IMPORTANCE OF THEORY IN QUANTITATIVE ENQUIRY

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Introduction
This chapter illustrates the importance of theory in quantitative enquiry to the selection of an appropriate research paradigm, formation of research questions and hypotheses, development of measures and testing of relationships in the practice of research. These elements are addressed in this chapter, prefaced by an overview of the concept and relevance of theory, and concluded with some closing remarks.

Concept and relevance of theory
In daily life, people have a tendency to loosely refer to personal hunches, speculations, conjectures, insights, assertions and explanations as theory; in a comparatively more rigorous and scientific manner, theory refers to a well-confirmed explanation of nature that describes how nature will behave under certain conditions (Zima, 2007). Essentially, the fundamental purpose of scientific enquiries is to develop theories, test theories, modify or revise theories and apply theories. According to Sutton and Staw (1995), theory explains connections among phenomena; it is the answer to queries of why, depicting the rationale behind certain actions, events, structures and thoughts. It emphasises the nature of causal relationships, identifying the sequence of occurrence and interconnectedness in terms of systematic reasons, timing and patterns. Wacker (1998) stated that ‘theory-building is important because it provides a framework for analysis, facilitates the efficient development of the field, and is needed for the applicability to practical real world problems’ (p. 362). A good theory can be characterised as unique, parsimonious, conversational, generalisable, fruitful, internally consistent, empirically risky and abstract. Generally speaking, a theory should have four basic criteria: conceptual definitions, domain limitations, relationship-building and predictions. Of these, conceptual definitions are fundamental for the reason that a theory starts with its measurements. While domain limitations keep theories applicable to relevant areas, relationship-building implies that theories strive to make connections between two or more concepts. In light of these relationships, theories should also help predict how future events will unfold.

Theories hold strong current and future implications for the growing discipline of sport management. Costa (2005) and Cunningham (2013) gathered the perspectives of leading
scholars in sport management, who indicated that there was a general inadequacy and a lack of success in both the areas of adopting theories from parent disciplines and developing sport management theories. According to Chelladurai (1992), Slack (1996) and Doherty (2012), theories adopted by the field of sport management in recent years have originated in mainstream business administration and other social sciences. These theories are then introduced to and tested in the sport management setting, verifying a viable process of knowledge production for sport management. It is important to take into consideration the unique characteristics of the sport industry (e.g., simultaneous production and consumption, synchronised co-operation and competition, monopolistic bargaining and territorial rights, revenue sharing, vicarious identification of consumers, ephemeral experience and, most importantly, uncertainty of game outcomes (Mason, 1999; Mullin, Hardy and Sutton, 2014; Smith and Stewart, 2010). Endeavouring for the establishment of a distinctive sport management discipline (Chalip, 2006), theories, assertions or best practices that are specific to the sport management discipline are now being proposed, tested and even formed. Doherty (2013) noted that ‘the strength of an academic discipline is its body of knowledge that is not covered by another discipline’ (p. 5). Chalip (2006) emphasised that ‘if sport management is to be anything more than the mere application of general management principles to the sport context, then there must be something about sport that renders distinctive concerns, foci, or procedures when sport is managed’ (p. 3). Zhang (2015) cautioned that directly adopting the measures derived in general business administration or other social sciences with little to no modification or revision may not adequately capture the unique features of a sport management setting.

**Level of theorising and research paradigms**

The essence of a profession is knowledge. In human history, there have been numerous habits and methods commonly adopted by people to seek truth, acquire and accumulate knowledge, enquire about the surrounding world and solve problems. These may include, but are not limited to, tenacity, intuition, personal experience and rationalistic inference. However, many of these traditional approaches lack objectivity and control of context and environment, resulting in information that cannot be rigorously scrutinised, replicated and generalised. Instead, it is scientific methods of enquiry that have significantly helped the human race advance its problem-solving capability. Characterised as being systematic, logical, empirical, reductive and replicable, the scientific way of discovery undergoes a meticulous process of defining the question, formulating a hypothesis, collecting and analysing data, and interpreting the results (Baumgartner and Hensley, 2012; Thomas, Nelson and Silverman, 2011).

Following the scientific protocol of research, quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods are the three commonly accepted strategies, approaches or paradigms of enquiries (Creswell, 2003). Originating from natural sciences, a quantitative paradigm assumes that the reality or research parameter is relatively stable, directly measurable, reasonably rational and largely generalisable. A typical quantitative research investigation involves clearly stating the research question(s), rationally developing research hypotheses, carrying out well-conceived research procedures that include controlling extraneous variables, employing statistical or other data-analysis procedures and interpreting the results (Baumgartner and Hensley, 2012). Research questions are usually deduced from an existing theory or combination of related theories, major research findings, or general explanations that apply to a specific setting, which in turn dictates the hypothesis statement, protocol of research investigation for the specified problem and interpretation of the results (Thomas et al., 2011). In quantitative studies, strategies of enquiry usually include the true experiments, less rigorous quasi-experiments and correlational studies.
via descriptive investigations such as surveys and observations. More recent quantitative strategies involve complex experiments with many variables and treatments (e.g., factorial designs and repeated measure designs) and elaborative structural equation models that incorporate causal paths and the identification of the collective strength of multiple variables. Consistently, data collection is performed via predetermined instrument-based questions, behaviour or performance data, attitude data, observational data or census data (Creswell, 2003).

Although qualitative research methods are not the focus of discussion in this chapter, they need to be briefly defined so as to provide a comparison with quantitative approaches. Qualitative methods, after all, are an integral part of mixed-approach studies, and it is necessary to highlight their importance in this chapter. Unlike quantitative studies, qualitative studies follow an inductive reasoning process by generating research questions, assertions and even answers via information obtained from individual cases. According to Baumgartner and Hensley (2012), Creswell (2003), and Strauss and Corbin (1998), a qualitative approach is one in which the enquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives or participatory perspectives, where an investigation is often conducted in natural settings without the control of research environment, condition or extraneous variables. A qualitative study is of the assumption that meaning and reality are situational and specific to the case(s) involved. Assertions and themes derived in the study are not ready for forming generalisable statements or theories. This paradigm of research investigation utilises such strategies as narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies or case studies, in which the researcher collects open-ended, emerging data with the primary intent of developing themes from the data. Interviews, observations, focus groups, audio-visual recordings, publications, collections, text and image analyses, and document analyses are often the procedures of data collection in qualitative enquiries. For instance, when conducting a grounded theory study, the investigator attempts to understand the general process, action or interaction grounded in the views of the participants. This process involves conducting multiple stages of data collection, theoretical sampling of different segments of research participants in order to maximise group similarities and differences in information, developing an in-depth understanding of the interrelationships among categorised information, and constantly comparing data with emerging categories of assertions and themes.

Merits exist with both quantitative and qualitative paradigms, and each can be adopted to address research questions unique to a situation. Nonetheless, preferring to adopt one approach over the other would fail to take advantage of the merits of having both. A mixed-approach paradigm is therefore particularly useful for the academic discipline of sport management, where scholars have started to pay attention to the uniqueness of the sport industry and attempted to form a distinctive discipline from the ground up (Rudd and Johnson, 2010; Zhang, 2015). In fact, in today’s scientific environment it is less about choosing a quantitative versus qualitative approach and more about choosing the best combination for the research situation and practising research that lies somewhere on a continuum between the two (Bryman, 2007; Newman and Benz, 1998). Adopting a mixed-method approach, the researcher would discover and examine knowledge claims based on pragmatic grounds (e.g., consequence-oriented, problem-centred and/or pluralistic), while adopting research protocols that involve the simultaneous or sequential collection of data to best understand the research problem (Baumgartner and Hensley, 2012; Creswell, 2003). For example, through conducting simultaneous data collection procedures, Cunningham, Ferreira and Fink (2009) carried out a mixed-method study to examine factors that influenced the perceived offensiveness of prejudicial comments made by sport television commentators. After responding to a series of eight experimental scenarios (i.e., quantitative approach), participants were asked to reflect on the pattern of their responses and to explain
why they answered as they had (i.e., qualitative approach). Similarly, Rohm, Milne and McDonald (2006) used the mixed-method to develop a consumer segmentation typology by using both demographic variables and self-expressed motivations for sport and fitness participation. In particular, qualitative data were used to help validate quantitative analyses in order to establish the structure of market segmentation. As a final example, Gibson, Qi and Zhang (2008) conducted sequential data collections to investigate the images young Americans held of China as both a tourist destination and host of the 2008 Olympics. The relationships among destination image, travel intentions and tourist characteristics were explored. Qualitative enquiries were first carried out to formulate a preliminary scale to measure images of Beijing as a tourist destination and Olympic Games host. Based on the findings of the qualitative enquiries, a questionnaire was developed to examine the stated research question, appropriately lending a quantitative element to the study.

From theory to forming research questions

A comprehensive review of literature is a prerequisite process for identifying research topics, developing the problem to be investigated, formulating one or more research hypotheses, and designing methods for investigation. In quantitative studies, a related theory or theories, application of these theories and associated research findings play a key role in the rational process for developing the problem and stating the hypotheses. In this process, the investigator generally carries out deductive reasoning as he or she logically constructs a theoretical explanation of a phenomenon in order to form research questions and hypotheses that can be tested for specific situations, practices and/or realities. As Kerlinger (1973) explained, ‘hypotheses incorporate the theory, or part of it, in testable or near testable forms’ (p. 22). Systematic and progressive testing of hypotheses helps advance research questions and enquiries within the topic area through careful articulation and delimitation of the contextual environment that represents the application parameter of the theory or theories.

For example, Ajzen and Fishbein’s (1980) theory of reasoned action is an approach to predict and understand an individual’s behaviour. This theory explains that human beliefs refer to knowledge about the attitude object, which could be formed via direct observations, accepting information from outside sources, or self-generated inference processes. To influence people’s behaviour, they should be exposed to sufficient information while being able to alter their beliefs in a social environment. These beliefs will in turn determine attitudes and subjective norms, which then determine intentions and their corresponding behaviours. Expectedly, there are strong sequential relationships among beliefs (knowledge), attitudes, behaviour intentions and behaviours. Adopting this theory to deduce research questions, Jin, Zhang, Ma and Connaughton (2011) studied the level of awareness, perceived environmental impact, attitude, behavioural intentions and actual behaviour regarding the support of the Green Olympic initiatives and future hosting of mega-sport events among residents in a host city of the Olympic Games. Specifically, they investigated two research questions:

1. What were the levels of awareness of the Green Olympics, the perceived environmental impact of the event, and the attitudes, behavioural intentions and actual behaviours of supporting the Green Olympic initiative and the future hosting of mega-sport events among local residents?

2. What were the relationships among awareness of Green Olympics, perceived environmental impact, attitude, behavioural intention and actual behaviour of supporting the Green Olympic initiative and future hosting of mega-sport events among local residents?
Based on the theory of reasoned action, and related research findings identified in previous studies, the following hypotheses were tested: There would be sequential relationships among the level of awareness of the Green Olympics, perceived environmental impact of the Olympic Games, attitude towards the Green Olympics, and behavioural intentions and actual behaviour of supporting the Green Olympics initiative and the future hosting of mega-sport events among local residents.

Depending on the nature, complexity and concepts involved, multiple theories may need to be adopted and applied to formulate the theoretical framework for an empirical investigation, which will in turn guide the development of the research problem and hypotheses. For instance, Chen and Zhang (2011, 2012) developed a theoretical framework to examine consumer attributes associated with collegiate athletic facility naming rights sponsorship. As sport facility naming rights is one of the fastest growing and most valuable forms of sponsorship, the limited opportunities in major league professional sports have led corporations to seek marketing opportunities with college sports. Although collegiate athletics has become increasingly attractive for sponsorship investment, it has also been laden with potentially negative side effects. For example, how university stakeholders perceive and respond to stadium naming rights sponsorship is a major concern for both corporations and college administrators. Through a review of literature, a theoretical framework with multidimensional factors (beliefs about naming rights sponsorship, attitudes toward commercialisation, team and stadium identification, perception of financial status and perceived fit) assessing consumers’ perspectives of naming rights sponsorship effectiveness was proposed, tested and confirmed. To conduct the study, a number of theories were adopted and related research findings were taken into consideration when developing the research questions and forming the hypotheses. These included, but were not limited to, the planned behaviour theory (Ajzen, 1985), belief-attitude– behaviour intentions hierarchy model (Madrigal, 2001), consumer-based brand equity theory (Keller, 1993), social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979), team identification (Pease and Zhang, 2001; Trail, Fink and Anderson, 2003; Wann and Branscombe, 1993, 1995) and product match-up hypothesis (Kahle and Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1989, 1990). It was expected that the derived theoretical framework would provide a research direction to comprehensively examine how the stakeholders of intercollegiate athletic programmes perceive and respond to corporate naming rights sponsorship of sport facilities.

From theory to measurement

While a theory generally describes the interrelatedness among concepts and constructs, and how they function together to influence the phenomena, accurately measuring the involved concepts and their constructs is a precondition for utilising the theory in research investigations. Kerlinger (1973) explained that a concept could be constitutively defined by its composing constructs, components or ingredients. According to Zhang, Connaughton, Byrd, Cianfrone, Byron and Kim (2007), various theories are often adopted by researchers to conduct empirical investigations to identify the constructs or perspectives (i.e., dimensions or factors) of a concept as their first step of testing relationships among different concepts or even developing a new theory. For instance, Sloan (1989) and Zillmann and Paulus (1993) postulated the concept of social motivation for sport spectatorship. Conducting a comprehensive review of literature and deducing from general motivation theories, they identified five theoretical categories that could be used to explain the social motivations of sport fans, including (a) salubrious effect theories (recreation theory and diversion theory), (b) stress and stimulation seeking theories, (c) catharsis and aggression theories (catharsis theory, frustration–aggression theory and social learning theory), (d) entertainment theories and (e) achievement-seeking theories. Closely following these
components for assessing the concept of spectators’ social motivation, Pease and Zhang (2001) developed the Spectator Motivation Scale, with a total of thirty-five items measuring these components, or sub-concepts, from different perspectives and written items. Other researchers have developed similar scales (e.g., Trail et al., 2003; Trail and James, 2001; Trail, Robinson, Dick and Gillentine, 2003; Wann and Branscombe, 1993, 1995).

When stringently following the quantitative research paradigm, deduction for measuring different perspectives of a concept is necessarily based on the theoretical definition of the concept and the related research findings of previous studies. For instance, by following Schofield’s (1983) arguments and applying the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980), Zhang, Pease, Hui and Michaud (1995) and Zhang, Lam and Connaughton (2003) defined the concept of market demand as consumer expectations towards the attributes of the core product. In essence, it is a cluster of pull factors associated with the game event that a sport team can offer to its new and returning spectators/consumers. Market demand factors may vary among different settings or sectors within the sport industry. After the Spectator Decision Making Inventory (SDMI) with four factors (Game Promotion, Home Team, Opposing Team and Schedule Convenience) was first developed by Zhang et al. (1995), Zhang, Lam, Bennett and Connaughton (2003) conducted a replication study to confirm the composition of these constructs. In this study, the hypotheses were deducted from the theory that originally guided the development of the SDMI and also from the research findings of related studies. A survey form containing the SDMI and consumption variables was administered to sport game spectators and re-examination of SDMIs construct and predictive validity and testing of the stated hypotheses were carried out by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis and a structural equation modelling analysis. Essentially, this replication study rigorously carried out the principles of a deductive reasoning process.

In sport management studies, there are a variety of situational factors that require mixed-method investigations containing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. These include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) adopting theories from mainstream business or social science studies and adapting or modifying them for sport settings; (b) expanding upon the rather small number of theories or measurement models that originate in the field of sport management for applications in various research settings within the sport industry; and (c) developing new measures or revising available measures to account for the diverse segments and settings of the sport industry. For instance, through both qualitative (i.e., interviews, observations, focus-group studies and review of literature) and quantitative investigations (i.e., survey administration, test of content validity, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, calculation of reliability coefficients), Byon, Zhang and Connaughton (2010) developed the Scale of Market Demand by following the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) to assess consumers’ general market demand factors associated with professional team sports. Similarly, Byon and Zhang (2010) developed the Scale of Destination Image by following the cognitive-affective attitude theory (Bagozzi and Burnkrant, 1985) to assess perceived destination images by sport tourists. Adopting the uses and gratifications theory (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974), Cianfrone, Zhang and Ko (2011) modified and extended the Sport Video Game Motivation Scale (SVGMS) that was developed by Kim and Ross (2006). The original scale had seven factors (Competition, Diversion, Enjoyment, Fantasy, Interest with Sport, Social Interaction and Sport Knowledge Application); however, after conducting a comprehensive review of literature and taking into consideration multiple perspectives of motivational theories and research findings in general motivation, sport spectator motivation, sport participation motivation and media usage motivation, three new factors (Challenge, Arousal and Team Identification) were added to the revised SVGMS.
After a measure is preliminarily developed from original formulation, modification or revision, it is necessary to first establish content validity that adequately represents the concept and its specified constructs, regardless of the enquiry approach adopted for the measurement study. To have good content validity, a measure should assess what it purports to assess according to the defined concept, which would in turn help support, develop, change and improve theory or theories, decrease inferential errors, enhance confidence in the internal validity of the study and increase the generalisability of research findings (Wood, 1989). Unlike measures in psychomotor and behavioural domains, many cognitive and affective concepts in sport management studies cannot be directly assessed, as they are latent. Instead, they are often estimated from observable and manifested indications, typically referred to as items or statements. Essentially, these tangible items are indirect indications of various constructs constituting the concept (Zhang, Lam and Williamson, 2002). With an intention to measure a particular construct (i.e., factor) under a concept, the items need to be relevant to the delineation of the construct, representative of the universe of the construct and clear enough to describe the construct in a uni-dimensional fashion (Baumgartner, Jackson, Mahar and Rowe, 2006; Wood, 1989).

Traditionally, a panel of experts, consisting of related theorists, practitioners and even participants for whom the measure is designed, are involved in testing the content validity of the newly developed or revised measure. Based on the percentage of agreement, each item is judged in a dichotomous fashion (e.g., ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; ‘Match’ or ‘Not Match’) by the experts with respect to the concept or at times its constructs. Judgment is made in terms of each item’s relevance, representativeness and clarity. An alternative format asks experts to place an item into the most appropriate construct. Sometimes, the Delphi technique with multiple rounds of surveys of the expert panel is adopted to define a concept, specify the constructs constituting the concept, write items and verify the content validity. Other times, conducting focus group interviews and pilot studies can help strengthen the content of the measure (Zhang et al., 2002).

While the traditional approach focuses on the concept, a more contemporary approach focuses on the constructs of the concept and simultaneously evaluates the three aspects of content validity. Experts judge how well each item represents the corresponding construct using a Likert scale (e.g., from 1 = not match to 5 = match). Then, validity evidence, reliability and homogeneity coefficients are calculated (Aiken, 1985, 1996; Dunn, Bouffard and Rogers, 1999; Messick, 1989). Nonetheless, it is necessary to re-emphasise that both the theoretical concept and its defined constructs dictate the entire testing procedures of content validity, which is particularly true in quantitative or mixed-method studies. This practice is also true when choosing statistical procedures to examine the construct validity evidence (i.e., factor, convergent and discriminant validity), criterion-related validity evidence (i.e., concurrent and predictive validity) and reliability. For instance, a preliminary scale developed through mixed-method procedures would likely need both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses; whereas, a scale developed strictly through deductive reasoning and quantitative procedures would need only confirmatory factor analyses.

**From theory to testing relationships**

Ultimately, theory explains the nature, pattern and strength of interconnectedness among concepts and phenomena (Sutton and Staw, 1995). As a theory or set of theories provides directions and parameters for the formulation of research questions, hypotheses and measurement, it also offers hints for forming research designs, methods and even analytical procedures. As such, numerous studies in the field of sport management have adhered to theory while testing the relationships among a set of constructs.
For example, Cianfrone and Zhang (2006) followed the Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (AIDA) theoretical model (Pitts and Stotlar, 2012; Mullin et al., 2014) while conducting an experimental study to examine the differential effectiveness of television commercials, athlete endorsements, venue signage and combined promotions, as assessed by Generation Y consumers. The researchers conducted a $2 \times 4$ independent-group experiment consisting of two experimental conditions (experimental and control) and four video footage interventions with different promotional procedures (television commercial, athlete endorsement, venue signage and combined promotion). Research participants were randomly assigned to the eight groups and then responded to a questionnaire that measured brand awareness in terms of unaided recall, aided recall and recognition. A factorial MANCOVA revealed that after controlling for differences in the action sport consumption backgrounds of the subjects, all four promotional procedures effectively increased the participants’ brand awareness during a televised action sports event. Television commercials were the most effective, followed by combined promotion, athlete endorsement and venue signage.

In another study, Cianfrone, Zhang, Lutz and Trail (2008) followed multiple theories, including Lavidge and Steiner’s (1961) Hierarchy of Effects Model of Advertising, Tajfel and Turner’s (1979) social identity theory, Madrigal’s (2001) belief-attitude-intentions sponsorship model and Oliver’s (1997) customer loyalty framework while conducting an experimental study to examine the effectiveness of a sport video game’s (SVG) in-game advertisements in the cognitive, affective and conative consumption domains. Participants were gamers who were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: (a) experimental – playing a SVG with advertisements, and (b) control – playing a SVG without advertisements. Consumption background and identification level were incorporated as covariates to ensure group equivalence. The participating gamers responded to a questionnaire measuring brand awareness, brand attitude and purchase intentions. Results from the MANCOVA revealed that after controlling for the effect of the covariates, the experimental group had a significantly greater mean brand awareness score than the control group. Mean brand attitude and purchase intention scores were not significantly different among groups.

Through deductive reasoning and the implementation of a structural equation modelling analysis, Braunstein, Zhang and Trail (2011) followed Fishbein and Ajzen’s (1975) expectancy-value model and the multiple aspects of identity theory (Stryker and Burke, 2000) to develop an explanatory model that analysed athlete endorser effectiveness in promoting non-sport products. The sequential relationships of identification with an athlete and sport to product-endorser congruency, perceived value and purchase intentions were examined, providing a preliminary overview of key socio-psychological factors that may influence the purchase intentions of endorsed products.

Kim, Zhang, Jackson, Connaughton and Kim (2013) and Kim, Zhang and Ko (2009) first developed and revised the Scale of Market Demand for Taekwondo schools by conducting both qualitative and quantitative studies. Then, the researchers followed the concept of the Yale Attitude Change Model (Hovland, Janis and Kelley, 1953; Zimbardo, Ebbesen and Maslach, 1977), which explains that human attitudes (the affective component) are usually influenced or changed by altering the opinions or beliefs of people (the cognitive or knowledge component) and, in turn, can be a powerful driving force that impacts consumer behaviour (Fazio, Powell and Williams, 1989). The researchers were able to use this theory to examine the structural relationships of market demand factors to member satisfaction and commitment factors of Taekwondo schools. Testing the proposed structural model revealed good fit of the model to the data, and the market demand factors were found to have positive effects on member satisfaction and member commitment. Member satisfaction also had a positive influence on member
commitment. The market demand factors directly and indirectly affected member commitment and all direct and indirect paths were statistically significant. The indirect effect was substantially larger than the magnitude of the direct effect, indicating that the addition of member satisfaction as a mediating construct to the direct effect enhanced the predictive power of the market demand factors on member commitment.

Closing remarks

In addition to guiding the formulation of the research question, measurement, design, procedures and, the ever-important, testing of the relationships among concepts, theory and related empirical findings derived from previous research investigations should serve as the focal point in the discussion section of a research report. In this process, a number of key questions need to be answered, including but not limited to the following: (a) how consistent or different the research findings are in the current study from the stated theory and those of related previous studies; (b) what reasonable explanations are for the identified consistence or difference; (c) how the findings of the current study contribute to the confirmation, strengthening, addition, modification or even rejection of the theory; and (d) how the findings of the current study provide implications for the application of the stated theory.

In sport management studies, theories developed in mainstream business administration and social psychological studies are often adopted. Sometimes, due to a lack of empirical evidence for the applicability of these theories or inter-concept relationships in specific segments of sport organisations, a co-ordinated theoretical framework is developed to guide the research investigation. Even so, earlier discussions on the relevance and importance of theory in quantitative and mixed-method studies would be equally pertinent to these situations.

All in all, theory plays a pivotal role in quantitative or mixed-method studies. It is prevalent in every step of a research investigation and is in every part of a research report. After all, the advancement, confirmation or rejection of theory is one of the main goals of research. Nonetheless, challenging tasks remain for sport management scholars, the least of which include the following two perspectives: (a) how to best apply and interpret general business administration and social psychology theories in specific sport management settings; and (b) how to best, thoroughly and unambiguously, develop theories in specific sport management settings and make them generalisable within or beyond a larger realm of the sport industry.

References


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