SPORT VOLUNTEERISM AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: IMPLICATIONS FOR SPORT POLICY [draft]*

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ABSTRACT

Two key, and quite distinct approaches to social capital have emerged in recent research. In the functionalist approach, developed by Robert Putnam, social capital is associated with the strength of community, and refers to “features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action” (Putnam, 1993). In the network approach, associated with Pierre Bourdieu, social capital is seen “as a resource that stems from participation in certain social networks that possess specific characteristics which open up access to resources of varying value” (Lévesque, 2005).

These two approaches are compared with respect to their utility for the development of certain aspects of sport policy. Consideration is given to theoretical utility, aspects of measurement, and relevance with regard to policy development. Although Putnam’s approach has been widely used by policy developers, we argue that there are important features of Bourdieu’s approach that are worthy of consideration. Examples are given from a case study of sport volunteerism, and implications for sport policy development are explored.

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SPORT VOLUNTEERISM AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: IMPLICATIONS FOR SPORT POLICY

At the 2003 World Congress on the Sociology of Sport (Cologne, GERMANY) a session on Sport and Community sparked a growing debate in the field. Papers by Dutch and Scandinavian scholars employed the social capital framework developed by Robert Putnam to interpret data regarding sport and community. Discussion, at the session and subsequently at the conference, raised the question of Pierre Bourdieu’s approach to social capital, and how that approach might lead to a reinterpretation of the data. The Putnam – Bourdieu debate over social capital has grown slowly in the sociology of sport, with Putnam’s approach having the most currency to date in both contract and academic research. This currency has been reinforced by the favour in which Putnam’s work is held in social planning and social policy circles. This paper examines the Putnam – Bourdieu debate, and then provides a preliminary test of Bourdieu’s approach in a case study of sport volunteerism.

SOCIAL CAPITAL: PUTNAM vs. BOURDIEU

Putnam’s ideal of social capital deals with collective values and social integration, whereas Bourdieu’s approach is made from the point of view of actors engaged in struggle in pursuit of their interests.

(Siisiäinen, 2000, p. 10)
During the last 10 to 15 years there has been growing interest by academics and policy makers in social capital as a tool for research and public policy, although there is hardly any consensus about what social capital is, and how it can be used as a tool for policy. The ideas associated with the term ‘social capital’ are not new, and have been traced in philosophical thought to, among others, Alexis de Tocqueville. The term “social capital” may have been used first by Jane Jacobs in the 1960s, but was developed by Pierre Bourdieu in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., 197?, 198?), and in the United States by James Coleman in the 1980s (e.g., 1986) and Robert Putnam in the 1990s (e.g., 1993). The term began to achieve more public recognition at the end of the millennium via a World Bank research programme, and the popularity of Putnam’s book, *Bowling Alone* (2000).

The concept of social capital is extremely broad, and has been used in a number of ways. In overly simplified terms, King and Waldegrave (200?) have described social capital as a counterpart to human capital: human capital concerns what you know; social capital concerns who you know. Wade and Schneberger (2006) have identified five dimensions social capital that “manifest themselves in various combinations and shape the interaction amongst the members of a group, organization, community, society or simply network and can be studied through various perspectives (see Figure 1):

1. Networks -- lateral associations that vary in density and size, and occur among both individuals and groups;
2. Reciprocity -- expectation that in short or long term kindness and services will be returned;
3. Trust -- willingness to take initiatives (or risk) in a social context based on assumption that others will respond as expected;
4. Social norms -- the unwritten shared values that direct behavior and interaction;
5. Personal and collective efficacy -- the active and willing engagement of citizens within participative community.
The two most frequently cited approaches to social capital are those developed by Pierre Bourdieu and Robert Putnam. The following provides an outline (necessarily simplified) of these approaches, and the ways in which they have been used in studies of sport. It should be noted, however, that despite both Bourdieu and Putnam’s frequent use of sport as an exemplar in their theoretical work, and the increasing prevalence of studies of sport and cultural capital, there have been surprisingly few attempts by sociologists of sport to engage with social capital.

**Putnam:** With regards to sport, Putnam’s (1995) influential article introduced the idea that volunteerism in sport as in other spheres of social life contributes to the social capital of communities and, as a result, to the strength of democracies. For Putnam, one of the leading figures of the functionalist and pluralist approach, social capital consists of “…features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action” (Putnam, 1993, p. 167). From Putnam’s perspective “social capital is a public good, a community resource that tends to be undervalued and in short supply” (King & Waldegrave, 200?, p. ?). In *Bowling Alone* (2000), Putnam argues that excessive individualism in the United States has reduced civic engagement and participation in the electoral process, both of which are marks of declining social capital. This, in turn, undermines the efficacy of public institutions.

In the case of sports, declining participation in sport clubs and volunteerism are seen as signs of declining social capital. Putnam’s work has been criticized (Dyreson, 2001), especially by those who argue that the evidence on aggregate measures of social capital
and civic engagement may obscure “a more complex reality,” and that “the overall picture is of shifts in civic engagement more than losses, and of only moderate net losses at worst” (Curtis et al., 2003). In a provocative essay, Dyreson (2001, p. 24) asks what type of civic engagement sport really builds, and critiques Putnam’s “perhaps too easy acceptance that sport builds the kind of social connections necessary for making healthy societies.” In fact, Dyreson points out the irony of Putnam’s use of bowling as a measure for the study of social capital: “Curiously, the sport that Putnam used as such an effective marker of contemporary republican decline, bowling, historically manifests civic divisions along racial and gender lines” (p. 26). Dyreson (2001, p. 24) offers two dissenting views to the assumption that sport is always positive: “First, sport has sometimes built institutions which are powerful tools for civic division and disengagement. Second, sport creates social connections which often have more to do with markets and consumers than with democracy.”

Less subject to controversy, are three forms of social capital distinguished within this tradition: (1) bounding social capital, referring to the relations within homogenous groups (e.g., members of sport teams or clubs); (2) bridging social capital, referring to relations across horizontal social divisions, such as between teams in a league; and (3) linking social capital, referring to ties between different social classes of society, for example citizens from all social classes who are fans of their local professional football club.
Most sport scholars have used the functional approach to social capital, which does not mean that they adopt a functionalist theoretical framework. Lawson (2005), for example, argues that sport and physical education professionals, programmes and policies aimed at empowering communities may:

- Produce and reinforce social networks involving participants, their family systems, other residents, and other helping professions. Vibrant social networks produce rich stocks of social trust, norms of reciprocity, and conditions conductive to cooperation, coordination and collaboration. These social networks animate democracy and sustain its civil society. (p.138)

Tonts (2005) presents more nuanced conclusions regarding the relationship between competitive sport and social capital in the context of rural Australia. He notes that several sport events and clubs can be seen as sites of social networking and therefore “…form the basis for both the creation and expression of social capital” (p.147). Moreover, he argues that sport in these rural communities often provides bridging social capital between people from different classes, and of different age and race. Interestingly, Tonts also points out that the bonding social capital that creates a sense of identity and belonging to specific communities or clubs sometimes also results in the exclusion of certain citizens along the same race, class, gender and social class lines, showing that social capital also has too a “dark side”.

Jarvie, (2003), Maguire et al. (2002) and Smith & Ingham (2003), have documented the role of sport in the reproduction and regeneration of community social capital. They argue that there are ways in which sport can positively contribute to community social
capital, although it cannot be assumed that sport always increases social capital all the time. Smith & Ingham (2003) highlight this situation in their exploration of public discussions (i.e., town meetings) about the construction of professional sport stadiums in the U.S. They argue that the public subsidization of professional sport facilities does not contribute to or re/generate the sense of a “community-as-a-whole, but may further divide residents depending upon their situated interests” (p. 252). Implicit in their argument is the assumption that sport programmes focused on mass participation and recreation can contribute to increased community social capital. They point out that there is “no support (theoretical or empirical) that professional sport can (re)generate community, especially when there are other pressing issues that divide the city across racial, class and community lines” (Smith and Ingham (2003, p. 271; cf. Jarvie, 2003).

Bourdieu

Bourdieu provided a number of definitions of social capital. It is:

…l’ensemble des resources actuelles ou potentielles qui sont liées à la possession d’un réseau durable de relations plus ou moins institutionnalisées d’interconnaissance et d’interreconnaissance; ou, en d’autres termes, à l’appartenance à un groupe, comme ensemble d’agents qui ne sont pas seulement dotés de propriétés communes… mais ont aussi unis par des liaisons permanentes et utiles (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 2).

[Or, “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual
acquaintance and recognition or, in other words, membership in a group” (1986, p.249). Moreover, Bourdieu adds that: “The volume of social capital possessed by a given agent…depends on the size of network connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected” (1986, p.249). In other words, social capital is unevenly distributed and dependent on the levels of resources an individual achieves access to within his or her network.

A third approach regroups diverse forms of network-based approaches to social capital. Because it is closely connected to Bourdieu’s approach I have, for the purposes of this paper, conflated the two – my co-authors will not thank me for this. Those who use the social network approach often build on Bourdieu’s emphasis on social capital as a resource. For example, Lin defines social capital as “… the resources embedded in social networks accessed by actors for actions.” (2001, p.25) Within this general social network approach, some are more interested in the networks themselves (the structure of relations within the networks), whereas others focus on the relational aspects of the networks (the resources available and accessible). At this point it is important to stress that, whereas all three traditions refer to social networks as a main feature of social capital, they do not use that concept in the same way. In the functional approach social networks are seen as sources of social trust and norms of reciprocity, and they provide the conditions conducive to the ‘proper’ functioning of society. In the two traditions associated with Bourdieu, social networks are not more and not less than vehicles of production,
reproduction and exchange of resources. They are truly a capital, similar and interconnected with economic, cultural and other forms of capital.

Some researchers have begun to examine sport through the lens of network-based social capital. Although Alegi’s (2000) study of soccer in Africa does not have an explicit theoretical framework, the emphasis on social networks illustrates Bourdieu’s theory of social capital as resources linked to the access of a network of resources -- with people who are in positions of power or in position to change things. Alegi examined the importance of soccer to the social experiences of black African workers, entrepreneurs and political leaders, and showed how people subject to systemic discrimination and without political rights used soccer to form social networks based on community identities at national, regional and local levels. Specifically, while black African workers and youth were generally not interested in advancing into the political sphere, upwardly mobile black Africans turned to soccer for self-advancement for the ‘charitable uplift of their community’. Thus, the small minority that constitutes Durban’s black elite realized that soccer was vital to their social capital. Litwin (2003) used a network-based approach to confirm that physically active older adults are more socially connected. Furthermore, the older adults in diverse networks (i.e., the most endowed social network in terms of the range of sources of contact and potential support) were more likely than those in specific networks (the network of friends, the network of neighbours, the exclusive family network, and the restricted network) to engage in physical activity.
PUTNAM or BOURDIEU?

As far as we know, this debate between Bourdieu and Putnam never occurred. However, it is evident that Bourdieu “tries to answer those questions that Putnam leaves untouched…: the relationship between social capital and power, symbolic power and universal values (trust?), and the preconditions for social consensus” (Siisiäinen, 2000, p. 9). Both approaches recognize that social capital resides in relationships, but there are key differences between the two approaches that influence and structure the ways in which researchers investigate social capital:

…the leading approaches may be broadly divided between those who focus on social structure in the form of a social network, and those who take a more functional approach and view social capital as being those social resources that enable effective cooperation. In practice, this distinction has an enormous impact on the ability to identify what might constitute social capital and how it functions, including being able to distinguish social capital from its determinants and its outcomes (Policy Research Initiative, 2003, p. 5).

By focusing on either the collective, or the individual dimensions of capital, Putnam and Bourdieu respectively “carry on, and develop further, the ideas of two opposing sociological traditions” (Siisiäinen, 2000, p. 22) – social integration and social conflict, functionalism and more critical approaches, even consensus and conflict approaches to society. It is striking that an approach (Putnam’s) so grounded in U.S. pluralist and functionalist thought has achieved so much prominence with ‘third way’ theorists and practitioners. However, the distortions to Bourdieu’s approaches to capital are also striking in recent U.S. sociological work. Capital has been seen in consumerist terms as a
new approach to social stratification. The notion of capital as a relation, as a basis of appropriation and exploitation, and as a means of producing and reproducing class distinction has almost been lost.

Since we are studying voluntarism, a topic normally associated with Putnam’s approach, why would we choose Bourdieu. Siisiäinen goes argues that the choice between Bourdieu and Putnam, in terms of their respective approaches to social capital depends: (1) on the problems we are interested in, and (2) on our position concerning the disputes between the sociology of integration and the sociology of conflict” (2000, p. 23). On the second point, our position is clear; on the first point, the problem we are interested in concerns the reasons for, and benefits to be derived from volunteering in sport. As King and Waldegrave (200?) note, with regard to their study of employment in New Zealand: “The value of Bourdieu’s conceptualization of social capital… derives from his focus on the individual dimension of social capital and the equation of social capital with the qualifications or credentials of entry and membership of a particular social group [or] social network [social field] (p. ?). As a form of unpaid employment, and given our interest in motives and benefits, voluntarism lends itself readily to an analysis of social capital from Bourdieu’s perspective.

SPORT VOLUNTEERISM: A CASE STUDY

Despite the increasing attention to volunteerism in recent years, from both scholars and policy makers, we know very little about volunteerism in sport. Most of the surveys and literature address volunteerism in different sectors of social life, but rarely refer
specifically to volunteerism in sport. For example, in Statistics Canada’s National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP, 2000), results for volunteers in sport have been regrouped in the wider category of arts, culture and recreation. To our knowledge, only Sport England has conducted extensive surveys of sport volunteered (Leisure Industry Research Centre, 2003). Yet, volunteerism is the backbone of the sport system, from the local to the international levels. According to Doherty (2005), sport volunteerism in Canada represents 18% of total volunteerism in Canada, making sport one of the major sectors of volunteerism in Canada, an estimate that is slightly higher than the 15% measured in England (Leisure Industry Research Centre, 2003, p.7). Recognizing the importance of volunteerism, the new Canadian Sport Policy underlines the central role of volunteerism in achieving one of its four goals:

In pursuit of [the goal of Enhanced Capacity], the federal-provincial/territorial governments, in keeping with their level of responsibility, will…. Support the development of volunteer and salaried leadership and organizations at all levels to strengthen their contribution to a healthy and ethically based, athlete/participant-centred sport system. (Sport Canada, 2002, p. 21)

This paper addresses the relationship between volunteerism in sport and social capital. Multiple questions can be raised about the relationship between sport volunteerism and social capital. Does volunteerism in sport contribute to social capital, or do higher levels of social capital foster volunteerism in sport? What social factors explain the variations in social capital in sport volunteers? What are the implications for volunteerism and for sport policy? The case study has modest goals. The objective of this paper is to validate
different measures of social capital, inspired by the social network tradition, in order to see if, with such measures, there is a link between sport volunteerism and social capital. To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the existence of a relationship between social capital and volunteer involvement in sport using tools from the social network tradition.

In fact, we were only able to find two other studies, Ruston (n.d.) and Tonts (2005), focusing on sport volunteerism and social capital. Ruston used results from UK 2000 Time Use Survey to examine what he argues are three important aspects of social capital: “time spent volunteering (formal participation), time spent helping others (informal involvement) and social time spent with friends and family (informal sociability)” (p. 1). His findings show that volunteering, helping, and socializing takes up a small amount of the time of adults, that people over 45 years old are more likely to volunteer, and that volunteers, helpers and socializers spend more time with other people in the community than the general population. Tonts (2005) argues that “… the role of volunteers is particularly important with regard to social capital. With various examples, he shows that sport volunteers provide key resources to their community, such as time, expertise and material resources. Tonts points out that individuals often gain social capital through their volunteer work that, the social network tradition would imply, may benefit them when they need to have access to resources they do not possess.

METHODS
A pilot study was carried out in two local communities in Canada, one predominantly Francophone in Quebec, the other predominantly Anglophone in Ontario. Through a mailed questionnaire, the pilot study surveyed sport volunteers from both communities, on several questions related to volunteerism in sport including: time devoted to volunteerism, forms of volunteer involvement, reasons for volunteerism, benefits from volunteerism, training, support and evaluation, challenges and obstacles, as well as social capital and citizenship.

Questionnaires (French and English respectively) were sent to volunteers in two different sport associations (one individual sport and one team sport) in the two communities. In the case of the team sport associations, questionnaires were sent to half of the total volunteers (every second name on the list of members provided by the association). For the associations in the individual sport in both Québec and Ontario, questionnaires were sent to all the volunteers. In total, one thousand questionnaires were mailed and 271 were returned, for a 27.1% response rate; considered a good return rate for mailed questionnaires.

The measures of social capital were produced using two tools developed by a team of Dutch researchers; these were translated and adapted to Canadian society. Each tool emphasizes a different aspect of social capital. The first, the resources generator, identifies the resources respondents have effectively had access to through their social networks during a given period of time (Van Der Gaag & Snijders, 2005). It includes questions such as: Is there anyone in your family, among your friends or acquaintances you could easily ask for help for... finding a summer job for a family member… or giving
you a good reference when applying for a job? This tool addresses access to 13 different resources, thereby assessing the social capital effectively used by an individual during a given period.

Since individuals do not necessarily use all of their network resources at any given moment, it is important also to evaluate their social capital potential (Montgomery, 1992). This second dimension is assessed with a social position generator that measures individuals’ access to people with social status of different values with regard to the resources associated with their status. These two dimensions correspond approximately with the two components of social capital identified by Bourdieu – resources, and mutual cognition and recognition. Within the social network tradition of social capital, access to people with high social status constitutes the best “synthetic indicator” of the social capital that one possesses (Lin, 2001; Lin et al. 2001). From a theoretical point of view, the argument is that individuals who occupy the highest social positions are also those who own the resources that are most useful for individuals, and that access to these social positions constitutes potential access to the resources they possess.

To estimate the value of social capital within this framework the position generator permits a measure of the possibility that a respondent may contact different people with diversified occupations (based on the understanding that, in Western societies, occupations are the best indicator of the social position of social actors). Therefore, the position generator identifies potential access to different occupations, occupations
selected as representatives of the wide range of social status existing in Western societies, from the medical doctor to the construction worker.

Finally, since the pioneer work of Granovetter (1973, 1974), we know that specific social ties carry more of certain types of resources than others. Therefore, given the circumstances, drawing from weak ties may be more useful than drawing from strong ties. Strong ties are conceptualized differently by the different researchers using the category, but all of the approaches have as a common feature the utilisation of affective or emotive proximity. Family, friendships, and conjugal ties constitute the main examples of strong ties. Weak ties involve a smaller affective engagement. Reference is made here to colleagues at work, landlords, acquaintances, etc. Given the diverse capacity of different links to constitute good, or not so good vehicles of specialised resources, we have also collected information on the strengths of ties in the measure of respondents’ social capital (Erikson, 2004).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measures

The position generator

Data collected with the position generator make it possible to generate several social capital indexes. The one most commonly used, suggested by Lin who was the first to propose such an index, is the total number of positions reached through the networks. While having retained this index, we also developed two others. They are: the number of positions reached through strong ties; and, the number of positions reached through weak
ties (see Table 1). One of the limitations of these indices is that they implicitly assume that all social positions (occupations) are equivalent in terms of the resources they possess. Therefore, two individuals may be in contact with the same number of occupations, which results in according the same value to the their social capital, while the types of occupations accessed may be quite different (for example three occupations with a high social status such as physician, engineer and manager, in comparison to more modest ones such as cook or mechanic.

To avoid that difficulty, some researchers have proposed the creation of indices that take into account the social status of various occupations (Van der Graag, etc.). The challenge is to identify a mechanism by which a relative value is assigned to each occupation that is not arbitrary. For the purpose of this study we used the International Socioeconomic Index (ISEI) (Ganzedoom & Treiman, 2003), which emphasises the economic and social resources associated with occupations, rather than a scale of prestige levels for each occupation. By attributing a value to each occupation in the position generator, according the ISEI, it becomes possible to calculate different indices of the value of the social capital possessed by individuals. Three indices can be directly calculated: total, average, and maximum values of positions accessed. A final index has been created which concerns the range of the values of social positions accessed. The hypothesis developed here is that, the higher the diversity, the higher the variety of resources accessible to individuals through their social network.

The resource generator
Data gathered with the resource generator permitted the creation of three indices. They correspond to the total of resources accessible, and to the number of resources accessible through strong ties and weak ties (see Table 1).

**Results for the measures of social capital**

Analysis of the results presented in Table 1 leads to two observations. First, for most of the indices calculated, the scores for women are lower than these for men. This is particularly striking in the differences between the two groups on the availability of weak ties, a category in which women score significantly lower than men. This finding is consistent with several other research projects that made the same observation of a structural social capital deficit of women (Van der Gaag et al.; Lin, ). This gap, concentrated in the weak ties, reflects two different forms of sociability and also, for women, a structural position within society that places them at disadvantage with regard to their access to jobs. In the case of sport volunteerism that may mean, for example, that the social networks women create through their volunteer work involve less of these weak ties than for men. Networks with more weak ties may be more useful to access, for example, a higher position within their sport organization, or a job in the labour market. It also means that women cannot count as much as men on these weak ties to deal with the challenges they face in sport volunteerism.

The second observation stems from the strong correlations among a large number of different indices of measure of synthetic social capital (see Table2). These results illustrate that the various indices constitute similar measures of the same reality, and also
show that there is some interdependency between indices. For example, correlations are weak and non-significant between indices that measure the strength of ties. This supports the hypothesis (above) that these links do not necessarily bring the same resources and that they are not accessible to the same individuals.

Social capital and sport volunteerism

As noted previously, it is not the objective of this study to measure precisely the influence of volunteerism on the development of social capital, or vice versa. Indeed, the data available do not allow for a comparison between a group of volunteers involved in sport, and a comparable group of individuals who are not involved in sport volunteerism - a necessary comparison (along with more longitudinal studies) in order to establish more precisely the relationship between social capital and volunteerism.

This being said, the data do favour analyses that consider the link between sport volunteerism and social capital. A series of analyses were carried out in order to identify the presence of correlations between different indices of social capital and the level of involvement in sport volunteering. Three indicators of involvement level in volunteerism are available: the number of months during which the respondent has been a volunteer during the past year; the average time spent in volunteerism involvement per month during the past year; and the lifetime duration of the volunteer involvement.
The results presented in Table 3 show moderate, but significant correlations between most of the social capital indices and the duration of the lifetime volunteer involvement while controlling for age of respondents. With one exception, correlations are positive between the value of social capital and the level of volunteer involvement. The only negative relationship is with the average value of positions accessed, and this correlation is weak.

The finding of a generally positive relationship between social capital and volunteer involvement, however, does not provide any indication of the direction of this relationship. Does volunteerism enhance social capital, or are individuals with high social capital more likely to be involved in volunteerism? The data collected in this study do not provide an answer to that question. However, they show the existence of a strong link between the two phenomena on most of the indices of social capital developed for, and considered in this study, showing the strength of this relationship.
Table 1: Indexes of social capital value by gender

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<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>Min</td>
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<td>range in accessed value</td>
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<tr>
<td>total accessed resource through strong ties</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>total accessed resource through weak ties</td>
<td>13.00</td>
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Table 2: Correlation between different indexes of social capital value

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<th>number of positions accessed through weak ties</th>
<th>number of positions accessed through strong ties</th>
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<th>average accessed value</th>
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<th>range in accessed value</th>
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<td>1.000</td>
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<td>0.678 **</td>
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<tr>
<td>highest accessed value</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.527 **</td>
<td>0.324 **</td>
<td>0.306 **</td>
<td>0.618 **</td>
<td>0.281 **</td>
<td>-0.199 **</td>
<td>-0.119</td>
<td>0.306 **</td>
<td>0.527 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>range in accessed value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total accessed resource</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.417 **</td>
<td>0.147 *</td>
<td>0.435 **</td>
<td>0.447 **</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.397 **</td>
<td>0.354 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resource</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total accessed resource through strong ties</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.354 **</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.461 **</td>
<td>0.393 **</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.397 **</td>
<td>0.354 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total accessed resource through weak ties</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.243 **</td>
<td>0.482 **</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.239 **</td>
<td>-0.095</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.397 **</td>
<td>0.354 **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p ≤ .05 (2-tailed)
** p ≤ .01 (2-tailed)
Table 3: Correlations between different indexes of social capital value and chosen characteristics of volunteerism in sport by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position generator</th>
<th>Number of months during the last year</th>
<th>Average duration by month during the last year</th>
<th>Duration of lifetime volunteerism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>number of positions accessed</td>
<td>0.0472</td>
<td>0.1171</td>
<td>0.2641 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number of positions accessed through weak ties</td>
<td>0.1157</td>
<td>0.0863</td>
<td>0.1485 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number of positions accessed through strong ties</td>
<td>-0.0566</td>
<td>0.1067</td>
<td>0.1812 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total accessed value</td>
<td>0.0541</td>
<td>0.0867</td>
<td>0.2780 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average accessed value</td>
<td>0.0725</td>
<td>-0.1584 *</td>
<td>-0.0508 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest accessed value</td>
<td>-0.0214</td>
<td>0.0105</td>
<td>0.1691 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>range in accessed value</td>
<td>-0.0754</td>
<td>0.0517</td>
<td>0.1998 **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Generator</th>
<th>Number of months during the last year</th>
<th>Average duration by month during the last year</th>
<th>Duration of lifetime volunteerism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total accessed resource</td>
<td>-0.0448</td>
<td>-0.0115</td>
<td>0.1270 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total accessed resource through strong ties</td>
<td>-0.0740</td>
<td>-0.0874</td>
<td>0.1161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total accessed resource through weak ties</td>
<td>0.1166</td>
<td>0.1865 **</td>
<td>0.1068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p ≤ .05 (2-tailed)
** p ≤ .01 (2-tailed)
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper considered two major approaches to social capital, and presented a case study focusing on the relationship between sport volunteerism and social capital using an approach inspired by both Bourdieu and by the social network tradition. In the absence of a control group and given the limited sample in this study, the results are not as statistically strong as might be expected. Nonetheless, the results confirm that there is a strong link between sport volunteerism and social capital. Moreover, the results indicate that the link is stronger when we control for sex and age. Despite the fact that the results do not reveal the direction of the causal link between social capital and volunteerism, they strongly suggest either that social capital fosters volunteerism, or that volunteerism generates more social capital. In both instances, these results are important, not only for our understanding of volunteerism in sport, but also for policy makers.

Based on these results should policy makers develop specific measures to foster social capital? Like the Policy Research Initiative (PRI, 2005), we suggest rather that social capital should be considered as a tool for the attainment of other policy goals related to volunteerism in sport. Social capital development could indeed be used for several purposes. It might, for example, contribute to improving the training, support and feeling of recognition of volunteers within a sport organization. Developing the social capital of volunteers may also be instrumental in improving their capacity to participate fully, have a positive experience, and therefore stay longer in the organization. A good network of both weak and strong ties provides a volunteer with a wide range of resources for support in their volunteer work, as well as in the other aspects of their lives, thus impacting on the
participation and retention of volunteers. Such networks also represent a variety of resources for promotion to higher ranks within the organization.

With regard to sport organizations, having volunteers with strong social capital may increase the capacity of the organization as well as its own social capital. The more the organization has, through its volunteers, a widespread and diversified network of strong and weak ties, the more the organization has the capacity to be well connected to other sectors of public life, and to access resources of different types, such as facilities, money, human resources, or even political influence. Indeed, as suggested by the Policy Research Initiative (2005, p. 17), with regard to volunteerism in sport, and indeed a wide variety of sport policy issues, governments and sport organizations together should consider: (a) building and supporting networks where applicable; (b) tapping into existing social networks to realize specific policy goals; and (c) increasing their sensitivities to existing patterns of social capital.

There are several limitations that should be noted with regard to this study of sport volunteerism. Like most other volunteer sectors, the demand for volunteers in sport is high. Unlike most other volunteer sectors, the evidence for Canada (and probably for other countries where youth sports are organized, officiated, and coached primarily by volunteers) suggests that volunteers in sports receive little training or supervision. Such is the demand for volunteers in sport that volunteer work can be found for almost every parent of children and youth involved in a sport (from fund raising to time keeping, from coaching to officiating). By drawing heavily from the parent population (who may only
be involved for the duration of their children’s participation), and by demanding little in the way of qualifications, sport volunteerism is quite an open sector. While this does not detract from the likely dual possibility that those with higher social capital are more likely to volunteer, and that those who volunteer are likely to experience increments to their social capital, it does suggest that future studies might take account even more of the status of the volunteer position, and the duration of volunteer involvement. Particular attention might be paid to those volunteers who continue to be involved after their children no longer participate.

This paper underlines the usefulness of research based on Bourdieu’s approach to social capital, as well as on social network research. It also demonstrates the usefulness of position and resource generators in the study of social capital. The results of this pilot study appear sufficiently promising to argue for more research on the relationship between sport volunteerism and social capital in order to better understand the mechanisms at work. We believe this paper contributes to the study of sport volunteerism, and more precisely draws attention to the relationship between social capital and sport volunteerism, and the possibilities of measuring that relationship. In that sense, the study may constitute part of a basis for much needed research on these issues.
References [some missing]


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i See The Social Survey of the Networks of the Dutch, 1999-2000. Accessible at [http://www.xs4all.nl/~gaag/work](http://www.xs4all.nl/~gaag/work)
Figure 1: Dimensions of ‘social capital’