1. Introduction to the *Research Handbook on Sport Governance*

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INTRODUCTION

Research on governance is an increasingly central topic within the sport management scholarly community. In a recent scoping review (see Dowling et al., 2018), only 18 of the 243 identified studies on sport governance were published between 1982 and 2003, with the remaining 225 published between 2004 and 2016. One explanation for this increased and voluminous scholarly activity on the matter is the number of recent scandals (such as the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic bribery incident, the 2015 FIFA corruption crisis, or the 2016 IAAF case) that have affected international and national sporting organizations and have made headlines for months on end. This, in turn, has attracted the attention of policy makers, investors, fans, consumers, and sport enthusiasts in general, owing to the apparent appearance of a “legitimacy gap” (see Sethi, 1979) between sport (organizations) and its stakeholders. Such a “gap” occurs when organizational goals, methods of operation, and outcomes are not in accordance with the expectations of those stakeholders who confer legitimacy (Wartick and Mahon, 1994). Thus the level of scrutiny that sport is now exposed to ensures that (how) decisions made on everything from event-bidding to the signing of sponsorship contracts are examined at an almost forensic level of detail (Chadwick et al., 2018).

Of course, neither the scholarly activity nor the institutional pressures are limited to *fighting* issues associated with *misgovernance*, such as corruption, doping, or match-fixing. There has also been increased institutional pressure to *promote* issues associated with *good governance*, such as equality, gender diversity, and balance (e.g., Adriaanse, 2017), or social responsibility (e.g., Breitbarth et al., 2015). Against this background, the aim of this Research Handbook (the first of its kind) is to present a collection of original contributions that advance our knowledge on various issues on sport governance and, in so doing, to offer a vital reference point for advancing research on this matter.

BACKGROUND

The Edward Elgar Research Handbook series has gained considerable recognition as a primer for research in various sport-focused fields, including *economics* (Andreff and Szymanski, 2007), *business* (Söderman and Dolles, 2013), and *employment relations* (Barry et al., 2016). When we were contacted to enrich this portfolio of Research Handbooks by putting together one on sport governance, our aim was to follow this well-established tradition that is based on original contributions and characterized by a pedagogical spirit. Although our combined knowledge and understanding of the extant

literature on sport governance led us to keep specific topics and/or levels of analysis in mind, the authors in this Handbook were invited on the basis that they, in our judgment, could make novel and cutting-edge contributions by expressing their *own ideas* in the field of sport governance. As a result, we made minimal, if any, efforts to edit what was submitted for content, thereby allowing all the contributors to approach their topics in the manner they believed appropriate.

We are, of course, delighted with what is presented here. We believe that the contributors to this Handbook offer many original ideas and new directions for sport governance research that will guide such scholarly activity for some time. This should make the Handbook a valuable adjunct to faculty and (research) students interested in understanding more about governance issues in the sporting context. Forward-looking leaders in sport organizations could also benefit from the ideas, tools, and mechanisms that are discussed and offered in this Handbook by improving the way their organizations are governed.

CONCEPTUAL BASIS AND STRUCTURE OF THE HANDBOOK

According to Rosenau (1995), governance is the process in which a single organization or a network of organizations (or society/system) steers itself, allocates resources, and exercises coordination and control. Shilbury et al. (2013) argued that Rosenau's (1995) definition helps us understand governance within the sport domain, where the concept of "sport governance" has come to mean both the *governance of* an organization and the notion of *governance across* a sport system.

Research on sport governance has looked at international, national, organizational, and individual levels of analysis from various perspectives. Although there are no clear-cut boundaries between these levels, it is possible to grasp their particular meaning. The international perspective looks at the global application of good governance principles that have been advocated by international organizations and have been shadowed by recent scandals that have either directly or indirectly affected sport. The national and organizational perspectives look at how governance is applied at the level of national or local organizations, and the challenges these entities face in implementing governance principles. The individual perspective takes a person-centered approach to the research on sport governance, thereby analyzing micro-elements that are key in developing accountable sport organizations.

These different levels of analysis were conceptually explained by Henry and Lee (2004). Drawing on the work of Leftwich (1994), Henry and Lee argued that, given the extended network of, and reliance on, various types of stakeholders, sport organizations found themselves in a *systemic* governance sphere in which *organizational* and *political* governance also have a key role to play. Systemic governance concerns the relationships between organizations within sport systems, including competition, cooperation, and coordination between stakeholders in complex business and policy environments (related to what Shilbury et al., 2016 called "collaborative sport governance"). It emphasizes the importance of understanding complex sport systems and the need for sport organizations to negotiate with other parties, including sport clubs, governing bodies, governments, businesses, media, and broadcasters. Organizational governance distinguishes norms and

standards of management practices for how organizations should operate, such as good governance principles advocated by relevant or high-profile sporting institutions (for example, IOC's Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance) or by national sporting agencies and governments (such as the UK Sport Code for Sport Governance). Political governance is about the steering influence of governments and governing bodies of sport over (other) sport organizations through moral pressure, financial or other types of incentives, or other forms of control.

To various degrees of explicitness, this Handbook is aligned with Henry and Lee's (2004) typology of sport governance by presenting original contributions that, structured into seven parts, fall under the systemic, organizational, and political types.

Part I, "Principles of good governance in sport," consists of seven chapters and broadly falls under the organizational governance subset. In Chapter 2, Jean-Loup Chappelet and Michaël Mrkonjic argue that, given the plethora of governance principles and indicators contained in almost 50 different frameworks, sport organizations and their stakeholders lack conceptual and operational clarity and stability, and that this, in turn, renders the implementation of such frameworks of good governance a challenging exercise. The authors' examination of these frameworks provides an appraisal of their implementation challenges, limitations that these assessments tools present, and suggestions of what remains to be done in this emerging field of sport governance assessment and evaluation mechanisms. In Chapter 3, Arnout Geeraert delineates the Sports Governance Observer, a tool for benchmarking good governance in international sport federations. As in the previous chapter, the focus here is on methodological challenges associated with measuring governance, that is, with the construction and use of governance indicators. Rather than providing a methodological blueprint, Geeraert flags troublesome aspects of indicator construction and use. Thus this chapter calls for the need for researchers to be particularly cautious when establishing the validity, reliability, legitimacy, and functionality of such measurement tools. In Chapter 4 the discussion moves to the next level, where Thierry Zintz and Simon Gérard offer an in-depth analysis of the 2015–2016 Support the Implementation of Good Governance in Sport (SIGGS) project outcomes. In their chapter, the authors highlight the need for a wider stakeholder-centric approach (that is, implying systemic sport governance) in order for good governance frameworks to be (more smoothly) accepted and (more easily) practiced. In Chapter 5, Simone Digennaro, Mark Lowther, and Antonio Borgogni offer another framework for (self-) assessing good governance (SATSport), but their focus is on its application and appraisal in grassroots sport organizations, with particular attention given to the role of leadership for its successful practice. In Chapter 6, against all these frameworks for assessing good governance, Vassil Girginov's proposition is that any account that fails to examine the role of culture in shaping the meaning and practices of good governance will be incomplete and misleading. Thus Girginov wonders whether it is possible to have a universal definition of governance in the vastly culturally diverse world of sport. He builds his argument by pointing out that various studies on good governance indicators lack consistency, correctness, and replicability. Chapter 7 offers a prime example of organizational sport governance. In the chapter, Els De Waegeneer and Annick Willem underline that an important element in trying to secure good governance practices in sport governing bodies is the embedment of an ethical code in the organization. They take a close look at the ethical codes of 35 Olympic Federations and highlight the opportunities and pitfalls

that these codes can present in promoting and guiding good governance in the sport domain. In the final chapter of this part (Chapter 8), Jonathan Robertson, Stefan Walzel, and David Shilbury describe the intersection between governance and social responsibility in sport and develop a future research agenda following calls to link these two research fields. They provide a starting point for a more integrative view of social responsibility that extends beyond discretionary managerial action, to consider the responsibility of the organizational whole. The crux of their proposition is that the ability of a board of directors to provide adequate foresight, oversight, and insight on social issues becomes key to the impact the organization has on society.

Part II, entitled “Systemic sport governance,” consists of four chapters and, as its title connotes, concerns the complexity of sport governance systems involving multiple stakeholders in cooperative and/or competing relationships and the inevitable changes associated through the conducting of negotiations and mutual adjustments. In Chapter 9, Vilma Čingienė discusses the legislative, political, and financial framework of sport governance in Lithuania. Drawing on empirical findings, she first offers a critical evaluation of the governance behavior of national sport federations by discussing the implementation of good governance principles as well as the impact of partnerships and networking on the organizational performance. The chapter then moves to the local level by discussing governance-related activities in the context of a public and a non-governmental sport organization. Chapter 10, by Keyu Li and Graham Cuskelly, is one of two in this Handbook to focus on China. This chapter takes a historical perspective and offers a descriptive picture of the evolution and reformation of sport governance in China since the late nineteenth century, a necessary exercise for understanding the more political and business-oriented approach of today’s Chinese sporting environment (see Chapter 21). In Chapter 11, Mikhail Batuev and Leigh Robinson illustrate how three action sports (snowboarding, skateboarding, and climbing) have organizationally evolved and how the Olympic Movement affected their governance. Drawing on organizational legitimacy – one of the key notions of the new institutional theory – the authors conclude that cultural legitimacy in action sports often does not correspond to regulatory legitimacy within the Olympic governance frameworks. Thus their chapter raises some serious concerns about the legitimization of action sports based solely on their technical characteristics and the suitability/applicability of an “umbrella” governance thereof. The final contribution in this part (Chapter 12) comes from Simon Gérard, David Legg, and Thierry Zintz. They discuss sport governance in the Paralympic Movement, which despite having undergone rapid growth in recent decades has a governance system that remains largely unknown and under-researched. The authors theoretically underpin their empirical examination with institutional theory and develop a processual analysis of the governance system of the Paralympic Movement since the creation of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) in the late 1980s. Their analysis reveals two main stages during which the governance system of the IPC, and the underlying institutional dynamics, experienced significant transformations: 1) from a disability-based movement to a sport-based movement (1989–2001); and 2) autonomy and self-sustainability of the Paralympic Sports (2001–2017).

Part III is entitled “Relationships governance in sport” and consists of three chapters. While systemic governance stresses the complexity of sport systems and the interrelations and mutual adjustments amongst different and often diverse stakeholder groups, this part

focuses on more “homogeneous” and/or close-by organizational entities. Thus, in Chapter 13, Hagen Wäsche and Anna Gerke provide a structural approach to network governance in sport. Drawing on network theory and network-analytic concepts, the authors picture the structural architecture and underlying mechanisms of interorganizational sport networks (IOSNs) at the network level. In this chapter, different forms of network governance and structural contingencies are presented that explain the functioning of IOSNs and the conditions under which they are effective, thereby introducing a theoretical framework that provides conceptual and methodological directions for future empirical investigations of IOSN governance. In Chapter 14, Ian O’Boyle, David Shilbury, and Lesley Ferkins analyze the growing body of work related to the field of collaborative governance in sporting networks. The focus of their chapter is on the federal model of sport governance, around which an in-depth examination of key issues and challenges related to collaborative governance is presented. The authors conclude that, because trust and leadership constitute the two dominant themes within these networks, there is a need for particular and further (empirical) attention to be given to issues such as histories of conflict, trust-building, transparency, and face-to-face dialogue. To some extent, Chapter 15 responds to this call by empirically examining perceived trust in the context of charitable foundations, which now constitute the dominant mode of governance for the implementation of community-oriented practices (COP) of the professional teams. In this chapter, Christos Anagnostopoulos and Mathieu Winand draw on social exchange theory and offer an account of how managers responsible for these charities deal with the calculus and knowledge-based trust inside the board. The authors do this by reporting different influence tactics these managers use to achieve relational and ideally identification-based trust from their counterparts in the parent company (that is, the professional team).

Part IV, entitled “Sport event governance,” also consists of three chapters with, of course, evident links to what has been earlier discussed as systemic sport governance. In Chapter 16, Milena Parent and Michael Naraine examine governance processes, specifically the coordination aspects between sport event stakeholders as well as the relationship between sport event governance and social media. They do this by drawing on a comparative case study of the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Winter Games and the 2012 London Olympic Games for the first part, and use ethnographic observations from the 2016 Lillehammer Winter Youth Olympic Games to address the second part. Their findings highlight six network governance coordination themes integrated into a coordination framework suggesting how a sport event stakeholder’s activities and procedures can be influenced by other public, nonprofit, and private organizations in the event network. The authors also found that social media at a sport event can present challenges given the “overshadowing” that may occur as a result of multiple stakeholders offering competing strategies or operationalizing social platforms for their own interests. In the second chapter in this part (Chapter 17), and closely related to the previous one, Becca Leopkey argues that an additional level of difficulty in the process of various stakeholders working together is the responsibility of the event hosts to ensure a positive and sustainable event legacy as a result of hosting the Games. Leopkey argues that, despite previous efforts, there continues to be a lack of strategic guidelines that explain and define the core issues related to the governance of event legacy. In an attempt to fill this void, Leopkey presents a theoretical framework for the governance of legacy within the Olympic Movement. In Chapter 18, James Anderson and Marijke Taks investigate urban governance in the

context of a non-mega sport event in a medium-sized city through the lens of urban regime theory. Their findings indicate a lack of transparency and strategic planning. More specifically, the authors point out that, while the city council expressed multiple expected outcomes prior to hosting, tangible key performance indicators (KPIs) were missing, making it difficult to measure performance effectiveness and efficiency. The crux of this chapter is that such an approach makes it challenging for concerned residents to hold the city council accountable; consequently, the authors propose a shift in focus on how to measure local governance of a sport tourism strategy effectively through KPIs.

Part V, entitled “Sport governance and business implications,” consists of four chapters and, with varying degrees of explicitness, revolves around the impact that governance has in the way sport organizations exist and operate in a highly commercialized landscape. In Chapter 19, Sara Ward and Daniel Parnell draw on Brentford Football Club’s “supporter-owned” governance model and provide a thorough insight into the governance issues evidenced therein. In their empirical chapter, the authors reveal that the club struggled to reduce its debt, increase alternative revenue streams, and instill democratic decision making in the boardroom. The chapter concludes by evaluating whether supporter ownership could be effectively applied within the current governance structure of English football. Such challenges are also highlighted in Chapter 20, where Stefan Prigge uses the case of German Bundesliga member Hamburger Sport-Verein (HSV) to analyze the outsourcing of the professional football department from a members’ association to a stock corporation with external owners. Prigge’s analysis shows the consequences of a successful outsourcing initiative and provides evidence that HSV moved from engaging and contributing community members towards a more consumer- and customer-based philosophy. The second chapter on the Chinese context comes from Simon Chadwick, Ian Gibson, and Tao Jiang. Chapter 21 examines recent developments in Chinese football and analyzes the governance challenges they are posing. The authors point out that these developments associated with Chinese football have resulted in the emergence of several issues to existing systems of governance both in Chinese football and, more significantly, in football elsewhere in the world. In Chapter 22, Benoit Séguin and Gashaw Abeza use the Olympic brand as an illustrative case to present the role and value of brand governance in the constantly evolving and fast-changing present economy. Séguin and Abeza highlight that, as opposed to the traditional marketing approach, where branding has largely been seen from the conventional creative and cosmetic standpoints, preserving the coherence and continuity of the Olympic brand requires an understanding of the changing economy. Thus the authors underscore the importance of brand governance by outlining six specific directions that facilitate the production of knowledge and serve as an input in building a long-term Olympic brand value.

Part VI, “Sport board governance,” consists of five chapters and shifts the attention to the individual level of analysis. In Chapter 23, Jimmy Smith uses the NCAA president, Mark Emmert, as a case to discuss intercollegiate examples towards enhancing the sport managerial governance perspective. Smith’s chapter, through Emmert’s perspective, sheds light on the ever-changing governance of the intercollegiate athletic landscape. In Chapter 24, Larena Hoeber and Sally Shaw remind us that women are not yet fully represented on governance boards. The authors’ proposition is that there has been minimal change in the governance structure of sport organizations, where a culture of “male, pale, and stale” appears to be firmly entrenched. Hoeber and Shaw present two suggestions for

future research on women and sport governance. First, they discuss and critique the business case argument, which is commonly used as an incentive for having more women on boards. Second, they propose that more research be conducted on women's involvement in the governance of local sport clubs, an area that has been previously overlooked. In Chapter 25, Veerle De Bosscher and Popi Sotiriadou point out the growing number of stakeholders and organizations involved in managing high-performance (HP) sport, which has resulted in a greater need for coordination, strategic management, and transparency. The authors' argument is that the expectations on national governing bodies (NGBs) to deliver improved elite sport performances has grown and, thus, so has the need for boards of directors, in collaboration with the sport clubs, to steer, coordinate, and control athletes' pathway development. In their contribution, De Bosscher and Sotiriadou draw on the results of a large-scale project that compared elite sport policies in 15 countries. Their results revealed some strengths and weaknesses of volunteer-based NGB boards that influence decision making and create tensions between the elite and grassroots levels of sport. Furthermore, the authors highlight that directors who are elected by community/grassroots sport clubs tend to be unfamiliar with the high demands of managing HP sport. Thus the chapter discusses board composition directions as they relate to both existing trends, on one hand, and requirements for dealing with HP environments, on the other. Chapter 26, by Tracy Taylor and Leigh Robinson, highlights the key steps in succession planning and outlines the benefits and challenges in its implementation, while discussing how succession management can improve the governance of sport bodies. The authors' main proposition is that, given the recent high-profile examples of sport governance failures over the past few years, there is a real need for better board and executive leadership evaluation, timely turnover and renewal of positions and roles, and mentoring and building of talent. The last chapter of this part comes from Shannon Kerwin and Alison Doherty (Chapter 27), who consider board dynamics in nonprofit sport organizations. The focus of their chapter is on volunteer board member role identity, intergenerational board diversity, and contemporary leadership issues. With regard to role identity, Kerwin and Doherty recommend the exploration of the salience of identity for board members, and the potential correlates of this influential social phenomenon. As for intergenerational diversity, they highlight the need to examine the forces, impact, and policies around managing individuals from different generations who serve on nonprofit sport boards. Within contemporary leadership, the authors put forward the shared, servant, and values-based leadership styles and identify these as types of leadership that are increasingly relevant in nonprofit sport organizations. Finally, the authors reflect on the relevance of considering the intersection among these topics in order to develop a strong theoretical understanding of board dynamics in nonprofit sport organization governance.

The Handbook concludes with Part VII, which provides directions and perspectives in Chapter 28. Drawing and reflecting on the abovementioned 26 original chapters, we sum up what we have learned to date and where research must go from here to begin to formulate a more holistic, instrumental, and viable action theory for sport governance.

CONCLUSION

The *Research Handbook on Sport Governance* collates the work of leading scholars and pioneers of sport governance research, who present original chapters that advance our knowledge on sport governance research and offer a vital reference point for advancing research. The editorial team expresses its heartfelt gratitude to contributors for their excellent contributions and for their effort in producing timely, relevant, and advanced original contributions. The process of editing this Handbook was very smooth and enjoyable, mainly thanks to the effort put in by the 47 scholars who contributed to it. We are also very grateful to the Edward Elgar Publishing team for entrusting us to lead such an important work, which will hopefully serve as a foundation for taking future research in sport governance to the next level.

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