GLOBAL TRENDS AND LOCAL NEEDS – THE TROUBLE WITH SPORT 'GLOBALIZATION'

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Abstract

Sociologists such as Elias and Dunning (1993), have empirically studied long term processes of change in sport, eliciting attention to trends such as sportization (the increasing formalisation of folk games into regulated pastimes and what is now identified as 'modern sport'), politicization (increasing political control in sport), medicalization (increasing medical specialization engaged in modern sport), technicization (increasing technical capability of sports equipment and even artificial limbs in influencing achievement in sport), and globalization (increasing spread of one sporting model, based on Olympic, secular and Western models internationally). The question in this case is the extent to which the process of globalization has affected the development of Sport. This research paper used research documentation providing access to some of the recent research on globalization and interviewing sport scholars to explore how sport has become a global phenomenon, by examining globalization and its impacts on sport generally, and on coach education specifically (case study).

Keywords: Globalization, Sport, Coach Education

The Concept of Globalization

Globalization has been one of the most hotly-debated topics over the past few years (The World Bank Group, 2012). Globalization has indeed flattened the earth and opened new international possibilities, paving the way for new ideas and refreshing ways of thinking about the world (Mahbubani *et al*., 2008). It is no longer possible or even instructive to view the world through the simple prism of right and wrong, good and bad, guilty or innocent (Sethi, 2009). However, what does globalization mean?

Some argue that, the term 'globalization' describes the increased mobility of goods, labour, and technology all over the world (Kirk *et al*., 2008; Naim, 2012; The Canadian Economy, 2012; World Bank Group, 2012). The term 'globalization' was quickly applied to political and cultural changes that affect large segments of the world's peoples in common ways, including education (Spring, 2008). Giulianotti and Robertson (2007) note that the period from the 1870s to the mid-1920s has been termed the 'take-off' period of globalization, when transnational relations expanded massively (through transport, trade, communications, education and migration), and the world underwent intensified 'sociocultural compression'. It is also argued that globalization is the growing integration of economies and societies around the world (Mahbubani *et al*., 2008).

The Investor World Organization (2012) offers a definition of globalization as "the process of increasing the connectivity and interdependence of the world's markets and businesses." This process has speeded up dramatically in the last two decades as technological advances make it easier for people to travel, communicate, and conduct business internationally. Indeed, globalization may refer to the universal tendency for a market society, and to the universalization of a certain model of market society, characterized as open and private. Accordingly, globalization is considered as a direction or trend in global development (Girón and Correa, 2009). Globalization is also defined as 'the worldwide diffusion of practices, expansion of relations across continents, organization of social life on a global scale and growth of a shared global consciousness' (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007). In the midst of the plethora of definitions of globalization offered by many authors and international organizations, it may be argued that the concept of free movement of people, ideas, goods, ideologies and technologies around the world is taken into account in any definition of globalization. It is also worth noting that globalization is a continuous process and, therefore, any definition of globalization is a continuous, constantly changing one (AL-Gheilani, 2008).

The Processes and Impacts of Globalization

The processes and impacts of globalization have to be defined to be verified, and have to be consistent to be notable. The subject of globalization is particularly complicated because, being a worldwide phenomenon, it has so many dimensions. Its impact also varies from country to country and from one function to another (Jreisat, 2008).

Some argue that globalization is a continuing process of capital accumulation that has been going on for centuries and has only recently intensified as a result of technology (Jreisat, 2008; Kirk *et al*., 2008). A clear instance of this process is that applications of Information Technology (IT) in governments, particularly in managing public organizations, have resulted in shortened distances, saved time, expanded outputs and increased freedom in crossing boundaries, and have overcome cultural, political, and institutional barriers. Information technology is changing everything about the world in which we live, with impacts that are both deep and diverse (Jreisat, 2008). The Internet, email, web pages, fax machines, printers, videoconferencing, and numerous other tools profoundly change information dissemination and transmission, and enhance global communication (Alli *et al*., 2007; Jreisat, 2008). In fact, technological breakthroughs created the second era of globalization in the last decades of the twentieth century (Bale and Christensen, 2004). These advancements precipitated an 'information revolution,' changing relationships, and improving global interconnections and communications. While some countries have benefitted from the information revolution and have built global communications bridges with other countries and international organizations, Oman has just begun investment in the field of information technology to communicate globally. This started in 2003 with the establishment of the "Digital Oman Strategy", the main aim of which is to make Oman a more attractive destination for foreign investment (e.Oman, 2011). In sport, still, there is no use of advanced information technology in Oman to communicate nationally or internationally. The culture of contacting others through the internet (email) or the establishment of websites to view the activities and objectives of sports organizations is still in its infancy. Lack of access to technology can be one of the reasons for a lack of communication with international sports organizations.

However, globalization involves more than technology. Universalism (as one impact of globalization) has raised issues of environment, human rights, education, security, and ethics, to mention only a few policy arenas (Jreisat, 2008). For example, the right to practice

sport (regardless of gender or race) has been raised in many countries. However, it is worth noting that universalism can serve a purpose on one level, but is also accused of ignoring cultural distinctiveness. For example, it is valuable to reiterate the right of Muslim women to practice sport, but it is also important to provide sports opportunities that take into account the culture of Muslim women. Contrary to histories of colonization and empires, today, effective globalization trends mostly rely on international cooperation rather than on unilateral coercive or imperial powers (Jreisat, 2008). Evidence of a continually widening and deepening global integration is the growing number of international and regional structures and organizations in existence (Jreisat, 2008; Spring, 2008), for example, the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Examples of international sport structures are The International Council for Coach Education (ICCE) and The International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE).

It is worth examining some of the arguments about the relationship between globalization and education. Educational researchers indicate the rising importance of 'globalization and education' as a field of study. Global educational discourses play an important role in creating common educational practices and policies (Carson, 2008; Spring, 2008). After the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, similarities in education policies and practices across the continents, such as in curriculum development, administrative practices and financial management systems and, higher education institutional development, are a reality. It is argued that these similarities exist because of pressures exerted by globalization processes, for example free movement of people between countries and technological advances that globalize systems of accreditation and people's expectations (Donn and AL Manthri, 2010). However, while education systems with international appeal have increased in recent years (Carson, 2008) (for example, Oman uses some school systems from the USA and Singapore), there are both dangers and possibilities within international curriculum development and pedagogy. For example, educators are already experiencing many of the dangers in terms of the loss of control over their teaching and the narrowing of curriculum horizons as they respond to political pressures for accountability on internationally competitive test results and internationally recognised accreditation. On the other hand, possibilities are also beginning to emerge in the internationalization of curriculum studies, in the form of both critical and creative resistances to globalization. There is a growing recognition that worldliness calls for curriculum studies to move beyond national borders into transnational spaces (Meyer and Kamens, 1992; Ramirez, 2003; Carson, 2008). In terms of coach education, many sports coaches - especially

from developing countries such as Oman - travel to study coaching science. Other countries (such as Qatar) have bought in foreign coaching curricula to qualify their coaches. Therefore, it may be argued that knowledge transfer through education has become a contemporary phenomenon in order to improve human capital around the world (Meyer and Kamens, 1992; Spring, 2008). However, it is suggested that more research should be carried out to evaluate how well existing educational institutions and curricula are preparing the citizens of tomorrow to respond effectively to the opportunities provided by globalization; in all change processes there are winners and losers (Donn and AL Manthri, 2010). Finally, in the midst of the above impacts and globalization's specifications, the question that arises is, to what extent has globalization affected the sport and coach education fields?

Globalization and Modern Sport

The spread of modern sport is one of the arenas where the process of globalization is visible (Bernstein, 2000: Rowe, 2003; Kirk *et al*., 2008). Sport constitutes a vital site for the theorization and empirical exploration of the multidimensional and long-term process of globalization (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2004). This section explores the relationship and impact of globalization on sport. It starts with some historical events that are considered as the start of the sport globalization process. Then, it moves to explore how some sports have become global games, followed by an investigation of how the media have contributed to sport becoming a global phenomenon today. This section provides examples of the ways in which sport has changed.

The Olympic Games provide an example for analyzing the relationship between globalization and sport (Kirk *et al*., 2008). In 1892, Baron de Coubertin considered international sporting events to have the potential to promote peace and understanding between nations. He proposed a revival of the Olympic Games of Ancient Greece. An international sport congress in Paris in 1894 led to the foundation of an International Olympic Committee, which proposed that the first Olympics of the modern era be staged in Athens in 1896 (Bernstein, 2000; Smart, 2009). De Coubertin campaigned around the world to gather support for the idea of nations joining together to engage in a global competitive sport event. He intended the modern Olympic Games to be on a global scale. Over the years, the Games transformed into the most prominent regular global sporting event, constantly changing in nature, with most radical transformations taking place in the past 20 years (Bernstein, 2000). Currently, the global status of the Olympics has been attributed to its media coverage,

especially that of television (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2004; Kirk *et al*., 2008; Bernstein, 2000).

Sport was changed in the small time-frame in the late 1800s when many sports first established their governing bodies. Changes have happened in almost all sports to formalize and regulate sport for the purpose of international competition, a process called 'sportization'. Developments included the establishment of governing bodies, rule-books, and time and space parameters for competitive engagement which radically changed the freer folk-games that existed before this (Elias and Dunning, 1986). To give a historical example**,** one of the first modern sports to go international and begin to develop a global profile was tennis. The game was introduced to America in 1874 (Cooper, 2004). An early semi-official international tennis tournament, including players from America, Canada and England, was staged in 1878 in Newport, USA. The tournament was a forerunner to the first international team tennis competition established in 1900, officially called the International Lawn Tennis Challenge Trophy, donated by American doubles champion Dwight Davis, and subsequently known as the Davis Cup. The competition was open to all nations that had established official tennis associations to govern the organization and development of the sport (Smart, 2009). In 1913 the International Lawn Tennis Federation was established (Smart, 2009). It has been argued that lawn tennis developed as a result of the interweaving of a number of complex social processes. The fact that it bridged the gap between upper and middle classes and was a game that could be played by people of all ages and both sexes was instrumental in its development (Cooper, 2004).
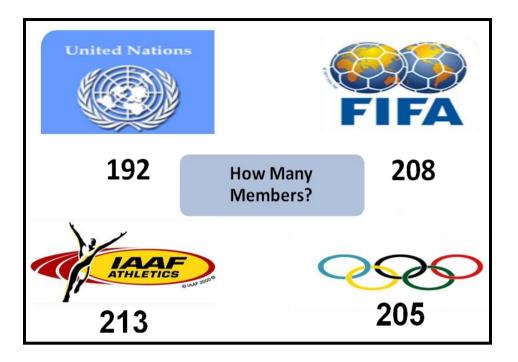
In cultural terms, modern sport affords a rich study of globalization processes. For example, the game of football gives rise to a compelling relativization of social identities alongside concrete socio-political frameworks. Historically, football, as a cultural form, has undergone different kinds of globalization, such as an initial rejection or transformation in some societies, and a more common development of highly particularistic identities among participants (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2004; Frick, 2009; Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009). Transnational processes in football have increased massively through intensified migration and advanced mediatization. Most football clubs have interconnections with other nations, through the recruitment of migrant players through the global players' market, and the attraction of foreign fans (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007). Consequently, the sport is a highly popular and globally networked cultural form. The secretary general of the United Nations endorsed this view when he remarked that football is more universal than the UN and that the FIFA World Cup brings the family of nations and peoples together celebrating

common humanity in a way that few other cultural events can equal (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007; Frick, 2009; Smart, 2009). However, FIFA has been recently criticized regarding the rule of banning the 'hijab' (Tarczynski, 2010). While FIFA has established many projects to develop football in Muslim countries, according to the international rule in Laws of the Game 2010/2011, published by FIFA, a player's "equipment must not have any political, religious or personal statements" (FIFA, 2011).

Another good example of a sport that has been affected by globalization is gymnastics. Benn and Benn (2004) argue that processes of globalization have been recognizable in the development of the gymnastics field. The influential part played by globalizing trends in the rapid development of gymnastics knowledge and demands on coaches has been recognized, for example, in coach knowledge transfer as Eastern bloc sports coaches were able to travel to other countries to offer their coaching services after 'glasnost'. Many of the coaches who had produced top champions in the sport became economic migrants and gymnastics knowledge began to be shared globally. Coaches and gymnasts became global commodities.

As illustrated, sport provides a good example of globalization trends. The Olympic Games and the International Sport Governing Bodies have expanded the reach of western sport forms with the help of media, professionalization, commercialization and other global technical advances. In Athens, in 1896, about 200 male athletes drawn from only 13 nations participated in 43 events in eight sports: track and field, weightlifting, rifle and pistol shooting, tennis, cycling, swimming, gymnastics and wrestling. The Summer Games has been held every four years since then, with the exception of the war years of 1916, 1940 and 1944. By 2008 in Beijing, the number of countries participating had increased steadily, reaching 204 (in excess of the 192-state membership of the United Nations (see Figure 1)), and 11,028 athletes competed in 302 events in 28 sports (IOC, 2012; Smart, 2009). Nowadays, most International Sport Federations hold World Championships and sport has become a lucrative, global business. Hosting international sporting events has also become a means to promote tourism. For example, Oman invested millions of dollars to host the 2nd Asian Beach Games in 2010 (having built a dedicated village north of Muscat), which is the biggest ever held in the country to date, and it is being tagged as a sport tourist attraction with the development of a huge resort.

Figure 1: Example for Sport and Globalization

The media have been an important influence on the spread of modern sport globally. As mentioned above, the global status of sport has been attributed to its media coverage (Bernstein, 2000; Giulianotti and Robertson, 2004). From the mid-twentieth century, television broadcasting media have created a cultural-commercial force field that has radically transformed sport. The FIFA World Cup tournament and Olympic Games are excellent examples. The FIFA World Cup was televised for the first time in 1954 and the Summer Olympic Games in 1960. Television coverage has significantly increased the global popularity of both events and competitive bidding for broadcasting rights has radically transformed the political economy of these and other sporting events (Smart, 2009).

Accordingly, the Summer Olympics ranks alongside the FIFA World Cup as one of the world's most popular sporting festivals (Kirk *et al*., 2008). Both are truly global sporting events that attract substantial interest from the public, broadcasting organizations and commercial corporations alike. The 2004 Athens Olympics exceeded all broadcasting expectations with 3.9 billion people accessing television coverage of events. Given the scale and reach of global television coverage, it is not surprising to find that the Olympic Games is now regarded as one of the most important events for commercial corporations seeking to promote their brands, particularly as consumers tend to associate Olympic sponsors with leadership in their respective product fields (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2004; McCall 2004, cited in Smart, 2009).

The football media has become similarly transnational for various reasons. Transnational media corporations provide the technical and business infrastructure for the global flow of football information, and for the exponential increase in specialist television channels and magazines devoted to the game. Interconnecting ties between football clubs, associations and media broadcasters have become increasingly complex since the late 1980s. Yet clubs are increasingly equipped to establish their own media outlets, such as television channels and websites, to control information output and directly reach their global audiences (Bernstein, 2000: Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007; Mahbubani *et al*., 2008). In terms of electronic media, the World Cup has reached larger and larger global television audiences, rising from 13.5 billion in 1986 to 33.4 billion in 1998 (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007). In fact, football has become increasingly transnational, in terms of player migration, team competitions, supporter association, and the educational backgrounds and global connectivity of football's various stakeholders. Accordingly, football is not only the world's most popular sport, but also probably its most globalized profession (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007; Milanovic, 2009).

The growth in global television coverage and the increasing commercialization of sports has provided the corporate sponsors of sports events with a compellingly persuasive platform to achieve a global profile for their brands. Press, radio and television have not only communicated information and images about sport to the fans; they have also served to promote sport to a wider public. Developments in television technology, particularly the emergence of satellite television broadcasting, have contributed significantly to the globalization of sport (Smart, 2009).

However, globalization has been criticized for contributing to some problems that have appeared in the sports field, for example, naturalization policy in the gulf countries. Supporters of naturalization policy assert that nationalized foreign athletes help these countries to obtain high results and a high global profile in international events. For example, most of the Olympic medals in individual sports have been obtained by nationalized foreign athletes, which indicates that the naturalization policy has succeeded only in individual sports (Nimer, 2010). Despite these results, there is still a lack of popular support. AL-Harbi (2012) states that people in Qatar (for example) are more proud of their national hero Talal Mansor, the Asian champion in 100m, who is originally Qatari, than the world champion in the 3000m steeplechase, Sif Shaheen (Stevin Tsherono), who is originally from Kenya.

However, there is a group who gave an alternative middle view about naturalizing foreign athletes in gulf countries. They argued that naturalization processes must have a clear

format and criteria to protect the rights of both sides (the athlete and the country) (ILLAF, 2010). For example, athletes should live in the country for at least two years before representing that country, so they can get used the culture of the country. However, this condition does not exist in either Qatar or Bahrain. For example, the Bahraini runner Mariam Yousif, the world champion in the 1500m running event, (her Ethiopian name was Azenibic Koto Cola) tried to gain Swiss nationality, but she was refused because she did not live in Switzerland long enough to obtain the nationality. Then, she started representing Bahrain in international sports events after she was granted Bahraini nationality. Mariam, however, is not considered by some people to be a good role model for Muslim girls (Al-Ansari, 2011). Mariam's story exemplifies the current process of sports naturalization in the gulf countries (Saud, 2012). The problem with all of this is the inevitable lack of attention to, and development of, talent amongst nationals in their own country.

Globalization and Coach Education (Case Study)

The previous chapter indicated that there has been an increasing interest in the science of sport coaching in recent decades (Debanne and Fontayne, 2009; Levy *et al*., 2009). The global growth of coaching science influences the development of a need for more sophisticated systematic development of coaches. Gilbert *et al*. (2009) claim that coaching science has found its way into a wide array of scientific periodicals around the world and that coach education programmes are now offered globally by hundreds of universities and organizations. Erickson *et al*. (2008) also suggest that coach education is moving towards a globalized position. The formalization of this is reflected in the appearance of the International Council for Coach Education (ICCE) and the National Council for Accreditation for Coach Education (NCACE), international coaching bodies which now host global annual coaching education conferences in collaboration with other international sports organizations such as the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) (Trudel and Gilbert, 2006; Gilbert *et al*., 2009; ICCE, 2012). The International Council for Coach Education (ICCE) was established by delegates representing fifteen countries on the 24th of September 1997. The mission of the ICCE is to promote coaching as a profession around the world, and to improve the quality of coaching at all levels. The ICCE aspires to accomplish this mission by creating a global community of coaching practice, comprising organizations and individuals responsible for coach education and coaching (Trudel and Gilbert, 2006; Erickson *et al*., 2008; ICCE, 2012).

Other international organizations and projects have appeared in recent years to help in building coach education systems, providing an international platform for the advocacy, organizational support and quality assurance of the training and development of community level coaches. One of these projects is the International Community Coach Education Standards (ICES). The ICES gives advice on the best way for sports coaches to develop so they can meet the needs and entitlements of sports participants. The ICES project tries to ensure standardized coaching programmes that are designed to meet internationally accepted standards. The project provides support for building or improving existing community level coach education and development systems on a local, national or continental level. In fact, it aims to bring all qualification opportunities together in a fit-for-purpose, agency or country level framework that can be referenced against international benchmarks (Dudfield, 2011). The coach education programme offered by The International Olympic Committee (Olympic Solidarity) is also an example of an international programme which is available for all sports coaches around the world. The main objective of this programme is to offer coaches access to high level further training, knowledge and experience, which they will then use to benefit their respective national sports structures. The programme also offers support to develop national sports and coaching structures (Robinson and Schneider, 2011; IOC, 2012; Yousfi *et al.*, 2009). Many countries around the world now take advantage of all the above international opportunities in order to qualify their sports coaches, while other countries, such as Oman, still have limited access to these opportunities. The reasons behind this lack of communication with international coach education institutes should be investigated.

Conclusion

It is clear from the above discussion that globalization is a phenomenon traceable in many aspects of life, not just sport. It refers to long term processes of change that move the world towards increasing similarities, where people are increasingly interconnected and barriers between countries and ethnicities are removed. Outcomes include the fast and free flow of people, capital, goods and ideas (Naim, 2009; World Bank Group, 2012). However, globalization has been magnified, disparaged, applauded, and often blamed for global problems.

It may be also mentioned that sport is epicentral to contemporary globalization processes. The analysis of football's globalization, for instance, can advance both the sociology of the game and our theoretical understanding of globalization (Bernstein, 2000; Giulianotti and Robertson, 2004; Mahbubani *et al.*, 2008; Frick, 2009). In fact, global sport is

now a serious and increasingly financially rewarding business. Sport is now an established part of a globally extensive entertainment industry, and sportsmen and sportswomen have eagerly embraced the notion that they have a responsibility, not only to be successful in competition, but also to entertain spectators and viewers by participating in the promotion of sport as spectacle (Bernstein, 2000; Rowe, 2003; Smart 2009).

The data gathered in this research give an overview of the Western origins and gradual processes of change that have brought modern sport into a global business empire at international major competition level. However, there are many levels of engagement with sport. It is important to identify how much of the global opportunities any country wants or needs and its people. Proposing any future strategy cannot be decoupled from the global frameworks.

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