

RUNNING HEAD: COMMUNITY SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

**Power, Resources and Environmental Negotiation in Community Sport  
Organizations**

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### **Abstract**

This study sought to examine power, resources and environmental negotiation through an examination of the operations and governance of two Community Sport Organizations (CSOs) located in a mid-sized city in the Midwest region of the United States. This was undertaken by answering three research questions: (1) How does power shape the allocation of resources within CSOs? (2) How do CSOs secure access to resources from their organizational environments? and (3) How do CSOs attempt to manipulate their organizational environment?

The dissertation took a case study approach, combining documentary review with in-depth semi-structured interviews to develop a greater understanding of the CSOs under study and of the dynamics of power that animate the organizations' activities, decisions, and outlook. By using two theories of power, Lukes' Three Dimensional (3D) approach and Resource Dependence Theory (RDT), the dissertation examined both an institutional and episodic view of power, providing a richer view of power within the organizations under study.

In RQ1, the study finds that CSOs are willing to allocate resources to the social construction of their sport; that they are sensitive to threshold effects in resource allocation, meaning they provide resources up to the point that a need is met, and not beyond; and that gender played a role in internal resource allocation. In RQ2, the results indicated that the CSOs under study were able to secure resources from their environments through not valuing their institutional existence, and through working with their multi-level governance structures. RQ3 finds that CSOs used anticipatory

compliance with environmental actors and borrowing capacity of means to change their organizational environments.

The overall conclusion of the study notes that low organizational capacity in CSOs has considerable benefits to go with the drawbacks previously noted in the CSO and not-for-profit literatures. The study outlines that CSOs are able to use their low capacity status to help ensure their organizational environment remains passive, allowing them to maintain a focus on their members and mission while securing sufficient resources to survive. Further discussion of volunteer leadership being a type of participation in sport and of the challenges of studying CSOs, as well as participant recruitment, are also included.

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Over the course of my PhD work I have had employers and professional colleagues who have been understanding and supportive of my academic work. Staff meetings and board meeting alike were often interspersed with my reference to a theory or a paper that could easily (and often justifiably) have provoked exasperation, but instead was taken as a chance to take advantage of the work I had been doing. That open attitude on behalf of dozens of board members and members of my teams was and still is greatly appreciated.

My parents both worked hard to instil a desire for education, and more importantly modelled that behaviour in our home. Both my parents undertook to further their education in adulthood, making clear to me that education is indeed a lifelong process.

I have been working towards a PhD for nearly the entirety of my daughter's life. As she has made her own journey into school and becoming her own wonderful person at the same time, it is striking how she, my wife and my son have done more than I can put into words to help me. Their support, their love and their being who they are has helped more than anything imaginable in this process and has made every day better in the meantime.

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**List of Abbreviations**

|      |                                 |
|------|---------------------------------|
| 3D   | Three-Dimensional View of Power |
| CSO  | Community Sport Organization    |
| ISC  | Individual Sport Club           |
| LTAD | Long Term Athlete Development   |
| NSO  | National Sport Organization     |
| RDT  | Resource Dependence Theory      |
| RQ   | Research Question               |
| SIB  | Social Impact Bonds             |
| TSL  | Team Sport League               |
| US   | United States                   |

## **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

Sport participation includes thousands of athletes, coaches and officials annually (e.g, Physical Activity Council, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2008), of whom only a small portion competes at the highest levels of elite competition. One of the experiences shared by athletes of all levels, of all outlooks, and resulting in all outcomes is the local sport club, or community sport organization (CSO). As the bottleneck of the athlete experience, CSOs form an irreplaceable element in the execution of athlete development programming (Balyi, Cardinal, Higgs, Norris, & Way, 2005), efforts at athlete retention (Butcher, Lindner, & Johns, 2002), at retention of key volunteers (e.g, Cuskelly, 1995; Doherty & Carron, 2003; Doherty, Patterson, & Van Bussel, 2004), and, at retention of sport officials (S. Warner, Tingle, & Kellett, 2012).

Despite the clear emphasis on community sport, in reality, there is only a small, but growing, emphasis on the same in the sport management literature. While several studies exist at the national level (Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1995a; Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1995b; Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1995) and the provincial level (Inglis, 1997; Kikulis, Slack, Hinings, & Zimmermann, 1989), there is very little management-based scholarship in relation to the community level of sport in Canada, save for cases where community sport is used as a milieu for the development of a thesis outside the realm of sport, such as social capital (Sharpe, 2006). Outside of Canada, there is a limited, but instructive, body of literature on CSOs (Koski, 1995; Papadimitriou, 2002; Shilbury & Kellett, 2006). Anecdotally, there is considerable evidence that efforts to increase athlete retention (Butcher et al., 2002), and to disseminate national athlete development programs (Balyi et al., 2005), highlight CSOs as being the “bottleneck” of interest in the

dissemination plan. The above anecdotal evidence and the finding that 71 percent of Canadian sport organizations are local in scope (Mulholland, 2008), suggest strongly that the gap in the literature presents an area of particular interest to researchers and sport management practitioners alike.

As CSO research is still a nascent field, many areas can and should be examined. The “bottleneck” that is the CSO would indicate resource-based (human, financial, material, informational) and procedural issues as potential areas of investigation. These areas can be examined from an organizational theory or organizational behaviour or even strategic management approach. Given that developing a better understanding of the management of local sport organizations can focus on many different areas/levels of analysis, this dissertation focuses on the ongoing structural interplay at the local level between three aspects (resources, power, and environment) with one overarching, critical approach to the problem at hand. More specifically, I use a resource dependency perspective in relation to examining the acquisition of resources, a power and politics perspective in relation to examining the use of resources, and, finally, a resource dependency perspective in relation to examining how managers negotiate their environment. The focus on resources, power, and environment reflects that, as voluntary organizations, CSOs typically have difficulty securing key resources, and thus the power to do so, from an environment that is not munificent, as has been outlined in relation to CSO facility access by Misener (2009), is of particular explanatory utility. These three aspects combined and viewed through a critical lens provide findings that make an original contribution to the literature in sport management and in management writ large.

The purpose of this dissertation is therefore to view power, resources and environmental negotiation through an examination of the operations and governance of two non-profit CSOs located in a mid-sized city in the Midwest region of the United States (US). The dissertation builds on previous research regarding CSOs and provides insights into the unique realities of CSOs as voluntary sport organizations. The findings indicate that CSOs negotiate their environment in creative and perhaps counter-intuitive ways. As a whole, this dissertation will present, in the results, a notion of the CSO wherein a low capacity state is both a gift and a curse, allowing for access to some resources and preserving the essential nature of the organization while also constraining access to resources and the ability of the CSO to serve broader societal interests. The findings and conclusion provide insight into resources, power and environmental negotiation and implications for CSO researchers and managers, as well as those working with CSOs.

The remainder of this introduction chapter outlines the context of the study (the CSO), the key theoretical concepts that will be developed throughout the dissertation, as well as a reader's guide to the remaining chapters. Sections on extant CSO scholarship, Resource Dependence Theory (RDT), Power, and Lukes' three dimensions of power (3D) will provide the reader with a framework for the remainder of the dissertation.

### **The CSO Defined**

This dissertation uses the CSO definition developed by Doherty and Misener (2008): "CSOs are non-profit, voluntary organizations that provide many of the recreational and competitive sport activities we enjoy in our communities" (p. 114). This definition of a CSO is useful in that it provides some parameters around the concept,

while still acknowledging that the very notion of the CSO is not an objective or stable conception. Compounding the confusion is that most everyone who has been involved in sport has had direct contact with CSOs at some point, creating many personal definitions of the term in addition to academic lack of clarity.

Unpacking this definition, the term non-profit is a clear point of demarcation. That CSOs are resident only in the non-profit sector in this definition makes a material difference to their study. That these organizations are categorized by their economic structure does not preclude further examination based on structural (e.g., Mintzberg, 1979) grounds as well. While non-profit sport organizations are certainly not exempt from acting like firms (e.g., Mason, Thibault, & Misener, 2006; Stevens, 2006), this distinction is meaningful. For the purpose of this dissertation, the non-profit prong of the definition excluded for-profit ventures, such as martial arts clubs, that may have been doing much of the same work as their non-profit counterparts. From the perspective of an athlete or participant, the non-profit/for-profit distinction may well be unimportant, as the profit orientation may not be as important as the services provided. However, from an organizational view, this distinction is an important delineation, especially in considering the internal coalitions that form the organization (Mintzberg, 1984). The non-profit orientation also excluded agencies of the state, such as municipal parks and recreation departments. This is not to posit that either of these delivery methods is unimportant in the overall development of sport and athletes, but that this dissertation has focused on the CSO as its particular interest. Given the challenges of defining the concept, the attempt by Doherty and Misener is a very good start on developing a

rigorous definition, and this attempt will be a useful guide in the remainder of the dissertation.

Within broader organizational theory contexts, CSOs can also be defined as a subset of non-profit “mutual aid organizations” as elucidated by Hodgett and Bishop: “They are collectives which are self-organized, productive and which, by and large, consume their own products” (p. 24, 1985). CSOs are primarily concerned with providing service to their own members or participants and are largely self-organized with only some guidance or direction from other organizations, such as National Sport Organization (NSOs) (e.g., Taylor, 2004) through certification requirements or competition structures. The placement of CSOs within the broader context of the ‘mutual aid’ organization also provides an avenue for an ongoing examination of CSOs from the perspective of the development of social capital (e.g., Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu, 1988; Putnam, 1995).

### **The CSO in Sport and Athlete Development**

The basic model of sport development remains contested, but a constant in scholarship has been that CSOs provide the primary point of entry into the system. Green (2005) developed a model of the sport development pyramid in which the base level was a point of entry, the biggest tranche, and was situated almost entirely within CSOs. Shilbury, Dimitriou and Green (2008) conceived of a three-phase sport development process that bore little resemblance to the pyramid model, but nonetheless had CSOs occupying the most populous, “Attraction” phase. In Canada, CSOs have been identified as a key element in sport development (cf. Balyi et al., 2005; Government of Canada, 2012), and similar assertions are found in Australia (cf. M. Green & Collins, 2008; Hoye,

2006; Shilbury & Kellett, 2006), Norway (Steen-Johnsen, 2008), England (Taylor, 2004), and in the US (B. C. Green, 2005). Research on sport drop-out causes and rates (Butcher et al., 2002), volunteer engagement (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007) and officials' dropout (e.g., Hoye & Cuskelly, 2004; Kellett & Shilbury, 2007; S. Warner et al., 2012) all point to the concept that a majority of the outcomes (both salubrious and negative) in a sport system will be situated at the CSO level. The CSO is an important point of entry and vehicle of development for participants in most sport systems.

### **Overview of the CSO Literature**

The literature on CSOs is burgeoning, providing an ever-increasing body of work from which to draw empirical and theoretical guidance. But, the nature of any burgeoning field of endeavour is that there is still much work yet to be done. The recent increase in scholarship in this area has certainly closed many gaps in our knowledge about CSOs, but it has also created new questions that need to be addressed for scholars and managers alike. In this section, I outline the existing scholarship in CSOs and situate that scholarship within the context of this dissertation. The review of the literature will demonstrate that much of the study of CSOs to date has "...a growing focus on its purported role in helping to achieve social policy objectives that range from individual physical and emotional health to community cohesion" (Doherty & Cousens, 2013, p. 419). The focus in the literature on the impacts of CSOs on their communities is important scholarship that enhances our understanding of the role of sport in society, but leaves a gap in terms of the study of the CSOs themselves, along with the impact of their communities on them. The following sections demonstrate that this dissertation is a step towards addressing that gap.

Social capital has been a vital element of CSO scholarship to date (Doherty & Cousens, 2013); and in fact, the notion of social capital is a running theme in much of the extant CSO scholarship. Social capital theory has had considerable public scrutiny, especially following Putnam's (1995) *Bowling Alone* thesis, placing the notion in the public sphere (Glover & Hemingway, 2005) and in the realm of decision makers with the state. While criticized for over-application (Hemingway, 2006), the thesis has persisted and become a useful investigatory lens for CSO scholarship in particular.

An exploration of social capital necessitates an initial examination of the notion of capital and of field as developed by Bourdieu (e.g., 1986; 1988). Bourdieu defined social capital thusly:

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a ‘credential’ which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 286)

Using Hodgett and Bishop's (1985) formulation of the “mutual aid organization,” there is considerable overlap between the idea of social capital and the idea of forming community groups such as CSOs. Bourdieu was clear, though, that the social capital accumulated in a particular setting may not fully translate to another setting, or field (cf. Hoibian, 2006). In sport, the idea of social capital has particular traction given the necessity of working together for even the simplest of competitions, where a minimum of two people must organize a match at a particular time and place.

Sharpe (2006) was among the first to use social capital as the primary theoretical tool in the examination of CSOs. Her work was instructive to the current dissertation in that it applied the notion of social capital to the ongoing operation of the club as opposed to simply working to monitor the generation of capital. Other studies have emphasized that the CSO is a vehicle for the generation of social capital that can benefit communities in general (Doherty & Misener, 2008; Glover & Hemingway, 2005; Hoyer & Nicholson, 2009; Putnam, 1995), and marginalized groups within a community (e.g., Frisby, Reid, Millar, & Hoeber, 2005; Hoyer & Nicholson, 2009; Maxwell, Foley, Taylor, & Burton, 2014; Skinner, Zakus, & Cowell, 2008).

The utility of social capital as a means to examine the role of CSOs in their community is made clear by the extant scholarship. The broader impacts form an important part of our understanding of CSOs and their role in sport broadly. The present dissertation does not emphasize this particular vein of inquiry, as it uses the CSO proper as its focal point, rather than the broader impacts of these organizations. As is noted by Sharpe (2006), the accumulation of capital within a CSO can impact resource distribution, and this finding is germane to the present dissertation. More will be presented on the applicability of capital in Chapter 7.

Aside from social capital, another key vein of research in CSOs has been their ability to generate outcomes on behalf of other stakeholders, most often the state (Enjolras, 2002; Wicker, Breuer, & Hennigs, 2012; Wicker, Filo, & Cuskelly, 2013). Research to either empirically measure that impact, or to examine the impact of the intervention on the focal CSO, is another area of interest in the literature. Horch (1994a) found that increasing funding and other support from government decreased the self-

reported autonomy of CSOs in Germany. He also found that the diminution of autonomy was lower when the external body was in a closer relationship with the CSO, meaning that federal government funding decreased autonomy the most while NSO funding did so the least. He explained the dependence using RDT as a theoretical framework, and drew upon institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) and Lukes' three-dimensional (3D) model of power (Lukes, 2005) to explain the apparent reluctance of the federal government to more fully assert what was clearly considerable influence over the CSOs. Horch's work in this case has provided a foundation for numerous other scholars to examine the operation of CSOs, as opposed to the impact of CSOs on the sport system or their community.

For example, Enjolras (2002) examined the commercialization of Norwegian CSOs, concluding that clubs in that nation were largely taking on a more commercial orientation, led by the sports where a private operator would be best positioned to take on functions of the CSO. He also found higher levels of commercialization among individual sport clubs and among clubs with a more competitive orientation on their respective fields of play. Of particular note is the finding of meaningful difference in the strategy and structure of clubs based on their field of play reality (individual versus team in this case). This conclusion responds to Chalip's (2006) call for management research that is distinctively of a sporting nature, and also provides a basic typology of CSOs for future empirical work.

Next, organizational capacity has been a key construct for analysis in the case of CSOs and other voluntary sport organizations. Kikulis, Slack and colleagues, in studying numerous Canadian sport organizations, examined capacity based on internal resources

(Kikulis et al., 1995a; Kikulis et al., 1995b) and internal structures (Kikulis et al., 1989). Their work was echoed by Inglis (1997) at the provincial level, and by other authors working at the national level in Canada (Amis & Slack, 1996; Amis, Slack, & Hinings, 2004), and in Australia (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2003; Wicker et al., 2013). The notion of capacity as an internal attribute of CSOs is only contested in the literature when applied to facility access, where access is seen as equivalent to (or at least as good as) control (Doherty & Misener, 2008; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006). Where there is a marked change in organizational capacity, such as found by Stevens (2006) in Canada and Horch (1998; 1994a; 1994b) in Germany, the capacity of the organization was controlled or overtly possessed by the focal organizations.

Finally, CSO scholarship has also delved into less esoteric grounds that are geared towards a better understanding of the internal functions of CSOs. These studies have been narrower in scope but often provide vital instruction to scholars and managers seeking to better understand CSOs. Work on volunteer management in CSOs (Cuskelly, 1995; Doherty & Carron, 2003; Doherty, 2006) has developed a view of voluntary contributions as being tied to high functioning committees, role clarity, and cohesiveness of the voluntary boards or committees. In addition to committee function, ownership and control of sporting facilities (Enjolras, 2002; Mills & Hoeber, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2009) has been found to correspond to higher levels of achievement and durability of CSOs. Access to external social networks (Misener & Doherty, 2009; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Thibault & Harvey, 1997) that include private sector and state nodes have been found to be important for the growth and the internal function of CSOs. In Greece, the relationship between the CSO leadership and its

coaches was found to be a predictor of organizational goal achievement as well (Papadimitriou, 2002). Innovation within CSOs has been studied (Hoeber & Hoeber, 2012), linking technological adoption processes with the localized reality of the focal organization. All of the above cited studies form the growing body of CSO scholarship that, while the literature remains nascent, leaves significant room for further research.

Given the geographic situation of the present dissertation, a note is required on CSO scholarship based in the US. The bulk of CSO research has been based in Europe, Australia and Canada (Doherty & Cousens, 2013), and the gap on US-based research is rather stark. In a few cases, CSOs are referenced in US studies, but usually only to contextualize broader studies of sport systems (e.g., B. C. Green, 2005) or, in some cases, to problematize CSOs as part of an issue in which the personal development of participants is subjugated to the organizational or team goals for championships (e.g., Bowers & Green, 2013). Work on attrition among sport officials (S. Warner et al., 2012) is among the rare examples of sport management scholarship clearly situated at the CSO level. The lack of literature emanating from US-based CSO studies is particularly confounding given the apparent public interest (e.g., The Aspen Institute, 2014) in CSOs and youth sport. The role of CSOs in the US sport system and comparison of US-based CSOs versus those in more studied locales represents a current gap in the CSO and sport management literature.

In summary, the above paragraphs demonstrate that, in the last 10 to 15 years, there has been a strong interest from scholars in CSOs and how CSOs can shed light on sport systems, social development goals, and managerial theory. While meaningful work has been done recently in this area, the knowledge gap relative to other levels of sport

systems, such as provincial sport organizations (e.g., Inglis, 1997; Shilbury & Kellett, 2006) and NSOs (e.g., Amis et al., 2004; Ferkins, Shilbury, & McDonald, 2009; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2003; Kikulis et al., 1995a; Kikulis et al., 1995b; Parent & Patterson, 2013; Sam, 2009; Slack & Hinings, 1992; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Stevens, 2006; White Morrow & Chelladurai, 1992), remains large. I argue that a full understanding of sport, sport development and sport management requires further examination of the base level of the athlete experience, the CSO. This section outlined some of the theoretical perspectives scholars have deployed in CSO research. In the following section, I will turn to the concepts that have been used in this dissertation to provide insight into CSOs.

## **Power**

The literature is replete with definitions of the concept of power. In this section, I use two of the primary contributions to this question as candidates for a viable definition, resulting in a conclusion that the definition elucidated by Dahl (1957) provides a utilizable, functional definition that is supple enough to be used in various applications. The conclusion that Dahl's conceptualization is more appropriate for this dissertation stands in contrast to Weber's negatively framed definition that can make it difficult to operationalize the concept in research, theory development, or practice. The use of Dahl's definition of power lends further weight to the immanence of power (Rail & Harvey, 1995) and its durable applicability to sport studies.

Dahl (1957) defined power simply, noting, "My intuitive idea of power, then, is something like this: *A* has power over *B* to the extent that he can get *B* to do something that *B* would not otherwise do" (p. 202-203). Dahl's simple definition of power belied his underlying understanding of its immanence, "The concept of power is as ancient and

ubiquitous as any that social theory can boast” (p. 201). As power is ubiquitous in human experience and the study thereof, simplicity is needed to understand the concept amid innumerable other variables. Beyond its simplicity, Dahl’s definition of power is affirmative and thus can be viewed as being present in gradients. The positive definition of power allows for a social actor to have a small amount or a significant amount of power, a degree of flexibility not afforded by all definitions. Dahl’s definition of power is elemental to the study of power by subsequent thinkers, including Lukes (1974; Lukes & Haglund, 2005) for the reasons noted above and is, pertinently, of use in sport studies.

Weber (1999) defined power in the negative, as opposed to Dahl’s positive view of the concept. Weber stated, “In general, we understand by ‘power’ the change of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a social action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action” (p. 83). Using the same rubric as Dahl’s definition, it could be restated as “The ability of *A* to get *B* to do something that *B* would not have otherwise done, counter to resistance from *B*”. Weber’s concept of power is a binary view in that power is either sufficient to overcome the resistance of *B*, or not. The view of power also mandates resistance, meaning that power can only exist in the presence of an overt conflict with other participants in the action. If one sets aside the semantic differences, the outcomes of power are the same in the two definitions outlined above, but the relative semantic rigidity of Weber’s definition confers less ability to apply to real-world problems of power than the more flexible, more positive view expressed by Dahl.

That Dahl’s concept of power does not mandate the presence of an overt conflict is central to Lukes’ (1974) 3D concept of power. Lukes’ thesis is that power can exist in

the face of overt conflict, as a means to prevent a conflict from becoming overt and as a means of ensuring that the presence of a conflict is unknown to social actor *B* (and at times, even, social actor *A*). Lukes' model of a third dimension of power "problematizes consensus" (Fletcher, 1992, p. 31), suggesting that "power is being exercised whenever it can be determined that a group's best interests are not being served" (p. 31). In terms of settling upon a definition of power, Lukes' contribution comes through de-necessitating a conflict. Dahl's core definition provides an affirmative, useful definition of power, and Lukes' work (Lukes, 2002; Lukes, 1974; Lukes & Haglund, 2005) builds on that definition, making use of the flexibility to better apply the concept of power in more social settings. Lukes' definitional work, based on Dahl's foundations, provides a fruitful application in the field of the sport studies. There are many research contexts in which Weber's concept of power is germane (Stokes & Clegg, 2002), and especially where a conflict is overt. However, this dissertation deals with overt conflict as well as evidence of power that is unseen to both parties, meaning that Weber's work is not as optimal a theoretical frame in this case.

The definitions of power created by both Dahl and Weber assume a modality of power that exists at the level of the individual actor (be it an individual person or a collectivity). Marxist conceptions of power focus on the power of entire classes to change their station in the greater society (Beamish, 2002). In this section, I outline key debates in reference to class in sport studies, concluding that Lukes' (1974) conception of power provides a basis for viewing power at both the atomistic and collective levels.

From the Marxist perspective, sport can be viewed as nothing more than an oppressive reproduction of the capitalist structure (Brohm, 1978), or as an idealistic, pure

expression of humanity, freed of all oppressive structures, a perspective outlined though disputed by Gruneau (1983). The collective view of sport and of power expressed within is much more likely to reside in the space between the two extremes. Gruneau (1983) develops a lucid, comprehensive view of this debate within the realm of sport and concludes that sport is a means of class oppression and of development of class advancement. Gruneau's analysis begins with an exposition of the content and importance of Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (2007). Veblen's analysis of the production and reproduction of the leisure class suffers from a negative, normative view of the concept of leisure but does provide considerable support for Gruneau's thesis of the role of sport in the production and reproduction of class power, "To such an extent that this is true, that many ostensible works of disinterested public spirit are no doubt initiated and carried on with a view primarily to the enhanced reputation, or even the pecuniary gain, of their promoters" (Veblen, 2007, pp. 221). In unpacking this statement, one sees that Veblen's view of public service both enhances the station of the classes served and the position of the services' upper class patrons. The act produces, reproduces, undercuts and supports the current structure simultaneously. The apparent contradiction of the previous statement is further developed by Gruneau, viewed from the perspective of the historical position of Canadian sport:

My argument is that Canadians have always existed in a setting of expanding and contracting opportunities and choices, and that these expansions and contractions have been intimately connected to the struggles over scarce resources, forms of technical and moral control in the society, and the differential capacity of some

groups to manufacture consent and define “acceptable” ways of doing things.

(Gruneau, 1983, p. 103-104)

The contradiction above is between the narrow or broad application of power in sport, but it also illustrates how sport can be simultaneously a location of the exercise and derivation of power. Gruneau’s analysis insists that sport is neither a “prison in measured time” (Brohm, 1978) nor the reification of true human expression through play. Gruneau rejects the “either/or” views of sport and instead insists upon a more nuanced approach that does not shun, but embraces the complexity of the social milieu. In the study of management, Gruneau’s rejection of simple categorizations in favour of complexity is echoed by Gummesson (2008). In the examination of power in sport studies, Gruneau’s rejection of simple dichotomy is reflected by Lukes’ (1974) use of both individual and collectivist examples in terms of his description of the third dimension of power and in terms of his exposition on the relationship between power and structure (Lukes, 1977).

Concepts of power in sport are often applied under the concept of governance. The governance of CSOs is not covered extensively in the literature, in favour of NSOs or the governance of the system as a whole. At the local level, Vail (2007a) developed the notion of the community champion in the creation of sport organizations, and Sharpe (2006) used the principles of social capital in outlining the power over resource allocation within a local softball club. In both cases, the application of power within the organization and on behalf of the organization, in relation to the environment, was found to be germane to a better understanding of the organizations under study.

In sport, but beyond the realm of the CSO, power has been used extensively to further understand NSOs in Canada (Kikulis et al., 1995a; Kikulis et al., 1995b; Mason &

Slack, 2005; Slack & Hinings, 1992; Stevens, 2006), in New Zealand (e.g., Chalip, 1996; Ferkins, Shilbury, & McDonald, 2005; Ferkins et al., 2009) in Europe (e.g., Papadimitriou, 2002; Smith, 2009; Steen-Johnsen, 2008), and in the US (B. C. Green, 2005). The examination of power in sport organizations has been a fruitful vein of study in several sport settings. Power has proven to be fundamental to understanding organizations (Pfeffer, 2013; 1992; 2007), and sport management scholars have engaged in power as a lens, though not often specifically in the CSO field of application.

This dissertation makes use of Dahl's definition of power, noted above, and examines power through the lens of resource dependence, informed by Lukes' (2005) concept of power as having three distinct dimensions. With a core definition in hand, more will be presented on theories of power and their applicability to the dissertation later in this section. In order to situate the dissertation more fully, I will first provide more review of the literature in relation to RDT, then returning to the power literature with RDT in mind in order to complete the review.

### **Resource Dependence Theory (RDT)**

Dahl's definition of power is instructive given its simplicity and its flexibility. But, the concept of power requires a more discrete working definition in order to be applicable in a managerial setting. Pfeffer and Salancik's (1978) seminal work elucidating RDT provides much of the management-specific conceptualizations of power. Pfeffer and Salancik outlined a concept of organizational power, wherein control of resources is the only effective measure for power and dependence on resources is the only effective measure of being subject to power. Subsequent to the seminal work,

Pfeffer summarized this position succinctly by creating a ‘New Golden Rule,’ “the person with the gold makes the rules” (Pfeffer, 1992, p. 83).

RDT can provide theoretical grounding for the examination of organizations and their relationships to their environments. RDT views resources not as a means to an organizational end (such as profitability), but elemental to the survival to the organization, “The key to organizational survival is the ability to acquire and maintain resources” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 2). The view of the organization as being inexorably tied to its context is an outcropping of the open systems view of the organization (Scott, 1998), wherein the boundaries of the organization are entirely permeable and are in fact difficult to even discern. That “no organization is an island” may seem self-evident, but this approach opens new views of the organization and the environment from which it springs. In the case of CSOs, the openness of the organization is nearly beyond debate in that participants often compete in more than one sport, parents support children in other activities, and facilities are leased or purchased from other organizations or the state. That organizations seek to reduce uncertainty is clear, and the RDT perspective allows a view of the organization where certainty of resources is the same as organizational certainty – a state universally sought by organizations.

Certainty is sought but never completely or permanently found in the organizational setting. The compromise position is one of minimized dependence on other organizations for the resources needed to survive (Casciaro & Piskorski, 2005). A local basketball club, for instance, must seek access to a gym in order to survive – there is no other viable option if the club values its own existence. With dependence, comes

external control from other organizations (in this example, the municipality that may lease field time). RDT envisions ten primary conditions that can lead to dependence on the part of a focal organization (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). These ten conditions can certainly apply to the CSO and can be an *a priori* test for dependence. Using the example of a local basketball club's dependence on a gym for court time as an illustration, Pfeffer and Salancik's ten conditions are outlined below:

- *Awareness*: the municipality must be aware of the basketball clubs' demand for resources.
- *Resource flow*: the municipality must actually supply at least some gym time to the club in order to engender dependence.
- *Criticality*: the use of the gym must be critical to the survival of the basketball club – if alternative facilities are readily available dependence will not result.
- *Non-Substitutability*: the club must not readily have other options for gym time available to them in order to ensure dependence.
- *Non-reciprocity*: dependence will not occur if the basketball club holds another resource, such as exclusive rights to another facility that the municipality requires for its operations.
- *Visibility*: the actions of the basketball club must be sufficiently visible so that the municipality can judge if its demands (if any) are being met.
- *Non-Conflicting Demands*: compliance with the demands of the municipality must not be in conflict with the demands of other social actors on which the club is dependent.

- *Uncontrolled demands*: in this example, the members of the basketball club may be able to exert a modicum of control over what demands the municipality makes (through democratic governance and advocacy), but as individual voters, they do not exert a meaningful ability to change the demands that are to be made of them by the municipality.
- *Ability to perform*: the basketball club must be able to actually adhere to the demands made on it by the municipality.
- *Desire to exist*: the basketball club must actually desire to exist in order for dependence to be meaningful.

The challenge for the basketball club in the example above is to secure the needed resource (access to a gym) while subjecting itself to as few of the conditions above as possible. CSOs may use many strategies to minimize dependence on the external environment, but they will not eliminate them. One of the means for dilution of dependence is to create interdependence. By developing countervailing dependencies, the focal organization can minimize net dependency, while still securing resources from the environment. In the basketball example, the club may strive to take on a specific role in the maintenance of the gym, creating some reciprocal dependence on the part of the municipality. The concept of reciprocal dependence or countervailing influence has been criticized for its over-simplistic depiction of the environment (Casciaro & Piskorski, 2005) but has proven valuable when examining career development paths (Sherer & Lee, 2002) and in the case of family leave policies (Ingram & Simons, 1995), for instance. In this dissertation, I have been cognizant of Casciaro and Piskorski's (2005) assertions that complexity of the environment makes straight line assertions about power imbalances

difficult to apply. The above basketball example is instructive but does not capture the complexity of linkages that are likely to be present at the local level; thus, actual examples of this framework in the data are not as straight-forward as in this illustrative example (Misener & Doherty, 2009).

RDT applied to CSOs can provide insight into how these organizations function and how they interact with their environment. Sport management studies based on a RDT perspective (e.g., Armstrong-Doherty, 1996; Thibault & Harvey, 1997) have used a survey-based methodology, focussing on financial resources, though Wicker and Breuer (2011) expanded their analysis to the five dimensions of capacity (human resources, financial, relationship, network and infrastructure) outlined previously by Hall (2003). The present study, using qualitative methodologies, provided a thicker dataset within its smaller sample size. Thicker data answer Armstrong-Doherty's (1996) long-standing call, for a broader view of resource dependence in sport organizations:

Besides financial interdependence, there has been very little investigative consideration of the environment's dependence on the focal organization. Such an investigation would enhance the understanding of organization-environment relations and facilitate the consideration of organizational strategies for managing the power-dependence relationship and consequent control. (p. 62)

Within broader sport management scholarship, RDT has provided utility as a theoretical lens for the study of board effectiveness. Hoye and Doherty (2011) situated RDT as a key underlying theoretical plank in their model of non-profit board effectiveness. Their emphasis on RDT was preceded by work by Miller-Millesen (2003),

who emphasized that RDT can provide particular insight into the relationship a non-profit organization has with its environment, “Resource dependence theory highlights the board’s boundary spanning responsibility and provides insight into the ways in which power and influence have the capacity to bias resource allocation decisions” (p. 522). Specifically at the level of the NSO, Slack and Hinings (1992) found that RDT provided partial explanation for NSOs’ reactions to funding changes by the federal government (Sport Canada), “The extent to which the interest group, Sport Canada, has discretion over the resource allocation can be seen predominantly in its ability to make rules about the use of the resource and to regulate its possession and allocation” (p. 121). These examples demonstrate that RDT has been an effective theoretical approach to non-profit organizations generally, and sport organizations specifically.

Drees and Heugens (2013) conducted a meta-analysis of RDT and found that in-sourcing resource needs was useful operationally, but conferred little legitimacy on the focal organization, “in-sourcing arrangement may be instrumental in terms of countering resource dependencies, but since they do not liaise the focal organization with admired external constituents, they cannot act as a conduit for positive legitimacy spillovers” (p. 1688). Davis and Greve (1997) suggested that board interlocks, a key tenet of environmental negotiation, had detrimental impacts on shareholders but positive impacts on the boards and senior management, further indicating that interaction with the environment can have meaningful resource impacts on the organization. Katila, Rosenberger, and Eisenhardt (2008) built on the scholarship in relation to environmental negotiation by coining the term “Swimming with Sharks” (p. 326) to describe the defensive mechanisms used by new firms to enter into resource exchanges while avoiding

the resource misallocation that may result from the dependency. Of note in relation to CSOs is that cash on hand was an important defensive mechanism, and firms that lacked the ability to defend against resource misallocation were more hesitant to engage with other actors in their environment.

Hillman, Withers and Collins (2009) reviewed the state of RDT literature, demonstrating an ongoing emphasis on formal interorganizational linkages, such as mergers, acquisitions and joint ventures. As a suggestion for future RDT study, they recommended combining RDT with other theoretical viewpoints, “research using RDT has a long history of integration with other theoretical perspectives to examine the phenomenon of interest” (p. 1416). This dissertation therefore follows Hillman et al.’s recommendation.

In the conclusion to their book outlining RDT, Pfeffer and Salancik outlined three primary roles for management. These are symbolic, responsive and discretionary (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), and they can form a lens through which to view managerial action. The symbolic role of management is essentially a means to send messages to other organizations (e.g., “under new management”) or to use management to create new connections with social actors. The responsive role of management involves sorting through the demands placed on the organization from its environment and determining to whom a response is necessary. Finally, the discretionary role of management envisions actions taken by the organization not to react to their environment, but to change it. These three roles for management are reflected in Thiel and Meyer’s (2009) study of German sport clubs, wherein they defined the three primary roles of the sports club as cultivating traditions (symbolic role); providing sports programs (discretionary role); and

representing members' interests (responsive role) (p. 86). The confluence of the literature between RDT and the CSO scholarship presents an opportunity to further evaluate the efficacy and applicability of RDT in the CSO setting (cf. Horch, 1994b).

### **Resources and Power: A Radical View**

Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) equated resources with power throughout their exposition of RDT, specifically in terms of countervailing power. They noted, however, that the role of power vis-à-vis a relationship with the environment is paralleled with an internal power dynamic within the organization. RDT posits that membership in an organization is not possible for any social actor, only the contribution of resources to that organization; and the ability to withhold that contribution is, by definition, power. The internally countervailing power concept is further elucidated by Jun and Armstrong (1997) who developed a matrix of the influence generated by different activities (e.g., volunteering, leading, donating) of members in two church communities. CSOs, with similar traditional reliance on internal members for resources (M. Green & Collins, 2008; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006), can be expected to have similar internal power relations.

The present study extends beyond the view of power as being a proxy for resources. Using Lukes' (1974) concept of three dimensions of power, this dissertation examines the internal contributions of members as a power relation. The use of power as a specific construct is supported by Pfeffer's (1992) contention that power is undeniably an element of any organization, "Today, more than ever, it is necessary to study power and to learn to use it skillfully, since we cannot otherwise hope to gain individual success in organizations or the success of the organizations themselves" (p. 8).

Lukes' (1974) view of power provides the multi-faceted and dynamic understanding of the concept that can provide a useful frame through which to examine the power relations of CSOs. Lukes builds upon the above developed concept of power, whereby power is simply the ability of one actor to get another to do something. From there, he moves on to the ability to suppress from consideration the concerns of another social actor, and finally the ability to keep the other social actor from even forwarding their position, a radical view that "problematizes" (Fletcher, 1992) consensus. As CSOs operate with agendas, both metaphorical and literal, Lukes' concept of power is an appropriate tool for this setting.

Lukes' (1974) concept of power is a three dimensional view. The first view, "involves a focus on behaviour, in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests" (p. 15). The second dimension of power is more sophisticated, acknowledging that not making a decision can also be an exercise of power: "it allows for the consideration of the ways in which decisions are prevented from being taken on potential issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests" (p. 20). The third and final dimension of power subsumes the other two and adds further considerations, stating that it:

... allows for consideration of the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics, whether through the operation of social forces and institutional practices or through individuals decisions. This, moreover, can occur in the absence of actual, observable conflict, which may have been successfully averted – though there remains here an implicit reference to potential conflict (p. 24).

These three definitions outline a cascading definition, starting with the simplest, conflict-based definition (one dimensional), adding complexity and considerations until arriving at the third dimension of power. The three dimensions do not conflict as Lukes contends that power can be exercised in any of the three dimensions outlined. In the study of CSOs, all three dimensions of power can come into consideration. Certainly, the first dimension of power is intuitively familiar to anyone in any organization, where there is a conflict and power is exerted to win the said conflict. The second dimension may still be familiar to most, where the exercise of power is the ability to determine what questions and decisions are addressed and when. The third dimension of power is less intuitive and relates to the exercise of power that prevents questions from ever being asked. I shall now deal with this dimension further.

Lukes' (1974) conception of the third dimension of power notes that preventing discussion is an exercise of power. He cites the example of the ongoing exclusion of blacks from Baltimore's political institutions.

The analysis remains superficial precisely because it confines itself to studying individual decisions made to avert potentially threatening demands from becoming politically dangerous. A deeper analysis would also concern itself with all the complex and subtle ways in which the inactivity of leaders and the sheer weight of institutions – political, industrial and educational – served for so long to keep the blacks out of Baltimore politics; and indeed for a long period kept them from even trying to get into it. (pp. 37-38)

The ability of social actors to prevent an issue from ever being raised is elemental to the exercise of real power in an organizational setting. Lukes conceptualized that the ability

to suppress questions can be called “inducement”, “encouragement” or “persuasion” (p. 36). Lukes acknowledged the probable fallacy of determining what would have happened, rather than what did happen, but he did note that there are several opportunities for empirical assessment of the third dimension of power despite this challenge. In this dissertation, the third dimension of power explains the established “way of doing things” that can hold considerable sway in organizations, including CSOs. As the present study of CSOs focuses on their operations and governance, the dispensation of power within the organization and especially the development of what questions are addressed are particularly germane. Lukes’ assessment of the three dimensions provides considerable utility in this study and can provide similar utility in sport management scholarship.

### **Power: Competing Perspectives**

This subsection will delve further into the concept of power and provide alternate views of the concept. These perspectives will further enumerate power as a theoretical tool, and will demonstrate the efficacy of the RDT/3D approach in this dissertation.

Lukes developed a theory of power that corrects for the impact of luck (Lukes & Haglund, 2005), and in so doing, provides a strong endorsement of Bourdieu’s concept of power in society, “His empirically-based work certainly illustrates both the pervasiveness and the significance of symbolic power relations sustained through the transmission and internalization of tacit knowledge in ways that actors may neither know nor intend” (Lukes & Haglund, 2005, p. 57-58). It is in the unconscious accrual and exercise of power that Bourdieu’s scholarship develops a succinct, useful concept of power. Bourdieu’s formulation of capital assumes that capital is synonymous with power, as it

“amounts to the same thing” (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 97). Bourdieu developed a typology of the forms of capital, which is quite useful for methodological purposes; but, for this section, I shall concentrate on his exposition of what capital is, given the direct connection with power. Capital is a means of conceptualizing the fact that some advantages in life are conferred through means such as inheritance, wherein the social actors are not only able to derive power, but to accumulate (Bourdieu, 1986) and transfer it as well (e.g., Hoibian, 2006). Bourdieu’s notion of capital is compelling in that it can be self-sustaining,

Capital, which in its objectified or embodied forms, takes time to accumulate and which, as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form, contains a tendency to persist in its being, is a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible.

(Bourdieu, 2001, pp. 96)

Bourdieu’s notion of the persistence of capital is espoused not only by Lukes but also by Veblen (2007), who remarked on the fact that members of the leisure class maintained their leisure class accoutrements even after they could no longer afford to do so – for them, changing class status was objectively impossible.

Bourdieu’s conception of power is focussed on the concept of habitus (cf. Bourdieu, 1988), or the sum of the dispositions of individuals, groups and societies. Like Lukes, Bourdieu contends that this is a contested ground constantly subject to production and reproduction. Where Bourdieu’s analysis is narrower than that of Lukes it is in Lukes’ analysis where there is a focus on behaviour as a meaningful representation of power:

Thus I conclude that this first, one-dimensional, view of power involves a focus on behaviour in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation. (Lukes, 1974, pp. 15)

In the case above, Lukes is referring to the first dimension of power, but his concession that behaviour is elemental to the continuum of power allows for an explanation of the power expressed conceptually via habitus, but also the crude, quotidian power of brute force exercised by senior managers over employees or by states over populations.

As with Bourdieu, Michel Foucault's analysis of power is effective in its understanding of the subjectification of the person and the corresponding power over the subject,

It is a form of power that makes the individual subjects. There are two meanings of the word subject; subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to. (Foucault, 1994, pp. 221)

Foucault developed a concept of power wherein the subjectification of the individual was the primary form of power, or of domination (Foucault, 1994). The subjectification as a means of power was joined by surveillance, discipline and bio-power as the foundational concepts (Rail & Harvey, 1995) of Foucault's oeuvre. Foucault's work developed a concept of power that was at once structurally immanent (Rail & Harvey, 1995) and was exceptionally applicable to sport studies, given the emphasis on the discipline of the body (Maguire, 2002; Markula & Pringle, 2006; Rail & Harvey, 1995). Despite Foucault's masterful exposition of the topic of subjectification, his analysis of power does not fully

align with this dissertation's purpose in the same manner as does Bourdieu. Foucault envisions three forms of struggle,

Generally, it can be said that there are three types of struggles: either against forms of domination (ethnic, social and religious); against forms of exploitation which separate individuals from what they produce; or against the ties the individual to himself submits him to others in this way (struggles against subjectification, against forms of subjectivity and submission). (Foucault, 1994, p. 221)

Although Foucault discussed struggle in the passage above, his focus is clearly on struggle against structure and against class position. Like Bourdieu, he does not attempt to account for the diaspora of potential power relations, leading to my conclusion that while both Bourdieu and Foucault have made seminal contributions to the concept of power, neither matches the contribution of Stephen Lukes for this dissertation, as his work encapsulates power examined at multiple levels from multiple viewpoints.

### **Power: From Dimensions to Configurations**

While Lukes presented a lucid and comprehensive view of power, his view is difficult to operationalize for both researchers and practitioners; as such, work requires identifying what did not happen. Given this challenge, I utilize the power configurations outlined by Mintzberg (1984) as a framework to examine power at the organizational level. Using this framework allows for a more proximate, organization-centred view of power, while still allowing for an analytical examination of power through the three dimensions espoused by Lukes. Mintzberg outlined six organizational power configurations. Below, is a short survey of the configurations (pp. 210-212):

- The *instrument* organization is dominated by an external social actor and thus is built around bureaucratic functions to allow it to meet the demands of the external actor.
- The *closed system* is largely insulated from external influence and thus internal social actors dominate the organization and its attempts to control its environment.
- The *autocracy* is built around a single person or leader as the other power sources are sufficiently diffuse that the leader's power is not threatened.
- The *missionary* organization pacifies external attempts at domination and then is able to share power within the organization relatively equally, given the adherence of internal members to an over-arching ideology.
- In the *meritocracy*, the internal power coalition is strong as it is technically oriented, leading to deference to professional abilities over bureaucratic rules or norms.
- Finally, the *political arena* describes an organization wherein no coalition (internal or external) holds sway, leading to perpetual conflict amongst more-or-less equally powerful social actors. Mintzberg contends that the political arena is the configuration that portends the termination of the organizational life cycle.

In this dissertation, Mintzberg's (1984) configurations help provide a framework to examine power relations within the CSOs, and given the notions of countervailing power (e.g., internal vs. external focus), Mintzberg's configurations provided readily available connections to the RDT perspective in the study. Mintzberg's configurations were compatible with Lukes' (1974) theory of power in that they do not require an outward conflict nor the full cognizance of the social actors involved – they can be viewed as 'the way of doing things' among the social actors involved. Mintzberg's conceptualizations of organizational power can be tied to Lukes' broader view, and

provide the utility of being proximate to organizational functions, and thus can be readily captured in a research (e.g., semi-structured interview) setting without having to contend with the abstractions of finding out what did not happen.

Thus, the three theoretical perspectives combine to create a framework for CSO study in this dissertation. RDT provides a means to track the movement of power through the movement of resources into, within and out of the organization. Lukes' three dimensions of power provide a means to categorize the power relationships and to find power where the movement of resources would otherwise go unnoticed. Mintzberg's power configurations provide a design archetype for the organizational structures to match the states of power seen through the other two lenses. Design archetype is especially important given that so many CSOs would likely fall within a single archetype (e.g., Missionary), and thus, comparisons can be drawn between the data and Mintzberg's archetype(s). The triangulation of theoretical perspectives allowed for a richer view, one that accounted for the resources, the immanence of power and the manifestation of power relations in organizational structure.

### **Structure of the Dissertation**

This monograph dissertation is designed to provide the reader with a full context of the research work undertaken, an explanation of the work itself, and an explanation of the implications of that work for researchers and managers. The work in this monograph is laid out into the following chapters:

- Chapter One – The current chapter, provides context for the overall research project and situates the project within the extant literature of sport management and management scholarship;

- Chapter Two –Provides an explanation of the research questions undertaken in this project. This section provides the theoretical background for each research question, its context in the literature, and its context in managerial practice;
- Chapter Three – Provides an explanation of the methodology used in this project, including the use of a case study method as a vehicle for better understanding a still emerging research context;
- Chapter Four – Provides results for research question one;
- Chapter Five – Provides results for research question two;
- Chapter Six – Provides results for research question three;
- Chapter Seven – Provides a discussion of the overall findings of the research project, including implications for theory development and future research, before providing limitations and future directions.

The above chapter has situated the extant scholarship on CSOs, power, and RDT. I have demonstrated that CSO scholarship is growing but still exhibits considerable gaps, especially in terms of research based in the US and what is being examined specifically. With the study situated within the literature, the next chapter takes on the research questions addressed in this dissertation and situates those key questions in terms of the gaps in the literature.

## **Chapter 2 – Research Questions and Associated Theory**

The research project examined three key questions. These questions further the examination of power, resources and environmental negotiation in the contexts of the CSOs under study. The basic understanding of these cases can then provide the basis for further research in CSO scholarship, as well as guidance to managers working in sport, either within or with CSOs. As the flow of resources is indicative of the presence of a power relation (Dahl, 1957; Lukes, 2005; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), these flows, internally within the organization and outward from the organization, are important in terms of developing a stronger understanding of power in the CSOs under study.

The three research questions are presented first with the internal power within the CSOs, secondly with the inflow of resources, and finally with the outflow of resources, directed at manipulating their environment. The three questions align with the concepts of power outlined by Fleming and Spicer's (2014) overall review of power literature in the management context. They outlined four sites of organizational power, "in" organizations, "through" organizations, "over" organizations, and "against" organizations. "In" organizations refers to the power relations that lead to the allocation of resources to coalitions within the organization. "In" is dealt with in research question (RQ) 1. "Through" refers to the power relations realized by working through an organization, using that organization as a tool. "Through" is covered in greater depth in RQ2. "Over" and "Against" are both captured in RQ3 of this dissertation in that the focal CSO is working to exert power over its environment, though not necessarily at the direct or overt expense of another organization. Fleming and Spicer's overview indicates that no one site of power gives rise to another, supporting that this dissertation does not imply

that there is a temporal link between the three sites of power. The power relations described are more akin to a cycle in that there is no discrete beginning or end to the power relations for the CSO; and thus, these questions are presented in no particular order.

The RQs were:

RQ1: How does power shape the allocation of resources within CSOs?

RQ2: How do CSOs secure access to resources from their organizational environments?

RQ3: How do CSOs attempt to manipulate their organizational environment?

Moving towards an answer to these three questions can help further the research in the field of CSOs by illuminating more of the basic operations and governance in these organizations – providing a pathway to understandings of power, resources and relationships with the organizational environment. These three RQs are further developed through a three-part theoretical framework that includes RDT (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Pfeffer, 2013), the 3D model of power outlined by Lukes (1977; 2005), and a critical view of the organization (Sayer, 2004). Each question, with the relevant theory and literature, is presented below.

### **RQ1: How does power shape the allocation of resources within CSOs?**

All organizations are coalitional in nature (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978); and in an open systems view of an organization (Scott, 1998), there is little, if any, real barrier between the organization and its environment. Therefore, there is reason to consider the internal distribution of resources within an organization when examining power relationships. It is commonplace in media reports to see examples of internal resource distribution going awry in CSOs (e.g., Zytaruk, 2012); but, they are only a very small

sample of the internal resource allocations in CSOs. The following paragraphs will outline how a CSO processes resources and how power relationships can help in understanding the allocation of resources, once secured.

The allocation of resources within a local sport club can vary widely from sport facilities (Misener & Doherty, 2009; Wicker & Breuer, 2011), to coaches and officials (Sharpe, 2006; S. Warner et al., 2012). The variance in the nature of internal resources is mixed with the reality that, in a CSO, there are not that many resources to allocate. Resources are, by definition, scarce (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978); but in the CSO setting, their scarcity is often their defining characteristic (Hall et al., 2003; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Vail, 2007b; Wicker & Breuer, 2011; Wicker et al., 2013). Given the scarcity of resources, their allocation within the organization provides a key insight into the priorities and outlook of the CSOs under study. This question can also provide some key insight into the basic processes used in CSOs to allocate resources internally. Sharpe (2006) used the notion of social capital (cf. Putnam, 1995) as the lens for resource allocation study in a local softball club, finding that resources tended to be accrued to those that had acquired the highest levels of social capital within the club.

The lens of power (both RDT and 3D) can provide key insight into the focal organizations, as power is very often an ignored or avoided topic (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Pfeffer, 1992; 2013). The ability to expose power relations about which actors are unaware can provide insight into areas that would otherwise go unquestioned.

Pfeffer (1992) outlines the consequences of being unaware of power in organizations:

By pretending that power and influence don't exist, or at least, shouldn't exist, we contribute to what I and some others (such as John Gardner) see as the major problem facing many corporations today, particularly in the United States – the almost trained or produced incapacity of anyone except the highest-level managers to take action and get things accomplished (p. 10).

Thus, both the powerful and the powerless suffer when power is unquestioned or unknown as the survival of the organization (and therefore, whatever outcomes it is designed to engender) can be the consequence of ignorance. For sport management scholars, greater understanding of the role of power in local sport organizations can lead to better understanding of governance structures (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007; Smith, 2009), capacity limitations (Misener & Doherty, 2009), stakeholder relations (Parent & Séguin, 2007), and relations within multi-level governance structures (Shilbury & Kellett, 2006), among others. For managers in CSOs, greater awareness of power relations can lead to clearer priority setting and greater clarity in focus. In the case of New Zealand soccer, an action research approach to the organization (at a national level) led to more effectiveness on the part of the organization, not just a deconstruction (Cooper, 1989) of the existing structure (Ferkins, Shilbury, & McDonald, 2009).

For managers, enhanced knowledge of the internal allocation of resources can be vital to being better able to work with CSOs. The allocation of resources within a CSO can be an important theoretical insight, guiding decisions on how CSOs are funded and how a member of the CSO environment can best relate to the CSO in question. External sources and recipients of resources from a CSO benefit to understand the resources' path of travel within the focal organization.

**RQ2: How do local sport clubs secure access to resources from their organizational environments?**

Studies problematizing the generally low capacity of CSOs provide evidence that they are generally resource-starved (e.g., Sharpe, 2006; Misener & Doherty, 2014; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2009). Although, low capacity and resource starved, CSOs do attract and deploy resources. This question centred on the issue of attraction of resources by CSOs. In keeping with Pfeffer and Salancik's (1978) notion of the environment being the source of all organizational resources, and with Scott's (1998) open systems theory of organizations, there is a theoretical and empirical contention that resources must be derived from the organizational environment. As resources must be generated from the organizational environment, the process of that attraction from external sources is clearly an important question to shape understanding of CSOs.

RDT posits that there is a fundamental trade-off between securing resources and engendering dependence (Drees & Heugens, 2013; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). As a source for a resource is secured, the focal organization becomes dependent on that source. Although, the focal organization can modulate dependence through several strategies, the most prominent being mutual dependence (cf. Casciaro & Piskorski, 2005), wherein the focal organization provides a resource that makes the other actor dependent as well, thereby diminishing the net power of the other actor. Given that, by definition, CSOs must secure resources in order to exist, and that securing resources engenders dependence, this question explores the means by which the CSOs under study have negotiated their environments to secure resources while minimizing dependency.

**RQ3: How do local sport clubs attempt to manipulate their organizational environment?**

The resource dependency perspective posits that the organization is not solely dependent on the environment, but can modify the environment to better suit its needs. “The most direct method for controlling dependence is to control the source of that dependence. One is not always in a position to achieve control over dependence through acquisition and ownership, however” (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 143). Non-profits, the focus of this study, are not exempt from merger action (Stevens, 2006), but this is not an as readily available option as it may be for the firm (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Despite lacking these means, non-profit organizations still have many means available to negotiate their environment:

Organizations coordinate in many ways – cooptation, trade associations, cartels, reciprocal trade agreements, coordinating councils, advisory boards, boards of directors, joint ventures and social norms. Each represents a way of sharing power and a social agreement which stabilizes and coordinates mutual interdependence. (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 144)

Local sport organizations likely engage in many of the above means of coordination, such as the common-place practice of parents serving on the board of two sports (cf. Davis & Greve, 1997), or the creation of local sport councils (Edmonton Sport Council, March 7, 2009). In an environment comprised entirely of other organizations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), the ability to decrease dependence on them by modifying the environment can be a powerful indicator of organizational success, or at least of organizational survival. Addressing the ability of CSOs to negotiate their environment can complete the cycle of

organizational resources, from securing resources from the environment, to using politics and power to process those resources, and then finally to using the resource base to negotiate the environment. All of this occurs with the intent of securing still more resources to enhance chances of survival and the ability to meet organizational goals.

### **Chapter 3 - Methods**

The review of the CSO literature previously indicated that my vein of inquiry is novel and is aided by a small but growing body of extant literature and theory within sport management. Eisenhardt (1989) described the efficacy of the case study approach when there is little extant literature: “In sum, building theory from case study research is the most appropriate in the early stages of research on a topic or to provide freshness in perspective to an already researched topic” (p. 548). I used qualitative case study research as the primary methodology, in keeping with Eisenhardt’s assessment, and with the assessment of both Yin (2009) and Stake (2005). The case study provides closeness to the data, and the ability to see emergent theoretical possibilities in a way that is appropriate for a new vein of inquiry. In sport management, case studies have been helpful sources of insight in novel areas such as event management (Parent, 2008), organizational failure (Parent & Séguin, 2007), organizational change (Stevens, 2006), sport governance (Shilbury & Kellett, 2006), in agent-principal (agency) theory (Mason et al., 2006), and in the examination of CSOs specifically (Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006).

The dissertation relies on a Critical Realist epistemology. Critical realism is opposed to strict positivism in that it acknowledges realities that are not readily viewed through the lens of covering laws. Critical realism is also opposed to relativism or interpretivism by contending that there are realities, outside the knowledge of the researcher existing whether they are comprehended or not, “To say that meaningful reality is socially constructed is not to say that it is not real” (Crotty, 1998, p. 63). To illustrate, Fish (1996) cites the example of “balls” and “strikes”. In the sport of baseball, it is at once that, “balls” and “strikes” are social constructions, created out of history and

constantly contested, but it is equally clear that behaviour is modified as a result of their all-too real existence. Given this illuminating example, it is reasonable to agree with the assertion that, “Something is real if it has an effect or makes a difference” (Fleetwood, 2004, p. 27). Accordingly, this dissertation examines those elements under study that have been demonstrated to have made a difference for the CSOs under study, from the perspective of the CSO as opposed to indirect study via the perceptions of an actor from the CSO’s environment.

In the following paragraphs, I outline the research strategies I employed in this dissertation.

### **Case Sampling**

Eisenhardt (1989) noted that one of the more difficult elements of case study research is the selection of cases, as a result of the possible open-ended nature of the process. “The cases may be chosen to replicate previous cases or extend emergent theory, or they may be chosen to fill theoretical categories and provide examples of polar types” (p. 537). Stevens (2006) used the latter route in testing sport organization archetypes (Kikulis et al., 1995b) in the selection of Hockey Canada, a possible outlier of the archetype framework. My selection of cases was informed by the organizational typology developed by Kikulis, Slack and Hinings (1995b), giving a theoretical grounding to the selection of cases, and providing a set of case archetypes (Kitchen Table, Boardroom, Executive Office) that is applicable at the CSO level. While some of the measures of the typology (e.g., “International Performance”) would not be within the purview of most CSOs, they can be adapted, for example, as national championships performance. The typology can nevertheless provide utility as a framework for case selection, helping to

ensure applicability of the results. Both cases selected were from the “Boardroom” archetype, typified by moderate formalization and high centralization of decision making (Kikulis et al., 1995b, p. 77). The selection of two cases was effectively the inverse of Stevens’ (2006) strategy of choosing an outlier in the continuum of archetypes. With two cases, the middle archetype was more likely to produce a thick dataset and a view of the reality of these CSOs that includes elements from across all organizational design archetypes, though anchored in the middle category. The middle archetype is also the most common occurring organizational type based on the research of Doherty and Misener (Doherty & Misener, 2008; Misener & Doherty, 2009), who outlined that the majority of CSOs (in Canada) have no staff at all. More precisely, they found 13 of 20 CSOs in their sample had no staff whatsoever (Misener & Doherty, 2009). That CSOs have demonstrated sufficient capacity to create websites and maintain even basic archives of minutes indicates they are often not at the “Kitchen Table” level, typified by minimal coordination and scant planning (Kikulis et al., 1995b, p. 77). The general skew of CSOs towards the mid-level is reflected in their work and is also echoed in this dissertation.

The guidelines noted in Kikulis et al.’s (1995b) typology can provide sampling guidance, but not to a sufficient degree. Other variables, such as organizational size, organizational location, and the inherent nature of the sport (e.g., individual versus team) (Enjolras, 2002) also merit consideration. I contend that geography can be an important variable, and can alter the reality of the CSO (Shilbury & Kellett, 2006) sufficiently that it must be part of the sampling matrix for this study, and thus chose cases from the same municipality. I also contend that organizational size is subsumed by the archetypes from Kikulis et al. (1995b), and that the inherent nature of the sport is not as relevant given the

considerable guidance from the archetypes and the statutory requirements that dictate some basic structure and operation of all non-profits (State of Wisconsin, 2012), regardless of focus.

The two cases outlined in this dissertation were the product of considerable efforts in recruitment. Efforts undertaken in recruitment are presented below and further discussed in Chapter 7. While two cases was less than I had intended at the outset of this project, they have provided a thick dataset that has illuminated both practice and theory in the area of CSOs. Small numbers of cases have provided for meaningful contributions to literature in past sport management studies. McGannon (2002) conducted a study with a single respondent with whom she conducted four interviews. This course of action was taken because, "...in the end, the data from this one woman was deemed appropriate to accomplish the overarching goals of this research" (p. 82). McGannon's choice of a single case is one clear example of a small amount of case work providing a useful starting point in an area of theoretical interest (in her case, exercise adherence in sedentary adults). A seminal article in the field of Organizational Studies was built around the reading of a book, which in turn was based on two interviews and archival document review. Weick's (1996) exploration of the Mann Gulch disaster was built around the aforementioned two interviews (that took place nearly 30 years after the incident in question) and archival documents that were actively hidden from view by government officials. Despite this lack of available data, the dataset was thick and was able to provide the foundation for a seminal piece of scholarship. Weick goes on to assert that this single case can be of value for the entire field of Organizational Studies: "Thus, if we understand what happened at Mann Gulch, we may be able to learn some

valuable lessons in how to conceptualize and cope with contemporary organizations” (Weick, 1996, p. 628).

In sport management, case study work with CSOs is often reliant on a single case (e.g., Sharpe, 2006) or an immersive method such as an action research approach (Misener & Doherty, 2009), again with a limited amount of cases. One notable exception is Doherty and Misener (2008) who were able to secure the participation of twenty clubs within a city. In contrast to the present study, Doherty and Misener were able to work via (though not exclusively) an existing CSO network group and were engaged with only the Presidents of the CSOs under study (as opposed to a broader sample of the Board as was the case in this dissertation). Their approach was fruitful in terms of recruitment and gave the scholars a strong view of the CSO network in that community (their unit of analysis). In this dissertation, the interest of the study is to build on the environment-focused work in the extant literature and examine the CSOs themselves. Lessons can be drawn from Misener and Doherty’s recruitment success, and specifically their tactic to draw from within an existing network. Such a network was not readily available in the geographic region involved in this study and, thus, was not available to me. But, like other CSO studies that have drawn from one or two cases (e.g., Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006), this dissertation is positioned to provide a thick set of data that can inform both theory and practice.

### **The Limitation of Participant Recruitment**

The case study methodology was an appropriate choice given the emergent nature of this vein of study (Eisenhardt, 1989). In fact, the depth of engagement with each of the cases allowed for insight into their realities that would have been difficult to imagine

through, for example, a broad-based survey or a single interview with the President. For example, a survey question that asked, “do you value your existence?” would be much more likely to engender quizzical stares rather than the kind of insightful, thoughtful responses that the leaders of the two CSOs provided in the course of in-depth semi-structured interviews. The closeness to the data and the ability to create depth of the data were important to this study, and the case study methodology was an important tool in reaching that conclusion.

While there are considerable strengths to the case study methodology, its efficacy is far from full proof (Crotty, 1998). In the following section, I outline the challenges I encountered in the recruitment of clubs for the study. I go on to situate those challenges within the extant literature and practice of sport management research, and I provide some implications for future research in this important area. I conclude that difficulties in the recruitment of respondents is unlikely to be solved in full, but that there are several potential strategies that can help the academy continue to develop an understanding of CSOs and their role in sport systems the world over.

### **Challenges Associated with Participant Recruitment**

At the outset of this project, I intended to involve clubs from Canada, with a cluster of clubs in the US to provide another perspective on the phenomena that emerged from the data. As the geography of the clubs, and their legal structures (most often regulated at the provincial/state level) would be important, my intent was to select a group of up to six clubs from one major city in Canada, as well as four from the Midwest US city referenced in the results section. In both cases, I encountered significant, almost debilitating, challenges in recruitment of clubs to the study. Over the course of nearly

two years, repeated attempts were made to secure the cooperation of clubs and their leaders in the study with almost nothing that could accurately be categorized as “success.” The following short sub-section will outline the nature of those efforts as well as the nature of the reasons given by the clubs for their non-cooperation.

### **Reaching Small Sport Organizations As Research Partners**

In the initial design of this study, I expected to see several challenges, some of which manifested in reality and others which did not. The recruitment of clubs to the study was not one that I had foreseen. In hindsight, the literature may have provided some guidance, as the key CSO studies I was working from, such as Sharpe’s (2006) study of a single softball club, were, when using qualitative methods, often focused on single cases. While they did not expound upon recruitment challenges, the fact that studies had rarely used multiple cases at the CSO level may have been an indicator that this tranche of the project would be difficult. At the outset, I was emboldened and encouraged by the work of Inglis (1997), Kikulis, Slack and colleagues (Kikulis et al., 1989; Kikulis et al., 1995b) and Steen-Johnson (2008), all of whom had worked with multiple respondents in lower capacity sport organizations. However, these studies were situated in Canadian provincial sport organizations, Canadian national sport organizations and in the Norwegian Olympic Committee, respectively. The change in context to the CSO level and away from the single sport network may have played a role in my challenges relative to the successes enjoyed by these scholars.

At the local level, Steen-Johnson’s recruitment successes echo those enjoyed by Vail (2007b) who worked through Tennis Canada to reach out to local tennis organizations. Recruitment of clubs via the existing sport network in which they are

situated may have been a key element in both cases. Steen-Johnson's work, while focused on the CSO level, was, in fact, situated at the NSO level, using the NSO to gain insight into snowboarding clubs in Norway. Within that arrangement, there were clear advantages in terms of capitalizing on existing networks. Direct observation of multiple clubs at the NSO General Assembly (referenced in the quote below as the NSBF) was an important data collection tactic, "field observations at a major snowboarding event and at the General Assemblies of the NSBF and the NOC [National Olympic Committee] during the spring of 2007 served to provide a wider range of perspectives of the Federation" (Steen-Johnsen, 2008, p. 342). Through the focus on the NSO and overt utilization of the NSO's existing network, Steen-Johnson was better able to view the perspectives of the snowboard clubs in Norway. In hindsight, the dual advantages of NSO insertion point and network effects provided a significant advantage, at least in the ability to examine more clubs in the same study.

Vail (2007b) examined the role of "Community Champions" in the development of community-level tennis programming in Canada. Her study was facilitated through both funding and the overt cooperation of the NSO. Tennis Canada provided funding and set up "summit" meetings involving the NSO and its component provincial sport organizations. The direct support of the NSO was crucial in the recruitment of key communities, as the NSO as well as its partner PSOs were actively working on behalf of the project. And while the research conducted has proven useful in the academic context, the main thrust of the project was to deliver a valuable resource at the community level. This study also took advantage of indirect contact with CSOs as well as the network impacts of working within a single sport system. The study was overtly conducted with

the needs and perspective of the NSO in the forefront, “In this study, Tennis Canada needed information to know if the BTC [Building Tennis Champions] strategy was working to solve the problem of declining participation” (p. 584). I used a similar, though less formal tactic for recruitment. This tactic is described later in this section.

In the realm of participatory action research, logistics often dictate a single case approach. But, even with that stipulation, recruitment of informants can be a challenge. Frisby, Crawford and Dorer (1997) were forced to amend the scope of their project due to the availability of informants to participate in the mode that had been planned for:

... it was not possible to reach most marginalized low-income women in the community (e.g., visible minority women, women isolated by abuse, and older low-income women). Most of the women who became involved were White, had preschool children, and were ready to reduce the social isolation they were experiencing. (p. 20)

In addition to making compromises on the desired demographic composition of the respondent group, the researchers also had to make allowances for a lack of capacity, reducing their roles as leaders and organizers of the study’s interventions:

Based on the theory underlying participatory action research, it had been expected that the women would select program interventions they could control and organize. However, many of the women were single parents, who, because of heavy demands placed on their time and the social problems they encountered, had little capacity to assume organizational roles. (p. 22)

In their study, Frisby, et al. (1997), after encountering recruitment challenges, made amendments to their research plan in order to ensure a project that could make a strong

contribution to the literature and, in their case, a project that could be of help to the community.

Recently, Paul Jurbala (Personal Communication, March 8, 2015) mentioned that, in the course of an in-progress doctoral study, he encountered significant recruitment challenges and was forced to adjust his methodology as a result. After an initial goal of nine CSOs and an initial set of contacts at 16 CSOs, Jurbala was forced through non-interest of CSOs to adjust his plan to instead work with only one club for the study. Of interest, unlike in my study where I was able to offer my own services, he was able to bring services from outside providers (through a grant) that were worth up to \$20,000 CAD to the CSOs. He found that the value he was able to promise the clubs was of little value to them and did not sway their decision to participate. In fact, in the one club that Jurbala was able to secure, the President, Vice President and Technical Director of the club all held PhDs, and expressed a strong openness to research generally. That his only successful recruitment came in relation to individuals experienced in research aligns with my findings in this dissertation both in terms of volume and in terms of the backgrounds of the respondents most open to participation in the study.

In the US context, Green (2005) outlined the athlete development pyramid in the sport of volleyball. The analysis, while considering the role of local clubs, was nonetheless situated at the NSO level, looking at athlete progression towards a national team program as the NSOs' animating motivation. By taking a system wide view of the challenges of volleyball CSOs, Green was able to provide theoretical insight about the sport system in the US, "Sport programs have emerged haphazardly – often through the collective efforts of a few energetic volunteers and sometimes through the enthusiastic

patronage of one or more organizations” (p. 248). But, despite this insight, the examination of the clubs and the managerial implications for those actors was derived tangentially, by studying the issue from the perspective of the NSO.

With the benefit of hindsight, the following section outlining the specifics of the recruitment challenges now appears to have been predictable. The above paragraphs outline that the study of CSOs directly has not often been fruitful, but my methodology, even while cognizant of these warning signs did not seem to suffer from being too ambitious, and my experience and network of contacts in sport boosted my confidence in my ability to recruit clubs to the study. Despite the assumption that recruitment would be a challenge, but not a defining element, a long list of CSOs was developed at the outset and the CSOs were contacted. CSOs were contacted through email or via phone using contact information available on the club’s website. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the clubs that were contacted in the initial wave of contacts. As with elsewhere in the study, the specific names of the clubs are withheld to preserve the anonymity that would have been promised had the club agreed to participate.

Upon exhausting the list of 25 clubs outlined in Table 3.1, it became clear that a change in tactics was required. At that point, even TSL was not confirmed as a participant in the study, and only four of the clubs noted responded to initial inquiries with any sort of interest. It would become a consistent challenge of the study design that the most common response from CSOs was utter silence. In fact, over the course of the entire study, I heard “no” only three times. The vast majority of the time, I heard nothing, despite repeated attempts to contact the clubs. Thus, I was provided no insight as to the next steps or where the request to the CSO may have gone awry. My review of

Table 3.1

*Initial List of Clubs Contacted*

| <b>Location</b> | <b>Sport</b>  | <b>Nature of Club (League or Single Club)</b> |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Canadian City   | Cycling       | Single                                        |
|                 | Tennis        | Single                                        |
|                 | Wrestling     | Single                                        |
|                 | Swimming      | Single                                        |
|                 | Basketball    | Single                                        |
|                 | Tennis        | Single                                        |
|                 | Softball      | Single                                        |
|                 | Diving        | Single                                        |
|                 | Basketball    | Single                                        |
|                 | Canoe         | Single                                        |
|                 | Ice Hockey    | Single                                        |
|                 | Sailing       | Single                                        |
|                 | Volleyball    | Single                                        |
|                 | Tennis        | Single                                        |
|                 | Ultimate Disc | League                                        |
|                 | Soccer        | Single                                        |
|                 | Ice Hockey    | League                                        |
|                 | Fencing       | Single                                        |
|                 | Athletics     | Single                                        |
|                 | Water Polo    | Single                                        |
| US Midwest City | Ultimate Disc | League                                        |
|                 | Soccer        | Single                                        |
|                 | Cricket       | Single                                        |
|                 | Curling       | Single                                        |
|                 | [TSL]         | League                                        |

the literature before embarking on the study had indicated that CSOs had very low capacity, and the initial pass at recruitment indicated that there was not sufficient capacity to even contemplate 4-6 interviews of about 60 minutes in duration. In this tranche of recruitment, two clubs said no after initially expressing interest. In both cases, my request to view archival documents was the area of concern expressed by the CSO leaders. Beyond that concern, though, no specifics were given in either case.

**Evolving tactics.** In this sub-section, I delve further in to my position and role as a researcher in the context of this study, which had, subsequently, little apparent impact on the interview participants. However, before having collected data, I was cognizant of the potential impacts I may have on interviewees due to my role as a researcher and as a practitioner in sport management. After the first tranche of recruitment attempts, I changed this tactic to attempt to take further advantage of my background as a practitioner.

Over the course of the study and data collection period, I was the Executive Director of one Canadian NSO and the CEO of another. As is noted above, in the effort to suppress the potential separation between me and respondents, I did not bring up this information as part of my initial contact. Naturally, had I been asked I would have been forthcoming with that information, as deception was not the goal; but, I wanted to be sure that respondents were not telling me what they thought might be the “correct” answer. As the recruitment phase of the study progressed, it became clear that more of my resources would have to be dedicated to recruitment and, upon consultation with my supervisor, I made a tactical change that seemed meaningful at the time, but in terms of generating recruitment, was not impactful.

In my second set of attempts to contact CSOs, I led in the introductory email with my role at my NSO, my background in sport and offered my help to them as part of the study. I noted that upon completion of the study, I would not only share the results and conclusions but would make myself available to the CSO to discuss the findings and to offer advice on how to apply the lessons of the study, partially in reference to each club, but especially based on the overall findings<sup>1</sup>. My experience in the sport sector, both on my own and as a purchaser of consulting services, indicated that this kind of research and consultation work would be worth at least \$5,000 CAD and as high as \$20,000 CAD on the “retail” market. My expectation was that this additional benefit, mentioned at the front end, would help encourage clubs to be more involved in the study. Unfortunately, that expectation was not realized.

With an offer of expertise added to the request for participation, I went out once again to clubs in the Canadian City and in the US Midwest City. The following Table 3.2 is an overview of the seventeen additional clubs contacted in this second wave.

The addition of an offer of free consulting services did not produce the desired results. Even in the US Midwest City where I did gain traction with two CSOs, I was still under a 50% success rate in my contacts. And, in the US setting, with more community sports embedded in schools, finding clubs to talk to was also more difficult. Given these setbacks and the fact that, at this point roughly 12 months of recruitment effort had

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<sup>1</sup> The decision to be clearer about my role in the sport sector and my experience as a practitioner did not negate the ethical and methodological issues that would have surrounded working with a club associated with one of the NSOs that I had led. Ethically, informed consent could have been degraded given the reporting relationships, and in terms of methodology, the risk of my being told what I wanted to hear was too high to contemplate a research relationship. Thus, clubs in ringette or towed water sports were not recruited at any point.

Table 3.2

*Summary of Clubs Contacted in Second Wave of Contacts*

| <b>Location</b> | <b>Sport</b>        | <b>Nature of Club (League or Single Club)</b> |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Canadian City   | Soccer              | League                                        |
|                 | Triathlon           | Single                                        |
|                 | Gaelic Sports       | Single                                        |
|                 | Gymnastics          | Single                                        |
|                 | Gymnastics          | Single                                        |
|                 | Softball            | Single                                        |
|                 | Baseball            | Single                                        |
|                 | Football (American) | League                                        |
|                 | Football (American) | Single                                        |
|                 | Swimming            | Single                                        |
|                 | Speed Skating       | Single                                        |
|                 | Figure Skating      | Single                                        |
|                 | Field Hockey        | Single                                        |
|                 | Curling             | Single                                        |
| US Midwest City | ISC                 | Single                                        |
|                 | Nordic Skiing       | Single                                        |
|                 | Softball            | Single                                        |

passed, I made another change in tactics in the attempt to recruit more participating clubs.

In order to help ensure that study participants responded freely in the decision to participate and to answer freely within interviews, I had initially avoided utilizing my network of colleagues at the NSO level to contact their Canadian CSOs. Upon consultation with my advisor, we agreed that while this concern was valid, and would have to be taken into account in the course of the data collection and analysis, it was not so debilitating as to compromise the standard of a trustworthy dataset. Thus, I set about

contacting colleagues from NSOs in Canada to ask if there were CSOs in the Canadian City to which they could refer me. Once again, hope had sprung eternal and I had expected that the prompt from the NSO would engender more action on the parts of the CSOs. Once again, the hope was not realized.

Several of my practitioner colleagues referred me to clubs. Two in particular not only provided me with a reference, but also sent emails to the leaders of the CSOs recommending that the CSO talk to me further and that I could provide them with valuable research-based insights for them. In one case, the NSO leader referred me to the club at which her own children competed in her NSO's sport. That CSO never responded to my requests to discuss the research further. Another club responded that they did not have sufficient time to engage in the research and thus respectfully would pass on the opportunity.

The final phase of recruitment was based around what I would characterize as "shots in the dark." The experience to that point indicated that these were unlikely to be fruitful, but attempts were made to contact several more clubs, to gauge their interest such as CSOs in sports that included arm wrestling and motocross. After several attempts it became clear that the arm wrestling club had become defunct. The motocross club did respond but indicated that they were in fact a for-profit business. After having attempted contacts with about fifty clubs and having gotten a positive response from only two, a decision had to be made about the study.

After considerable reflection and upon consultation with my advisor, I concluded that the study would include the two CSO case studies outlined in this dissertation. Given that the extant literature had little, if any multiple-case research from which to

draw recruitment advice in this context, there was certainly justification for executing the study with the two cases. At that time, data collection had begun and initial data analysis was showing promise in terms of theoretical and practical implications, further indicating that the two cases could provide a dataset that would allow for a contribution to the literature and to managerial practice in relation to CSOs. The potential implications of these recruitment challenges for future research will be considered further in Chapter 7. As the remainder of this chapter demonstrates, the two cases were built with two sources of data that reached saturation of information, and provided a trustworthy dataset that could help me answer my three RQs. The data was triangulated through a view of the organizational documents, its actions and the words expressed by respondent in interviews. The triangulated dataset has provided a multi-faceted view of the organizations in which the RQs could be explored with results that make a contribution to the existing literature on CSOs and on organizational power.

Given the above, cases were chosen from a mid-sized city in the upper Midwest of the US. The geographic location of the CSOs was the result of a convenience sample due to access and local knowledge on the part of the researcher. The selection of clubs was a purposive sample, having examined websites of several area clubs to determine which of these shared the most design traits of the Boardroom archetype. The clubs were contacted first via emails and then by phone calls to determine their interest in participation in the study. Following my ethics certificate, once the club President or other Board member had responded with interest, individual Board members were solicited for their interest in participating on an individual basis. Board members were

solicited by consulting the list of Board members on the website and through snowball sampling.

### **Case Descriptions**

The two cases involved in this dissertation provided a view into CSOs from two sports that can be considered “mainstream” and part of the multi-level governance structures that included state-level associations and a NSO. The paragraphs below provide a brief description of each CSO. These descriptions are drawn largely from the meeting minutes for each CSO, as well as through familiarization during the overall research process. I also provide a brief overview of the sport governance processes used by each CSO under study.

**Case One – Team Sport League (TSL).** The team sport CSO is actually a conglomerate of several individual club and high school programs. TSL provides the umbrella guidance and leadership for the sport in the area. This includes the provision of league programs, coach development, officiating development, and development of new youth and high school teams. While TSL had very little direct interaction with individual players, coaches and officials, it was of considerable influence in the sport in the area, and by extension, across the state on account of its central location and its size relative to other comparable CSOs in the state. TSL was governed by a Board of Directors that included a President as well as Vice-Presidents assigned to various portfolios (e.g., officiating, Female programs, high school).

Within its operations, TSL had a demonstrable split among its Male and Female programs, having director positions for Male and Female programs and having designated officiating roles for Male and Female programs. The split was due largely to

significant differences in the field-of-play rules and regulations between Male and Female versions of their sport. Due to these differences, there was very little overlap among technical leaders (i.e., coaches and officials) between the Male and Female functions. However, this split did not appear to create a structural “ghetto” for either gender, as both men and women worked on issues for the Male and Female games, and the leads on each game were full participants, enjoying full membership on the Board. The role of gender in the governance and operation of TSL will be covered in greater detail in the results and discussion chapters.

TSL did not own its own playing or practice venues and, thus, sought field space access as a key resource. The CSO did not have any physical office or office space and did not even possess sport equipment to speak of. Their resource needs were focused on what was needed to ensure that a game was played – a field, officials and information dissemination. As this CSO functioned primarily as a league, it also worked to generate more teams for the league and more opportunities for area youth to participate in their sport. The CSO had a website that was used primarily as an internal communications vehicle. The CSO minutes did not report bank balances consistently, but when they did, they were in the range of \$3,500 USD (TSL Minutes, February 2010). Neither the minutes nor the content of interviews referred to basic corporate documents such as strategic plans or policy manuals.

TSL’s Board functioned with some deference to formal rules of order, but generally worked informally. Meeting minutes were comprehensive, covering all the key elements of deliberations, but also including informal asides, such as a promise by the

President in one meeting to buy beer for the group should they complete a full discussion by the top of the hour (TSL Minutes, October 2010).

TSL was very much tied in with the local school system. The high school version of the sport was operated by the high schools directly, but the leagues for high school play were administered by TSL. Likewise, many of the youth teams under the TSL umbrella used fields provided by schools or school districts for practices and games. A brief overview of the key organizational traits of TSL is found in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

*Key TSL Information*

|                                            |                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sport Type</b>                          | Outdoor team sport                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Key Partners</b>                        | Local club teams, local high schools, state association, NSO, officiating organizations                                               |
| <b>Board Size (Variance during period)</b> | 6-8 Members                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Full-Time Paid Staff</b>                | None                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Part-time Paid Staff</b>                | Game officials paid a per game fee                                                                                                    |
| <b>Resources</b>                           | Access to facility spaces, officials and other in game personnel such as ‘culture keepers’, bank balances on the order of \$3,500 USD |
| <b>Members</b>                             | Teams that participated in the league, both at the youth and high school levels                                                       |
| <b>Primary Services to Members</b>         | League structure, schedule and officiating provision;<br>Playoff and tournament organization                                          |

**Case Two – Individual Sport Club (ISC).** As with TSL, ISC worked with local high schools for facility access and to manage high school competitions in its sport. ISC

was less engaged with high schools than TSL, but did have a connection. In terms of educational institutions, ISC was much more engaged with the local university, where it secured facility time in the winter for drop-in participation nights. The relationship with the university had been long standing. ISC also worked with local private clubs (which offered their sport) to secure facility space on off-hours for drop-in participation. In all cases, securing time to participate in the winter months was a clear priority and an area of some accomplishment for ISC.

Like TSL, ISC did not own any of its facilities and thus worked to acquire access to facility space from several providers in the area. The CSO had a website and published a local sport guide (which is explored further in the results and discussion) with an internal audience largely in mind. ISC did possess some sport equipment, but that was primarily used racquets that were then donated to local community centres (ISC Minutes, February 2011). ISC employed several part-time staff as junior program instructors and as supervisors of adult drop-in nights. Of note, when the adult night supervisor could not make it, a volunteer would cover for them at no charge. Instructors were paid, but at a rate of only \$35USD/day (ISC Minutes, February 2011). While not “wealthy,” ISC had considerably greater financial resources than TSL, with reported bank balances in the range of \$50,000 USD (ISC Minutes, January 2011, May 2010). As with TSL, there was no evidence of the existence of strategic plans, budgets or other basic corporate documentation.

ISC’s minutes indicated a degree of formality very similar to that of TSL. Meeting minutes tended to focus on progress reports and were informal in tone, for instance, noting the addition of a new Board member with a cursory note in the roll call

section listing a “new member” without any further detail (ISC Meeting Minutes, January 2011). The summarized profile of ISC is in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

*Key ISC Information*

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sport Type</b>                          | Indoor/outdoor individual sport                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Key Partners</b>                        | Local high schools, local private health and fitness clubs, municipal governments, school boards, regional (multi-state) sport association, NSO                             |
| <b>Board Size (Variance during period)</b> | 6-9 Members                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Full-Time Paid Staff</b>                | None                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Part-time Paid Staff</b>                | Some staff are paid to instruct beginner programs and to supervise some drop-in nights.                                                                                     |
| <b>Resources</b>                           | Facility space, equipment (for donation), practice equipment; balls; a small shed for equipment storage; bank balances on the order of \$50,000 USD                         |
| <b>Members</b>                             | Individual participants ranging from youth learning the game to high school coaches and Master’s age recreational participants.                                             |
| <b>Primary Services to Members</b>         | Drop in adult nights – especially in winter months at indoor facilities;<br>Junior development and first contact programs;<br>Some league play for both adults and children |

### **Connections to Multi Level Governance**

Both clubs were members of their State Sport Organization and members of their NSO. They both reported direct contact with both the State Sport Organization and the NSO on various items, though the State Sport Organization tended to be related to competitive issues (playoffs and state championship tournaments), while the NSO tended to be focused on programs to develop the sport (outreach programs) and its volunteer workforce (coach and official seminars). The relationship between the clubs and their various levels of governance resemble what has been reported in Canada (cf. Parent & Patterson, 2013) as well as in Australia (cf. Sotiriadou, Shilbury, & Quick, 2008), for instance. One key difference from Canada and from the Australian State Sport Organization model (Shilbury & Kellett, 2006) was that the clubs tended to work directly with their State Sport Organization as well as their NSO, rather than having their relationship with the NSO mediated by the State Sport Organization. This type of relationship, where CSOs have direct relationships with the NSO, is in keeping with the extant literature on the structure of the US sport system (B. C. Green, 2005).

### **Situating the CSOs in the US Context**

As noted previously, there is very little extant literature on CSOs within the US; and that literature rarely touches on the CSOs directly, but, instead, looks at impacts of CSO work or at organizations affiliated with CSOs. Although the literature on CSOs in the US is limited, it is important to situate these CSOs with the broader context of American sport. In an overview of sport governance in the US, Green, Chalip and Bowers (2013) concluded that the US system is unique in that there is a nearly no direct involvement in sport policy by the national government and relatively little even at the

state level. However, their description of the multi-level governance in USA Football aligns well with other governance structures in the Anglosphere (e.g., Ferkins et al., 2009; Houlihan, 1997; Parent & Patterson, 2013; Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2009), wherein clubs form state associations that then form the NSO. However, they also outline in their case of USA Football that the majority of football played in the US is not within the purview of the NSO, but is embedded within an educational setting: “Significantly, the sport development model for America’s most popular sports is predicated on the delivery of elite youth sport through the school systems” (B. C. Green et al., 2013, p. 26). The authors go on to point out that the US is the only nation in the world in which educational institutions are expected to deliver high quality elite sport programs (p. 26). The emphasis on school-based sport in the US context is significant and provides for the uniqueness of the US sport system. However, the multi-level governance structures viewed in other countries still exist, but run in parallel to the other systems of sport governance, such as the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association), and those parallel structures can be very important culturally and economically for sports and their communities. As is explored further in the results and discussion chapters, the emphasis on connected sport and the education system was evident in both cases, but especially in regards to TSL.

### **Data Collection**

Typically with case study analysis, using multiple data collection techniques is appropriate (Yin, 2009); and in this dissertation, the two techniques resulted in a trustworthy dataset. I used two primary techniques in these cases: semi-structured interviews and documentary review. Both techniques followed University of Ottawa

ethics guidelines, with all informants being provided with a letter of information and consent form (Appendix A) to sign prior to their participation. Ethics approval was received prior to embarking on this study. The ethics approval for this study demanded anonymity on the parts of participants; and thus, this was maintained at all times. In order to preserve the promised anonymity of the study participants, the participants are referred in subsequent pages of this dissertation by pseudonyms and with the “code” for their CSO (TSL, Team Sport League; or ISC, Individual Sport Club). For example, Frank-TSL refers to “Frank” from the CSO previously referred to as TSL. In order to maintain the anonymity promised to respondents, some other identifying elements such city names, the sport, or names of specific programming initiatives have been replaced by generic placeholders, such as [NSO Program]. Given that the CSOs under study were small and were in a mid-sized city, I have tried to ensure that anonymity is preserved. While the ethics requirements in this respect are limiting, and the required frequent use of both acronyms and aliases can be awkward, I nonetheless have taken all reasonable efforts to maintain the anonymity that was promised to respondents.

The in-depth semi-structured interviews followed an interview guide designed to draw out information about how the organization derives, uses and develops resources, but allowed for deviation should an interesting or theoretically relevant line of discussion arise. Interviews were scheduled with 4-5 members of the Board of Directors of the focal CSO, at which time, theoretical saturation was reached in both cases. In-person interviews lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and were conducted in the official language (e.g., English or French) of the informant’s choosing (all chose English). Interviews were conducted over the phone when circumstances dictated (n=6), and in-person interviews

were conducted when possible (n=3). Sturges and Hanrahan (2004), when using both phone and in-person interviews, found that, “Given the marked similarities in the quantity, nature and depth of responses, we conclude that the mode of interview did not influence data to any significant degree” (p. 113). In the case of this dissertation, phone interviews were fruitful and provided a level of insight and volume of data (interview transcript) commensurate with the in-person interviews. Interviews were digitally recorded. Table 3.5 is a summary of the interviews conducted.

Table 3.5

*Interviewee Details*

| <b>CSO</b> | <b>Pseudonym</b> | <b>Position in the CSO</b>         | <b>Transcript Length</b> |
|------------|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| TSL        | Bob-TSL          | President                          | 43 Pages                 |
|            | Dan-TSL          | Referee Coordinator (Boys)         | 32 Pages                 |
|            | Geoff-TSL        | Referee Coordinator (Girls)        | 42 Pages                 |
|            | Sally-TSL        | Vice President – High School Girls | 41 Pages                 |
|            | Mike-TSL         | Treasurer                          | 14 Pages                 |
| ISC        | John-ISC         | President                          | 39 Pages                 |
|            | Roger-ISC        | Past-President                     | 45 Pages                 |
|            | Cary-ISC         | Director at Large                  | 60 Pages                 |
|            | Frank-ISC        | Secretary                          | 18 Pages                 |

The interviews were informed by an initial documentary review of meeting minutes and websites providing a better sense of the longitudinal context of the organizations and their ability to secure resources, allocate resources using power and politics and finally to manipulate their environment. A sample interview guide is provided in Appendix B. Each question in the guide was designed to elicit information and discussion around a specific element of the theoretical framework. For instance, in order to elicit an answer

about the unintuitive notion of an organization not valuing its existence, the question was, “I understand that your sport is important to you, but is it important to you that your club provide that sport, as opposed to another club, the city or another provider?”. Questions about resources such as “What resources do you typically need to get your job done?” readily allowed for prompts based on previous interviews or on information gleaned from meeting minutes. The interview guide was implemented directly in the study without a pilot; but, the experience of the study was that the guide prompted meaningful conversation and that the openness to follow-up questions allowed for an evolution of the interviews without adjustments to the guide. I conferred frequently with my supervisor on the progress of interviews to provide confirmation that the interview guide was as effective as it appeared to be. Those consultations affirmed that the guide was engendering fruitful discussions in keeping with the research questions. Given my personal background as a leader of a NSO and a professional in sport management practice, the interview questions were initially phrased in a way I believed my practitioner colleagues and I would be able to respond; and, I was also able to ask follow-up questions informed by the data sources but also by my personal experience.

The saturation “stop sign” for the study came from two general sources and one specific source. Generally, after no new themes emerged in an interview, another interview was conducted; and when no new themes emerged again, saturation was viewed to have occurred. The other general element was that over 50% of the population of Board members were interviewed in each case. More specifically, all but one of the potential respondents that were cited by interviewees were interviewed (one did not respond to repeated requests for an interview). In all other cases, when a person was

mentioned in an interview, that person was, in fact, interviewed in the course of this study. These three “stop signs” combined to triangulate and provide a solid evidence base to conclude that saturation had occurred. While qualitative researchers face “a paucity of methodological descriptions and few, if any, definitive rules for determining saturation” (Bowen, 2008, p. 137-138), this triangulation of indices (theoretical saturation, 50% coverage, and no new referrals) provides a solid basis for determining theoretical saturation in this study.

Meeting minutes from monthly meetings for the previous three years were reviewed. In all, 47 documents, totalling 136 pages, were gathered. Organizational websites were examined to help situate the organization and to identify Board members. Interviewees were selected based on the initial documentary review of the evidence, given the suggestion by Yin (2009) to use each interaction with the data to lead to the next. This is also in keeping with the approach to data advocated by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Charmaz (2008) among others. The semi-structured interview method has been used successfully in numerous sport management studies (Mason & Slack, 2003; Parent & Séguin, 2007; Parent, 2008; Stevens, 2006), and the documentary review was an important part of the work of Shilbury and Kellett (2006) in a review of Australian Touch Football, as well as Sotiriadou, et al. (2008) in a review of NSOs’ developmental operations in Australia. It merited consideration to engage in observations of the political and/or operational processes as they happened, using participant observation (e.g., Sharpe, 2006) or methods with more direct interaction with the focal organization (e.g., Ferkins et al., 2009; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Vail, 2007b), but I elected not to pursue this avenue in order to ensure that the project was executable while

still covering the boardroom archetype laid out by Kikulis et al. (1995b), as this would have required a commitment of time and of travel to the Midwest city that was not practical as a PhD student who was also a practicing manager. Further study with a more immersive methodology within one case would certainly be a viable future direction for this vein of research.

Documents were electronically converted when needed. Verbatim transcripts, capturing key pauses, other audible evidence were developed and were shared with informants to verify content and to allow the informants to re-state items should they have so desired. This step served to further increase the trustworthiness of the data.

### **Data Analysis**

Given the tripartite theoretical framework, the data analysis was hermeneutical in the sense that there was an interplay between the “how” of RDT and the “why” of power analyses. Given this approach, I used the guidelines developed by Yin (2009). This included maintaining a chain of evidence by developing case reports, memoing, and using a coding scheme that had *a priori* codes but allowed room for changes to the coding scheme based on the emerging themes in the data (Charmaz, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti 6.0 so as to preserve a strong chain of evidence and to facilitate replicable, traceable analysis of the texts. I heeded the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994) and Bauer (2000) in reviewing documents and interview transcripts in their entirety, coding for key trends and key factual elements (e.g., references to timelines, types of resources) first, and then applying thematic codes to help develop emergent pictures within the data. A full code table was developed (and adapted

as the study progressed) so as to provide replicability and practical utility during the coding process. Initial codes included notes about resource flows (e.g., “Resources-Money”), decision making (e.g., “Decision”), and types of resources in play (e.g., “Resources-Facilities”). These axial codes provided a basis for analysis throughout the process. As the study progressed, codes around Resources were added to include “money”, “human resources”, “connections” and “coaches.” Although several of these codes emerged in the course of the data analysis, most, such as “coaches,” did not become significant elements of the study, having arisen rarely in both the minutes and the interviews. A full list of codes is available in Appendix C.

Coding was an iterative process that resulted in and was guided by ongoing analytical steps (Charmaz, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009). Iterations affected coding schemes, but also resulted in theoretical conclusions. In Table 3.6, I briefly outline my strategies for this level of analysis, summarizing in the process the 13 steps elucidated by Miles and Huberman (pp. 246-262).

The analytical process was hermeneutical in that the answers to the questions of “what”, “why” and “how” (Whetten, 1989) impacted each other throughout the process. The same applied to the steps noted above, in that they were not executed as sequentially as the above simplified explanation may imply. Thus, this process can be aptly described as iterative, and this closeness to the data during collection and analysis allowed for a thicker dataset and opened greater possibilities for theoretical contributions as a result.

The step of reviewing themes confirmed the analytical steps of developing the themes in the data. For each of the RQs, a set of themes emerged from the data. The analytical steps outlined in Table 3.6 guided the development of themes emerging first

Table 3.6

*Analytical Steps and Example Tactics*

| <b>Tactic</b>     | <b>Explanation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Example</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Developing Themes | In this phase, I noted patterns and examined these patterns for basic plausibility. I endeavoured to continually examine competing theories throughout the analytical process by memoing and note taking about the emerging themes. | The theme of valuing existence emerged through this step. Initial interviews with Brad-TSL and Roger-ISC indicated this theme merited further exploration and subsequent adhered to this theme in the data.                                               |
| Chunking          | By developing clusters of data and developing metaphors to help explain those clusters, I began to see broader trends and to assemble broad data points into more manageable categories.                                            | Seeing the chunks of resources made clear that money was not as important a variable as may have been considered likely prior to the study as it was rarely mentioned by interviewees or in the minutes, resulting in “chunks” that were not significant. |
| Counting          | As a means of testing previous conclusions about plausibility and to detect otherwise unseen patterns, counting of occurrences of data points or of incidences mentioned in the data helped provide a grounding                     | The incidents of resource types noted above were counted at the outset of analysis, though this was not a fruitful analytic tactic for the purpose of                                                                                                     |

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                    | to evaluate ongoing analytical directions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | answering the research questions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Contrasting and Dividing Variables | In creating divisions among the variables and then means to compare and contrast them, I saw more power relations (through contrasting views/outcomes), and I was able to again question earlier conclusions.                                                                                                                  | Division of variables by who was served gave insight into the fact that some actions served the sport itself, or the future state of an organization rather than discrete stakeholders.                                                                 |
| Seeing Relationships               | In building relationship models, including if>then statements, I tested possible power relations as well as possible examples of resource dependence from the data. I examined the data to find intervening variables within any established if>then statements so as to ensure that the connections are grounded in the data. | The relationship between resource flow and gender emerged through this step, showing that, where Female sport was in the lead, fewer resources were allocated. Seeing the relationship between the resources and gender allowed this finding to emerge. |
| Building a Chain of Evidence       | As theoretical constructs came together, this step helped ensure that alternate theories or explanations were not being missed. This step, for example, ensured a consideration of neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) as is outlined in Chapter 7.                                                             | The pre-emptive compliance with State Federation regulations by TSL required a view of neo-Institutional Theory as a test and alternate theory.                                                                                                         |

from documentary review and then developed further in the course of semi-structured interviews. Emerging themes in the data were further explored in the course of interviews, using the steps noted in Table 3.6. The themes outlined in the results chapters reflect these themes. Other themes or potential themes that the literature would have indicated may be at play, such as coaching (Sharpe, 2006) or crisis management (Wicker et al., 2013), did not emerge and were not reinforced in the course of semi-structured interviews.

To further ensure that the findings would be trustworthy, I sent a summary to respondents to allow them to refute, contest or shape the findings. Three respondents responded to this request and reported that the findings presented “nothing I can argue with” (Dan-TSL) and “I think all of your points are right on and capture the spirit of the organizations and its board members” (Mike-TSL). All the respondents, including Sally-TSL agreed with the findings summary and did not suggest any changes as a result of their respective reviews. Subsets of the findings were also presented at the 2013 North American Society for Sport Management conference, as well as in front of peers at the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences for feedback.

### **Introduction to Results**

The results are presented within the three RQs outlined in Chapter 2. Within each of the three RQs, individual findings are highlighted, with supporting evidence from the data for each. The results outlined in these three RQs and eleven highlighted findings provide the empirical basis for the discussion and conclusions to follow.

Each element of the findings begins with a short table that provides an outline for that section. In order to demonstrate the triangulation of the data, and thus

trustworthiness, the tables present evidence of what the CSOs said, what they documented, what they did, and the impacts of those actions. This short summary will frame the subsequent exploration of the data and findings.

## **Chapter 4 – Results for Research Question 1**

### **How does power shape the allocation of resources within CSOs?**

This chapter outlines three themes: resources flowing to irreplaceable elements of the organization, resources flowing to the current members of the organization versus those that flow to (purported) future members, and finally the impact of organizational values on the flow of resources. The internal flows of resources will be related to the underlying power relationships in the organization that is concurrent with resource allocation. I close this chapter with a note on gender and resource allocation as it applied uniquely to TSL.

#### **Allocating Resources to Irreplaceable Elements of TSL**

In the case of TSL, the existential resource of note was officials. TSL's sport is (at varying levels, types) an either partial or full contact team sport, and thus officials are seen as essential to the conduct of the game. Officials in TSL provided services to all games at all levels and were an existential requirement for the games to happen. The officials for the sport were usually paid a small stipend, but certainly not enough for them to consider officiating to be anything more than an avocation. That officials were a vital resource to the sport and to the organization was not lost on respondents from TSL; but, those in charge of officiating did not seem to be aware of nor willing to exploit the power they possessed as a result of being a non-substitutable resource for the organization. Table 4.1 briefly outlines and/or provides examples of the words, documentation, actions and impacts of the non-substitutability of officials, and the paragraphs that follow further develop these concepts.

Table 4.1

*Data Summary: Irreplaceable Elements*

| CSO           | TSL                                                                                 |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | “we are so desperate for officials” (Sally-TSL)                                     |
| Documentation | “[Dan-TSL] is always looking for new officials” (TSL Minutes, September 2010, p. 5) |
| Actions       | TSL had designated roles on the Board for officials                                 |
| Impacts       | Resources for officials’ training were low; having an adequate supply was the key.  |

The officiating leaders for TSL were in charge of the Male and Female officiating programs<sup>2</sup> respectively. They both reported very little overlap between their crew of officials and between their respective duties, denoting that the technical differences between the games made such overlap not only unlikely, but undesirable, “And I can get on a lot of details if you want, but the bottom line is – and we get this, the guys that are coming over from the girls’ game, they’re disrupting the play because they’re making an incorrect call” (Dan-TSL). A short section at the conclusion of this chapter deals further with the issues of gender in the allocation of resources, but for the present exposition of resource allocation (in relation to officiating), I will stipulate that, for technical reasons on the field-of-play, the officials themselves did not see overlap in their work as beneficial, as the rules and the officiating procedures were different between Male and Female competitions.

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<sup>2</sup> Male and Female refers to the gender of the athletes in the contests, not the genders of the officials themselves. Male and Female is used rather than the more common “Men’s” and “Women’s” as the categories also included “Boys” and “Girls” competitions.

Both officiating leaders for TSL reported that their greatest resource need was more officials. When Geoff-TSL was asked what resource he needs to do his job, he responded, “Well, what I could use there is a good recruiter” (Geoff-TSL). And, in addition to the quantity of officials, TSL exhibited a desire to also increase the quality of the officiating through training and support, while acknowledging less progress in that respect, “I would like to get there and then we have enough officials to cover the games, but we don’t do a rigid job of improving the officiating from year to year” (Geoff-TSL). Outside of the leaders in officiating, the desire to improve the amount, quantity and quality of officials was also mentioned by other respondents. Sally-TSL mentioned dealing with complaints from coaches about officiating, and conceded that the pool of available officials is limiting for the organization,

We will do this, but we employ them, but that’s all, and we do have open conversations with them and they are constantly trying to improve, but we don’t have any jurisdiction over officials other than hiring or not hiring them; and because we are so desperate for officials, it’s kind of a double edged sword. (Sally-TSL)

In the above quote, Sally-TSL also alludes to the nominal separation between TSL and its officials. The officials in the area have formed officiating organizations that run in parallel to TSL. Geoff-TSL also reported that they are loosely aligned with a regional association of officials that encompasses several sports. The exact placement of officials within the organization is not clear as they are clearly part of the organization (both the Male and Female leads attend Board meetings); but, they are not fully embraced either, as neither officials lead had a vote at the Board meetings.

In terms of resource allocation, neither of the officiating leads felt that they had been allocated much at all in the way of resources, and certainly did not perceive themselves as being in a position to exercise their power over TSL. Dan-TSL, when asked what conditions he could apply to the provision of officiating services responded, “Yeah, but, you know, the thing is that’s not even in my realm of personality” (Dan-TSL). In fact, Geoff-TSL reported paying out-of-pocket to secure outside “raters” (trained evaluators) and conducting officiating training sessions in his home, “And so we haven’t, up to this point, done much with or needed those resources, and while we’re supposed to do field training, originally it’s like two hours, so we’re just going to make a mini-field in my dining room and we pretend that we were doing field work” (Geoff-TSL).

Although the officiating elements of TSL’s programming were being run on a shoestring budget, TSL was doing enough to ensure that each game had an officiating crew in place. Both officiating leaders in TSL reported that their biggest daily challenge was rescheduling games, not getting officials assigned in the first place, despite their ongoing struggles with official recruitment. That resources would not flow to officiating once enough officials are in place is in keeping with Weber’s (2009) observations of umpires in Major League Baseball. He noted that Major League Baseball had traditionally viewed umpires as being like bases, in that, as long as there were four on the field there was no problem. While several other respondents from TSL reported the importance of officiating, and that disputes over officiating or the rules did tie up precious volunteer time, the idea that “good enough is good enough” was apparent in the data where officiating was concerned.

Sharpe (2006) mentioned that the presence of umpires in a softball CSO was similarly positioned to just ensure that each field had an official when dealing with a shortage of available volunteers:

Consequently, the league assigned the most experienced officials to the senior fields where the umpires' ability to make calls had a significant impact on the outcome of the game. They filled in the gaps with young and inexperienced umpires who were assigned to the tyke fields where making calls was not needed because of the three-pitch format. (Sharpe, 2006, p. 394)

Sharpe went on to detail some of the implications of the threshold approach to securing officials, "The games at the tyke fields were the ones with the most complaints of disorderliness and dirty play both on the field and in the stands" (p. 394). The findings in the present case mirrors those in the case from Sharpe and notes about officials shortages across North American sport (e.g., Hoyer & Cuskelly, 2004; Kellett & Shilbury, 2007; Titlebaum, Haberlin, & Titlebaum, 2009); but from a resource perspective, it aligns with the concept that marginal resources are more likely to engender a response from organizations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), and that sport does not recognize quality officiating as being a marginal resource over officiating of sufficient quantity. That the marginal value of quality officiating is insufficient to attract meaningful allocation of resources within the organization is in keeping with both officiating and RDT literatures. That the officiating leaders do not see this lack of power to exert demands on the focal organizations as problematic, and simply 'get on with things' by, for example, conducting positioning practice in dining rooms is very much in keeping with Lukes and Haglund's (2005) vision of a third dimension of power being measured primarily by the

service of interests rather than through overt conflict, “The point of that ‘radical’ definition was to seek to suggest a range of interests people have, of which they may not be aware, which may be adversely affected by the powerful” (p. 63). The reticence on the part of officials to more strongly assert their interests with TSL is evidence of a suppressed interest as is predicted by Lukes’ concepts of power. 3D concepts of power problematize consensus (Fletcher, 1992), and this serves as an example of where the consensus obscures that the subjective interests of one party are not being served. Those unserved interests were a key indicator of a power relationship in the 3D framework (Lukes, 2005).

### **Future Members as an Attractor of Resources**

The allocation of resources to officials was demonstrated above to have been exemplary of a third dimension of power relation. The following paragraphs outline the evidence supporting that the CSOs under study were willing to allocate resources to the social construction that is their sport. Both organizations were willing to dedicate resources to projects and programs that were not likely to serve the interests of current members, but were instead geared toward a service to the sport itself. In the case of ISC, this was work to ensure access to the sport by more people; in the case of TSL, it was service to an unquestioned notion of how the sport ought to be played, manifesting most clearly in the form of “culture keepers” who were deployed to game sites to monitor conduct against the cultural standards of the sport. This evidence will be presented in reference to the theoretical framework of this dissertation, noting that both 3D power and RDT help explain this phenomenon. Table 4.2 provides the words, actions, impacts overview of the data related to future members as an attractor of resources.

Table 4.2

*Data Summary: Future Members as Attractors of Resources*

| CSO           | ISC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | So there is a sort of service element... that pervades the sort of the mission and raison d'être for a [sport] association" (Cary-ISC).                                                                                               |
| Documentation | "[Frank-ISC] expressed a hope that once rolled into [ISC] oversight, the [Junior Development] program may open up to players beyond interclub [sport], to those not able to afford private clubs" (ISC Minutes, February 2011, p. 1). |
| Actions       | Launch of junior programming for non-members                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Impacts       | New resources were directed to junior programming at the expense of capacity building.                                                                                                                                                |

As has been presented earlier, ISC had a bias towards ensuring access to [sport] to those who could not otherwise partake in the sport. In a winter climate (and a traditionally summer sport), this was most pertinent to winter participation. The genesis of ISC was based around ensuring access to the sport, "...if you took away the [ISC] and you were of modest means, what would be your ability to play [sport] out there? It would be very limited" (Cary-ISC). Cary also reported that membership in a private club that offers the same programming would be upwards of \$2,000.00 USD per year, an amount that would be unaffordable for many of the leaders and participants in ISC. While ISC worked to ensure all programs were self-funding, the costs were kept low by using volunteers as staff, avoiding overhead costs and by reducing interdependence where possible, as noted above. But, as ISC progressed, its original mandate of providing access to its sport to its own members (who could not otherwise afford access) changed

to include the community more broadly, and the leaders of ISC had come to no longer require the services of ISC for their own sport access. Those leaders generally had the means and inclination to just join a private club for their own access, but the evidence indicates they did not do so, or, if they did, they maintained their work with ISC despite securing private access.

John-ISC echoed the original intent of the organization and a commitment to that service, despite having recently secured private access to the sport for himself:

[ISC], I think grew out of initially adult [sport] and then I think it, we brought on a junior component probably very early on and some of the early Board members felt it was very important that we service a segment that wasn't being serviced and that is kids that couldn't afford private clubs and to make sure they had access to [sport]. And while I personally don't fall into the private club, well I guess I am now, but recently we joined, but you know I believe that if we're, if our name is the greater [City] [Sport] association we need to service all things [sport]. (John-ISC)

This notion of serving the sport above serving the interest of current membership was also presented by Cary-ISC who noted that many of the Board members no longer had a financial need to use ISC programs, but a need to supplement that which is available from private providers, "There is no need for that [exclusive use of private providers]. So there is a sort of service element... that pervades the sort of the mission and *raison d'être* for a [sport] association" (Cary-ISC). Given that the association had a strong (though not exclusive) interest in serving non-members, the evidence suggested that the health of the sport itself was a primary filter of internal resource allocation in ISC, appearing to come before service to existing members or building capacity to serve future members.

ISC's dedication to its sport manifested itself primarily in junior programming. Juniors generally were not members of ISC and were targeted for not having access to the sport without an intervention from ISC. One member, in the course of a meeting, expressed a specific desire to ensure greater access to junior non-members within programming, "[Frank-ISC] expressed a hope that once rolled into [ISC] oversight, the [junior] program may open up to players beyond interclub [sport], to those not able to afford private clubs" (ISC Minutes, February 2011).

The above section demonstrated that the leaders of ISC ensured allocation of resources within the club was dedicated to the social construction of the sport, rather than to the direct provision of service of its existing members through ISC's commitment to junior outreach programming aimed to serve members of the community who were not members of the CSO. This section also presented evidence to indicate that this was not necessarily part of the original intent of the organization that had been dedicated to providing access for its members, such as the emphasis on junior outreach and access programs in ISC, and ISC's engagement with its NSO to secure resources for those programs. That new resources, as they became available, were dedicated not to increasing the capacity of the organization but to servicing the short-term benefit of the sport could be partially explained by both Lukes' notions of power and by RDT.

As a social actor, ISC has not questioned the value of increasing access to the sport by non-members. This presents the inverse of Lukes' (2005) concept of tracking power by determining where interests go unserved. Here, the interests of the sport and of non-members are served, overtly, and in a manner that appears to be unquestioned by the organization. That the sport itself would hold an unquestioned sway over the

organization is a finding that may be unique to sport (cf. Chalip, 2006) or in a manner similar to religious organizations where faith-based organizations have a unique set of measurements outside of traditional social-welfare deliverables, “In a way, faith outcomes may be akin to measures of self-esteem, wherein funders may not be specifically interested in the outcome but they recognize that it may be highly correlated with participant success” (Fischer, 2004, p. 36). This finding suggests that “sport outcomes” may merit measurement alongside more traditional measures of CSO success (e.g., Doherty & Cousens, 2013; Doherty et al., 2004; Horch, 1994a; Hoye & Doherty, 2011), just as “faith outcomes” merit consideration when examining the success of Faith Based Organizations. This is especially worthy of consideration given that the data showed resources were allocated within ISC for goals which could best be described as “sport outcomes” rather than, and even at the expense of “mutual aid” (cf. Hodgett & Bishop, 1985).

### **Organizational Values as Attractors of Resources**

TSL had a volunteer position at every game dedicated as a “culture keeper” (Bob-TSL). The culture of the sport was very important to them to preserve; and volunteer time, a scarce resource, was dedicated to serve the culture of the sport. That the culture of the sport was important was not necessarily unique to this sport community (cf. Mills & Hoeber, 2013; Steen-Johnson, 2008), but that the importance attracted a specific internal allocation of resources is a novel finding. The notion of a “culture keeper” is a uniquely overt allocation of resources to the culture of the sport. The culture keeper was but one manifestation in TSL of the importance of the culture of the sport, and by extension the voluntary culture of the club. The following paragraphs further develop

evidentiary links between the desire to maintain culture and the allocation of internal resources within TSL. Table 4.3 briefly outlines the findings and evidence in this area.

Table 4.3

*Data Summary: Organizational Values as Attractors of Resources*

| CSO           | TSL                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | "The games are not respected like [Sport]. If you go to a youth hockey or youth soccer game, and there's just a cacophony of yelling parents and yelling coaches" (Bob-TSL) |
| Documentation | "Addressing concerns about sportsmanship. Ideas submitted last season: Mandatory culture keepers for each team, every game, all levels" (TSL Minutes, February 2010, p. 5). |
| Actions       | Development of a "culture keeper" program                                                                                                                                   |
| Impacts       | Scarce resources were dedicated to providing culture keeper role at the expense of other potential uses of marginal resources.                                              |

Bob-TSL noted that the organization had worked with its component teams to ensure a culture keeper would be on the sidelines of games:

But I guess the way it's evolved is a sincere focus and systems on the sportsmanship and respect for the game to the point where teams are encouraged to have a culture keeper on the sidelines, and that sounds corny, but that literally means that if a parent is yelling at one of our officials, he'd go over to the parent and tell them to knock it off and that this is [sport], so respect the game. (Bob-TSL)

As was noted earlier, officials were in short supply in TSL (and required a specific skillset); but, it is nonetheless striking that TSL has dedicated human resources to

immediately correct poor behaviour towards officials rather than in the form of officials directly. Hoye and Cuskelly (2004) found it common that administrators in sport programs over-attributed attrition in officials to abuse, so there is support to the idea that TSL used culture keepers as a means of retaining officials, but their stated reasons for the culture keepers tended to be much broader than the retention of a key resource:

That fear of the over-emphasis on competition with little ones, and little being anything under 13, 14 or 15. When the over-emphasis on competition is our main goal, it worries me that we are rewiring our human brain instead of being in it for the camaraderie and good naturedness or the love of the competition, we are training a new generation to love to win over the competition, and that's a huge concern. That's a huge concern as a society. (Sally-TSL)

The emphasis on the sport's culture could apply to officials, it could also apply to principles of athlete development such as the movement toward long-term athlete development (LTAD) (Balyi et al., 2005; Helsen, Starkes, & Hodges, 1998), as is alluded to by Sally-TSL above. However, the data suggest a connection between critical incidents on the sidelines and the provenance of the culture keeper concept, "It is suggested this person identify themselves and meet with the officials before each game so the officials know who they are and can go to them when they feel a fan has become obstructive or belligerent" (TSL Minutes, September, 2010). Internally, resources flowed in service of the sport itself, as defined by the leaders of TSL. The preservation of the notion of sportsmanship and the culture of the sport was worthy of an internal allocation.

The allocation of resources towards an unquestioned notion of sportsmanship and of "the game" is very much in keeping with Lukes' outline of the second dimension of

power, the ability to control what is a decision and what is a non-decision, “A decision is a choice among alternative modes of action, a non-decision is a decision that results in the suppression or thwarting of a latent manifest challenge to the values or interests of the decision-maker” (Lukes, 2005, p. 22). Previous incidents involving sportsmanship, including a purported “blood bath” (TSL Minutes, May, 2006) at a particular tournament indicate that there was a self-evident problem, as perceived by TSL in terms of sportsmanship. Although this problematization of conduct and emphasis on competition is treated as self-evident, TSL does acknowledge there is another potential side to the argument, though TSL rejected it:

I think one of my concerns again with several organizations that have attempted to come in, I think, in good spirit to say, “Gosh, we can really help you. We can do this. We can organize this. We can take over youth and do this and this and this.”

And then all of a sudden I see competition coming into play at the youth levels, and I’m not just talking friendly competition. I’m talking, “We want to start travelling across the country with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders.” Well, that’s a problem for me. (Sally-TSL)

The findings showed that TSL was aware of an alternative to having resources flow to keeping the culture, but rejected those alternatives, seemingly without discussion, consultation, or debate. The value of the culture was, to re-state, “a latent manifest challenge” (Lukes, 2005, p. 22) for the organization to sufficiently maintain resources being allocated to this end and so that alternatives were subjugated. Bob-TSL, noted that an emphasis on the culture of the sport was not necessarily required, citing other sports as examples they did not want to follow, “The games are not respected like [sport]. If you go

to a youth hockey or youth soccer game, and there's just a cacophony of yelling parents and yelling coaches" (Bob-TSL). Bob-TSL's awareness of the sporting culture of other team sports is indicative of an awareness of alternative courses of action and their rejection by TSL.

### **Gender and Resource Allocation<sup>3</sup>**

As is noted above, resource allocation within TSL can legitimately be broken down by gender. The allocation of resources between the two gendered disciplines of the sport was not even in terms of officiating and officiating development. However, it would be difficult to assert that there was any active gender discrimination within TSL's resource allocations. The following short section will further this argument, and acknowledge the power dynamic relative to gender in this setting. This section does not arrive at a decisive conclusion about gender and resource allocation in TSL as the evidence did not provide a clear finding. Table 4.4 briefly outlines the words, documentation, actions and impacts of TSL in relation to gender-based allocation of resources.

TSL characterized its girls youth program as "booming" (Bob-TSL), and integrated a dedicated position on its Board for members representing Female high school and girls' youth programs (and Male equivalents as well). TSL also scheduled annual "girls' breakout sessions" in conjunction with Board meetings (TSL Minutes, January 2010) to work on issues particular to the girls' game. Another breakout session was also

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<sup>3</sup> Gender was not one of the *a priori* considerations of this study, and the issues around gender emerged from the TSL dataset. This was not the case for ISC where gender was only mentioned in passing in minutes or interviews and thus this element is pursued here only in relation to TSL.

Table 4.4

*Data Summary: Gender and Resource Allocation*

| CSO           | TSL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | “We [Population of the City] are very, very equitable in almost to the matter, I would say to a fault” (Sally-TSL)                                                                                                                                      |
| Documentation | Officiating assignment software was purchased for the Male game without overt regard to the applicability to the Female game, “[State Federation] purchased “The Arbiter” software for boys (not sure about girls)” (TSL Minutes, February 2010, p. 2). |
| Actions       | Allocated resources on a per capita basis rather than ensuring outright equality of resourcing                                                                                                                                                          |
| Impacts       | No one, even those leading the Female programming challenged the notion that per capita equality was equal                                                                                                                                              |

scheduled to discuss the boys’ game at the same meeting. However, there was clearly a split between the Male and Female versions of the sport, “Yeah, the games are different. The rules are different. The equipment is different. One could argue they’re actually different, two different sports, and I think there are people who would say they ought to be completely separate” (Bob-TSL).

The meaningful differences on the field of play were compounded by the differences in sizes (in terms of number of athletes) between the two genders, “And so basically, we’ve been sort of skipping by with what we could because we didn’t want to raise the budget like they did on the boys’ side because of the size, the number of the girls that are involved is small” (Geoff-TSL). The differences in gender were justified based on these two reasons by TSL leaders, and there was no mention in the TSL minutes

of any concerns relative to gender equity. One respondent who was primarily concerned with the Female side of the sport categorized gender equity as being *de rigueur* within their home city, “We [Population of the City] are very, very equitable in almost to the matter, I would say to a fault. When a new boy’s sport wants to start, they won’t even consider it unless they mirror with the girls’ sport” (Sally-TSL). There was no evidence in the data of a concern that TSL had failed to ensure gender equity, and in fact some evidence that the organization characterized their practices as being equitable on a per capita basis.

There was evidence that there was awareness of the gender differences in resource allocation, but again, no acknowledgement that the differences were potentially problematic. In fact, there was some valorization of the differences, from the perspective of the girls programs:

One of our annual debates is whether to have the boys’ and girls’ state championship games on the same day or separate days. And there are many people in the girls’ game that don’t want anything to do with the boys’ game. They want their own day and all. (Bob-TSL)

Separate and equal (on a per capita basis) is the approach taken by TSL; but this approach is not neutral. In the case of officiating programs, one program (female) is struggling to bring in trainers for seminars while the other (male) is buying small tokens (such as flipping coins) for their officials. As is noted above, neither officiating program is remotely decadent; but in officiating, the per capita approach appears to break down, and the equity principle is lost.

The above paragraphs demonstrated that gender is a meaningful element in resource allocations in TSL. Table 4.5 presents the three dimensions of power as outlined by Lukes and demonstrates that the evidence in this case study does not provide clear evidence of a power relation on an unserved interest. However, as Lukes (2005) notes repeatedly, the challenge of the third dimension is viewing what did not happen, the resource that did not get allocated or the conflict that never bubbled to the surface.

Table 4.5

*Summary of Dimensions of Power relative to gender in TSL*

| <b>Dimension of Power<br/>(Lukes, 2005)</b> | <b>Characteristics of<br/>Dimension</b>                        | <b>Evidence from TSL in<br/>relation to gender</b>                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First Dimension                             | Overt conflict                                                 | No overt conflict is noted in minutes or interviews                                                                                                         |
| Second Dimension                            | Control of agenda –<br>restricting that which is<br>considered | Girls' programs are overtly<br>represented on Board and<br>both boys' and girls'<br>programs are given special<br>breakout sessions at Board<br>meetings.   |
| Third Dimension                             | Control of what interests are<br>even contested                | Those in leadership<br>positions in the girls'<br>program appear keenly<br>aware of the inequities and<br>endorse them based on the<br>per capita argument. |

Given that the subjective interests of the girls program can be viewed as being underserved by an observer, there is reason to consider the possibility that the third dimension of power is at play. However, the overt awareness of the issue on the parts of respondents also demonstrates a competing explanation that this is simply a matter of per capita allocation of resources. The second dimension of power, wherein the control of the agenda is at play, provides a more fruitful explanation. That the equal service of both genders was seen as important on a per capita basis, but not on an absolute basis (according to respondents working with both the Male and Female games) indicates that the agenda (per capita vs absolute) had been decided, with the outcome not then requiring any overt conflict to be resolved.

### **Summary of Internal Resource Allocation in the CSOs**

The sum impact of these internal allocation dynamics revealed power relations that allowed for resources to flow only until a need was met (and no more), that the CSOs were willing to allocate resources “for the good of the game,” and thus away from the short term benefits of members, and that in the case of TSL, resources were allocated on a per capita basis among Male and Female programs, leading to a greater allocation of resources in the Male program in the absolute sense. More precisely, the above results have demonstrated that power shaped internal resource allocation by both CSOs with three clear themes: 1) that the power to determine threshold effects made it such that once the key demands of a program area were met (such as in officiating), the power to attract marginal resources was greatly diminished; 2) that both CSOs viewed the sport itself as an important recipient of resources and were willing to exercise their power through the allocation to the social construction of the sport; and finally, 3) that TSL’s

unquestioned agenda for determining gender equality (per capital allocation) appears to have played a role in resource allocation within TSL.

## Chapter 5 – Research Question 2

### **How do CSOs secure access to resources from their organizational environments?**

This question had the potential to be confounding in that few resources normally flow into a CSO (Misener & Doherty, 2013), thus creating the potential of not having sufficient resources to track. Fortunately, while the amount of resources flowing was very low, the resources that did flow were visible and largely existential. The most essential resource was facility access, as was found by Misener and Doherty (2009); but other resources from the environment were valued by the CSOs as well. They included financial resources, through grants from their respective NSOs, and human resources in the form of key personnel to lead, coach and officiate the sport. In all cases, the CSOs were able to secure sufficient resources from their environments to survive. This chapter illustrates that, although the clubs were able to survive, they did not capture sufficient resources to grow their capacity (and likely their ability to secure still more resources); and that the reasons for not capturing any surplus resources were varied, potentially counter-intuitive, and build upon the finding in the previous chapter that the social construction of the sport can attract resources. This chapter addresses three key elements of the research question: the (un)importance of existence, multi-level governance, and ongoing personnel development. Each element will be dealt with as a discrete part of the answer to the research question. Conclusions and discussion of these discrete elements will be covered more fully in Chapter 7.

### **The (Un)Importance of Existence**

Respondents in the present study indicated that their clubs largely did not much care about their own existence as a CSO, and that this freed them from many of the

resource demands that RDT would predict. Specifically, it was clear that the clubs were able to secure access to facilities with relative ease, contrary to previous findings about CSOs (Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006; Wicker & Breuer, 2011), and that they were more than willing to help erstwhile competitive organizations grow and thrive. The results indicate that the clubs were focused to a much greater degree on the outcomes they could engender, such as greater access to the sport, rather than on the furtherance of their club as an institution.

In this section, the key findings of the data are presented in two sections: importance of existing and resource flow. The first establishes the CSOs' actions that indicate a low emphasis on their existence, and the second outlines the flow of resources that follows.

**The Importance of existing.** Simply stated, respondents largely did not consider their organization to be important. They stated that they were much more interested in what the organization could accomplish than in its ongoing survival. This is illustrated in their responses around their willingness to step aside should another organization be able to present a better product for their community, "I do not think it has to be [TSL] per se" (Sally-TSL). Another respondent was clear that the existence of the organization was not their impetus for neither involvement or an animating concern for the organization presently: "I would say my prejudice is in the results and not in the organization itself. So I don't particularly sense or I have no particular institutional loyalty to an organization called [ISC]" (Cary-ISC). Given that the respondents to this study are among the organizations' key leaders (neither organization had professional staff), this appears to not be simply a matter of volunteer commitment (cf. Cuskelly, 1995; Doherty & Carron,

2003) to the organization, but rather a matter of the organization's commitment to its own existence. The actions of the organizations also indicated a similar disinterest in the institution that is their CSO. It was clear in the data that the organizations were taking discrete actions that could undercut their own existence. It was equally clear that organizations were aware of this possible consequence and proceeded anyway. The two organizations undertook two different actions of this nature and both are outlined further. Table 5.1 outlines words, documentation, actions and impacts for each CSO's willingness to not exist.

Table 5.1

*Data Summary: The Importance of Existing*

| <b>CSO</b>    | <b>TSL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | "[TSL] is critical, but if we have the statewide sponsorship or the high school sponsorship and we wouldn't need [TSL], that would be fine with me." (Bob-TSL)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Documentation | "Move to a schedule that mirrors most other [State Federation] spring sports (baseball, softball and soccer). This essentially moves the season out one week. Using the [State Federation] calendar, the season would start on week 38 and end on week 50. The girls would follow the same calendar but probably end earlier until they have enough teams to support a fuller schedule and bigger tournament" (TSL Minutes, February 2010, p. 1) |
| Actions       | Dedicating scarce resources to grow the sport in an adjacent city                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Impacts       | Relatively easy access to facilities for games and practices by the CSO and its member teams.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>CSO</b>    | <b>ISC</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | “It’s not like the Elks or the Alliances, or Phi Beta Phi or something where you feel sort of like an institutional loyalty to the organization.” (Chuck-ISC)                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Documentation | The following question was discussed: Should [ISC] promote itself more? The answer may be complicated by a need to keep membership numbers down in order to provide quality services efficiently for the members we currently have but also a desire to promote our programs to our target audience/users. (ISC Minutes, February 2011, p. 2) |
| Actions       | Providing a sport guide that included competing programs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Impacts       | Ability to extract facility maintenance commitments from the municipality.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

Table 5.2

*Interviewee responses in reference to valuing existence*

| <b>Respondent</b> | <b>Response</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mike-TSL          | I would feel okay with that. I'm involved in [TSL] because I have three children who are all [sport] players and [TSL]'s role, and [State Sport Organization] for that matter too, and that's why I'm involved there, their role is to grow [sport]. Grow the sport of [sport] in the geographical area that we are in, and I must say I'm the first to always want... If something is going well for my family, I want to try and get [sic - give] back to the organization if I can. So I got involved because of my children and the aspect of wanting to get [sic - give] back so whether it was [TSL] who is doing it or it was some other organization to the extent that they needed volunteers and were interested and someone with my skill that I felt like I can help them, I would do it. |
| Dan-TSL           | Because if somebody else could go and do that, if somebody else could go out and schedule the high school games, if somebody could go out and make sure that rules are... that can happen, but what you need is you need to have the authority therefore when grievances come through, or if there's a question about a specific rule or anything like that, you've got to have that one overriding authority, and I'd rather have a Board than an individual in that position.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Sally-TSL         | Oh gosh. I think organization is important. I don't necessarily think [TSL] is the founding force in this area, and at present, [TSL] is the organizing force... I do not think it has to remain [TSL] per se.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Geoff-TSL         | I sort of have a personal philosophy of best available. I officiate eight different sports, and with that many, you just can't do a top notch job in every sports, and so I generally say is I want to be what I call it best available. But what it kind of means is I want what's better than the lowest person on the totem pole.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

Bob-TSL

Let's see, in the absence of recognition of the sport by [the State High School Sport Federation] and sponsorship by the public schools, [TSL] is critical, but if we have the statewide sponsorship or the high school sponsorship and we wouldn't need [TSL], that would be fine with me. I just think [sport] is such a unique sport. We did something for sportsmanship, but it's a sport that many kids as possible should have the opportunity to play, and however that happens is fine by me.

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John-ISC

**John-ISC:** Well, it's a great question, and of course, every person would have different take on that. What's the right word? The factor that drives me aren't completely... what is that word? I don't want to say "know," because that's not right word. Shoot. I can't think. I'll just tell a background on why, and why I chose this, and then where it's going.

**David Patterson:** Sure.

**John-ISC:** [Sport], as probably with many sports, but I think [sport] is one of the ones that's very unique unlike baseball, basketball, football, and probably even hockey. If your child plays [sport], the kids that really end up being successful in [sport] generally, by and large, if you look at the kind of a history [sport] players that have made it, fall into probably one of four categories. One, they came from families that they had plenty of resources, but we're talking about money now.

Two, a parent play [sport] either at college level or pro level.

Three, their parents coach.

Four, they had access to a private club and that's probably directly related.

**David Patterson:** Yeah.

**John-ISC:** My son took an interest at [sport] in age 4 and I didn't fall on any of those four categories. I have never played [sport].

**David Patterson:** Okay.

**John-ISC:** I love the game. In fact, I would watch it as a kid, but I never played that. I did other sports, and I quickly saw the disadvantage that you'd have in excelling in the sport simply because I couldn't offer him any of those top four items I just stated. And so I thought, "Well, what am I good at? I'm really good at managing training. I'm good at running organizations. I'm good at that kind of stuff. So how do I use that skill to help my son to be successful?"

So I figured I needed to get involved in a local organization so at the very least, I could be connected to the game at some level and that in turn would help me help him.

**David Patterson:** Yeah.

**John-ISC:** Now, a lot of people make decisions initially for, and I can't think of the right word for it, but they make decisions for unselfish reasons.

**David Patterson:** Sure.

**John-ISC:** But then as they learn more, they change their mind, you know?

**David Patterson:** Right.

**John-ISC:** I would be lying if I didn't say my primary focus is still my son because as a parent, that's what it is. It's logical, now that I've got involved in this, and now I've learned to play the game, I'm playing the game now and I'm changing my own choices on what I want to be interested in, it's becoming a bigger part of my life, and it's not just about my son anymore, but I really like it.

I like these people I work with and I like this organization we're involved in. I see there is a need here where this organization could do more. If you go into other communities, bigger communities, if you're

going to do some research, there are actually major [Sport Pro Tour] events. Now, we can never do that here. I am not trying to fool myself, but there are actually major [Sport Pro Tour] events in bigger cities that are actually run by organization like ours.

**David Patterson:** Sure, okay, yeah.

**John-ISC:** And so this could be taken to a whole another level. Now, we can't do that in [City] because I don't think [City] is probably just at a density of the population with their facilities, but the reality is that we can do a better job at holding a game here in town.

So I think if my son, let's flip around your question, I thought about this, if my son quit tennis and said, "Dad, I'm burned out, I don't want to do it anymore," would I quit [ISC]? And the answer to that question would be no. I see it as something bigger. I see it as something that I enjoy and it seems like kind of a quality way to spend my time outside, if I'm going to volunteer for something.

**David Patterson:** Yeah.

**John-ISC:** And so even if my son stays in [sport], but moves on to high school and college, I think I'll stay involved because now it feels good in what we're doing. Does that answer your question?

**David Patterson:** Absolutely, yes.

**John-ISC:** Okay.

**David Patterson:** Yeah. For more sort of expression way too, are you an instrument, or are you the music?

**John-ISC:** Sure, sure.

**David Patterson:** And I think what you're saying is [ISC] is the instrument.

**John-ISC:** Yeah.

**David Patterson:** [Sport] is the music.

**John-ISC:** Yeah.

**David Patterson:** If along the way you found a better instrument, do you switch?

**John-ISC:** Would I switch if there is a better instrument?

**David Patterson:** Yeah.

**John-ISC:** Me personally?

**David Patterson:** Yes. I don't mean away from [sport], but I mean away from this, if there's another way to accomplish what [ISC] does?

**John-ISC:** Yeah, I think, like I said, yeah, because since I've kind of shifted somewhat more into kind of this is a good cause, if there is a better way to achieve results, then yes.

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Roger-ISC

Well, that's an interesting question because as I mentioned to you before [ISC] started out to fill certain niches in the market and when the [sport] boom initially hit back in the early 70's, [the local school board] ran [sport] lessons. The city built [sport] courts. Two private [sport] clubs and the university [sport] facility, indoor clubs throughout the hill. And then of course country clubs had a lot of programming during the summer.

If you got money, you're connected with one of the country clubs or you can play at private [sport] clubs during the winter or if you're connected to the university, you got [sport] resources up the ass.

But if you're a guy who can't afford -- the last year I was a member of [Private Club Name] Country Club indoor [sport] facility, it cost me two grand. And that's a lot of money when you think about that's after-tax money. It cost me probably three grand to earn there.

Frank-ISC

Well, that's a good question. I guess because they've been organized over the years to provide [sport] for all age groups, I think it's important that [ISC] continues. I don't know if another organization would be able to come in and just start running with it without having some of the past experience of, let's say, [Frank-ISC] or [Board Member] or [Ron-ISC]. There is just a number of people that have been committed to it over the years, and if they left and another organization took it over, it seems to me it would only be because the people who have been pulling it through for several years would give it up. I hope that doesn't happen, and obviously, [John-ISC] and some of the younger folks that are pulling it through some more, so I don't know. I think I'd like to see [ISC] exist and continue to grow.

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Cary ISC

I would say my prejudice is in the results and not in the organization itself... So I don't particularly sense or I have no particular institutional loyalty to an organization called [ISC] ... Nada... Well, yeah. But it's a vehicle, it's the projects that are important, not the organization itself... So let's say the [NSO] said, "Okay, we've just got a billion dollars. We've made more money than we ever could imagine off of whatever, the US Open or whatever, we are going to hire a full time [sport] administrator for the City and begin to administrate all the programs. Would you guys be willing to shift everything over to that entity? I mean, would there be much objection to that?"... Do you know what I mean?... So yes, it's not one of those things. It's not like a fraternal organization. It's not like the Elks or the Alliances, or Phi Beta Phi or something where you feel sort of like an institutional loyalty to the organization.

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Beyond the respondents' statements, in the case of ISC, the club developed a sport guide for the area. The guide was seen as something of a "yellow pages" for the

sport in the club's metro area. The guide outlined all of the organizations (both voluntary, third sector, such as YMCAs, and for-profit) where their sport was being offered. The guide presented full contact information for providers as well as guides for end users to find programming in their sport. Placement in the guide was provided to ostensibly competing providers at no charge, "So we try to be open, open-minded, open-ended on those kinds of things and really be a directory of all that is available, and we don't try to pass judgment on the quality of the programming or the individuals involved" (Cary-ISC). Given that CSOs are often pressed to increase membership rolls (e.g., Papadimitriou, 2002; Sharpe, 2006), it does not serve the institution of the club to encourage membership in other organizations, but it does serve the goal of increasing access to the sport for the community. The placement in the guide was provided free of charge (and the printing and production costs were absorbed by the club). In effect, the guide was a tool used to actively suppress ISC's market share and increase the market share of competing clubs or firms – something that, for instance, a for-profit organization that valued its existence would not do. It was, therefore, evident that access to the sport was much more important to the club than who was providing said access. While government funding imperatives drove membership increases in the case of German CSOs (Wicker & Breuer, 2011), similar government funding incentives appear not to exist in the US. In the case of ISC, the incentive to grow membership was not necessarily clear, but there was no evidence that ISC stood to benefit in any way by dedicating resources to the growth of other clubs and programs in their community.

In the case of the team sport, work was done to directly and indirectly provide resources to a club in an adjacent area. The adjacent club was in its start-up phase and

required the aid of the more established club to get up and running. In addition, the draw of resources from the resource-starved organization through grants was meaningful as was the commitment on the part of the established club to play games against the new club. The decision to play games hosted by the other club used up finite resources (e.g., facilities, available weekends), and consumed financial resources when teams travelled to the other city (a distance of more than 230km). While the club could potentially benefit from the ability to play newer teams, the club did not stand to gain significantly as they were able to play adequate games, and had access (at about the same distance) to other major centers with opposing teams to play. The organization was undertaking this work as a method of ensuring that those who wished for access to the sport had an adequate opportunity to do so, and simply “to grow the sport” (Bob-TSL).

The organizations under study demonstrated through interview responses and through discrete actions that their own existence was not particularly important to them. Not valuing existence raises several key questions in relation to RDT, as valuing existence is one of the factors leading to organizational dependence (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). The theoretical implications will be dealt with in the Chapter 7. The following section further explores the motivations for action on the parts of the clubs, if not preservation of their own existence.

One of the clubs seemed to actively look for opportunities to no longer be involved in their current activities. The club was nearly always on the lookout to engender self-reliance in other clubs (as is noted above) and for chances to join the state high school sport federation (affiliated with the National Federation of State High School Associations) and referred to hereafter as the State Federation, “That’s our goal, to lose

that jurisdiction” (Bob-TSL). Joining the State Federation for the high school level programs would mean ceding control of those programs to the schools and to the State Federation in their entirety. From a resource perspective, the organization would lose control of or access to many of the resources that are sought by typical CSOs, such as facility access (cf. Misener & Doherty, 2009), and membership and commensurate revenues (cf. Wicker et al., 2012). The organization pursued this outcome vigorously despite the fact that the achievement of the goal would lead to fewer available resources, not more – for the organization.

In the absence of recognition of the sport by [State Federation] and sponsorship by the public schools, [TSL] is critical, but if we have the statewide sponsorship or the high school sponsorship and we wouldn’t need [TSL], that would be fine with me. I just think [Sport] is such a unique sport. We did something for sportsmanship, but it’s a sport that many kids as possible should have the opportunity to play, and however that happens is fine by me. (Bob-TSL)

In the case of a team sport, the organization was particularly concerned with the maintenance of sportsmanship, even deploying “culture keepers” (Bob-TSL) on the sidelines to correct behaviours out of line with the established sportsmanship norms in the sport. The establishment of cultural norms extending beyond organizational or structural boundaries, tied to the practice of the sport itself, was important, as were the connections that the act of organizing brought with it:

It’s called the heart. People have a deep desire to be in community with other people, and the more and more that our society is closing its front doors, especially in urban and suburban areas of the United States, we are more and more moving

away from that sense of community. Without a doubt, what I have seen in my short 50 years on this Earth is this huge increase in the last 25 years, let's say, of youth sports and people wanting to organize activities, because more and more, we are sitting behind computer screens, in front of audiovisual and we are not out communing with our neighbors. This forces us to commune with our neighbors because as human beings, we have a need for that. (Sally-TSL)

In the case of ISC, the club was also largely indifferent to existential issues, focusing instead on ensuring the growth of their sport and ensuring broad access to it, "There is a sort of a service element...that pervades the sort of the mission and *raison d'être* for a [sport] association" (Cary-ISC). In fact, ISC grappled with the question of whether it should promote itself at all,

The following question was discussed: Should [ISC] promote itself more? The answer may be complicated by a need to keep membership numbers down in order to provide quality services efficiently for the members we currently have but also a desire to promote our programs to our target audience/users.

(ISC Minutes, February 2011, p.2)

The question that ISC struggled with in their meeting was not about how to promote, or the strategic imperative of promotion, but about if promotion should happen at all. In this meeting, two points of view are discussed (less promotion leading to higher quality and higher promotions leading to more outreach); but, the implications for ISC's long-term survival (through higher retention, or greater recruitment of members, for example) is not mentioned. ISC framed the question of promotion around the sport and its services, not around the institution that is the club.

## Resource Flow

Given the focus of both clubs on delivering sport programming being of greater importance than their own existence, it bears examination to look at their ability to deliver on that core goal. As CSOs, both clubs are constrained by facility access (neither club owned a sport facility) and by access to adequate membership in order to conduct sport programming. In order to do any of these things, the clubs needed to attract resources. The following section outlines areas in which the clubs have been able to capture resources from the environment and where they have not been able to do so. In both cases, clubs have been able to capture resources despite their small size and relative stature, based at least partly on their emphasis of delivery over institutional existence.

ISC partnered closely with the local municipal government. The partnership helped ensure that the CSO had adequate facility access to conduct its programming (largely junior development programming in this case). The club paid the city government an annual facility access fee that was understood to be dedicated to the ongoing maintenance of the facility. The club was able to demand from the city (and receive) documentary evidence that their “donation” of only \$1,300 USD to the city parks and recreation department was indeed using the funds provided for maintenance (ISC Minutes, January 2011). Given the relative sizes of the organizations and the relative ability to access the facility, RDT would create an expectation that the City would be able to make nearly unfettered demands upon the club given the predicted power differential (Casciaro & Piskorski, 2005). The club had found a way, partially due to its willingness to not exist, to reverse the power relationship predicted by RDT and instead exert demands upon the ostensibly more powerful actor. The City was obligated to provide

recreational facilities and services to its residents, but it was not required to provide maintenance of a facility to the specifications of a single club, among many other providers of that sport and among other potential uses and associated user groups (ISC Minutes, September 2010) of the facility. That the City went beyond the provision of a facility and instead took upon itself to be accountable to a single club is evidence that power had been exerted by ISC.

In the case of TSL, access to facilities was also illustrative of how the club has used its willingness to not exist to dissipate or eliminate RDT-based power differentials with a larger organizational actor. TSL required access to facilities from both the municipality as well as from the local school boards. In this case, the club was able to secure facility access with relative ease, but could foresee greater difficulty if the sport became entwined in the school system, as described in the following quote:

They probably have the least amount of strings. You make a couple of phone calls. You send them a schedule. You send them your certificate of insurance, and ‘Okay, the field is yours all spring.’ School districts are still more, but again we are not considered a school sport yet. Once we become a school sport, then you have to jump through all the hoops that go along with that. (Sally-TSL)

The preceding paragraphs have developed evidence of the CSOs’ ability to avoid forming a dependence relationship with other organizational actors in their respective environments while securing a key resource, facilities. The data indicate that the clubs are resisting the formation of dependence based on their non-insistence on their own existence. In order to develop this potential theoretical implication further, it is important to first eliminate the other nine links in the “chain of dependence” from Pfeffer and

Salancik (1978). To that end, Table 5.3 provides an evidentiary basis to conclude that each of the other nine conditions of dependence were in place in the CSO's under study.

Table 5.3

*CSO Analysis based on Pfeffer and Salancik's (1978) Chain of Dependence*

| <b>Condition</b>            | <b>Evidence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Awareness</i>            | Each of the clubs under study had facility owners that were aware of their resource demands, if only by virtue of facility bookings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <i>Resource Flow</i>        | Both clubs were actively using facilities; the resource in question (facility access) was flowing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <i>Criticality</i>          | Pfeffer and Salancik's contention that the resource is critical extends beyond the criticality of the resource itself (in this case a facility) but to the criticality of the source of the resource. Both of the sports under study have highly specific facility needs, and were both operating in a situation where the facility was not plentiful, and alternative providers were either non-existent or rare.                        |
| <i>Non-Substitutability</i> | Both clubs required specialized facilities that could not readily be sourced from other providers. In the case of ISC, they also required an indoor facility for their traditionally outdoor sport, creating an even more specialized facility requirement.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <i>Non-reciprocity</i>      | Neither club owned a facility nor held another resource that could realistically be considered a reciprocal resource relative to their facility providers. For example, the "donation" provided to the municipality for facility access by the individual club was \$1,300 USD (Ron-ISC), a trivial amount for a mid-sized city government or even relative to the construction costs of a sport or recreation facility.                  |
| <i>Visibility</i>           | One of the reasons that CSOs provide a fruitful ground for study of RDT is that the visibility of resource usage (and demand compliance) is self-evident. When an ice hockey club, for example, uses an ice surface, it is obvious that the facility access has been used. Likewise, demands, such as type of usage or payment for usage, are equally obvious. There was no evidence in the data to suggest this dynamic was not germane. |
| <i>Non-Conflicting</i>      | As these CSOs had very few relationships outside of facility access, there                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Demands</i>              | was no real opportunity to develop conflicting demands from other organizational actors that may have diminished dependency relative to the CSO.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <i>Uncontrolled Demands</i> | The clubs in the study were not in a position to exert demands upon the facility owners. The clubs did not have the financial wherewithal to make reciprocal demands nor the political connections in the community to do so either in the case of the municipality. Between the two cases, only one respondent had a background in city government and had resultant political connections. The respondent suggested that these connections were helpful, but not in terms of any specific resource. |
| <i>Ability to Perform</i>   | The clubs demonstrated that they could adhere to the resource demands placed upon them by the facility owners. Both had plans for responsible facility usage (such as designating volunteers for cleanup duty after a pizza night) and both demonstrated an ability to pay access fees where/when necessary. The evidence in both cases indicated that the low level of demand was not due to an inability to meet a higher set of requirements.                                                      |

The above paragraphs and tables have presented strong evidence that neither CSO valued its own existence. In fact, the only interviewee that talked about the CSO as being inherently valuable did so largely in deference to the people who had led the organization, not to the institution itself. For analytical purposes, it is prudent to draw a clear distinction between “not caring about the organization” and “not caring.” The volunteer leaders in the study had committed significant time, often years, to their respective causes, and at times, at considerable personal expense in the form of time and effort. Their involvement made it clear that they cared dearly about what they were doing, but they saw the organizations as “the instrument,” while what they cared about so passionately was “the music” (John-ISC). As the impacts of their not caring about

existence indicate, in important ways, their ability to further their sport was enabled by their focus on the “music” of their sport over the “instrument” of their respective organizations.

### **Multi-Level Sport Governance Structures**

As was noted previously, both CSOs were members of their respective NSOs. Both clubs were able to secure resources through special grant programs and ongoing support through their NSOs. In the case of special grant programs, the CSOs made meaningful changes to their operations as a result of the influx of resources, in a manner similar to the changes Horch (1994a) saw in German CSOs, although due to funding from the federal government rather than the NSO. In the case of ongoing program support, the resources flowing into the CSO did not engender much in the way of change and were clearly seen as part of the ongoing operations of the CSO, and not seen as marginal incoming resources. This finding is in keeping with the idea that resources would be more impactful when marginal, as was outlined by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) in discussing funding models for universities, wherein “new money” was a great deal more valued by administrators than pre-existing funding sources

In the case of both CSOs, there was ongoing support from their respective NSOs. In the case of ISC, this applied most often to league structures that were either directly operated by the NSO or were supported by it. In the case of TSL, the support was in personnel development and especially in the training of technical officials. In the following paragraphs, I provide evidence of the impacts of this ongoing support, and situate this evidence within the theoretical framework of the dissertation. In Table 5.4, I

outline a summary of words, documentation, actions and impacts of the CSOs' relationships with their respective NSOs.

In the case of TSL, the ongoing connections with the other layers of the national governance structure were visible in both in the case of special projects and in the case of ongoing support. TSL was able to secure vital resources through its multi-level governance structures, while engendering minimal dependence on the other governance levels. The lone exception was the State Federation, where TSL was in a dependent relationship of its own creation.

The State Sport Organization for their state was new and had two members of its Board that were also members of the TSL Board of Directors. While this was partially attributed by all respondents to a lack of sufficient volunteers to fulfill both Boards, they also reflected that this interlocking directorate (Davis & Greve, 1997; Pettigrew, 1992) helped ensure information flow between the two bodies, "Yeah, kind of between the two of us, we are the liaisons between the two organizations, but then also we can keep the [SSO] informed of what [TSL] is doing and vice versa" (Matt-TSL). Another leader of TSL (but an *ex officio* Board member) was also the President of the State Sport Organization, creating another interlock, though without the formality of dual Board membership. He reported making an effort to overtly separate the roles within his TSL role, "I actually let them make the report to the [TSL] Board about what's going on at the [State Sport Organization] level. I clarify things if necessary" (Dan-TSL). While this arrangement was valorized by respondents from TSL, Cousins and Barnes (2009) warned that social actors that are highly embedded (Granovetter, 1985) in multiple elements of a

Table 5.4

*Data Summary: Multi Level Governance*

| <b>CSO</b>    | <b>TSL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | “And they also sort of have an unstated one [requirement], and I don’t know how long we’re going to be able to keep playing this one, but they have an emerging areas kind of a thing where they said, ‘Well, we’re going to take the best available trainer if we can’t get what they call a district rated one’” (Geoff-TSL) |
| Documentation | “Another grant ([NSO program]) has been applied for. This is where [NSO] comes into the state and helps launch the sport. Arizona got it last year” (TSL Minutes, February 2010, p. 2).                                                                                                                                        |
| Actions       | TSL exploited its relatively small size to secure waivers of training requirements for its officials                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Impacts       | TSL was freer to offer training using resources already readily available and did not have to seek these resources from other areas or pay more for access to them.                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>CSO</b>    | <b>ISC</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Words         | So I see them (NSO) asking us, ‘To just fill out the forms and we will help you get started.’ So I see it as being a really good relationship. (Frank-ISC)                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Documentation | “Junior Team [Sport]: We are not going to run this through the [NSO] this year. The main reason is to keep the cost down” (ISC Minutes February 2008, p. 2)                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Actions       | ISC was able to secure resources from the NSO to deliver its junior programming with very few outgoing resources involved.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Impacts       | ISC’s junior programming was resourced and was delivered in new areas of the City.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

sport system can close that system off to new perspectives and stakeholders, “Understanding these implications of embeddedness for sport delivery enables other communities to avoid the weaknesses associated with highly socialized environments, while capitalizing upon the potential benefits” (Cousens & Barnes, 2009, p. 587).

Respondents from TSL did not express any misgivings about the interlocking arrangement for the reasons posited by Cousens and Barnes and only lamented the general pull on the time of these highly involved volunteers. There was no evidence of that potential downside of interlocking directorates. When asked about juggling multiple roles as being potentially problematic, Dan-TSL responded that the multiple roles was simply a matter of one person possessing a great deal of historical information, “And when you’re talking about resources and decision making in all of that, I do realize, and I do understand that a lot of people, particularly at [TSL] because I’ve been involved with them for so long, they do look to me a lot.”

There is some evidence in the element of interlocks with the State Sport Organization of an unseen power relationship, posited by Lukes (2005) as the third dimension of power. The potential conflict that could be advantageous to TSL through greater access to State Sport Organization resources, such as information, grants or access to decision making, is not overtly acknowledged, even after a prompt. Lukes foresaw this type of unconscious exercise of power in outlining his concept of the third dimension of power, “Decisions are choices consciously and intentionally made by individuals between alternatives, whereas the bias of the system can be mobilized, recreated and reinforced in ways that are neither consciously chosen nor the intended result of particular individuals’

choices” (p. 25). The unconscious power of the interlocking directorate structure between [TSL] and the [State Sport Organization] appears to be in place, but there is no evidence in the data that can connect this power relationship with the flow of resources. Resources did flow from the State Sport Organization to TSL, especially through a special project grant, but there is no evidence that this resource flow was greater or lesser than it might have been otherwise. The special grant initiative was a state-wide program; and the data suggest that the role played by TSL in that initiative was commensurate with its size relative to other CSOs in the state. Lukes (2005) categorizes this type of conflict, where there is no effective difference, as “latent” (p. 28). This finding in the data does not necessarily point directly to the research question at hand, as it does not answer how the organization secures resources from its environment; but, the finding of a latent conflict does point to a potential source of resources for TSL that may be exploited in the future.

For TSL, the relationship with its NSO had two primary components. Firstly, the NSO provided support, training, and training materials for officiating programs; and secondly, the NSO provided a special project grant for development of all elements of the sport on a one-off basis (TSL Minutes, 2010). The ongoing flow of resources in the form of officiating training and training material was seen by respondents as mundane, but also essential to cultivating an important internal resource – officials. The following paragraphs provide evidence outlining the resource flow between the NSO and TSL, demonstrating that affiliation with the NSO was a source of resources for TSL, and engendered only minimal reciprocal dependence as a result. This evidence will further

buttress the earlier finding that lower capacity can be a means to secure resources for a CSO.

### **TSL's NSO and Ongoing Officiating Development Support**

The NSO was the primary provider of officiating development support and materials for TSL. Geoff-TSL was the director of officiating for the Female program, in the area and noted a reliance on the NSO for the basic elements of their programs, “They [NSO] produced the rule books. They make the rules, and they make an umpire manual that we use for training as well. More recently they’ve been starting to put videos on like for “you make the call” game situations” (Geoff-TSL). Dan-TSL, the director of officiating for the Male program, also reported a heavy reliance on the NSO for program support, “then we’re working with [NSO] from an officials’ standpoint to get what called the [Program Acronym]. It’s a [Sport] program, but I don’t remember what [Program Acronym] stands for, but it’s an advanced training program that we’re getting one of those in town this year” (Dan-TSL). While respondents reported a need to conform to the training regulations and rules in terms of who delivers material, the resource flowed to TSL without requiring a resource to flow in the reverse direction. The fact that the NSO writes the rules and the manuals does create a unique dependence based on non-substitutability (Barney, 1991); but, the data did not show evidence that the NSO exploited the exclusivity of its resource to capture resources from the CSOs.

The officiating leaders in TSL did note a key advantage they felt they had in terms of relieving themselves of the modest requirements from the NSO for access to training materials. As an emerging area in their sport, their experience was that they could have some requirements waived or lessened, “And they also sort of have an

unstated one [requirement], and I don't know how long we're going to be able to keep playing this one, but they have an emerging areas kind of a thing where they said, 'Well, we're going to take the best available trainer if we can't get what they call a district rated one'" (Geoff-TSL). The conscious use of this waiver, and the knowledge that the relatively low capacity of TSL was allowing greater resource access than would have otherwise been the case, is evidence that TSL had found a context in which lower organizational capacity could lead to higher power and commensurate resource access.

### **ISC and Its NSO**

The relationship between ISC and its NSO was tied less closely to day-to-day operations than in TSL and more to grant programs and other project-based support. The relationship with the NSO was also more contested by the members of the Board, as data suggested that ISC considered its membership in its NSO to be a choice rather than a taken-for-granted element of its operation. The following paragraphs outline more of this relation, specifically noting the resource flow that resulted.

ISC reported that its membership in the NSO was valuable, and worth preserving, but also acknowledged that the value had not always been apparent within the ISC leadership, "we were kind of doing more stuff for the kids that couldn't afford [sport], and therefore, there were some folks on our Board that felt that, you know, that [NSO] membership was an additional, unnecessary cost" (John-ISC). John-ISC noted he felt the broadening of the NSO's mandate was part of the reason for the clearer value of NSO membership, "I would like us to be more connected to the [NSO], because the [NSO] is doing a lot of good things, for all kids to play [sport], even those who can't afford it. They've got programs out there that are doing things" (John-ISC). The NSO programs

that were most resonant with respondents from ISC were those geared towards younger athletes, and athletes with economic barriers to participation, as is noted in the following quote:

Well, in the short time that I've been with [ISC], the main thing that has come up has been the various connections that we have because of the [NSO Grassroots Program Name], and the one thing that [ISC Leader] has done very well is to apply for grants and get everything, all the paperwork in, and I think the [NSO Midwest Office] has really helped us know where are the grants, where the money is to get some of these things started. So they've basically supplied equipment to us and hit the ground and running, and this is relatively new, only on the last year or year and a half or so. So I see them asking us, 'To just fill out the forms and we will help you get started.' So I see it as being a really good relationship. (Frank-ISC)

While the resource flowing to ISC from its NSO engenders a dependence on grants for future programming, in the interim, the resource flowing back to the NSO of "fill out the forms and we will help you get started" (Frank-ISC) is not seemingly onerous, even for an organization with low capacity, requiring only a few minutes of time and basic information.

On a more ongoing programming basis, ISC was looking to its NSO for support in terms of league management through a youth league program. However, there was no evidence in the data that the NSO provided meaningful development of personnel, as was seen in the case of the officials in TSL. In ISC's sport, it is commonplace to compete without technical officials participating; and that lack of demand in the 'sport life' of the organization may explain the lack of emphasis in the organizational life as well.

Enjolras (2002), Sharpe (2006), Steen-Johnsen (2008) and Mills and Hoeber (2013) all reported in previous studies that the ‘field-of-play’ nature of a sport had implications for its organizational reality and the findings in this study are consistent with their scholarship. This also seems to be the case in this dissertation.

### **Multi-Level Governance and Power**

The above paragraphs illustrated that a key source of resources in the CSOs’ organizational environments was their “parent” organizations in their multi-level governance structures. The other organizations were a source of revenue on an ongoing basis, as well as when associated with special grant programming. The data also provide little suggestion of the NSO increasing its power in a meaningful way as a result of the demonstrated resource flow. While the perspective of the NSOs is not taken in this dissertation, the evidence suggests that the NSOs were aware of the very low capacity of the CSOs, and thus, did not demand resources, knowing that they effectively did not exist. As TSL reported, this was an overt strategy on their part in terms of skirting officials’ development certification requirements. Likewise, ISC reported a previous willingness to sever ties with the NSO altogether; there is some evidence that the CSOs were also aware of this characteristic of the resource dyad.

### **Summary of Findings**

This chapter outlined the means by which the CSOs have secured resources from their environment (multi-level governance and not valuing existence), and the means by which they have worked to diminish dependence as a result of those resource flows. The evidence demonstrated that the CSOs were able to exploit, in several instances, their low

capacity to reduce or eliminate demands on them in exchange for resources. The findings also demonstrated that the organizations' leaders did not value the existence of the organizations over the outcomes the organizations were able to create. The literature on RDT predicted (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) that an organization that does not value its existence would have greater power over other organizations in its environment than it otherwise would. The findings in this dissertation support that prediction.

## **Chapter 6 – Research Question 3**

### **How do CSOs attempt to manipulate their organizational environment?**

Having tracked the flow of resources from the environment into the organization and having provided evidence as to the allocation of resources in the CSO, this question examines the ways in which the CSOs under study attempted to negotiate their environments to make resources more accessible. This chapter outlines two key strategies that emerged from the data: anticipatory and current compliance with the State Federation guidelines for high school athletics, and finding and using under-used resources in the environment that allowed the focal organizations to “borrow” organizational capacity. Both of these strategies were implemented with some degree of reported success in securing resource flow.

### **Anticipatory and Current Compliance**

Both organizations were working with the State Federation to secure opportunities for play in the short term for their members. In the case of ISC, this was through connections with high schools and their coaches to ensure that the players and coaches were able to connect to ensure participation. In the case of TSL, this was informal, wherein the club was working with schools to create leagues and participation avenues. But it was also formal in TSL’s attempt to have its sport recognized as sport with full varsity status in the state. For both TSL and ISC, the work from the clubs to negotiate the environment relative to high school sport allowed TSL, for example, to access resources in the short term and was part of changing an environment in the longer term.

Both organizations demonstrated power relationships by negotiating, or attempting to negotiate, this particular segment of their respective environments. In the

case of TSL, the power was exercised in a manner that changed actions, making a difference (cf. Fleetwood, 2004) in how TSL was structured and how it viewed its future state. TSL's sport did not have full varsity status with the State Federation and it was clearly a goal for TSL to attain this status. That this points to a lack of desire to exist on the part of TSL was covered in Chapter 5, but this also points to a power relationship wherein the State Federation has been able to modify the actions, such as the design of playoff structures, of TSL without ever asking TSL for compliance. The ability of the State Federation to modify the actions of TSL wherein TSL does not wait to be asked is a manifestation of the 3D power in that TSL acts as though compliance with State Federation regulations is its only viable option. The following paragraphs demonstrate that TSL was keenly aware of the power of the State Federation, and this power created a one-way power relationship in that TSL modified its actions while the State Federation demonstrated no awareness to TSL of the relationship at all. The summary of the key data in this section is presented in Table 6.1

Although a non-varsity sport at the state level, TSL was a varsity sport in numerous schools in its area, and intended to become a state-level varsity sport. As such, TSL was consistently careful to ensure compliance with State Federation regulations, even though the State Federation had no authority over their operations. In minutes from February 2010, TSL looked at scheduling changes for their leagues; board members noted that, "the ultimate goal of these proposals is [State Federation] sanctioning of

Table 6.1

*Data Summary: Anticipatory Compliance*

| <b>CSO</b>    | <b>TSL</b>                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | “...and it’s another reason for [the State Federation] to recognize the sport because it’s already being run consistent with their standards.” (Bob-TSL)                 |
| Documentation | “the ultimate goal of these proposals is [State Federation] sanctioning of [sport]” (TSL Minutes, February, 2010).                                                       |
| Actions       | Shift of playoff formats to align with the State Federation requirements, despite not being formally aligned or bound to the State Federation                            |
| Impacts       | TSL adjusted its playoffs in a manner that did not suit its short term interests, but instead had a playoff system that was compliant with State Federation regulations. |

[sport]” (TSL Minutes, February, 2010). A similar minuted discussion noted that TSL would use the State Federation’s eligibility regulations, taken whole cloth (TSL Minutes, March 2009). That the ultimate goal was varsity recognition presents an interesting RDT finding as noted in RQ2, but was also germane in the manner in which the State Federation was able to modify the actions of TSL without any overt actions.

As noted above, TSL effectively used pre-existing State Federation regulations as a filter for its own decision-making processes. In the case of the scheduling changes referenced in the February 2010 minutes, the downside of the proposed changes included that the shift in scheduling would force teams and athletes to travel more than they were accustomed to and that the competitive balance of the state in the sport was not the same as other State Federation sports, but that they would adopt the State Federation

scheduling model anyway. This was to result in a playoff structure that did not reflect the competitive reality of the sport in the state, but would reflect the structure preferred by the State Federation. The State Federation's structure was a clear impetus for this change, though TSL had decided to become compliant completely on its own initiative. It is in this initiative on the part of TSL that 3D power becomes visible. As Lukes (2005) noted, if interests are going unserved, then power is likely present. The interests of TSL were consciously and freely conceded in service of the State Federation's structure. There was no overt conflict between the two organizations, nor was there an overt effort by the State Federation to manipulate the agenda for TSL, but TSL nevertheless complied and valorized the compliance:

Our thought there is that if we're running the sport consistently with [State Federation] rules and regulations already, that will just make the transition that much easier, and it's another reason for [the State Federation] to recognize the sport because it's already being run consistent with their standards. (Bob-TSL)

Bob-TSL also acknowledged that the pre-emptive compliance being exercised by TSL was not always viewed as a positive development within TSL, though he also expressed a decrease in resistance over time:

I think there's also a feeling that some of the [the State Federation] standards are too rigid. There's no flexibility, but I think that was at the beginning of the process. Right now it's been accepted pretty across the board that consistency is a good thing.

In the pre-emptive compliance with the State Federation, the TSL case exhibited traits of both the first and third dimensions of power as expressed by Lukes (2005). In the first

dimension, outward resistance to changes in schedules or structures is overcome. In the third dimension, the goal of compliance with the State Federation is not questioned, nor is the goal of becoming a varsity sport. Of note, the compliance steps being taken by TSL were not requested, monitored, or evaluated by the State Federation (Dan-TSL follow-up response). This finding indicates that the State Federation exercised considerable power over the activities of TSL without any expressed desire to do so, nor any apparent knowledge of having done so. The unconscious exercise of power was predicted by Lukes and Haglund (2005), outlining the notion of a symbolic power in which social actor A, can transform actor B without any overt intention, “And what of relations of symbolic power between agents which serve, via linguistic and body language, to reinforce and sometimes transform social relations, groups and institutions, in ways of which the agents may be partially or wholly unaware?” (p. 56). The power exercised by the State Federation over TSL fits this model of power outlined by Lukes, and thus demonstrates how an actor in a sport system can change outcomes at the CSO level without the blunt instruments of government funding (e.g., Horch, 1998; Horch, 1994a; Horch, 1994b; Wicker et al., 2012) or even without intent.

The low capacity exhibited by TSL is in keeping with findings of other scholars looking at CSOs (cf. Hoeber & Hoeber, 2012; Misener & Doherty, 2009). In the relationship with the State Federation, TSL’s capacity becomes germane. With greater capacity, TSL could very well have resisted the power of the State Federation or at least made the State Federation aware of the impacts of its power. Without the capacity to do anything about it, TSL works not only to comply with the demands of the State Federation, but to seek means to comply to a greater degree, to the point of wishing to be

subsumed by the State Federation in the future. Lukes' (Lukes, 1977; Lukes, 2002; Lukes, 2005; Lukes, 1974; Lukes, 2003; Lukes & Haglund, 2005) oeuvre on power outlines a notion wherein power exists in one of three dimensions, but the dimension is viewed as being a product of the two parties to the power relationship, existing outside of either actor. The power relationship between TSL and the State Federation appears to exist on the third dimension for the State Federation, wherein the State Federation's actions are in keeping with unquestioned understandings and a lack of awareness. For TSL, the power relationship is very much on the first level wherein they modify their activities overtly in the face of the State Federation's power. The multidimensionality of power will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

### **Borrowing Capacity**

The notion of organizational capacity in sport organizations tends to focus on that which the organization possesses and/or controls. The CSOs under study found ways to effectively borrow capacity from other organizations, make use of capacity in the environment for the time and application required, and then moving on. The CSOs also showed an ability to find areas where borrowing capacity from the environment can be done with little, if any, enduring dependence. A brief summary of the words, documentation, actions and impacts related to borrowing capacity are outlined in Table 6.2.

ISC had a simple but effective method for borrowing capacity. The club was intentional in whom it added to its Board of Directors, seeking to add skillsets to the Board that would have the effect of increasing capacity without a need to pay or hold

Table 6.2

*Data Summary: Borrowing Capacity*

| <b>CSO</b>    | <b>TSL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Words         | “We go to the ones that are free mainly. Or there’s one we have to pay the price of one custodian, so for about \$10 an hour, you can have like ten meeting rooms and a kitchen area.” (Geoff-TSL) |
| Documentation | In reference to officials, “Level 1 training classes are March 14 and 21 at the Pizza Oven West” (TSL Minutes, February 2010, p. 2).                                                               |
| Actions       | TSL sought out free areas for administrative functions such as meeting spaces.                                                                                                                     |
| Impacts       | TSL did not have an outlay of resources nor the resource dependencies that go with controlling a resource such as a building outright.                                                             |
| <b>CSO</b>    | <b>ISC</b>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Words         | “If I bring the laptop to the [ISC] adult night, it just makes my job more convenient, so I just use my own equipment.” (Frank-ISC)                                                                |
| Documentation | “We will be having our August Board meeting at [sport venue] with some post meeting [sport] on the courts” (ISC Minutes, May 2010, p. 2).                                                          |
| Actions       | ISC avoided acquiring some capacity, preferring to borrow instead in terms of meeting space and technology.                                                                                        |
| Impacts       | ISC had the capacity it needed, when it needed it in these areas, minimizing resource outlays.                                                                                                     |

these capacities. ISC worked to ensure they had legal capacity on their Board, “Someone to help us draft up these legal papers that we need to establish ourselves with the tax and

the entity” (Cary-ISC) and were keen to make use of the connections with the municipality that Ron-ISC brought to the organization through his employment at a senior level of City Government. The seeking of skillsets by the CSO effectively allowed them to have in-house counsel, an in-house lobbying firm, as well as in-house technical expertise (one Board member was a published author on the sport). As volunteer positions, the supply of these resources came at no cost to the organization; and although it did engender some dependence on the Board members, the ongoing transition of Board members outlined in the minutes (e.g., ISC Minutes – January 2010) indicated that a steady flow of new volunteers was available to ISC as needed. While strategic Board recruitment is not a new finding (Mizruchi, 1996; Pettigrew, 1992), the use of intentional recruiting by a CSO to develop a borrowed capacity is not prominent in the CSO literature, though it does appear at other levels of sport organizations (Ferkins et al., 2005; Ferkins et al., 2009).

Borrowing capacity from a law firm, a lobbyist, or a published technical expert is of value; but often, a CSO will be faced with more mundane, but no less challenging resource requirements. Both organizations held meetings of its Boards or component parts at places that were not under the control of the CSO, so as to not incur meaningful costs or dependence on any one location. In the case of ISC, meetings were often held at the office of a Board member (e.g., ISC Minutes; January 2011, February 2011). In the case of TSL, meetings were more common on account of the officiating groups, but they were able to secure meeting space at little or no cost and without any ongoing dependence. When asked about organizations from which they seek resources, Geoff-TSL reported that meeting room providers were important:

Oh, I suppose the other organizations or the places are mostly schools that provide facilities for meeting rooms for training. And I have to think that generally they provide those either for very little or for free. We go to the ones that are free mainly. Or there's one we have to pay the price of one custodian, so for about \$10 an hour, you can have like ten meeting rooms and a kitchen area.

So that's certainly an affordable direction to go. (Geoff-TSL)

As reported earlier in the findings, Geoff-TSL also indicated he held training sessions in his living room. The sourcing of meeting rooms, while seemingly mundane, does provide the association with an existential resource (meetings were required both legally and practically), and does so in a way that is scalable without creating a type of ongoing dependence:

We don't have office space. We don't have telephone lines. We don't have those kinds of needs. We don't have a part-time or full-time staffing. So most of what we are looking for is committed people who could fulfill the volunteer hours that are necessary to keep all these wheels turning. (Cary-ISC)

That many of the resources required by a CSO are highly substitutable appears to have allowed the CSOs to only borrow this capacity, meaning that they could scale up their meeting space needs on a "just in time" basis without creating any of the dependence that would go with a more durable solution to this resource problem, such as an ongoing lease of space or securing permanent office space for the organizations. It also points to the need for a flexible human resource capacity. That these organizations sought out resources such as meeting rooms at the lowest possible cost is hardly surprising as simple math dictates that an organization with \$3,500 USD in the bank will not spend when it

does not have to. But, the fact that the organizations did not see that lacking control of key resources was even a problem contributes to the idea that increasing capacity was not necessarily viewed as an unconditional positive by these organizations.

The flexible capacity of the organization was largely valued by the members of the CSOs. Meeting space was a physical, tangible manifestation of this value and even the addition of a computer was seen by respondents as not only unnecessary, but undesirable:

I really don't speak out much in the way of hardware or software for doing the job, it's just something I have. If I bring the laptop to the [ISC] adult night, it just makes my job more convenient, so I just use my own equipment (Frank-ISC).

The addition of capacity in a permanent form was viewed as a needless expenditure, but also a needless entanglement that would make it harder to act as a volunteer. Borrowed capacity for the CSOs seems to provide the capacity needed, when needed without the dependencies that result from controlled resources. At the scale of the CSO, these dependencies are something as simple as maintenance of a laptop, but nonetheless are avoided, in favour of seeking temporary access to resources that can be found as needed without any future obligations attached.

## **Summary**

CSOs, despite having very low capacity, do apply some of that capacity to the process of negotiating their environment. As small organizations, it should come as no surprise that the manipulations of the environment were modest and proximate to the focal organizations. The CSOs sought to create small advantages for their organizations

by acquiring temporary resources and to anticipate a future environment by complying in the present. The CSOs showed they were aware of the importance of their environment and took steps to create a more favourable set of environmental conditions. That the CSOs did this work builds on the CSO literature in that other studies have either not delved into the environment, focusing on internal relationships (cf. Misener & Doherty, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006) or have dealt with CSOs' relationships with their environment solely based on their reaction to external stimuli (Horch, 1998; Wicker et al., 2012). Other studies with a more external focus have emphasized networks as the theoretical underpinning (e.g., Doherty & Misener, 2008; Nixon, 2002; Thibault & Harvey, 1997); but, few have used the concept of the negotiated environment as its basis. The limited ability of these CSOs to manipulate their environment and the relatively passive means by which they do so provides a new way of understanding how CSOs can exercise power over other organizational actors in their environment.

## Chapter 7 - Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter provides further explanation of the implications of this dissertation's findings. The explanation includes a brief summary of the results, an exploration of the findings of each RQ, along with the theoretical and managerial implications of those findings, the methods used to reach those findings, and then further discusses the theoretical approaches used in study, namely a critical management approach (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000). Finally, this chapter outlines the limitations of the study and the future directions for this vein of research.

### Summary of Results

The results of the present study, outlined in the previous chapters, develop a vision of the CSO as being tied very closely to its resources, and focused on the more proximate goals, timelines, threats, and opportunities. The proximate focus of CSOs is consistent with previous studies (cf. Hoeber, 2007; Mills & Hoeber, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006) and provides a narrower field of view for the CSOs and researchers alike in terms of RDT and 3D. The following section summarizes these results as well as outlines a small group of findings that did not fit within the rubric of the three RQs, but present theoretical and methodological implications in regards to the dissertation's purpose.

**Neutrality of capacity.** A theme that emerged throughout the three questions was the neutrality of the notion of organizational capacity. Hall, et al. (2003) noted that the concept of capacity was as yet ill-defined but that scholarship can agree, "The concept of capacity is also closely linked to that of capital in that the capacity of an organization to work toward a particular objective depends upon the capital it is able to deploy" (p. 4).

Most scholarship on CSO capacity has focused on capacity as a trait that is to be increased at every turn, when viewed from the perspective of the CSO (e.g., Misener & Doherty, 2013) or from the perspective of CSO funders and partners (e.g., Horch, 1994a; Wicker et al., 2012). The concept that there may be a downside to increasing capacity is not thoroughly developed in the literature (cf. Bowers & Green, 2013; Horch, 1998); but, both clubs in this dissertation appeared quite aware that increasing capacity would engender dependencies, would consume resources in the short term, and would potentially cause the CSO to drift away from its original mission. Both CSOs valorized their low capacity state and were able to access resources as a result. This general theme will be developed further within the discussions of RQ2 and RQ3.

While partially captured under the aegis of capacity limitations, there was also a consistent thread that the people involved in the leadership of these CSOs genuinely enjoyed doing what they did. Ron-ISC noted that he was continuing to work as a leader in his CSO despite resistance from his spouse, “Oh, you’re doing [ISC] again. I didn’t realize you were going to have so many meetings.” Sally-TSL noted that her work in the CSO was animated partially by a loyalty to the sport and to her own child’s participation, but also to the beneficial interpersonal results, “We want to be with other people who have like desires and one way we do that is finding some kind of sporting event or activity.” John-ISC noted that while he first engaged in the CSO due to the involvement of his son, he had come to enjoy the work on a personal level as well,

I would be lying if I didn’t say my primary focus is still my son because as a parent, that’s what it is. It’s logical, now that I’ve got involved in this, and now I’ve learned to play the game, I’m playing the game now and I’m changing my

own choices on what I want to be interested in, it's becoming a bigger part of my life, and it's not just about my son anymore, but I really like it. I like these people I work with and I like this organization we're involved in. (John-ISC)

This emergent theme presents the possibility that CSO leaders' enjoyment of the mechanics of their work may partially explain the resistance to increased capacity. Using softball as a stand-in example, it could well be that sometimes, for some volunteers, they do not organize so they have softball, but have softball so they can organize. This view can lead to a notion of sport leadership as a modality of sport participation. This notion will be developed further later in this discussion.

**Paucity of time.** A second theme that emerged from the data was the paucity of time. Numerous respondents, when asked what their top resource need was, responded that they needed either more people or more engagement from the people that were involved. Be it for attendance at meetings (e.g., Bob-TSL), simply responding to requests for information (e.g., Sally-TSL, Mike-TSL, John-ISC, and Frank-ISC), or by actively engaging in the sport (e.g., Geoff-TSL and Dan-TSL). When asked what the most important resource in the organization was, John-ISC responded, "I suppose we need man hours" (John-ISC). Bob-TSL noted that, as President, he was looking to be able to convene regular meetings: "When your reality is just being able to have those monthly board meetings, it's probably the most important and practical part of the job" (Bob-TSL). In some form (e.g., meetings) or another (e.g., officials) time was consistently a resource that the CSOs lacked and respondents were acutely aware of this deficiency.

The following paragraphs deal with each of the three RQs in terms of implications for theory development and for managerial practice. Upon dealing with the three RQs, and the findings that did not explicitly connect with any of the RQs, the discussion moves to providing a critical analysis of the findings and methodology, concluding with the limitations and suggested future directions.

### **RQ1 – How does power shape resource allocation within CSOs?**

The findings related to this RQ indicated that the CSOs allocated resources being mindful of capacity thresholds wherein marginal resources were allocated only until a resource threshold was reached, that the CSOs were willing to allocate resources towards the health of the sport itself, and that gender played a role in resource allocation. This section is subdivided into three sections: threshold effects, fealty to the sport, and gender as a filter for resource allocation. All of these findings are developed in the following section, first from a theoretical and then from a managerial perspective. This is followed by a brief summary of the implications stemming from the RQ1 findings.

**Threshold effects.** The findings in this section indicated a coalition or unit within the CSO could attract resources until that resource flow ensured the passing of an operational threshold, after which time the resource flow became severely restricted. In the case of the present dataset, this applied most clearly to officials, wherein the focus for resource flow was to ensure that there were enough officials to cover all the games. Once that threshold was cleared, the officials no longer demonstrated the power required to attract marginal resources.

This finding is in keeping with the original theoretical foundation for RDT. Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) outlined that marginal resources are more likely to engender

power, relating to the power of administrative units in insurance companies, “An analysis of an insurance company showed that the influence of subunit managers was related not only to the hierarchical position but also to the direct involvement of the subunit in maintaining the organization’s revenues” (p. 232). This finding builds on the concept of marginal resources by noting a threshold effect in the data. The threshold value of some resources also implies that substitutability of resources can be threshold dependent. In the case of the present study, officials were an irreplaceable resource, until they showed up at the field of play. Once adequate officials were on the field, their training and development may have been valued but certainly was not irreplaceable, as the existence of the game was not reliant on gradients of quality, but instead on thresholds of quantity of officials. Other studies using RDT outlined that a constrained labour pool can have material impacts on the power possessed by specialized workers (e.g., Ingram & Simons, 1995). Ingram and Simons’ (1995) study, as well as the example of fast food workers used by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), treat the availability of workers as being a key determinant of relative power between the employer and employee groups. They do not, however, assess this problem from the point of view of the threshold of “enough workers.” In these analyses, more available labour consistently decreases the power of the workers to extract greater resources from employers. This finding illustrates that there can be a state where the employer can have enough workers available; and thus, the power of the workers in place decreases significantly upon meeting a threshold. The objective requirements for officials (either two or three are required for each game) make this distinction much clearer in the sport setting than in the legal or food services industries noted above.

The question of thresholds is dealt with explicitly in RDT scholarship, as is noted above. But, in 3D scholarship, the notion of the threshold can be viewed as evidence of working on the second dimension of power, wherein a social actor is able to set the decision-making agenda. The data indicated that there did not appear to be an overt battle for resources for officials, and the fact that officials were included in Board meetings was a strong indication of something other than outright conflict. But, the threshold of resource flow indicated that the officials lacked the power to influence the organizational agenda sufficiently to ensure resource flow. The existence of a threshold in this case indicates that the officials were not able to have the rest of the organization conceptualize their role as being a type of sport participation or that their increased training and ability would have a positive impact on the organization. TSL viewed the officials as a problem to be solved rather than a participant to be served, and that conceptualization was an exercise in power by the organization over its officials. This conceptualization not only allowed the organization to marginalize the resource needs of officials, but prompted the officials themselves to valorize their marginalization as a necessary outcome of the scarcity of resources. Officials hosted meetings in living rooms and got by with no training aids without prompting an overt conflict over the resources that could have rendered these steps unnecessary. The question before TSL was not concerned with the quality of officials or of their experience, but simply the quantity of officials. The nature of this question diminished the power of the officials to attract resources. In this CSO, the ability to control the question was a means of regulating the power of the officials.

For sport managers, the notion of resource thresholds can resonate and can be helpful in better negotiating the organizational environment. On the field of play, the threshold of a world record, of a statistical milestone (e.g., Moskowitz & Wertheim, 2011) or simply one more goal than the opposition are among the most common and simple goals. Off the field of play, thresholds tend to not offer the clarity of “enough” officials or a scoreline, but can be instructive. When governments have worked to influence the operations of voluntary sport organizations, they have often deployed threshold measurements that provide a bar to clear for the organizations. This threshold effect can be seen in increasing community access to sport (Horch, 1994a; Wicker et al., 2012), in the professionalization of sport organizations (Kikulis et al., 1995b; Kikulis et al., 1995), and in securing more medals on the international stage (Norris, 2010; Parent & Patterson, 2013), wherein a clear threshold is given to sport organizations by funders. The findings in this study indicate that there may be a risk that once the threshold is cleared, the organization will no longer pursue the goal. The relatively new funding scheme of “Social Impact Bonds” (SIB), wherein payment varies and is only payable upon delivery of outcomes (Fox & Albertson, 2011), may be a useful approach for funders concerned about threshold effects, in that SIB funding can scale up or down with relative performance, helping to ensure enduring dependency of the CSO on the funder, as more and more resources can always be at stake. There are valid criticisms of the SIB approach more generally (M. Warner, 2013), but the SIB trait of funding in increments for gradients of outcomes could be applicable for funders working to engender outcomes by funding a CSO. Regardless of the funding scheme deployed, ensuring that

dependency is not eliminated by clearing a threshold may ensure that the funder can exert power over the focal CSO.

**Faith to sport.** That sport is a social construction is relatively clear (Bourdieu, 1988; Gruneau, 1983; Rail & Harvey, 1995; Sayer, 2004). That the CSOs in the study were both committed to dedicating resources to their respective social constructions indicates that both RDT and 3D concepts of power may have too narrow a definition of a “social actor.” In the application of stakeholder theory, for example, the natural environment is rarely seen as a stakeholder (e.g., Henriques & Sadorsky, 1999), but instead, as a contested ground over which social actors assert stakeholder demands. The faith demonstrated by the CSOs to their respective sports indicates that they viewed their sports as a legitimate social actor, and one that holds power over the focal organizations, and was thus able to attract resources. The idea that the sport itself has power and is a social actor is perhaps a bridge too far from the viewpoint of theory building, failing to address “what” variable is in question, absent a social actor (cf. Whetten, 1989). Protection of a social construction is a role of social actors, and those social actors are protecting an interest in their sport of choice. In terms of building an understanding of CSOs’ power, resources and environmental negotiation, the question becomes who is protecting the sport.

The findings indicated that the NSOs had a considerable role in protecting the sport itself, and the NSOs can likely gain considerably from the enhanced standing of the sport. That NSOs value the sport as well is inferred by Green (2005) in her examination of sport development systems in USA Volleyball and by Sotiriadou, et al. (2008) in an examination of athlete development models in use in Australian sport. In the Canadian

context, NSO values have been explored and have implications for sport development at the national level (Bell-Laroche, MacLean, Thibault, & Wolfe, 2014). In all of these cases, the notion that the NSOs' values animate their actions and are grounded in their respective sports is instructive. For NSO managers, these findings suggest that the shared value of the sport is also important to CSOs and can be sufficient to create a power relationship. These findings indicate that NSOs and other organizations working with CSOs should keep in mind that "giving back to the sport" is more than rhetoric, and, in this case, has engendered resource allocations at the local level. This knowledge can allow other actors in the CSOs environment, such as a NSO, to use their resources effectively to prompt actions on the part of the CSOs, appealing to and resourcing sport outcomes rather than capacity building ends.

**Gender and resource allocation.** The implication of gender playing a role in resource allocation is hardly new in sport management, "sport organizations are often places that still reproduce traditional gender roles and Male privilege and dominance" (Cunningham & Sagas, 2008, p. 3). That the notion of "per capita" resource allocations was the dominant explanatory vehicle by both Male and Female respondents of the uneven resources being directed at the two TSL programs is an important finding from the RDT and 3D perspectives, and can be instructive to sport managers.

The theoretical contribution to 3D research is that the shared assumption that "per capita" and "fair" were effectively the same thing is illustrative here but also potentially in other research applications. The unquestioned assumption that per capita allocations of resources was not only shared, but valorized by Male and Female respondents alike, presents an example of the power associated with the resource allocation resting on the

third dimension of power, as described by Lukes (2005). That this power relationship rests so clearly on the third dimension, where the notion of fairness is itself part of the power relationship, wrests this question partially away from RDT analyses, as the power is institutionalized rather than executed, or, using the terms of Fleming and Spicer (2014), these are examples of “institutional power” and “episodic power.” The 3D view of power (institutional) in this case renders the RDT (episodic) less efficacious as a theoretical lens. While power could certainly be traced from both institutional and episodic sources simultaneously, the lack of a conscious decision to exercise power (or resist its dispensation) obscures the RDT (episodic) power as the flow of resources, from the perspective of the distributors, has been done in an unremarkable and fair method. For managers, the 3D version of power illustrated in this finding is instructive. Without a thoughtful examination of power relations, unquestioned assumptions can be allowed to persist, becoming insidious. The assumption that per capita resource allocation is the fairest method is certainly defensible, but when it is unquestioned, as in the case of TSL, it is not defended at all. Gender and resource allocation is an issue that sport organizations have dealt with for some time, and quite often not particularly well (e.g., Cunningham & Sagas, 2008). The lack of a serious questioning of why women and girls are participating less or about the efficacy of resource distribution (as opposed to its fairness) can lead to unintentional results for CSOs. Managers at the CSO level as well as the other sport organizations with which they partner must be cognizant of these unquestioned power relations and work to surface them. Awareness of the power relation will not necessarily solve a problem (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000), and in fact, surfacing the

relation may serve to reinforce its efficacy; but when examined, the power relation can be dealt with more effectively, and the organization can better evaluate all available options.

Hoeber (2007) outlined a similar situation in gender dynamics at a Canadian university athletic department to that found in this dissertation's two CSOs. As with this finding, Hoeber found a valorization of the gender inequities, and attributed the valorization to the notion of hegemony,

A Female athlete recalled when she started playing university ice hockey she was very disappointed with the disparities between the two teams. Now, as the president of the athletic council, she had greater access to information and stated she had to look beyond the situation with the two hockey teams to assess what the athletic department was doing as a whole. One could have expected that with more information she would have become even more frustrated, because the department was inconsistent in their practices across all teams, and she could have used this information to advocate more changes. Instead, she used the knowledge of the larger context facing the department as evidence to rationalize the existing situation. This example illustrates how hegemony works, in that she privileged the knowledge that consented to inequities over the knowledge that challenged them (p. 272).

In the above example, Hoeber connects a similar dynamic of gender relations in a sport organization to hegemony. She goes on to cite Rao, Stuart and Kelleher (1999) in reference to the positional power that enables gender-based power inequities. Rao et al. build a case for the notion of positional power as an extension of Lukes' (1974) 3D power model. The concept of positional power, also draws from both Foucault and

Bourdieu, and characterizes power in organizations as a field we create, “These fields tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies, the Heisenberg principle in organizational practice” (Rao et al., 1999, p. 9). Thus, these two pieces of scholarship outline situations where gender inequity is valorized and explained in unquestioned ways, even when interests are going unserved. The unquestioned acceptance of per capita resource allocation in TSL mirrors the process outlined by Rao et al. (1999) and empirically elucidated by Hoeber (2007).

### **Research Question 2 – How do CSOs attract resources from the environment?**

The results illustrated that the CSOs under study not only attached little value to their existence, but were able to benefit in key resource relationships from having done so. These clubs were able to secure access to facilities, an existential resource for any CSO, and were in some cases able to dictate the terms of the exchange, despite the fact that the facility providers (such as municipal governments) were in a position that RDT would otherwise predict would be much more powerful. The following section further develops the findings’ theoretical implications and thus the contribution to the sport management and RDT literatures.

The findings in this study provide support for Pfeffer and Salancik’s (1978) contention that all ten conditions of dependence must be in place in order for dependence to manifest. The tenth condition (value of existence), is shown via the present study to be a required element of dependence. The result buttresses the argument that these conditions are all required, and these are ten “conditions” of dependence as opposed to ten “steps” or “gradients,” affirming Pfeffer and Salancik’s position.

Support for the notion that the “value of existence” condition must be present

creates a potential “workaround” for organizations and a theoretical grey area for researchers. For organizations, the willingness to forego existence can provide an “out” to what would otherwise have been a dependent relationship. In the case of the CSOs in the present study, they were able to reverse dependence and exert demands (in terms of both reporting and action) on a municipality in exchange for a small donation.

The notion that an organization can effectively opt out of RDT by not valuing its own existence provides a counter argument to the notion that a lack of capacity in CSOs is solely problematic. A lack of organizational capacity has been demonstrated to inhibit innovation (Hoeber & Hoeber, 2012) for instance, and several authors have demonstrated that the lack of volunteer capacity is a major impediment to goal attainment (e.g., Doherty & Carron, 2003; Doherty, 2006; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2004; Kellett & Shilbury, 2007; Misener & Doherty, 2009; S. Warner et al., 2012). However, the clubs in the present study were enabled by their lack of institutionalized capacity in the form of a desire to exist. The study demonstrated that these clubs found a way to get things done, not in spite of their low relative capacity, but because of it. For any CSO, this approach to strategy is potentially compelling, especially given that most CSOs’ power is relative to state actors, whose power they are highly unlikely to ever match, even with vastly increased resources.

In terms of sport management scholarship, there is a considerable body of literature that problematizes low capacity levels in sport organizations. The problematic nature of low capacity organizations has led to concerted movements to professionalize sport organizations, often initiated by national governments (e.g., Babiak & Thibault, 2005; Kikulis et al., 1995a; Kikulis et al., 1995b; Shilbury & Kellett, 2006; Wicker et al.,

2012). Increasing the professional capacity of an organization increases its ability to act, its ability to develop vital networking links in its environment, and also serves to institutionalize the organization by creating a group of people who depend upon the health of the organization to make a living.

The potential downside of professionalization in terms of goal displacement, as noted by Agency Theory (Jensen & Meckling, 1976), has been outlined in the realm of sport management, though most extensively in larger, higher profile organizations (Babiak & Thibault, 2005; Mason & Slack, 2005; Mason et al., 2006; Stevens, 2006). The work on professionalization of sport organizations to date has been largely based on the two conceptual poles of capacity and agency. The ability of the clubs in the present study to secure resources without engendering commensurate dependence points to another potential view of professionalization, at least in the milieu of the CSO.

The scholarship demonstrating the value of increased capacity in CSOs presents a vision of the CSO as being able to deliver on its goals, and often, goals of its funders (most often governments). Even when restricted to the view of bounded rationality, this begs the question, “why don’t they all do it?” The present study points to a potential reason, being that the CSOs under study are finding that they are realizing their key goals without the work associated with increasing capacity, and in some cases, have elected to maintain a small capacity base as a means of furthering their goals.

As is noted in the results, when asked what resource they felt they most needed, nearly every respondent mentioned volunteers and/or time, indicating that they were feeling the absence of capacity within their organizations. So, the effectiveness trade-off associated with low capacity was real, was understood by the clubs, and yet, was still

made. Through attempts to turn over more high performance sport (e.g., high school varsity) to a state-wide body or by publishing (for free) program information from rival clubs and providers, these clubs actively and intentionally undermined key areas of potential capacity growth.

For sport management scholarship, the findings of the present study indicate that our academy may be able to look at some of the heretofore hidden strengths of the lower capacity sport organization and its working board ethos (Kikulis et al., 1989) or low capacity CSO. While the clubs under study struggled with some of their capacity shortcomings, they were also able to open up access to their most important resource (facilities) and were able to focus on goals for their sport and participants rather than for the organization as an entity. This can help open up the possibility for some CSOs that maintaining, for example, a Kitchen Table configuration (Kikulis et al., 1989) may be advantageous.

The theoretical contribution in terms of RDT attends to Pfeffer's (2013) call for more confirmatory studies, and a move away from perpetual novelty in theoretical work. That the original view of RDT expressed by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) is affirmed in this study does not reduce its value as a theoretical contribution. In fact, this finding supports a largely ignored plank (Drees & Heugens, 2013) of the RDT theoretical framework. By not taking an element of the theory for granted, this dissertation makes the unique contribution to scholarship on RDT that the desire to exist is indeed a condition of dependence, while confirming the overall tenets of the theory. Likewise, outside of the non-profit or religious organization setting, it is hard to conceive of how this finding could have been seen, in that for-profit firms are more likely to value their

existence given their prime objective of increasing shareholder wealth. Thus, we find a potential contextual boundary for RDT based on the nature of the organization under study. In the sport setting, this finding helps respond to Chalip's (2006) desire to see a true sport management academy, by being an example of a theoretical contribution that comes uniquely from a sport perspective.

Working from a RDT perspective shines a light on the systemic pressures exerted on small CSOs, largely from the lens of securing access to sport facilities. This perspective illustrated that CSOs are able to maintain or increase access through a willingness to not exist. By not valorizing their existence as an organization, these CSOs created conditions where facility access has become fairly straightforward and has not presented a meaningful threat to their existence. For example, Wicker, et al. (2012) looked at CSOs from the perspective of government funders looking to increase registration levels. Increasing registration levels is in itself an increase in capacity (through a larger volunteer base and increased subscription revenue), but also addresses a goal for the CSO that is beyond the current membership. Increasing membership in the organization is a goal directed primarily at those who are not yet members, whereas increasing facility access is aimed at those who are. At least in the realm of facility access, this study presents evidence that lower capacity is not antithetical to provision of mutual benefit. This finding echoes Stevens' (2006) statement that Hockey Canada's uptick in capacity following a merger with a rival national body allowed for a more commercial positioning: "The operations domain held priority as a result of the fact that the underlying interpretive scheme of the CHA [Canadian Hockey Association] embraced a commercial rather than community approach" (p. 94). This is another case of increasing

capacity benefitting external stakeholders (via the commercial approach) to a greater degree than those internal to the organization.

It can be argued that the activities undertaken by the CSOs in this dissertation were simply an emergent strategy (Mintzberg, 1987). But, this finding provides explanation for how this strategy emerged. As Mintzberg noted in reference to Honda, organizational activities and actions can and do predate formalized strategy,

... it did not go to America with the main intention of selling small, family motorcycles at all; but rather, the company seemed to fall into that market inadvertently. But once it was clear to the Honda executives that they had wandered into such a lucrative strategic position that presumably became their plan. (p. 19)

To borrow from the example above, the CSOs in this study may have found themselves in a potentially viable strategic position in relation to environmental actors, such as their NSO, the State Federation or their municipalities, but they were placed in that position firstly by not valuing their existence. Any strategic steps (intentional or emergent) emerged from this initial position on the part of the CSOs.

Given that the external stakeholders to CSOs, often governments, are looking for outcomes that can largely be characterized as salubrious on a societal level (increased sport participation, for instance) (e.g., Zeigler, 2007), there remains a question of the value of increasing capacity. When the organization does not value its own existence, as in the two cases outlined herein, the focus of the organization can rightly be seen as internally focused, and focused on a narrow set of both stakeholders and outcomes. The narrow focus was demonstrated by Sharpe (2006) in her examination of a similarly low

capacity CSO, wherein the club focused almost exclusively on facility access and access to key volunteer support personnel (such as coaches and officials). Sharpe's conclusion that more capacity was needed was couched in terms of the satisfaction of external pressures: "All organizations, even grassroots associations, must have the capacity to successfully meet the demands of the external environment. Further, it is the need to successfully meet these demands that leads many informal groups toward professionalization" (p. 399).

The present study has made a key theoretical contribution to the management literature by examining an oft-ignored element of RDT. This study has provided evidence that all ten conditions of dependence must in fact be in place in order for dependence to manifest in an inter-organizational dyad. Secondly, the cases illustrated that there can be value for CSOs in not pursuing increased organizational capacity. The findings show that lower capacity comes at an operational cost, but that lower capacity can be a sought-after and desirable state for some CSOs.

For managers, there are clear implications for those involved in CSO management. For municipalities, sport governing bodies, facilities and vendors, the implication is that ensuring greater resourcing for CSOs will be beneficial as much of that increased capacity will be dedicated to servicing organizations in that CSO's environment. Wicker, et al. (2012) demonstrated that increased capacity allowed CSOs to better respond to funders' goals of increased participation. The present study showed that low-capacity CSOs demonstrate not only an inability to act on external stakeholder demands, but an unwillingness to do so. The notion of differential power (cf. Casciaro & Piskorski, 2005) is instructive, but relies on both organizations valuing their existence.

When one organization does not value their existence, the notion of offsetting power appears to weaken. Thus, managers who may normally wish to limit the capacity to act of other organizations may wish to see a minimum level of capacity in the CSOs with whom they work. What this minimum capacity is would be a question for future research.

### **Research Question #3 – How do CSOs Negotiate their Organizational Environment?**

The findings associated with RQ3 included two emergent themes. The concept of anticipatory compliance and the notion of borrowing capacity are further explored in the following paragraphs with both theoretical and managerial implications elucidated. The section concludes with a summary of the implications of the findings on this RQ.

**Anticipatory compliance.** TSL was committed to compliance with regulations from the State Federation at nearly every turn, in anticipation of a regulatory scheme in which they hoped to one day be a part. The willingness to comply with the State Federation's regulations without the short-term impact of having the sport be a part of the State Federation was an exercise in power by the State Federation over TSL, though not intentional. Revisiting Dahl's (1957) definition of power, the ability of A to get B to do something B would not have otherwise done, does not mandate that A is aware of this ability. Likewise, Lukes and colleagues (1977; 2002; 2005; Lukes & Haglund, 2005) also outlined that the exercise of power need not be conscious in order to be impactful. The findings of the study indicated that the State Federation was not aware of its impact on the CSO, but were equally clear that this impact was real, and prompted TSL to do things it would not have otherwise done.

From the RDT perspective, anticipatory compliance effectively means that TSL sought to negotiate its future environment by complying with conditions it anticipated

would be in place. TSL became dependent on the State Federation for structural cues (such as playoff and league formats) despite the fact that State Federation was not aware of the dependence. This lack of awareness calls into question one of the ten conditions of dependence outlined by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) in that one of the organizations in the dyad was not aware that the other was modifying its behaviour. However, this particular tenet presumes that the powerful organization controls a resource that is flowing to the less powerful. In this case, the State Federation does not necessarily control the interpretation and cooptation of its structures, policies, and its overall modes of operation. TSL's strategy of anticipatory compliance with the State Federation cannot be regulated by the State Federation, as only a social construction is moving between the organizations, not a scarce organizational resource. RDT runs into a limitation in its explanatory power in this case as the flow of resources must be visible, and social constructions, while real, can hardly be considered visible, and can rarely be considered a scarce resource.

The resource flow to a social construction is evocative of institutional isomorphism (cf. Deephouse, 1996; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), wherein organizations in the same organizational field adhere to the same norms of conduct and structure (cf. O'Brien & Slack, 2003; Washington & Patterson, 2011). One of the reasons to engage in institutional isomorphism is to legitimize an organization and its activities. Washington and Patterson characterized legitimacy as, "the view that organizational legitimacy refers to the degree of cultural support for an organization—the extent to which the array of established cultural accounts provide explanations for its existence, functioning, and jurisdiction, and lack or deny alternatives" (p. 5). The findings did not provide explicit

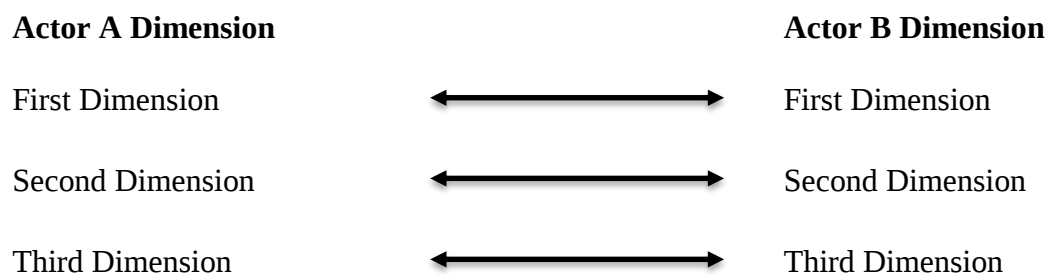
examples of TSL seeking legitimacy through isomorphism, but did, as stated again by Washington and Patterson, “look to the environment for clues to understand appropriate courses of action” (p. 4). As TSL sought out clues for an appropriate course of action, it found the State Federation as a model upon which to base its own functions and structures. And, given that the State Federation was not in a position to control what of its cues were applied by other organizations, the State Federation was not in a position of power, in the short term, over TSL. The findings indicate that institutional theory may provide a partial explanation for their anticipatory alignment with the State Federation. That TSL expressed outright that their anticipatory alignment was to secure varsity status for the sport mitigates this connection, hence the partial explanation offered via isomorphism.

The timeframe is an important context for this examination of the theoretical implications of the findings. As the findings note, TSL was keenly aware of the potential resources that would be made available to the sport should it gain statewide varsity status, and was working to be compliant so that this status may be easier to gain in the future. So, no resources were flowing between these organizations (a condition for dependence per RDT), but TSL did anticipate resources to flow in the future. Institutional theory seeks to explain organizational structures and decisions that often cannot be explained by rational incentives (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In the short term, TSL’s rational incentives are not clear, but their vision for a future state was visible in the data, and was overtly grasped by TSL. Their isomorphism was not an irrational compliance with norms of an organization field, it was a strategy of anticipatory compliance with another organization that they hoped would have power over them in the future. The emergence

of dependence in an inter-organizational dyad is explained by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) entirely in the present tense, without a notion of a temporal element of the phenomenon. This finding shows that TSL was aware of its anticipatory compliance and took steps to secure resources and minimize dependency, in the future. That the conditions of dependence exist in a particular time is taken for granted in the original theoretical work. Hillman, et al. (2009) called for more historical research to find the boundaries of application for RDT, but this call was related to the historical progress of a dependence relationship, not about the anticipation of a resource in the future. Creating a theoretical space in which future dependence can be used to explain present-tense activities by a focal organization is a contribution of this dissertation to the RDT literature.

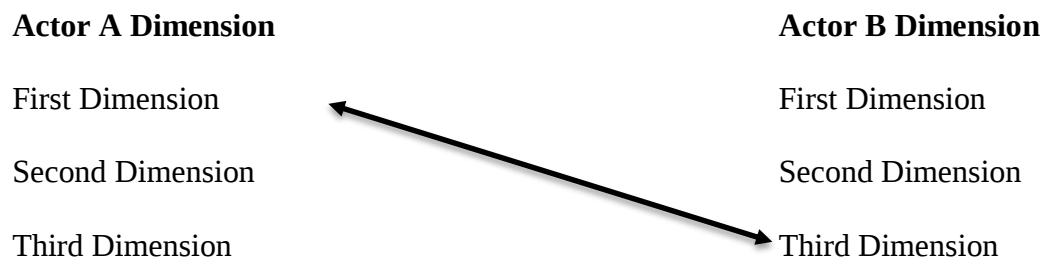
The theoretical implication of this finding in terms of 3D scholarship relates to the multi-dimensionality of the power relationship between TSL and the State Federation. The State Federation was not aware of the relationship and was not setting an agenda to be followed by TSL, they were applying power in a manner consistent with the third dimension context. Conversely, TSL was keenly aware of the power relationship and their desire to comply. TSL was actively and consciously working to exert a power relationship over the State Federation, typical of a first dimension relationship. Lukes' theory supposed that the power relationship was in one of three dimensions, not the actors in that relationship. Lukes sees power as existing in the space between, held by no actor, in a manner much like Foucault, as summarized by Rail and Harvey (1995, p. 166) "power circulates through a network of individuals; it is omnipresent; it is in everyone; it is immanent in the structuralist sense of the term." The relationship between TSL and the State Federation was not restricted, though, to only one power dimension, with the nature

of the power relationship being specific to each actor's context. That the power relationship can be viewed as being on two levels simultaneously presents a greater complexity for researchers and managers alike. If multidimensional power dyads are possible, the amount of potential configurations increases from three to nine. That the two actors in the dyad were not on the same power dimension is not predicted by Lukes' work, as his writings were about the relationship rather than either actor. But, Lukes (2005) cites the example of the Black community in Baltimore and that they did not assert greater political influence. As with the State Federation/TSL dyad, it stands to reason that not every member of the Black community in Baltimore was unaware of their subjugation. As with the notion that domination can never be total, power relationships may not exclusively be on the same dimension, and this finding contributes to the sport management and managerial literatures by displaying an example of the multi-dimensional power relationship. Figure 7.1 illustrates the view of power existing on a single dimension, where the dimension of the power relation is shared by the actors in the power dyad. This results in three possible configurations.



*Figure 7.1.* Illustration of power existing on a single dimension for both actors in a power dyad.

Figure 7.2 illustrates the power relationship between TSL and the State Federation where the expression of power by TSL was conscious and on the third dimension by the State Federation where it expressed no awareness of its power. This type of multi-dimensionality could result in as many as nine configurations.



*Figure 7.2.* Illustration of a multidimensional power relationship with power existing on different dimensions for each actor in a power dyad.

For managers, the implication of anticipatory compliance is that a clear understanding of stakeholders is important in the sport setting. Norms in sport can be strongly held and essentially intractable, as they can become part of the construct of the sport itself. Any organization will have stakeholders and those stakeholders will vary in importance (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). Organizations may need to be cognizant of those stakeholders who will be affected by their actions despite the absence of a direct connection. In the case of the State Federation, this particular application of its legitimacy by TSL does not have any obvious deleterious effects for the State Federation, nor obvious ones for TSL. However, the potential strategic error on the part of the State Federation is that this power is being exercised unintentionally. Unintentional consequences engender considerable uncertainty for an organization and the commensurate risks inherent in organizational uncertainty. Conversely, intentional,

strategic deployment of legitimacy within the state sport community could help further establish the State Federation as the sport leader in the state and could help usurp other sport systems (such as for-profit or club-based sport) even outside the direct programming offered by the State Federation.

**Borrowed capacity.** Anticipatory compliance on the part of TSL was one of two key themes in environmental negotiation, the other being the notion of borrowing capacity. The findings indicated that both ISC and TSL borrowed capacity from other actors, allowing for the use of capacity at little or no cost, and relieving the organization of the dependencies that emanate from resource control.

Both organizations worked to avoid having outright control of many key resources available to them such as office space, human resources through full-time employment or even something as simple as a laptop computer. The reticence on both CSOs' part to acquire elements of organizational capacity likely both diminished their ability to achieve their organizational objectives but also helped preserve the nature of their CSOs as well. In the following paragraphs, using work by Horch (1998), I elucidate the notion that these CSOs were protecting their essential voluntary nature as much as they were avoiding dependencies. The power relationships predicted by RDT and by 3D are discussed later as they are relevant, but Horch's outline of how smaller CSOs "self-destruct" through increasing their capacity is germane to this context.

Horch outlined three key aspects of the transformation of a CSO from a mutual aid organization to something more bureaucratic and commercial:

- **Autonomization:** Denoting a detachment of the organization from its members, where the members can become more aptly described as customers than members.

- Goal Displacement: Goals begin to move away from mutual aid outcomes such as growth of the sport or access to process-based goals, such as revenue increases or increasing membership rolls.
- Bureaucratization: The organization begins to take on more traits of the state or of a for-profit organization, as a bureaucracy. (Horch, 1998, p. 49)

It is not hard to see many of the traits outlined by Horch (1998) in previous professionalization movements for sport organizations at other levels of multi-level governance structures (cf. Hoye & Cuskelly, 2003; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007; Parent & Patterson, 2013; Wicker et al., 2013). The findings indicate that both clubs were borrowing capacity as a means to be effective, but were avoiding the more permanent increases to capacity that would trigger the three processes noted by Horch above. Horch acknowledges that the professionalization/commercialization process can often be the unintended consequence of the ongoing operation of a CSO; and it stands to reason that the avoidance of those three processes can also be unintentional, at least overtly. The CSOs in the present study were avoiding the possession of capacity so as to conserve the resources they did have, and free them up for programming; but, they were also preserving the mutual-aid nature of their organizations.

In elucidating the theoretical contributions of RQ2, I outlined some evidence that increasing capacity is not unconditionally efficacious for a CSO. The finding of borrowed capacity, and the theoretical work by Horch (1998), further that notion, outlining there are real benefits for CSOs to limit their capacity, limiting dependency, and preserving their presumptive essential nature. The CSOs under study faced pressures to increase capacity from their own membership, as well as from NSOs, and the leaders

faced pressures to secure more human resources, freeing up more of their finite leisure time. Their ongoing decisions to limit their own capacity either by foregoing capacity, by not valuing their own existence or borrowing capacity when it was needed all led to an organization that could secure resources from the environment, but also avoided the “self-destruction” process predicted by Horch.

For managers working in sport, this finding and theoretical implication are confounding. Nearly the world over, sport leaders are encouraged to increase participation, modernize sport structures and, eventually, produce medals on the international stage. These outcomes are commercial in nature, have goals that lie outside enhancing the immediate experience of the member at the CSO level and, according to Horch, are destructive in nature. In England, broad movements to “modernize” (Harris, Mori, & Collins, 2009) CSOs leading up to hosting the London 2012 Olympic Games were aimed at increasing sport participation and increasing medal prospects for Great Britain in 2012 and beyond. The modernization movement, like similar state-led movements in Canada (Kikulis et al., 1995b; e.g. Kikulis, 2000; Parent & Patterson, 2013; Slack & Hinings, 1992; Sport and Fitness Ministers, 1987), seeks more professional staff and a strong outcome-based orientation by sport organizations. The attempts at increasing capacity at the CSO level in Great Britain were not universally accepted by the CSOs (Harris et al., 2009), with a misalignment of priorities cited as a primary reason. This finding in Britain reflects the present finding in the US context that CSOs will not unconditionally value increases in capacity. If managers need greater capacity at the local level, but do not wish to “destroy” CSOs, they have to be deliberate in their strategy.

The CSOs in the present study found ways to borrow capacity in order to deliver more and better without taking on the guise of a commercial provider. Horch (1998) outlined four general strategies for CSO protection:

- Ensuring more self-reflection on the parts of CSOs so that they can intentionally maintain their structures and avoid accidentally sliding into the self-destructive processes.
- Form new, small clubs to maintain their mutual-aid nature.
- Provision of centralized services by federations.
- Intentional and limited professionalization when the size of the club or its operations demand it. (pp. 54-55)

The findings in this dissertation line up well with the notion of provision of centralized services for CSOs. Where implemented, this could have the effect of being a “library” from which CSOs can borrow capacity. A capacity library could take on the form of a local sport commission, a cross-sport CSO that resembles the United Way or other fundraising organization, or could be a function of a local government. Given that these CSOs have shown an ability and inclination to borrow capacity, they would be likely to make use of such a library. The CSOs in this study also showed an inclination to work with their respective NSOs, making use of capacity when offered on a temporary basis. Other NSOs, regional associations, or municipalities could work to provide centralized capacity libraries that could have available expertise, equipment and mundane but important assets, such as meeting space, to support CSO functions. This type of support could provide CSOs with the professional assets of a commercialized organization while allowing for preservation of the mutual-aid focus. A clear example of success in this

respect is sport facilities. These facilities, often provided by schools, municipalities or private operators, are made available to clubs to rent (a form of borrowing) without incurring the commensurate dependencies that go with facility ownership. The findings here indicate that this practice could be extended to less sport-specific (and generally, less expensive) elements of CSO operations.

### **Other Findings**

As is noted in the results section, the finding that leaders in the CSOs demonstrated a desire to organize for the sake of organization merited further exploration, but did not fit within the three RQs in this study. The following section will discuss the theoretical and managerial implications of this finding.

**Implications for theory.** The notion of organizational resources (and therefore organizational power) is contextual. A softball diamond is an existential resource for a softball club but of little use at all to a diving club, for example. Thus, understanding the context of resources is an important element of understanding them. CSO scholarship has indicated that the needs of the organization and its leaders are best viewed as administrative overhead that is either strictly an input (e.g., Balduck, Van Rossem, & Buelens, 2010) or is a distraction from the real business of youth development (e.g., Bowers & Green, 2013). The administration of CSOs has not been conceptualized in the literature as a modality of participation in sport, leaning much more heavily to viewing volunteers as a human resource for the focal organization (Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye, & Darcy, 2006). The findings in the present study indicate that viewing volunteering as a modality of participation in sporting activity, rather than the provision of volunteer labour to enable sport participation by others may help understand the CSO context better.

From the perspective of power, the allocation of resources to the social construction of the sport (for example) can legitimately be viewed from the perspective of institutional theory, but can also be viewed as volunteer leaders working to ensure they will have more and more work to do, which can be conceptualized as enhancing their participatory experience, as well as a potential distraction from the “real work” of ensuring sport participation by athletes, coaches and officials on the field of play. The calculus of power, regardless of the theoretical lens, can be greatly affected by a change in perspective, such as looking at capacity from the perspective of a volunteer who enjoys the work and does not wish to be relieved of it.

**Implications for management.** From a managerial viewpoint, the idea that volunteers can see an organization as an end rather than a means can be helpful in constructing interactions with these organizations. A clear example is the movement towards LTAD. The movement is well established in Canada (e.g., Balyi et al., 2005; Norris, 2010) and has adherents in other countries as well (e.g., Lawn Tennis Association, 2014; USA Hockey, 2014). The movement is not without its detractors in the literature (e.g., Ford et al., 2011), but does stand as an example of CSOs being prompted to make change from outside actors. One of the changes often prompted by LTAD is to move away from scorekeeping and formalized competition structures for younger athletes. Managers wishing to implement LTAD via CSOs would be well advised from this finding to keep in mind that diminishing competitive structures will also diminish the need for organizing – something that volunteers may not welcome as readily as one would expect based only on an efficiency or effectiveness lens and can present a contradiction, such as in the case of Sally-TSL, who spoke fondly of the

organizational work she was doing while also decrying the over-competitiveness of sport in some settings. Managers looking to work with volunteer leaders can better understand CSOs by framing leaders as participants alongside athletes, coaches and officials, more so than service providers alongside, for example, hotel workers, facility custodians or bus drivers. As was the case with Joe-ISC, who escalated his involvement based on his enjoyment of his volunteer experience, CSOs and researchers working with them may be able to pull from the sport dropout literature (e.g., Butcher et al., 2002) to better understand the reasons for volunteer engagement and to understand what will engender changes in behaviour by volunteer leaders in CSOs.

This dissertation makes a contribution as being among the first to examine the CSO directly and within the US context. While previous scholarship has provided insight into American CSOs via the lens of their NSO (e.g., B. C. Green et al., 2013; B. C. Green, 2005) this study has taken a deeper look at the CSOs within this context. Given there is more extant scholarship on CSOs in, for example, Canada (e.g., Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006; Vail, 2007a), Australia (e.g., Wicker et al., 2013), Norway (Steen-Johnsen, 2008), Portugal (Barros, 2003) and Greece (Papadimitriou, 2002). The findings in this dissertation indicate that there are numerous similarities between CSOs in the US and their colleagues in other countries. The similarities include the basic Community-State/Province-National structure of sport governance, as is seen in Canada and Australia (with a similar dynamic in Britain, absent the state/province step). In this dissertation, the State Sport Organization was an important element in the governance structure for TSL, and a regional (Midwest) body was important for ISC. The use of a regional body to provide more localized programming for sport, as was done in the case

of ISC, is potentially an important point of comparison. In the US, there is dramatic variation in the sizes, climates and political structure of the states, in a way that is similar to Australian states and Canadian provinces. The use of a regional body could allow for multiple jurisdictions to be covered by one regional body, and for some larger jurisdictions to be split in others. It could be that this configuration is able to exist partially due to the lack of direct government support of sport. US states are not asking their state sport organizations to further non-sport goals (such as recognition of the state), as other sub-national governments may ask of their respective sport systems, allowing for more flexibility in how a sport develops its broad organizational design. Configuration could also be extended to create the unitary configuration, as was outlined by Shilbury and Kellett (2006), where the state organizations were collapsed into the NSO, leaving behind regional offices of the NSO, rather than free standing state sport organizations. The US example of regional organizations and the Australian example of the unitary structure both point to there being options beyond the traditional local, provincial, national structure that is common in the Anglosphere.

In both CSOs under study, there were important and clear connections to school-based sport, even at the community level. That school-based sport would be important to these CSOs is consistent with the scholarship of Green and colleagues (B. C. Green et al., 2013; B. C. Green, 2005) who outlined the role of school sport in the American sport system. The role of school sport in the US manifested in the resource allocation of both CSOs, and especially in the case of TSL, which was seeking varsity recognition for its sport. The fact that the club system of sport runs in parallel to a large and culturally important school-based system provides a unique element in US sport meaning that,

while comparisons with other nations can be valid, such comparisons must be made with due care.

### **Discussion Summary**

The preceding pages outlined the implications of the findings of the study, which in turn elucidated contributions to the literature from both a theoretical and a managerial perspective. The most recurrent theme in the discussion has been that organizational capacity is not an unconditional asset for CSOs, and that lower capacity levels can have benefits both in terms of securing resources from the environment and from preserving the inherent mutual-aid nature of the organization. In addition to contributions relating to capacity in CSOs, the discussion also outlined contributions relative to the importance of the social construction of sport, the concept of multiple dimensions of 3D power at play within a given relationship dyad, and the notion of the power of anticipatory compliance with the organizational environment.

All of these contributions further the understanding of CSOs in the literature and further the application of RDT and 3D in sport management literature. The study provided a set of findings that would have been difficult to generate in a setting outside of sport, but have nonetheless contributed to RDT scholarship by reinforcing the tenth and least studied condition of dependence which can impact power relations. The study added to 3D scholarship by elucidating a situation wherein there was clear evidence of a power relationship existing on two different dimensions simultaneously, based on the perspective of each social actor.

In the review of literature, I outlined the persistent and fruitful use of social capital as a theoretical lens in CSO scholarship. In this analysis, social capital has not

provided significant utility as a theoretical tool. There was circumstantial evidence that, for example, building democratic institutions within the clubs added to the social capital in the CSO and in the CSO's community. In this study, social capital was in evidence, but not the dominant explanatory factor for the power relationships observed. In fact, one of the key contributions of this study is the provision of a view of power in CSOs without using the dominant social capital lens. Social capital, with an emphasis on its application within a particular field (Hoibian, 2006) may not provide as strong an analytical lens when the relationship with the environment (in another social field) is of vital importance. Previous scholarship using social capital is of tremendous value in furthering the understanding of CSOs, but a diversion from this line of research can also provide needed insight, as has been done in the present study.

### **A Critical Analysis**

The following paragraphs outline the impact of the critical approach to the dataset and how that has allowed for insights that may not have been possible using other epistemological lenses. The data analysis in this study was built around two theoretical constructs of power: RDT and 3D. Both views of power were helpful in providing better understanding of power and power relations in the CSOs under study, but to truly view these constructs properly required a reframing and insight. Alvesson and Deetz (2000) outlined three processes for critical analysis in management that can create insight into the phenomena under study. Table 7.1 outlines the three critical processes outlined by Alvesson and Deetz, as well as how those processes impacted analysis of each of the three key findings of the study.

Table 7.1

*Examples of Critical Analysis of Key Themes based on Alvesson and Deetz (2000)*

| <b>Element of Critique</b>  | <b>Borrowing Capacity</b>                                                                                                                              | <b>Will to Not Exist</b>                                                                                                                | <b>Organizer as a Participant</b>                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Insight                     | Understanding that using one's own computer or making photocopies at work is effectively borrowing organizational capacity and theoretically relevant. | That the desire to exist is not taken for granted is not an obvious approach in the literature.                                         | Organizers of sport activities are most of viewed as human resources to the organization, not beneficiaries of its existence.      |
| Production of Critique      | CSOs are able to scale their capacity to avoid dependency.                                                                                             | CSOs lack of a desire to exist forces the hand of facility owners as they are not able to walk away from a venue of their own creation. | When we view volunteer leaders as unpaid staff only, we fail to understand their conception of their role in the organization.     |
| Transformative Redefinition | Borrowed capacity can be strategically advantageous, not just a way of muddling through absent basic resources.                                        | Desiring to exist means dedicating resources to the organization itself and not to the organizations' hoped-for outcomes.               | Organizing is a way of participating in sport, in the same way that coaching officiating may be considered modes of participating. |

**Summation of Theoretical Implications**

Whetten's (1989) call on the management academy was to provide a framework for theory development that would, "propose several simple concepts for discussing the theory development process" (p. 490). His outline of theory was simple and provided the basic tools for authors to frame a theoretical contribution. Thus, his framework of "what", "how" and "why" provided a pathway for the development of the present discussion.

Mintzberg's (1984) notion of power configurations is particularly helpful in drawing together the two theories of power used in this study (RDT and 3D), and producing a model of configurations (a visible structuration of organizations) rather than a model of power wherein power is immanent and can sometimes only be viewed by the absence of action rather than through a visible manifestation. Mintzberg's work helped in providing a model of the structural impacts of power, allowing for future research to look for both configurations and direct evidence of power.

**What, How and Why**

This study provided several findings that can crystallize around the three key elements of theory building. Table 7.2 outlines these elements.

Table 7.2

*Summary of Elements of Theory Development*

| <b>Element of Theory</b> | <b>Description by Whetten (1989)</b>                                                                                                                                  | <b>Elements in Dissertation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What                     | Which factors (variables, constructs, concepts) logically should be considered as part of the explanation of the social or individual phenomena of interest? (p. 490) | The flow of resources into the organization and then again within the CSO indicate the presence of power relations.                                                                                                                                       |
| How                      | How are the factors related? (p. 490)                                                                                                                                 | The CSOs under study exhibited a reticence to have resources flow towards activities that would increase their own capacity. The low capacity nature of the organization also created access to revenues that likely would not have been there otherwise. |
| Why                      | What are the underlying psychological, economic, and social dynamics that justify the selection of factors and the proposed causal relationships? (p. 491)            | RDT and 3D explanations of the power configurations are outlined in each finding.                                                                                                                                                                         |

**Power Configurations and CSOs**

Mintzberg (1984) developed a set of ideal-type configurations to describe the power relations in organizations. These configurations were developed to follow an organization through a life cycle, finishing with the termination of the organization's existence. The CSOs under study provided solid examples of "Missionary"

organizations. Mintzberg described this ideal type as being “dominated by a strong internal ideology, which serves to pacify the organization’s external coalition”, with the external coalition being a group of “influencers, or ‘stakeholders’ - people who use ‘voice’ to attain their needs through an organization” (p. 208). The strong internal ideology of the CSOs under study was demonstrated in the manners by which they avoid adding capacity, favouring instead their sport outcomes. The passivity of the environmental coalition may have been manipulated through lobbying and the [sport] guide publication in the case of ISC. TSL’s environment demonstrated passivity through their relatively easy access to facilities. In both cases, the evidence presented is in keeping with the notion of a passive environmental coalition. Mintzberg’s notion of the Missionary configuration does not mention CSOs specifically, but does mention previously referenced religious organizations as well as other community organizations.

Mintzberg’s (1984) notion of power configurations denotes that upon a change in power, the configuration will change. This is very much in line with the “self-destruction” process outlined by Horch (1998). Horch’s vision of “self-destruction” is not in relation to the existence of the organization but instead in relation to the “missionary” configuration of the organization. Where Mintzberg sees transition to another configuration, Horch focuses on the destruction of the previous configuration.

### **Importance of Environmental Passivity**

Mintzberg’s (1984) “Missionary” configuration hinges on the passivity of the environment, where the external coalition (or coalitions) does not apply pressure to the focal organization, largely due to the small size of these organizations and to their focus on their mission. While Horch (1998) did not allude to the passivity of the environment

specifically in outlining the destruction process, his other work outlined impacts of active government intervention (Horch, 1994a; Horch, 1994b). Horch's findings were similar to other authors (Doherty & Misener, 2008; Doherty & Cousens, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Sharpe, 2006; Wicker & Breuer, 2011; Wicker et al., 2012; Wicker et al., 2013) who found that increased capacity in CSOs was in response to environmental demands, rather than having been prompted from internal action. The organizations under study demonstrated strategies such as borrowing capacity and anticipatory compliance to ensure a passive environment. While these means were not always deployed intentionally, these actions allowed them to maintain their Missionary configuration.

The internal focus on the work of the organization, rather than the organization itself was described by Mintzberg (1984) as being an "ideologic" internal coalition. Of note, Mintzberg outlined three possible power configurations with an ideologic internal coalition and only one of them, Missionary, was adjudged to be stable (p. 210). Thus, it is important to note that the CSOs under study both serviced their ideologic internal coalition and worked to ensure a passive environment. Both of these actions preserve their organizational bias towards a "Missionary" (Mintzberg, 1984), "community sport" (Horch, 1998) or "mutual aid" (Hodgett & Bishop, 1985) type of organization, allowing them to maintain a Missionary configuration and, thus preserve stability.

The CSOs in this study acted to serve their ideologic internal coalition and also worked to ensure a passive organizational environment. Both of these activities were undertaken with intent and served to ensure the organizational survival of the CSOs under study. Table 7.3 summarizes these activities.

Table 7.3

*Activities to Maintain Internal and External Coalition Properties*

| <b>Coalition</b>   | <b>Maintenance Activities</b>                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Internal/Ideologic | Commitment of resources to the social construction of the sport (ISC and TSL)<br>Focus on ensuring access to sport (ISC)<br>Culture Keepers on sidelines (TSL) |
| External/Passive   | Borrowing Capacity (ISC and TSL)<br>Anticipatory Compliance (TSL)<br>Not Valuing Existence (ISC and TSL)                                                       |

**Summation of Managerial Implications**

For sport managers, there are several key implications emanating from this dissertation. The theoretical implications of borrowing capacity and the will to not exist provide a basis for a summary of the most important managerial implications. Those potential actions are outlined further in this sub-section.

Working with a CSO that does not value its existence can provide some unique challenges for managers. Pfeffer's (1992) contention that he who has the gold makes the rules presumes that the other parties would like the gold too. A CSO that does not value its own existence does not necessarily care for resources and thus the ability to engender dependence is diminished. The CSOs in this study acquired, distributed and dispensed of resources, but their reticence to apply those resources to increasing their capacity meant that outside actors, such as the municipality, struggled to exert demands over the CSOs. Managers working with small CSOs that do not value increases in capacity would be

well-served to heed Joe-TSL's notion that they care more deeply about the "music" than the "instrument" and work on sport outcomes first and foremost with their CSO partners. Depending on their multi-level structure, NSOs (or state/province level organizations) putting personnel in close proximity (within that state or on a national level) can provide some of the borrowed capacity that CSOs have sought in this study, but in a manner that is reliable and predictable for the NSO. This provision of capacity can also further engage with the CSOs who are the delivery agents for grassroots programming. In the case of ISC, further local engagement by the NSO (through a regional director) was cited as a reason to maintain national membership. This example illustrates that the increased capacity of a CSO can benefit other players in its multi-level governance structure both in terms of program provision and in terms of capturing resources (through membership fees) for the NSO.

### **Key Contributions to the Literature**

Bringing in Mintzberg's (1984) work created the foundation that can guide future research on CSOs and other organizations that Mintzberg characterized as "Missionary." The distinguishing characteristic in terms of the external coalition is the passivity observed in these cases. Internally, power relations are committed to the ideology of the organization, to the point of the rejection of expertise that may diminish the egalitarian nature of the organization. Finally, the environment is negotiated to both exploit the passivity of the environment through borrowing capacity and to ensure its ongoing passivity through anticipatory compliance.

The key findings of this study contribute to the literature in terms of the power (from RDT and 3D perspectives) and CSO literatures:

- **Key contribution to the RDT literature:** The desire to exist, as one of the ten conditions of dependence has been validated with evidence to suggest that this condition is in fact germane to the creation of dependence.
- **Key contribution to the 3D literature:** This dissertation provides evidence that a power relationship can exist on two different dimensions for two different actors in a dyad, in this case, with one on the first dimension of power and the other on the third.
- **Key contribution to the CSO literature:** The study furthers the notion that increasing capacity is not a universally positive development for CSOs as it can increase dependency and detract from the nature of the CSO as a mutual aid organization. This finding supplements, but does not detract from, previous scholarship indicating the benefits of increasing capacity. This finding makes the probable “trade-offs” of capacity growth more explicit.

Apart from this key theoretical contribution, there are other supplemental contributions that further the academy’s understanding of CSOs and can serve as starting points for subsequent research.

- **A Partner That Does Not Value Its Existence:** For organizations working with CSOs, it would be prudent to evaluate the degree to which that organization values its existence. In cases where the organization does not value its existence, emphasizing sport outcomes rather than institutional outcomes would likely be a more effective method of engendering action on the part of CSOs. For a manager working at the CSO level (paid or volunteer), being aware of the notion of organizational self-destruction (Horch, 1998) can allow the organization to

progress to another state (or, to “self-destruct”) intentionally or avoid doing so with intent. In either case, CSO managers can better serve their organization and their mission by being cognizant of the shift in the organization that can take place when it starts to value its existence.

- **Environmental Actors Lend Capacity:** As CSOs may be inclined to borrow capacity from environmental actors, those actors should be prepared to act accordingly. As is noted in the discussion, municipalities, sport councils and other such bodies could formalize their capacity lending abilities by forming “capacity libraries” that could loan meeting rooms, computers, software and other functional resources for CSOs in their respective communities. So doing can increase the power of the municipality by creating a dependence that resonates with the CSO and is not readily replaceable, as for-profit actors are unlikely to be able to replicate the “library” at a reasonable cost.
- **Sport Outcomes Can Be Meaningful:** As with “faith outcomes” in Faith Based Organizations (cf. Fischer, 2004), “sport outcomes” can be meaningful in the sport setting. The results demonstrated that the social construction of their respective sports attracted resource flow from both TSL and ISC. As the “good of the game” can be an attractor of resources, managers working with CSOs would be well advised to position potential activities in those terms. Nearly any administrative change can be construed as being for the benefit of the sport, and organizations looking to engender change in CSOs would be well served to ensure that this connection is not lost on their CSO partners. At the same time, managers working within CSOs should be cautious as “the good of the game” could readily

be a reason to resist change. In the results chapters of this dissertation, the “good of the game” resource allocation created what would generally be regarded as beneficial outcomes (sportsmanship and junior outreach). However, the preservation of the game could readily become the preservation of the status quo, leading to an organization that is incapable of change (e.g., O'Brien & Slack, 2003).

- **Unconscious Power Can Be Powerful:** In the case of TSL, the State Federation exerted considerable power over the organization without ever articulating a preference to TSL. Sport organizations that work with CSOs can heed this example and increase their awareness of the power they may have over other organizations in their environment and intentionally deploy that power.
- **Time Is Scarce:** Throughout interviews with respondents, it was clear that leaders of the CSOs under study found their time to be the resource that was the scarcest. While the general pull on their time was a serious challenge for these leaders, both in their managerial roles and in their personal lives, data also indicated that they truly enjoyed what they were doing and were willing to continue doing it. Managers and researchers looking to work with CSOs would be well served to be aware of the scarcity of time for these leaders and design managerial interventions and research methodologies with this scarcity in mind.

### **General Limitations of the Study**

I set out in this research project to create a thick, trustworthy dataset. The qualitative approach of the study and the critical realist epistemology combine to develop such a dataset, but do not purport to deliver a generalizable dataset. Unlike researchers

approaching from a strictly interpretivist perspective (cf. Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), as a critical realist, my approach views generalizability as a desirable though not necessary outcome of a research programme. The present study does not provide generalizable results, but does provide an empirical basis for further quantitative studies that may provide more generalizable findings. So, while the study is limited in terms of generalizability, it is one step towards a fuller understanding of the unique features of CSOs, and specifically the role of power within these organizations. The rich history of case studies in managerial research (cf. Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Eisenhardt, 1989) has led to insights that then produce further study, working from a theoretical insight at the case study level (e.g., Mintzberg, 2009; Weick, 1996; Weick, 2005). So while the generalizability of this study is a limitation of its application, there is considerable support in the literature that further study based on these findings can generate findings that can be generalized.

The amount of cases involved in this study at only two presents a degree of limitation. Again, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) provide guidance in reference to the number of cases required for good theory building, citing the influential study of *IDEO's* innovation processes by Hardagon and Sutton (1997) using two project teams as cases. In sport management, single case studies have, for example, dealt with the failure of major events (Parent & Séguin, 2007), and community outreach efforts (Frisby et al., 2005). The single case method has been used extensively in the emergent field of CSO studies as well (e.g., Hoeber & Hoeber, 2012; Mills & Hoeber, 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006), also in keeping with the still-emergent nature of this vein of scholarship. The dual case approach used in this study was limiting in that more cases

allow for more “replications, contrasts and extensions to the emerging theory” (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 25); but, the literature strongly indicates that this limitation does not preclude a contribution to the literature in a still-growing area of study. The use of two cases has provided a richer view of CSOs than a single case approach, allowing for emergence of more themes, such as the role of gender specifically to TSL and the unique role of junior development in ISC. The dual cases also facilitated the reinforcement of other themes such borrowing capacity and the valuation of existence.

### **Implications of Recruitment Challenges on Future Research**

In Chapter 3, I outlined some of the serious challenges I encountered in the process of participant recruitment. I also outlined how participant recruitment in CSOs has presented challenges for many researchers and has resulted in the adaptation of methods in other studies. The literature review for this dissertation has already developed the value of case studies in a nascent research context (Yin, 2009). Further, I have demonstrated that the literature supports the use of case studies as a theory development device that can be further tested using qualitative methods (Eisenhardt, 1989). In the following paragraphs, I outline key insights gleaned from a difficult recruitment process that should be valuable to future researchers looking to use qualitative methods when work with CSOs.

Hall, et al. (2003) defined capacity as the ability of an organization to realize its goals. The idea that capacity would be goal-focused is intuitive and, for the most part, is theoretical and practically useful. Organizations exist to accomplish something; and thus, the concept of capacity to realize that accomplishment is eminently reasonable. The

recruitment challenges associated with this study indicate that perhaps the notion of capacity as the ability to accomplish goals is too narrow in a descriptive sense. That recruitment of clubs was so universally difficult provides indication that CSOs lack the capacity not only to accomplish all of their goals, but to do much of anything else either. In this study, each respondent noted that the one thing they needed more of was time. My request to the CSOs was for access to documents, which some CSO candidates found unpalatable, but the request was also for time, something the subsequent data indicated was the most precious resource at the CSO's disposal. The scarcity of all resources associated with CSOs may have been such that even sparing 60 minutes of time may have been too much to ask. Perhaps compounding this challenge was that my ethics approval for the project mandated that I contact clubs via the club President. The President could act as a bottleneck in that process for self-serving reasons (of which I would likely not be made aware), but most likely, this requirement could have exacerbated the time pressures in that the person that is often the most time stressed was the one I had to ask first for a contribution of time.

The reticence of clubs to share their minutes was an interesting development in the course of the study. As these CSOs did not participate in the study, I was not able to develop a dataset that may provide an empirical basis to explain their hesitation. Absent that data, I can speculate that, for some clubs, their minutes may have contained information they considered sensitive. Further to the lack of time and capacity noted already, it may have simply seemed too daunting to round up documents. Findings in this study about "borrowing capacity" and previous research (e.g., Horch, 1998; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Sharpe, 2006) indicate that it would not likely be common for clubs to

have a common filing system, so finding minutes from the previous three years may have meant searching through boxes in the garages of two or three previous Board secretaries – a daunting task for an organization already struggling to find time to conduct its baseline operations.

My research in this area proved to be very challenging. But challenges aside, CSOs represent an area of research in sport management that is simply too important to ignore. The study of CSOs will continue to be challenging given their severe resource restrictions, but that challenge can be mitigated in several ways. Further study using a case study methodology could continue to work through the vector of NSOs or other “parent” organizations. This method of recruitment opens the study to concerns about bias, given that CSOs may feel accountable for their responses and thus be less than open with researchers. Another “vector method” would be to study the environment in which CSOs exist. This could include facility owners/operators, sporting goods stores or even hotels. The approach of indirectly studying what is happening in the CSO has been executed with some success in studies at the community level relative to sport related concussions, where the phenomena of concussion occurrence at the CSO level is studied by examining reports at hospital emergency rooms rather than directly at the CSO (e.g., Daneshvar, Nowinski, McKee, & Cantu, 2011). By looking in the areas where the activity of CSOs manifests, researchers can ascertain their behaviours and perhaps the antecedents to behaviour without having to reach CSOs directly.

In the methods section, I demonstrated that research in CSOs has generally relied on either single cases or on the use of a “vector organization,” wherein CSOs are studied by working through another organization, most often the NSO. My experience is

consistent with the literature to date on the difficulties of reaching out to CSOs for research. Given the prevalence of CSOs, attempts to recruit respondents could continue, relying on the mass of potential respondents to create a critical mass for any one study, in effect, waiting for the academy's luck to turn. As time is clearly a precious resource for CSOs, it may serve researchers well to seek out the times when club leaders have time to spare. This could be done by focusing on off-season attempts to contact, or could be done at tournaments (or other similar competitions) where "hurry up and wait" is commonplace. Intercept interviews in that setting may not only provide adequate time, but could be a welcome distraction for respondents. These options could provide greater access to CSOs and greater access to the leaders of these organizations, all while staying within qualitative methods.

Moreover, as has been defined earlier in the literature review, quantitative methods have had some traction in the study of CSOs, and could be a valuable tool as well. Quantitative methods have proven to be helpful in reaching out to many CSOs in a single undertaking (e.g., Misener & Doherty, 2014; Wicker & Breuer, 2015), and the positivistic approach of these studies have added to the body of knowledge in this field. Future studies using quantitative methods can and likely will provide further insight to the operations and composition of CSOs.

At the other end of the methodological spectrum lies ethnography and auto-ethnography. These methods could provide real insight into single cases and produce significant datasets, and the direct implication of the researcher may prove to be enticing to clubs considering participation in a study. In a management studies context, Van Maanen (2011) suggested that ethnography is particularly well suited to an area of study

where otherwise counter-intuitive behaviour (such as not valuing existence) may be evident, “Ethnography shines a light, sometimes a very strange one, on what people are up to and such doings are rarely, if ever predictable or in line with what either ‘current theory’ or ‘the experts’ might say” (p. 229). In a sport context, Tsang (2000) used autoethnography to elicit stories of her own experience as a national team rower. Tsang’s autoethnographic work could be replicated in the CSO setting, capitalizing on community service already being undertaken by researchers, and providing the benefit of thick datasets situating the research in a way that is unique to that setting. “The approach I have synthesized here as method is something that was good for this particular researcher on this particular subject at this particular time and these particular stories” (Tsang, 2000, p. 56).

Within the two CSOs in the present dissertation, it was interesting to note that the site of the study was a “college town” and that the pool of respondents was highly educated, interested in education and were often referencing their own research experiences as graduate students. Crotty (1998) cautioned about the privileged position of the researcher wherein care must be taken to ensure that respondents are not too deferential to researcher. In sport management research, Frisby and colleagues (Frisby et al., 1997; Frisby et al., 2005) and Ferkins, Shilbury and McDonald (2005) all dealt with the challenges of being a privileged observer in an action research setting. In this research setting, the participants were not in any kind of awe of my position as a researcher, and even critiqued my methodological approach, “I find this one [research project] a bit formless” (Geoff-TSL). One respondent reported he had written a book on his sport, another, when discussing community connections paraphrased de Tocqueville,

“Wasn’t it de Tocqueville who said that America is a country of organizations and associations?” (Cary-ISC). In the particular research site for this project, the privileged position of the researcher was not particularly challenging, and in fact, was a method for me to work closely with respondents, rather than on them.

As was covered earlier in the literature review, there is little extant literature on CSOs in the US; and thus, this presented an opportunity to enhance understanding of CSOs themselves, as well as CSOs in a relatively unstudied geographical context. The study is limited, however, in that the context is specific and its applicability to other contexts is far from certain. Vagaries ranging from the structure of school boards, to local demographics to climate all were evident in the data and all were peculiar to the geographical setting. Further study that uses more geographic settings would help contextualize emergent phenomena and help ensure that such themes are not just the product of a localized condition. The findings in this study, pertaining to facility access, power relationships, and internal allocation of resources have been found in many other organizational research contexts, and thus, indicate that this study, while geographically constrained, has made a contribution in a context broadly similar to previous scholarship.

Finally, I did not account for gender in the *a priori* approach to the project. Gender emerged in the data in the case of TSL, but was not part of the initial lenses of study. Perhaps partially as a result, snowball sampling of the leaders in the clubs resulted in an interview with only one Female respondent. The data generated from that interview was fruitful, but not necessarily unique from that of other respondents. In fact, the more uniquely Female sport perspective among respondents came from Geoff-TSL, who was in charge of officiating for the Female version of his sport. The data did not indicate that

there was anything specific being missed as a result of the largely Male pool of respondents, but a more balanced gender mix could have provided a richer dataset. The snowball sampling approach meant stopping when saturation was reached, which happened in both cases as a result of the data generated for the research questions of interest. That theoretical and not demographic saturation was a “stop signal” precluded ensuring more women participated in this study, which is a shortcoming that could be addressed more intentionally and overtly in future studies.

### **Future Directions**

Broader, quantitative studies such as those undertaken in Australia (Wicker et al., 2013) and in Germany (Horch, 1994a; Wicker et al., 2012) can help situate CSOs more broadly within their national context. Further, international views of CSOs would also be helpful to better understand the persistent and unique attributes of sport at the community level locally and globally. As is noted above, upon development of a theoretical perspective via case study research, further quantitative testing of that theory is a logical next step. Such a study that further tests the notions of borrowing capacity could be developed through a survey instrument. A concept that is more nuanced, such as the desire for the organization to (not) exist, would require deft handling in a survey tool, but could also be further developed in interviews, focus groups or by dealing with those organizations such as NSOs or State Sport Organizations, whose dealings with multiple clubs can provide an informed perspective. Further, the linkages indicating that CSOs benefit from a passive environment could be tested from the perspective of the actors in that environment, such as NSOs, municipalities and other facility providers.

While quantitative research methods will help provide a broader and perhaps more generalizable view of CSOs, there is certainly room for more depth of understanding as well. The use of action research in sport management remains relatively novel (cf. Chalip, 1997; Frisby et al., 1997), but has been fruitful in the case of NSOs (Ferkins et al., 2009) and CSOs (Sharpe, 2006) alike. The added thickness of the dataset given the close interaction of the researcher with the organization and the chance to see the organization through a change process (Frisby et al., 1997) could provide meaningful contributions to this body of scholarship. As organizational change, virtually by definition, involves power (Pfeffer, 2013; Pfeffer, 1992) and organizations are reticent to change (doing what they would not have otherwise done), power relationships are likely to be revealed, allowing for a greater understanding of power in CSOs.

The approach to these two cases has been to focus on the two focal organizations and view the environment solely from their perspective. This approach was fruitful, for example, in terms of revealing the strategies used by these organizations to manipulate their environments, their internal resource management processes, the impacts of the relationship TSL had with the State Federation, and the State Federation's ability to manipulate the activities and structure of TSL. Likewise, the focus on the perspectives of the two focal organizations was revelatory in terms of their willingness to not exist. The benefits of this approach have been helpful in this study, but future studies could also branch out from the focal organizations and study more directly the organizations that comprise their respective environments. A fuller understanding of the organizational network can provide further understanding of the focal organization's reality. Approaches such as network analysis (e.g., Quatman & Chelladurai, 2008) could provide

further insights into the power relationships that CSOs have with their environment and could also further elucidate the notion of borrowed capacity by tracking resource flows within the CSOs' organizational networks.

This study was limited to non-profit community sport clubs. Given Thiel and Mayer's (2009) contention that non-profit clubs are inherently different from for-profit firms, it may be fruitful to further explore this boundary of CSO scholarship. For-profit community sport clubs in martial arts, golf and other sports is the norm in many locales, and further understanding of that realm can provide a richer view of sport at the community level, and through comparison, may also shed further light on non-profit CSOs.

This dissertation made use of Kikulis and colleagues' (1989) structural taxonomy of sport organizations, emphasizing organizations that bore greatest similarity to the "Boardroom" archetype. While the archetypes outlined by Kikulis et al. were to be applied to NSOs in Canada, they did prove useful in providing some *a priori* categories for case selection. Still, this utility also created a limitation in that only the mid-range, Boardroom archetype is represented in the study. Organizations with even lower capacity, referred to by Kikulis et al. as Kitchen Table Organizations, as well as those with higher capacity, that is, Executive Boardroom organizations (with Stevens (2006) subsequently adding the "Amateur Sport Enterprise" archetype in further research), would provide a richer understanding of the broader reality of CSOs and their situation within the context of a sport development system. This dissertation provided findings and insights into CSOs generally, but a broader view of the continuum of capacity levels would add further insight to these contributions.

From the outset of this project, I was surprised at the lack of scholarship related to CSOs in the US. This study provides a contribution to the literature by addressing CSOs in the US setting and by taking steps towards situating the US context within the realities of other nations. Future research could build on the US context, and could contrast with other national CSO norms, as was done by Green and Collins (2008) in their comparison of athlete development in Finland and Australia. Within the US context, comparisons with CSOs not affiliated with their sports' NSO, such as Church Leagues, could provide a fruitful analytical lens.

Finally, the present study has made several contributions to the literature on power and on CSOs more generally. As with any such effort, there are limitations on this study, ranging from geography to gender to methodology. These limitations are in keeping with similar scholarship, and thus, limit the potential impact of this contribution to the literature, while also opening up veins for subsequent research in this field. The study of CSOs is still young and these future research directions, when explored, will provide further insight into CSOs and will further our understanding of the common point of entry into sport for a great many athletes, coaches, volunteer leaders, and officials.

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## **Appendix A – Informed Consent Form**

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Title of the Study:</b>        | Resource Dependence and Power in Local Sport Organizations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Principal Investigator:</b>    | David Patterson<br>School of Human Kinetics, Faculty of Health Sciences<br>125 University Street<br>Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Thesis Supervisor:</b>         | Dr. Milena Parent<br>School of Human Kinetics, Faculty of Health Sciences<br>125 University Street<br>Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Invitation to Participate:</b> | I have been invited to participate in the abovementioned study by David Patterson.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Purpose of the Study:</b>      | The purpose of the study is to better understand the functioning of local sport organizations by coming to understand how they acquire and process resources, and in turn, how they influence their environments to make more resources available. This knowledge, combined with an understanding of the power relations involved in local sport organizations will lead to better understanding of optimal functioning of local sport organizations.                                                                      |
| <b>Participation:</b>             | My participation in this research study will consist of participating in a semi-structured interview, either in person or over the phone, lasting forty-five to ninety minutes. I understand that I will be asked questions relating to the above purpose concentrating on two key areas: resources (e.g., facility access, human resources, finances) and power. With permission, the principal investigator will digitally record the interview or, if otherwise indicated, will simply take notes during the interview. |
| <b>Risks:</b>                     | My participation in this study will not subject me to any foreseeable risks.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Benefits:</b>                  | Participation in this study will help provide researchers with greater knowledge of how local sport organizations operate, by understanding how these organizations interact with their members and their environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Confidentiality:</b>           | Assurance of my confidentiality has been guaranteed by the investigators. I understand that unless indicated otherwise no names will be used within the contents of the research                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

study and that all personal information will be kept under lock and key for a period of ten years post publication after which, the data will be destroyed. The content of the interviews will be used only for the purpose of identifying themes during a content analysis and highlighting issues raised by informants.

**Anonymity:**

I understand that my anonymity will be protected in this research study and its findings by using a broad title such as “Board Member – winter sport” or “Staff Member – Summer Individual Sport” when directly quoting information. Only the primary investigator and his research supervisor will have access to the raw data. The interviews will be transcribed and analyzed using qualitative data analysis software. The software program will facilitate the coding and retrieval of the data by highlighting the themes that appear in the interviews. My transcript will be provided to me for review so that I may ensure the accuracy of the details. At this time, I will be able to make any modifications deemed necessary. My interview details will be part of a larger pool of data and will be used in the final dissertation, scholarly presentations, technical reports and paper submissions to scientific journals.

**Conservation of Data:**

All data collected including archival material, interview tape recordings, transcripts, notes and data analysis will be secured by the principal investigator in a locked filing cabinet in a University of Ottawa office which requires an entrance access code. Only the principal investigator and research supervisor will have access to the information.

**Voluntary Participation:**

I fully understand that I am not obligated to participate in this study and, if I opt to participate, that I am free to refuse to answer particular questions or withdraw at any point without suffering any negative consequences. If I chose to withdraw from the study, I may decide at that point whether or not the researcher may use the data collected prior to withdraw in the study. Should I decide that I do not wish my data to be used in the study, I understand that it will be destroyed.

**Acceptance:**

Please initial one of the following options:

I consent to my interview data being quoted in publications (thesis, articles, etc.) using my identity/name \_\_\_\_\_(initials).

I consent to my interview data being quoted in publications (thesis, articles, etc.) but I wish for these quotes to remain anonymous \_\_\_\_\_(initials).

I do not consent to be quoted at all in this research \_\_\_\_\_(initials).

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in the above research study conducted by David Patterson (Ph.D. Student, School of Human Kinetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa). I fully understand that by consenting to participate in the study my rights to withdraw at any point are not being affected. Should I have any questions or concerns regarding the study, the primary investigator or research supervisor of the study may be contacted. Ethical concerns regarding my participation in the study should be directed to the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 159, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5, tel.:613-562-5841, email: [ethics@uottawa.ca](mailto:ethics@uottawa.ca). Two copies of the consent form have been provided, one of which is mine to keep and the other is to be given to the principal investigator.

Participant's signature:

Date:

Researcher's signature:

Date

## **Appendix B – Interview Guide**

1. What is your role with the organization? - [To establish foundations and set informant at ease]
2. What do you usually find you need to get your job within the organization done? - [Identification of resources of note for organization]
  - a. Prompt
    - i. Resource Types
    - ii. Resource Locations
    - iii. Barriers to Acquisition
3. What other types of organizations do you find you rely upon the most in order to do your job? - [Identification of resources from external sources]
  - a. Prompt
    - i. Specific Organizations
    - ii. Resource Types
4. Typically, what resources do you seek out when doing your job? - [Resource types and elements of the status of the resources in terms of being replaceable/irreplaceable]
  - a. Prompt
    - i. Sources
    - ii. Types
    - iii. Internal/external
    - iv. If you can't get the resource from your first choice, where else do you look?

5. Typically, who approaches you for help on projects or with requests for resources? - [Internal and external dependence upon the information or the organization]
  - a. Prompt
    - i. Sources
    - ii. Types
    - iii. Internal/External
    - iv. If they can't get the resource from you, can they get it from somewhere else?
6. Are there any organizations that you work with that have "strings attached" when they provide you with a resource? - [Ability, willingness of external actors to place demands on the focal organization]
  - a. Prompt
    - i. Source
    - ii. Types
    - iii. Internal/External
    - iv. If they attach a string, do you find they follow up to see if you did what you said you would do?
    - v. Do you ever get to negotiate the "strings" and/or can you attach strings of your own?
7. Do you have the chance to dictate the terms of an interaction with another organization [cite example if possible]? - [Evidence of attempts/success in terms of negotiating the environment directly]

a. Prompt

- i. Source
- ii. Types
- iii. Internal/External
- iv. Can you dictate terms to any larger organizations (e.g., facility owners)

8. Have you ever worked with another organization to create a resource for your organization?- [Evidence of inter-organizational linkages]

a. Prompt

- i. Source
- ii. Types
- iii. Did you create access to the resource, or create the resource from whole cloth?
- iv. Did you “renovate” an existing resource to make it better/more useful?
- v. How many existing resources have you dedicated to finding new resources?

9. I understand that your sport is important to you, but why is it important to you that your club provide that sport, as opposed to another club, the city or another provider?

a. Prompt

- i. Do you value your own existence, if so, why?

10. If you secure a new resource [ideally, cite a real example found in the document review] who decides how this resource is used in the organization? - [Internal power, power configurations and potentially unseen power relations]

a. Prompt

- i. How is this decided?
- ii. Do you really know how this is decided or do “they” make the decision?
- iii. What are the criteria used to allocate the resource?
- iv. When you allocate the new resource, who do you explain the decision to?

11. How do you resolve conflicts over resources within the organization? - [Overt power relations/power configurations]

a. Prompt

- i. Resolution process
- ii. Deferral to internal/external actors
- iii. Tell me about the last time your org dealt with an internal conflict.

12. Who, in your opinion, holds the power in terms of the organization’s resource decisions? - [Nature of power relations, ability to view the dimensions of power comparatively through prompts]

a. Prompt

- i. Internal/External
- ii. Known/Unknown

13. Do you have anything to add?

**Appendix C – List of Codes Used**

Agenda Changes  
Athlete with a Disability  
Communication Channel  
Conforming to External Standard  
Decision - Chair Only  
Decision - Motion unclear  
Decision - No Motion  
Declaration - No Motion  
Elections  
External – State Games Association  
External - Government and Regulatory  
External – Local School Board  
External - Private Operator  
External - Schools  
External - Sponsor  
External – State Federation  
Female Gender Difference  
Flagged for Later Presentation and Decision  
Inter Organizational Cooperation  
Motion  
NSO - NFHS  
NSO – Sport Specific NSO  
Parallel Club  
Power - 1st Dimension  
Power - 2nd Dimension  
Power - 3rd Dimension  
Promised Follow Up  
State Sport Organization  
Resource - External Practice  
Resources - Coaches

Resources - Facilities

Resources - Human

Resources - Money

Resources - Players

Resources - Referees

Resources - Sport Equipment

Resources - Teams

Resources - Technology

Resources - Transportation

Scheduling and Alignment

Suggested Action - No Follow Up Promised or Mentioned

Travel

Unanimous

Voice Vote

Volunteer Training