fleming's VARK in sport management majors at UNE and CSU?
3. Do chi-square (χ^2) evaluations of Kolb LSI 3.1 sport management student learning preferences between (Cal U and CSU) and (Cal U and UNE) reveal statistically significant differences?
4. Do chi-square (χ^2) evaluations of Kolb LSI 3.1 sport management student learning preferences between Cal U and (UNE and CSU data combined) reveal statistically significant differences?
5. Do descriptive statistics of VARK comparisons among UNE, CSU, and the VARK databases indicate any statistical trends?

If indeed sport management majors from varying institutions exhibit statistically similar learning style profiles, guarded inferences may be drawn concerning generalization of results, and possible classroom activities that may be most meaningful for all sport management majors. On the contrary, and if significant statistically differences exist, further evidence will be presented in support of the individualization and pluralization of instruction to these sport management majors.

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

The Carnegie Classification is the framework for classifying colleges and universities in the United States. Created in 1970, it is named after and was originally created by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, but responsibility for the Carnegie Classification was transferred to Indiana University's Center for Postsecondary Research, in 2014. Table 3 compares some potentially meaningful group variables as defined by the Carnegie Classification system.

Table 3. *A Comparison of Carnegie Classification Variables Between the University of New England, Cleveland State University and California University of Pennsylvania*

	CSU	UNE	Cal U
Control	Public	Private (Non-profit)	Public
Population	16,216	4,493	9,400
Setting	Urban	Suburban	Suburban
Undergraduate Graduate Profile	Mostly Full-time, 4 year, Inclusive	Primarily Full-time, 4-year, Selective	Full-time, Selective
Living Arrangements	Non-Residential	Residential	Residential

Ex Post Facto Research

Groves (n.d.: 7) explained that there are three types of ex post facto research: research that is concerned with the exploration of causes; that which is concerned with the exploration of effects; and that which is concerned with the exploration of consequences.

In this investigation the independent variable is the cause and it is a predetermined and hence a stable factor (i.e., selection and attendance in a specific sport management program at a specific university), and the effect (dependent variable) is the group variation or consistency of participant scores on learning style assessments (Kolb's LSI 3.1 and Fleming's VARK). This study explored this cause and effect relationship. According to Goes and Simon (2013: 14):

Ex post facto research is an ideal method for conducting social research when it is not possible or acceptable to manipulate the characteristics of human participants. It is a substitute for true experimental research and can be used to test a hypothesis about cause and effect, where it is either not practical or ethical to apply a true experimental or quasi-experimental research design. Ex post facto research, then, is a method of teasing out possible antecedents of events that have happened, but cannot be manipulated by the investigator.

Despite studying facts that have already occurred, ex post facto research shares with experimental research some of the basic logic of inquiry, for example:

Attempts are made to explain a consequence based on an antecedent condition; to determine the influence of one variable on another variable; and test a claim using statistical hypothesis testing techniques. Ex post facto research uses data already collected but not necessarily amassed for research purposes. Ex post facto literally means from what is done afterward. Ex post facto research can be viewed as experimental research in reverse. (Goes and Simon 2013: 1-2)

Cohen et al. (2000: 123) noted that instead of taking groups that are equivalent and subjecting them to different treatments to determine differences in the dependent variables, an ex post facto experiment begins with groups that are already different in some respect, and searches in retrospect for factors that

brought about those differences in the dependent variables. In this way, ex post facto research transforms a non-experimental design into a pseudo-experimental design.

The Research Design

This investigation was largely quantitative in nature and utilized an ex post facto research design. The independent variable for this study was enrollment in either the CSU, UNE, or Cal U undergraduate sport management program. The dependent variable was learning style preference as assessed by the Kolb LSI 3.1 or Fleming's VARK. Primary data, assessed by the LSI 3.1 and VARK, were collected from CSU in the spring of 2016, and from UNE in the spring of 2016. Secondary LSI 3.1 data was available from Cal U and provided by permission from West (2010). Figure 3 illustrates the research design.

Figure 3. *Symbolic Illustration of the Research Design*

N (Cal U)	T_1	$O_{1(fall, 2010)}$	
N (UNE)	T_2	$O_1(spring, 2015)$	O_2
N (CSU)	T_3	$O_{1(spring, 2016)}$	O_2

Source: Author.
Note: N represents nonrandom assignment of participants; T_1, T_2, & T_3 = the antecedent treatment of institutional affiliation; O_1 = evaluation by use of Kolb's LSI; and O_2 evaluation by Fleming's VARK.

Selection of Participants

Approximately 58 LSI questionnaires and 58 VARK questionnaires were distributed to sport management majors at the University of New England (30 males and 28 females), while 56 LSI 3.1 and 56 VARK inventories (32 males and 24 females) were distributed to sport management majors at Cleveland State University. These numbers exhausted the total population of sport management students at each institution. The majority of participants were traditional college-age students ($\mu = 21$ years old). Inception of this study took form in the fall of 2013 while the primary researcher was an instructor at the University of New England. Initial steps included applying for a grant from the HayGroup foundation concerning acquisition and use of the LSI 3.1; applying for permission to utilize the VARK inventory; writing a letter of introduction to the Chair of the Department of Business at the University of New England, and applying to the University of New England's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for permission to administer the learning style inventories to sport management students. In the spring of 2015, and after UNE IRB permission was granted, a pilot study was conducted with 13 sport management majors (six males and seven females) at UNE. All student participants were informed that their participation was

completely voluntary and a letter of informed consent was read and distributed. Additionally, they were informed that participation or nonparticipation would not in any way affect their grades. The pilot study served as a review of survey distribution and collection procedures as well as a way to make sure that the questions were clear and understandable. The same ethical procedures were followed in the fall of 2015 at Cleveland State University (CSU) and CSU IRB permission was granted in the spring of 2016.

As previously mentioned, and due to limitations of time, resources, and the number of sport management students at each university, a non-probability convenience sample was used for this study. Appointments were made with the department chairs and instructors of sport management courses at each university concerning the administration of the surveys. In general the inventories were administered, (a) during required classes for sport management majors, (b) during normal class hours, and (c) by classroom instructors or graduate assistants acting on behalf of the primary researcher. Collectively, the inventories took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

In 2010, West conducted a study of sport management students at Cal U ($N = 248$) comparing the learning preferences (via the LSI 3.1) of online students to those in a traditional (face-to-face) classroom. Secondary data from her study concerning those sport management majors who were traditional students ($n = 101$) were used as a baseline for this investigation.

The University of New England is a private non-profit college of approximately 2,653 undergraduate students. It is categorized as a regional suburban institution with its athletic programs competing in the NCAA's Division III. Its two campuses are located in Biddeford, Maine and Portland, Maine. The university offers a variety of programs and majors with over half of its students enrolled in either medically related programs or allied health programs. Some program examples are pharmacy, physical therapy, dentistry, dental hygiene, and osteopathic medicine. The current sport management program resides in the Department of Business in the College of Arts and Sciences.

In contrast, Cleveland State University is a public institution located in the urban area of downtown Cleveland, Ohio. It has an undergraduate enrollment of 12,376 and its athletic teams compete in the NCAA Division I. It offers more than 200 undergraduate and graduate majors. Cleveland State University (CSU) has a high percentage of commuters and students who maintain full or part-time employment while attending school. Approximately 60 students are currently pursuing an undergraduate sport management degree under the auspices of the Department of Health and Human Performance within the College of Education and Health Sciences. The department offers majors in sport management, health and physical education, community health, and exercise science. There are a higher percentage of non-traditional students at CSU than at the UNE, and many of the CSU undergraduates are first generation college students. According to West (2010) and with regard to the California University of Pennsylvania:

> As part of the PASSHE, Cal U serves a broad range of students from diverse educational backgrounds and, often, limited financial resources for higher education. As an institution that traces its roots in the region to 1852, California State was an

academy and then a normal school. It became state owned in 1914, and in 1928 it was renamed California State Teachers College. . . (California University of Pennsylvania [Cal U] 2005).

Instrumentation

Hawk and Shaw (2007: 15) recommend the "coupling of learning style instruments to extend the diagnostic range available to both faculty and students". In search of a complete and universal model they suggested that an ideal composite model would need to measure all of the following learning style dimensions:

1. The concrete and abstract dimension (Gregorc 1979, Kolb 1984).
2. The active and reflective dimensions (Dunn 1990, Felder–Silverman 1988, Kolb 1984).
3. The sequential and random/global dimensions (Dunn 1990, Felder–Silverman 1988, Gregorc 1979).
4. The visual, aural, read/write, and kinesthetic dimensions (Felder–Silverman 1988, Fleming 2001).
5. Three intuitive and sensing dimensions (Felder–Silverman 1988).
6. The sociological elements of learning through self, pairs, peer, with a teacher, and mixed (Dunn 1990).
7. The environmental elements of sound, light, temperature, and room design (Dunn 1990).
8. The emotional elements of motivation, persistence, responsibility, and structure (Dunn 1990).
9. The physical elements of perceptual, intake, chronology, and mobility (Dunn 1990).
10. The psychological element of hemisphericity (Dunn 1990: 12).

Due to time constraints and the limited availability of resources concerning acquisition of the test only two inventories were used in this study. Hawk and Shaw (2007: 13) acknowledge, "A combination of the Kolb, Felder–Silverman, and the VARK Models or the Gregorc, Felder–Silverman, and VARK would cover the first five, but only the Dunn and Dunn instrument would allow coverage of the last five". The Dunn and Dunn model is commercially available yet expensive. Consequently two learning style inventories served to assess the dependent variables for this study. They were Kolb's Learning Style Inventory 3.1, and Fleming's VARK.

The Kolb LSI

The Kolb LSI 3.1 is a commercially available psychometric inventory with 12 items where respondents rank-order four sentence endings that correspond to the four learning styles (Hawk and Shaw 2007: 2).

The VARK inventory

According to Hawk and Shaw (2007: 7) Fleming reported, "that about 41% of the population who have taken the instrument online have a single style preference, 27% two style preferences, 9% three style preferences, and 21% have a preference for all four styles". The VARK addresses all the senses with the exception of taste and smell. The VARK inventory is composed of 13 statements that describe a situation and asks the participant to pick one or more of four actions that the respondent could hypothetically take. Each action corresponds to a particular learning style preference (Hawk and Shaw 2007: 6). It is available free and online at *vark-learn.com* and there is a specific version for athletes. The VARK questionnaire is self-administered, self-scored, and self-interpreted. According to Hawk and Shaw (2007: 7) "Fleming (2001) discusses the validity of the instrument, presenting research that supports the use of the instrument in identifying learning preferences of students. Beyond his reports, there is no other research on validity or reliability". "Fleming also presents the results of research that indicate higher student performance in courses when faculty match learning activities with students' learning styles as determined by the VARK instrument" (Hawk and Shaw 2007: 8).

Procedures

Inception of this study started in the fall of 2013 while the primary researcher was an instructor at the University of New England and continued throughout a two-year stint at a visiting instructor of sport management at Cleveland State University. Although this research is ongoing the data acquired and reported in this paper were completed by 2017. Initial steps included applying for a grant from the HayGroup foundation concerning acquisition and use of the LSI 3.1; applying for permission to utilize the VARK inventory; writing a letter of introduction to the chairs of the Department of Business at the University of New England, and the Department of Health and Human Performance at Cleveland State University, and receiving permission from both affiliated institutional review boards to administer the inventories to sport management students. In the spring of 2015, and after UNE IRB permission was granted, a pilot study was conducted.

By September of 2016, 212 psychometric inventories were distributed, completed, collected, and tabulated from the University of New England and Cleveland State University.

Results

The first sub-problem was to assess the prevalence of accommodating, assimilating, converging, and diverging learning preferences at the UNE and CSU through the administration of the Kolb LSI 3.1. Secondary data gleaned from West (2010) of 101 traditional face-to-face sport management students at Cal U was also utilized. Results are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. *Raw Data of Results of the Kolb's LSI 3.1 Samples*

|	UNE (*n* = 54	CSU (*n* = 54)	Cal U (*n* = 101)
Accommodating	13	13	38
Assimilating	13	20	16
Converging	14	9	6
Diverging	14	12	41

Source: Author.

Table 5 lists the results expressed as a percentage of the sample size (*n*), and Figure 4 is a histogram and provides a visual representation of data.

Table 5. *Prevalence of Learning Style based on Kolb's LSI, expressed as a percentage*

	UNE (*n* = 54)	CSU (*n* = 54)	Cal U (*n* = 101)
Accommodating	24%	24%	38%
Assimilating	24%	37%	16%
Converging	26%	17%	6%
Diverging	26%	22%	41%

Source: Author.

Figure 4. *Comparison of the Prevalence of Accommodating, Assimilating, Converging, and Diverging Learning Styles between UNE (n = 54), CSU (n = 54), and Cal U (n = 101) Sport Management Majors based on Percentage of Total Sample Size for Each Organization*
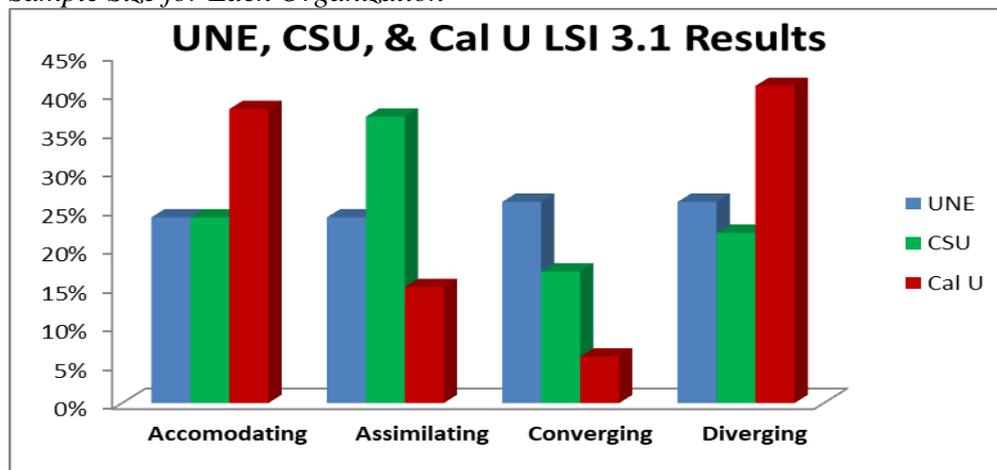
Source: Author.

The prevalence of learning styles among sport management students at the UNE revealed a very balanced result with nearly equal numbers across all four of Kolb's learning styles. Nearly half the students from the CSU sample demonstrated a preference for the Assimilating style, while secondary data obtained from West (2010) at Cal U demonstrated high preferences for the diverging and accommodating learning preferences.

Significance

The magnitude of differences between groups was found to be significant for comparisons between UNE and Cal U, χ^2 (1, $n=$ 155) = 1.43E-09, $p < .001$; a significant difference was also found between CSU and Cal U, χ^2 (1, $n=$ 155) = 3.39E-07, $p < .001$). As expected, when data from CSU and UNE were combined and compared to Cal U, χ^2 (1, $n=$ 155) = 5.11E-14, $p < .001$ it was also significant. Chi-square values were also calculated for differences between UNE and CSU with results significant at the 0.2 level but not the 0.001 level, χ^2 (1, $n=$ 108) = .13, $p < .2$.

When chi-square (χ^2) analysis was conducted using the SAS utility, and the expected frequency was 25% for each of the four learning style categories, no significant differences between the expected and observed frequency distributions were found for UNE ($\chi^2 = .138$). However, significant differences were found for CSU ($\chi^2 = 8.9$) and Cal. U. Pa. ($\chi^2 = 33$).

VARK Analysis

Neil Fleming's VARK questionnaire was used as the second dependent variable for evaluating consistency of learning style preference for this investigation. The 16-item VARK questionnaire assesses learner preference for Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic learning modes. On each of the VARK's 16 questions participants are encouraged to circle as many of the answers as they feel apply to them. Consequently one survey may have only 16 answers circled, while another may have as many as 64. Many of the participants who took the VARK displayed a balanced learning preference exhibiting no dominant learning mode and were subsequently classified as multimodal. Any given participant may be classified as bimodal, tri-modal, or exhibit balance across all four learning modalities. Fleming's latest research algorithm combines bimodal, tri-modal, and balanced learning styles into one multimodal category. Individuals displaying a balanced learning profile across all four VARK categories were dropped from the dataset since they would only add comparable weight to each category.

The VARK assessment for the remaining participants from UNE ($n = 52$) was expressed as a percentage of the total sample size and revealed that 19% of the respondents favored the visual learning mode, while 19% of the respondents favored the Aural, 21% utilized the Read/Write mode, and 42% preferred the Kinesthetic.

The VARK assessment for participants from CSU ($n = 52$) revealed that 16% of the respondents favored the Visual learning mode, 19% of the respondents favored the Aural, 22% utilized the Read/Write mode, and 42% preferred the Kinesthetic learning modality. Sub-problems two and five explored the differences between CSU and UNE sport management students as measured by Fleming's VARK. Fleming's international database also served as a baseline for comparison of VARK results. As one might intuitively expect of sport management majors a trend toward the Kinesthetic learning preference was observed in both the CSU

and UNE data. Additionally, the UNE and CSU VARK scores demonstrated a trend toward consistency of learning style preference. Figure 5 reflects a near mirror image between these two samples.

Figure 5. *Comparison of Visual, Aural, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic Learning Styles between UNE (N = 52) and CSU (N = 52) with Bimodal and Tri-Modal Participants Reintegrated*
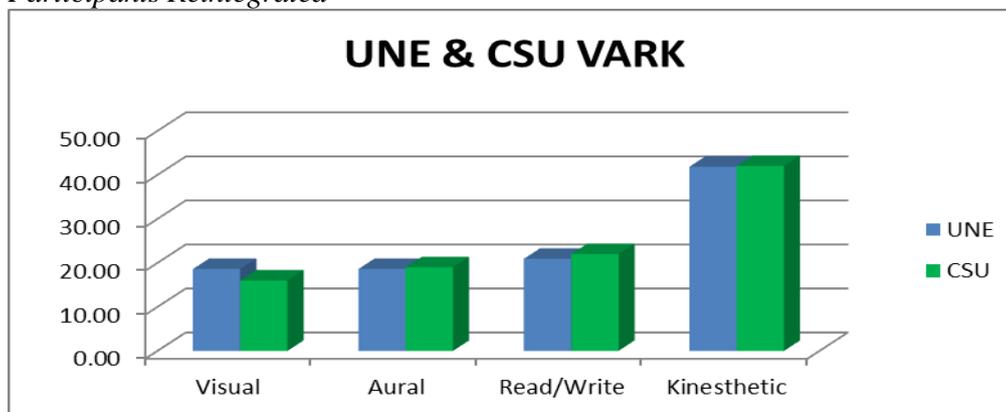
Source: Author.

Sub-problems two and five explored the differences between CSU and UNE sport management students as measured by Fleming's VARK. Fleming's international database also served as a baseline for comparison of VARK results. Table 6 compares primary data with secondary data from the VARK database.

Table 6. *Comparison of Primary Data to the VARK Cumulative Database*

	UNE (N = 52)	CSU (N = 52)	VARK 4-Year College (N = 7,801)	VARK SPORT (N = 1,754)
Visual	19%	16%	22%	23%
Aural	19%	19%	25%	26%
Read/Write	21%	22%	24%	21%
Kinesthetic	42%	42%	29%	31%

Source: Author.

Conclusions

This investigation has assessed the learning preferences of sport management students at two geographically disparate universities through the use of two different learning style instruments. Third and fourth sets of secondary data served as a baseline for comparison to bolster the meaningfulness of results. The prime research question was: Do selected undergraduate sport management majors display consistency of preferred learning styles across institutions of varying Carnegie classifications and geographical boundaries? A testable null hypothesis was stated, H_0: There will be no significant difference in learning style preference between sport management students at the University of New England (UNE),

Cleveland State University (CSU), and California University of Pennsylvania (Cal U) as measured by Kolb's LSI 3.1 and Fleming's VARK inventories. Assessments were conducted, and descriptive statistics and chi-square tests were used to evaluate significance across five measures. They were:

- Comparisons of CSU, UNE, and Cal U LSI prevalence data by tables, charts, and graphs.
- Comparison of UNE data to Cal U data by chi-square.
- Comparison of CSU data to Cal U data by chi-square.
- Comparison of (UNE and CSU) data combined compared to Cal U data by chi-square.
- Comparison of VARK scores between CSU and UNE by tables and charts.

Four out of five assessments revealed significant difference in the data examined, and although the VARK scores between UNE and CSU revealed some consistency of learning preference a relatively low sample size coupled with the fact that the VARK inventory only measures perceptual faculties mitigates this result. Consequently, it is the decision of this investigation that sport management majors at UNE, CSU, and Cal U are not consistent in their preferred learning styles as measured by Kolb's LSI 3.1. Therefore the null hypothesis must be rejected.

Discussion

Admittedly, there could be a myriad of variables responsible for variations in learning style preference that were outside the scope and limitations of this study. Variables such as social economic class, genetic disposition, cultural influences, parental encouragement, concern, and involvement in K-12 education were not directly assessed as part of this investigation. However, the variables that served as independent variables for this study were program affiliation, college attended, and other Carnegie classification attributes.

Strong differences in LSI 3.1 scores were found between UNE and Cal U, and CSU and Cal U, while a statistically weak but interesting difference ($\chi^2 = .13$) was found between UNE and CSU. The UNE LSI 3.1 data displayed a remarkably balanced profile, with approximately 25% of respondents neatly dispersed among the LSI's four learning categories. The Cal U and CSU data were heavily skewed, and each institution's results favored a few learning categories. The University of New England held the distinction of being the only private school among the three institutions, raising the question of a possible correlation between private school attendance and a balanced learning style.

Kolb defined Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) as a social psychological concept that is only partially determined by personality. There is no doubt that personality plays an essential role in individual learning style; however, it is only one of five variables affecting learning style. According to ELT, equally important are the environmental factors of educational specialization, career, job, and tasks skills (HayGroup 2005: 6). In the past empirical evidence has demonstrated that

educational specialization tends to shape learning as individuals' progress through the educational process and become exposed to the values, norms, and beliefs of that field's culture. For example:

> *People specializing in the arts, history, political science, English, and psychology tend to have Diverging learning styles, while those majoring in more abstract and applied areas such as medicine and engineering have Converging learning styles. Individuals with Accommodating styles often have educational backgrounds in education, communications, and nursing, and those with assimilating styles in mathematics and physical sciences. (HayGroup 2005: 7)*

The same type of influence is demonstrated by choice of professional career. According to the HayGroup (2005: 7):

> *One's professional career choice not only exposes one to a specialized learning environment, but it also involves a commitment to a generic professional problem, such as social service, that requires a specialized adaptive orientation. In addition, one becomes a member of a reference group of peers who share a professional mentality and a common set of values and beliefs about how one should behave professionally. This professional orientation shapes learning style through habits acquired in professional training and through the immediate normative pressures involved in being a competent professional.*

Student participants from UNE made the choice to go to a private school. Most private colleges cost more than public colleges. Consequently, it would be logical to assume that if one is willing to pay more for a pricier commodity (than the basic "no frills" commodity that is available for a lesser price) one highly values that commodity. If a person comes from an environment where education is highly valued, it is likely that one would receive more resources, tutoring, attention, support, and encouragement, related to this value, than a person from an environment where education is not as highly valued. Jones et al. (2003) explored learning styles across the four disciplines of English, math, science, and social studies using Kolb's LSI as the assessment instrument. Their results indicated that:

> *Eighty-three (81%) of the 103 participants switched learning style modes for two or more disciplines. These learning styles are subject area sensitive, that a majority of the students perceive different disciplines require different learning strategies and that they are able to adapt or style-flex to meet the requirements of the learning task. This finding is consistent with previous research. (Jones et al. 2003: 372)*

Figure 6 *displays some popular professional fields and associate Kolb affiliation.*

Figure 6. *Professional Fields and Affiliated Kolb's LSI Categorizations*
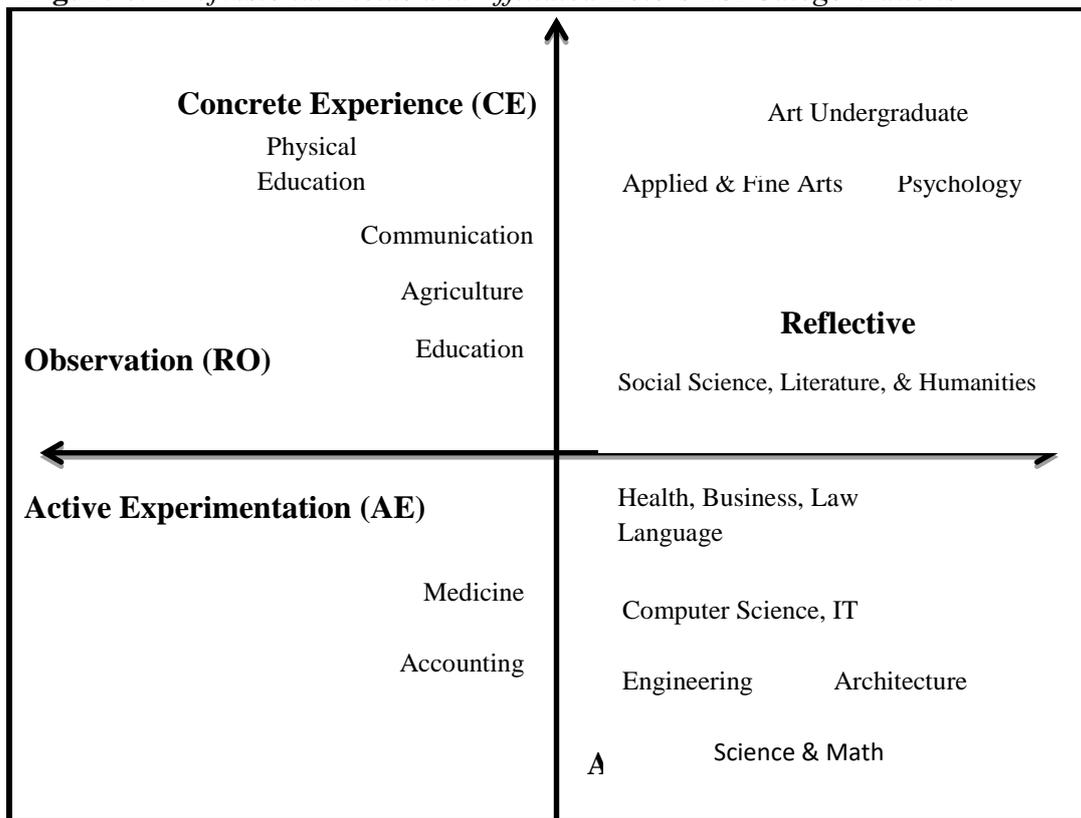
Source: Author.

According to CSU's internal statistical reports approximately 53%-58% of CSU's students are classified as first generation college students (i.e., neither a parent nor a grandparent attended college), a situation in which they may rely heavily on one or two learning style modes, while the balanced learning style displayed by the UNE students, may in fact be due to earlier and greater exposure to educational indoctrination and the normative demands of the field of sport management.

The Meshing Hypothesis

At present there is no irrefutable empirical evidence supporting the Meshing Hypothesis. Pashler et al. (2008: 110) argue that:

> *Until a study is conducted where subjects have been first classified as having Learning Style A or B, and then randomly assigned to Learning Method 1 or 2, and later, all subjects have taken the same test, the learning-styles hypothesis is supported if and only if the learning method that optimized the mean test score of one group is different from the learning method that optimized the mean test score of the other group.*

Although they concede that identifiable differences in learning preferences exist, Pashler et al. (2008) do not support learning style testing in the educational

environment, nor do they support the attempted matching of instructional methods to learner preference. In short, they contend that limited educational resources would be better spent elsewhere. Others disagree and have supported the individualization and pluralization of instructional methods (Gardner 2011, Hawk and Shaw 2007). Felder (2010: 2) stated:

> *The Center for Applications of Psychological Type database lists 292 publications and dissertations relating students' MBTI profiles to their academic performance and attitudes, and many studies have also been carried out using other common learning styles assessment instruments. The findings of Pashler et al. (2008) notwithstanding, significant and predictable performance differences have been found in many of these studies. The engineering education literature alone provides numerous examples. In several studies based on the MBTI, intuitors in theoretical/ analytical engineering courses with examinations that rewarded problem-solving speed predictably did better on average than their sensing classmates, while in courses taken by the same students that stressed engineering practice and required careful observation and attention to detail, the sensors predictably did better. Also consistent with type theory, intuitors were three times more likely than sensors to give themselves high self-ratings for creative thinking; extraverts initially reacted more positively to team assignments than did introverts; thinkers consistently outperformed feelers in the impersonal environment of the engineering curriculum and the feelers were more likely to drop out, even if they were doing well academically. Similar correlations have also been found between engineering students' performance and attitudes and their learning styles as assessed by the Index of Learning Styles and the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory.*

The reality is that learning style assessment by one of the more popular inventories can be an inexpensive and time efficient process. The total assessment is effectively completed in less than 20 minutes. This includes time for both the survey's completion and evaluation. Setting questions of validity aside, there may still be benefits in conducting this process, namely, a placebo effect and a possible Pygmalion effect. Participants may simply respond to the instructors concern and appreciation for taking the time to discern their individual differences. If this concern is coupled with high performance expectations, a Pygmalion effect may result. Felder (2010: 3) elaborates:

> *There is at least one good reason not to attempt to teach all students in their preferred manner, but it has nothing to do with the validity of the meshing hypothesis. It is, rather, that doing so is for all practical purposes impossible. As long as the students have more than one learning style among them, whenever students with one style receive matched instruction, the other students will automatically be taught in a mismatched manner. This does not mean that learning styles have no place in instructional design, however: there is another view of their utility that the debunkers have chosen to ignore. The point is not to match teaching style to learning style but rather to achieve balance, making sure that each style preference is addressed to a reasonable extent during instruction. From this viewpoint, instruction is ineffective if it heavily favors one set of learning preferences (and hence one set of students) over another.*

Assuming that West (2010) and Cavanagh et al. (1995) have presented findings that are valid and reliable, the empirical evidence indicates that 80% of sport management students prefer to learn at least in part by concrete experience (CE). If the *meshing* hypothesis (i.e., the construct that matching learning activities to learning preferences) is also valid and reliable, efficiency in instructing sport management students should be increased by the use of learning activities that match the CE dimension. It was traditionally thought that the following class activities required concrete experience: (a) lecture examples, (b) problem sets, (c) films, (d) simulations, (e) laboratories, (f) observations, and (g) field work.

The least preferred and consequently the least motivating to sport management majors would include those learning activities associated with the abstract conceptualization category (AC). According to Kolb (1984) this would include lecture, papers, analogies, text readings, projects, model building, and model critique. Consequently, with relation to the majority of sport management majors, the learning activities of in-class lectures, papers, text readings, model building, and projects may be the least motivating, and therefore the least productive learning activities concerning these students.

As previously cited Colvey (2014) evaluated 231 junior and senior undergraduates who were enrolled in the professional programs of the Department of Health, Physical Education, and Sport Science at Arkansas State University. Each student completed the Computerized Assessment Program-Styles of Learning (CAPSOL) inventory. The results indicated that the individual, sequential, and the bodily kinesthetic learning styles were most popular. In 2002, while under the auspices of the United States Sports Academy, Wesley utilized the Inventory for Learning Styles (ILS) instrument to evaluate the learning style preferences of 490 high school student-athletes at nine Mobile County, Alabama high schools. Wesley's study indicated 447 (91.2%) preferred an active learning style, while 27 (5.5%) of the student-athletes showed a balanced learning preference, and the remaining 16 (3 .3%) a reflective learning preference. Kolb's research shows that a preference for learning by abstraction increased with age and educational level, while a preference for learning by action increased until about middle age and then decreased (HayGroup 2005: 24-25). Consequently, as a student progresses through the educational spectrum there is a balancing effect occurring (i.e., an increase in the use of the learning style mode of abstract conceptualization, and less reliance on active experimentation).

Similar to the Colvey (2014) and Wesley (2002) studies previously mentioned, this study also demonstrated a high concentration for the Kinesthetic learning style preference as assessed by Fleming's VARK with 42% of respondents possessing a Kinesthetic preference. In 1984, Kolb identified role playing, constructing models, physical activity, demonstrations, guest lectures, and real life examples as classroom activities consistent with this preference.

Throughout learning style literature two recurring themes continue to arise. Namely, that the learner who receives information via their primary learning style have increased motivation; and secondly, increased motivation is correlated with higher learning outcomes (Maushak et al. 2000, Robinson 2011).

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Public Sport Policies: Characterization of Sports Services and Human Resources in Municipalities of Mozambique

By Gustavo Paipe[*] & Maria José Carvalho[‡]

Municipalities have an important role in the provision of sports services for citizens. Imperatively, the allocation of qualified human resources is a fundamental requirement for success in the programmes offered. The aim of this study was to characterize the sports services and human resources in municipalities of Mozambique. Data collection was accomplished by using a semi-structured interview directed to councillors and a questionnaire to sport municipal directors. It was applied a content analysis and descriptive statistics analysis for the results derived from the interviews and questionnaires. The results indicated that 91.7% of the municipalities were created in 1998 and 8.3% in 2008. On the other hand, the perceived services efficiency in general was considered as regular. Regarding human resources, the large majority (75%) of the employees do not have qualification in sport training. This indicates that training in leadership; policy formulation; general management; strategic planning; public relations; legal aspects and sport law; sport marketing; programme planning and accounting in sport are required.

Keywords: *efficiency, municipal policies, qualification in sport, services creation.*

Introduction

The interest in sports practice along the 20th century has gained an important social significance, especially in developed societies. Several forms of participation in this social space have emerged (Shilbury et al. 2008). Sport, as a cultural habit, has no longer been practiced just by the aristocracy – who ensured its reproduction through the school institutions. It became a practice of the working classes belonging to associations formed to host and develop regular sports practice (Marivoet 1997).

The social involvement of classes with less economic and cultural resources brought new attitudes and values (Hoye and Nicholson 2009). This idea was supported in the recognized qualities of sport practice: its ability to contribute to the well-being (Bento and Bento 2010) and comprehended as a powerful vehicle for the return to Nature in an increasingly urbanized society (Sérgio 2001).

Today we are experiencing lifestyles from the globalization phenomenon. Nowadays, we have access to practices that are carried out in other countries and in different cultural contexts that allow us to assemble rich and valuable experiences (Prista 2012). These experiences, provide the awareness of different

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realities and needs (Pereira 2009) inducing an adequate answer from public authorities (central, regional or local).

The operationalization of possible solutions to this demand is a challenging task. However, with the creation of legislative documents associated to sports practice, a growing political attention to the sports offer is shown in Mozambique (Paipe 2015). This evolves exclusively through different levels of participation and involvement of practitioners, technicians and leaders in the domain of public and private organizations.

This article proposes to study the contribution of public organizations in sports practices, since the participation of these organizations is expressed in the interests of promoting and massificating sport for most of the population. Hence, physical and sporting activity is available to everyone, competing to a greater or lesser extent to the promotion of healthier lifestyles.

In developed countries, the opportunities that are offered to the practice of sports are higher compared to those exhibited by developing countries. Africa is a continent where most of the countries have a low human development index and most of the population lives mainly based on subsistence activities, lacking of means and effective monitoring conditions of calamities, such as droughts and cyclical floods. Sports activities do not constitute a priority and are not a subject of highlight (Nhantumbo et al. 2006). The health services are confronted with the pursuit for solutions to problems of nutrition as well as endemic diseases/ contagious constraints (World Health Organization 1990).

Moreover, the increasing urbanization of African societies[1], the accelerated adoption of habits of industrialized countries and, in some cases, the improvement of hygienic conditions (Alwan and Modell 2003) have increased the sedentary lifestyle. This leads to associated hypokinetic diseases, which begins to worry the health authorities (Prista 2012), requiring the development of intervention programmes and definition of appropriate public policies.

In this regard, Mozambique is dealing with problems that underpin its interest in sport, with orders and legal regulations. Official documents are prepared and promulgated, making sport an object of public policy. Nevertheless, Mozambique is a developing country, consequently, presents a faulty public policy (typical of this kind of countries) where education system, health and housing, among others, are not the most appropriate and this indirectly influences the national sports system (Chappell and Seifu 2000).

It is in this perspective that municipalities, as entities of Government that are closest to the citizens, have fundamental duties and responsibilities for the achievement of the Mission of State. This mission pretends to serve the citizens and organizations, provide good answers to aspirations, needs and motivations, and contribute to the improvement of a quality life through definition of policies and provision of sports services that promote healthier lifestyles (Gallardo Guerrero and Gómez Jiménez 2004, Pereira 2009).

In this research, a dual approach was used. First, to analyse municipal sport services regarding to its creation and positioning, and on the other hand, to

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[1]UNFPA, State of world population 2007: Unleashing the Potential of Urban Growth. http://www. unfpa.org/swop.

examine the human resources available for responding to challenges placed by new demands of physical activity and sports practice in municipalities of Mozambique. The understanding of these scopes will allow a diagnosis of reality of sport in the municipalities of Mozambique, enabling to support the local authorities to design intervention strategies based on identified realities.

Literature Review

Municipal Sports Services

The evolution of the municipalities in Mozambique is very arduous to be analysed due to the lack of disaggregated studies about the subject in Mozambique (World Bank Staff and Muzima 2008). However, by the end of the 90s, the urban areas of Mozambique were under the political and administrative authority of the centralized Government, which terminated with the end of the colonial Government in 1975. During the period of single political party, the Government formally finished the constitutional amendment of 1990.

The colonial administrative model determined the existence of political executives in cities *(Administrators)* responsible for presiding the city councils (Cistac 2001). These cities did not have binding powers. Its members were chosen by the Portuguese Government authorities to provide the support to the hierarchical executive on coordination and implementation, through the administrator of the city, in a hierarchy that culminated in the colonial Governor of the *"Província Ultramarina de Mozambique"*.

After the independence in 1975, the State established new systems of governance and urban management. Although the formal public sector unit, even with the designation changed to "Executive Councils", remained very similar, in structure and functions, to the councils of the colonial period, as well as its role and its relationship with a wider range of socio-political institutions, it became considerably different (Cistac and Chiziane 2008).

The process of economic and political liberalization contemplated in the Constitution of 1990, counselled by the provisions of the Peace Agreement of Rome in 1992 regarding local governance, resulted in the formulation of a strategy for the introduction of decentralized local governance by the Ministry of State Administration (MAE). This Ministry categorizes urban areas based on the economic development of the main urban cities of the country (World Bank Staff and Muzima 2008).

This definition takes into consideration political, economic, social and cultural aspects, population density, number and type of industry, degree of development of trade activities, education and sanitation. The *MAE* categorizes cities and urban towns in four types: A, B, C and D. The "A" type includes the country's capital, Maputo; the "B" type comprises province capitals of Nampula, Beira and Matola; the "C" type encompasses all other province capitals; and the "D" type incorporates the other urban cities and towns (Assembleia da República de Moçambique 1987).

The law of the institutional framework of municipal districts[2], approved by the Government and submitted to the legislature in 1994, dictated the gradual introduction of local authorities elected throughout the country, including all 23 cities and 121 districts. This law promoted a single legal integration, with small variations in structure and functions, appropriate to the specificities of the urban and rural contexts. This comprehended the last law passed by the National Assembly with single political party before the first multi-party general elections in October 1994, which pronounced a significant point in the country's transition to a liberal democracy.

The Government, in early 1995, formal and substantive questions were raised by legal and political experts about the legality and feasibility of the institutional law of the municipal districts in 1994. As a result of discussions among the Government, the parliamentary majority of FRELIMO and the parliamentary representation of the opposition RENAMO, agreed on a revision of the Constitution in order to clarify the legal basis for the establishment of democratic local governments (Helling 2008).

In late 1996, a large bipartisan majority in the Assembly of the Republic approved several amendments to the Constitution. This included the review of constitutional articles related to the nature and the role of a decentralized territorial administration by the Local authorities of the State *(OLE),* including provinces, districts, administrative posts and locations, as well as the constitutional status and powers of local authorities (Cistac 2001, Helling 2008). These amendments were considered by many individuals as inconsistent with the institutional law of the municipal districts of 1994 requiring new legislation before the creation of the first municipalities of Mozambique.

Because of these constitutional amendments of 1996, at the beginning of 1997, the Government submitted to the National Assembly a proposal for a framework law of local government. The lack of agreement between the parliamentary groups regarding the implications of the proposal, in particular, with relation to the number and selection of the first local authorities –and to what they considered as a limitation of its functions and power–, led the opposition to withdraw the legislative debate and vote. It was then approved, at the first session of the Assembly of 1997, a new law of Local Government, including the legislation that structured the establishment of the first local authorities and elections, municipal finance, mayors and other specificities of the employees of the municipality (Helling 2008, World Bank Staff and Muzima 2008).

Thus, the municipal law of Mozambique was implemented in early 1997, resulting in the first municipal elections at the end of the same year. The first 23 municipal governments elected, entered into office in January 1998. At the time of approval of local laws, there were 23 cities ranked, including Maputo, such that, 10 were province capitals and 13 secondary cities. All of these towns became municipalities in 1998. In addition, the Government proposed that each village (district headquarters) in each province would become a "Village Hall" for the first group of 33 municipalities (Cistac 2001).

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[2]Moçambique, A. R. (1994). Lei n.º 3/94 de 13 de setembro: Quadro institucional dos distritos municipais. Boletim da República, I Série - 2° Suplemento (37).

It is in this context that the municipalities have by law responsibility in various areas for local development, including the environment, basic sanitation and quality of life; provision of public services: health; education; municipal policing; construction and housing, and particularly in culture, recreation and sport (Carvalho et al. 2015, Carvalho et al. 2012, Constantino 1999).

Human Resources

The evolution of sport arises from a complex articulation of several factors, highlighting the scientific knowledge available at any time, the technologies, the environment, material resources and human resources, although the importance of all of these factors in sport, and in any other activity, the central role of human resources is universally recognized (Gabriel et al. 2010).

Among the multiple aspects that characterize sport, the human resources play a key role for the success of any activity, since these are regarded as a catalyst for efficient standards of management in any industry (Taylor et al. 2015). It is evident that the success of any attempt at sport development is largely dependent upon the ability and competence of the human resources (Chelladurai 2006).

Human resources are a rare resource, so carefully planning and selection, training and appropriate rewards and proper integration in the organization, are important requirements for using the resources strategically and efficiently (Brewster 1995, Chirilă 2009).

The specific training of human resources is an important factor for the success of the activities of a company or organization. It allows a theoretical deepening of the reality that will face in professional practice (Beech and Chadwick 2004). As well as de Lima (2008) says, the human resource development includes training activities and continuing education in order to augment the individual's ability to accomplish tasks with efficiency and enthusiasm, giving him/her the opportunity to progress by presenting better operational performance.

A review of human resources management literature clearly revealed that appropriately trained employees were regarded as the major success variable for maintaining standards of service and efficient levels of productivity (Caughron 2000, Chelladurai 2006, Doherty 1998, Goslin 1996, Taylor and McGraw 2006). Human resources can only act as a lever force in any industry if properly trained (Buswell 2004, Yang and Chen 2009).

 In this sense, municipalities must understand the need to allocate skilled technicians. It is essential an appropriate organizational structure and technical support with the respective qualified human resources and materials (Constantino 1999), since these have a pivotal importance, along with other valuable and intangibles resources of sport organization such as brand value and customer relationships. Attracting, developing and retaining talented people can provide a sport organization with the resources it needs to prosper, grow and, ultimately, gain competitive advantage (Taylor et al. 2015).

In Mozambique, the sports structures have gone through several transfor-mations since the colonial period, being the sport a privilege for some social classes, contrasting with scarce opportunities for sports practice and access to

sports facilities for the majority of the population (Domingos 2009). The political changes that have been adopted since the independence period until the present have prompted the government to emancipate sports practice by fostering several organizational structures.

Figure 1 shows an approximation of the administrative organization of sport in Mozambique, as well as the distribution of human resources at different levels. However, it needs to be clarified that this research focuses in an analysis at the level of Municipal Sports Directions.

Figure 1. *Administrative Organization of Sport in Mozambique*
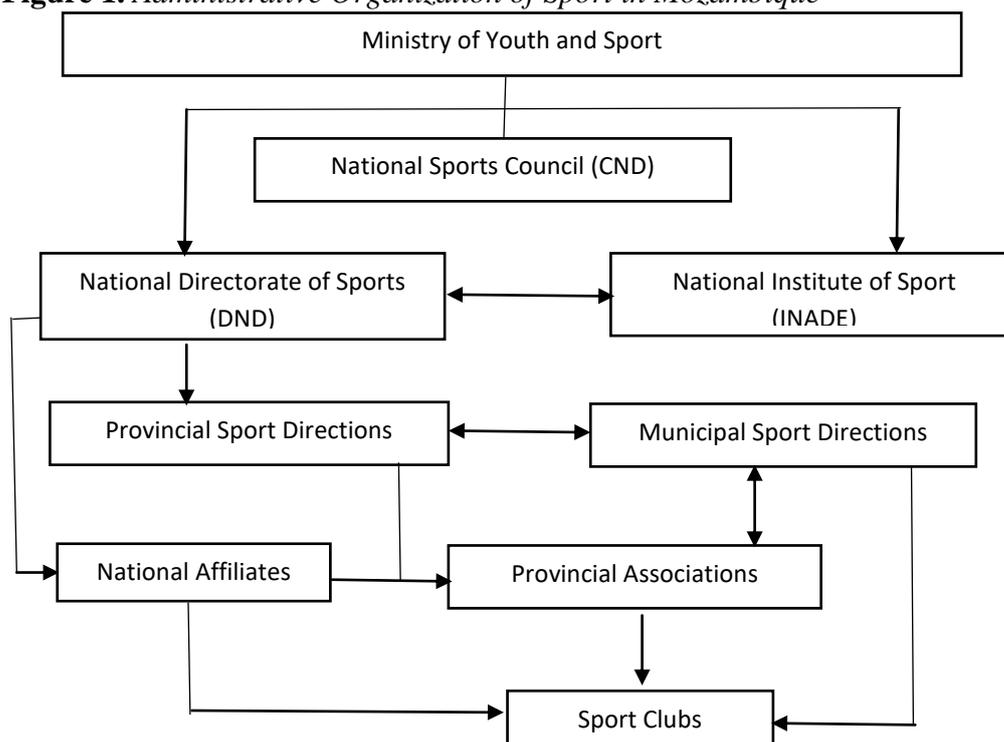
Source: Compiled by the authors.

The Ministry of Youth and Sport is the entity that represents the Government at central level and its mission is to promote the organization of the physical activity and the development of sports through the definition of sports policies, legislation and sports programmes nationwide.

The National Sports Council is the advisory body created by the Government for the policies to adopt in sport, with representation from various areas and sensibilities. The National Directorate of Sports is an organ of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, designed to ensure the development of government policies in the field of sport, its monitoring and evaluation. It is guided through the standards settled by the Government Plan and the law that establishes the Ministry of Youth and Sport as well as in the provisions of this Regulation.

The National Institute of Sport is a public body with legal personality and administrative autonomy, which has initiated its operation at the beginning of June 2011, with the appointment of the respective Director. Its main tasks are the

implementation of policies, programmes and other public and private initiatives in the area of sport; manage and promote the development of physical culture and sports; and improve the management mechanisms of sporting affairs.

The Provincial Sport Directions are government representations at the level of local governments in the province. Their primary mission is to represent the government and monitor the implementation of the policies defined at the local level. The Municipal Sport Directions comprise the departments of the municipal-lities; these municipalities have political, financial and administrative autonomy for the definition of sports policies at local level, considering the policies defined at central level. National Affiliates, Provincial Associations and Sport Clubs are legal persons of private non-profit organization, which objective is the promotion and practice of sports activities.

As previously mentioned, our study focuses on the characterization of municipal sports services, such that, it is relevant a brief reference to the administrative organization of municipalities in Mozambique, which we present in Figure 2.

Figure 2. *Administrative Organization of the Municipalities*
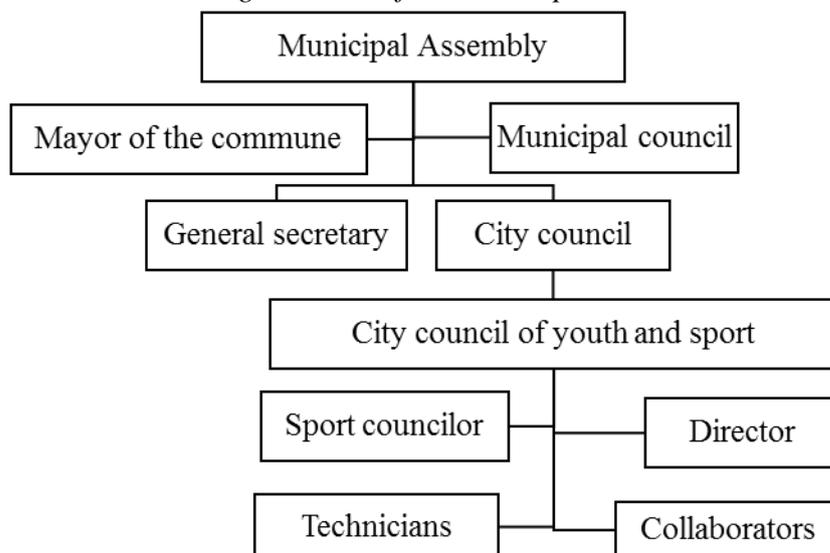
Source: Adapted by the authors from the Law 2/97[3].

The law 2/97, in article 1, paragraph 2, considers local authorities as public legal persons provided with their own representative bodies, which seek to pursue the interests of their respective populations without prejudice of interests both for national and state level. In article 32 of the same law are considered as fundamental bodies of the municipalities - Municipal Assembly; Mayor of the commune and; Municipal Council.

In article 34, the Municipal Assembly is considered as a representative body of the municipality endowed with deliberative powers. According to article 35,

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[3]Lei n.º 2/97, de 18 de fevereiro, I Série n.º 7, Boletim da República, 2º Suplemento, que aprova o quadro jurídico para a implantação das autarquias locais.

members elected by universal, direct, equal, secret, personal and regular residents of voters in respective constituency comprise the municipal assembly.

Article 49 defines municipal council as a collegiate executive body of the municipality, composed by the Mayor and City Council selected and appointed by him.

Article 57 of the same law, considers the Mayor of the commune a single executive body of the municipality. According to article 58, paragraph 1, the Mayor is elected by universal, equal, direct, secret and periodic of voters registered in the respective municipality area.

Methods

Participants

Twenty-four individuals responsible for sport from twelve municipalities were randomly selected for this research. From these, thirteen are councillors, six are municipal sports directors, three are coordinators and two are heads of departments. Regarding the gender of the participants, 16.6% are women and 83.4% are men. In relation to age, 25% of participants are aged between 26-32 years; 41.7% between 33-40 years; 8.3% between 41-48 years and 25% more than 49 years. Concerning the type of employment contract, 33.3% have permanent contract; 58.3% full-time contract and 8.3% part-time contract. All of them have an experience ranging from 1 to 5 years.

The selection of the participants was based on two criteria: response to the request for conducting the research and availability to participate. For this, an invitation letter explaining the research objectives was sent together with a declaration containing the agreement with data collection and respective signature directed to the principal researcher and the respondent (Quivy and Campenhoudt 2008). In Table 1, we present the principal characteristics of the municipalities.

Table 1. *Characteristics of the Municipalities*

Name of the Municipality	Province	Category	Region	Inhabitants
Beira	Sofala	B	Center	431.583
Cidade de Maputo	Maputo	A	South	1.194.121
Chimoio	Manica	C	Center	238.088
Gondola	Manica	D	Center	47.714
Ilha de Moçambique	Nampula	C	North	54.470
Manhiça	Maputo Provincia	D	South	65.341
Maxixe	Inhambane	C	South	108.824
Moatize	Tete	D	Center	52.205
Nacala	Nampula	C	North	208.446
Nampula	Nampula	B	North	471.717
Pemba	Cabo Delgado	C	North	141. 316
Quelimane	Zambézia	C	Center	193.343

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Regarding the analysed municipalities, four have population below 100,000 inhabitants, seven have population over 100,000 inhabitants, and one has population of more than one million inhabitants. In terms of categories, 8.3% of municipalities correspond to category "A", 16.7% to category "B", 50% to category "C" and 25% to category "D". It is also worth mentioning that 33.3% of the municipalities are located in the Southern region of the country, 41.7% in the Central region and 25% in the Northern region, comprehending three Southern provinces, four Central provinces and two Northern provinces.

Data Collection

Concerning the qualitative techniques, a semi structured interview was applied to twelve councillors of sport (Creswell 2013). The interviews occurred at the municipalities' office. They had from a minimum of 31 minutes to a maximum of 75 minutes. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain information about the human resources and their qualifications, as well as the future concern to respond to the sport demands of citizens.

Regarding the quantitative data, a questionnaire validated by Paipe et al. (2015) was applied to twelve sports responsible (one municipal councillor, six sports directors, three coordinators and two heads of departments). The ethical council of the Faculty of Sport of the University of Porto has approved the research with process number *CEFADE 05.2015*.

Data Analysis

With reference to data processing and interpretation, a content analysis and descriptive statistics were used (Veal and Darcy 2014) with the support of a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The categories were determined a priori through revision of the specialized literature about the subject (Bardin 2014).

Results and Discussion

After collecting data through questionnaires and interviews, the results are presented according to the order of the dimensions analysed, creation of the services and human resources, respectively. Due to the limitation of words, it will be assigned a code to each item of each dimension, which will be used during the presentation of the results as well as in their discussion.

Municipal Sport Services

This dimension comprised the year of creation of service (YC), the initial name of the town council (IN), its constitution (C), the current designation (CD), the most appropriate name (AN) and the efficiency of services (EFS).

In Table 2 are presented the results for the first three items "year of creation of services (YC), the initial name of the town council (IN), its constitution (C)".

Table 2. *Year of the Creation of the Service, Initial Name and Constitution of the Council*

Municipalities	Year of creation	Initial Name	Constitution of services
Beira	1998	Sports Department	Grouped
Cidade de Maputo	1998	Town council	One council
Chimoio	1998	Municipal service of culture, youth and sport	Grouped
Gondola	2008	Municipal service of culture, youth and sport	Grouped
Ilha de Moçambique	1998	Town council	Grouped
Manhiça	1998	Sports Department	Grouped
Maxixe	1998	Town council	Grouped
Moatize	1998	Other	Grouped
Nacala	1998	Town council	Grouped
Nampula	1998	Town council	Grouped
Pemba	1998	Town council	Grouped
Quelimane	1998	Town council	Grouped

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Observing Table 2, we can verify that most of the municipalities were established in 1998 and only one municipality was created in 2008. The initial designation of sports services for seven of these municipalities was town council, in two municipalities' sports departments, in other two municipal services of culture, youth and sport and one municipality without name. Concerning the constitution of the services, eleven municipalities presented a grouped town council consisting of two or more services, whilst only one municipality presented a single town council for sport.

Regarding the constitution of the town council, the interviews applied to council members of sport indicate that these are unanimous concerning that municipal sport services are already by themselves a town council. It is necessary to understand that sport is a very cross-sectional area that requires a lot of commitment from employees. In this sense, to be succeeded in municipal sports programmes, sport town council should be independent and not grouped or included within another council as it happens in most of the municipalities.

The results related to the items of current designation (CD), the most appropriate name (AN) and the efficiency of services (EFS), are presented in percentage, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *Current Designation (CD), Appropriate Name (AN) and Efficiency of Services (EFS)*

Current designation	%	Appropriate name	%	Efficiency of services	%
Municipal direction	8.3	Direction	8.3	Bad	25
Municipal department	16.7	Municipal sports service	8.3	Regular	41.7
Municipal town council of youth and sport	33.3	Municipal service of youth and sport	16.7	Good	25
Without a Specific Designation	16.7	Municipal service of culture, youth and sport	41.7	Very good	8.3
Other	25	Municipal department	16.7		
		Municipal town council of culture, youth and sport	8.3		

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Regarding the item of current designation of sports services, the results indicate that 33.3% of the municipalities have the designation of municipal town council of youth and sport, 16.7% are designated as municipal department, 8.3% as municipal direction, and 25% have other type of designation or do not have any specific designation.

Concerning the appropriate name attributed by councillors, the results show that 41.7% of the councillors indicated as an ideal name, municipal service of culture, youth and sport, 16.7% as municipal service of youth and sport, 16.7% as municipal department, 8.3% as municipal sport service, 8.3% as direction and 8.3% as municipal town council of culture, youth and sport.

These results suggest that the current designation of municipal services is not the most appropriate, which can influence directly or indirectly the quality of services provided to the citizens. Some authors (Gallardo Guerrero and Gómez Jiménez 2004, King 2014, Leber 2012) argue the relevance attributed to municipalities with appropriate structures so they can respond adequately to the demands raised by the citizens in sports, providing quality services and complying with the responsibilities assigned by law. Regarding the efficiency of the services, 41.7% of the councillors indicated that the services are regular, 25% evaluated the efficiency of the services as bad and 8.3% as very good.

The evaluation assigned to the efficiency of services can largely be related to the organization of sports services in the municipalities because, in most municipalities, the services are grouped with other areas, which somewhat limits the involvement of employees, since sport is often relegated to the last place, even if has not been grouped with other area.

In general, for the dimension, creation of services, our results corroborate other researches (Gallardo Guerrero 2002, Misener et al. 2013, Staněk 2007) conducted in other countries, in which the same dimension was analysed.

Human Resources

In this dimension, it was analysed the academic level of the employees (AL), sports training (ST), number of employees at the municipal sports services and external collaborators (NE), which are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** *Academic Level (LA) and Number of Employees (NE)*

Academic level	%	Number of employees		%
Bachelor Degree	58.3	Internal	2 - 5	83.3
Professional Training	16.7	Internal and external	10	8.3
High School	25	Internal and external	≥ 10	8.3

Source: Compiled by the authors.

On academic level, the results showed that 58.3% of councillors and municipal directors have a Bachelor Degree –although not in Sports and Physical Education or Sports Management– 16.7% have professional training, and 25% concluded High School.

In the item sport training, 16.7% have a background in sports management, 8.3% in sports animation, and 75% have no qualification in sports training, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. *Sport Training*
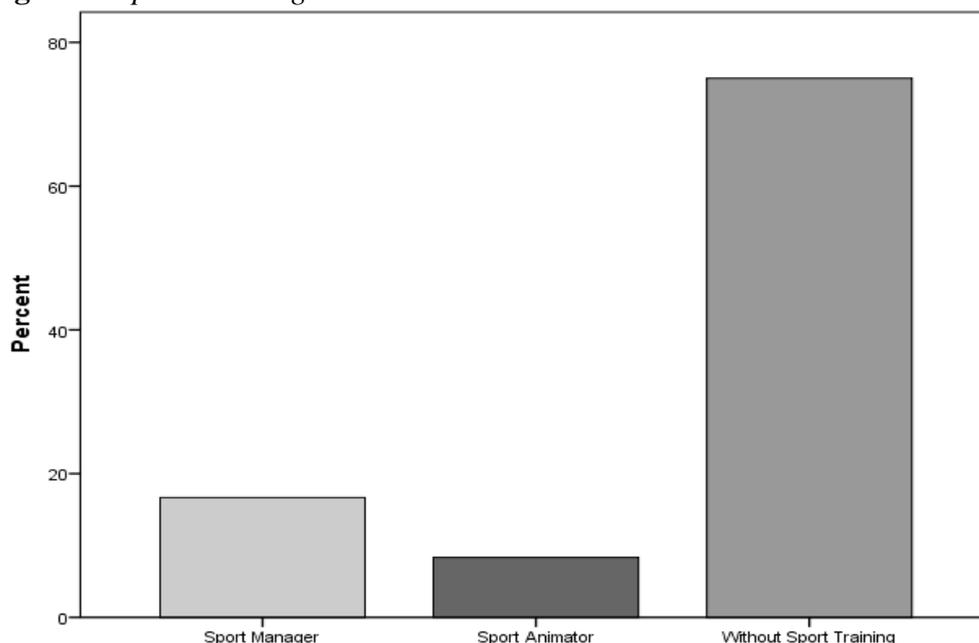
Source: Compiled by the authors.

In relation to the number of employees, 83.3% of the municipalities have 2 to 5 internal employees, 8.3% have 10 internal and external employees, and 8.3% have more than 10 internal and external employees.

It was undertaken a careful analysis about the qualification of the human resources. According to our results, it was verified that most of the municipalities do not have qualified employees, specifically in sports. This promotes a negative impact in the provision of quality services to citizens, since for the municipalities to provide a quality service, is pivotal to have qualified staff, particularly in the area of sport, which requires specific abilities (de Lima 2008, Goslin 1996).

The results of our study corroborate those found by Dixon et al. (2008) in their research about "*Human resources management systems and organizational effectiveness in non-profit sport organizations*" where they found awareness qualification in human resources. Our results are also similar with those found by Campos Izquierdo et al. (2007) and Arboledas Garcia and Puig i Barata (2012).

Content analysis derived from the interviews of the councillors revealed that the generic skills of sport management are needed to achieve efficiency in the municipalities sport services in Mozambique.

Researchers on human resources in sport (Chelladurai 2006, Farzalipour et al. 2012, Horch and Schütte 2011, Krsmanović et al. 2014, Mihaela et al. 2014, Surujlal and Mafini 2011) argue that the efficiency of sports organizations and its development is strictly correlated to the specific training of employees.

The development of municipalities should not be simplified to mere provision of services, since these comprise only a part of the process. The citizens represent only one facet of a sport development strategy (Goslin 1996, Krsmanović et al. 2014). An integrated approach to sport development in the municipalities of Mozambique is imperative; this goes exclusively by placing qualified people (Surujlal and Mafini 2011, Taylor et al. 2015) with skills to develop properly effort in the scope of sport.

The municipal sports services require qualified human resources due to the diversity and complexity of the different cities of the country, resulting from political, economic, social and cultural conditions of each region where each individual is located. This also coupled with the fact that the model used in the municipalities is a reflection of centralized public administration system, which led to a weakness and poor management of local institutions, with negative effects on the quality of services provided to the population (Cabannes 2008, Cistac 2001, Vala 2008).

Conclusions

This study shows the creation of most municipalities in Mozambique is relatively recent, consequently the services provided, in particular, sports, are handicapped because the human resources placed in this area have no specific training which leads to poor quality and efficiency of services provided.

Parallel with this, most technicians, directors and municipal councillors of sport has no knowledge about sport management, management skills, policy formulation, etc., to enable them to develop appropriate strategic plans and sports development programs at local level.

The reason for this lack of understanding consists in an absence of a training strategy and accredited training system to encourage and support the transfer of sport skills (administration and participation) at local level.

In this sense, it is required training on the following tasks: programme planning; general management tasks; management of leadership; strategic planning; policy formulation; financing services; public relation skills; legal aspects, and marketing in sport, in order to improve sports policies and strategic plans focused on concrete actions to develop sport and consequently the quality of sports services for citizens in municipalities of Mozambique.

Finally, it is important to mention that the study included 12 municipalities from three regions (south, centre and north) of the country and all categories (A, B, C and D) corresponding to 22.64% of all municipalities of Mozambique, although the percentage is considerable, future researches that involve highest number of municipalities are required.

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