

The Effect of Community Sports Program on Township Cohesion of a Selected Sports University in Beijing, China



Meng Chao

Emilio Aguinaldo College, Manila, Philippines

ABSTRACT: This study aims to determine the correlation between the assessment of the respondents on the Community Sports Program of the university and the assessment of the respondents on the effect of the community sports program on township cohesion. This study made use of the quantitative comparative correlational research design to examine the relationship between respondents' assessments of the university's Community Sports Program and its impact on township cohesion. The research design involves collecting numerical data through a structured survey questionnaire, measuring respondents' perceptions and assessments using a 4-point scale for each construct related to the Community Sports Program and its impact on township cohesion. A sample of 200 participants in a sports university was selected using purposive sampling technique to ensure they have direct experience or knowledge related to the Community Sports Program and its effects on township cohesion. For the Community Sports Program of the University, the mean score stands at 2.977. When correlated with the assessment of its effect on township cohesion (which has a mean of 2.724), a correlation coefficient of -0.063 is obtained. The significance level for this correlation is 0.378. Given this result, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, signifying that there is no significant relationship between the respondents' evaluation of the Community Sports Program and their assessment of its influence on township cohesion.

KEYWORDS: community sports program, township cohesion, sports university, community members

1. INTRODUCTION

Social cohesion, a concept with a rich intellectual history dating back to the 19th century, encompasses shared values, experiences, civic participation, mutual assistance, trust, and various dimensions. It is influenced by various scientific fields, including political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and health sciences. Current literature focuses on three fundamental elements: establishing a collective identity, cultivating social connections, and aligning attitudes towards collective welfare. Social relations involve quality, tolerance, and trust, while belonging involves emotional attachment and identification with a particular social entity. (Moustakas, 2022)

Utilizing sports as a means to foster social capital has been a prevalent notion dating back to the early 1800s. This phenomenon can be attributed to the intricate interplay between various forms of capital, namely economic, social, cultural, and physical, which collectively contribute to the observed predictive nature. (Wagenknecht, 2016)

The General Administration of Sport of China is responsible for formulating, implementing, and evaluating sports policies in China, promoting reforms, developing national strategies, and coordinating regional sports advancement. It oversees fitness programs, establishes physical exercise standards, combats performance-enhancing drugs, and evaluates national sports associations. (General Administration of Sport of China, 2019)

School sports programs play a significant role in fostering positive connections within a community, particularly among the youth. Herges (2022) emphasizes the importance of strengthening the ties between high school sports, youth, and the local community. Such engagement helps foster a sense of community, bolsters school pride, and encourages a healthy lifestyle.

According to Spaaij et al. (2016) Sport Development Programs for communities are transformative, promoting dialogue and problem-solving. They encourage community ownership of development and require educators to collaborate with students. The dynamic between educators and students is changing, requiring a reevaluation of roles. Freirean pedagogy is applied, challenging traditional social, economic, and political domains.

According to recent data by Huang (2022), China's national fitness program has successfully attracted a staggering number of participants, surpassing the impressive milestone of 100 million individuals. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that a substantial proportion of the population, specifically 37.2 percent, actively engages in various forms of physical exercise as a result of this program. The sports industry in China, which holds a significant value of 2.73 trillion yuan (\$380.49 billion), plays a crucial role in

The Effect of Community Sports Program on Township Cohesion of a Selected Sports University in Beijing, China

contributing to the country's economy. This contribution is facilitated by the integration of emerging technologies such as 5G, augmented reality, and 8K, which are actively shaping the landscape of the industry.

Cubizolles (2013) investigates the relationship between sport and social cohesion in South Africa, focusing on a project in Stellenbosch promoting aid and development through tourism and football. The study examines the project's impact on African footballers' acceptance of the democratic framework and inequitable views among colored footballers. The project's allocation of resources has exacerbated inequalities between football groups, perpetuating stereotypes and hindering social cohesion advancement.

However, in this study, the selected sports university's commitment to sports extends far beyond its university walls. Recognizing the transformative power of sports, the university has actively initiated the Community Sports Program aimed at fostering township cohesion. This initiative stands as a testament to the university's mission of promoting sports not just as a pursuit of excellence, but also as a catalyst for community bonding and social integration.

General Objective

This study aims to determine the correlation between the assessment of the respondents on the Community Sports Program of the university and the assessment of the respondents on the effect of the community sports program on township cohesion.

Hypothesis:

Ho: There is no significant correlation between the assessment of the respondents on the Community Sports Program of the university and the assessment of the respondents on the effect of the Community Sports Program of the university on their town's cohesion.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study made use of the quantitative comparative correlational research design to examine the relationship between respondents' assessments of the university's Community Sports Program and its impact on township cohesion. The research design involves collecting numerical data through a structured survey questionnaire, measuring respondents' perceptions and assessments using a 4-point scale for each construct related to the Community Sports Program and its impact on township cohesion. A sample of 200 participants in a sports university was selected using purposive sampling technique to ensure they have direct experience or knowledge related to the Community Sports Program and its effects on township cohesion. The collected data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the assessment of respondents' perceptions of the program. Inferential statistical tests will be employed to address other research questions. All statistical analyses will be conducted using appropriate software, with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The findings was presented in a clear and understandable manner, facilitating communication of the study's findings to both academic and non-academic audiences.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Community Sports Program of the University was rated as "Evident" by participants, with an overall mean score of 3.034 and a standard deviation of 0.539. The program's accessibility was deemed "Highly Evident," with the highest mean score of 3.56. However, there is room for improvement in scheduling flexibility, with the lowest mean score of 2.66.

The University's Community Sports Program has been evaluated by respondents on its impact on township cohesion, focusing on social interaction. The program has an average score of 2.762, placing it in the "Evident" category. The program fosters an inclusive and accepting environment, fostering peace and togetherness among diverse populations. However, there is room for further development in enhancing community bonds and relationships.

For the Community Sports Program of the University, the mean score stands at 2.977. When correlated with the assessment of its effect on township cohesion (which has a mean of 2.724), a correlation coefficient of -0.063 is obtained. The significance level for this correlation is 0.378. Given this result, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted, signifying that there is no significant relationship between the respondents' evaluation of the Community Sports Program and their assessment of its influence on township cohesion.

In essence, the data suggests that while the respondents might have a certain perception of the Community Sports Program of the University, this does not necessarily align with their perception of the program's effect on fostering cohesion within their township. This could indicate that other factors might influence township cohesion, or that the perceived quality or effectiveness of the program doesn't directly translate to its impact on cohesion.

In the analysis of the Community Sports Program's influence on township cohesion, several considerations arise that necessitate a more comprehensive understanding. First, there are potential extraneous variables that have not been accounted for in this investigation. While the program may have specific impacts, broader community cohesion may be predominantly shaped by other determinants, such as local events, overarching policies, or collective community endeavors.

Second, a discrepancy in perception might exist. The respondents, while expressing approval of the program, may not necessarily associate this approval with enhanced community cohesion. Their appreciation might stem from other facets of the

The Effect of Community Sports Program on Township Cohesion of a Selected Sports University in Beijing, China

program, such as the quality of sports activities or the provided facilities. Such favorable perspectives, however, might not culminate in a heightened sense of unity or connection with fellow community members.

Furthermore, the metric employed to assess “township cohesion” might not be entirely congruent with the perceived efficacy of the program. It is plausible that respondents harbor a divergent conception of community cohesion, which remains unaddressed by the initiatives of the program or the evaluative parameters of this study.

Given these insights, it becomes imperative for policymakers and university administrators to adopt a holistic approach when gauging the sentiment of the community. If fostering township cohesion stands as a primary objective of the Community Sports Program, a reevaluation of its methodologies is warranted. This would encompass a thorough exploration of other influential variables and a refined understanding of the intricacies of community cohesion as perceived and defined by its members.

IV. CONCLUSION

The university's Community Sports Program obtains a positive review. Thus, its strengths are evident in its accessibility and sustainability, notably in seeking partnerships for long-term profitability. Nevertheless, feedback reveals a need to enhance areas like schedule flexibility and alignment between program assessment techniques and participant awareness. Further, while the program's coaching quality is praised, there's opportunity for boosting its influence on participants' overall well-being.

In investigating further into the program's influence in township cohesiveness and identity, it becomes obvious that while the program is successful in building inclusion and cultural identity, there remain areas for development. This includes boosting efforts to enhance community relationships and overcoming the perceived experience gap in its inclusive projects.

The disparity implies that attitudes about the program do not immediately connect with its perceived performance in promoting township cohesiveness. Such findings underline the importance for policymakers and program planners to go deeper into understanding the intricate aspects impacting community feelings and perceptions.

REFERENCES

- 1) Cubizolles, S. (2013). Sport and social cohesion in a provincial town in South Africa: The case of a tourism project for aid and social development through football. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 50(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690212469190>
- 2) General Administration of Sport of China. [(accessed on 14 September 2019)]; Available online: <http://www.sport.gov.cn/n16/n1077/n1422/7300210.html>
- 3) Herges, L. (2022, February 8). Creating a positive connection between youth, high school sports in a community. National Federation of High Schools. Retrieved from: <https://www.nfhs.org/articles/creating-a-positive-connection-between-youth-high-school-sports-in-a-community/>
- 4) Huang, H. (2022, October 22). A sports power and physically fit nation. *China Daily*. Retrieved from <https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202210/22/WS63534086a310fd2b29e7de72.html>
- 5) Moustakas, Louis. 2022. Sport for Social Cohesion: Transferring from the Pitch to the Community?. *Social Sciences* 11: 513. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11110513>
- 6) Spaaij, R., Oxford, S., & Jeanes, R. (2016). Transforming communities through sport? *Critical pedagogy and sport for development*. *Sport, Education and Society*, 21(4), 570–587. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2015.1082127>
- 7) Wagenknecht, M. (2016). Creating community through sports participation. *The Imprint News*. Retrieved from <https://imprintnews.org/journalism-for-social-change/where-do-the-children-play/16112>



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.