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## Editorial

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**Biographical notes:** Jonathan Michael Casper's research interests focus on the role of sport and recreation related to active living and quality of life. He has published in several journals including *The American Journal of Health Promotion*, *Annals of Behavioural Medicine*, *International Journal of Sport Marketing and Management*, *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, *Leisure Sciences*, *Journal of Sport Management*, and *Sport Management Review*.

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This special issue presents articles submitted to a call for papers of the *International Journal of Sport Management* on the topic of 'sport participation management and marketing'. The health benefits from sport participation and economic impact as a result of sport participation in particular have begun to receive more attention. Additionally, 'active living' and increasing the number of individuals who participate in sport has become a topical and even political issue in many countries as competition for an individual's leisure time increases, and obesity/sedentary activities become more prevalent. Even though sport participation holds both health and economic importance, and while policy level action has been in place (e.g., Canada's 2005 Healthy Living and Sport Participation Marketing Strategy), sport management literature has not kept up.

Eight papers were selected based on their adequacy to the special issue aims and quality of research; 14 papers were rejected. The number of submissions indicates this topic is progressively becoming more relevant to sport management. This special issue helps to build the sport participation literature related to marketing, measurement, programming, and delivery methods.

In the first paper, Thomas Mueller develops and tests the reliability and validity of a recreational sport participation scale that explores active, serious, and casual leisure participation. Confirmatory factor analysis reveals that 'challenge', 'victory', 'sensory', 'workout', and 'social' are dimensions of participation which are reliable, valid, and a good model fit. The scale could be used to benchmark and measure the dimensions of motivation among recreationists.

In the second paper, Kanters, Bocarro, Greenwood, Casper, Suau, and McKenzie examine middle school students' using the theory of planned behaviour over time in relation to intramural and varsity school sport participation. The results suggest that intentions to participate in sport either increase or are maintained through participation in school sports, and the intentions of non-participants in school sports (intramural or varsity) decrease over time. They conclude that a singular model of school sport that only

includes highly competitive varsity sports may limit opportunities for children to play sport and diminish their intentions for enduring sport participation.

In the third paper, Cohen, Brown, and Welty-Peachey conduct a qualitative, grounded theory study to explore the market segment attracted to non-traditional, co-ed sports such as quidditch. They conclude that five factors led towards a desire to participate in quidditch and heightened purchase intentions: identification with Harry Potter, camaraderie and friendship, desire to have fun, desire to try something new, and desire to get in shape.

In the fourth paper, Cousens, Barnes, and MacLean address the downward trend in sport participation among Canadians by examining the collaboration of community sport organisations. They focus on swimming and basketball networks in one region of Canada. Results of social network analysis reveal many unrealised ties between providers and organisations; however, strengthening these ties and collaborative efforts is needed to enhance sport participation.

In the fifth paper, Hall and Ferreira analyse the sport participation decision-making processes for senior games participants. They examine the spatial representations of preferences and identify the evaluative criteria seniors used to select senior games event sites. The findings reveal the importance of convenience and quality of the events that influence senior participants' decision-making processes.

In the sixth paper, Wang, Li, Olushola, Chung, Ogura, and Heere evaluate to what extent people in three different countries (the USA, the Netherlands, and the Republic of Korea) perceive how their sport participation structure provides them with a sense of community. Consequently, they determine the value of sport participation communities in terms of social capital across the three distinct national participation systems. Results from asynchronous online focus groups reveal that social capital manifests itself differently in each nation. The findings support previous studies on social capital such that sport participation is a strong instrument for bonding, yet less effective as an instrument to bridge across different groups.

In the seventh paper, Crofts, Dickson, Schofield, and Funk shed light on the long-term physical activity behaviours of women after participating in a novice mass participation sporting event. The results indicate that three months after participating in a triathlon, 95 women reported their intentions to participate in the same event the following year and/or other triathlons and/or fitness events. Results show that over 90% of respondents intended to participate in future events. The findings suggest a strong association between the psychological connection model and behavioural intentions. They conclude that mass participating sporting events can provide short-term inducement for increase physical activity and can have the potential to act as a 'gateway' event for other similar events.

In the eighth paper, Balaska, Alexandris, Kouthouris, and Pollatidou present an analysis of the influence of various types of constraints and processes of change for individuals within varying stages of behavioural change within recreational sport participation. The transtheoretical model is used to frame the stages of behavioural change. Results reveal that individuals in the lower three stages of behavioural change perceived more constraints than participants in the two higher stage groups. Results also suggest that individuals in higher stages of behavioural change engage in more negotiation strategies compared to lower stages. Furthermore, both cognitive and behavioural processes were found to increase with advancing stages. They conclude that their findings help with promotion of more active recreation.

Overall, these papers offer a new insight in to sport participation related to marketing and management. Collectively, they highlight the diversity of research related to participation and offer a departure point for future study.

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