

# INVESTIGATION OF DISCIPLINES THAT INFORM AND FACILITATE SPORT MANAGEMENT: A PILOT STUDY

Author:  
Dimitris Gargalianos

email:  
dimitris\_gargalianos@hotmail.com

Co-authors:  
Psimopoulos Constantine  
Chelladurai Packianathan

University:  
Democritus University of Thrace, Greece

Faculty:  
Department of Physical Education & Sport Sciences

## Abstract

### Introduction

Although the relevance of other disciplines to sport management theory and practice has been pointed out by scholars (e.g., Chelladurai, 1992), there has never been an organized attempt to assess the extent to which they inform and facilitate sport management thought and practice. While some fields (e.g., economics, etc.) may have more direct impact on sport management, other (e.g., pedagogy, etc.) may have less. It could also be argued that some of the disciplines may inform the theory and practice of sport management per se, while others may facilitate the production and exchange of the services in the sport industry. For example, exercise psychology inform the services provided in fitness clubs; sport psychology facilitates the refining of the teaching and coaching services in sport; sport philosophy guides in ethical behavior in management, as well as within the services offered and so on. It must also be noted that some disciplines may be related to both sport management science and the services it provides.

### Purpose

The purpose of this investigation, which served as a pilot for a larger study, was to make a first step in identifying whether there are disciplines that: a) collaborate with the theory and practice of sport management and b) contribute to the production and exchange of services under the purview of sport management.

### Methodology

A questionnaire, developed by the authors, was emailed to approximately 10% (n=37) (name, year) of the professors of all levels who teach sport management in undergraduate and/or graduate programs in Universities/Colleges around the world ([www.nassm.org](http://www.nassm.org)), 46% of whom responded. The disciplines included in the questionnaire were extracted from the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS), which is owned and maintained by

the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) of UK. Of the 1500+ disciplines listed there only 108 were considered to be serving the purpose of this study and were included in the questionnaire in random order.

The participants were requested to read the title and description of each item and indicate the extent to which they believed it related to and/or informed: a) sport management and b) the production and exchange of sport services. An 11-point response format (0 = not related, 10 = strongly related) was used in both cases. In order to ensure objectivity of the process and confidentiality of the subjects / data the questionnaire was in electronic format (SurveyMonkey) and encrypted.

### Results

The analysis of data focused on the identification of: a) the disciplines receiving a score higher than 6 in both sport management and production / exchange of services under the purview of sport management, and b) the most highly rated disciplines related either to sport management, or sport services, or to both ( $M \geq 8$ ). Out of the 23 disciplines that fulfilled these criteria the 3 highest rated ( $M \geq 9$ ) were: "Strategic Management" (9.58), "Human Resource Management" (9.41) and "Management Techniques" (9.41), while the 3 lowest rated were "Counseling ( $M = 3.94$ )", "Landscape Design" ( $M = 3.41$ ) and "Conservation of Buildings" ( $M = 3.05$ ). A very interesting observation was that the first discipline that included the term "Sport" in its title was "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, Tourism" ( $M = 8.35$ ; rank = 18).

### Discussion - Implications

The fact that 23 disciplines were found to fulfill the criteria presented in the previous section supports the argument that in order for sport management to become a science and produce quality services it needs to closely collaborate with these disciplines. Further, sport management theorists and practitioners need to gain a better understanding of them and use the resultant insights to become more effective / efficient. In addition, cross-disciplinary research must be undertaken to enhance the production and exchange of sport services. Finally, sport management curricula need to be expanded to include material from those disciplines that are closely related to sport management.

#### Conclusions

It could be concluded that a more thorough investigation of the disciplines that inform and facilitate sport management using a more representative sample of the population, as well as of the ways they collaborate with it might be necessary in order to acquire a better understanding of the synergies that develop among them.

#### References:

- Chelladurai, P. (1992). Sport management: opportunities and obstacles. *Journal of Sport Management*, 6, 215-219.
- Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) (available for public use at: <http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/1805/296/>).
- <http://www.nassm.org>