



THE BASIC UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE OF THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT: PERCEPTIONS OF ATHLETES AND EXECUTIVES OF THE FLYING DISC ASSOCIATION OF THAILAND

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Abstract

Good governance is essential to ensuring effective management and sustainability and that the population's demands are met. However, institutional efforts to address these issues have yet to prevent scandals from occurring within sports administrations. This study compared the Flying Disc Association of Thailand's (FDAT) athletes' and executive board members' understanding, application, and beliefs about the Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic Movement (PGG). A hundred and thirty-two (132) flying disc athletes and fourteen (14) FDAT executives comprised the study's sample. The questionnaire, which asked questions surrounding the PGG's seven (7) values – organizational management, democracy, honesty, transparency, solidarity, athlete engagement, and autonomy – was completed by the respondents. To compare participant knowledge, implementation, and PGG beliefs, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Overall, most participants are familiar with the PGG. The perceptions of PGG usage within the FDAT varied statistically across athletes and executives. All categories, except those relating to athletes' representation and the principles of autonomy, had negative connotations from the athletes' standpoint. In comparison, executives showed a more positive overall perception of PGG application. This study suggest that the FDAT should start providing education if it intends to execute the PGG within the national sports associations and itself.

Keywords: Good Governance, Sport Governance, Flying Disc, Olympic Movement

Introduction

The National Olympic Committees (NOCs) support the Olympic Movement nationally, while the International Olympic Committee (IOC) forms the center of Olympic organizations.



According to the Olympic Charter, the IOC (a) supports and encourages the promotion of sports ethics; (b) cooperates with relevant public and private organizations and authorities to serve sports to humanity; (c) ensures the regular celebration of the Olympic Games; (d) fights against any form of discrimination affecting the Olympic Movement; (e) ensures the coordination, organization, and development of sports and sporting competitions; (f) ensures that fair play rules are abided and violence prohibited during sports; (g) leads the fight against doping in sports; (h) takes precautions to prevent endangering athletes' health; (i) opposes any political or commercial abuse of sport and athletes; (j) ensures that the Olympic Games are held in a manner that demonstrates a responsible concern for athletes; (k) contributes to the International Olympic Academy (IOA); and (l) contributes to various organizations that focus on Olympic education (IOC, 2020).

The aforementioned goals effectively summarize the Olympic ideology or “Olympism.” However, ensuring that these objectives are met is a challenge that affects both the IOC and NOCs. The Olympic Charter states that the role of NOCs is to propagate the fundamental principles of Olympism at a national level within the framework of sports activities and to contribute, among other things, to the diffusion of Olympism in the teaching programs of physical education and educational institutions. They witness the establishment of institutes that focus solely on Olympic education and are particularly interested in the creation and operations of National Olympic Academies, Olympic Museums, and cultural initiatives associated with the Olympic Movement. The NOCs also (a) ensure that the Olympic Charter is upheld within their respective nations; (b) support the growth of both high-performance sports and sports for all; (c) organize courses to aid in the education of sports administration which, furthermore, spread the fundamental principles of Olympism; and (d) pledge to take action against any form of discrimination, violence, and use of methods and substances forbidden by the IOC or the International Federations (IF) in sports (IOC, 2020).

The stated responsibilities reflect the Olympic philosophy, but there is little evidence that the NOCs are fulfilling them. The National Olympic Committee of Thailand (NOCT) is Thailand's governing NOC. The NOCT's general by-law outlines the following goals for the organization: (a) to stimulate and uphold the Thai people's interest in and win their support for Thailand's honorable and sportsmanlike participation and representation in the Olympic, Asian, and SEA Games; (b) to establish and carry out programs that will advance amateur sports and the Olympic Movement in Thailand; (c) to encourage people, especially the Thai youth, to become interested



in a healthy, physical, moral, and cultural education through sportsmanlike participation in competitions that adhere to sporting rules; (d) to have independent authority, either directly or indirectly through its constituent members and committees, over all matters relating to Thailand's participation in the Olympic, Asian, and SEA Games, including Thailand's representation at those Games and the organization of the Games when held in Thailand, and, in support of such participation and organizational activities, to adhere to and enforce the Olympic Charter; (e) to choose and ensure that Thailand's most qualified players represent the nation at the Olympic Games, competitions, and events; (f) to provide financial support, as the NOCT deems necessary, to the growth and selection of competitors for the Olympic, Asian, and SEA Games; and (g) to seek, gather, and accept donations, gifts, legacies, and devises in support of its corporate goals (Somphong et al., 2019).

The official literature on the IOC and NOCs, the National Sports Association particularly, demonstrates how the Olympic philosophy is mirrored in these organizations' declared tasks and how they are charged with raising public awareness of the Olympic philosophy and the management of the Olympic Movement.

However, it is uncertain whether these mandates are carried out. Leiper (1977) concluded that effective governance is “no better known today than it was at the outset of the national and international games” after analyzing the National Sports Association and its operations. The Flying Disc Association of Thailand (FDAT), established in 2018, has been recognized as the national governing body for flying disc sports in Thailand by the Sports Authority of Thailand and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports.

Due to the nature of sports organizations and their legal constitutions, the study of sports governance is complicated. Sports communities are legally recognized as non-profit entities. This category includes various organizations, from international federations to neighborhood sports clubs. These organizations have distinct resources and skills and function under the same legal framework but have different goals, governing norms, issues, and practices.

When the Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic Movement (PGG) was published, the IOC assumed that Olympic sports organizations would accept it and put it into practice. This study aims to determine whether the FDAT executives and Thai flying disc



athletes are familiar with the PGG. It also seeks to determine whether they believe that the FDAT is managed in accordance with those principles.

Objectives of the Study

This study adds novel findings from the FDAT to the expanding field of research on sports policy and management. Corruption in Thailand is considered an institutionalized issue in both public and private entities. The purposes of this study are to:

1. Evaluate, through the FDAT, the knowledge athletes and executive board members have of the Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic Movement.
2. Determine how athletes and FDAT executive board members implement the Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic Movement.
3. Analyze how members of the executive board and athletes understand the FDAT's implementation of the Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic Movement.

Literature Review

Governance Theories

Due to the decline of numerous large corporations at the turn of the century, corporate governance (CG) has become a profoundly relevant topic. CG refers to the formal rules, policies, or procedures, as well as implicit cultures that create conflicts of interest among the various stakeholders of a company. Minor shareholders are meant to be shielded from exploitation by more powerful shareholders or management. A good, established CG practice is believed to offer a solution to unscrupulous management (Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2013).

The stewardship theory focuses on the internal monitoring of a company but starts from the opposite point of view: “Managers are motivated by a need for achievement, responsibility, recognition, and respect for authority, rather than seeking to maximize their own interests over those of shareholders” (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007).

Institutional resource dependency and network theories seek to explain “how organizations relate to their external environment and get scarce resources” (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007). In this strategy, companies utilize their governance models to guarantee the funding required to



accomplish their objectives. This illustrates how an organization might be persuaded to utilize conventional federated arrangements.

According to the resource dependency theory, “organizations must manage their relationships with other organizations to ensure they get the resources and information they need” because they “are dependent on other organizations for survival” (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007). The main objective of network theory is to describe how organizations interact with their surroundings.

According to the stakeholder theory, an organization’s system of governance must take into consideration the existing relationships between and responsibilities of it and its stakeholders (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007). Every organization must abide by the requirements set by its various stakeholders, including the government, sponsors, athletes, board members, and management. According to Hung (1998), as referenced by Hoyle & Cuskelly (2007), “organizations are responsible to a wider range of societal groups than to their shareholders or custodians.”

Following the managerial hegemony theory, even while the important organizational stakeholders are technically in charge, this control is rarely exercised because it has been given to a new management: the elite.

A “multi-paradigm approach is required to allow for the paradoxes, ambiguities, and tensions involved in governance” (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007), considering that it is currently impossible to comprehend the complexity of governance in non-profit sports organizations.

The decision-making processes in these organizations have also been hampered by the involvement of professional managers and specialized industry agents, as well as pressure from the government and other stakeholders (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007). As a result, volunteer control over non-profit sports organizations has decreased.

Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance

The PGG first became public in 2008 and was the IOC's response to management problems in global sports organizations. The IOC and Olympic sports organizations have a policy of avoiding any attempt at external control or regulation in the interest of implementing their own governing guidelines. As Bruyninx (2012) stated, they communicate the following message



when addressing concerns brought up by external sources: “We have understood your concern, but do not intervene in our business; we can and will take care of this ourselves.”

There are numerous instances of this perspective being true, including the Union Cycliste Internationale's implementation of the PGG in 2004, which was swiftly adopted by the Dutch NOC and the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOC) in 2005, the Commonwealth Games Federation in 2006, and the European Team Sports Association in 2008. The PGG was additionally included in governmental and intergovernmental organizations like UK Sport in 2004, the European Union in 2000 and 2007, and the Council of Europe in 2004 and 2005.

The IOC has established a template that NOCs can apply for, which officially instates a collaboration between sports organizations and governments that respect their autonomy and good governance. As stated by Thomas Bach (2017), the president of the IOC, in a speech:

“... accountability is linked to the autonomy of sport. Accountability requires transparency and good governance. Just like we expect politics to respect the autonomy of sport to determine the rules governing sports organizations, our stakeholders from politics and society rightly expect that the world of sport is also run according to the standards of good governance. Only in this way, we as sports organizations can maintain our credibility in the eyes of the public. With autonomy comes responsibility for the sports movement. Therefore, responsible autonomy and good governance are two sides of the same coin. Responsible autonomy implies rights, but also duties for the sports movement.”

The PGG, described in this section, enables sports organizations to self-regulate. According to the IOC, good governance in sports organizations is the fundamental basis for securing the autonomy of the Olympic Games and sports organizations and ensuring stakeholders respect this autonomy. This was reiterated in the second seminar on the autonomy of the Olympic Movement in 2008, where the resolution adopted highlighted the fact that good governance in sports organizations is the fundamental basis for securing the autonomy of the Olympics and sports organizations (IOC, 2008).

The PGG is a system made up of seven (7) dimensions and thirty-eight (38) sub-dimensions that must be filled out by the International Federations and National Olympic Committees



(Chapelett, 2016). Despite the PGG's general nature and the variety of ways it can be interpreted, its objectives are simplified as follows:

Table 1. Goals derived from the Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance (PGG).

Dimension of PGG	Goals
Vision, mission, and strategy	(a) must execute his strategy, vision, and objective.
Structures, regulations, and democratic process	(b) to be ruled applying democratic ideals.
Highest level of competence, integrity, and ethical standards	(c) to fulfill high criteria for ethical behavior.
Accountability, transparency, and control	(d) to manage possessions in a transparent and forthright way.
Solidarity and development	(e) to distribute the funds in a fair manner.
Athletes' involvement, participation, and care	(f) to be concerned about athletes' development.
Harmonious relations with governments while preserving autonomy	(g) to be untainted by politics or business.

Source: IOC (2022).

Relying on these guidelines, the IOC investigated twenty-eight (28) IFs in 2012 on the basis that the IFs had no athletes' commissions, no women on their decision-making boards, and disregarded good governance principles. The outcome of this investigation was the provisional exclusion of wrestling (Chapelett, 2016). This resulted from the lack of precision and wide character of the IOC's principles.

All these strategies are outlined in the ideal of Western democracy, put forth by Cornforth and quoted by Hoye and Cuskelly (2007), which is built on the philosophy of pluralism and open elections based on the principle of "one person, one vote." The ideal also posits that elected officials will speak for interests other than their own, as they are apart from the executive branch and are responsible for making policy rather than carrying it out.

The Flying Disc Association of Thailand

The FDAT is a non-profit organization recognized as the national governing body for flying disc sports in Thailand by the Sports Authority of Thailand and the Ministry of Tourism and



Sports (FDAT, 2023). The World Flying Disc Federation (WFDF), the international governing organization of flying disc sports authorized by the IOC, and the International World Games Association (IWGA) also recognizes the FDAT as a regular member.

The FDAT believes everyone should be able to participate in sports and physical activities in a welcoming and inclusive way, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ability, cultural background, or ethnicity. The FDAT is committed to ensuring that every person bound by FDAT policies and practices is treated with respect and dignity and protected from discrimination, harassment, and abuse.

The FDAT is proud to be an equal opportunity employer dedicated to creating a diverse environment and is committed to its members' ongoing safety and welfare.

The objectives of the FDAT include:

1. To develop, encourage, and promote flying disc sports in Thailand.
2. To plan for the development of athletes, officials, and coaches.
3. To unearth new talents.
4. To select athletes representing the country in international flying disc competitions.
5. To represent Thailand in the international bodies recognized for representing flying disc sports.
6. To be a member of the international governing body of flying disc sports.
7. To promote the development of flying disc sports at the grassroots level through the establishment and recognition of state affiliates and affiliate clubs.

Methodology

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted with ethical approval by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (Certificate number: COA.1-007/2023). The study's title and primary objective were disclosed and the participants were guaranteed confidentiality before they took the survey. Participants were informed that their participation was optional and that the data collected would be utilized for educational purposes. They were given the researcher's and present tutor's contact information, including their emails and phone numbers.

Participants and Procedures



This study is quantitative and employed surveys distributed to flying disc competitors and FDAT administrators. The items were taken from the Sports Governance Observer (Geeraert, 2015), the Basic Indicators for Better Governance in International Sport, and the IOC's working paper, 'Consolidated Minimum Requirements for the Implementation of the Basic Principles of Good Governance for the Olympic Movement' (IOC, 2016). The survey was validated in five steps: first, the survey's initial construction was based on a review of existing, related literature; second, it was reviewed and approved by experts; third, it was doubly translated to identify potential errors; fourth, after each testing step, a pilot test was conducted; and, fifth, appropriate modifications to the instrument were made.

This study chose simple random sampling collection as its sampling methodology. Active flying disc athletes currently participating in the FDAT program (n=132) and FDAT executives (n=14) comprised the study's respondents. A t-test was then conducted. The seven (7) PGG elements were utilized as the independent variables, while the dependent variables were the executives' and athletes' perceptions of the PGG's effectiveness.

Instrument

The literature review conducted provided the foundation for creating the initial survey. The instrument was divided into two parts: respondent characterization and knowledge of the PGG. If the respondent knew of the PGG, they were asked whether, to their understanding, the PGG served a purpose in Thailand's flying disc sport. If they did not know of the PGG, they could still continue with the next part of the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to evaluate the twenty-three (23) subdimensions and seven (7) dimensions of the PGG on a Likert scale, which ranked the items from "Unfulfilled" to "Highly fulfilled" or "No information or opinion." The survey's content and face validity were determined by submitting the survey to an expert panel and conducting a pilot test.

The principles were divided into groups and included in the PGG according to their content. Some principles comprised two or three parts, like the first, which discusses the PGG's vision, mission, and strategy. These were categorized under "Management." Other principles refer to the Olympic institutions, rules, and democratic procedures and were included under "Democracy." Table 2 provides explanations for this collection of ideas:

Table 2. Categories and Dimensions of the PGG



Category	Dimension of PGG	Goal
Management	Vision, mission, and strategy	(a) To comply with his mission, vision, and strategy.
Democracy	ulations, and democratic process	(b) To be governed under democratic values.
Integrity	level of competence, integrity, and ethical standards	(c) To have important levels of ethical standards.
Transparency (control)	ity, transparency, and control	(d) To be transparent in the management of resources.
Solidarity	Solidarity and development	(e) To be equal in the distribution of his resources.
Athletes	olvement, participation, and care	(f) To be focused on the development of the athletes.
Autonomy	Harmonious relations with governments while preserving autonomy	(g) To be free of political or commercial interference.

Each PGG dimension had a period of four for both parts of the survey. The participants scored them using a scale of six (6) perception items representing their feelings. The items are as follows: “Unfulfilled”: 2, “Slightly fulfilled”: 1, “Neutral”: 0, “Fulfilled”: 1. “Highly fulfilled”: 2, and “Don’t know or have an opinion.” To elaborate on the scoring process, a principle would be given a value of -2 if the respondent believed it did not apply and a value of 2 if they believed it applied fully. The mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and minimum and maximum of each concept were determined by studying the sample results.

Data Analysis

A t-test analysis was performed to measure the differences between the groups in relation to the score variability within them. The mean, variance, standard deviation, and alpha level were calculated (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008).

Results

T-Test Results

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare FDAT executives’ and athletes’ perceptions of the PGG. Each of the seven (7) principles significantly differed in scores ($p=.0001$). These findings imply that athletes and executives have statistically distinct perceptions of the implementation of the PGG in Thailand’s flying disc sport. With the



exceptions of athletes' representation ($M=0.028$) and the principles of autonomy ($M=0.188$), athletes held a negative perspective of all PGG categories. In general, executives perceive the PGG more favorably than athletes, as they find all their actions beneficial. Athlete and executive results were combined for the seven (7) PGG in the Thailand Olympic Movement.

Knowledge of PGG

The participants' knowledge of the PGG was the first subject of inquiry. The first question was whether the participants were even aware of the Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance in the Olympic Movement. In general, the majority of participants ($N=34$; 23%) were unfamiliar with the PGG. A number of athletes surveyed ($N=32$; 24%) did not know of the PGG. In contrast, the majority of executives ($N=12$; 86%) knew the PGG.

Application of PGG

The PGG-aware participants (77%) were asked, "Do you think the PGG applies to the Flying Disc Association of Thailand?" They were given the following three answers to choose from: (It) "Applies fully," "Partially," or "Not at all." A hundred and twenty-two (122) or 84% of the respondents indicated they thought the PGG applied fully within the FDAT (Table 3).

Table 3. Athletes' and executives' knowledge and application of the PGG

Participants	Knowledge		Implementation	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Athletes	100 (76%)	32 (24%)	110 (83%)	22 (17%)
Executives	12 (86%)	2 (14%)	12 (86%)	2 (14%)
Total	112 (77%)	34 (23%)	122 (84%)	24 (16%)

Perceptions of the PGG

The athletes received scores for autonomy ($M=0.200$, $SD=1.113$) and transparency ($M=-0.350$, $SD=1.108$). Their perspectives about the implementation of the PGG in the FDAT ranged from "neutral" to "slightly unfavorable." The principle of transparency, which included factors such as accountability, control, resource management, and checks and balances, received the lowest score of the seven (7) principles. Contrarily, the principle with the highest score (autonomy) is connected to having a strong relationship with the governing body and being free from political



and organizational intervention. Table 4 presents the survey's results, all of which varied greatly from one another.

Table 4. Consolidated scores for athletes and executives.

Principle	Group	N	Mean	SD	Diff	T *
Management	Athletes	132	-0.023	1.235	-1.296	-4.71
	Executives	14	1.273	1.007		
Democracy	Athletes	132	-0.056	1.118	-1.564	-5.96
	Executives	14	1.508	0.823		
Integrity	Athletes	132	-0.086	1.003	-1.501	-5.50
	Executives	14	1.415	0.928		
Transparency	Athletes	132	-0.350	1.108	-1.509	-5.55
	Executives	14	1.259	1.097		
Solidarity	Athletes	132	-0.216	1.076	-1.722	-6.63
	Executives	14	1.506	0.857		
Athletes	Athletes	132	0.048	1.085	-1.145	-3.84
	Executives	14	1.097	1.025		
Autonomy	Athletes	132	0.200	1.113	-1.351	-4.72
	Executives	14	1.151	1.033		

*Significant differences in all principles (p-values <0.0001)

Athletes' involvement (M=1.097, SD=1.025) and solidarity (M=1.506, SD=0.857) accounted for the executives' evaluations. All the surveyed executives had positive assessments of PGG utilization in elite athletics. Athletes' representation, which received the lowest score, pertains to athletes' involvement, participation, and responsibility in their sport, whereas solidarity, which received the highest score, is related to equity in resource allocation and the growth of sports in underdeveloped areas.

Management as a concept was viewed far more favorably by executives than athletes. The athletes' perspective was somewhat negative (M=-0.023), falling between “modestly fulfilled” (-1) and “neutral” (0). The executive mean, however, was favorable (M=1.273). Athletes had a higher standard deviation (SD=1.235) than executives (SD=1.007). This suggests that players' perceptions of management in the FDAT are more complicated than executives'. The maximum and minimum scores were identical for both groups, and while some members of both groups feel that their vision, mission, and strategy have not been fully realized (-2), others believe they have (2).



In comparison to athletes, who had perspectives falling between “modestly fulfilled” (-1) and “neutral” (0) ($M=-0.056$), executives had a more positive perception of democracy ($M=1.508$). Athletes had a higher standard deviation ($SD=1.118$) than executives ($SD=0.823$), implying that athletes have a wider range of opinions about democracy in the FDAT than executives. The highest and minimum scores ranged from “barely fulfilled” (-1.75) and “highly fulfilled” (2) to “unfulfilled” (-2) and “highly fulfilled” (2) for executives and sportsmen, respectively.

As in other categories, the average athlete's perspective of integrity as a principle fell between “slightly fulfilled” (-1) and “neutral” (0) ($M=-0.086$), whereas the executives' perspective was more favorable ($M=1.415$). Athletes had a higher standard deviation ($SD=1.003$) than executives ($SD=0.928$). Athletes gave “unfulfilled” (-2) and “highly fulfilled” (2) scores, whereas executives listed “somewhat fulfilled” (-1.5) and “highly fulfilled” (2) scores.

Transparency was viewed more favorably by executives than by athletes. Athletes' perspectives were on the negative side ($M=-0.350$), falling between “modestly fulfilled” (-1) and “neutral” (0), while the executives' mean was favorable ($M=1.259$). Athletes had a greater standard deviation ($SD=1.097$) than executives ($SD=1.108$). The maximum and minimum scores for both athletes and executives were the same.

The principle of solidarity was viewed more favorably by executives than by athletes. The athletes' perspective was somewhere between “slightly fulfilled” (-1) and “neutral” (0), resulting in a negative mean score ($M=-0.216$). Executives, however, had a positive mean ($M=1.506$). Athletes had a greater standard deviation ($SD=1.076$) than executives ($SD=0.857$). Both groups' maximum and minimum scores were the same as the lowest and highest conceivable scores.

Athlete's representation scored the second-highest mean in the data analysis among athletes ($M=0.048$). In contrast, the executives' mean for athlete representation was their lowest-scored principle ($M=1.097$). Despite this, executives still perceive the PGG more favorably than athletes. Athlete scores were only favorable in terms of autonomy and athlete representation. The executives' standard deviation was 1.025, while the athletes' was 1.085. Both had identical maximum and minimum scores.



Autonomy was ranked higher among executives than athletes. The athletes' mean was positive ($M=0.200$), indicating that athletes believe that the FDAT is free from commercial and political interference. The executives' perspective was similarly favorable ($M=1.151$). Athletes had a higher standard deviation ($SD=1.113$) than executives ($SD=1.033$). For athletes, the range of possible scores was -2 to 2, while the scores from executives ranged from -1.5 to 2.

Discussion

Academic journals have published incredibly little regarding athletes' perspectives of rules in competitive sports. Despite efforts to “ensure the respect for the athletes who are at the heart of the Olympic Games” (IOC, 2014; MacAloon, 2016), athletes' perspectives are frequently ignored. Interviews with academics like Borja Garcia and Barrie Houlihan support the appreciation for sportsmen's opinions. In a discussion with Professor Jean Loupe Chapelett, it was stated that “the perspective of athletes is not well considered.” A recent study on stakeholder perspectives of the governance of schoolboy football in Ireland revealed ineffective stakeholder management due to “poor communication practices, perceptions of inaccurate disclosures, perceived lack of inclusion in decision-making, perceptions of organizational injustice, uncertainty over an understanding of roles and responsibilities” (Finnegan, McArdle, Littlewood, & Richardson, 2018).

The Eastern European Players' Organization for Professional Footballers (FIFPro) created one of the most extensive studies on athletes and the government. The researchers discovered issues surrounding payment, aggression, intimidation and harassment, match-fixing, and prejudice (FIFPro, 2012). The International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) made significant adjustments to football's governance following the publication of this study (FIFA, 2016). This was made possible by the intense pressure footballers applied to FIFA, the sport's popularity, the FIFA Gate incident that broke in 2015, and the financial power of some professional football players who hired competent attorneys, researchers, and managers to hold FIFA accountable.

If the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) challenges the judgments of clubs or NOCs that preserve legal or contractual rights and the concept of good faith, other sports may find themselves in similar, or even worse, situations (Rigozzi, 2010).



Comparison between athletes and executives

Significant variations in the seven (7) PGG results were found when comparing the groups ($p=.0001$). Athletes' perception of how the PGG is applied fell somewhere between "neutral" (0) and "slightly fulfilled" (-1). For executives, it ranged from "neutral" (0) to "fulfilled" (1). These findings indicate that executives and athletes have statistically distinct perspectives on the FDAT's PGG compliance. While the executives' perspective is generally more optimistic than the athletes', both are close to being neutral. While athletes gave scores ranging from five (5) to seven (7), executives gave excellent scores.

These findings highlight issues with the top-down strategy traditionally proposed by the IOC, the efficiency of policy implementation, and the NOC's management of its stakeholders. Deciding on an implementation method suited to the unique settings of national sports organizations is a concern raised by these results. This, and other issues, will be discussed further in the study.

Athletes' Perspective

Generally, athletes hold a negative perspective of the PGG, including transparency and management, with the exceptions of athletes' representation and autonomy. An investigation carried out by the French Rugby Union revealed contention as well as concord between its participants. Sports policies may have little impact if athletes are not involved in their implementation. According to past research, sports regulatory bodies that include organizational membership should have some degree of regional freedom under a "one size fits all" strategy (Viollet et al, 2016).

An additional study on elite athletes' perceptions of anti-doping, conducted by Swedish researchers with two hundred and sixty-one (261) elite athletes from fifty-one (51) different countries and four (4) international sports federations, revealed that athletes had doubts surrounding the legitimacy of how such rules and principles are applied in practice, particularly concerning issues of privacy, inefficiency, and equal treatment, as well as their involvement in the anti-doping work (Efverström et al., 2016).



A study discovered that only 13% of athletes acknowledged the PGG and only six (6) of those knew whether or not it was being followed. Other athletes chose not to respond. Additional research could determine the number of athletes working in sports administration and why some athletes choose not to. According to Canadian academic Donnelly (2015), true democratization of sports would be conceivable if athletes owned the sports organizations.

Leagues and clubs constitute national federations rather than athletes. Colombia's National Federation (NF), for example, comprises leagues, which are, in turn, organizations of clubs. Chapelett (2016) proposes a new structure for sports administration that will involve the formation of athlete cooperatives, thus increasing athlete autonomy and governance at the international level. Within the context of a social and solidarity-based economy, this would offer athletes more of a say through the "one athlete = one vote" strategy and manage non-profit initiatives alongside for-profit ones (Chapelett, 2016). Having cooperatives as a new type of sports organization might introduce a fresh perspective on how sports are organized and offer a new area of study in sports management.

Accountability, control, resource management, and checks and balances are all related to the principle of transparency, which received the lowest score among the seven (7) surveyed principles. This principle is the most delicate since it has a direct bearing on how resources are managed. The IOC suggests that transparency is a desirable quality. However, transparency is not as easily achievable in some countries compared to others. Transparency in reporting is a common practice in most developed democracies, but not in Colombia. Colombia has laws and government entities that are in charge of monitoring public organizations' transparency. Legally, the COC is a private company. Despite receiving public support, the COC is not obligated to adhere to these rules, and they do not. Each principle is important to a system's governance, but from the IOC's perspective, transparency is essential.

The IOC's forty (40) recommendations for the Olympic Movement are collected in Agenda 2020+5. It influences how the Olympic Movement will progress in the future.

Recommendation number 27 proposes following the fundamental principles of effective governance. It explains that the PGG is adhered to and accepted by all organizations associated with the Olympic Movement. Periodic updates and the self-evaluation of the PGG are recommended by the IOC, emphasizing the need for openness, honesty, and opposition to all



forms of corruption. Within the Agenda is a comprehensive list that includes the minimal specifications and standards for NOCs. This poses three problems. The first is language difficulties. Only a select few members of the COC can read English, which is the language in which the document is written. The second issue is the considerably more nebulous and manipulatory aspects of self-evaluation. Organizations can demonstrate their written vision, mission, and anti-corruption codes, and they may even accomplish their objectives, but how are they accomplishing that? What methods are being employed to produce those results? Democracies throughout Latin America are proof that having rules and documentation in place does not ensure transparency in procedures. Minikin (2015) demonstrated how simple it is for someone to take advantage of a system's rules to gain and hold power. Finally, even if self-evaluation is utilized, it will still require resources and personnel to carry it out. Although Columbian elite sports are well-funded, the resources needed to achieve international sporting achievements and top athletes' demands are rising, and government resources — the primary funding source—are scarce.

Other values pertaining to athletes examined in this study were unity, integrity, democracy, management, participant representation, and autonomy.

Despite the fact that each of these concepts is taught to athletes, more education is required, and more athletes must participate in the management and governance of the sporting system. While there is a rising public awareness of governance issues in sports, Donnelly (2015) notes that there has yet to be a grassroots movement aiming to bring about reform, and issues like match-fixing and corruption persist. Like Chapelett, he proposes “a democratization of sport,” in which “players became more involved in the organization of their sports.”

Executives' perspective

Scores for executives are supported by athletes' solidarity and representation. Almost all executives had a positive assessment of PGG application in elite athletics.

Athletes' representation, which executives scored the lowest of all the surveyed principles, refers to athletes' involvement, participation, and care in sports. This indicates that athletes are directly associated with the PGG's lowest perception of compliance. This result sharply contrasts the findings of a study by Alvarado (2017), which asked Guatemalan sports managers to evaluate the significance of various good governance principles. The study found that while



democracy was ranked highly, stakeholder representation (including athlete representation) was not. Donnelly (2015) emphasizes the significance of athlete participation in sports administration. According to Donnelly (2015), owners and executives of professional sports clubs are not answerable to players or fans. These findings indicate that FDAT executives are aware of the need for greater athlete involvement in FDAT governance.

Athletes scored transparency the lowest of the principles, while executives scored it the second lowest. These results indicate how crucial this principle is to both parties. Thailand is a nation with laws, institutions, and entities dedicated to combating corruption, including the Political Constitution, Penal Code, Unique Disciplinary Code, anti-corruption statutes, state contract laws, procurators, national, departmental, and municipal comptrollers, the Public Prosecutor's Office, and accounting and internal control offices (Editorial, 2018). Thailand's current position in the World Corruption Perception Index is 101 (where 76 is the lowest score), maintaining its score from 2019 to 2022 (Transparency, 2023).

Solidarity, which has to do with distributing resources equally and promoting sports in underdeveloped areas, received the highest score of all the principles. According to executives, Colombia's sports system most complies with this principle.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to discover whether Thailand's FDAT executives and athletes were aware of, utilizing, and adhering to the PGG. Overall, the majority of individuals are familiar with the PGG. The majority of athletes (N=100; 76%) and executives (N=12; 86%) surveyed in this study are familiar with the PGG. Participants familiar with the PGG were asked if they believed the PGG as a whole applied to the FDAT. Three options were available: (The principles) "Apply fully," "Partially," or "Not at all." Most respondents believed that the FDAT implements the PGG generally (N=122, 84%).

The participants' assessments of the PGG in the FDAT ranged from "neutral" to "mildly unfavorable." Scores for athletes were based on autonomy and transparency. Scores for executives were supported by athletes' solidarity and representation. All executives had positive assessments of the use of the PGG in elite athletics. Athletes' representation, which received the lowest score among executives, pertains to athletes' involvement, participation,



and responsibility in sports, while solidarity, which received the highest score, is related to equity in resource allocation and the growth of sport in underdeveloped areas.

The FDAT must start offering instruction if it plans to adopt the PGG. Different strategies are needed to implement policies like good governance. The Sports Governance Observer (SGO) offers insightful suggestions for implementing strong governing practices within sports organizations. Following years of scandal and allegations of corruption from within international sports organizations, journalists and academics have highlighted a crisis in global sports management. They have also increased public awareness of this crisis on a nationwide scale. Commercialization, institutionalization, and globalization are traits that have seriously harmed democracy in these societies (Donnelly, 2015).

The IOC designed the PGG (IOC, 2008a), established other sports organizations (ASOIF, 2017, 2018), and implemented the Basic Indicators for Better Governance in International Sport (BIBGIS) project (Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2013) and the SGO (Geeraert, 2015). Other countries have adopted these codes and guidelines for better governance and to address governance issues. Despite the progress of good governance in sports, education, appropriation, implementation, and evaluation of principles at all levels are still necessary.

There has never been a more pressing demand for the PGG, particularly by the IOC, NOCs, and NFs, than today. Several restrictions have been implemented to ensure the best possible practice among commercial firms in what is now a highly competitive and morally deficient economy. The IOC, NOCs, and NFs have monopolized the sports sector and run a very lucrative business. Instead of reforming as a response to competition, they must do it following their basic sense of integrity. As a result, the PGG is needed to set an example for corporate entities, the IOC, and the NOCs.

When the PGG was published, the IOC anticipated that the IF and NOCs would embrace and implement it using a top-down, "one size fits all" approach. This study demonstrated that education and greater involvement of athletes in the system's governance helped reduce ignorance of and negative perceptions toward the PGG.

This paper aims to educate readers on what NOC and NF activities are essential and deserving of their capacity, time, and finances. Non-core business activities, like moral education, are the



responsibilities of the government, Ministry of Education, religious institutions, and parents, not the NOCs and NFs. Hence, this study emphasizes how important it is for athletes to be involved in FDAT governance. Athletes' clubs are not a guarantee that the PGG will be followed. The present procedures for legitimizing member-based sports organizations can result in inadequate governance and democratic processes being twisted to fit individuals' agendas over the organization's vision.

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The data used to support the finding of this study are included within the article.

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