

Sport Development and Sport for Development in the Caribbean

A Sociology of Emerging Trends

Roy McCree



Research in the
Sociology of Sport

VOL
26

**SPORT DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT
FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE
CARIBBEAN**

RESEARCH IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT

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**SPORT DEVELOPMENT
AND SPORT FOR
DEVELOPMENT IN THE
CARIBBEAN: A SOCIOLOGY
OF EMERGING TRENDS**

EDITED BY

ROY MCCREE

The University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

To CLR James, Professors Lloyd Brathwaite and Dom Basil Matthews

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INTRODUCTION: SPORT DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN: A SOCIOLOGY OF EMERGING TRENDS

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Over the past 60 years or more, sociology has been one of the pioneering disciplines in the study of the significance of sport as a social phenomenon although the exact origins of the sociology of sport may vary from country to country and continent to continent (Malcolm, 2012; Young, 2017). In examining the reciprocal or dialectical links between sport and society, sport sociologists have examined a very wide range of related issues having to do with age, race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, body image, imperialism, (de)colonization, nationalism, national identity, commercialization, professionalization, industrialization, globalization, athletic migration, deviance (e.g., crowd disorder, drug use, corruption), the environment, the sport media (new and old), coaching, as well as sport policy (e.g., elite sport), often through multiple theoretical and methodological frameworks (Collison et al., 2019; Giulianotti, 2015; Houlihan & Green, 2011; Malcolm, 2012; McCullough et al., 2022; Wenner, 2022; Young, 2017). Relatedly, sport sociology has also examined the ways that sport has served to reflect, reinforce as well as resist or transform particular patterns of inequality, discrimination, or relations of power in society. In examining the reciprocal sport-society nexus, therefore, the sociology of sport has focused on how the development of sport (DOS) has affected and been affected by a range of social, cultural, political, economic, global, environmental, and technological processes. When we speak of the DOS or sport development (SD) therefore, in the context of the sociology of sport, it refers to the examination of these various processes in and through sport, as both institution and activity. Relatedly, consistent with one of the fundamental

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aims in Emerald's Research in the Sociology of Sport Series, this Volume examines the exciting "relationship between sport, culture and society" in the context of the Caribbean and Caribbean sport participants.

The DOS may also be distinguished from sport for development (SfD) through its focus on the provision of sport infrastructure, coaching, records and elite sports or the production of athletes, winning championships and medals in order to satisfy the fans, as well as the needs of people in general for pride, prestige, pleasure, passion, patriotism, and power (McCree, 2008, 2017). But what is SfD and how does it differ from SD or the DOS and its study?

SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT

The subject matter of SfD, also referred to as "development through sport" or "sport in development" (Collison et al., 2019; Levermore & Beacom, 2012) also has several related social, political, and economic dimensions, similar to DOS, but there are still critical differences or nuances in relation to its subject matter, objectives, and the approaches to its utilization or developmental application.¹

Fundamentally, SfD has to do with the use of sport by the State, as well as international agencies like the United Nations, to achieve certain goals in relation to social policy, foreign policy, and economic development policy. More specifically, on the social front, these relate particularly to the issues of personal development, inequality, marginalization or social exclusion, conflict resolution, crime, non-communicable diseases or health, educational performance, community development, child protection, and youth empowerment (Coalter, 2007; Collison et al., 2019). Referring to the broad use of sport to achieve certain social development objectives, UNICEF noted that:

Sport for Development (S4D) refers to the use of sport, or any form of physical activity, to provide both children and adults with the opportunity to achieve their full potential through programmes that promote personal and social development. (UNICEF, 2019, pp. 6–7)

Politically, SfD has also been defined as "...the use of sport as a tool in the pursuit of development cooperation, humanitarian aid and peace-building efforts." (sport and dev.org). In this sense, sport is used as an instrument of developmental assistance, diplomacy among nation states as well as dealing with the issue of human rights (Levermore & Beacom, 2012, pp. 1–25).

The use of SfD therefore, has seen its more direct and systematic use by the state and international organizations to pursue certain broad developmental objectives. Following on from the Millennium Development Goals (Levermore & Beacom, 2012, pp. 1–3), this is also reflected in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), where sport has been used as an implementation strategy to achieve several goals in relation to health and well-being (SDG 3), inclusive, equitable, quality education and lifelong learning (SDG 4), gender equality and empowerment (SDG 5), sustainable economic growth and decent work (SDG 8)

as well as peace, justice, and good governance (SDG 16) (Lindsay & Chapman, 2017). In Chapter 9, Stockard and in Chapter 12, Ramnarine et al., also attempt to define and distinguish SfD.

This greater use of SfD has seen the growth of what has been called or termed a Sport for Development and Peace sector or movement that brings together both state and non-state actors at a local and global level, particularly those that deal with sport (Collison et al., 2019; Kidd, 2008; Young & Okada, 2014). Some of these global non-state actors in sport include NGOs like Play International (<https://www.play-international.org/en>), Game (<https://game.ngo/>), Sport and Dev (<https://www.sportanddev.org/index.php/about-us/what-we-do>), the Sports and Rights Alliance (<https://sportandrightsalliance.org/who-we-are/>), as well as the Foundation for Sport, Peace, and Development (<http://www.foundationforsportanddevelopmentandpeace.com/>).² In the latter regard, there has also been an annual conference on Peace and Development which has been held since 2013 (<http://www.foundationforsportanddevelopmentandpeace.com/>). In addition to peace, the focus of SfD has also seen the emergence of other specific sub-areas like Sport for Gender and Development inclusive of Sport and Gender based Violence, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of SfD programs due to their interventionist nature (Hayhurst et al., 2011) which are illustrated in Chapter 12. Furthermore, the adoption and expansion of SfD is also evident in its use by the corporate or business sector as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies (Hayhurst, 2011; Levermore, 2011; Paramio Salcines et al., 2013).

Undeniably, while there is some clear overlap between SD, its study and SfD, as they relate particularly to the issues of inequality, discrimination, marginalization, exclusion, and conflict, there are also clear differences in the range of subject matter dealt with in both (e.g., athletic migration, sport media, elite sport, nationalism, breaking records, hero production, SDGs, diplomacy) and the extent to which sport has become a tool or instrument of social policy and international development under the aegis of the UN (Fig. 1.1). In the latter regard, SfD has seen the emergence of a particular global and bureaucratic eco-system, to use a fashionable buzz word, or an SfD ecosystem. This ecosystem consists of the state, the United Nations, and its agencies as well as non-state actors operating locally and globally in sport, which have taken a more interventionist approach to dealing with a range of social problems as part of a global policy agenda (re., the SDGs). Its uniqueness and growth has also been expressed academically, in the establishment of its own *Journal of Sport for Development*. Fig. 1 attempts to capture visually, the differences as well as overlap between DOS or SD and SfD or the extent to which they are related but separate, in terms of their subject matter and scope. While some may argue that SfD as a concept is not new, that is really a moot point if only because it is true. What is surely new however and distinguishes it from its ancient and 19th century antecedents, which advocated the use of sport to build character through the inculcation of values related to obedience, discipline, and respect for authority, is the various forms it has assumed and surely, the context in which it has (re)emerged in a more globalized and conflict riddled world (see Kidd, 2008).

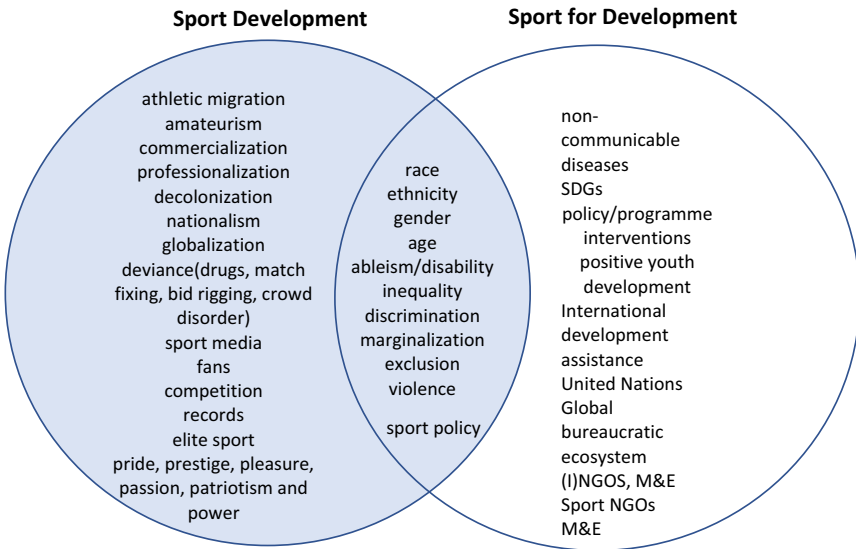


Fig. 1. Sport Development and Sport for Development. *Source:* Author created 2024.

It is in the context of the increased prominence of both the DOS and SfD in contemporary society, that it was decided to use them as the two major or overarching themes around which to structure the content and organization of the Volume.

GOALS AND STRUCTURE OF VOLUME

Although the Caribbean in its broad sense has been known historically for the production of world class athletes, notably in athletics, baseball, cricket and, to a lesser extent soccer, it has lagged very far behind in the production of research and publications on sport, in spite of the early pioneering and foundational work of CLR (James, 1963). In this regard, and rather ironically, if not tragically, the Caribbean is yet to come up to speed. Against this background, this Volume in the Sociology of Sport Series had five major related goals:

- (1) to help fill the lacuna in the sociological study of sport in the Caribbean and small island states in general, by building on the legacy of CLR James as it relates to showing the intimate and reciprocal links between sport and society;
- (2) to examine issues related to SD and SfD across a range of Caribbean countries which, in this Volume, include: Cuba, the Dominican Republic (DR), Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, and Trinidad and Tobago;

- (3) to examine a broader array of issues in Caribbean sport that have come to define the contemporary scope of sport sociology which include notably, globalization, commercialization, professionalization, athletic migration, nationalism, gender, and disability together with the other important issues related to race, ethnicity and class;
- (4) to show the extent to which the Caribbean has formed part of broader processes related to globalization and commercialization in sport;
- (5) to go beyond James by studying other sports besides cricket that have formed part of Caribbean sport history and culture although there is still one chapter on cricket (see Chapter 1) given the game's continued symbolic importance and popularity throughout the region and its diaspora. In this Volume, these other sports include athletics (Chapters 4 and 6), baseball (Chapters 3 and 4), boat racing (Chapter 8), boxing (Chapter 12), e-sports (Chapter 9), soccer (Chapters 5, 10 and 11), and the triathlon (Chapter 7).

In terms of its structure, the Volume consists of 12 Chapters together with an Introduction which provides the background and rationale for the study as well as an Overview of the Chapters. The rest of the Volume is divided into two Sections consistent with its two major related themes. In this regard, Section I deals with SD and has eight Chapters dealing with West Indian cricket (Chapter 1), baseball players of Haitian origin (Chapter 2), baseball in Cuba (Chapter 3), Cuban Women in Sport (Chapter 4), transatlantic soccer migration from Trinidad and Tobago (Chapter 5), Jamaican female college athletes in the US (Chapter 6), the triathlon in Trinidad and Tobago (Chapter 7), and boat racing in Martinique (Chapter 8). Section II deals with SfD and has four Chapters. Chapter 9 deals with the newly emergent e-sports in the Caribbean. Chapters 10 and 11 both deal with soccer in Haiti, but Chapter 11 examines amputee soccer within the context of disability and sport, in the aftermath of the tragic earthquake of 2010. The final Chapter (12) examines the use of boxing, particularly female boxing in Trinidad and Tobago, to achieve certain goals of SD and SfD.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Consistent with the goals of the Volume, the Chapters addressed several themes related to sport, race, gender, nationalism, national identity, disability, professionalization, commercialization, and globalization. In these respects, there was some thematic overlap not just across the two major Sections dealing with SD and SfD, but within the Sections and even the individual Chapters themselves, in their treatment of SD and SfD in the Caribbean context. However, two of the major related overlapping or cross cutting themes dealt with national identity or nationalism (6 Chapters), and gender (6 Chapters).

Both Chapter 1 by Cooper and Chapter 2 by Gentile examine the issues of nationalism and race, though in the context of two separate sports, cricket and baseball as well as separate jurisdictions (i.e., DR and the West Indies). In his examination of West Indian cricket, Cooper does not simply restate the historical

role of cricket in the decolonization of the region as a mode of resistance to British imperialism or hegemony. In this regard, building on the seminal work of West Indian intellectuals in cricket, particularly that of CLR James, he provides a much more sociologically nuanced and developed theoretical perspective, in the form of the Black Sporting Resistance Framework (BSR), to understanding the anticolonial and emancipatory function of the West Indian cricket team in the 20th and 21st centuries. The BSR itself is “grounded in” two major related frameworks that include “the sporting resistance typology (Cooper, 2021) and the sport activism typology (Cooper et al., 2019; Cooper et al., 2020),” which are broken down themselves into further subcomponents or categories. For instance, “the sporting resistance typology” consists of several ways in which resistance can be manifested through “agency, pioneering, advocacy, hybrid, activism, social movements, revolutions, and sustained cultural empowerment,” while “the sport activism typology” can variously assume a “(a) symbolic, (b) scholarly, (c) grassroots, (d) sports-based, (e) economic, (f) media, (g) political, (h) legal, (i) music and art, and (j) military” nature. Another interesting feature of Cooper’s theoretical approach has to do with seeing the anticolonial resistance of West Indian cricket as part of a broader Black diasporic, transnationalist, and internationalist social movement against inequality and imperialist hegemony. In Chapter 2, Gentile examines the historical genocidal, denigratory, and discriminatory practices experienced by Haitians in the DR to the point of their denial of Dominican citizenship through mass deportation. As a result of this treatment, which is attributed to their race and nationality, it is common for baseball players in the DR to hide their Haitian ancestry or roots “by falsifying their birth certificates or place of birth” in Haiti in order not to be denied opportunities to play MLB. This situation has been highlighted by well-known players of Haitian descent who include notably, Sammy Sosa, Miguel Sanó, Estevan Florial, and Miguel Tejada. Not too dissimilar from West Indian cricket therefore, baseball in the DR has been a site of racist oppression as well as liberation through the opportunity to play MLB.

In Chapter 3, Rodríguez-Matos, Hernández Garrido, and Herrera Ochoa continue with this theme of the role of sport in the process of identity formation and relations of power based on their examination of baseball in Cuba. In this regard, drawing on Giddens’s notion of institutions as practices, as well as Bourdieu’s notions of the habitus and the field, the authors clinically examine how baseball, as a cultural or sporting practice or, as both subject and object, constitute and is also (re)constituted in particular (neo)colonial relations of power, has become “embedded in the popular imagination of Cubans,” similar to cricket in the West Indies. In this regard, it has become an integral part of Cuba’s national identity and intangible national heritage although it only received this formal designation in 2021. However, the authors also show “the king of Cuban sports” was also characterized by patriarchal “practices” which have constrained the involvement of women in the game although women have still made significant strides as both players and officiating officials. This issue of gender in Cuban sports is addressed at more length by Laguardia Martínez in Chapter 4, which also addresses the contemporary decline and changes in Cuban sports. In their Chapter, Rodríguez-Matos et al. also touch on these issues but, in the specific context of baseball.

While the issues of identity and nationalism are also addressed in Chapter 4 by Laguardia Martinez as well as in Chapter 8 by Zamor, unlike the previous Chapters, gender assumes more theoretical and empirical prominence in their work. In her Chapter, Laguardia Martinez first shows how sport was used by the Cuban state as a strategy of human and political development through promoting the ideals of the Cuban revolution grounded in egalitarianism, humanism, and international solidarity in the face of the US economic embargo. In these respects, the Cuban model, consistent with the socialist sport model in general, represented a fusion of both SD (driven by athlete and medal production or elite sport), as well as SfD (driven by the egalitarian ideals of the revolution in access to sport facilities, participation of all or *masividad*, the empowerment of women, as well as the health and well-being of the people). However, both SD and SfD were driven by the same fundamental objective which was the promotion of the revolution both at home and abroad. The major focus of her Chapter, however, is to show how Cuban women have made tremendous strides in Cuban sport as athletes, referees, and officials, both nationally and internationally, and how they contributed to the use of sport as a soft power, foreign policy asset for Cuba by serving as “informal diplomats.” However, these strides or achievements took place particularly in sports deemed to be the natural “preserves” of men like baseball and boxing although persistent “hegemonic masculinity,” or what Guttman (1978, p. 34.) calls “porcelain doll femininity,” still serve to discourage female involvement in sports. So much for the “empowerment of women”? In addition, Laguardia Martinez also examines the decline in Cuban sport domestically and internationally, linked to increasing externally generated economic hardships and how it has impacted female involvement in sport and the Cuban sport model as a whole. Laguardia Martinez’s Chapter makes a significant contribution to not just the sparse literature on Cuban sport but, even moreso, the role of women in its sporting successes, with respect to which only one known previous publication seems to exist (see [Bequer Díaz et al., 2016](#)). In addition, while the study of Cuba’s use of sport as a soft power strategy in international relations is not new (see [Huish et al., 2013](#)), what is new is the case she makes for the contribution of women to this process.

While not as politically complicated as the Cuban case, in her Chapter, Zamor examines the growth and development of the indigenous sport of boat racing in Martinique known as the *Tour des Yoles Rondes* which is seen as a unique expression of Martinican identity. Relatedly, drawing on feminist and Value-Expectancy theories, she also examines how this sporting practice has served to reflect and reinforce traditional patterns of gender inequality in Martinique by discouraging female involvement, as well as to undermine that inequality, as more women have still become involved in the sport as both participants and, even as leaders of the sport’s ruling body. As it relates to female involvement in sport, both the case of Cuba and Martinique can serve to highlight the maxim, *plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose* or the contradictory role of sport as both a symbol of change and the patriarchal status quo.

Although the issues of commercialization, professionalization, and athletic migration are mentioned in various ways in Chapters 1–4 and 8, the issues are addressed more substantively by McCree in Chapter 5 and Doss in Chapter 6. In his Chapter, McCree examines the phenomenon of male transatlantic soccer migration from the Caribbean based on a case study of Trinidad and Tobago, in the period spanning 1933–2019. Drawing on world system's, dependency, figural, globalization, and network theories in particular, McCree examines the various economic and organizational factors both global and local, that have facilitated as well as constrained this migration process. The Chapter shows that while soccer migration has fluctuated significantly over the period examined, it was marked by a substantive increase in the number of players from the 1990s onward (by 2,100%), the number and diversity of destinations (from 3 to 26), as well as a shift in destinations from the UK to within Europe, Asia, and Central America, consistent with a global pattern. In Chapter 6, while the study of Doss also bears on the subject of athletic migration, the focus is on student-athletic migration to the US and moreso, the migration of female Jamaican athletes to US Colleges through athletic scholarships. Additionally, unlike McCree's Chapter, which focuses more on the quantitative dimension of the sport migration process, Doss examines the actual experiences of the female athletes in dealing with "the intersections of being Black, female, international, student-athlete, and first-generation college student." Relatedly, she also examines the range of challenges they encountered that included, discrimination, "systemic racism," weather, language, "culinary options," balancing studies and involvement in sport, as well as the absence of family. To do so, Doss draws on Critical Race Theory (CRT) and moreso, Yosso's Cultural Wealth Model (2005) to show how the athletes made use of four major forms of capital to cope and still pursue their goals since "failure was not an option": social capital, aspirational capital, resistance capital, navigational capital and, to a lesser extent, linguistic and family capital. Doss's study makes a very important theoretical and empirical contribution at several levels: Caribbean student-athletic migration, Caribbean female student-athletic migration, the study of black college athletes as well as minoritized athletes in general, in US College sports.

In Chapter 7, Rampersad also examines the issue of gender and sport but, as it relates particularly to the issue of coaching and the myriad factors which affect the recruitment and retention of women in the sport of triathlon in Trinidad and Tobago. In this regard, he examines the various material (economic costs), sporting (facilities, coaching style), biological (re. menstruation, ageing), and social factors (e.g., family support, mothering), that impact the involvement of women in the sport and emphasizes the need for greater education of all stakeholders (coaches, administrators, parents, athletes) in order to deal with these challenges. This is the first known academic study of this sport in the Caribbean.

Four of the Chapters that focused more on SfD were Chapters 9–12 although they also make reference to the development of the sports concerned in relation to facilities and opportunities to participate. In Chapter 9, Stockard undertakes one of the first known studies of e-sports in the Caribbean. In this very exploratory study, he shows how esports can be possibly used to help realize some of the