

The Governance of Large Non Governmental Organisations : The Case of the International Sporting Governing Bodies

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Abstract

Research Question

In the world of non-profit organisations such as the International Sporting Governing Bodies (ISGBs), the organisation, promotion, development of a specific sport are entrusted to an international organisation which is in charge of managing and continuing, the tradition of a sport, year after year, in a quasi world monopoly situation.

Just like a multinational, an ISGB has a world purpose. It guarantees the conformity and the unity of a sport from one continent to another.

The governance of such ISGBs is often questioned on the systemic, political and organisational levels (Henry, 2001).

The complexity of the governance of non-profit sporting organisations is due to the vagueness or lack of "performance". Moreover, some elements such as salaried employees/managers working with volunteers, the lack of control (except for the financial audit) as well as the strong involvement of political networks and of private economy (sponsors, TV) influence the governance mode.

How can this governance be "measured"? Moreover, is there any typology for the ISGBs?

Theoretical Background

Generally, sporting organisations include a large number of stakeholders which have an impact on the decision-taking process.

Some authors like Carver (1997, 2001) have shown that the efficiency of the governance of large associations is often questioned. They have proposed new principles and organisational governance tools. The studies carried out by Pérez (2003) bring a new dimension to the analysis of the governance of organisations thanks to its model which divides the organisational governance into five levels, including a level of metagovernance. Arcioni (2007) has proposed a new system in order to measure the governance modes of Olympic ISGBs and deduce a typology.

Methodology

In order to analyse the governance of the ISGBs, we have chosen to use Perez's analysis framework. The research study which concerned all the Olympic Governing Bodies (summer Games and winter Games) included three stages:

- An exploratory survey in order to define the indicators,
- A quantitative survey in order to identify a typology for the 40 ISGBs in June 2005,
- A qualitative survey in order to select three ISGBs in December 2006: the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball et de Beachvolley (FIVB) and the International Skating Union (ISU).

Results

The typology we have found enabled us to identify four governance profiles in the Olympic ISGBs: "good governance", "weak management", "weak management and regulation", and "weak governance". However, there were not enough dimensions in Pérez's analysis framework to describe the governance of the ISGBs precisely. In order to evaluate the modes of governance in NGOs, we propose to extend Pérez's model to twelve dimensions. Each level will have at least two dimensions in order to obtain a finer analysis of the governance modes.

References

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