

The Use Of Grounded Theory Method In Sport Management Research: A Systematic Review

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Aim of the research/project

This project aims to carry out a systematic review about the use of the Grounded Theory method in studies of the area of Sports Management.

Theoretical background or literature review

The Grounded Theory method was first presented by Barley Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967 through the publication "The Discovery of Grounded Theory". Glaser (2004) brings the idea that Grounded Theory is a methodology, whereas for Strauss and Corbin (2008), it is a method, in which the theory derives from the data, which were systematically gathered through a research process, where collection of data, analysis and theory maintains a close relationship. Grounded Theory emphasizes the development and discovery of a theory rather than testing hypotheses or a pre-existing framework. The Grounded Theory method has been associated with different areas of knowledge, such as administration and health. According to Sotiriadou and Shilbury (2010), this methodological approach neglected by the sport management field, not having many works that use this method to develop their research. The authors advocate the use of Grounded Theory in sport management, because is an area that is relatively new, and the use will enable research to make original contributions. After 7 years of publication of Sotiriadou and Shilbury (2010), a systematic review about the use of the method in researches in the area of sport management allows the exploration of a subject still underutilized in this methodological perspective, increasing the knowledge in the area and verifying if there was growth of the area in this sense.

Methodology, research design, and data analysis

A bibliographic search of publications of articles in the SCOPUS database was carried out using the terms "sport management" and "grounded theory". All publications that presented the terms in their full text were selected. The research area, periodical or year of publication was not specified, that is, the data obtained ranged from the first publication registered in the database until the date of data collection, held in March 2017. 614 publications were identified, which were excluded duplicates and those in the form of expert opinion, commercial publications, books, books chapters and studies published in annals of events. After this filter, 561 articles were left. The abstracts were read by two researchers in order to confirm that they used the method in an empirical research in sport management. When the abstract did not provide the necessary information, was read the method section. Was exclude 528 articles (9 without access to the full text, 1 in French language and 518 that do not used grounded theory in a sport management research). After this reading, 33 articles were selected and analyzed through the technique of content analysis, following the steps of preanalysis, analytical description and interpretation (Bardin, 2009). The categories established a priori were the eight core elements of grounded theory describe by Weed (2009) to verify if the research has the sufficient conditions for grounded theory, instruments utilized, theoretical background, year and journal.

Results, discussion, and implications/conclusions

The results show that 2016, 2015 and 2014 were the years that had the most number of publications. The "Sport Management Review" and "Journal of Sport Management" have the major number of publications, but were identified 22 different journals. The interview is the most common instrument used in the researches, and the most cited theoretical background for the use of method are Glaser and Straus (1967) and Strauss and Cobin (2008) publications, although Charmaz (2006) also been used by the authors. In concern to eight core elements of grounded theory, only 4 articles present all the elements. Others 4 articles do not present any element. The theoretical sampling and saturation were the elements that do not appear in more than half articles. Otherwise, the theoretical sensitivity and the grounded a substantive theory is present in most researches. Is important to note that, of the 518 articles exclude of the analysis, 156 use the grounded theory references in some part of the methodology, in most cases to analyze the data. These results reflect that grounded theory approach is not easy to put into practice, mainly when all core elements are considered. Researchers should to consider if their study is appropriate for a grounded theory design (including theoretical sampling, iterative data collection and others elements). An incomplete

use of the methodology can compromise the quality of the research. Considering the growing interest in used the method, this reflection can contribute to development and enhancement of research quality in sport management area.

References

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