



Sport management at the municipalities of the state of Santa Catarina: an outlook of the structure of its governance and public policies

A Gestão do Esporte nos Municípios de Santa Catarina: Um panorama da estrutura de governança às políticas públicas

La Gestión Deportiva en los municipios del estado de Santa Catarina: panorama de la estructura de su gobernanza y políticas públicas

Sabrina Furtado

Loughborough University
sabrina_mfurtado@hotmail.com

Joao Victor Moretti de Souza

Universidade Federal do Paraná
joao.moretti@ufpr.br

Fernando Marinho Mezzadri

Universidade Federal do Paraná
mezzadri@ufpr.br

Abstract

The analysis of sports policies implemented at the municipalities level in Brazil is still scarce. This gap is concerning, considering the relevance of these policies for understanding the panorama of sports development in the territory. Furthermore, it is important to understand the administrative arrangements that facilitate the delivery of sports services to the community, the structure, and the stakeholders linked to the development of public policies, as well as the political and cultural predispositions of the area. Thus, the present study aimed to collect and analyze data related to sports management in the municipalities of the state of Santa Catarina (Brazil). Data were collected through the Sports Management Research Instrument in States and Municipalities (GEEM), which has 270 questions divided into six pillars: general organization data; governance, human resources, sports policy, sports infrastructure, and sports culture. The managers of the 295 municipalities in the state of Santa Catarina received access to the system on the Sports Intelligence Research Institute (IPIE) website and answered the instrument online. The data were treated quantitatively

using Excel and Power BI software. The study included 171 municipalities. Regarding items related to the governance of these entities, the results point to a profound weakness of these bodies when addressing principles of good governance. Items relating to transparency, such as the publication of documents, democratic processes, such as the non-existence of a sports council, and equity and diversity of managers at the highest hierarchical level present results that highlight flawed or non-existent practices. Regarding the planning, implementing, and evaluating municipal sports policy, a considerable percentage of municipalities do not have a document guiding local sports policy. Regarding service levels, it was possible to observe a focus on sport for life. When implementing actions, there is a low percentage of actions for people with disabilities. The evaluation of sports policy was also an item that showed few levels of practice in the municipalities. In general, the data points to a low level of governance within sport management in municipalities, principles of transparency, accountability, and democratic processes need to be expanded. Such findings can support future research in the area that dialogues with theories on the management of public sports policies, seeking to outline methodologies applicable to the different realities encountered. The aggregation and analysis of data can favour the formulation of more effective public sports policies, seeking social value for the community where it is developed.

Keywords: Public Policies. Sports Management. Governance.

Resumo

A análise acerca das políticas esportivas desenvolvidas no nível dos municípios brasileiros ainda é escassa. Tal lacuna é preocupante, considerando-se a relevância de tais políticas para compreensão do panorama de desenvolvimento esportivo do país. Além disso, é importante conhecer os arranjos administrativos que propiciam a entrega do serviço esportivo à comunidade, a estrutura e os grupos de interesse ligados ao desenvolvimento das políticas públicas, além das predisposições políticas e culturais da área. Dessa forma, o objetivo do presente trabalho foi o de levantar, catalogar e analisar dados relacionados a gestão do esporte nos municípios do estado de Santa Catarina. Os dados foram coletados através do Instrumento de Pesquisa de Gestão do Esporte nos Estados e Municípios (GEEM), possuindo 270 questões, divididas em seis pilares: Dados da entidade; governança, recursos humanos, política para o esporte, infraestrutura esportiva e cultura esportiva. Os gestores dos 295 municípios do estado de Santa Catarina receberam acesso ao sistema, no site do Instituto de Pesquisa Inteligência Esportiva (IPIE), e responderam o instrumento de maneira online. Os dados foram tratados de maneira quantitativa, nos softwares Excel e Power BI. Participaram do estudo 171 municípios. No que concerne aos itens relativos à governança destas entidades, os resultados apontam uma fragilidade profunda desses órgãos ao endereçarem princípios de boa governança. Itens relativos a transparência, como publicação de documentos, aos processos democráticos, como a não existência de conselho para o esporte, a equidade e diversidade dos gestores de maior nível hierárquico apresentam resultados que evidenciam praticas falhas ou inexistentes. Já no que diz respeito ao planejamento, efetivação e avaliação da política municipal de esporte, um percentual considerável de municípios não possui documento balizador da política esportiva local. Com relação aos níveis de atendimento, foi possível observar foco para o esporte para toda vida. Na implementação das ações, nota-se um baixo percentual de ações para pessoas com deficiência. A avaliação da política de esporte foi também um item que apresentou escassos índices de pratica nos municípios. De maneira geral, os dados apontam para um nível de governança baixo dentro da gestão do esporte nos municípios, princípios de transparência, prestação de contas e processos democráticos precisam ser ampliados. Tais achados podem subsidiar futuras pesquisas na área que

dialoguem com as teorias sobre a gestão de políticas públicas de esporte, buscando traçar metodologias aplicáveis as diferentes realidades encontradas. A aglutinação e análise dos dados pode favorecer a formulação de políticas públicas de esporte mais efetivas, buscando valor social para a comunidade onde é desenvolvida.

Palavras-chave: Políticas Públicas. Gestão do Esporte. Governança.

Resumen

En cuanto a los ítems relacionados con el gobierno de estas entidades, los resultados apuntan a una profunda debilidad de estos órganos a la hora de abordar los principios de buen gobierno. Elementos relacionados con la transparencia, como la publicación de documentos, los procesos democráticos, como la inexistencia de un consejo deportivo, la equidad y la diversidad de directivos al más alto nivel jerárquico presentan resultados que resaltan prácticas defectuosas o inexistentes. En cuanto a la planificación, implementación y evaluación de la política deportiva municipal, un porcentaje considerable de municipios no cuenta con un documento que oriente la política deportiva local. En cuanto a los niveles de servicio, se pudo observar un enfoque en el deporte para la vida. A la hora de implementar acciones, existe un bajo porcentaje de acciones dirigidas a personas con discapacidad. La evaluación de la política deportiva también fue un ítem que mostró pocos niveles de práctica en los municipios. En general, los datos apuntan a un bajo nivel de gobernanza en la gestión deportiva en los municipios; es necesario ampliar los principios de transparencia, rendición de cuentas y procesos democráticos. Tales hallazgos pueden sustentar futuras investigaciones en el área que dialogen con teorías sobre la gestión de políticas públicas deportivas, buscando delinear metodologías aplicables a las diferentes realidades encontradas. La agregación y análisis de datos puede favorecer la formulación de políticas públicas deportivas más efectivas, buscando valor social para la comunidad donde se desarrolla.

Palabras clave: Políticas Públicas. Gestión Deportiva. Gobernanza.

Introduction

The provision of sports services by the public sector in Brazil encompasses different administrative levels of the country, as well as intersects and collaborates with other agencies and organizations. In this context, where multiple actors are involved, the development of sport policy becomes a complex element of analysis, supported by multifaceted discussions and multidisciplinary theories.

The debate around public sport management in the country is evolving, and in the past couple of decades, a scientific field has focused on discussing national policies, whether they are related to sport organizations, and the structure of high-performance sports policies (Castro et al. 2004; Mazzei et al. 2014; Silva et al. 2020) or the context of participatory and educational sports (Carneiro et al. 2021; Filho & Francisco 2019; Santos et al. 2019). There are also studies discussing the political and legal framework of the sports structure (Canan et al. 2018; de Castro et al. 2019; Matias et al. 2015) and studies on public funding for the sport sector in the country (Carneiro 2018; de Castro et al. 2018; Furtado et al. 2016). A common point of the sport management research agenda in Brazil is that most of these studies encompass discussions that address national-level issues in the field. However, in other structures of government spheres, such as states and municipalities, academic research is still scarce (Mezzadri et al. 2020). Most of the studies available are case studies with specific analyses of a few municipalities, or studies that discuss specific projects and actions, again in the form of case studies (Ordonhes et al. 2024). Regarding the topics addressed by these projects, some aimed to discuss the levels of sports practices offered (educational, sports for all, or high performance), or the allocation of financial resources for the sector (Micaliski et al. 2023).

The above-mentioned literature is relevant and essential for the advancement of the sports field locally, regionally, and federally in the country. However, systematic discussions and analyses on the different domains related to sports management need to be developed, so that the impact and effects generated by the development of public sports policies can be understood and subsequently improved (Filho & Francisco 2019; Santos et al. 2019).

One important aspect that supports efficiency in delivering sport and physical activity programs, is the access to clear and objective information about the processes of planning, operationalization, and evaluation of public policies (Houlihan 2005). It is essential to understand and contextualize the field in terms of the human resources involved, the governance tools applied, the public served, and the availability of infrastructure for implementing such policies. Furthermore, it is important to understand the administrative arrangements that facilitate the delivery of sports services to the community (such as the distribution of functions, forms of control, and decision-making within organizations), the structure and interest groups linked to the development of public policies, as well as the political and cultural predispositions in the area (Houlihan 2005).

In the face of the context outlined above, a pertinent question guided this research: how is the sport management area structured at the municipal level in Brazil? Thus, the objective of the present discussion was to collect, systematize, and analyze data related to sports management and governance in the municipalities of Santa Catarina, a state in the south of Brazil.

Methodological Procedures

Instruments and Data Collection

The data were collected through the Sports Management Research Instrument in States and Municipalities (GEEM), proposed and validated by Mezzadri et al. (2020), containing 270 questions divided into six pillars: organizational data, governance, human resources, sports policy, sports infrastructure, and sports culture.

The GEEM instrument was applied in partnership with the state government through a cooperation agreement between the Fundacao Catarinense de Esportes (FESPORTE) and the State University of Paraná in collaboration with the State University of Santa Catarina. The data were collected between 2020 and 2022.

Data Analysis

The sport managers from all the 295 municipalities in the state of Santa Catarina were invited to take part in the research and given access to the system on the website of the Sports Intelligence Research Institute (IPIE). The questionnaire is online, and only managers with a personal account in the system can access it. Of the total municipalities, 55% (163) completed the questionnaire, either fully or partially. The data from the six dimensions of the instrument were analyzed, providing an overview of municipal sports management in the state. The data were processed quantitatively using Excel and Power BI software (Moretti de Souza et al. 2024).

This study presents data regarding the nature of the organizations, governance issues, management tools, services provided to the population, sports culture, and the infrastructure managed by the municipalities.

Results and discussion

Of the 295 municipalities invited to participate in the study, 31% fully completed the instrument, and another 24% partially completed it. Although the study was supported and encouraged by the state government to promote municipal participation, the numbers reflect low adherence by managers. According to reports from the managers themselves, factors contributing to this low participation include a lack of available human resources to allocate time to the study, a

high turnover in leadership positions in sports management entities, and insufficient data to answer the research questions.

Regarding the pillar of organizational data, most organizations are characterized as sports secretariats (42%). However, only 11.95% of these organizations are exclusively focused on sports. Therefore, although the sports sector appears to have some level of institutionalization within the public management apparatus, the legitimization of sports, leisure, and physical activity as an independent and autonomous field—capable of securing funding, supporting policies, and having structured governance (Robertson et al. 2022)—is still far from being accomplished by the vast majority of municipalities.

In the governance domain, approximately 80% of the organizations do not have a dedicated website to disseminate information about their actions, projects, and other activities. However, digital media, particularly Facebook, is widely used to communicate with the community (employed by 124 organizations). The absence of a dedicated website to provide information impacts the transparency of the organization's management (Duval 2018). Basic elements linked to the principle of transparency include the availability and easy access to data and information. By compromising transparency, these entities also compromise another basic pillar of governance: accountability (Hood 2010). The lack of information available to public access also implicates barriers to implementing an evaluation process of the sport public policy.

Regarding the organizational sustainability of these entities, most do not have an institutional development plan (62.79%) or a strategic map (73.68%), which hinders the development of medium- and long-term actions (Mehta 2018; Zwart & Gilligan 2009). This indicator could be related to the high turnover in leadership positions mentioned above, as the lack of stable leadership affects the ability to plan long-term policies for municipal sports management. However, it is worth noting that 70.68% of the municipalities have a short-term action plan in place.

When analyzing the power structures and decision-making processes in the municipalities, it was found that 75% of municipalities do not have a municipal sports council (or any other deliberative or consultative body). This further highlights the negative impact that high leadership turnover has, as well as the fragility of democratic processes within these entities (Lachance 2023; Soares et al. 2010). Another governance indicator that negatively affects the development of public sport organization analysed in this study, is the gender discrepancy in the leadership positions in these entities. The majority of high-level managers are male (83.58%), showing a low level of gender equity. This issue, although reflecting a problematic governance indicator, is consistent with findings in other areas of sports management (Ramos Acosta et al. 2022).

Regarding the planning, execution, and evaluation of municipal sports policies, only 66.15% of the entities have a guiding document for local sports policy that outlines principles for the sector. Concerning the allocation of financial resources, the priority area, according to the managers, is

"sport for life" (the equivalent of "sports for all" in some countries). When asked about the factors influencing decision-making regarding this allocation, the managers indicated that professionals in the field and the community are the main influences. When planning the sports policy, the predominant factors influencing them are sports culture/vocation, followed by community demands. In terms of service provision, there is a focus on sport for life, which aligns with the priority given to resource allocation.

Expressive results were found regarding the lack of provision of physical and sports activities for people with disabilities. At all three service levels (sports training, sports excellence, and sport for life), about 70% of municipalities do not offer activities for this population. In municipalities where such actions exist (less than 30%), they are concentrated in only five sports (athletics, bocce, five-a-side football, seven-a-side football, and table tennis), and they were delivered primarily at the sport-for-life level. Participation in physical and sports activities for people with disabilities is a right guaranteed by law (Brazil 2015), and the lack of public sector efforts to offer this right creates yet another barrier for this population (Mendes et al. 2022). This issue may be further exacerbated when we consider other studies highlighting the prioritization of sports policies focused on high-level and performance programs at the federal level (Furtado et al. 2019).

Finally, the results show that the evaluation of sports policies takes place in only 30.17% of the municipalities. This data highlights, from a concerning perspective, the fragility of the public sports policy cycle in the municipalities. Evaluation is an essential component of any public policy program and should be incorporated already in the planning stage of such policy. It must be methodically formulated to provide answers and parameters that allow managers to assess the success or failure of a policy in creating changes in the pre-existing conditions of the target population (Arretche 2013; Figueiredo 1986).

It is important to emphasize that the discussion presented here represents a limited scope due to the lack of participation from many municipalities in the state studied. While it is assumed that the reality of other entities may align with the data presented here, there is a need to expand the participation and data collection in the state of Santa Catarina. Additionally, it is important to stress the limitation of the present discussion regarding the data presented, given their breadth and relevance across various fields of sports management. It is suggested that further studies be conducted to delve into the specific areas introduced in this paper.

Conclusions

This paper discussed the low level of governance practices in the management of sports in Santa Catarina municipalities. Principles of transparency, accountability, and democratic processes, when present (though rarely), are embryonic and fragile. The vast majority of municipalities

surveyed do not have a municipal sports council or even a guiding document for sports policies. These management elements are essential for improving the sports field and implementing more effective sport and physical activity policies. Issues such as the lack of physical and sports activities for people with disabilities need to be systematically and sustainably addressed. Furthermore, it was noted that a concerning number of municipalities do not evaluate the policies they implement, another indication of the fragility of the field. Theoretical and Practical Implications: The data presented here can support more research in the field that engages with theories of sports policy and management, to outline methodologies applicable to the different contexts. The aggregation and analysis of the data can contribute to the formulation of more effective public sports policies, seeking social value for the community where they are developed. Providing this information to managers can assist them in the decision-making process regarding sports planning, optimizing the use of available resources, and minimizing barriers or potential weaknesses. It is further suggested that more studies should be carried to expand the discussion of the data presented and advance in the proposal of applicable solutions.

References

- Arretche, M. T. (2013). Trends in the study of public policy evaluation. *Revista Critica de Sociologia e Politica*, 1(1), 126–133.
- De Castro, S. B. E.; Poffo, B. N.; De Souza, D. L. Financing of high-performance sports in Brazil: “Brazil in high-performance sports” program” (2004-2011). *Revista brasileira de ciência e movimento*, v. 24, n. 3, p. 146-157, 2016.
- Canan, F., Rojo Junior, J. R., & Starepravo, F. A. (2018). Considerations on the Relationship Between the State and Sports Confederations. *Revista Brasileira de Ciência e Movimento*, 26(1), 156–166. <https://doi.org/10.18511/rbcm.v26i1.8434>
- Carneiro, F. H. S. (2018). *The financing of sport in Brazil: aspects of state action in the Lula and Dilma governments*. 1–385. Tese.
- Carneiro, F. H. S., Athayde, P. F. A., & Mascarenhas, F. (2021). The participation of federated entities in financing sport and leisure in Brazil. *Podium Sport Leisure and Tourism Review*, 10(1), 163–186. <https://doi.org/10.5585/podium.v10i1.17786>
- De Castro, S. B. E., Milani, F. G., dos Santos, T. O., Starepravo, F. A., & Mezzadri, F. M. (2019). Parliamentarians of Paraná and the allocation of budgetary amendments in sport. *Journal of Physical Education (Maringá)*, 30(1). <https://doi.org/10.4025/jphyseduc.v30i1.3072>

- De Castro, S. B. E., Starepravo, F. A., & de Souza, D. L. (2018). Program “sport and leisure of the city”: An analysis of its budget composition (2004-2011). *Movimento*, 24(2), 383–398. <https://doi.org/10.22456/1982-8918.64954>
- Duval, A. (2018). *The rules of the game : The need for transparency in sports governance The rules of the game. January 2015*, 2016–2019.
- Estatuto Da Pessoa Com Deficiencia , LEI N° 13.146, DE 6 DE JULHO DE 2015. (2015).
- Figueiredo, M. F. A. M. C. (1986). Political assessment and policy evaluation: a theoretical framework. *Institute of Economic Studies*, 15.
- Filho, S., & Francisco, M. (2019). *Right to sport and leisure: A public policy proposal for municipalities. In: XIII Congreso Argentino y VIII Latinoamericano de Educación Física y Ciencias (Ensenada, 30 de septiembre al 4 de octubre de 2019)*
- Furtado, S., May Effting, E. R., Barboza Eiras de Castro, S., & Lange de Souza, D. (2016). Sport financing in Santa Catarina: the case of FUNDESPORTE in 2011 and 2012. *Motrivivência*, 28(47), 145. <https://doi.org/10.5007/2175-8042.2016v28n47p145>
- Furtado, S., Trindade, N. V., & Mezzadri, F. M. (2019). The Brazilian paralympic committee as a civil society organization of public interest. *Movimento*, 25(1). <https://doi.org/10.22456/1982-8918.92201>
- Hood, C. (2010). Accountability and transparency: Siamese twins, matching parts, awkward couple? *West European Politics*, 33(5), 989–1009. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2010.486122>
- Houlihan, B. (2005). Public sector sport policy: Developing a framework for analysis. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 40(2), 163–185. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690205057193>
- Lachance, E. L. (2023). Learning How to Make Decisions in a Nonprofit Sport Organization: An Application of Strategic Decision-Making Theory. *Case Studies in Sport Management*, 12(1), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1123/cssm.2022-0019>
- Matias, W. B., Athayde, P. F., Húngaro, E. M., & Mascarenhas, F. (2015). The Tax Incentive Law and the (Non) Right to Sports in Brazil. *Movimento (ESEFID/UFRGS)*, 21(1), 95. <https://doi.org/10.22456/1982-8918.46419>

- Mazzei, L. C., Bastos, F. da C., Bohme, M. T. S., & Bosscher, V. De. (2014). High-performance sport policy in Brazil: Analysis of the investment strategy in Olympic confederations. *Revista Portuguesa de Ciências Do Desporto*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.5628/rpcd.14.02.58>
- Mehta, R. (2018). *The future of sports governance : Will sport sustain its traditional model of autonomy ?* 1–11.
- Mendes, M. de M., Silva, G. de P. A., & Costa, L. A. (2022). Public sports and leisure policy for people with disabilities_ a gap between legal guarantees and the materiality of the rig. *Revista Do Programa de Pós-Graduação Interdisciplinar Em Estudos Do Lazer*, 23(3), 1–29.
- Mezzadri, F. M., Lise, N. S., Maoski, A. P. C. B., de Castro, S. B. E., & Santos, T. O. (2020). Sports management in states and municipalities (GEEM): presentation of a tool aimed at Sports Intelligence in Brazil. *Research, Society and Development*, 9.
- Micaliski, E. L., Radtke Junior, C. H. ., Hertes, A., Ordonhes, M. T., Figuerôa, K. M., & Cavichioli, F. R. (2024). The influence of the municipal human development index on the development of educational, income or leisure sports policies in Brazil. *Retos*, 51, 962–969. <https://doi.org/10.47197/retos.v51.101375>
- Moretti de Souza, J., Furtado, S., Cavichioli, F., & Mezzadri, F. (2024). Use Of Business Intelligence In Sport Management: The IPIE Reports. *Revista Intercontinental De Gestão Desportiva-Rigd*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.51995/2237-3373.v14i1e110087>
- Ordonhes, M. T., Zamboni, K. J., Souza, J. V. M. de, Mezzadri, F. M., & Cavichioli, F. R. (2024). Community participation in the development of sports policies in the state of Paraná. *Revista Brasileira De Atividade Física & Saúde*, 29, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.12820/rbafs.29e0339>
- Ramos Acosta, J., Arias Castaño, A. M., Gómez Solano, J. H., Ordoñez Saavedra, N., & Carrillo Barbosa, R. L. (2022). Gobernanza y legitimidad en las federaciones deportivas colombianas (Governance and legitimacy in Colombian sports federations). *Retos*, 45. <https://doi.org/10.47197/retos.v45i0.89338>
- Robertson, J., Dowling, M., Washington, M., Leopkey, B., Ellis, D. L., & Smith, L. (2022). Institutional Theory in Sport: A Scoping Review. In *Journal of Sport Management* (Vol. 36, Issue 5, pp. 459–472). Human Kinetics Publishers Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2021-0179>
- Santos, E. S. dos, Milani, F. G., Reverdito, R. S., & Starepravo, F. A. (2019). The Financing of Sports and Leisure by Municipalities in the State of Mato Grosso from 2005 to 2008. *LICERE - Revista*

Do Programa de Pós-Graduação Interdisciplinar Em Estudos Do Lazer, 22(1), 49–68.
<https://doi.org/10.35699/1981-3171.2019.12311>

Silva, D. S., Silvestre, B. M., & da Silva, J. V. P. (2020). Evaluation of public sports policies: the case of the Plano Brasil Medalhas 2016. *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Do Esporte*, 42.
<https://doi.org/10.1590/rbce.42.2019.075>

Soares, J., Correia, A., & Rosado, A. (2010). Political factors in the decision-making process in voluntary sports associations. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 10(1), 5–29.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/16184740903554033>

Zwart, F., & Gilligan, G. (2009). Sustainable Governance in Sporting Organisations. In P. Rodriguez (Ed.), *Social Responsibility and Sustainability in Sports* (pp. 165–227).

Recebido em: Julho, 2024
Aprovado em: Outubro, 2024

A **Revista de Gestão e Negócios do Esporte** utiliza o [Open Journal Systems](#) (versão 3.3.0.9), sistema open source, preservando assim, a integridade dos artigos em ambiente de acesso aberto.
