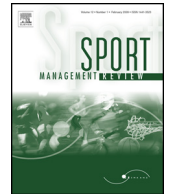




ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Sport Management Review

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/smr

Urban sportscares: An environmental deterministic perspective on the management of youth sport participation[☆]



Norm O'Reilly^{a,*}, Ida E. Berger^b, Tony Hernandez^c, Milena M. Parent^{d,e},
Benoit Séguin^d

^a Fox Professor of Management, Department of Sports Administration, College of Business, Ohio University, United States

^b Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University, Canada

^c Centre for the Study of Commercial Activity/Department of Geography, Ryerson University, Canada

^d School of Human Kinetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa, Canada

^e Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Norway

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 23 September 2013

Received in revised form 11 July 2014

Accepted 11 July 2014

Available online 23 August 2014

Keywords:

Sport geography
Sport development
Infrastructure
Policy
Demographics

ABSTRACT

This paper examines sport participation from an environmental perspective by considering the dynamic role of the *sportscape* (built-form and supporting infrastructure) in enabling, facilitating and promoting youth sport participation. Complementing recent work by Wicker et al. (2013), we conduct a case study of the 'geography of sport' in the Greater Toronto Area. In the process we introduce the concept of facility 'gravitas' to capture the attractiveness or 'magnetism' of sportscape entities and thereby acknowledge the multifaceted sets of environmental factors (including the bricks-and-mortar of facilities and the supporting mechanisms such as transportation, coaches and clubs) that influence sport participation. The results demonstrate that the geography of sport is not only about where sport venue built-forms are located, but also what types of sport infrastructure are available. To develop a better understanding of sport participation it is important to assess the capacity and quality of the sportscape along with other supporting structures and facilitators. The paper points to the implications for managers and policy makers from this perspective.

© 2014 Sport Management Association of Australia and New Zealand. Published by Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

1.1. Rationale

Despite sport's widely acknowledged health, social and community benefits, studies around the world report significant declines in active sport participation, particularly among youth (Colley et al., 2011; Moore, 2007; Ogden et al., 2006; Tremblay et al., 2009). Studies highlight the fact that regular (at least once/week) participation in sport is decreasing (Bloom, Grant, & Watt,

[☆] The authors would like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Sport Canada for its support of this research, as well as Michelangelo Puopolo for his research assistance in compiling the club and facility database for the Toronto area, and Diving Canada for providing the diver data.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 7405177242.

E-mail address: oreillyn@ohio.edu (N. O'Reilly).

2005; Colley et al., 2011), raising concerns that citizens' health is likewise decreasing (e.g., Merrifield, 2007). Although declining sport participation is an issue for all ages (Shields et al., 2010), most alarming is the rate of decline amongst youth – attributed to their collective adoption of increasingly sedentary activities such as television viewing, video gaming, on-line social networking, computing and the like (McElroy, 2002; Merrifield, 2007; O'Reilly, Parent, Berger, Hernandez, & Seguin, 2012). In Canada, these trends have placed increasing pressure on sports development and health practitioners to develop policies and program interventions to reverse, or at least arrest, the slide in active engagement with sport.

The decision to participate in sport has most often been examined at the level of the participant by focusing on psychological, sociological or socioeconomic factors such as attitudes, subjective norms or socio-demographics (Berger, O'Reilly, Parent, Seguin, & Hernandez, 2008). This paper, by contrast, considers sport participation from an environmental deterministic perspective with the goal of integrating knowledge from the sport geography literature (Atkinson, Sallis, Saelens, Cain, & Black, 2005; Bale, 1993, 2003; Norman et al., 2006) with a sport management approach (e.g., Alexandris & Carroll, 1999; Hallmann, Wicker, Breuer, & Schonherr, 2012).

A review of the literature makes clear that “in contrast to the extensive literature on the individual determinants of sports participation, the availability of studies about the influence of sport infrastructure on sport participation is limited” (Hallmann, Wicker, Breuer, & Schuttoff, 2011, p. 68). The goal of this investigation is to problematize differences in the characteristics of the supply point rather than simply assume a uniformity and ubiquity to sport facility provision. For example, not all swimming pool facilities are the same (i.e., they can range from low to high order goods), they can differ in terms of single or multi-sport facilities, the number and type of pools, depths and dimensions, presence of diving boards, timing equipment, training pools, meeting rooms, food services, and many other elements of quality of facility (design, years since last renovation/construction, etc.). Each of these factors could impact the attractiveness of the facility and therefore the range and threshold of on-going activities.

However, few studies in sports management or ‘sports geography’ have attempted to differentiate sport facilities in terms of the characteristics that in combination determine their form, function and attractiveness. For example, a water polo club requires certain pool depths and dimensions to be able to function. Similarly, a diving club is restricted to a subset of diving board equipped swimming facilities. However, most research has ignored the sport specific aspects of facility provision (Hallmann et al., 2012) and the multi-faceted characteristics of any particular facility (Wicker, Hallmann, & Breuer, 2013). This research contributes to this gap through a case study of the geography of sport in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Canada's largest, and North America's 5th largest, metropolitan market, with over five million residents. It specifically investigates the urban *sportscape* of the GTA in terms of the built form of sport facilities (e.g., pools, arenas) and supporting infrastructure (e.g., clubs, coaching) for youth participation. The purpose of the paper is to investigate the role of the *sportscape* in enabling, facilitating and promoting youth sport participation.

1.2. Sport participation among youth

It is important to note that the terms ‘sport participation’ and ‘physical activity’ are often used interchangeably. There are many definitional questions related to sport participation and physical activity, including questions of when a physical activity becomes sport and whether physical exertion, rules and competition are necessary requirements of sport. Though all definitions are debatable (Vander Kloet, O'Reilly, & Berger, 2007), most researchers would agree that ‘sport’ contributes meaningfully to the broader category of ‘physical activity’ and thus can claim at least some (if not all) the benefits associated with the more general term. For the purposes of this paper, we focus on ‘sport’ participation among Toronto youth and adopt Sport Canada's (1998) definition that sport is:

...an activity that involves two or more participants engaging for the purpose of competition. Sport involves formal rules and procedures, requires tactics and strategies, specialized neuromuscular skills, a high degree of difficulty, risk and effort. Its competitive mode implies the development of trained coaching personnel and does not include activities in which the performance of a motorized vehicle is the primary determinant of the competitive outcome. (p. 7)

Statistical reports of declines in sport participation in youth are common around the world (e.g., England, Korea and Netherlands) (England National Statistics, 2012; Lim et al., 2011). By way of example and context, Fig. 1 presents recent trends in sport participation (as defined here) in Canada across age cohorts and over time. The data are based on findings from the Canadian General Social Survey (GSS), a longitudinal study of Canadian lifestyles undertaken by Statistics Canada (Berger et al., 2008). Sport-related questions were asked in the 1992, 1998 and 2005 cycles of the survey (Statistics Canada, 2006). In order to assess the extent of sport participation undertaken by a respondent, the GSS used the question “Did you regularly participate in any sports during the past 12 months?” (Statistics Canada, 1998, p. 7). Within this definition, ‘regularly’ was noted to refer to “at least once a week during the season or during a certain period of time.” At the national level, the sport participation rate for Canadians aged 15 and over dropped from 45% in 1992 (9.6 million persons) to 28% (7.3 million) in 2005, with the most significant declines occurring for the 15–19 and 20–24 year old cohorts.

Previous analysis of this data with an explicit focus on youth by Berger et al. (2008) revealed differences in youth sport participation across a number of demographic dimensions, including gender, income/education, immigrant status, and urbanity. These findings mirror the growing body of literature on youth participation that collectively has identified the impact and influence of a large number of cognitive, psychosocial, and situational variables on sport participation (Vander Kloet et al., 2007). These factors can perhaps best be categorized as socio-individual characteristics such as age, gender

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/140868>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/140868>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)