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Signaling Change: Exploring Gender EDI and Human Resource Management Practices, Board Gender Composition, and Board Outcomes in Non-profit Sport Governing Bodies

Across the globe, Adriaanse (2016) examined the gender ratio on national sport organization (NSO) boards in 45 countries and found that women were underrepresented as board directors, board chairs, and chief executives. It is clear many countries have failed to achieve government mandated critical mass goals of 30% representation and the representation of females in leading positions in sport organizations across countries is below the *gender balance zone* of between 40% and 60% (Adriaanse, 2016; EIGE, 2015). While studies have provided valuable insights and have suggested ways how gender diversity can be improved (e.g., Adriaanse, & Schofield, 2013, 2014), another perspective is to examine system processes (i.e., HRM) to more readily understand equity and inclusion (Wicker et al., 2020). Therefore, our work will explore the human resource management (HRM) policies and practices that trigger or suppress gender equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) on sport boards to breakdown embedded hegemonic norms that influence board outcomes. As such, this proposed research has the following three objectives:

1. The first objective is to uncover the common HRM practices around gender EDI in non-profit sport organization boards to further understand the complex gender dynamics around EDI initiatives.
2. The second objective is to explore the differences in HRM practices around gender EDI in different types of non-profit sport boards in Canada and Germany. Specifically, this study will explore uniform male boards (share of women: 0%), skewed boards (share of women <20%), tilted boards (share of women between 20% and 40%), and balanced boards (share of women between 40% and 60%; Joecks et al., 2013; Kanter, 1977) in both countries to determine if HRM practices differ by board composition and country of origin.
3. The third objective is to analyze if the type of board (i.e., uniform male, skewed, tilted, or balanced) of non-profit sport governing bodies define their outcomes and if/how board composition and HRM influence board outcomes.