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Citation:

Keshkar, S and Dickson, G and Ahonen, A and Swart, K and Addesa, F and Epstein, A and Dodds, M and Schwarz, E and Spittle, S and Wright, R and Seyfried, M and Ghasemi, H and Lawrence, I and Murray, D (2021) The Effects of Coronavirus Pandemic on the Sports Industry: An Update. *Annals of Applied Sport Science*, 9 (1). pp. 1-23. ISSN 2322-4479 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29252/aassjournal.964>

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REVIEW ARTICLE



The Effects of Coronavirus Pandemic on the Sports Industry: An Update

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Submitted 14 December 2020; Accepted in final form 04 January 2021.

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ABSTRACT

The sudden rise of coronavirus in the world had various effects on the sports industry. Nevertheless, sports organizations around the world adopted new and different methods to manage the crisis, which in turn, enriched global knowledge of sports management. Also, some industries changed their products and adapted their structure and performance according to the new situation. The new Experiences gained during the pandemic showed that sports organizations need crisis management programs to deal with crises in the future. So, it's necessary to manage sports organizations with a different perspective and new plans to encounter future needs and problems. To do this, sports managers must learn from the experiences of the pandemic era and be prepared to predict the world in the future, and better manage their organizations.

KEYWORDS: *Coronavirus, Covid-19 Pandemic, Sports Industry, Sports Organizations, Sports Events, Sport Contracts and Force Majeure, Women Sports, Sport Education, Sports Tourism, Sports Media, Broadcasters and Sports Rights Holders.*

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INTRODUCTION

The sudden and unexpected outbreak of coronavirus in the world caused a serious crisis in the sports industry. Early in the spread of the virus around the world, global sports activities almost ceased and sports activities were launched at home using the Internet and virtual networks. Sports competitions were stopped and clubs were closed. Sports production was in crisis. In the meantime, sports media programs were in a state of uncertainty. And all these events led to financial losses and economic problems for industry owners, producers, athletes, coaches ... and in short, those involved in the sports industry. Gradually, however, with the increasing awareness of experts and scientists about the coronavirus and how it works, the sports industry began its activities in a new way and with special restrictions, and the form of these activities was different in countries around the world. Coronavirus COVID-19 has caused profound changes in the products, the process of managing sports and leisure, and the economic, social, and cultural situation of the sports industry, and it seems that the effect of these changes will last long after the disease is controlled. Predicting and forecasting the sports industry in the post-corona era will play an important role in future planning and helping the industry grow in the future. Accordingly, this article, presented by researchers in the field of sports management from different universities and countries, examines the damage caused by a coronavirus and the subsequent actions and inactions taken as a consequence, and the future of the sports industry in the post-corona period by these experts and researchers. In this article, each of the experts discusses one of the dimensions of the sports industry that has changed under the influence of COVID-19.

Although it is difficult to predict what will happen in the sports industry in the post-pandemic era, and it is not possible to give an accurate or definite opinion about the future of sports in the post-pandemic era, Nevertheless, paying attention to the influential variables in the sports environment makes it possible to study and analyze the situation of the sports industry in the future. During the outbreak of COVID-19 around the world, attention was paid to the future of sports in the post-corona era. This article is a collection of research findings and thoughts of researchers and sports management professionals

regarding the corona crisis and its effects on the sports industry.

SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Geoff Dickson

In the early half of 2020, the COVID-19-related lockdown (i.e., stay at home) and other social distancing policies plunged the global sports industry into disarray. Sport stopped for all intents and purposes. There are many reasons for this. Sports facilities were closed by order of local, regional, and national governments. Sports participation often involves body-to-body contact and other interpersonal interactions within proximity, so even non-facility-dependent sports were prohibited. Sporting events are watched by people sitting within proximity to each other for extended periods. So even when the sport was permitted, the game was played in empty (or ghost) stadiums and thus without ticketing revenue. Travel to events was restricted by laws prohibiting unnecessary travel, both domestic and international. Sports organizations, be they community clubs, professional sports teams, or international sports events, were effectively closed for business. For all their differences, and whilst the immediate impact varied between organizations, the revenue streams for sports organizations are ultimately premised on the sport being played. No matter the nuances of the business model, the virus asphyxiated the core business of every sports organization.

Organizations responded with a variety of initiatives to ameliorate the situation. Consider these examples from the Australian sports industry. Organizations terminated the employment of staff. Many initiated salary reductions for staff (or employed them for fewer hours), as well as both voluntary and involuntary redundancies. Staff was stood down or furloughed (i.e. a temporary period without work, either with or without pay). Others forced staff to take annual or long service leave. Staff was redeployed to other departments. Organizations accessed government interventions (e.g. employee salary subsidies, grants). Organizations sought to borrow money from financial institutions and governing bodies. Other organizations ceased capital expenditure and stopped recruitment and all non-essential spending.

Sports organizations suffered reputational damage during the crisis. Anxious administrators tried to limit the financial impacts by concocting (desperate) measures to enable the elite sport to be played. These initiatives were not always well received. The common refrain was that the decision-makers were driven more by money than commonsense. Elite athletes were seen as greedy and “out of touch” when, through their player associations, they rejected reductions in their (very) large salaries at a time when millions were without incomes.

Organizations and athletes were also able to maintain and or enhance their reputations through a variety of COVID-related social responsibility initiatives. This included food distribution, support for isolated people, fundraising, donations, and public health messaging. If sports organizations were knocked to the ground, let’s not forget that sports organizations also helped others to regain their footing.

The COVID crisis permeated every corner of every sports organization in the world. There is no shortage of perspectives and angles through which the situation can be viewed. In the remainder of this section, I would like to highlight three concepts - business continuity, organizational reliance, and innovation.

Business continuity. The International Standards Organizations defines business continuity as the organization’s capability to continue the delivery of its products or services at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive event, either natural or deliberate (1). Business continuity management is a process that helps organizations identify risk elements and become sufficiently flexible and capable of responding to these risks.

Even though most sports organizations survived the crisis, it is fair to say that many were on life-support systems and that their businesses were unable to continue the delivery of their services. Attached on all sides – no play, no facilities, no spectators, no travel – sport was effectively discontinued. That it took a one in a hundred-year event to do so is perhaps little consolation for those caught in the middle.

Organizational Resilience. The end goal of business continuity management is to make the organization more resilient. There are three approaches to defining organizational resilience. First, resilience refers to an organization’s ability

to resist and recover from adverse situations. For example, Boin and Eeten refer to resilience as “bouncing back to a state of normalcy”. Second, resilience can refer to a focus on the advancement of organizational processes and capabilities (2). Within this context, Lengnick-Hall, Beck, & Lengnick-Hall refer to organizational resilience as a “firm’s ability to effectively absorb, develop situation-specific responses to, and ultimately engage in transformative activities to capitalize on disruptive surprises that potentially threaten organization survival”. Third, there are definitions that include anticipation (3). Ortiz-de-Mandojana and Bansal define resilience as “the incremental capacity of an organization to anticipate and adjust to the environment” (4).

Will sports organizations bounce back? Yes, but it’s too early to tell how quickly and how. But at the moment the score is surely COVID-19 1, Sport nil. In terms of coming back bigger and better? Again, it is too early to tell, but no doubt some of the COVID-related innovations will endure. Were sports organizations sufficiently resilient in terms of their ability to see the pandemic coming? No. Should they have seen COVID-19 coming? No. Should they have contemplated the possibility of a pandemic? Yes. And some did. The insurance policies taken out by some major events must surely rate amongst the best investments ever.

Innovation and new business models. The COVID-19-related constraints compelled organizations to pursue business model innovation. Business model innovation refers to “the discovery of a fundamentally different business model in an existing business” (5). Broadcasters are re-evaluating both the value of current deals. Sponsors are slashing spending in response to an impending global recession. This global recession will have a more prolonged effect on the industry than the virus itself. And it is this recession that will necessitate changes to business models. Some will be more successful than others. And only time will what features of these new business models will endure in the post-pandemic world.

The COVID-19 virus knocked sport to its knees. Not only were people unable to participate in sport, but people lost their jobs and careers. Some organizations were unable to survive. But every sports fan loves a comeback. And sport’s comeback is going to be the stuff of Hollywood movies.

SPORT EVENTS

Aila Ahonen, Kamilla Swart

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected sport globally, and especially sporting events at all levels from mega-events to small local events across the world. This situation in spring 2020 is a pertinent example of the uncertainty of today's life, and it has hit the sports event industry very hard. Tournaments and games have been postponed and canceled. This is not affecting only the event organizers but also tourism. Sports tourism is a growing trend worldwide and can bring multiple benefits to the hosting city or nation in terms of economic impact or brand image.

Due to the restrictions of social distancing and attempts to control the spread of the virus multiple major events, such as the F1 Grand Prix, World Athletics Championships, Wimbledon, UEFA 2020, and Tour de France has been rescheduled or canceled. The most discussed event is the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games (OG), which now has been postponed to summer 2021. The decision to postpone the OG was taken already on March 24th, 2020 by the International Olympic Committee and the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee (6). What the economic impacts of postponing the OG will be for Tokyo remains to be seen in the future.

The impact of Covid-19 for international major and mega sports events as well as national leagues has been widely discussed in global media and decisions of cancellations or postponements have been made on regular basis. Some big leagues, such as NBA, NHL, Premier League, and other national leagues have been able to continue playing after few months break, first without spectators and in summer with restricted spectator numbers. However, the economic impact on local sporting clubs and national leagues has been severe, and many of them have announced that they would not be able to bear the possible second wave of the pandemic. Sport being a spectator-driven industry, the losses of matchday revenue together with broadcasting rights proceeds support the idea of playing the series with closed doors even though the atmosphere might be quite depressing.

Sports clubs and event organizers are not the only ones suffering from this situation. Sports tourism is one of the fastest-growing industries and the desire to travel to sports events is high (7). Non-mega or medium-size sporting events can

have a significant effect on the local community, both economically and socially (8). The cancellation of sporting events has affected small and medium-sized cities and different business sectors as well as the tourism industry as a whole. In some advanced countries, governments have already developed funding programs to support Covid-19 effects of the sports industry, which has helped some sporting clubs to survive spring 2020. However, this kind of temporary funding solves the problem only for this period and it remains to be seen what the overall effects are in long run.

Fortunately, the pandemic has slowed down in some parts of the world and government restrictions have been annulled, and sports events can be organized and spectators took in by obeying the social distancing rules. However, this has not been easy and there are already examples of small sale events where it is suspected that the virus has spread. This will challenge event organizers until the virus is under control globally. Even though the pandemic has slowed down in some countries, it is still spreading fast in others, which prevents traveling for quite some time still and disrupting the sport tourism industry.

While sport will continue to be an important aspect of society, the pandemic is likely to affect the management of sports organizations in the future. Digitalization will come to the fore, and more flexible, adaptive, and resilient sports organizations will be required to bounce back from this crisis. Moving forward there will be a great need for integrating all facets of risk management including managing sport amidst a global economic recession. We may also need to reconsider how the sport is consumed, especially about stadium use, participant- and spectator-based events, the adoption of immersive technologies as well as the growth of e-sport. Innovative new ways of organizing sports events in traditional sports online have already been invented during the worldwide restrictions and this development must continue to event organizers to secure their economic stability. At the moment, some major leagues are already worried about what will happen in terms of the spread of the virus when their seasons start again in full power.

To conclude, lessons learned from the pandemic underscore that uncertainty is common

in the sports business. However, the pandemic effects need to be solved and sports organizations supported to overcome the challenging economic and social impacts of this period. While sport makes a comeback in different stages around the world, we need to ask whether this pandemic will bring some kind of change in the dominant design of this industry? We also need to raise the question as to whether the sports business industry is likely to be more prepared for future crises should another major disaster ensue.

THE ECONOMICS OF PROFESSIONAL TEAM SPORTS

Francesco Addesa

COVID-19 outbreak represents an unprecedented challenge for the sports industry in its current form. The last comparable global pandemic – the Spanish flu in 1918 – hit a world where the sports industry did not have the size and relevance reached in the contemporary world, where its estimated value was 471 US billion dollars in 2018 (9). This article aims to discuss the economic impact of COVID-19 on the sports industry, focusing especially on professional team sports.

The first – and most obvious – theme to consider is the dramatic revenue drop caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. Among the three main sources of revenue of professional team sports, gate receipts have certainly suffered the most immediate negative effect. The social distancing measures leading to events canceled or staged behind closed doors have deprived the event organizers of an instant cash flow, that will be unlikely to return until a large-scale production of an effective vaccine. Cancellation of events may lead to a renegotiation of broadcasting deals, that represent the main source of revenue for professional team sports (10) and – consequently – the reason why all the organizers have been reluctant to delay/cancel events or have been trying to complete their seasons. Finally, the global economic crisis hitting also all the other industries may lead to a diminished value of the future commercial/sponsorship deals, and – very likely – to the renegotiation of the current deals.

If we consider only the twenty richest European football clubs, their estimated revenue loss is between 1.31 and 2.94 US billion dollars for the 2019/20 season, whereas for the 2020-21 season the estimated loss is 1) between 0.36 and

1.30 US billion dollars in case of stadiums partly reopened, no renegotiation of broadcasting deals and a 5-20% drop in commercial revenue, or 2) between 2.73 and 4.80 US billion dollars in case of games behind closed doors, renegotiation of broadcasting deals and a 30-60% drop in commercial revenue (11). This impact will be even more significant for professional leagues where gate receipts are still the most important component of the clubs' revenue stream due to reduced popularity and media exposure.

The financial pressure professional clubs have been facing leads to the second theme – the professional athletes' labor market. The reduced revenue stream has forced professional clubs to renegotiate players' contracts, with Juventus being the first club – just one month after the COVID-outbreak in Italy – to reach an agreement for a temporary pay cut to their salaries up to four months (12). However, not all professional clubs have managed to find an agreement with their athletes so easily even in the richest leagues, where a temporary wage loss is not supposed to impact players' well-off lifestyle. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand the challenges that less profitable leagues would face when dealing with athletes whose wages do not differ significantly from an average worker's wage.

The third and final theme is peculiar to the non-American professional leagues, where the movement of players from a club to another occurs in exchange for the payment of transfer fees negotiated by the two clubs. As a consequence, between 10 and 30% of a club's debts and credits reflect unpaid transfer fees (13). Due to the negative impact on revenue stream caused by the COVID-19 outbreak and discussed above, alongside the owners' reduced propensity – or even inability – to inject equity, professional clubs may struggle to pay off these debts, which would further deteriorate the economic and financial situation of a league as a whole.

It is evident that the current pandemic has had a massive negative impact on the economics of professional team sports, and that this impact is still far from being definitive and accurately measured. This will force professional leagues to design new policies aimed to limit the damages in the short-run and to ensure the survival and stability of the whole system.

The first solution – proposed by Szymanski (2020) – would be the creation of a consolidation

fund, financed by the future broadcasting deals, to support clubs with a deficit on transfer fees and players suffering a pay cut, that would be allowed to redeem their claims within five years (13). The rationale would be to use the money that professional leagues would be able to generate in the future to save the leagues themselves today. This solution – that would necessarily need players’ consent, which would pave the way to the creation of a collective bargaining agreement also in the non-American leagues – may be used to support also the lower tiers of professional sport and amateur and grassroots sports according to a cross-subsidization scheme. This would require a higher degree of collaboration between professional and non-professional sports, considering also that some leagues may decide to abandon the professional status due to the excessive tax costs, which would then lead to reduced mobility of lower tiers players that may decide to find another primary job and play part-time in local clubs.

Other solutions specific to the European context such as the adoption of the salary cap – proposed by Fritz Keller, president of the German Football Association (14) – or luxury tax – proposed by the president of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), Aleksander Ceferin (15) – may lead European leagues to get closer to the profit-maximizing model implemented by the American Leagues (16), as well as more frequent use of players’ trade rather than fees’ payment in the transfer market.

Finally, the reduced financial resources may lead especially small clubs in the non-American leagues to adopt more autarchic policies, based on the nurture and development of local talent. This would benefit professional clubs in terms of reduction of short-run expenses and development of successful youth academies leading to a potential increase in future revenue stream and to stronger links with the local communities.

SPORT CONTRACTS AND FORCE MAJEURE

Adam Epstein, Mark Dodds

The impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) has been dramatic in the sports world. Many events, from local grassroots events to international competition, have been canceled or postponed. These changes create a financial

hardship on the event organizers and others downstream such as equipment suppliers, broadcast companies, concessionaires, and so on. This leads to the question: how can a sports organization protect itself from such a hardship? This article discusses some ways to get ahead of the curve.

First, sports organizations can shield themselves from financial losses through the purchase of insurance coverage for negligent acts. Typically, insurance provides financial coverage against claims of careless misconduct by the sports organization, or one or more of its employees. This might include, for example, a claim by an event patron or spectator that there was no notice that a concourse floor was wet and, as a result, the individual slipped and fell on the wet surface and suffered a physical injury. Something as simple as a sign or other warning might have prevented the slip and fall, but the patron-turned-plaintiff alleges that there was none in place.

Continuing from an insurance perspective, sports organizations have other means to protect themselves as well especially if the event is canceled or postponed. In 2020, the advent of COVID-19 forced cancellations or postponements around the world including the Tokyo Olympic Games which have been pushed now to 2022. Therefore, sports events and organizations must purchase event cancellation insurance (17). This type of insurance came to the forefront of discussion when the Wimbledon tennis tournament canceled its 2020 tournament, but it had the foresight to purchase “pandemic insurance” for the last seventeen years (18). As a result, the All-England Lawn Tennis Club collected on its cancellation claim for £250 million (19) even though the tournament was canceled.

From a contract perspective, sports organizations should have the foresight to include “force majeure” contract clause provisions in event contracts. Literally, “major force,” these clauses are drafted and placed into a contract to address how the parties to the agreement would address the cancellation of the event due to an unforeseen, external force. While traditional force majeure clauses deal with extreme acts of nature such as earthquakes, tornadoes, snowstorms, floods, and other natural disasters, some clauses have addressed issues related to potential work

stoppages due to labor strikes, wars, and acts by the government (such as a “national emergency” or mandatory curfews) that might interfere with the performance of a contract. The National Basketball Association (USA) collective bargaining agreement (employment contract) allows the league to garnish player salaries where a long-term disruption occurs (20), including a work stoppage created by the government’s travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. Also, The Indian Premier League has a similar force majeure clause to cover its work stoppage. In a normal season, the players are due 60% of their salary by April 30. If the season is canceled, the IPL argues the clause allows it to avoid paying the salaries since the pandemic (and cancellation) would be out of its control. If the games are postponed and/or played to empty stadia, then the salaries may be adjusted accordingly (21).

Most recently, the global pandemic COVID-19 should give sports organizations, contract drafters, and insurance companies reason to include terms such as a pandemic, disease, or virus as a legitimate reason to excuse performance (i.e., cancellation) by one or more of the contract parties. By specifically mentioning such terms in a contract, the parties can feel some measure of comfortability that if there is an outbreak such as COVID-19 which causes an event to be postponed or canceled outright. Put differently, the parties to the contract could feel more certain how a cancellation might play out because the specific cause (i.e., pandemic) was addressed within the “four corners” of the contract itself.

The concept of “liquidated damages” is the dollar amount that the parties agree upon in advance in case an event was canceled due to a force majeure. These damages (which should not be interpreted to be a “penalty”) might allow or require a party to the contract to pay an agreed-upon dollar amount in case the event was canceled due to force majeure. However, if a court believes that these agreed-upon damages are outrageous or grossly unfair to a party, courts have been known to not enforce the liquidated damages clause at all as a matter of adhesion.

Given that force majeure clauses are a nature of contract law and interpretation, if the parties disagree as to whether the clause would apply in a unique situation; this could lead to litigation through the courts. That said, if both parties act in

good faith (one of the fundamental tenets of contract law), litigation can often be avoided particularly if the parties want to continue to do business with each other and maintain a business relationship moving forward. Indeed, there is no perfect force majeure clause.

From a common law (i.e., judicial interpretation) perspective, there are some traditional defenses to a contract in the event a contract failed to provide a force majeure clause or liquidated damages, or a remedy for a cancellation. These judicial principles go by varying expressions to include “commercial impracticability” “frustration of purpose” or “impossibility of performance.” They come into play when an external, unforeseeable force interferes with the contract to an extent so great that a court is called upon to intervene as to whether the contract might as well be terminated (assuming the parties cannot resolve the situation themselves). Still, the best contract drafters predict what could happen, provide for it in the contract, and protect their client, such as itself.

WOMEN SPORTS

Sara Keshkar

Undoubtedly, COVID-19 has impacted the entire population on a global scale in various ways. Due to gender inequalities, one of the aspects where the COVID-19 pandemic has had the greatest impact on women and girls has been in sports (22). Women’s sports which is, it is important to note, already widely underfunded and underrepresented and is likely to be hit even harder by the current situation (23). The United Nations has warned the world about how the few sports for development programs targeting girls have had to be suspended and girls needed to be sent back home, where many often face precarious situations. Although some schools have worked to run online programs that propose physical education and sports activities, there are still millions of girls who cannot participate because their access to the Internet is limited. Also, millions of women are prevented from participating in sports activities due to the multiple domestic tasks they have to do.

The impacts of COVID-19 on girls and women in the sports field can be evidenced in different areas such as leadership, gender-based violence, economic opportunities, participation, and representation in the media. Women in sports

have been underrepresented in the leadership roles of sports organizations, being excluded from decision-making processes in the sector and, consequently, according to UN Women, there are fewer women than men involved in the process of assessing the impact of COVID-19 on sports (22). In their research, Bowes et al. (2020) showed that there was a gendered dimension to the experiences of elite athletes during the lockdown. A reduction in time spent training and changes to the types of training were reported. Also, many women athletes felt they had less access to equipment than men, and that men's sport was a priority. Professional and semi-professional sportswomen, already operating in financially precarious circumstances, were also impacted through a reduction in match fees and/or sponsorship or being furloughed (24).

The new coronavirus pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on women's elite sport and exacerbated inequality with knock-on effects for the future (25). The Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport Committee (DCMS) report on the impact of COVID-19 noted women's soccer and rugby seasons, as well as cycling events, were canceled, while men's sports continued, and said the postponement to 2021 of the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics had also hit female athletes hard. "The lack of visibility of women's sport during the pandemic risks undoing work to improve funding for women's elite sport", "Cancellation of women's events is likely to reduce the number of women being inspired to take part in sporting activities" (25). FIFPRO, the worldwide representative organization for approximately 65,000 professional footballers, recently warned that the current economic standstill threatens the growth of professional women's football into a strong and viable industry (26).

The financial impact of the pandemic on sportswomen worsened by a lack of global industry standards in the majority of sports. In many countries when it comes to women's sports there is a lack of written contracts, of which do exist few are long-term or professional. For the sportswomen who are now out of the contract because of COVID-19, there may be little recourse. Some experts believe that women's sport was in a bad financial situation before the COVID-19 pandemic and, post-pandemic, it will be more difficult and fuller of serious problems for that part of the sports industry. "Female

athletes could be left club-less, job-less and not knowing who they are without sport" (23). This will be amplified across women's sport in the Islamic countries which normally have many restrictions on women's media coverage and their presence on sports fields because of cultural, especially for hegemonic masculinity culture (27) and religious barriers around mixed-gender sports and clothing considerations. In some Islamic countries, plans have been developed to protect women and prevent possible harm to them during the pandemic. In Iran, the Sport for All Federation prepared a special protocol for mothers' and women's sports to promote their health as an important element of a healthy family and society (28). Mataruna et al. (2020) in their study on Muslim women and sport in the United Arab Emirates showed that the possibilities of a behavioral change in the contemporary local society could lead to more opportunities for women in sports even after the imposition of barriers is necessary (29).

In any event, the response to COVID-19 can be different in some countries, for instance, with Spanish teams Barcelona and Atlético Madrid enacting 70 percent pay cuts on both the men and women's squads. Over at Colombian club Independiente Santa Fe, female players reacted in outrage after having their professional contracts suspended, while their male counterparts received partial payment.

As in many other fields, women have been historically underrepresented in sports organizations' leadership positions and, therefore, excluded from decision-making in the sector. Consequently, there are fewer women than men involved in the process of assessing the current impact of COVID-19 in sport and planning ways out of the crisis, which may leave women and girls behind. As stated by the United Nations, "Evidence across sectors, including economic planning and emergency response, demonstrates unquestioningly that policies that do not consult women or include them in decision-making are simply less effective and can even do harm" (30).

Different reports show an increase in violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence during the pandemic. According to UN data released in late September, lockdowns have led to increases in complaints or calls to report domestic abuse of 25% in Argentina, 30% in

Cyprus and France, and 33% in Singapore (31). It means where women and girls have faced increased social isolation and economic vulnerabilities, the risk of their being victims of sexual abuse and harassment increases, including in sports environments. It is therefore key to reinforce safeguarding policies in sports organizations during the crisis and upon the reopening of the sports world. The sports world can also take advantage of its reach to promote awareness to reduce the incidence of gender-based violence (32). A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia identifies sport as a priority setting for preventing violence against women in Australia (33). So, they decided to fight violence and COVID-19 through sports activities.

As support for women's sport was making huge strides in 2019 after years of incremental, but important progress, the future is uncertain about the continued momentum of gender equality in sport due to the economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak. With slashed revenues across the entire ecosystem of sport, clubs, teams, and other organizations may fall back to prioritize investments in "traditional" sports—meaning men's sports. Arguments about this being more profitable in terms of audience, media coverage, and sponsorships may rule the decision-making, which in turn may lead women athletes to face even more precarious contracts and conditions of training and, in some cases, to the extinction of women's teams and leagues altogether. Research results show that cultural differences can influence sponsorship (34) so it can be concluded that the lack of sponsorship in many cultures could be amplified during the outbreak. Salary cuts, termination of contracts, and clubs closing down were already a reality for women athletes before the crisis. Apart from athletes, as the sports world cuts back on its workforce due to shutdowns, women professionals and support staff, coaches, trainers, and facilitators also stand at risk to lose jobs (35).

The Olympics is a rare time when sustained coverage of women sports stars hits the headlines. Yet according to the report published by UNESCO on "Gender Equality in Sports Media", outside of the period of major sporting festivals, statistics claim that 40% of all sports participants are women, yet women's sports receive only around 4% of all sports media coverage. COVID-

19 caused the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games to be postponed. Besides, sports media professionals risk losing their jobs or having their contracts suspended. When the lockdown is over and sports events resume, there will be an intense sports calendar and some women's events may clash with men's, leading to competition for audience and media attention. It will be crucial to ensure a gender-balanced schedule. This scenario holds the potential to erode women's sponsorship opportunities. On the other hand, there is the opportunity to rebuild portfolios that recognize the value of continuing to invest in women and to promote gender-sensitive sports marketing (36). The marginalization of women in society manifested itself in their experiences of the sport too. This manifests itself today in the lack of women in positions of power in sports associations, invisibility across sport media platforms, and the presumption that women athletes are never going to be quite as good as men (24).

During quarantine and another stay-at-home situation, sports and physical education lessons were canceled. So many girls around the world lost contact with the vital support system that sports NGOs and schools had provided. Though these days some schools are trying to keep children and adolescents engaged in physical education and targeted sports activities online, unfortunately not all had already developed the skills to do so, nor do all participants have access to the Internet. Even when they do, particularly girls and young women can be overwhelmed with care work and household chores, and cannot engage in online tasks, let alone those focused on physical education activities. It can be predicted that in the post-corona era, many girls will be unable to return to sports practice, as traditional roles will have set in and their contributions to the local economy and care for the family will be seen as necessary to family well-being and even survival, overshadowing the "luxury" of their sports practice. Moreover, families and teachers will be especially concerned with children and adolescents catching up with the missed time away from in-person school. Sports and physical education lessons may not be a priority. Further, even if all these barriers are overcome, grassroots organizations risk not being able to continue offering sports programs—especially where governments and donors are stopping or reducing

financial support. For girls whose parents lost incomes, they may have to drop out of the sport because their families can no longer “pay to play” or cover the costs related to their engagement in sport (35).

It seems the future of women’s sport in the post-pandemic world will be filled with lots of difficulties that will have to be faced by sportswomen, and targeted action to tackle gender inequality in sport may help to alleviate some of these difficulties. The future of women's sports in the world depends on how their problems are managed during the pandemic. If we pay attention to reducing and solving the problems of women athletes in terms of leadership, gender-based violence, economic opportunities, participation, and representation in the media during the pandemic era, the world will surely face fewer problems in the future, because women athletes are not only an important part of the world sports industry, but also an important part of the global society, and in improving their living and working conditions, that will, in turn, will affect the living standards of the people of the world.

SPORT EDUCATION

Eric C. Schwarz, Sharna Spittle

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic of 2020 has had a substantial effect on the delivery of sports education and the preparation of university students for entry into the global sports industry. All disciplines of sports education have been impacted including sports management, physical education, coaching, fitness, sport science/human movement, exercise science and rehabilitation, and outdoor recreation. Everything from in-class lectures, experiential learning, laboratory and clinic training, and collaborations with industry partners have all been affected by this pandemic.

So why is this pandemic having such an effect globally on all aspects of life when previous similar pandemics such as the 1918-1919 Spanish Flu and the 1957 Asian Flu did not? Part of the answer lies in those pandemics being in an era where there were few vaccines and a general acceptance of overcoming numerous childhood infectious diseases and deadly afflictions (37). The other is the global mobility of people through modern transportation methods has allowed for the asymptomatic transmission of the virus, especially by carriers that do not show symptoms

(38). With the significant population of international students in universities globally and the timing of the explosion of the pandemic being around the start of the school year in the southern hemisphere and the spring semester in the northern hemisphere, it was inevitable universities would need to react by moving face-to-face classes to online and banning academic activities from campuses. This was mirrored across most of global society with businesses, sports, and normal freedom of movement being suspended.

In terms of sports education, this has had a devastating effect. Internships and placements canceled. Clinical and practical labs required for accredited programs and certification of students suspended. Student teaching hours postponed. In sum, the most significant effect of COVID-19 on sports education is the change in the levels of engagement that have been possible with industry during this time. The changes to the ‘running’ of sport and associated business during these times have impacted the opportunities that students have had to engage in work-integrated learning activities that have been an important aspect of their education experience. The changed conditions have also limited experts from across all areas of the sports industry from being able to devote as much time as they have been able to previously to assist and contribute their knowledge and experience to the education realm. This has the potential to create a ‘knowledge gap’ with the transmission of information between industry and education that had once flowed freely but now is severely interrupted. The impacts of the loss of these ‘links’ with industry may become more prevalent as job cuts are made to maintain the financial viability of an institution, which could in turn force academics to become more teaching-focused and limiting their time to engage with industry.

This pandemic is going to change how sports education is delivered in the future – both in the short-term and the long-term. For example, in the discipline of sport management, where fan experience is a vital concept in the delivery of sports programming, the inability to have fans in the stands will change how sport marketers engage with fans. According to José Bonal, Sport Management Professor, Universidad Europea de Madrid, “when we talk about fan engagement strategies or sports fan behavior, we will need to do it from this new

‘COVID’ perspective with new approaches developed in the industry, which ultimately will translate into new classes and research”. Stacey Hall, Professor of Sport Management at the University of Southern Mississippi believes “this pandemic will bring a lot of issues to the forefront in sport management planning and operations, event management, and business continuity that will need to be discussed in future classes”.

So, what does the short-term future of sports education look like once universities decide to return to the classroom? According to Hall, “whether the university can handle social distancing in the classroom space will depend on if face-to-face classes will resume or a hybrid or fully online approach will be the mode of delivery going forward”. Bonal agrees that there will be a “higher demand for online programs”.

Universities will also need to seek opportunities for engagement with the industry during these times in an ‘altered’ way to previously but also allow the potential adoption of new practices that have been found as beneficial practices to the industry. This will be especially true for disciplines such as physical education that requires a student teaching hour to become licensed and the sport sciences that mandate clinical and laboratory hours for programs to maintain accreditation and students to receive certification.

Ron Dick, Associate Professor of Marketing at Duquesne University, believed that universities must “adapt or die” and that those sports education programs (and universities in general) who cannot adjust to whatever the new normal becomes will cease to exist. This is because “the adverse consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the university sector have been both immediate and anticipated to endure for many years, which will require strategic policy choices of varying degrees by universities to mitigate predicted losses.” (39). According to Dick, “there is a bleak future for universities who had financial difficulties before the COVID-19 pandemic, which may now result in those institutions being forced to close their doors.” Additionally, any institution that relies on international students is facing immediate and potential long-term issues related to travel restrictions and the resulting loss of revenue.

These and other financial pressures facing universities could mean fewer investment opportunities with the sports industry and potentially reduce the ability for joint initiatives

and programs, which will further limit opportunities for engagement and activities that may have once being core in academic programs. However, because sports are so embedded in the social fabric of the global society, once students return to schools, fitness centers and clinics reopen, and professional sports are back playing games, there is a likelihood that there will be a return to some sense of normalcy. Practical and experiential learning opportunities will return, but likely with new requirements including COVID-19 testing before engagement, proof of having a vaccine once one comes available, or offering virtual options for students to engage in.

Who potentially is the big winner in post-pandemic sports education? First are universities that have invested in eSports within their academic curriculum or via investments in infrastructure and programming. During the shutdown of sports, eSports has filled the void with broadcast programming on television and online, professional athletes partaking in eSports tournaments and activities, and even wagering on eSports events, which in turn has also drawn advertisers to promote their products and services through these activities (40). The other winner is those academic institutions that can effectively deliver engaging remote and virtual learning experiences in a manner that bridges the digital divide to provide access to education for all regardless of socioeconomic status or technological deficiency (41).

In closing, some of the changes and initiatives that have been introduced to allow businesses to continue and operating during these times should be adopted based on their success and maintained in current practice. These practices and the innovations that have been developed should be integrated into the ongoing curriculum. Leaders in the sports education space will be those who can be ‘flexible’ with their curriculum delivery and provides opportunities for specific skills to be developed to respond to situations such as COVID-19 will also be essential.

SPORTS TOURISM

Richard Wright

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), one in every ten jobs (an estimated 330 million) is influenced, if not directly supported by travel and tourism-related activity, making it one of the world’s largest

economic sectors (42). Although the tourism industry - estimated to be worth around seven trillion US Dollars – is well known for its resilience (43-47), the global COVID19 pandemic has been referred to by the International Monetary Fund (IMF's) chief economist as 'a crisis like no other' (BBC, 2020).

This essay looks specifically at the impact of Coronavirus on the production and consumption of sports tourism, defined by Weed and Bull (2004, p. 37) as "a social, economic and cultural phenomenon arising from the unique interaction of activity, people and place (48). It presents an overview of some of the research to have been published during the pandemic, including Chang et al's (2020) aspirational ten-point charter for post-COVID19 sustainable tourism (44). It concludes by looking at the uncertain future of the event, active and nostalgia sports tourism (49).

Without question, those employed within the international travel and tourism sector have been one of the hardest hit by the consequences of COVID-19 (44, 46, 50, 51). In May 2020, for the first time in a decade, both the WTTC and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reported a fall in international tourist arrivals during the first quarter of the year (down 22% compared to 2019). Furthermore, the UNWTO forecasted that the COVID19 crisis could lead to an annual decline of between 60% and 80%, placing 100 to 120 million jobs at risk (52). The mass restrictions on mobility and strict social distancing rules introduced in an attempt to reduce community transmission of the highly contagious respiratory disease led to the postponement and/or cancellation of thousands upon thousands of sports fixtures, including the Games of the XXXII Olympiad (46). Wimbledon was canceled for the first time since 1945. There was no Monaco Grand Prix for the first time since 1954. Similarly, the start of the Tour de France, the world's largest tourism-generating annual sports event, was pushed back to August and The 2020 UEFA Championships was pushed back a full twelve months (51).

Every cancellation, whether in the form of a postponement or not, will have come at a significant cost to both the event hosts and the local tourism and hospitality businesses dependent upon event-related income (46, 47).

Sports tourism is a niche/special interest market believed to account for around 10% of all international travel and tourism receipts (52). In 2003, Getz (2003, p. 84) described sport event tourism has a growing niche market for destinations... somewhat unique in its ability to attract large numbers of high-yield visitors, including spectators, participants, officials, and the media, as well as the potential to generate positive destination imagery through media coverage". The National Association of Sports Commissions claims that visitor spending associated with sports tourism accounts for 25% of all tourism receipts in the United States (an estimated \$8.96 billion) (NASC, 2015). In many other parts of the world, including Australia and New Zealand, the income generated by sports tourism is estimated to be closer to 55% (53).

Gössling et al (2020) rapid assessment of the tourism-related impact of COVID19 led them to conclude that the global pandemic should "lead to a critical reconsideration of the global volume growth model for tourism" and "be seen as an opportunity to critically reconsider tourism's growth trajectory, and to question the logic of more arrivals implying greater benefits". They argue that the existing methods of evaluating success are outdated and unsustainable, pointing to the emergence of 'over-tourism' and the visible impacts of climate change (46). Similarly, Ioannides and Gyimóthy (2020) chose to position the unprecedented global disruption "as a prism through which we contemplate how broader transformations could play out in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis". They offer a couple of potential avenues that policymakers may wish to pursue, one of which focused on the potential emergence of more sustainable niche activities whilst the other was a return to the "pre-crisis unsustainable growth-oriented trajectory" (45).

Although it will be many years before the full extent of the COVID19 legacy can be truly understood or appreciated, Chang et al's (2020) also support the need to shift focus from the maximization of profits towards the minimalization of risks facing the producers and consumers of tourism activity (44). Their aspirational ten-point charter presents a means of establishing a balanced and sustainable industry for future generations to enjoy (Table 1).

Table 1. The 10-point charter (44)

<p>(1) Social distancing from the tourist source and at the destination should be regulated and enforced in all aspects of the travel industry, especially for: (i) religious tourism, (ii) adventure tourism, (iii) farm tourism, (iv) MICE tourism.</p>	<p>(2) Travel and entry restrictions on tourism numbers should apply at (i) domestic destinations, (ii) international destinations.</p>
<p>(3) Personal protection equipment (PPE) should be mandatory for (i) medical tourism, (ii) air travel, (iii) sea travel.</p>	<p>(4) The medical and health situation at the destination should be controlled to ensure safety by: (i) implementing comprehensive and frequent monitoring to control diseases and pandemics; (ii) identifying early indicators of the risk of resurgence and reinfection; (iii) designing and implementing health and safety procedures for residents, staff, and visitors; (iv) developing robust tests for tourists.</p>
<p>(5) Transform any future crisis into an opportunity for sustainability by (i) monitoring the potential tourism demand; (ii) prioritizing segments and anticipating changes in tourist behavior; (iii) ensuring connectivity and strengthening relationships with a range of distribution companies; (iv) guaranteeing links between potential visitors and destinations; (v) restarting tourism activity to maximize economic, social, and environmental contributions; (vi) minimizing any negative impacts of restarting the tourism economy.</p>	<p>(6) Transport systems (air, sea, trains, buses, taxis) should impose updated rules and regulations regarding social distancing and safety standards, especially for: (i) tourist sources and destinations; (ii) boarding and disembarking; (iii) serving meals, onboard activities, and side-trips; (iv) improved medical facilities and highly trained on-board healthcare workers; (v) seating arrangements on board.</p>
<p>(7) Major events tourism should impose updated rules and regulations regarding social distancing, especially for: (i) sports events, (ii) musical performances, (iii) theatrical performances, (iv) concerts, (v) fairs, (vi) expositions.</p>	<p>(8) The trade-offs between domestic and international tourism are; (i) domestic tourism might require air, land, and sea passage; (ii) international tourism might require air, land, and sea passage.</p>
<p>(9) Hotel accommodation needs to take into account social distancing at (i) the lobby for check-in and check-out, (ii) serving meals, (iii) social activities.</p>	<p>(10) Industry knowledge and experience should be used to control increases in (i) insurance premiums, (ii) exclusions for pre-existing illnesses.</p>

Today's global sports industry is estimated to be worth between €350 billion and €450 billion (\$480-\$620 billion), including infrastructure construction, sporting goods, licensed products, and live sports events (54). Although it would be relatively easy for professional sports clubs and competitions to implement much stricter entry restrictions and enforce safe/social distancing at all fixtures and events, the additional costs associated with the change of business practice will probably prevent them from being introduced (unless they are made mandatory). The recent discovery that sporting organizations, including the IOC, were willing to sanction the hosting of professional sports fixtures without any spectators, however, revealed the extent to which the global sports entertainment industry is

currently dependent upon the revenue gained from ticket sales or gate receipts. With this in mind, perhaps a shift in focus, from profits to planet, is not so far-fetched as it first may appear.

The symbiotic relationship that exists between 'sport' and 'tourism' has been well documented over the last quarter of a century (55). Gibson (1998) is widely credited as being one of the first waves of scholars to critically examine how different sports activities were being incorporated within traditional leisure/holiday experiences. She identified three closely-related, occasionally overlapping categories, one of which – labeled active sport tourism - encapsulated traveling to partake in some form of physical activity (paid or unpaid). The other two categories focused on travel and tourism activity specifically inspired by

a desire to attend sporting fixtures/events or to visit sports-related attractions (e.g. sites of sporting significance) (49). Ritchie and Adair (2006, p.8,) defined sports tourism as “all forms of active and passive involvement in a sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organized way for non-commercial or business/commercial reasons, that necessitate the travel away from home and work locality” (56).

Arguably, what became increasingly apparent during March and April 2020 was the significant power of sports media/broadcasting partners and the serious lack of contingency funding and/or crisis/scenario planning within some of the world’s biggest sporting organizations and sport event-tourism based operations (47, 57). Over the past decade, despite the growth in active and event sports tourism, many stadia have arguably become little more than a recording studio capable of accommodating a live audience. Furthermore, the only ‘tourists’ needed to meet the demands of the sports media is that of an away/visiting team and someone to interview them after the event (i.e., the professional business/entertainment sport tourist). Could COVID19 have presented us with a potential cure to what Muller (2015) referred to as Mega Event Syndrome (i.e., a lack/loss of interest in bidding to host major sports events)? Could we see the biggest tourism-generating sports events on the planet become much smaller, more sustainable, and more attractive to cities with smaller host populations and smaller stadia? Will event sports tourism experiences be accessible only to those with expensive cameras and very deep pockets? As a consequence, will we see noticeable growth in the number of heritage sports tourism attractions targeting those who are no longer able to access or attend live sports events? (58).

Alternatively, will the pendulum swing the other way? Will the consumers of large sports events call for the profits generated from global media partnerships and commercial sponsorships to be re-invested in the development of more sustainable business practices? Will we see a reduction in organizing and operating costs, including a reduction in the salaries paid to the professional athletes and administrators involved in the production of the event? Could the cost of hosting, filming, and attending sports events as a participant and/or a spectator become a lot cheaper as a result? Only time will tell. History

would suggest, however, that the producers of sports tourism events and experiences will be hoping to see things return “to normal” as quickly as possible. They will hope that the consumers of their products and services will still believe that, at the end of the day, “being there is everything”.

SPORT MEDIA

Matt Seyfried

Adapting to a changing world is nothing new for the media professionals who cover sports. Before the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, sport media professionals have had to navigate through numerous seismic shifts in the industry. In the early days of sports media, newspaper reporters “ruled the roost” in press boxes around the globe. However, with the advent of broadcast media, they had to change the way they report stories, due to a distinct competitive advantage attributed to the new medium (59). More recently, sports media adapted again, this time because of new media, when the Internet forced traditional media to be more accountable for the accuracy, and fans started taking a more active role in sport dissemination. Presently, sports reporters find themselves suffering a declining relevance as stories become more athlete-driven, with athletes and sports organizations using social media to interact directly with fans (60). Now, these professionals face an unprecedented challenge: the necessity of continuing to publish stories about an entire industry that has essentially shut down. COVID-19 has presented sport media professionals with a new opportunity. They must now figure out how to meet the demands of a seemingly insatiable public, hungry for a product that has temporarily ceased to exist. The challenge has required journalists, bloggers, sports information personnel, and others throughout the industry to re-evaluate what they do every day and find new ways to “deliver the goods” on sports during a worldwide pandemic.

COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on sports schedules, causing the mid-season cessation of multiple sports leagues around the world, indefinitely shelving the start of other leagues, and postponing some of the most prolific sporting events on Earth. The Summer Olympics, for example, one of the world’s most-watched sporting events, has rescheduled for 2021. According to Mark Tatum, the Chief Operating Officer for the National Basketball Association,

on March 11, 2020, the NBA, which was two-thirds of the way through their season, decided to suspend the rest of their season after a player with the league's Utah Jazz franchise tested positive for COVID-19 (61).

By default, those who cover and publish sports now are finding alternate ways to appease their audiences. Luckily, at least for major cable brands like ESPN, many of these broadcast media entities have a large number of archived program choices in the form of documentary specials and previously recorded "classic" games. For print journalists, publishing old commentary and sports stories wouldn't produce the same level of nostalgia from sports fans, so they face the daunting possibility of losing their jobs. With no sports to cover, and newspaper advertising revenue in sharp decline, some newspapers have decided to furlough or lay-off reporters. Others, like the Washington Post and the Denver Post in the United States, have asked their sports staff to transition to general assignment reporters, just to avoid the dismissal of loyal and trusted employees (61).

Many sports leagues, often through their direct-to-consumer channels, are imitating cable networks like ESPN and Fox Sports. Sport industry staffers in leagues around the world found themselves scrambling to find new ways to keep sports alive in the living rooms of their fans, and many have found success in streaming their archived content. The National Football League, for example, has made every game played since 2009 available to consumers on Game Pass, their D2C channel. The result has been a 500-fold increase in subscriptions to the service (62). The Premier League has plans for its subscription-based channel to commence streaming in 2022. Major League Baseball, meanwhile, is providing archived games to fans for free during the pandemic on MLB.com.

The content provided to homebound consumers consists of much more than just replays of old games. Broadcast companies and leagues have been very innovative in their approaches to programming. For instance, the NBA has hosted live quarantine parties on social media. During these parties, fans have an opportunity to digitally interact with some current and former players. The league also live-streamed players competing against each other in an e-sports version of professional basketball, which was made available for public consumption (63).

Wondering what the future of our world will be like, post-pandemic is most likely on the minds of many people. Sports fans, too, must wonder how the pandemic will affect the future of the industry. Will there be visible changes to sports, in general? Did the industry learn anything that they could apply to their crisis management protocols, to better prepare for future pandemics? These are valid questions, which would most likely draw a multitude of different answers, depending on who is asked.

One thing that has become abundantly clear from this pandemic is how dependent sports leagues are on broadcast entities and ticket sales. One could safely assume that leagues would not hasten to put players back on the fields and courts, possibly risking their health, if they were not so dependent on media revenue. Because of this, many leagues are trying to determine how to safely broadcast games from empty stadia and arenas. Additionally, for teams who play their home games in areas highly affected by COVID-19, there have been discussions in administrative sports circles about the possibility of moving games to play in cities that are less severely affected by the virus, rather than play in their home stadia.

Emergence in sustained growth in league-funded e-sports should be expected.

E-sports during the pandemic has been successful in maintaining an interest in sports, proving to be a sufficient alternative in the absence of live games. This may evolve to the point at which e-sports doesn't only provide entertainment when future pandemics arise, but fans could someday be treated to e-sport versions of their favorite sports in the off-seasons, thereby providing additional revenue streams to leagues, teams, and players.

SPORTS MEDIA IN PANDEMIC AND POST PANDEMIC

Hamid Ghasemi

The most important roles of mass media can be considered in areas such as "information, education, entertainment and culture (64). Sometimes the media pays attention to a role or a set of these roles. The choice of these approaches depends on the nature and goals of the media (65). Mass media is usually divided into three types: "print media", "broadcasting media", and "New media" (66). In the world of sports, each type of

media is trying to attract more audiences in a competitive environment. Mass media at some events, using bipolar or multipolar spaces among sports fans to develop the prevailing emotional atmosphere among them (67). In most of these media coverage, the roles of information and entertainment are at the highest level. News values such as "Timeliness, Prominence, Conflict, Oddity, Impact, and Proximity" are important in selecting and presenting sports events. Media gatekeepers use news values to produce compelling content that appeals to the audience, often the combination of prominence and conflict provides the situation to attract the most audiences (68). In competitions, some media outlets highlighted the conflict between sports celebrities to attract more audiences (64).

With the advent of the coronavirus pandemic and its effects on the sport at the international level, it seems that a new atmosphere has been created in the sports media situation. For example, the Tokyo 2020 Olympics were not held on the scheduled date and were postponed. Many world-renowned leagues changed their schedules, and sports clubs in many countries were closed for a while. Many events, including important competitions, club activities, were first stopped and then followed with special and different considerations than in the past. In this situation, the mass media news was dedicated to how to stop or hold sports events without the presence of spectators. It was media that broadcasted the news of competition ceasing and clubs stopped working. At the same time, the media, which played a major role in the live broadcast of sporting events, faced serious challenges. This led to changes in the process of thematic coverage and the media's view of sports.

At the outset of the Corona pandemic and restrictive event management arrangements, the mass media invested more in their information and culture-building capacities. This approach can be the result of social responsibility and restrictions on holding sporting events. The lack of sporting events including stop important club games in the world and many countries has made sports media pay more attention to their educational and cultural roles. Some findings showed that in some media, the educational and cultural role is less considered by sports Journalists (64). In this situation, "prominent sports figures and sports celebrities and even micro-celebrities" in the sports media called

on people to observe health and companionship to fight the coronavirus pandemic. The competitive environment of the past has now become a synergistic space for a national and global response to the coronavirus pandemic. According to the theory of media synergy in today's world (69), if the media focuses on the all-encompassing discourse, the ground for changing "Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior" will be provided more than before. According to this theory, which was proposed by Ghasemi et al. In 2015 in the book *Theories of Mass Communication*; the power of single media is divided between different media. In other words, to see changes in the attitude and behavior of the audience, the emphasis and synergy of messages from different media are needed. Different media refers to different types of print media, broadcasts, and new media at different levels. Concentrating on the different capacities of influence of different media will result in a very large sum (69). In recent years, this approach can be exemplified by events such as floods and devastating earthquakes, during which "media surpluses" lead to maximizing social participation in relief work. This time, the lack of sporting events and the general panic over the harmful effects of the Coronavirus pandemic paved the way for the "synergy of mass media," including mass media in the field of sports, with other media.

Reports on "Health, Coronavirus Pandemic Care, and Emphasis on Public Sports, especially at Home" appeared in most sports media. Exposure to the media in general and TV viewing, in particular, evokes psychological mechanisms such as identification, empathy, involvement, and being emotionally carried away (70). According to transportation theory (71), media consumers sometimes go through a process in which they are transported into a narrative, whereby their thoughts and attention are focused on it. Transportation indeed occurs more often during exposure to narratives. When individuals are transported into a narrative, their mental resources are fully employed to concentrate on the narrative, and this enables them to be completely absorbed by it (72).

Public sports, which always had a very small share in the sports media, is now more popular.

Home sports campaigns and the reflection of various training on how to use the minimum space and facilities in the home environment as the

quarantine location of many families received more attention. Reference groups and role models also made significant contributions to public media or their private media. Many athletes posted pictures of themselves exercising with their families at home.

New stories emerged in sports media. Some of them were about creativity in doing sports with minimal facilities. Some were dedicated to the story of athletes who contracted the coronavirus and succeeded in fighting it. This success was another manifestation of a championship and the defeat of a world opponent. In another story, those who died of the coronavirus set the stage for a tragic drama. In practice, the atmosphere of sports media was associated with the ugliness and beauty of this different era.

The role of government policymakers is crucial when it comes to fighting the Corona pandemic at the local and national levels. This means that control, stop, and prevention programs against the corona pandemic must be implemented in a coordinated system. Lack of accurate and timely information through official channels provides the basis for rumors or false news. Especially in this field, some unknowingly and some people, to profit from the created space, produce misleading content. Harmful effects will occur if this misinformation is not clarified and corrected promptly by specialized and government-affiliated authorities.

Sometimes personal experiences in the treatment of coronavirus, especially by sports personalities, are quickly spread by fans in cyberspace. If the relevant authorities do not take care of this kind of incomplete or incorrect information, the negative effects of this type of media efforts will outweigh its benefits. In this case, any prescription or approval of a specific method of dealing with the pandemic should be immediately reviewed by experts.

The coronavirus pandemic, with all its harmful effects, provided an opportunity for the sports media to pay more attention to its educational and cultural role. This synergy among sports media, and even in conjunction with other media, has created a suitable background for changing "knowledge, attitudes and behaviors" about the "health and sport" around the world. However, the potential dangers of publishing incomplete or misleading information about health and exercise should be considered, especially in cyberspace.

To this end, global and local monitoring to control health-related information is necessary and requires a timely response.

The best action for this purpose is clarification and correction of information by relevant experts and authorities.

BROADCASTERS AND SPORTS RIGHTS HOLDERS

Ian Lawrence, David Murray

COVID-19 has created an unprecedented international public health emergency and in doing so plunged the world economy into what will be the sharpest global economic downturn in living memory. Traditional notions of 'normality' have been upended to maintain social distancing and help limit the spread of the virus. As a result, mass gatherings of people at cultural and sporting events are unlikely to take place within the foreseeable future. For professional sports, the cancellation of 'live' events and disruption to their respective competitions has a myriad of ramifications for owners of teams, the leagues they operate within, and their governing bodies. The sudden disappearance of sports in North America alone (in the absence of insurance) is estimated to have cost approximately \$12 billion in lost revenue (73). In England, Premier League football clubs are bracing themselves for what is anticipated to be \$60-150m in lost revenues (74). Also, there are widespread concerns regarding the economic 'domino effect' upon the supply chain of sports-related jobs in both the community and the overall national economy. In North America, for example, the impact of disruption on professional sport has been far-reaching. Since 2018, when the Supreme Court removed a law that limited sports betting primarily to Nevada, more than \$20.5 billion has been wagered in the 16 states that were taking bets before the pandemic, generating \$180 million in tax revenue (legalsportsreport.com). By June, this figure had fallen by 76%.

Although mega sporting events such as Wimbledon and the Olympics held comprehensive insurance policies, the majority of elite sports leagues are unlikely to have taken out financial protection for the loss of an entire season – something that was regarded as unthinkable and therefore likely to compound immediate financial concerns.

The crisis has inevitably prompted several difficult and critically important medical,

competitive, and financial questions for sports rights holders to address in the short-term. The pandemic has also exposed a business model, which has evolved from one in which sports teams obtained the majority of their revenue from spectators 'physically' attending their games (in person) to one which is reliant upon the 'virtual' global spectator. Despite the evolution of sports leagues' business models, many industry analysts, such as PwC regarded professional sports as 'recession-proof' due to the 'love affair' that the public has towards their favorite teams and sporting competitions (75). However, the pandemic has undermined the most basic assumptions about sports economics and sports rights holders seeming dependence upon their broadcast partners for economic viability and long-term sustainability.

Professional sports leagues 'monetize' their product in the form of merchandising, live events (ticketing and hospitality), sponsorship, and broadcasting rights. The global value of sports broadcasting rights is estimated to be approximately \$50bn; a significant figure, but dominated by a small number of high-profile leagues in both North America and Europe. For example, in the US the NBA's current TV deal (2014-2023) is worth \$24 billion over nine years whilst the English Premier League agreed with a new contract with broadcaster's equivalent to \$12 billion over three years (2019-2022) (76-78). However, the size of the respective broadcasting deals is predicated upon the ability of premium sports' to deliver large audiences for their broadcast partners (typically with an appealing demographic profile that commercial partners are targeting to 'reach' and engage with).

In the absence of a 'live' sports product, urgent negotiations will already have taken place between both rights holders and their broadcast partners. Such discussions will inevitably raise questions regarding whether sports organizations (and those crucially without rich benefactors) will be able to survive in their current form post-Covid-19.

In the absence of a live sports product, the long-term commercial 'value' of the relationship (broadcaster-sports rights holder) will be driven by how many subscribers Pay TV has lost given the lack of live sport, and critically, whether those subscribers return once televised live sport resumes on our screens. For the sports industry, the trend was already towards 'Over the Top'

platforms - either through providers such as DAZN, Eleven, or increasingly Amazon. For example, subscribers to Amazon Prime Video service in the UK increased by 35% in the Q4 of 2019, coinciding with its first-ever live streaming of Premier League games (79). Many of the new subscribers will have 'turned off' following the end of the free offer, but Amazon will have retained many of its new subscribers, due to the relatively low cost of the subscription.

There is a widely held assumption that sports have little impact on the overall economy because of a 'substitution effect'. The theory being that sports fans seek out alternate forms of entertainment, when for example their league goes on strike or in the case of the current pandemic, the season ends abruptly. The Covid-19 crisis will most certainly challenge that hypothesis. Whether our passion and commitment towards professional sports will return (potentially enhanced) remains to be seen. However, with no ticket income for the foreseeable future, the industry will need to dramatically cut its cost base. With player wages generally absorbing the majority of industry costs, it remains to see how elite sport emerges from its current crisis and what the new 'normal' will look like with its broadcast partners.

CONCLUSION

The global outbreak of COVID-19 had different effects on the sports industry. Athletes getting sick, closing clubs and leagues, and stopping sporting events were the first visible signs of a corona outbreak in the world. This seriously affected the income of sports clubs and federations, which resulted in the unemployment of many club staff or the limitation of their working hours and the payment of lower salaries. In this field, women's sports faced more impacts and more serious problems compared to men's sports, the shadow of which will remain on the foreseeable future of women's sports. But for how long, no one knows. Staff insurance coverage and coaching and player contracts could not meet the economic and employment needs of the stadium and other related facilities, such as practice fields and training gyms, staff. On the other side, it can be argued that education and higher education in sport sciences were more affected by the pandemic than any other scientific field of study. Because, if other courses could be exploited through virtual training, there

should have been a possibility in the sports sciences could follow suit but virtual sports training was associated with the least effective in terms of virtual training methods. Sports tourism, as one of the branches of tourism, almost stopped around the world. In the meantime, the media played an important role in transmitting information about disease prevention guidelines, covering bankruptcy news, reported human interest stories about the impact of the virus on local and national sports, and covered what happened during the ceasing of sports activities. However, due to the non-holding of sports competitions, mass media focused on broadcasting sports archive programs. Also, media revenues from commercial advertising which is usually broadcast during the competitions were stopped.

Though the outbreak of the coronavirus COVID-19 was associated with negative effects on the sports industry and made the industry authorities confused about how to continue sports activities, gradually they learned that crisis management will have a special place in their organizational programs going forward into the future.

The effects of the pandemic on the sports industry have been so severe, deep, and widespread that it seems that they will remain in some lingering ways for some time into the post-pandemic era. For this, experts believe—even though predicting what's going to happen to the sports industry in the post-pandemic era is not easy—that in the future sport business models will change significantly. In the future, sports organizations will pay more attention to the content of personnel contracts and insurance premiums, given the possibility of crises, to support the activities of sports centers, athletes, and personnel. Women's sports will face many difficulties on the road to resuming their activities at the current levels because the media and sponsors will be more inclined towards men's teams and women's sports will be less seen and promoted. For this, more serious attention should be paid to gender equality frameworks. The use of e-sports and e-learning methods in sport sciences in educational centers will be considered as a useful new tool in the curriculum of schools

and universities. The use of new technology, as well as e-sports, will have a special place in the holding of sporting events currently and into the future. The typical sports club's revenue-generating methods will change, and in the future, the club's revenue-generating models will be based on the likelihood of a crisis occurring as a result of compensatory measures. Observing social distance and paying attention to health in stadiums will be more serious issues to which athletes and spectators will have to pay attention.

Finally, COVID-19 showed that the sports industry was unprepared for crises and need a variety of plans to manage potential crises in the future and that organizations operating regardless of the need for crisis management were likely to face insurmountable problems. Besides, the sports industry needs to be more prepared and flexible on ways to use new methods and utilize its capacities and resources for education, revenue generation, human resource management, and maintaining a favorable relationship with society. Based on this, it is suggested that managers, employees of clubs and federations, athletes, coaches, and referees be trained to get acquainted with the dimensions of crisis management and how to use it when needed. Be serious and for this, you need to review the content of the students' courses in universities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Finally, thanks to Vince Moore for reading and editing the text of this article and also thanks to Allameh Tabataba'i university for supporting the idea of this research.

Besides, The authors (**Eric C. Schwarz and Sharna Spittle**) would like to recognize the contributions of the following individuals for their contributions to the subtitle of “**SPORT EDUCATION**”: Dr. José Bonal, Sport Management Professor, Universidad European de Madrid, Dr. Stacey Hall, Interim Director, National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (NCS4) and Professor of Sport Management at the University of Southern Mississippi, Dr. Ron Dick, Associate Professor of Marketing, Duquesne University.

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