
**A CASE STUDY OF A NATIONAL SPORTS ORGANIZATION:
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE JAPAN
RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION AND THE NEW ZEALAND RUGBY FOOTBALL
UNION**

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Synopsis:

Abstract:

The Rugby World Cup 2019 and the Summer Olympic Games 2020 will be held in Japan. In addition, Sapporo City is considering joining the bidding competition for the 2016 Winter Olympic Games. The management system and the transparency of Japanese National Sports Organization will be focused on internationally as well as domestically. However, most Japanese national sports organizations publish their annual reports only in Japanese and have not introduced a particular management performance system. There exists a gap in terms of management systems and the transparency of Japanese national sports organizations compared with overseas national sports organizations. This study analyzes the management system and transparency of a Japanese National Sporting Body by comparing it with an overseas National Sporting Body.

The existing literature provides evidence of the examination of the performance management of sports organizations. Bayle and Robinson (2007) analyzed 11 French National Governing Bodies of Sport in order to understand their strategy and management practices in relation to their organizational performance. O'Boyle and Hassan (2013) demonstrated organizational performance and the measurement of non-profit sports organizations using electronic research and indicated a gap between the sports organizations surveyed. O'Boyle (2014) introduced three performance management tools to the operations of national sports organizations: 1.The balanced scorecard, 2.The performance prism and 3.The organizational development tool. Managing organizational performance and delivering a quality service to their

stakeholders is important for sports organizations (Bayle & Robinson 2007; O'Boyle and Hassan 2013). Although some of researchers have compared the management system or performance of National Sports Organizations, little study has been made of Japanese Sports Organizations. Sasakawa Sports Foundation (2013) examined two National Sports Organizations (Japan Association of Athletics, Japan Volleyball Association in Japan / USA track and field and USA volleyball) of two countries: Japan and USA (in Japanese). They introduced both organizations and examined the financial reports and coaching systems, and showed three main differences: 1. sports court system, 2. tax deduction system and 3. anti-doping system. However they did not discuss the performance management system and the transparency of the sports organizations.

This study examines the management system and transparency of a Japanese National Sporting Body by comparing the management system of the Japan Rugby Football Union (THE JRFU) with that of the New Zealand Rugby Union (THE NZRU), which is the world leading rugby country. To conduct this research, the content of both organization's annual reports are analyzed from the following two perspectives: 1. Performance management and 2. Transparency and Accountability. Data are collected from the JRFU website (in Japanese) and from the NZRU website. I requested annual reports, which I could not download, from the NZRU office directly. The results indicate the gap in terms of the performance management systems and accountability between the NZRU and the JRFU. The NZRU has implemented this system to manage their organizational performance since 2001. Kaplan and Norton (1992) developed the scoreboard system. It has been employed as a useful management instrument and has provided an effective way of monitoring the actions and processes undertaken by employees. With regard to accountability and transparency, the NZRU annual report provides management information to stakeholders from the top level of rugby to the grass roots. The report explains the organizational mission, its target and their achievement using a benchmark. On the other hand, the JRFU has not employed a performance management system and has not published clear numerical targets or achievements. The JRFU publishes three kinds of annual reports separately: Jigyoku-keikaku-sho (Business Plan), Jigyoku-hokoku-sho (Business Report) and Zaimu-hokoku-sho (Financial Report) in Japanese. Each report shows detailed information, however they are totally not organized.

Overall, the JRFU is behind the NZRU in terms of both management performance systems and transparency. First, the JRFU should introduce an efficient performance management system such as by using the balanced scoreboard or performance prism to measure organizational performance with objectivity. Second, they should condense the three annual reports into one report and clearly deliver the management information to the stakeholders. Moreover, Japan hosts the Rugby World Cup and the Summer Olympic Games in next five years. I also suggest that Japanese National Sports Organizations such as the JRFU should provide their management information to overseas stakeholders in English in the future. This study has some limitations. The content analysis method may limit my ability to generalize the results. Data is collected from only annual reports. Further studies need to employ a survey of stakeholders and interview both management and stakeholders.

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