



ETHICAL ISSUES AND PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT AS MORAL AND SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS FOR SPORTS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS IN NIGERIA: A PAPER WORK

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Abstract:

Every occupation desire recognition as a profession for a variety of reasons, sport management inclusive for example Law, medicine and Engineering are professions that traditionally carry with them prestige, respect and autonomy. Ethical code of conduct are meant to address a variety of ethical issues of the profession such as level of knowledge and skills; licensing; maintenance of discipline within the profession, establishment and registration of persons entitle to practice. It is with this in mind that the paper explored professional society, ethical issues, ethical code of conduct as moral and social obligation. The paper provides the foundation for a rational application of the principles of ethics to the ethical problems that confront the sport management profession in Nigeria. Many would suggest that the present ethical environment in sport management profession is in an abysmal state as the field does not have a recognize body (Association/Society) the like of NASSM SMAANZ, EASM, ALGEDE and AASM. There is the need for the setting up of sport management professional association to be called Nigerian Sport Management Association (NISMA) as currently there is no such association in existence. When established, the association should have a professional creed for consideration of its members and this will require cooperation with a wide range of other professional bodies in the field, such as NAPER-SD, NASSM, NSHA and other closely related occupational and professional group; these is because developing a code of ethic for sport managers is problematical undertaking. The breadth of the field makes it very difficult to create a code that has encompassing relevance.

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A profession is an employment not mechanical and requiring some degree of learning. It is also a collective body of persons engaged in any profession. A profession is basically a vocation which gets the status of a profession from the society on the basis, the unique service that it practices, the autonomy with which its members serve, the acceptance of responsibility for the actions they do, the realization of its members that their service to the society is not for mere economic rewards and an organization that controls and reflects the functions of its members (Venkateswarlur, 1987). Every reported profession has its own code of ethics for its members to follow in their performance of its members to safe guard against rendering rotten service to the society. Any candidates who fulfils this criteria, is normally licensed to practice that profession. Professional organizations are the heartbeat of a profession such professional includes Nigeria bar association, Nigeria medical association, NAPHER, AAPHER, NUJ, and NUT, NCS etc. They provide the following unique functional services to the members of the association, these include

- a) They provide opportunities for services;
- b) They provide a channel of communication;
- c) They provide a means for interpreting the profession;
- d) They provide a source of help in solving one's professional and personal problems;
- e) They provide an opportunity for fellowship;
- f) They provide an organ for research;
- g) They yield a feeling of belonging;
- h) They provide a means for distributing costs.

Similarly the Nigerian bar association, Nigerian association of engineers, the Nigerian union of journal lists and the Nigerian society of architects have their own criteria to permit an individual to practice. There are certain responsibilities that each coach must as some on accepting a position these responsibilities are as follows:

1. Knowing the objectives of the profession;
2. Planning and administering program in the light of these objectives;
3. Proudly effective leadership to achieve these objectives;
4. Scientifically measuring and evaluating the program of the professional Association to determine the objectives are being accomplished;
5. Re-evaluating the program of Professional Association in the light of results obtained through measurement and evaluating techniques.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (1963), the word “ethics” is derived from the Greek ethos or the nature or disposition of a culture. Ethics is further characterized as both a field of study concerned with moral principles and the moral principles that govern or influence human behaviour. Parhizgar & Parhizgar (2006) define ethics as the: critical analysis of cultural values to determine the validity of their vigorous rightness or wrongness in terms of two major criteria: truth and justice. Ethics is examining the relation of an individual to society, to the nature, and or to God. How do people make ethical decisions? They are influenced by how they perceive themselves in relation to goodness and/or excellence. According to McCroskey, Wrench, & Richmond (2003) means are the tools or behaviours that one employs to achieve a desired outcome, and ends are those outcome that one desire to achieve. Both means and ends can be evaluated as either good or bad. Remember, the definition of ethics by Parhizgar and Parhizgar (2006) involves the attention to behave or actual behaviour in the realm of goodness.

Many occupations, including those in sport management, desire recognition as a profession for a variety of reasons. Law and medicine are prime examples of professions that traditionally carry with them prestige, respect, status, and autonomy (De-George, 1982), although the desire for professional status is important and certainly understandable. As sport management strives to move toward a greater professional status, the aspect of autonomy does have particularly relevance with regard to ethics. Professions have traditionally been allowed more control to set their own standards and be self-regulating and self-disciplining. The standards are frequently expressed in the form of an ethical code, often developed and enforced a professional organization. Many business and professional business organizations have also developed ethical codes and creeds. One of the characteristics of profession is the anatomy that provides opportunity for self-regulation. This is often manifesting itself in a formulized approach to ethical standards and conduct. Various sports and recreation organizations have made modest efforts to deal with pertinent ethical concerns, but only very meager beginnings can be reported regarding efforts at formalizing the treatment of ethics in sports management. Zeigler, (1989) expressed the need for those involved in sports management to develop a sound approach to ethics as it relates to their duties and responsibilities and suggests that a comprehensive code of ethics is urgently required. But developing a code of ethics for sports management is problematic undertaking; the breath of the field makes it very difficult to create a code that has an all-encompassing relevance. In addition, no organization fully accommodates the tremendous variety of practitioners and academics in the field.

Ethical Issues in Sports Management

Ethical Issues that may arise in sports management profession are when three factors exist according to Johannesen, Valde & Whedbee (2008) identified these factors as:

- Sports management professionals' behaviour could have a significant impact on other persons;
- Sports management professionals' behaviour involves conscious choice of means and end;

Sports management professionals' behaviour can be judged by standards of right and wrong. Zeigler, (1987) also recognized the potential conflicts between practitioners and scientists early on and this issue affects the sports management field and profession today; Other issues according to Reynolds (2003) includes issues associated with licensing of sports management professionals, for example it is unclear who should manage the content and administration of licensing exams; there is no administrative body to do accreditation of professional education program; there is no administrative body to assess and assure competence of individual professionals. Other ethical issues are of professional relationship that must be managed according to Reynolds (2006) professionals typically becomes involved in many types of relationships that include: Professional vs employer; Professional vs client; Professional vs supplier; Professional vs professional; Professional vs professional society.

A professional association is for the promotion of members' professional growth, financial Welfare, security of tenure, advancement of the general professional status and collective bargaining. North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) was the first scholarly organization formed to meet the unique interests of persons within sport management academia (scientific study and professional preparation). NASSM operates according to the following canons or principles:

1. That sport managers shall (a) hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of individuals; perform services only in areas of competence; issue public statements in an objective and truthful manner; seek employment only where a need for service exists; maintain high standards of personal conduct; strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and in the performance of professional functions; and act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity;
2. That professionals shall (a) hold as primary their obligations and responsibilities to students/clients; be a faithful agent or trustee when acting in a professional matter; (b) make every effort to foster maximum self-determination on the part of students/clients; (c) respect the privacy of students/clients and hold in

- confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service; and, (d) ensure that private or commercial service fees are fair, reasonable, considerate, and commensurate with the service performed and with due respect to the student/clients to pay;
3. That professionals' ethical responsibilities to employers/employing organizations are characterized by fairness, non-maleficence, and truthfulness;
 4. That professionals (a) treat colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith; (b) relate to the students/clients of colleagues with full professional consideration, (c) uphold and advance the values and ethical standards, the knowledge, and the mission of the profession; (d) take responsibility for identifying, developing, and fully utilizing established knowledge for professional practice; and (e) shall, when engaged in study and/or research, be guided by the accepted convention of scholarly inquiry;
 5. That professional shall (a) promote the general welfare of society; (b) regard professional service to others as primary; and (c) report minor and major infractions by colleagues to the appropriate committee of the professional society when and where such a mechanism exists.

It recognizes that sport management, in both its academic discipline and professional practice, is highly interdisciplinary, thus, many facets of it use unique terminology/accurate language as a function of particular focus of attention. Because hundredths of thousands of sports managements worldwide engage in activities that affect the lives of millions of people, and because this power carries with it significant social responsibilities, the sport management developed the code of Ethical for Professional sports management. The code is based on three different yet interrelated principles of professional communication that apply throughout the world. These principles assume that just societies are governed by a profound respect for human rights and the rule of law, that ethics, the criteria for determining what is right and wrong, can be agreed upon by members of an organization: and, that understanding matters of taste requires sensitivity to cultural norms.

According to Yazid (2009) these principles are essential in the following respect:

- Sports management is legal;
- Sports management is ethical;
- Sports management is in good taste;

Recognizing these principles, members of the society for sports management of Nigeria will:

- Engage in sports management activities that is not only legal but also ethical and sensitive to cultural values and beliefs;

- Engage in truthful, accurate and fair management of sports that facilitates respect and mutual understanding;
- Adhere to the articles of the code of Ethics for Professional Communication.

Ethical code of conduct as moral and social obligation

Every established profession has a set of code of Ethics which guides and guard its modus operandi commonly known as Professional Ethics. The code is normally formulated, interpreted, and enforced by the professional association. According to Carmody, (1970) it serves as a guide to the newly initiated members of the profession as to their rights obligations privileges and responsibilities. Ethics is essentially social responsibility. It also serves as a guide to laymen for understanding particular professional conduct. It is professional etiquette which regulates conduct among professionals themselves as well as between them and their clients in the performance of their duties. Although a code of ethic is not a public Law, its criteria and goal are like good Laws, and it is tenable at the court of Law. It has the force of Law for the erring officer if he is found guilty to professional misconduct by professional association. The formulation of a professional ethics is based on the following moral and social principles among others:

- i. It must be clearly spelt out and specific: should not be ambiguous so that it may not be amenable to individual interpretation;
- ii. It must aim at rendering efficient services even where and when the client may not be able to pay for the service;
- iii. It must not be used to regulate the private lives of its members. Rather it must have bearing strictly on the efficient performance of professional duties;
- iv. It prescribes adequate penalty for contravention of any of the code of ethics;
- v. It protects and promotes member's professional integrity against unwarranted criticisms, and defends member's professional conduct in the context of the Code of Ethics;
- vi. The goals must be professional efficiency;
- vii. Because a code of conduct is a guide to professional practice in terms of e.g. how is/should it to be done? The code provides the answer. And experts in the profession must come together and direct their practice. The calls for virile profession associations.

Apart from professional competence in terms of acquired knowledge and skills through academic and professional preparation, ethical code of conduct is of paramount importance in professionalism. The code of conduct guides professional

practice in a technical sense as professional ethics is essentially a summation of the ideals, aspirations, training and conduct of the practitioners and which, ultimately, determines the quality of the profession.

The significance of professional ethics is highlighted as follows:

- i. It aims at ensuring profession efficiency as its goal in order that the practitioners may be guided by the morality of their profession;
- ii. It codifies moral behaviour in professional practice, and forms a bridge between professional competence and professional practice in the field;
- iii. It protects and guarantees the dignity and integrity of the profession and defends the professional conduct of the members;
- iv. It is a mechanism for self-caution and control in the moral aspect of professional practice;
- v. It is a mechanism for guaranteeing and monitoring moral respect in professional practice;
- vi. It codifies the right of, privileges and responsibilities of professionals;
- vii. It is a mechanism for discourage charlatans and quacks among professionals.
- viii. It is a mechanism for fishing out and disciplining or punishing the erring practitioners-the practitioners found guilty of professional misconduct. And, in professional ethics, any such punishment has or carries a legal force and status.

Robin & Reidenbanch, 1989; De-Goerge (1982) recommends that a code should (1) be regulative, not simply a statement of ideas, (2) project public interests and not be self-serving, (3) be specific and relevant to the specialized concerns of the members, and (4) be enforceable and enforced. Given the differences among organizations, it is unlikely that a generalized code will be widely applicable. This leaves it to each organization to evaluate the ethical implications of its own activities and to develop appropriate guidelines. This process alone will help sensitize the organization to the individual and group responsibilities involved in operating in an ethical manner (Behrman, 1988). There is little in the literature of sport management that provides any formal treatment of ethics within the field. Zeigler (1989) has expressed the need for those involved in sport management to develop a sound approach to ethics as it relates to their duties and responsibilities and suggests that a comprehensive code of ethics is urgently required.

The code if designed it will show the magnitude of a profession and allow one to judge one selves and colleagues in accordance with the provisions of this code. To understand the different functions codes, there is the need to distinguish between three different types of code:- code of ethics, codes of conduct and codes of practice and we

need to distinguish three levels of professional ethics (Duncan, 2000). Codes of ethics are more inspirational they are mission statements for the professional providing vision and objectives. Statements in codes of conduct are more oriented toward the professional and professional attitudes, they do not describe in detail how to carry out a particular action but they make clear the issues at stake in different specialized fields.

Codes of practice on the other hand fix some accepted state of the art (Berleur, 1994) and relate to current operational activities. The degree of enforcement possible is dependent on the type of code, codes of ethics, which are primarily inspirational use no more than light coercion, while codes of conduct violations generally carry sanctions ranging from warnings to exclusion from the professional body. Violations of codes of practice may lead to legal action on the ground of malpractice or negligence.

The hierarchy of codes parallels the three levels of ethical obligation owed by professionals:- The first level identified is a set of ethical values, such as integrity and justice, which professionals share with other human beings by virtue of their shared humanity, codes statements at this level are statements of aspiration that provide vision and objectives. The second level obliges professionals to more challenging obligations than those required at the first level. At the second level, by virtue of their role as professionals and their special skills they owe a higher order of care to those affected by their work. This second level of ethical obligation is also shared by every type of professional. Code statements at this level express the obligations of all professionals and professional attitudes. Again they do not describe specific behavior details, but their clearly indicate professional responsibilities. Duncan (2000) further elucidates that the third and deeper level comprises several obligations that derive directly from elements unique to the particular practice.

Why Ethical Code of Conduct for Sport Management Practitioners

According to Majasan (1996) to be registered as a sport management practitioner and to have his/her name retained in the register a person required to comply with the following

- a. Intended persons seeking to become a member of the profession should have sufficient knowledge and skill for the practice of the profession;
- b. Licensing;
- c. Mandatory Continuing professional Development;
- d. Annual subscription;
- e. Certificate of Experience.

Why code of conduct Sport management practitioners is the need to promote ethical behaviour encouraging Sport Management Practitioners to act ethically in the discharge of their responsibilities and when making ethical decisions and by supporting them when they do so;

1. To protect the organization and it employees from legal action;
2. To create an organization that operate consistently;
3. To produce good sport management practices;
4. To avoid unfavourable publicity;
5. To gain the goodwill of the community;
6. To operate with honesty and integrity, staying true to what to what we believe;
7. Operate according to our standards of ethical conduct-both in words and action (“walk the talk”);
8. Treat our colleagues, customers, and consumers as we want to be treated;
9. Strive to be the best at what matters most to our profession;
10. Accept personal responsibility for our actions;
11. Value diversity;
12. Make fact-based, principle-based decisions;

Objectives of the code of conduct for sport management practitioner

According to Majasan, (1996) the objectives of code of conduct for sports management professionals are:

- a. To guide the sport management practitioner in maintaining standards of ethical behaviour in his relationship with state and society, clients, profession and colleagues and oneself;
- b. To guide registered sport management practitioner in their daily discharge of duties as it will help to regulate professional behaviour in terms of safeguarding the interests of the community/school;
- c. To provide objective benchmarks for assessing sport management practitioner conduct and discharge of professional duties;
- d. To clarify the sport management practitioner rights, privilege, obligations and their legal bases;
- e. To re-awaking the sense of self-esteem, dignity, honour, service and moral rectitude of the sport management practitioner and re-affirm the sport management practitioner age-long position of leadership;
- f. To boost public confidence in the ability of the sport management practitioner profession to regulate itself and contribute meaningfully to national

development in order to enhance the professional image of sport management practitioners;

- g. To build a strong moral and ethical foundation for the actualization of sport society.

Major Ethical Perspectives

Table 1: Eleven major philosophical perspectives used to determine what is and what is not ethical as identified (Arnet, & Lewis, 2009)

Ethical Perspective	Basic Premises	Sports Management Application
Altruism	The standard is based on doing what is best or good for others.	Ethical business behaviour must be good for other people.
Categorical Imperative/Deontology	The standard is based on the notion that moral duties should be obeyed without exception. This perspective is very clear on good and what is bad-no middle ground.	There are clear sports management behaviours that are and are not ethical, so all individuals should avoid behaving unethically in sports.
Communitarianism	The standard is based on weather behaviour helps to restore the social fabric of society.	Sport manger must behave in a manner that helps the social fabric of society.
Cultural relativism	The standard is an individual's cultural or legal system of value. These standards differ from culture to culture.	1) The law determines sports management ethics. 2) One's nationalistic culture determines what is what is ethical. 3) One's organizational culture determines what is ethical.
Ethical Egonism	The standard is an individual's self-interest. Emphasis is on how one should behave, or it encourages people to look out for their own self-interests.	People in sports management should behave in whatever manner is most effective to achieve their self-interests
Justice	The standard is based on three principles of justice: 1) each person has a right to basic liberties; 2) everyone ought to be given the same chance to quality	Sport management decisions should be made on how the decisions will affect all relevant stakeholders equally. However, when stakeholders' needs are in

	for offices and jobs; and 3) when inequalities exist, a priority should be given to meeting the needs of the disadvantaged.	conflict, priority should be given to meeting the needs of these in subjugated stakeholder groups.
Nihilism	Ethic innately prevent individuals from creating new ideas and values that challenge the status quo, so individual of superior intellect should disavow any attempt by other to subject them to an ethical perspective.	Smart sport management people should not be hampered in their behaviour by any archaic or contemporary notions of good and bad management behaviour.
Psychological Egoism	The standard is an individual's self-interest. Emphasis is on how one actually behaves, or in everything we do is influenced by self-interested motives.	People in sports management actually behave in whatever manner is most effective to achieve their self-interests.
Social Relativism	The standard is the interests of my friends, group, or community.	People sports management should behave in a manner that is consistent with the interests of their social networks and communities.
Subjectivism	The standard is based on an individual's personal opinion of moral judgment. For this reason, perceptions of ethics differ from person to person.	Whatever an individual in sports management determines is ethical for her or his behaviour is ethical for that individual.
Utilitarianism	The standard is the greatest good for the greatest number of people.	People in sports management should behave in a manner that does the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people.

The eleven major philosophical traditions or ethical perspectives discussed in Table 1. Help to illustrate how varied the perspectives on ethics have been by various philosophical thinkers (Arnet & Lewis, 2009). The table is designed to briefly explain the philosophical perspective and then demonstrate how it can be applied in professional associations. Unfortunately, there is not one clear determination for what is or what is not ethical (Anderson 2007). What is term unethical behaviour in the

ethical matrix? Often times, however, determining the ethical nature of behaviour is difficult. Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond & McCroskey (2008) explain the Machiavellian ethic derives its name from Niccolo Machiavelli who believed that the ends justify the means.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The mission of sport management association is the attainment of professional excellence by determining who is a sport management practitioner; the standard of knowledge and skills required for registration and practice; guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for sport management practitioner, organizing Mandatory Continuing Professional discipline among sport management practitioner. Professional association is for the promotion of the member's professional growth, freedom, professional right and privilege also call for professional responsibilities it is in this context that professional code of ethic are formulated. Codes statements assert more specific behaviour responsibilities and serve many functions, some of which are:- Inspiration, Guidance, Education, Support for positive action, Deterrence and discipline, Enhance the profession's public image.

Based on the above assertions the following recommendations were made that:

1. There is the need for the setting up of sport management professional association to be call Nigerian Sport Management Association (NISMA) as currently there is no such association in existence;
2. When established, the association should have a professional creed or cannon for consideration of its members and this will require cooperation with a wide range of other professional bodies in the field, such as NAPER-SD, NASSM, NSHA and other closely related occupational and professional group; these is because developing a code of ethic for sport managers is problematical undertaking;
3. That NISMA should state out all the characteristic of professionals and government should consider that when making appointment;
4. That awareness should be created so that individuals become aware of things they stand to gain from best practice in professional sports management;
5. That sports management association ethics are the collective behaviours of its members, if each member acts ethically in the discharge of his professional conduct the action of the association will be ethical too, these implies that the starting place for ethics therefore is you. The ethical issue here is, are you an ethical person?

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