

## **Culture of National Sport Organizations and Participation in Sport**

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## **Culture of National Sports Organisations and Participation in Sport**

How the culture of NSOs affects sport participation?

### **Know**

- ❖ Sport Canada aims to introduce a cultural change across the sport system (e.g., through the SPDP)
- ❖ Sport participation is akin to a process of acculturation:
  - learning "correct ways" of doing sport
  - learning to identify the benefits of sport
  - learning to define the effects of sport as positive and pleasurable.
- NSOs are cultural agents
- NSOs subscribed to a humanistic-encouraging type of organizational culture
- NSOs' interpretation of sport participation affects its delivery

### **Don't Know**

- ❖ What cultural processes shape the process of participation in sport?
- ❖ How do NSOs' culture facilitate the socialisation of participants in and through sport?
- ❖ How do NSOs understand the participant and give meaning to the importance of sport?
- ❖ What learning processes does the SPDP promote?

### **Research results and analysis**

Four clusters of cultural interpretations of sport participation amongst the NSOs emerged:

- - 'elite culture' following a top-down approach where international success is used to promote grass-roots sport (e.g., Alpine Skiing, Athletics, Hockey);
- - 'mass culture' suggesting a bottom-up process which naturally leads to elitism (e.g., Gymnastics, Swimming);
- - 'sessional culture' – suggesting that sport participation 'dies when the grant dies' (e.g., Volleyball, Cycling);
- - 'place culture' - suggesting that sport participation is promoted only in certain geographic areas (e.g., Badminton, Ten-pin Bowling).

### **Research results and analysis**

- Each cultural interpretation of sport participation promotes different approaches to its delivery and results;
- NSOs and general public lack of awareness about SPDP;
- NSOs' cultures are multidimensional;
- SPDP seen as a departmental responsibility not as a core business of the entire NSO;
- NSOs perceive SPDP as an additional source of funding and not as an opportunity to address the fundamental issue of sport participation;
- NSOs lack the capacity to successfully run the program;
- SPDP reinforces the competition for funding and participants amongst NSOs and favours well-off organizations;
- NSOs' confusion over the LTAD model and the objectives of the SPDP program;
- NSOs are failing to utilize the opportunities offered by the interactive technology to effectively communicate their objectives and to develop relationships with members.

### Implications of results for policymakers, practitioners and future research

- NSOs need to change their perceptions about the SDPD and to ensure that it is well integrated into their strategic plans.
- The values and practices of the SPDP should not be seen as a project managed by an officer but as an essential part of the mission of the organization which is embraced equally by all members.
- NSOs need to better utilize their websites to promote a culture of sport participation.
- Sport Canada needs to establish a developmental strategy to support the SPDP in three key areas:
  - Establishing clear conceptual and practical linkages between the LTAD and SPDP;
  - Putting in place a capacity-building strategy to help NSOs develop the organizational capabilities needed to successfully implement the program;
  - implementing a systematic promotional campaign to assist in enhancing both the public and NSOs' awareness about the SPDP.