The Dynamics of Organizational Change in Non-Profit Sport Organizations

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This dissertation is dedicated to

my mother
Sylvie Dewar Thompson
1962-2019

Abstract

The purpose of the dissertation was to explore the impact of regulating dynamics on the process of organizational change in non-profit sport organizations. Regulating dynamics are the factors which enable or constrain organizational change. Four regulating dynamics were targeted based on previous literature: capacity for change, organizational culture, organizational politics, and digital technology.

To address the purpose, four research objectives were developed: (1) To explore how *capacity for change* enables or constrains organizational change in non-profit sport organizations; (2) To explore how *organizational culture* enables or constrains organizational change in non-profit sport organizations; (3) To explore how *organizational politics* enables or constrains organizational change in non-profit sport organizations, and (4) To explore how *digital technology* enables or constrains organizational change in non-profit sport organizations.

Through a constructivist epistemology, a collective case study methodology of five Canadian national sport organizations was employed. Data collection included semi-structured interviews conducted with 49 staff and Board members and 151 documents. Data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed thematically.

Overall, the findings demonstrate how regulating dynamics impact organizational change as they enable and/or constrain change in non-profit sport organizations concurrently and sequentially. All four regulating dynamics examined appeared to enable organizational change while only three – capacity for change, organizational culture, and organizational politics – constrained change. Thus, digital technology appeared to only enable change. The dissertation also demonstrates the impact of regulating dynamics not only at the organization level, but also how systemic and individual level dynamics influence organizational change.

The dissertation addresses recent calls by several scholars to examine the “how” of change or, in other words, the change process. In addition, the dissertation extends existing understandings of regulating dynamics beyond the context of organizational design change. In doing so, the author highlights how regulating dynamics impact different types of changes such as governance, structure, processes, culture, and people change. Practically, through regulating dynamics, this dissertation can help explain why change initiatives fail, whether it is because of a lack of capacity for change, poor organizational culture, complex political dynamics, or failing to capitalize on the benefits of digital technology.

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Statement of Author Contributions and Originality

The author acknowledges that she was solely responsible for the development and execution of this research project. She was responsible for all phases of the research project including: the conceptualization of the project, research questions and purpose; conducting the literature review; collecting the research data, including the recruitment of organizations and individual research participants, conducting the interviews, and collecting the documents; analyzing all data; and completing the write-up of the final dissertation. The supervisor's contributions included reviewing the dissertation for language and providing suggestions and feedback on the development of the dissertation's arguments and ideas. The author declares this document is original and has not been submitted for any other degree at another institution.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Name
AGM	Annual General Meeting
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COC	Canadian Olympic Committee
CSO	Chief Sport Officer
ED	Executive Director
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IF	International Sport Federation
NFP Act	Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act
NPSO	Non-Profit Sport Organization
NSF	National Sport Federation
NSO	National Sport Organization
OTP	Own The Podium
P/TSO	Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization

Chapter I

Introduction

> *I like to say we work in an environment of change which is inevitable or unavoidable. If we are going to be constantly changing, if we determine that it's inevitable and we can't control the actual changes, then the least we can control is how we manage change, how we communicate change, how we facilitate change, and how we go through that process to make sure that, while the change might be unavoidable, the consequences, I believe, can be manipulated – for lack of a better term – to be less impactful.*
>
> – Adrian[1] (Research Participant)

Organizational change – broadly defined as a process by which organizational characteristics, activities, or ideas are altered (cf. Van de Ven, 2021) – is a paradox. On the one side of the paradox, as the opening quotation demonstrates, organizations are in constant state of change. Organizations around the world have experienced unpredictable shifts in their economic, sociocultural, geopolitical, and technological environments making organizational change a necessary and unavoidable aspect of organizational life (Amis & Aïssaoui, 2013). Most notably, globalization, social and environmental movements, digital technology and social media, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic have required all organizations to adapt or risk failure altogether (Burnes, 2017; Van de Ven, 2021).

For instance, organizations are now operating in a world economy because of globalization, which provides opportunities for growth (e.g., expanding to new markets) but also makes them vulnerable to environmental uncertainties such as economic recessions (e.g., the 2008 recession) and political shifts like Brexit. Shifts in economic and political dynamics force

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[1] A pseudonym was used to protect the participant's anonymity

organizations to reassess their *raison d'être* and business models (Burnes, 2017; Carnall, 2018; Carnall & By, 2014).

Organizations are also facing external pressures as a result of social and environmental movements. Sociocultural movements – such as the #MeToo movement and the increasing attention to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion from the Black Lives Matter movements – have pressured organizations to change their policies, hiring practices, and rename buildings (Amis & Greenwood, 2021). Further, the increasing importance of sustainability stemming from the 2015 Paris UN Conference on Climate Change and subsequent environmental movements have forced organizations to also address these issues (Burnes, 2017). For instances, organizations are modifying their business practices to become more "eco-friendly" such as the development of the Seattle Kraken's Climate Pledge Arena which is partly powered by solar energy and claimed to be "carbon-neutral" (Young, 2022).

The creation of the Internet in the 1990s along with Google's inception in 1992 changed the way people, and thus organizations, access and store information as well as consume products (Burnes, 2017; Dees et al., 2022). The launch of the iPhone in 2007 and the subsequent smartphone boom has facilitated greater connection among people and organizations. The launch of the big four social media platforms – Facebook in 2004, Twitter in 2006, Instagram in 2010, and Snapchat in 2011 – have provided new avenues for organizations to interact and engage with consumers, especially those born in the digital age (Clavio, 2021; Newman et al., 2017). With new platforms continuously created and eliminated (e.g., TikTok, Vine), organizations are forced to adapt and stay "ahead of the curve" to continue engaging with their stakeholders. Beyond social media, other more complex digital trends have emerged which organizations must navigate such as blockchain technology, artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotics, and

virtual and augmented reality (Dimension Data, 2019; Naraine, 2019a; Thompson & Parent, in press).

Most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted people around the world and organizations have been forced adapt (Amis & Greenwood, 2021). The pandemic resulted in many people working from home for the first time, turning traditional brick-and-mortar organizations into virtual ones. For organizations, the pandemic has also impacted financial resources, potentially threatening their ability to survive (cf. Heroux, 2020). Amis and Greenwood (2021, p. 584) suggested that these shifts in work-from-home practices will cause major change in organizations as they will have to re-evaluate their priorities which "will lead to the need for new organisational designs, or at least a reimagining of how existing designs will work most optimally." While some organizations may opt to remain virtual, others have cautioned the fully virtual models or hybrid virtual models as it could negatively impact organizations' cultures causing two distinct and conflicting cultures, one for in-person staff and one for virtual staff (Alexander et al., 2020).

As Burnes (2017) asserted, these environmental shifts have impacted all types of organizations, including for-profit, public, and non-profit organizations. However, non-profit organizations specifically, face growing pressures for greater accountability and performance in these organizations due to their reliance on public funding. For example, in the sport sector, there has been a rise in governance mismanagement and corruption issues in non-profit sport organizations (NPSOs; e.g., antidoping, match fixing, and fraud; Fife, 2020; Parent et al., 2018) which has brought calls for better governance and accountability in these organizations (Chappelet, 2018). Along with the above, NPSOs also face growing capacity issues (Parent et al.,

2018), regulatory differences, and increasing pressures to become more "business-like" (cf. Cornforth, 2012; Sharpe et al., 2018).

Although the aforementioned examples are just a microcosm of what NPSOs must face, it is because of these environmental shifts which have led some scholars and practitioners – such as Adrian in the opening chapter quotation – to suggest it is organizational change, not stability, which is the norm of organizational life (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Burnes, 2017; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). In other words, as a response to these environmental disturbances, organizations have been forced to change to remain competitive and survive, making organizational change a prevalent and enduring feature of organizational life (Poole & Van de Ven, 2021).

On the other side of the paradox, despite the need for organizational change, research shows that planned change initiatives fail more often than they succeed, with some scholars citing failure rates of around 50-70% (Burnes, 2017; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). Poole and Van de Ven (2021) argued that organizational change continues to fail because existing research has predominantly focused on understanding *why* and *what* organizations change. They argued that less attention has been given to understanding *how* organizations change; in other words, there remains a gap in research seeking to understand the process of organizational change and the dynamics which regulate these change processes (cf. Pettigrew, 1987; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). The term dynamics (noun) can be broadly defined as "a force or factor that controls or influences a process of growth, change, interaction, or activity" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Similar to organizational change, the *process* of organizational change is defined as "an observed and/or experienced difference over time in some organizational characteristic, activity or idea" (Van de Ven, 2021, p. 437). Addressing the aforementioned gap by understanding the "how" of change

and the dynamics (referred to in this dissertation as regulating dynamics) that influence the success and failure rates of change processes is the focus of the present dissertation.

As explained in-depth later in this chapter, regulating dynamics can either enable or constrain a change process. In particular, existing scholars have noted the importance of four main regulating dynamics in enabling or constraining organizational change: capacity for change, organizational culture, organizational politics, and technology (e.g., Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988). Capacity for change refers to the competencies, capabilities, and resources used by an organization to navigate the change process (cf. Amis et al., 2004a; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Judge & Douglas, 2009; Meyer & Stensaker, 2006). Organizational culture is broadly defined as the modification of the values, beliefs, basic assumptions, attitudes, and behaviours of people in an organization (Daft, 2021). Organizational politics refers to "those activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices" (Pfeffer, 1992, p. 7). In the case of technology, this has been in the form of production processes or turning inputs into outputs (Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Slack & Parent, 2006); however, given the prevalence and importance of digital technology for organizations, the author argues that digital technology can also act as a regulating dynamic. Digital technology is defined as any device that uses "binary computational code" like smartphones, laptops, routers, tablets as well as the services associated with these devices such as Wi-Fi connectivity, social networking, and operating software systems (Hadlington & Scase, 2018, p. 4; O'Reilly et al., 2022).

Therefore, the purpose of the thesis was to explore the impact of regulating dynamics on the process of organizational change in NFPSOs. To address this purpose, four research

objectives were developed based on each regulating dynamic discussed above. Each objective corresponds with the four research articles presented in Chapters II, III, IV, and V:

1. To explore how capacity for change enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs.
2. To explore how organizational culture enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs.
3. To explore how organizational politics enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs.
4. To explore how digital technology enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs.

Overview of the Literature and Theoretical Background

In the following section, an overview of the three main schools of thought on organizational change is presented: The planned, emergent, and process approach. Following this, an overview of the research gaps regarding organizational change in sport is presented and the concept of regulating dynamics and their impacts on change processes are introduced.

Organizational Change: Planned, Emergent, and Process Approaches

The concept of organizational change has evolved (Heckmann et al., 2016). Early change scholars (e.g., Beckhard, 1969; Greiner, 1967; Kotter, 2007; Lewin, 1951; Lippitt et al., 1958) conceptualized organizational change through the lens of what is now known as the “planned” approach. Proponents of this perspective view change as something that can be predicted and planned from the outset and subsequently controlled by senior leaders in an organization. Thus, change is top-down, consciously implemented by the higher-level, senior executive staff and then directed to the lower-levels. Lower-level employees are seen as recipients of the planned changes and have very little, if any, input in the planning process (Alvesson & Sveningsson,

2016; Burnes, 2004, 2017). Change is usually seen as a linear process which occurs in distinct steps. These tenets led to the development of the popular *n*-step, prescribed models of change such as Lewin's three-step model, Kotter's eight-step model, and Greiner's six-step model (see Table 1.1; Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021).

Table 1.1

Examples N-Step Models of Change

Lewin (1951)	Kotter (2007)	Greiner (1967)
1. Unfreezing 2. Changing 3. Refreezing	1. Establishing sense of urgency 2. Forming a powerful guiding coalition 3. Creating a vision 4. Communicating the vision 5. Empowering others to act on the vision 6. Planning for and creating short-term wins 7. Consolidating improvements and producing still more change 8. Institutionalizing new approaches	1. Pressure and arousal 2. Intervention and reorientation 3. Diagnosis and recognition 4. Intervention and commitment 5. Experimentation and search 6. Reinforcement and acceptance

Although many of these models were popularized by industry consultants because of their simplicity, in practice, these planned approaches were less than successful (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016). Many of the change initiatives using a rigid planned approach failed to achieve their initial, intended changes (Burnes, 2017). As such, a different perspective emerged as a result of the failure rates of planned change initiatives – a perspective known as the unplanned or emergent approach (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016). Proponents of the emergent approach (e.g., Beer & Nohria, 2000; Falconer, 2002; Weick, 2000) acknowledge that

organizational change is not a linear phenomenon and is, therefore, messy and difficult to plan for ahead of time (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Burnes, 2012). As organizations are constantly adapting to shifting environmental circumstances, organizational change is viewed as continuous rather than a one-off event. Proponents of the emergent perspective also recognize the sociocultural and sociopolitical aspects of organizational change which further create uncertainty and unpredictability, supporting the claims that change cannot be planned (Burnes, 2017; Orlikowski & Yates, 2006). In addition, organizational change is not viewed as top-down but rather bottom-up, involving all members of the organization – in other words, not only senior leaders (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Burnes, 2012).

As a result of these two opposing perspectives, a third approach emerged: the process approach. Proponents of the process approach (e.g., Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Dawson, 2019; Pettigrew, 1985) critiqued the polarity of the planned and emergent approach and instead suggested each approach had merit:

> While planned and unplanned change may be viewed as opposite ends of a continuum, it is also useful to consider them together. ... Because of the complexity and uncertainty of most organization change initiatives, plans go awry, and alternative goals and directions emerge during the process. (Poole & Van de Ven, 2021, p. 6)

The process approach bridges the gap between the planned and emergent perspectives by acknowledging that managers may attempt to undertake planned change, but, that organizations are subjected to environmental forces; thus, "plans are always modified, reinterpreted and altered in unpredictable ways" (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016, p. 31). Likewise, Dawson (2019) explained how change initiatives rarely unfold as predicted and thus require flexibility in adapting to unexpected organizational realities. He further argues that "there is a need to

accommodate the non-linearity of change, [and] to incorporate the variety of different interpretations and experiences" (p. 3). Thus, process approaches acknowledge the sociocultural and sociopolitical as well as the diverse interpretations, ambiguities, and misunderstandings which can emerge during change. Table 1.2 summarizes each perspective's main tenets. Given how the process approach bridges the gap between the planned and emergent approaches, this dissertation is guided by a process approach to organizational change (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Burnes, 2017; Dawson, 2019).

Table 1.2

Summary of Planned, Emergent, and Process Perspectives to Change

Planned Perspective	Emergent Perspective	Process Perspective
• Change has a definitive start and end point • Change is predictable, controllable • Change is linear, planned from the outset through a sequence of pre-set stages or steps • Executing the plan will result in desired changes • Change occurs from the top-down, designed by senior leaders and directed to lower-level employees	• Change is unpredictable, uncontrollable, emergent, and therefore cannot be planned for at the outset • Change stems from the bottom-up rather than top-down • Change is continuous rather than a discrete process • Change focuses on continuously adapting to shifting environmental conditions	• Change is unpredictable • Change is both planned and emergent • Planned changes are shaped by unpredictable forces • Change must be flexible and adaptable • Change is non-linear • Change includes sociocultural and sociopolitical aspects

Note. Based on Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016), Burnes (2017), Dawson (2019), and Pettigrew (1985).

Organizational Change in Sport: Research Gaps

When examining research on organizational change in sport, there are some important gaps which this dissertation seeks to address. Echoing the argument made by Poole and Van de Ven (2021) in the broader management literature, existing research on organizational change in

sport has traditionally focused on understanding *what* organizations change and *why* they change (e.g., Amis et al., 2004b; Clausen et al., 2018; Kikulis et al., 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Legg et al., 2016; Ruoranen et al., 2018). One important gap is understanding *how* organizations change. Pettigrew (1987) and Van de Ven (2021) suggested that by understanding the change process, researchers begin to address the "how." Clausen et al. (2018) further discussed how there is generally a limited understanding of change processes in NPSOs. Although a review of the literature appears to show many studies examining the "change process", these studies are often informed by a planned approach to change, where change is conceptualized as having a distinct start and end point (e.g., Kikulis et al., 1995c; Legg et al., 2016), rather than a process approach. In addition, in many instances, the studies fail to define the concept of "change process" (e.g., Amis et al., 2004a, 2004b; Kikulis et al., 1992, 1995c; Legg et al., 2016; Skinner et al., 1999; Stevens & Slack, 1998).

One way to address the aforementioned "how" gap – or in other words, the change process – is through regulating dynamics. The concept of regulating dynamics central to this dissertation can be traced back to the work of Greenwood and Hinings[2] (1988, 1993, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988). In their book, *The Dynamics of Strategic Change*, the authors sought to examine radical strategic changes in organizational design (i.e., "patterns of structural arrangements and management systems", Hinings & Greenwood, 1988, p. 4). They developed a framework based the notion of archetypes, tracks, and dynamics of change as a means of mapping the change process related to organizational design changes. Archetypes are defined as "compositions of structures and systems given coherence or orientation by an underlying set of

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[2] Greenwood and Hinings' original concept was called *enabling* dynamics; however, given that these dynamics can both enable or constrain change, the term *regulating* was used in this dissertation as it is more inclusive of the enabling and constraining aspects of these dynamics.

ideas, values and beliefs" (Hinings & Greenwood, 1988, p. 4). Tracks are "the temporal association of an organization with one or more design archetypes" (Greenwood & Hinings, 1998, p. 294). Archetypes and tracks attempt to map the movement of organizations over time within or between different archetypes. In other words, they are a way of demonstrating design changes in organizations.

Although the concepts of archetypes and tracks is important as it provides the basis for much of the research on organizational (design) change in sport (e.g., Amis et al., 2002; Kikulis et al., 1992, 1995a, 1995b; Parent et al., 2021), it is their third concept – dynamics of change – which sets the foundation for this present dissertation. Hinings and Greenwood (1988) discussed how certain dynamics of change impact the ability for organizations to successfully change their design (i.e., move from one archetype to another). In other words, these dynamics regulate organizational (design) change by acting as either enablers (i.e., factors that can help change unfold) or constrainers of organizational change (i.e., factors which impede organizational change; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988). As Greenwood and Hinings posited, whether a regulating dynamic is an enabler or constrainer can impact the successful outcome of change. Greenwood and Hinings (1988, 1993, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988) identified five dynamics which enable or constrain change: (1) organizational capacity for change; (2) interpretive schemes, conceptualized through the concept of values; (3) interests; (4) power; and (5) situational constraints, conceptualized by contextual factors like technology.

As discussed later in this dissertation (see chapters II, III, IV, V) each dynamic Greenwood and Hinings identified alludes to broader phenomenon endemic to organizational life. With the exception of organizational capacity and (digital) technology, the concepts of values, power, and interests are sub-components or pieces to larger phenomena: namely,

organizational culture as it relates to values and organizational politics as it relates to interests and power. In other words, Greenwood and Hinings' research (1988, 1993, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988) alludes to how issues of (1) capacity for change, (2) organizational culture, (3) organizational politics, and (4) technology (including digital technology in today's context) could act as regulating dynamics, enabling or constraining organizational change processes. This supposition is supported by other research on organizational change which note issues of capacity for change (see Chapter II), organizational culture (see Chapter III), organizational politics (see Chapter IV), and digital technology (see Chapter V).

As such, addressing recent claims by Clausen et al. (2018) that "little is actually known about the factors and dynamics that influence [the] change process", this dissertation builds off Greenwood and Hinings' (1988) idea of regulating dynamics. To do so, it is important to step away from the original micro-level concepts (e.g., interests) and examine these dynamics from their more macro level – namely, to explore the impact of regulating dynamics (capacity for change, organizational culture, organizational politics, and digital technology) on the process of organizational change in NPSOs. Each dynamic comes with its own specific gaps related to organizational change research. The research and gaps are presented in Chapters II, III, IV, and V.

In addition to the "how" gap identified above, two additional critiques can be discussed regarding organizational change research in sport. First, studies of organizational change appear to focus on certain types of changes like design changes (Kikulis et al., 1995b) or policy changes (Legg et al., 2016). This is problematic because organizational change is diverse in terms of types, forms, and size and – in practice – organizations undergo multiple changes (e.g., governance, structure, people changes) simultaneously (Heckmann et al., 2016). It becomes

difficult to separate one change from another and, as Meyer and Stensaker (2006, p. 218) asserted, "We need to focus on change not as isolated events, but as a series of interrelated changes." As such, there is a need to expand the scope of research to examine organizational change more holistically rather than narrowly, reflecting the realities of organizational life.

Second, scholars (e.g., Feddersen, Morris, Storm, et al., 2021; Thompson & Parent, 2021) have criticized existing studies on organizational change for understanding this phenomenon from the perspective of senior leaders in organizations. For example, the research on organizational design change above obtained part of their data from interviews with senior leaders (e.g., Kikulis et al., 1995c). The focus on senior leaders inherently implies a planned approach to change and neglects to account for other stakeholders involved in the change process. Existing research has highlighted that, in practice, there are a variety of stakeholders involved in the change process (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021). While senior leaders may conceptualize the idea for change, lower-level staff and other stakeholders are involved in implementing and navigating the process. Thus, as Dawson (2019) noted, there is a need to incorporate stakeholders' different experiences related to organizational change. In sport, scholars have begun to identify this gap and address it by incorporating various stakeholder perspectives when examining organizational change. For instance, Welty Peachey and Bruening (2011) examined change in an athletic department from the perspective of employees at "all levels in the department." Similarly, Thompson and Parent (2021) examined change in an NPSO from the perspective of internal and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholder experiences included those from the Board of Directors and staff at the lower, middle, and senior levels while external stakeholders included member organizations, athletes, and partners. Thus, this dissertation takes the lead of Welty Peachey and Bruening (2011) and Thompson and Parent

(2021) and includes the perspective of stakeholders at different managerial (i.e., senior, middle, and lower level) and governance (i.e., Board members) levels.

Epistemology, Methodology, and Methods

Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge, is "concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate" (Maynard, 1994, p. 10). The present dissertation is guided by a constructivist epistemology. Constructivists are informed by a relativist ontology which sees reality, and therefore knowledge, as dependent on human practices (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thus, knowledge does not "emerge" or is "discovered" but rather "created" (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Constructivists reject the notion of singular, objective "truths", instead suggesting that each person's "way of making sense of the world is as valid and worthy of respect as any other" (Crotty, 1998, p. 58).

The epistemology guiding a research project informs the selection of the methodology and methods. A methodology refers to "the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods" while the methods are the specific techniques or procedures used to gather and analyze the research data (Crotty, 1998, p. 3; Maynard, 1994). As discussed in Chapters II, III, IV, and V, a collective case study methodology (Stake, 1995) was employed with five Canadian national sport organizations[3] (NSOs). There are two common perspectives to case study research, Stake (1995) and Yin (1994, 2018), each rooted in different epistemological assumptions. Stake's (1995) perspective was most appropriate for this dissertation as it is rooted in a relativist ontology, and thus, aligns with the constructivist

[3] National sport organizations are sometimes referred to as national sport federations but, for consistency purposes, the former is used in this dissertation.

epistemology guiding this research. Through this relativist ontology, Stake's (1995, pp. xi-xii) approach is a qualitative mode of inquiry rather than the quantitative approaches which "emphasize a battery of measurements of the case, [and] a collection of descriptive variables." In contrast, Yin's (1994, 2018) perspective is rooted in a realist ontology and objectivist epistemology which is demonstrated when he discusses concepts such as replication; thus, Yin's (1994, 2018) perspective is more focused on quantitative modes of inquiry. Given the dissertation's epistemological stance and the qualitative data collection methods and analysis used, Stake's perspective was most appropriate.

Finally, following ethics approval, an information letter (see Appendix A) and consent form (see Appendix B) was sent via email to participants for recruitment. The research data consisted of semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C for the interview guide) and documents. These methods are appropriate since the purpose of interviews is to gain insights into a phenomenon – in this case, organizational change in NPSOs – through the experiences and perceptions of individuals experiencing said phenomenon (Smith & Sparkes, 2016; Stake, 1995). Data were analyzed following Braun and Clarke's (2022) thematic analysis. These methods are described in detail in Chapters II, III, IV, and V.

Dissertation Outline

This dissertation follows an article-based format and includes four articles. The abstract for each article is provided at the end of this chapter. Following the abstracts, the remainder of the dissertation includes five chapters. Chapters II, III, IV, and V address each research objective: Chapter II focuses on capacity for change; Chapter III on organizational culture; Chapter IV on organizational politics; and Chapter V on digital technology. Chapter VI provides

the dissertation's discussion, answering the research purpose, as well as the conclusion, outlining the contributions, limitations, and future directions.

Chapter II Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore how capacity for change enables or constrains organizational change in NSOs. A case study was conducted with five Canadian NSOs undergoing change. Data were collected via 49 semi-structured interviews with staff and Board members as well as 151 documents, and analyzed thematically. Results showed that financial, human resources, temporal, and relationship and network capacity were critical in helping NSOs undergo organizational change, while planning, development, and research capacity as well as infrastructure and process capacity were identified as comparatively less important. Results also demonstrated how capacity for change is a multi-dimensional concept manifesting at the system, organizational, and individual levels. This study contributes to existing research by extending existing conceptualizations of capacity for change beyond human resources to other sources (e.g., financial, temporal), resulting in the development of a multi-dimensional framework for capacity for change in NSOs.

Chapter III Abstract

The study explored how organizational culture enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs. Five Canadian NSOs participated in a collective case study. Forty-nine semi-structured interviews with NSO staff and Board members and 151 documents were collected and analyzed thematically. The results show that organizational culture can both enable and constrain organizational change in NSOs. Initially, NSOs' existing divisive cultures acted as a barrier to organizational change. Understanding this barrier, NSOs engaged in culture change as a means of enabling broader organizational changes (e.g., governance change). Thus, organizational

culture became an enabler rather than a barrier to change. The study contributes to existing understandings of organizational culture and change, beyond the examination of culture change. In doing so, it highlights not only the dual role of organizational culture during change processes originally stipulated, but also the dynamic nature of organizational culture during change, where culture takes on different roles during the change process.

Chapter IV Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore how organizational politics enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs. Morgan's (2006) framework was used to understand politics and change. A case study of five Canadian NSOs was built from semi-structured interviews with staff and Board members (n=49) as well as documents (n=151). Data were then analyzed thematically. Results demonstrated how organizational politics can be both an enabler and a constrainer to organizational change. Moreover, stakeholder groups (e.g., Board member, staff, and NSO members) had diverging interests which led to conflicts that were resolved by distinct sources of power. The study demonstrates how organizational politics – through issues of interests, conflict, and power – can shape organizational change processes by either enabling or constraining change. Practically, the study highlights how different stakeholders have distinct sources of power which they can use to manage change.

Chapter V Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore how digital technology enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs, and included two research questions: (1) How are NPSOs integrating digital technology in their organizations?; and (2) How does digital technology enable or constrain organizational change in NPSOs? Five Canadian NSOs undergoing organizational change participated in the study. Data were collected from 49 semi-structured

interviews and 151 documents. Resulted indicated that NPSOs used a variety of digital technologies (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Office 365, G Suite, Dropbox, Email, Samepage) as they allowed them to track athlete information and communicate with stakeholders across the country. Digital technology facilitated NPSOs' changes as it allowed them to communicate and engage stakeholders more frequently. The study extends existing understanding of digital technology changes in NPSOs beyond social media as it highlights the different technologies NPSOs are using to operate their organizations.

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Chapter II: Organizational Change in NSOs: Exploring Capacity for Change

Thompson, A. & Parent, M. M. (In preparation). Organizational change in NSOs: Exploring capacity for change. *Journal of Sport Management*.

Introduction

Organizational change, or the process by which organizational characteristics, activities, or ideas are altered (cf. Van de Ven, 2021), is critical for today's organizations (Carnall, 2018; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). The turbulent and unpredictable environment which organizations must navigate has resulted in the need to make change an ongoing aspect of organizational life (Judge, 2011). To survive in this unpredictable environment, organizations must learn to better manage change (Heckmann et al., 2016).

Despite its criticality for today's organizations, the failure rate of organizational change remains high, with some citing more than half of change initiatives fail (Burnes, 2017). This high failure rate suggests the lack of useful frameworks available for organizations attempting to implement and manage change (Heckmann et al., 2016). For example, scholars such as Judge (2011) and Heckmann et al. (2016) have attributed this failure rate to organizations' lack of capacity for change. Capacity for change (also referred to as capacity for action) – or the competencies, capabilities, and resources used by an organization to navigate the change process (cf. Amis et al., 2004; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Judge & Douglas, 2009; Meyer & Stensaker, 2006) – has the potential to enable or constrain organizational change outcomes (Heckmann et al., 2016).

Existing conceptualizations of capacity for change focus heavily on the capacity of human resources, especially senior leaders (e.g., Amis et al., 2004; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Heckmann et al., 2016; Judge & Douglas, 2009). Although the importance of leaders in organizational change is not disputed, one challenge with this leader-focused conceptualization is that senior leaders may not be present during some or most of the change process (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021). This leadership challenge is especially prevalent in NPSOs, such as

NSOs that have seen a significant turnover in senior leadership positions, including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO; or equivalent) positions and Board member positions (e.g., Parent et al., 2019). As such, when undergoing change, NSOs may not be able to rely on their leaders as a source of capacity for change; it becomes necessary to explore whether or not these organizations leverage other sources of capacity to help them enable their changes. Therefore, given the potential enabling and constraining impact of capacity for change on the success of organizational change (Heckmann et al., 2016), the purpose of this study was to explore how capacity for change enables or constrains organizational change in NSOs.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

As discussed in the opening section of this paper, organizational change is viewed as a *process* which differs from planned and emergent perspectives. From a planned perspective, change is a one-off event that can be planned for and managed from the top down in a linear and predictable way (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016). From an emergent perspective, change is bottom-up and continuous and, therefore, cannot be predicted and planned for from the outset (Burnes, 2017; Orlikowski & Yates, 2006). In contrast, a process view takes a more unifying stance: Although organizations can initiate more formal, planned change interventions, change is not linear; organizations are equally subjected to shifts in the environment which require them to adapt and modify their initial plans (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016).

In addition, organizations undergo various types of changes, such as in their (a) structures, systems, and strategy, (b) people, (c) culture, (d) products, and (e) technology (cf. Daft, 2021; McCann, 1991). Changes in these areas are not mutually exclusive; changes in one area can often lead to changes in another area (Daft, 2021). Systems, structures, and strategy change involve modifying aspects of an organization's administrative domain (i.e., its

supervision and management) and include changes in "organization structure, strategic management, policies, reward systems, labour relations, coordination devices, management information and control systems, and accounting and budgeting systems" (Daft, 2021, p. 483). People change refers to the modification of human resources personnel (e.g., staff, volunteers) as well as their skills, abilities, and commitments. Culture change generally refers to modification of the beliefs, values, basic assumptions, attitudes, and behaviours of people in an organization (Daft, 2021). Product changes include adding, modifying, or removing existing goods or services in an organization's portfolio. Technology change refers to the changes in production processes, including knowledge and skill bases, workflows and methods, and equipment which increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization (Daft, 2021; McCann, 1991; Slack & Parent, 2006). In contemporary organizations, technology change also includes digital technology.

Capacity for change focuses on multiple types of changes implemented in parallel or sequentially in organizations over time (Heckmann et al., 2016). Having the capacity to change allows organizations to "stay competitive in volatile and unpredictable business environments" (Heckmann et al., 2016, p. 779). Organizations can better *react* to unpredictable environmental jolts requiring them to change (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) and *proactively* navigate change on an ongoing basis (Heckmann et al., 2016).

Various conceptualizations of capacity for change exist (Heckmann et al., 2016). Table 2.1 provides an overview of different studies and their frameworks for understanding capacity for change. For example, Judge and Douglas' (2009) framework presents eight dimensions of organizational capacity for change: (1) trustworthy leadership, (2) trusting followers, (3) capable champions, (4) involved mid-management, (5) innovative culture, (6) accountable culture, (7) effective communication, and (8) systems thinking. Likewise, Amis et al. (2004) and Greenwood

and Hinings (1996) argued how, for an organization to have capacity for change, it must meet three criteria: (1) the organization must understand where they want to go and must be able to generate commitment towards that goal; (2) leaders in the organization must have the technical skills and competencies to get to where they want to go and operate in the new state; and (3) they must have the ability to manage that process. Thus, capacity for change can be broken down into behavioural and technical components: leaders must mobilize commitment to change by creating a clear vision and must have the technical skills and expertise to successfully transition the organization to its new state (Amis et al., 2004).

Table 2.1

Selected Capacity for Change Frameworks

Approaches	Focus	Details
Judge and Douglas (2009); Judge (2011); Used by Heckmann et al. (2016) and Lei et al. (2019)	Human resources with some infrastructure dimensions	• Trustworthy leadership: The extent senior leaders earn the rest of the organization's trust and show how the organization will meet its goals. • Trusting followers: The extent senior leaders' proposed changes are willingly followed by non-senior leaders. • Capable champions: The extent capable change leaders are identified, developed, and retained. • Involved mid-management: The extent middle managers effectively link senior leaders to the rest of the organization. • Innovative culture: The extent leaders establish a culture emphasizing and encourage innovation. • Accountable culture: The extent leaders establish a culture that stewards resources and meet prescribed deadlines. • Effective communication: The extent leaders communicate the changes vertically, horizontally, and with stakeholders. • Systems thinking: The extent leaders focus on the root causes of change and acknowledge the organizations' internal and external interdependencies.

Greenwood and Hinings (1996); Used by Amis et al. (2004)	Human resources with a particular focus on leadership	• The extent leaders have a vision for the change. • The extent leaders have the technical skills and competencies to get to where they want to go and operate in the new state. • The extent leaders can manage the change process.
Castañeda et al. (2012)	Human resources with some general resources	• Relational capacity: The extent stakeholders are involved in change. • Collective efficacy: The extent there is a collective belief that the organization can engage in and accomplish change. • Leadership: The extent leaders and influential community members are supportive of the changes and the extent leadership is effective. • Resources: The extent resources are available to support an organization's change efforts. Resources included: (a) general resources, such as time and space; (b) organizational resources, like office, staffing, training, equipment, or internet; (c) organizational technological resources; (d) financial resources; and (e) information and data resources. • Skills and knowledge: The extent the necessary skills are held by stakeholders including adaptability, evaluation, technical, research and data dissemination, cultural competency, and training were noted as important in facilitating change.
Drummond et al. (2017)	Human resources	• The extent organizations use external resources such as consultants and contractors. • The extent organizations create communication channels which facilitate change. These channels allow those implementing change to communicate the changes to stakeholders. • The extent organizations' build teams to lead the changes.
Bennebroek Gravenhorst et al. (2003)	Human resource with organizational dimensions	• The extent aspects of an organization and aspects of a change process contribute to or hinder change. Organizational aspects include (1) the goals and strategy of the organization, (2) structure, (3) culture, (4) technology, (5) job characteristics, and (6) power relations. Change process aspects include: (1) goals and strategy of the change, (2) its technological aspects, (3)

		tensions within and between groups in the organization, (4) the timing of the process, (5) information supply, (6) generation of support for the change, (7) the role of change managers, (8) the role of line managers, (9) expected outcome, and (10) support for change.
Detert and Pollock (2008)	Human resources with some general resources	• The effectiveness of leaders. • Having time, resources, and training.

As Table 2.1 demonstrates, existing conceptualizations of capacity for change are heavily focused on human resources, especially senior leaders. Amis et al. (2004, p. 163) highlighted this idea when they argued that “the capacity of the organization to enter into and complete a radical transformation will be largely determined by the competencies and capabilities that the organization’s elite can bring to bear.” Similarly, most dimensions in Judge and Douglas’ (2009) framework focus on human resources in some form, with particular attention given to those at the middle and senior levels. Although the importance of leaders in enabling successful organizational change outcomes is undeniable, the existing conceptualization of capacity for change as predominantly leader-centric is problematic. Change is an unpredictable process where senior leaders or “elites” may not be present for some or all of the change process, leaving others responsible for leading change (e.g., middle-level and lower-level staff; Thompson & Parent, 2021). This issue is especially prevalent for NSOs, that have experienced frequent personnel changes in the past few years (Parent et al., 2021). Further, not only is depending too heavily on senior leaders for capacity for change problematic, the general focus on human resources is equally troublesome since organizational change can cause significant turnover in human resource personnel at all levels (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021).

Therefore, given the importance of capacity as a driving force for successful change, it becomes imperative to look beyond leadership and other human resource aspects to other sources of capacity for change. One way to achieve this is by going outside of the organizational change literature (and thus the capacity for change research) to the organizational capacity literature. To address the gaps mentioned above and the research purpose, Hall et al.'s (2003) framework was employed, which identified five sources of organizational capacity: (1) financial capacity; (2) human resources capacity; (3) relationship and network capacity; (4) infrastructure and process capacity; and (5) planning, development, and research capacity (Hall et al., 2003). Table 2.2 provides the definitions of each source of capacity adapted to the current study's context of organizational change.

Although Hall et al.'s (2003) framework is concerned with organizational capacity or "the ability of an organization to draw on various assets and resources to achieve its mandate and objectives" (Doherty et al., 2014, p. 125S) rather than capacity for change, which focuses on the competencies, capabilities, and resources used by an organization to navigate organizational change processes (cf. Amis et al., 2004; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Judge & Douglas, 2009; Meyer & Stensaker, 2006). The framework was developed specifically for non-profit organizations and is therefore useful for the current study's context. In addition, a comparison of the organizational capacity and capacity for change definitions highlights the similarities between the concepts, especially if one considers an organization's objective to engage in organizational change. Thus, in addition to the capacity for change literature presented at the beginning of this section, to help explain some of the research findings, the authors draw on the existing research on organizational capacity in NPSOs which has used Hall et al.'s framework

(e.g., Doherty & Cuskelly, 2020; Millar & Doherty, 2016; Misener & Doherty, 2009, 2013, 2014).

Table 2.2

Sources of Capacity for Change

Source	Adapted Definition
Financial	"The ability to develop and deploy financial capital (i.e., the revenues, expenses, assets, and liabilities of the organization)" to engage in organizational change.
Human Resources	"The ability to deploy human capital (i.e., paid staff and volunteers) within the organization, and the competencies, knowledge, attitudes, motivation, and behaviours of these people" to engage in organizational change.
Relationship and Network	"The ability to draw on relationships with clients, members, funders, partners, government, the media, corporations, volunteers, and the public" to engage in organizational change.
Infrastructure and Process	"The ability to deploy or rely on infrastructure, processes and culture, products related to internal structure or day-to-day operations (e.g., databases, manuals, policies and procedures), information technology, and intellectual property" to engage in organizational change.
Planning, Development, and Research	"The ability to develop and draw on organizational strategic plans, program plans and designs (including fundraising and volunteer management), policies, and proposals" to engage in organizational change.

Note. From Hall et al. (2003, pp. 5-6)

Methodology

A collective case study methodology (Stake, 1995) with five Canadian NSOs undergoing organizational change was developed. The following section presents the research context and sampling, the data collection and analysis methods, and the steps taken to enhance the study's quality.

Research Context and Sampling

The Canadian amateur sport system operates as a federated model (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2020) composed of three levels: national, provincial/territorial, and community/local levels. NSOs are at the national level and are responsible for governing all aspects of their sport in the country. Governing the sport includes: managing their sport's high-performance program, including its national teams; developing and implementing national-level initiatives to promote the sport; sanctioning national-level competitions and events; proposing bids to host international competitions; and providing professional development for coaches and officials (Government of Canada, 2021). NSOs obtain most of their funding through public sources (e.g., federal grants) as well as from commercial sources (e.g., sponsorship) and membership fees (Parent et al., 2021). In Canada, NSOs are legislated by a law which governs their internal affairs called the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act (NFP Act; Government of Canada, 2018). The NFP Act outlines specific requirements for NSOs including the content of their bylaws, their funding reporting requirements, and their Board election process (Government of Canada, 2018; Parent et al., 2021).

The study sample followed a purposeful and convenience sampling strategy (Andrew et al., 2011; Marshall, 1996). The selection criteria included (a) an NSO located in Canada, and (b) that self-identified as having recently gone through one or more types of changes described in the above literature review (e.g., structure, systems, people, culture, products). In addition, because organizational change can take several years to materialize (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021), the authors wanted to discuss change with participants retrospectively (accounting for the series of events influencing its development) and as it unfolded (see Thompson, 2018). Thus, the change timing was delimited to approximately the past five years. This criterion also allowed changes which started pre-pandemic and during the pandemic to be included.

The study's ethics certificate does not permit the identification of the specific NSOs or research participants in the sample. As such, specific contextual information cannot be provided per case; however, NSOs in the sample were Sport Canada funded and included both winter (*n*=2) and summer (*n*=3) sports, as well as Olympic (*n*=4) and non-Olympic (*n*=1) sports. NSOs ranged from 12 to 27 total personnel, with a range of four to 16 staff members and seven to 11 Board members. Three NSOs were akin to Parent et al.'s (2021) Board-led archetype, one to the Executive-led archetype, and one to the Professional archetype. NSO and individual participant names were replaced with pseudonyms to protect their anonymity.

Data Collection

Data were gathered from 49 semi-structured interviews with staff and Board members of each NSO. Participants were recruited by the first author via email. Interviews ranged from 41 to 132 minutes in length (average of 62 minutes) and were conducted until theoretical saturation was reached (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Legg et al., 2016). The interview guide was pilot tested with an individual who had previously worked in NSOs (Smith & Sparkes, 2016). Interview questions were developed based on the literature and theoretical framework; they focused on the participants' background (e.g., *How long have you been with this organization?*), the changes undergone (e.g., *What types of changes have occurred in the organization in the past few years?*), and each source of capacity for change (e.g., *How did your organization's financial resources [assets, revenues, expenses] impact its ability to change?*).

In addition to interviews, documents were gathered from the NSOs' websites or the main contact person for the NSO (e.g., the CEO) and included NSOs' bylaws, strategic plans, annual reports, policies, media releases, website screenshots, and other news sources relevant to the study. A total of 151 documents were collected with an average of 30 documents per case (see

Appendix D). The majority of documents were collected once each NSO agreed to participate in the study. These documents were critical in helping the researchers understand the research contexts and the nature of the specific changes undergone (e.g., bylaw changes, branding changes). In addition, documents, such as news reports and other internal documents not previously gathered, were also collected throughout the interviews if they were pertinent to the interview discussions; these documents provided support to what participants were discussing as a means of data source triangulation (Braun & Clarke, 2013; see research quality discussion below).

Data Analysis

Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were sent back to participants for member-checking to enhance data credibility (Burke, 2016). Data were analyzed following Braun and Clarke’s (2022) thematic analysis which consists of six iterative phases: (1) data familiarization; (2) data coding; (3) initial theme generation; (4) theme development and review; (5) theme refining, defining, and naming; and (6) writing up the themes. First, transcripts, notes taken during the interviews, and documents were imported into NVivo where the first author read and re-read the data to develop a deeper understanding of the content and made note of interesting and potentially relevant passages. Second, the first author coded segments of the data (i.e., interviews and documents) deductively (e.g., financial capacity for change) and inductively (e.g., temporal capacity for change) as well as latent and semantically. Third, initial candidate themes were generated from the codes by the first author by identifying patterns across the dataset. Fourth, the first author reviewed the overall fit of each theme across the dataset and within the original codes. Fifth, a short description or narrative of each theme was created, and theme names were developed. Sixth, the theme descriptions were expanded on in

more detail and are presented in the results section below. Quotations are used to provide evidence to the analytic claims made in the results and were selected based on how they most compellingly and vividly illustrate the analytic narrative (Braun & Clarke, 2022). In addition, as the analytical phases demonstrate above, both interviews and documents were integrated in the analysis process. Documents were especially helpful in providing support to what interviewees were discussing. For instance, as discussed in the findings below, when research participants discussed the use of surveys (i.e., planning, research, and development capacity), one participant shared a document containing the research report outlining the findings from the survey. In the analysis phase two, this was coded under planning, research, and development capacity along with the relevant passages from the interviews.

Research Quality

Several steps were implemented to help foster research quality. In addition to the member-checking completed with individual participants mentioned above, NSOs (through their main contact person) were given a preliminary report of the research findings and provided the opportunity to give feedback if desired. Two NSOs responded to this opportunity: both provided positive feedback (i.e., indicated the results represented their NSO's experience with change and capacity), with one NSO further emphasizing the temporal capacity issues which impacted their ability to change (see results for temporal capacity on p. 61). Further, weekly meetings occurred between the authors and their lab colleagues, which allowed them to critically reflect on the research process and analysis, akin to peer debriefing (Burke, 2016). Last, data source triangulation was employed through the interviews and documents. Unlike post-positivist perspectives where triangulation is used to increase the "accuracy" of the analysis as a means of finding the single "truth," this study employed data source triangulation as a means of further

"strengthening analytic claims, and of getting a richer or fuller story" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 286).

Results

Overall, financial, human resources, and relationship and network capacity were critical to help NSOs undergo organizational change. Results showed that planning, development, and research capacity and infrastructure and process capacity were comparatively less important in this regard. One source of capacity for change participants discussed as prevalent was time or temporal capacity. These six sources of capacity for change are further described next. As discussed later in this article (see the Discussion section), although these sources are not mutually independent, each source is presented individually for clarity purposes.

Financial Capacity for Change

Participants noted how financial constraints were a barrier for NSOs implementing change. A lack of financial resources prevented NSOs from implementing specific change initiatives. As Hayden (NSO 1, staff member) noted: "Well, you either have the money to do it or not, right?" These financial constraints were systemic in nature with participants noting the funding decline across Canadian NSOs in past decade. In addition to the overall decrease in funding, Tony (NSO 4, Board member) described how financial resources NSOs received from funding bodies such as Sport Canada, the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC), and Own the Podium (OTP) were usually targeted to pre-determined areas such as staff salaries and high-performance programming, which prevented NSOs from using these funds for specific changes they wished to engage in:

> Our funding is pretty restricted in terms of where it comes from, and how we can spend it. Right? Sport Canada gives us money for certain things, Own the Podium gives us

> money for certain things. By the time we get through that, you're like "there's not a whole lot left."

Despite these targeted funds, in recent years, funding bodies have provided financial support to NSOs seeking to implement specific change projects. In particular, NSOs have been able to apply for and leverage grants to make specific changes. For example, as Hayden described, Sport Canada provided critical funding for safe sport initiatives, which NSOs have used:

> So, some of the changes that we've made in the last two years around safe sport would not have been possible without Sport Canada safe sport funding. It's that simple. Right? So, it's not that we wouldn't have been willing and wanting to do those changes ... we just simply didn't have the capacity, the finances, the resources, to do it.

In addition to safe sport initiatives, other examples included NSOs using grants to fund their governance changes, as Ricky (NSO 4, staff member) described:

> So, back in 2016, the COC funded us to do a governance review. ... We got a grant of $36,000 for the governance piece. We spent about $25,000 on the governance change and then we got permission to spend the extra $10,000 on a human resources review, basically, which was awesome money well spent as well and tied in beautifully with that governance piece. Because now that you have a new governance model, what does that mean to your org [organizational] chart? So, that was $25,000 on governance, [and] $10,000 on HR [human resources].

Finally, many Canadian NSOs also leveraged the COC's NSF Enhancement Initiative to engage in rebranding changes (see Krashinsky, 2018). This was also the case for the NSOs in this study: "[The] whole branding exercise was funded by the Canadian Olympic Committee. So,

you know, they provided the funds to be able to do those changes" (Riley, NSO 4, Board member). NSOs saw these types of grants as "lifelines" and directly attributed them to their ability to engage in change, as Liam (NSO 5, staff member) noted when asked about whether the rebranding was funded by the COC:

> Yeah, which is a lifeline, right? If you don't have that [funding], you don't do it. So, that's a perfect example. If one of your sport partners provides funding to help you accomplish something, then you can do it. If they don't, you just simply don't do it.

Human Resources Capacity for Change

When it comes to implementing organizational change, participants expressed the importance of both the *number* of people available in the NSO to carry out change and the importance of their *skills*, *knowledge*, *past experience*, and *personality*, a sentiment Reagan (NSO 2, staff member) described when asked whether capacity impacted their NSO's ability to change:

> I would say, yes, just because of the manpower. Like, you know, there's only so many people within the organization [who] can make the change as well. I think it's more having enough people but also having the right people. Like our President does so much work. Like I can't even believe how much work [they do]. It's insane. But, you know, there are only so many hours in the day and there are only so many people.

Many respondents highlighted the challenges associated with implementing change when dealing with a lack of human resources:

> [NSOs], with rare exceptions, are so small. So, you're trying to do all of this stuff with less than a dozen people. So capacity is for sure a big issue. And most people in the non-

> profit sector and in the sporting world, in particular, have no experience with most of these kinds of change. (Avery, NSO 5, Board member)

As Avery alluded to, a lack of human resources is especially apparent in smaller NSOs that have few staff members but are equally expected to deliver on the same requirements outlined by funding partners. Jules (NSO 3, staff member) also supported this statement:

> I think the inherent issue is that, anytime you have a smaller sport, you have a smaller staff, but yet the expectation is to live up to kind of the same level of deliverables in a lot of ways as a big sport.

Skills, knowledge, past experience, and personality were also important in enabling change. Skills included governance and policy skills as well as branding skills to facilitate those particular changes respectively:

> I mean, you have to have people who know what they're doing in the area where you're trying to make a change. So, I think the first step in that is realizing that there's a technical competency, too, whether it's governance, or whether it's the brand development or conducting a consultation process. A person in the staff or CEO [position] thinking they can just do it all themselves, when they really don't know what they're doing in that area? That is damaging and also frustrating to watch. (Charlie, NSO 4, Board member)

Several participants also discussed skills related to change management that were helpful, including the ability to listen, to be patient, and to deal with various personalities:

> I don't want to say communication because it's such a broad term. I think the ability to listen, probably more than anything, I would say that that would be the key skill. And listen, you know, that maybe embodies a little bit of that patience and communication

> that we talked about earlier, but just to listen for understanding purposes. (Ryan, NSO 2, staff member)

Previous experience with the specific changes the NSO was about to make, such as moving from an operational Board to a governance Board, enabled the changes to occur as this person could take the lessons learned from previous experiences and apply them to this case:

> There was a new CEO who had come in and had experience working with governance Boards. And so, they were more aware of the different kinds of varieties of Boards that exist, kind of in the [non-profit] world. [Name of NSO] had always had a Board that was almost like a federated model. And so, [the CEO] was looking for people who had experience and knew that I did. So, it was actually the CEO who helped the Board understand what a governance model is and start moving in that direction. (Avery, NSO 5, Board member)

Respondents also noted knowledge of the sport enabled change to occur. This knowledge was often garnered through Board members with long-standing experience in the organization, which allowed new members from outside of the sport to look to them for sport-specific history and knowledge: "The President offers a great depth and history, and it's often good to pick [their] brain and say, 'Well, what have you seen in the past, and why is it like this? And why can we change it, and has it been tried before?'" (Bonnie, NSO 5, Board member)

Participants identified the importance of the personality and attitude of those involved in implementing change. For instance, participants like Reese (NSO 5, Board member) and Sawyer (NSO 4, staff member) attributed the success of the change process to their senior leaders' personalities, which included being "goal-oriented," "determined to get stuff done," and "not afraid to hold [their] ground." Participants also noted how those people engaged in change, such

as staff and Board members as well as NSO members (e.g., P/TSOs), must have a positive attitude towards change including having an "open mindset" (Skylar, NSO 3, staff member) and a willingness to engage in change, as described in the following quotation:

> First of all, there has to be a willingness to change. I think that's something you bring to the table. You can't – I've always said, you can't teach motivation. So, you want people to be motivated to want to change, to want to be able to do things, but you also have to have people [who] want to bring, I don't know how to say this, they want to bring in knowledge and an interest in changing and bring their own ideas to the table as well so that you have everybody kind of rowing in the same direction. I think that's important. (Peyton, NSO 3, staff member)

Where there was an expertise gap or when additional people were needed for specific changes, NSOs relied heavily on consultants and contractors. For example, some NSOs hired consultants to assist them with their governance changes:

> We have more recently been doing work with a company in [Location] called [Name of organization], and they really focus on Board governance and the Carver model. So we had an in-person session with [Name of consultant], that was excellent, around some of that, and especially around some areas where we're still a bit weak like what the reporting structure should be, how we do the monitoring of all of our targets under our strategic plan and our annual business plan. (Charlie, NSO 4, Board member)

In addition to the skills, knowledge, and experience consultants and contractors bring, having a greater number of people alleviated the high workload on existing staff and Board members, thereby indirectly enabling the implementation of new change initiatives:

> If we look at capacity employee wise and workload, with the hiring of more people, we've been able to implement a lot more change. ... Instead of having a bunch of generalized people doing 10 things adequately, we're able to have more specialized people doing three things well. So, with higher capacity of employees, we are able to implement more change because we are able to get more stuff done as opposed to overloading one person with everything. (Leonard, NSO 5, staff member)

In some cases, NSOs also relied on their Board members to alleviate staff members' workload. Board members can also be leveraged for their expertise in specific areas related to the change (e.g., branding, finance):

> Our Board is not an operational Board at all, which is great. At the same time, if I needed help from somebody, like we have some very high-profile, extremely smart people on our Board, and if you need something, you just go to them. (Sam, NSO 2, staff member)

NSOs also used interns to supplement human resource personnel gaps:

> As we've kind of evolved over the past couple years, I think we now know the options for us to get interns for the summer to kind of help out in the places that we need to get finished and need the extra help. So, I think like those spots have been identified and now ... we have the options to get these interns to kind of help out with some of the work. (Parker, NSO 1, staff member)

Several participants also discussed the human resources capacity issues in the system, with some of their members (e.g., P/TSOs) having a plethora of paid staff while others relying solely on volunteers. The lack of human resource capacity at the member level can be a barrier for the NSO trying to implement change initiatives as some initiatives, such as new programming or system-wide rebranding strategies, rely on P/TSO collaboration:

> We haven't had enough capacity to really drive the change. And it may be that the lack of capacity is also more felt through the P/TSOs, in particular, the smaller P/TSOs. ... Most of this is volunteer driven. Volunteers are maxed out and not able to do this and many of the P/TSOs are small and might only have a few clubs. And so, their volunteer base, their financial base, is a challenge. (Andy, NSO 4, Board member)

Relationship and Network Capacity for Change

Throughout their changes, NSOs relied heavily on their relationships with Sport Canada, the COC, OTP, sponsors, as well as other NSOs and organizations for both monetary and non-monetary resources. As discussed above, NSOs relied on Sport Canada, the COC, and OTP for financial resources through grants to engage in specific changes (e.g., governance, branding changes). However, these organizations were also important for non-monetary resources such as material and knowledge-based resources:

> As much as there was also funding provided for those initiatives, it was the resources and data that we were able to access without cost, or at very little cost, that allowed us to move forward more quickly than we might have been able to do otherwise. (Taylor, NSO 1, Board member)

Several participants noted the value of the COC in connecting their organization with consultants and other NSOs:

> So [Name of employee] who works at COC ... was responsible ... for the NSF enhancement [initiative]. Last year at our AGM… I said [to the COC employee], "We need a speaker on communication, any ideas?" [They] didn't just reply back and say, "Yeah, I've used this guy, or this guy was good", [they] went out to the network and said, "I got an NSO who's looking for X. Who's got ideas?" And then [they] sent me a list of

> seven or eight names with feedback. Like "this sport used them, and this is what they liked about it." I do that with [them] all the time – not all the time – but anytime I'm like, "How do I find a consultant in this?" [Name of employee] is such an awesome resource. (Ricky, NSO 4, staff member)

In the context of the Canadian amateur sport system, it is important to note this particular relationship is limited to NSOs who's sport partakes in the Olympic Games. Thus, non-Olympic sport NSOs do not have a direct relationship with the COC, and therefore, cannot reap the networking benefits.

In addition to Sport Canada, the COC, and OTP, NSOs also relied on their relationships with other NSOs and their respective international sport federations (IFs). Through these relationships, NSOs gained knowledge of best practices related to the changes they were seeking to implement. For instance, as Riley (NSO 4, Board member) described, NSOs relied on other NSOs that had undergone changes and sought to learn from these organizations' best practices:

> We worked with [Name of NSO]. And part of the reason ... we wanted to talk to them was, you know ... "you made a really drastic change, how did you do that and what has been the result of that and what were the challenges in doing it so that we can benefit from that learning?" And it was great. Like it was really good to have a good relationship with another [NSO] that has lived some of the change.

Infrastructure and Process Capacity

Compared to the first three capacity sources, infrastructure and process capacity was noted as less important for organizational change. Some NSOs indicated a lack of organizational processes as constraining organizational change. For instance, some NSOs lacked terms of reference which outlined the length of tenure and terms for committee members which led to

volunteers sitting on committees for decades. This was viewed as problematic because it prevented new people – and potentially new ideas – from entering the organization. Thus, NSOs implemented policies and procedures (e.g., terms of reference) to facilitate committee member transition and onboarding. This turnover was seen as positive as new people could bring new ideas to the organization. Implementing these policies also allowed NSOs to create a "healthy" turnover in a way that respected the work of long-standing members:

> Part of it was putting in some processes that helped facilitate that change as opposed to it just looking like we're telling them that it's time for them to go, which in essence, was the start of the conversation, right? It's time for this person to go. But then we ended up putting terms of reference in. That helped facilitate that conversation, which then, you know, created the timeline. (Hayden, NSO 1, staff member)

NSOs' digital infrastructures also enabled them to undergo change. NSOs used digital technologies such as Microsoft suite, Zoom, and their own platforms to help with their day-to-day operations, including change. For instance, Zoom was used to *communicate* changes directly to stakeholders while also allowing NSOs to obtain feedback on the progression of the changes:

> The one piece that I would have to say that the team has embraced, and then that COVID has really helped us take a leap, has been on town halls. So back to engagement and communication. We're using Zoom and other platforms to do town halls across the country ... and that has honestly been a game changer for the organization because they're doing it monthly now. (Riley, NSO 4, Board member)

In contrast to digital infrastructure and the introduction of organizational processes, organizational culture did not appear to enable changes to take place; rather, a negative and divisive culture occurring in NSOs at the time constrained changes from taking place as it

fostered resistance among stakeholders. Hayden (NSO 1, staff member) discussed how their NSOs was "hamstrung" by a poor culture which, in turn, prevent them from moving forward with the changes: "You live and die by your culture, right? So, you know, we're still hamstrung by a culture that largely, you know, has elements of mistrust, or lack of trust, lack of confidence."

Planning, Development, and Research Capacity for Change

Although NSOs recognized the importance of planning when undergoing organizational change, in practice, few NSOs discussed having a formal planning process prior to engaging in change. As Nichol (NSO 5, Board member) indicated when asked about a formal planning process:

> There hasn't been [formal planning], which is certainly something that I know I've been embracing and have embraced just from a personal perspective. ... We do need to write these things down and we need to have a plan. And a lot of our planning objectives have been ... reactive as opposed to proactive. So, we've been reacting to issues that have come about from stakeholders or from the environment in which we operate, and we haven't always been proactive to have processes in place.

The lack of planning was associated with several barriers including failing to: (a) assign someone to lead the change process, (b) conduct research, (c) develop a clear direction or vision for the change, and (d) create a detailed plan (i.e., not too broad). Participants also indicated a lack of available human resources and a high workload impacting NSOs' abilities to plan.

Although most NSOs did not undergo a formal planning process prior to engaging in change, the majority leveraged some form of research. In particular, NSOs used surveys and stakeholder meetings to receive input and feedback on intended changes:

> A lot of the research I've done has been face-to-face with the provinces, with our staff, [and] with our Board. And then research, a lot of it's been internal research, you know, to see where we've been, what we've been doing and how. And then trying to meld that all into one thing [plan] to try and develop your wish list, so to speak, of what you want to get done. (Peyton, NSO 3, staff member)

During their research process, NSOs relied heavily on consultations with various stakeholder groups to gain support for the changes. For example, Jordan (NSO 4, staff member) noted how they gathered stakeholders from different groups in their NSO community to discuss the rebranding changes:

> I think one thing we did with the rebrand was we didn't just do it on our own. We brought representation from our various stakeholders into the room to start talking about it. So, to try to minimize the backlash, right? So, we had members of the Board, we had alumni, we had current athletes, we had provincial/territorial representation, we had club developers, we had staff. So, it was really voices from various parts of our community all in one room planning together, which I think is important.

For specific changes like rebranding and website redesign, NSOs also considered what other NSOs had done for inspiration:

> But the new website, the goal was for it to be more interactive, and I know we looked quite heavily at what [NSO name] had done. They have a very nice, interactive website where you would come in and be engaged. (Sawyer, NSO 4, staff member)

NSOs also relied heavily on key organizational documents like the strategic plan and reviews (e.g., governance review, human resources review) to engage in their change programs. For example, Andy (NSO 4, Board member) discussed how their NSO considered whether the

proposed changes aligned with the goals set out in the NSO's strategic plan: "Well, I think when we looked at the rationale behind it [the change], we looked towards our strategic plan and the goals, and will this benefit it?" In similar vein, as Ricky (NSO 4, staff member) explained in the financial capacity results section above (see p. 40), some NSOs used a human resource review to help inform their governance and structure changes.

In addition, in terms of development, some NSOs used education and training strategies to help them implement governance and culture changes. For instance, when asked about what the change process involved, Addison (NSO 4, Board member) responded, "a lot of education," and explained how their organization's Board and staff members completed a training program with a consulting firm to educate Board and staff members on the governance changes:

> There's a huge educational component. ... Most of the [NSOs'] staff and all of the Board have gone through or are in the process of going through a pretty significant governance education program from a consultant. ... And it's a big deal. Like, I think it's about, I don't know, 10 or 14 hours of an online course or something. So, it's not ... just like, "Read this" [or] this 60-minute class, right? It's a fairly in depth. ... It's been absolutely critical. Because ... one person on the Board can espouse as much as they want, but until the whole Board just really gets it, it's not going to move forward. Everyone's kind of going to be fighting it. So, yeah, you all need the education to be on the same page.

Temporal Capacity for Change

Although participants recognized the value of these five sources of capacity for change, they also discussed how these sources were mitigated by time, acknowledging how temporal capacity was a barrier to implementing change:

> One of the most precious and limited resources we have is time. ... So there may be all these things out there, all sorts of resources out there, but who has the time, you know, given all the things that we are responsible for and the few people we have working on something. (Ashton, NSO 2, Board member)

As Ashton pointed out, NSOs know about the different material and knowledge resources available to them, but their ability to gather and read this information is impacted by their available time. In addition, NSOs' timelines are constrained by external factors such as the Olympic Games, over which they have no control:

> But it's limited by time. So, in the end, probably, the capacity problem is time. Like, we're on the clock. ... You know, in a business or whatever, you could be like, "Okay, we'll delay the launch a year, or a month, or a week or something" our competitions happened when they happen. ... The Olympic [Games] happen when they happen, whether you're ready or not. So, you know, we have this very rigid [timeline]. Like you have to be ready. (Ashton, NSO 2, Board member)

Discussion and Conclusion

Although human resources capacity was seen as a critical source of capacity for change – supporting Amis et al.'s (2004) findings – the present study also found five other sources which NSOs can use to engage in and manage organizational change, each with varying degrees of importance for the change process: financial capacity; relationship and network capacity; infrastructure and process capacity; planning, development, and research capacity; and temporal capacity. Therefore, this study extends previous understandings of capacity for change as a phenomenon predominantly centred on human resources and leadership related capacity (e.g., Amis et al., 2004; Judge, 2005). These findings also uphold the idea that capacity for change is

multidimensional, supporting existing assertions in both the capacity for change literature (e.g., Heckmann et al., 2016; Judge, 2005) and broader organizational capacity literature (e.g., Hall et al., 2003; Misener & Doherty, 2009). Each capacity source is discussed individually, followed by a discussion of the connections between sources and how they add to existing understandings of capacity for change and the organizational change process. Finally, the section ends with the study's contributions, limitations, and future directions.

Human Resources Capacity for Change

The findings highlight the importance of both the number of people and their skills, knowledge, past experience, and personality. Unsurprisingly, the study's findings demonstrate how human resources – or a lack thereof – constrains NSOs' abilities to go through change. A lack of human resources has been a long-noted issue in non-profit research in general (e.g., Hall et al., 2003) and in sport management in particular (e.g., Misener & Doherty, 2009, 2013).

Thus, human resources capacity for change is not only about the number of people but also the skills, knowledge, past experience, and personality of various stakeholders (e.g., staff, Board, members) who enable change initiatives to take place. Researchers, such as Castañeda et al. (2012), noted skills and knowledge related to adaptability, evaluation, technical, research and data dissemination, cultural competency, and training. In contrast, this study found skills and knowledge related to governance, policy, and branding issues as dominant. The difference in skills and knowledge identified could reflect the type of organization under examination and the type of changes undergone, demonstrating the contextual nature of this capacity dimension during organizational change. The importance of context is consistent with broader organizational change (e.g., Pettigrew, 1985, 1987, 2012) and organizational capacity research (e.g., Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Doherty & Cuskelly, 2020).

To combat the issues associated with either a lack of available people or a lack of skills, knowledge, and experience, NSOs leveraged consultants and contractors to help them implement change. This finding supports Drummond et al.'s (2017) claims that consultants are helpful but contrasts Amis et al. (2004) who argued consultants were a problem for NSOs undergoing change. This difference is likely attributed to the idea that consultants in Amis et al.'s case were not independent but provided by the funding bodies (i.e., Sport Canada; cf. Amis et al., 2004). In the present study, consultants were independent from Sport Canada or other funding partners and selected by the NSOs themselves. In addition, the study's findings indicating the use of contractors during organizational change to address specific knowledge gaps also echoes those of Thompson and Parent (2021).

Although the results reinforce the importance of senior leaders in enabling change, supporting Amis et al.'s (2004) findings, the present study also highlights the criticality of all human resources at different organizational levels to implement and manage change. The importance of human resources at varying levels in helping implement change initiatives contrasts the leader-centric nature of existing capacity for change approaches (e.g., Amis et al., 2004; Judge, 2005; Judge et al., 2009; cf. Table 2.1) but has been noted in the broader change literature, such as Thompson and Parent (2021) who found lower-level employees were critical in helping lead a change process. In sum, this study indicates human resource capacity is not only about the numbers or size but also about the quality (skills, knowledge, etc.) of the human resources.

Financial Capacity for Change

Based on the study's results, financial resources are paramount to implementing and managing organizational change, echoing Castañeda et al. (2012) who noted the importance of

financial resources as a capacity for change dimension. Financial resources act as both an enabler (i.e., for those who have financial resources) and a constrainer (i.e., for those who lack financial resources) of organizational change. A lack of financial resources constrained NSOs' abilities to implement changes, echoing Amis et al. (2004, p. 170) who found financial issues in one NSO led to "difficulties in trying to bring about change." The constraining feature of financial capacity contrasts other research on organizational capacity in non-profit sport organizations. That is, Misener and Doherty (2009) found financial capacity issues were not as significant as other sources and centered more on financial planning and management, rather than the amount of financial resources available. The present study found the opposite. NSOs discussed the impact (enabling or constraining) of financial resources on their ability to implement change while no issues around financial planning and management were discussed. The different findings could be explained by the type of non-profit sport organization examined. Misener and Doherty's study focused on community sport organizations (CSOs) which rely predominantly on volunteers. Finding volunteers – in their case a treasurer – to manage financial assets was a challenge for CSOs. In contrast, in the present study, NSOs relied on paid staff to handle much of their operations, including financial matters. In addition, the main source of revenue for CSOs were registration fees, with government support and fundraising as secondary. NSOs have governments as a key funding source (Parent et al., 2021).

Although financial issues NSOs experienced when implementing organizational change is unsurprising given recent work discussing the lack of overall capacity in these organizations (e.g., Parent et al., 2018), what is notable is how NSOs can *temporarily* improve their financial capacity for change by obtaining grants for specific change projects. Thus, when an NSO has limited financial resources overall (i.e., in their budget), they can seek and leverage grants which

are targeted to their intended change area (e.g., governance change, marketing or rebranding change, human resources change). In sum, although this study indicates financial capacity can be a substantial constrainer of organizational change, grants are a useful strategy for NSOs seeking to implement specific change initiatives.

Relationship and Network Capacity for Change

Like financial and human resources capacity, relationship and network capacity was seen as critical in enabling organizational change. This finding contrasts with the existing capacity for change literature (e.g., Amis et al., 2004; Detert & Pollock, 2008; Drummond et al., 2017; Judge & Douglas, 2009) which neglects to account for relationship and network aspects of capacity for change. However, this finding is supported by the broader organizational capacity literature, such as Misener and Doherty's (2009), who also noted the value of relationships and network capacity.

When undergoing change, NSOs relied heavily on their existing relationships and network with funding partners to grow their financial resources (e.g., grants) and help them through the change process. However, the findings also support the idea that organizations should look beyond the monetary resources relationships bring (Misener & Doherty, 2014): NSOs can also rely on relationships and networks to gain material and knowledge-based resources needed for the intended changes or the change process generally.

Despite the importance of relationships and networks for capacity for change, as Hall et al. (2003) and others (e.g., Parent & Harvey, 2017) noted, relationship building takes time and is often constrained by a lack of human resources. Thus, as discussed in the practical contributions below, sport funding body leaders should focus on creating better opportunities for NSOs to build relationships and network to share best change management practices, rather than more

opportunities. For instance, Hall et al. (2003) found the non-profit organizations in their study were interested in creating a central repository where organizations could access shared knowledge and other resources. This strategy could also benefit NSOs in the context of change management practices or other broader uses as it provides NSOs a way to access resources in their stakeholder environment, in turn fostering a competitive advantage (cf. DeCarolis & Deeds, 1999).

Finally, the criticality of relationships for resource acquisition (financial, material, and/or knowledge based) during organizational change highlights the potential consequences of relying too heavily on (external) stakeholders for resources. As Frooman (1999) discerned, stakeholders – in this case external stakeholders such as Sport Canada or the COC – choose to offer but could equally choose to withhold resources.

Infrastructure and Process Capacity for Change

Overall, infrastructure and process capacity appeared to be less important in enabling organizational change compared to financial, human resources, and relationship and network capacities, echoing Misener and Doherty's (2009) findings. However, there was some evidence that showed NSOs leverage policies – such as terms of reference – to enable changes in human resource (i.e., people change). In this case, the terms of reference promoted a constructive turnover of people in NSOs. Existing organizational change research tends to view turnover as negative, leading to decrease performance (e.g., Bester et al., 2016; Thompson & Parent, 2021; Wagstaff et al., 2016); but the present study demonstrates how staff and/or volunteer turnover can be positive for an organization. Constructive turnover allows new people to enter the organization and bring new, potentially innovative ideas (Hall et al., 2003; Singh & Agrawal, 2011) and thus, can indirectly further enable future changes. For instance, Damanpour (1991, p.

569) found no significant relationship between length of tenure and innovativeness, suggesting that "new executives with different perspectives, new ideas, and fewer obligations to internal constituencies than longer-tenured executives might be more successful in introducing innovations." Thus, turnover is important for both infrastructure and process capacity for change as well as for human resources capacity.

In addition, the value of digital technology in enabling change to be undertaken supports some claims made by scholars, such as Bennebroek Gravenhorst et al. (2003) and Castañeda et al. (2012), in their capacity for change frameworks. In this case, digital technologies were used to support communication strategies regarding the changes, echoing existing discussions noting the importance of communication from both the capacity for change (e.g., Drummond et al., 2017; Judge, 2005; Judge & Douglas, 2009) and broader organizational change in sport literature (e.g., Thompson, 2018; Thompson & Parent, 2021).

Finally, the divisive organizational cultures NSOs' experienced constrained their ability to change, supporting existing capacity for change research indicating that culture is generally a key dimension (Bennebroek Gravenhorst et al., 2003) and that more "positive" cultures – such as those that are innovative and accountable (Judge, 2005; Judge & Douglas, 2009) – are needed in growing capacity for change. In terms of the broader organizational change in sport literature, this finding also supports Clausen et al. (2016) who found organizational culture to be a barrier for implementing change.

Planning, Development, and Research Capacity for Change

Where planning has been reported as a critical dimension in general organizational capacity studies (e.g., Misener & Doherty, 2009), in the context of organizational change, planning was seen as less important compared to financial, human resources, and relationship

and network capacities. NSOs in this study did not engage in any formal planning process, contrasting Thompson's (2018) findings. Although NSOs recognized the importance of formal planning for organizational change, the challenges associated with planning – namely failing to assign someone to lead the change process, conduct research, develop a clear direction or vision for the change, and create a detailed plan (i.e., not too broad) – as well as the issue of time were barriers too big for NSOs to overcome. The lack of planning stands in stark contrast to the prescribed, planned approaches to change which favour formal planning processes (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Burnes, 2017; Dawson, 2019). Further, the constant changes in NSOs' external environment led to modifications to initial plans and required additional time. The issue of time and emergent environmental changes speaks to why planned approaches to organizational change often fail (cf. Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Burnes, 2017; Dawson, 2019).

Although the NSOs in this study did not undertake any formal planning, the study's findings did highlight the importance of research – like surveys, stakeholder consultations, using organizational documents, and looking at other NSOs – in enabling organizational change. This finding contrasts existing capacity for change and organizational capacity research (e.g., Amis et al., 2004; Doherty & Cuskelly, 2020; Judge & Douglas, 2009; Misener & Doherty, 2009) which does not indicate any use of research. In addition, the use of various forms of research does indicate some initial, *informal* planning, supporting the idea of process approaches to change which recognize that organizations can undergo initial planning but that plans are modified as unforeseen circumstances arise (cf. Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Burnes, 2017; Dawson, 2019). Finally, development – through staff and Board member educating and training – was thought of as important to enable change. This finding contrasts the general organizational

capacity literature, such as Hall et al. (2003), who found that non-profit organizations struggled with development efforts. In sum, the study highlights how NSOs focused on research and development to enable organizational change over planning efforts.

Temporal Capacity for Change

Existing approaches to capacity for change have largely omitted discussions of time, except for a few passing mentions (e.g., Bennebroek Gravenhorst et al., 2003; Castañeda et al., 2012; Detert and Pollock, 2008). The present study extends these findings and further underscores time's criticality in affecting an organization's capacity for change, and in turn, its ability to undergo organizational change. Although time was previously overlooked in much of the capacity for change literature, the study's findings are supported by the broader organizational change literature (Dawson, 2014; Pettigrew, 1987) where issue of time have long been noted.

The addition of time as a source of capacity (for change) also contrasts the broader organizational capacity research in non-profit sport organizations, where time is not discussed as a prevalent issue (e.g., Doherty & Cuskelly, 2020; Misener & Doherty, 2009, 2014). The contrasting findings could be explained by the nature of capacity being examined – in this case, capacity for change, and in Misener and Doherty's case, organizational capacity. It appears that time is more important for organizational change because change is an added task for the organization requiring extra time to undertake in addition to their regular operations.

In sum, this study sheds light on the potential power of time to mitigate already limited resources, be it financial, human resources, or planning. As such, it appears that temporal capacity can act as both an enabler and constrainer of organizational change in general, but also of the five other sources of capacity for change.

Connections between Capacity for Change Sources

In further analyzing the results, akin to Misener and Doherty (2009), the present study highlights connections between the different sources of capacity for change. In particular, NSOs relied on their relationships with funding partners (i.e., Sport Canada, COC, OTP) and sponsors for financial resources, thereby increasing their financial capacity. In the case of funding partners, NSOs obtained grants offered by these partners, while sponsors provided direct financial resources. In addition, relationships with other sport organizations, such as other NSOs and IFs, could increase NSOs planning, development, and research capacity as they look to these organizations for advice and best practices. Processes such as the addition of new policies (i.e., terms of reference) enabled new people (human resources) to enter the organization and potentially bring new ideas, skills, knowledge, and previous experiences. Finally, human resources capacity appeared to be connected with planning, development, and research. NSOs hired consultants to lead the training (i.e., development) of staff and Board members related to the proposed governance changes. Finally, time or temporal capacity appeared to mitigate the other sources of capacity, and in turn, organizational change.

The connections between capacity sources are important for managers as they can leverage these various sources of capacity together or individually to enable organizational change. Although only a few connections between sources can be gleaned from the study's findings, future research should consider exploring these connections in depth given the probability of these sources of capacity interacting during change. Researchers could examine the connection between sources either quantitatively (e.g., via a questionnaire), qualitatively (e.g., through interviews or focus groups), or using mixed methods (e.g., using a combination of

the first two). Understanding which capacity source is more valuable during which types of changes could also be practical for managers seeking to implement various types of changes.

Understanding Capacity for Change in the NSO Ecosystem

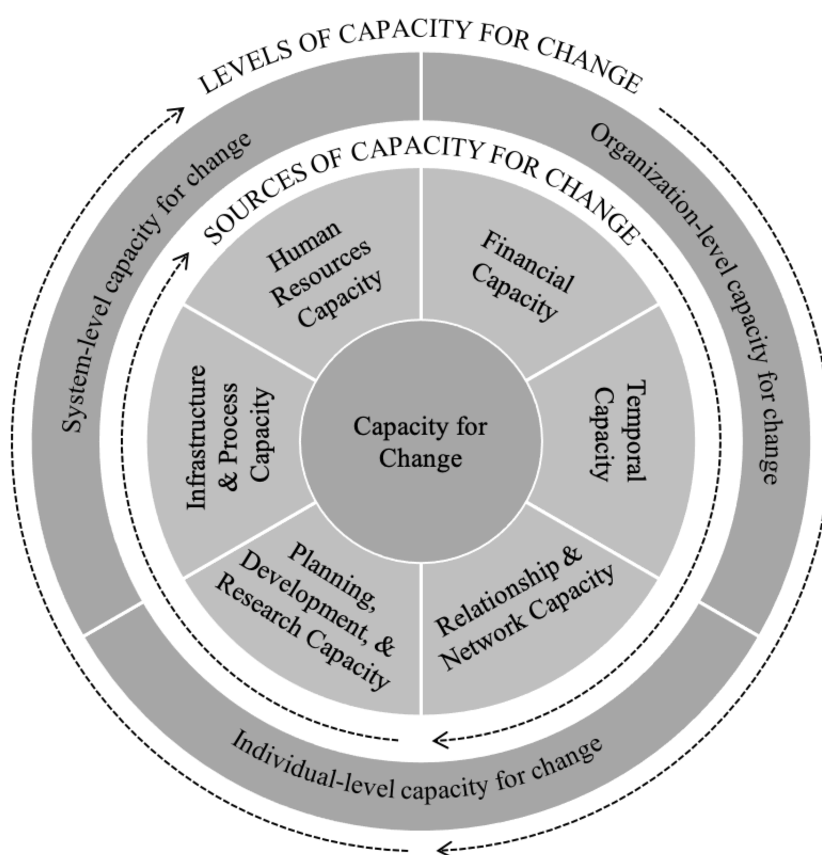
Although the aforementioned discussion focuses on capacity for change at the *organizational* level, when further examining the results, the study demonstrates how capacity for change can be impacted by other levels in an NSO's ecosystem – namely, the system and individual levels. At the system level, this study revealed how capacity in the system (e.g., financial, and human resources) can grow an organization's capacity for change, and in turn, further enable organizational change. In this case, the rise of available grants by funding partners allowed NSOs to engage in specific change projects (e.g., governance, branding changes). In contrast, a lack of capacity in the system can constrain an NSO's capacity for change. In this case, a lack of human resources at the member (e.g., P/TSO) level constrained NSOs' changes as many P/TSOs lack the available people to implement NSOs' proposed changes, such as new programming or rebranding strategies. At the individual level, the study revealed how individuals' skills, knowledge, past experience, and personality enabled or constrained organizational change.

In sum, the study demonstrates not only the multidimensionality of capacity for change across the various capacity sources (as noted in the beginning of this discussion section), but also the multidimensionality of capacity for change at different levels in an NSOs' ecosystem. To illustrate the multidimensional nature of capacity for change, a conceptual framework is presented in Figure 2.1. A conceptual framework is the "structural representation of ideas and notions" and is the first step in theory building (Doherty, 2013, p. 7). The framework has two dials: the inner dial includes the various sources of capacity for change identified while the outer

dial focuses on the levels where capacity for change is present. These dials can rotate, and thus, are illustrative of how sources of capacity for change can operate at different levels – be it systemic, organizational, or individual. The framework is a comprehensive tool which future researchers can use to examining capacity for change. Akin to the use of Hall et al.'s (2003) framework, the study's framework can guide the development of research purpose and questions, hypotheses or propositions, and the development of data collection (e.g., interview guides) or analysis (e.g., informing deductive codes).

Figure 2.1

A Multidimensional Framework for Capacity for Change in NSOs



This conceptual framework is the first step in theory development (Doherty, 2013). Future research can consider building off this work and better understand the relationships (a)

between the sources of capacity for change and (b) between the sources of capacity for change and the different levels, thereby, developing a theoretical framework and moving closer to theory building (cf. Doherty 2013). In addition, although the framework was developed in the context of non-profit sport organizations, it could be useful for non-profit organizations more generally as it was adapted from Hall et al.'s framework which focused on non-profit organizations.

Contributions, Limitations, and Future Directions

This study contributes to both organizational change theory and practice. As Kilduff (2006, p. 254) noted, "theory development is a revolutionary activity involving constant challenges to existing knowledge." Theoretical contributions include, first, highlighting six different sources of capacity for change and, second, the development of a novel framework for understanding capacity for change in sport which goes beyond the current human resources-centric conceptualization of capacity for change. The framework's value stems from its inclusion of multiple sources of capacity for change (beyond human resources) and the different levels where capacity for change is present in NSOs' ecosystems, demonstrating the multidimensionality of capacity for change across the various sources and at the different levels. It also adds value by highlighting initial connections between the different sources of capacity for change, supporting the future development of a capacity for change theory, and thus, moving towards theory development (cf. Doherty, 2013). In addition, the study also provides scholars a way of examining the capacity for change through the different sources as a means of future theory building and testing (cf. Bacharach, 1989).

The study's practical contributions lie in the various sources of capacity which managers can use to undergo organizational change, especially when one source of capacity is weaker or not present (e.g., in the case of human resource turnover). By leveraging other sources, NSOs

can potentially increase their chances of realizing their intended changes. In addition, the study's findings highlight the need for sport governing bodies such as Sport Canada, OTP, and the COC to facilitate better networking opportunities between sport organizations at all levels such as NSOs, P/TSOs, and even community sport organizations (CSOs). Whether through workshops or meetings, these organizations could potentially gain more knowledge about best practices related to organizational change management. These opportunities could be facilitated via existing meetings, but modified to enhance the quality of relationship building, rather than adding to non-profit sport organizations' existing workload. In addition, digital technology, such as platforms (e.g., a central repository) or apps (e.g., Slack) could be leveraged to more easily connect NSOs, P/TSO, and CSO without having to schedule additional time-consuming meetings.

This study was limited to national-level sport organizations in Canada. Future research should consider expanding to other levels in the Canadian amateur sport system such as P/TSOs or CSOs or in different countries. Differences between the levels have previously been noted in terms of general organizational capacity (e.g., Millar & Doherty, 2016) and thus could also be the case in the context of capacity for change. These findings could have important implications for managers in these other levels in enabling them to implement their change initiatives successfully. In addition, future research should assess the contextual boundaries of the multidimensional framework presented, thereby engaging in further organizational change theory building (cf. Bacharach, 1989; Whetten, 1989). Finally, researchers could build off the initial connections found between capacity for change dimensions and develop hypotheses which could tested for future theory building (cf. Bacharach, 1989; Whetten, 1989).

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Chapter III: Organizational Culture and Organizational Change in NPSOs: A Processual Approach

Thompson, A. & Parent, M. M. (In preparation). Organizational culture and organizational change in NPSOs: A processual approach. *Sport Management Review*.

Introduction

Organizational culture is critical for the overall success of sport organizations (Maitland et al., 2015). Recent governance mismanagement and corruption issues in NPSOs have shown how poor organizational cultures impact the performance of these organizations. For instance, the exposure of corruption and abuse issues in the past few years in NPSOs such as FIFA, USA Gymnastics, and UK Athletics has resulted in many critics calling for a wide-scale culture change in these organizations (e.g., Coaston, 2017; Collett, 2015; Ingle, 2020; Roan, 2014; Spicer, 2015).

Organizational culture is equally critical in the context of organizational change – or the process by which organizational characteristics, activities, or ideas are altered (cf. Van de Ven, 2021) – and must be an integral part of organizational change programs. Scholars have argued that, if organizational culture is not central, then change initiatives will fail (Burnes, 2017; Heracleous, 2001). Organizational culture can influence the way people perceive, think, feel, evaluate, and behave (Schein, 1990; Schneider, 1989), and thus, influence the outcome of organizational change programs (Burnes, 2017; Colyer, 2000).

From a research perspective, Wilson (1992, p. 91; as cited in Burnes, 2017) acknowledged it is not "always clear precisely how culture and change are related, if at all." When considering existing literature on organizational culture and change, it appears that culture plays a dual role: it can be the focus of a change program (i.e., changing the culture, as demonstrated in the examples above) and it can also be a phenomenon which impacts other changes in the organization such as changes in strategy, structure, people, products, and technology (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016).

Existing research on organizational culture and change has predominantly centred on one side of the dual role: culture changes (e.g., Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Feddersen, Morris, Abrahamsen, et al., 2021; Feddersen, Morris, Storm, et al., 2021). Fewer studies have examined the second side of the dual role, how organizational culture impacts the process of organizational change. For instance, Clausen et al. (2018) – examining one type of change, professionalization – found organizational culture was both a driver and barrier of professionalization. Despite this key finding, the authors provided a limited explanation as to how and why organizational culture was a driver and barrier to change. As such, the present study builds off Clausen et al.'s (2018) work.

Further, given organizational culture's dual role, there is an argument to be made to concurrently understand the impact of existing organizational culture and culture changes on organizational change – in other words, both sides of culture's dual role. Since culture change can take a long time to realize (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016) and organizations may engage in various types of changes simultaneously (e.g., culture, strategy, governance changes), an existing organizational culture could enable and/or constrain the organization's ability to undergo these different changes. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how organizational culture enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs.

Literature Review and Theoretical Background

Organizational change can manifest in different areas in an organization. For instance, organizations can change their systems, structure, strategy, and processes (e.g., organizational structure, policies, budgeting systems); people (e.g., staff and volunteers turnover as well as changes to their skill and knowledge base); digital technology; products (e.g., adding or removing goods and services); and organizational culture (i.e., modifying organization values,

beliefs, basic assumptions, attitudes, behaviours; Daft, 2021; McCann, 1991; Slack & Parent, 2006).

There also exists a plethora of different theoretical approaches used to examine organizational change and organizational culture, respectively (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). Thus, the following sections outline the theoretical approaches which inform this study. First, the processual approach used to conceptualize organizational change is presented. Second, the use of Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) approach to organizational culture and change is discussed. Third, the section ends by discussing organizational culture and change research and presents the gaps this study seeks to address.

Organizational Change: A Processual Approach

Organizational change can be conceptualized as an ongoing process (Dawson, 2019). This differs from other perspectives on change, notably the planned and emergent perspectives. In planned approaches, organizational change is viewed as something that can be explicitly and systematically planned for from the top down, and is typically discussed in the form of n-step, prescribed models (e.g., Kotter, 2007; Lewin, 1947, 1951). The emergent approach is seen in direct opposition of the planned approach, viewing change as a continuous, dynamic phenomenon that cannot be explicitly controlled and planned. Change is bottom-up rather than top-down and emerges from unpredictable circumstances in organizations' environments. Thus, these two schools of thought are often viewed on opposite sides of a spectrum (Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). The process approach bridges the gap between the emergent and planned perspectives. It acknowledges managers can attempt to undertake planned change but equally recognizes that these plans are subject to unpredictable forces in the external environment which results in emergent, unforeseen changes arising during the change process (Alvesson &

Sveningsson, 2016; Burnes, 2017; Dawson, 2019; Pettigrew, 1985). As Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016, p. 31) summarized:

> The process approach takes seriously managerial ambitions to accomplish planned change but acknowledges that executed plans are always modified, reinterpreted and altered in unpredictable ways. As plans are set in motion they blend with many other organizational circumstances (if they take hold at all, that is) rather than operate like the mechanical clockwork according to which a complex organization is governed.

Some foundational change scholars have recently argued that understanding change processes remains in a black box: organizational change researchers have traditionally focused on what occurs before and after a change initiative, while neglecting to understand the process of change (i.e., the "how"; Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021).

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture serves four main purposes in organizations (Burnes, 2017): (1) culture defines how people in organizations should behave in certain situations; (2) it affects all people in the organization, regardless of rank or position; (3) it ensures that people's actions are judged in relation to the expected behavioural norms; and (4) it determines which actions are legitimized or prohibited.

Like organizational change, the study of organizational culture contains a "battleground of competing paradigms that influence how researchers conceptualise phenomena, use methods to collect and analyse data, and represent their findings" (Taylor et al., 2006, p. 305). Thus, it becomes important to situate the present study among the various perspectives. Organizational culture can be generally placed into two main schools of thought tied closely to epistemological assumptions. On the one hand, many popular perspectives on organizational culture are rooted in

post-positivist assumptions which attempt to deconstruct the concept of culture into discrete variables that are then measured (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016). Notable examples include Cameron and Quinn's (2011) competing values framework, which categorizes organizations' cultures into one of four main groups through a questionnaire known as the *Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument*, and Hofstede and colleagues (1990) who developed their own scale for measuring organizational culture.

On the other hand, scholars such as Schein (2017) and Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016) have critiqued these existing works. These scholars argued culture cannot be measured, but they also question the purpose and value of its measurement: due to its complexity as a phenomenon, culture cannot be measured in a way that provides meaningful insights into the messy reality of organizational life. Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016) further argued many of these questionnaires (e.g., Cameron & Quinn, 2011; Hofstede et al., 1990) measure behaviours, not organizational culture itself. As the authors discussed, organizational culture "refers to what stands behind and guides behaviour rather than the behaviour as such" (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2016, p. 42). In other words, organizational culture explains peoples' behaviour.

This present study follows Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) perspective on organizational culture. Like the process approach to organizational change, organizational culture is viewed as a dynamic process which fluctuates over time. Organizational culture is not a homogenous phenomenon; organizations are made up of various subcultures which must be considered when researching organizational culture (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Colyer, 2000). Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) perspective on culture is appropriate for this study as it aligns with the constructivist assumptions underpinning this research. Constructivists believe there is no single, objective "truth" and that people make sense of their world in different ways

which are all "valid" and "worthy of respect" (Crotty, 1998, p. 58; Skinner et al., 2015). Thus, unlike post-positivist perspectives which may favour a strict and singular definition of culture developed by the researcher and imposed on research participants, this study follows Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016, p. 8) approach and focuses "on culture or, rather, what those involved defined as 'culture'." Constructivists also acknowledge meaning and "truth" is not discovered but constructed (Crotty, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 2013; Skinner et al., 2015). This premise aligns with Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016) who suggested culture is also socially constructed. Finally, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016) focused on understanding organizational culture from a process perspective, rather than measuring culture through a discrete set of variables at two cross-sectional time points. This perspective aligns with the process view of change presented above.

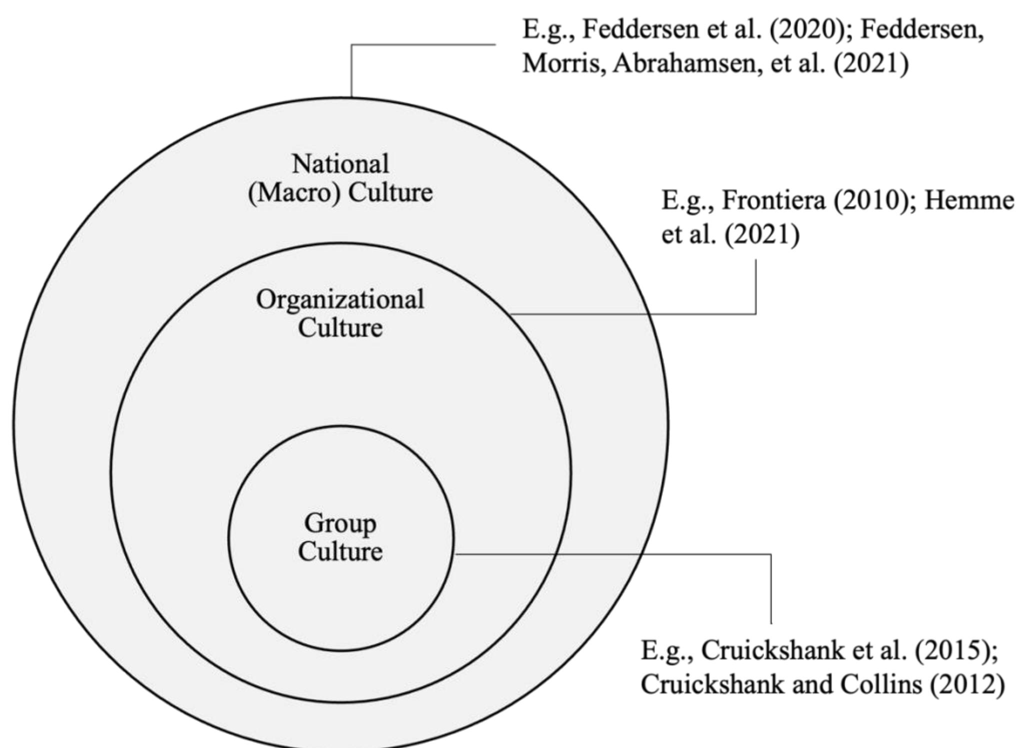
Organizational Culture and Change in Sport

As described in this article's introduction, organizational culture holds a dual role in the context of an organizational change phenomenon. On the one hand, organizational culture can be a type of change an organization undertakes (i.e., culture change) like a change in its strategy, structure, people, and products. Culture change is where we see much of the existing sport research (e.g., Cruickshank et al., 2015; Cruickshank & Collins, 2012; Feddersen et al., 2020; Feddersen, Morris, Abrahamsen, et al., 2021; Frontiera, 2010; Hemme et al., 2021). These studies have examined culture change at different levels of analysis (see Figure 3.1). For example, Feddersen, Morris, Abrahamsen, et al. (2021) found culture changes in NSOs' external environment – referred to as macroculture change – impacted their own culture change at the organizational level. Likewise, Hemme et al. (2021) examined different aspects of a culture change program in a public sport organization including its planning, implementation, and

design. Thus, research focused on culture change puts organizational culture at the center of the discussion.

Figure 3.1

Levels of Analysis of Existing Culture Change Research



On the other hand, organizational culture can also impact other changes organizations are undertaking. As Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016, p. 19) argued, “it is difficult to imagine a cultural change as a separate and distinct activity without any effect on strategy, structure and other management control systems.” Although less prevalent than culture change research, sport management researchers have alluded to the potential impact of culture on organizational change. For instance, Clausen et al. (2018) examined the causes (drivers and barriers) to one type of change – professionalization – in six IFs. The authors found organizational culture was “both a strong barrier and a powerful driver to IFs’ professionalization” (p. 51). Despite the relevance of these findings, Clausen et al. did not explain how organizational culture is both a barrier and

driver of this particular change. Thus, the present study builds off these findings to understand how organizational culture impacts (i.e., enables or constrains) organizational change processes.

Several other organizational change-related studies in sport management are worth discussing; although these studies have not necessarily examined organizational culture in its totality, they have focused on components of culture, specifically values, which could provide insights for the present study. In their study on values and organizational change, Amis et al. (2002) found NSOs which aligned with the prescribed values set forth by their funding partner (Sport Canada) were more likely to engage in the required structural changes, while the opposite was shown for NSOs that did not align with the prescribed values. From these findings, we can infer that organizational culture could enable or constrain organizational change. In a different study examining the pace, sequence, and linearity of change, Amis et al. (2004) discussed how the federal government sought to redefine the cultural values of amateur sport in Canada from high performance to participation, highlighting the potential development of subcultures in NSOs and amateur sport at the time. In similar vein, O'Brien and Slack's (1999) study examining the deinstitutionalization of amateurism in a Rugby Union Football Club discussed how deinstitutionalizing (i.e., altering) existing values can facilitate changes in an organization's structure. O'Brien and Slack also demonstrated how different subcultures were formed around divergent values, in their case, a subculture which valued amateurism and one which valued professionalization. Although the focus of these studies was on values, not culture, the findings could provide valuable insights for the present study since values are an aspect of and thus related to organizational culture.

Methodology

This study employed a collective case study methodology (Stake, 1995) with five Canadian NSOs. As the national governing body of their respective sport, NSOs' roles are to govern all facets of their sport in Canada. As the highest level in the federated sport model (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2020), their roles include:

> Governing all aspects of a sport within Canada; managing their high performance programs; selecting and managing their national teams; implementing national initiatives to develop and promote their sport; sanctioning national level competitions and tournaments; providing professional development for coaches and officials in their sport; and, proposing and supporting bids for international competitions in Canada. (Government of Canada, 2021, para. 2)

Canadian NSOs are funded predominantly by public sources such as federal grants, followed by commercial (e.g., sponsorship) and membership fees (Parent et al., 2021). They are also legislated by the Canada NFP Act – a law which governs the internal affairs of Canadian non-profit organizations at the federal level (Government of Canada, 2018). The NFP Act regulates (among other aspects) the content of NSOs' bylaws, NSOs' financial reporting requirements, and their Board election process (Government of Canada, 2018; Parent et al., 2021).

Data Collection

NSOs were recruited following a purposeful and convenience sampling strategy (Andrew et al., 2011; Marshall, 1996). To be eligible to participate in this study: (a) the organization must be an NSO located in Canada, and (b) the NSO must have self-identified as having recently undergone one or more types of changes (e.g., changes in structure, systems, processes, culture,

technology, and/or people). The change timing was delimited to approximately the past five years since change can take several years to unfold (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021). This timing allowed us to discuss changes with participants retrospectively and as they unfolded (cf. Thompson, 2018). Five years allowed us to also explore pre-COVID-19 pandemic changes.

The study's ethics certificate does not permit the identification of the specific NSOs in the sample; thus, pseudonyms for each NSO as well as the research participants were used to protect their identity. Nevertheless, NSOs in the sample were Sport Canada funded and included both winter (n=2) and summers (n=3) sports, as well as Olympic (n=4) and non-Olympic (n=1) sports. NSOs also ranged from 12 to 27 total personnel, including four to 16 staff members and seven to 11 Board members. Akin to Parent et al.'s (2021) archetypes, NSOs fit the Board-led archetype (n=3), Executive-led archetype (n=1), and Professional archetype (n=1).

Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and documents. Interviews were conducted with 49 staff and Board members of the five NSOs. An interview guide was created based on previous literature, and pilot tested (Smith & Sparkes, 2016) with a former senior-level staff member of multiple Canadian NSOs. Questions focused on participants' background in the organization, the changes undergone, the organization's existing organizational culture, and how the changes impacted this culture. Interviews began in October 2020 and lasted on average 62 minutes in length (with a range of 41 to 132 minutes). The interview process ended in March 2021 once theoretical saturation was reached (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Legg et al., 2016).

In addition to interviews, organizational documents were collected from the NSOs' websites or directly from the NSOs and included annual reports, strategic plans, and policies. Document collection began once NSOs agreed to participate in the study and continued as interviews progressed, when some participants' responses and experiences related to a relevant

document not previously gathered (e.g., news report). The documents collected prior to the interviews were useful in providing context about each organization, while those collected during the interviews were important for providing context *and* for data source triangulation (Braun & Clarke, 2013; see below for more details on triangulation). A total of 151 documents were gathered throughout the data collection process with an average of 30 documents per case (see Appendix D).

Data Analysis

Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed in NVivo following Braun and Clarke's (2022) thematic analysis. Table 3.1 describes the six-phase analysis process undertaken: (1) dataset familiarization; (2) data coding; (3) initial theme generation; (4) theme development and review; (5) theme refining, defining, and naming; and (6) writing-up the themes.

Table 3.1

Thematic Analysis Process (Braun & Clarke, 2022)

Phases of the Process	Definition
Data familiarization	Involved reading and re-reading all data, in this case interview transcripts, documents, and notes made during the interviews, to gain a thorough understanding of the data. Brief notes were taken of any ideas or insight about the data.
Data coding	Involved working through the dataset to identify segments of data (i.e., interviews and documents) that were interesting, relevant, and meaningful in light of the research purpose. Codes were conducted both inductively and deductively as well as at both the semantic (i.e., explicit) and latent (i.e., implicit) levels.
Initial theme generation	Codes were clustered to identify higher-level shared patterns of meaning across the dataset. This provided initial candidate themes which addressed the research purpose.

Theme development and review	Candidate themes were examined to assess the fit of the themes in relation to their coded extracts (i.e., within theme) as well as with the overall dataset (i.e., among the themes). This entailed (a) assessing the data extracts (i.e., raw data) to see if the extracts represent the themes developed and (b) reviewing the individual themes in relation to the entire dataset.
Theme refining, defining, and naming	A short synopsis or narrative was written about each theme (and sub-theme) which describe their scope and content.
Writing-up the themes	The short synopsis was further expanded to provide a rich and detailed account of each theme and sub-theme. Data extracts in the form of quotations were included to illustrate the themes. The most compelling and vivid extracts were used for the quotations to illustrate the analytic narrative. Any contextual information which could disclose the identity of the NSOs, or individual participants, were either altered or removed to protect their anonymity. Pseudonyms were also used to protect participant anonymity.

Although the process is presented sequentially, the analysis was iterative, meaning the researchers moved back and forth through the different phases in the development of their analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). As demonstrated in each analytic phase described in the Table 3.1, data analysis included both interviews and documents. As mentioned in the data collection section above, documents provided additional depth and support to what interview participants discussed. For instance, during a culture change in one NSO, one participant noted a news article that discussed this culture change. This document provided additional information on the culture change timeline (i.e., approximately when it began to take place) and its impetus which supported the information from the interviews. In this case, this document and content was coded under *culture change* with the relevant passages from the interviews in the data analysis phase two.

To increase the quality of the research findings, member-checking was completed at both the individual participant level as well as at the organization level with the senior leaders (e.g., CEO, ED) of each NSO. In addition, data source triangulation (through interviews and

documents) was employed as a means of "strengthening analytic claims, and of getting a richer or fuller story, rather than a more accurate one" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 286). Last, weekly meetings occurred between the authors and lab colleagues to discuss the analysis and results. This form of peer-debriefing (Burke, 2016) allowed the researchers to discuss and make sense of the initial analysis and allow the colleagues to probe further, thereby strengthened and deepened the analysis.

Results

The study findings indicate organizational culture can both enable and constrain organizational change in NSOs. Initially, NSOs' existing organizational cultures acted as a barrier to organizational change, due to their dual mandate challenges, their history, and the financial issues in the Canadian sport system. Understanding this barrier, NSOs engaged in culture change as a means of enabling broader organizational changes to take place. Thus, organizational culture became an enabler rather than a barrier to organizational change. The remainder of this section describes these results.

Existing Culture as a Barrier to Change

Initially, most participants discussed how their existing organizational culture was a barrier for NSOs seeking to engage in organizational change. As Hayden (NSO 1, staff member) explained, the existing organizational culture "hamstrung" their NSOs' ability to move forward with their changes: "You live and die by your culture, right? So, you know, we're still hamstrung by a culture that largely, you know, has elements of mistrust, or lack of trust, lack of confidence." As Nichol (NSO 5, Board member) also explained, existing organizational cultures slowed down the implementation of change initiatives as it created conflict which had to be dealt with:

> That culture of untrustworthiness, or yes, lack of transparency, is causing some of the conflicts and slowing down our ability to change. Now, it's one thing to identify those things, but it's totally another thing to start to build that trust back and make sure your stakeholders feel that they're heard and understand why decisions are being made. So that's where we are right now. We're working on it. But yes, the culture of the organization is causing some of the issues around conflict.

Although participants described the existing organizational cultures using words such as "covert", "distrust", "lack of transparency", "poor", "negative", "a culture of entitlement", "elitist", "high conflict", and the "old boys club", most notably, participants discussed how their NSO's culture was "divided":

> I would say the negative sides to the culture are a big part of it, because I think it just breeds more negativity and more animosity. ... The culture itself, because the culture is still very divided, it's ... very temperamental right now. So, you know, one side feels that there's a divide, then the other side feels like there's a divide, and instead of looking at the greater picture, it just continues to divide. So, I would say that that's probably the culture around the sport and the divisiveness and everything continues to breed that. (Sophie, NSO 1, Board member)

This divided culture was also noted as a contributing factor to the other culture descriptors mentioned above (e.g., distrust, high conflict, elitist). In addition, this divided culture was apparent between the NSO and its different stakeholder groups, namely its members and athletes. The divided culture stemmed from three main sources: (1) the dual mandate challenges, (2) the historical factors occurring in these NSOs, and (3) the systemic financial issues occurring in Canadian NSOs. Each source is described next.

Dual Mandate Challenges

The divided culture was rooted in the dual mandates of NSOs: organizations with a high-performance focus and more recently a focus on increasing participation in their respective sports. Thus, a (sub)culture developed around each of those beliefs: one culture whose followers believed NSOs should focus on high-performance only and one whose followers believed NSOs should extend their mandate to also include participation:

> We sort of have a dual mandate. One is to put more Canadians on international podiums. So, to have a presence on the world [sport] stage. And then also to get Canadians [participating in the sport]. ... And so, we have a split there at the moment of where our focus is. (Sawyer, NSO 4, staff member)

NSO History

Results highlight the power of organizational history as perpetuating an existing culture. As Sophie (NSO 1, Board member) explained, history can cause preconceived notions to spread throughout the years and contributes to the divided culture: “Well, I think there becomes a preconceived notion that bleeds down and has historically bled down for decades.”

In a similar vein, history has the potential of perpetuating existing preconceived notions of “us against them” between the NSO and its members, regardless of whether these factions still exist in the present-day organizations. As Ryan (NSO 2, staff member) explained, although some members perpetuated this divided “us against them” culture, when further asked by staff to describe who “us” and “them” were, many members failed to describe who these people were:

> It’s like people trying to go back to what it was [before], you know? “Us against them.” That’s the thing that comes up the most is “us against them.” So when I was [title of position], people would say like “they” or “them” and I’d be like, “Who’s them? Who is

> it?" I don't know and nobody could ever [provide an answer]. ... It had been like that, so people wanted to go back to – not want, want is not the right word. People are struggling to accept that it's not "us" and "them" anymore, that you're allowed to be here. That it's inclusive, you know? All of us are a part of is.

As such, NSO histories can perpetuate existing divided cultures in NSOs and, in turn, constrain their overall abilities to undergo change.

Systemic Financial Capacity Issues

Participants explained how their NSOs' existing cultures stemmed from financial capacity issues in the Canadian sport system, evident at the individual athlete level as well as the NSO staff level. As Sam (NSO 2, staff member) explained, when Canada hosted the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, NSOs experienced an influx of financial resources from Sport Canada and OTP available to their organization. This funding was targeted to high performance sport to help NSOs and their athletes maximize podium success at the Games. The NSOs' athletes enjoyed full funding to participate in their sport but the influx of money from the system created a culture of entitlement in the NSO, specifically with their athletes. Since then, NSOs have experienced a significant decrease in funding, and some have been forced to introduce fees for athletes seeking to participate in their sport. This created conflict between the NSO and its athletes:

> The way that [the high-performance program] was structured at one time ... there was a lot of favouritism happening. And what it created was a ... really, really big sense of entitlement. And this is not just [our NSO]. ... You talk to any of the sport orgs [organizations], they'll [say] ... it was really a big shift. And I think it had something to do with, you know, the Vancouver home Olympics and the amount of money that came

> into the system. ... There was so much money to do things. You could hire whoever you want. ... There were no athlete fees. ... It was awesome, right? And then it [the funding] kind of flowed through into 2014 and then it dried up a little bit. All the sort of discretionary, little pots of money, sort of dried up and went back to normal. And what happened is you had this big group of athletes that came through that part of the system and, you know, we're like, "Well, why do I have to pay a team fee? Like, you know, I won this medal and I'm the best in the program?" Right? And so, there's this really large sense of entitlement about what is the purpose of what you're doing, which is to represent Canada on the international stage, right? And so those types of people were really hard to deal with and they really soured a lot of others along the way who wanted to sort of jump on that bandwagon too. (Ivan, NSO 2, staff member)

In addition, because of this high-performance funding, NSOs focused their hiring efforts on high-performance staff. This resulted in NSO staff disproportionately centered on high performance, with few staff focused on participation. As Andy (NSO 4, Board member) explained, this led to an NSO culture centred on high performance:

> I think because much of the funding and so many of the staff are about the high-performance side, the culture remains about that. Versus being able to embrace the non-high-performance side, the recreational [participation] side. ... So it's a challenge to change that mindset and that culture, especially when probably 80% of the staff for sure in [Name of NSO] [are high-performance focused].

In sum, the results highlight how an existing negative culture can constrain NSOs' change processes due to organizational issues around NSOs' dual mandates and history as well as systemic issues in the financial capacity of sport system.

Culture Change as an Enabler of Organizational Change

NSOs recognized the barriers created by their existing organizational culture and, thus, chose to engage in culture change. As Sydney (NSO 1, Board member) explained, a strong and supportive culture is critical for engaging in organizational change:

> You need a really strong culture that's supportive of change because change is hard enough. If you got people resisting change and giving everybody in the office and on the Board a hard time about it, it's never going to freakin' happen regardless of how much money you have, you know? So, I think culture is super important.

When engaging in culture change, participants discussed several key elements which helped facilitate this particular change: culture workshops, facilitators, turnover and, continuously reinforcing the culture changes. Each is described next.

Culture Workshops

Participants noted how culture workshops or meetings among different stakeholder groups like staff, Board, and NSO members were helpful for facilitating culture change. In these workshops, stakeholders would collaborate on developing the "new" culture, rather than it being created by senior leaders only. The workshops allowed NSOs' various stakeholder groups to express frustrations and provide input on the culture changes, thereby increasing their acceptance and support for the change:

> So, we did a whole bunch of culture work and seminars and team dynamics workshops to set this in motion and really put the emphasis on the athletes being a huge part of leading this with all the staff as the biggest support mechanism, right? (Sam, NSO 2, staff member)

Facilitators

As a starting point in NSOs' culture change, some NSOs hired a facilitator to help lead workshops. These facilitators focused on group dynamics by identifying stakeholders' personalities:

> We did bring in a facilitator. He's really an HR [human resources] guy ... but he's worked for like hockey teams, and it was pretty interesting. He brought in these personality profiles and like put [you] up on the scales of where you are and all kinds of different metrics. And what it did was it helped identify why maybe two individual people can't help but butt heads on everything. And so, what it helped was to just bring some awareness to people. Like, "Oh yeah. I tend to do this, and this person tends to do this and we're going to clash." (Sam, NSO 2, staff member)

Turnover

Next, participants identified turnover as a factor which enabled change. This turnover happened from natural cycles of stakeholder turnover (e.g., Board member terms ending, athletes retiring, staff moving on to other positions) but could also be achieved more explicitly (e.g., relieving a person from their position):

> [Turnover] provides a big opportunity to influence the new people into the right direction. And then all of a sudden, you have a greater pool of people that are wanting and driving organization in the right path and change becomes, I think, a little bit quicker. (Sam, NSO 2, staff member)

As Sam noted, turnover facilitated change as it allowed the organization to "influence" incoming people away from the existing, divisive culture.

Culture Change Reinforcement

Finally, several participants discussed difficulties associated with implementing and maintaining culture change. In particular, Sam (NSO 2, staff member) discussed the importance of engaging in continuous culture reinforcement to ensure culture changes do not slip back: "Culture takes a very long time to change and it's exhausting really because it can slip back pretty easily unless you are diligent and pressing it forward and addressing things and having very difficult conversations often."

In sum, NSOs recognized issues with their existing, divided cultures and chose to engage in culture change before other types of organizational changes (e.g., governance change, structure change). As discussed in the next section, these culture changes enabled other types of organizational changes.

Organizational Culture Enables Organizational Changes

Participants discussed how organizational culture can either enable or constrain NSOs' ability to engage in organizational change (e.g., organizational structure change, policy changes):

> Your biggest barrier to change is acceptance of the change. So does your culture, does the organization you have, does it have a culture of accepting change? And if it doesn't, you're going to have all sorts of issues. So, before you even think of changing [other] things, the first thing you got to change is the culture. (Denver, NSO 2, Board member)

As Ashton (NSO 2, Board member) noted, a new organizational culture, which focused heavily on accountability in this NSO, enabled other types of changes to take place, namely changes in their policies and processes linked to accountability practices:

> But the real transformation, I would say, was that that culture change led to our ability to ... make all the other little changes, let's say, or really make sure that it [the other changes] sticks instead of just being lip service.

In sum, the results highlighted how improving a poor organizational culture can enable other organizational changes to take place.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study demonstrates that organizational culture can both enable or constrain organizational change in NPSOs. The findings support Clausen et al. (2016) who argued that culture was a barrier and driver of change. Extending the work of Clausen et al. (2016), the present study goes further to explain how culture, in this case a divisive culture, is a barrier to engaging in change as it creates conflict which NSO leaders must address. But, this study also highlights how changing a culture first can enable or facilitate other organizational changes to take place. This aligns with Amis et al.'s (2004) recommendation to change high-impact elements (e.g., values) first in a change program.

The results also demonstrate how the dual role of organizational culture evolves during the change process. Depending on the role it embodies, organizational culture can either enable or constrain organizational change at various points in the change process – in this case, initially constraining the change process but once altered (to be more positive), enabling change. As such, the findings support existing claims about the dynamism of organizational culture over time (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Cruickshank et al., 2015; Feddersen et al., 2020; Feddersen, Morris, Abrahamsen, et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the results highlight some consistent aspects across NSOs' organizational culture around the prevalence of the divisive culture. Most NSOs experienced a "divided culture" demonstrating the consistent aspects of cultures at the organization level across a particular group of similar organizations (i.e., NSOs). This finding sheds light on the systemic cultural

issues in Canadian NSOs, bolstering recent claims in the sport media (e.g., Ewing, 2022; Spencer, 2022).

This study also supports the idea that organizations experience fragmented subcultures (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Slack & Hinings, 1992) which are at times competing and "acting as sources of conflict and competition" (Colyer, 2002, p. 323). This finding is consistent with Slack and colleagues' seminal work on organizational change in NSOs in the 1980s-1990s and early 2000s who also noted fragmented, counter-subcultures in NSOs (e.g., Amis et al., 2002, 2004a; Slack & Hinings, 1992). In their case, these subcultures developed around volunteers versus paid staff as well as high-performance versus participation; in other words, fragmented cultures were role-based and strategy-based. In contrast to these previous studies, this research found fragmented cultures no longer centered on role-based issues (i.e., volunteers versus paid staff) but rather on strategy-based issues – specifically, on the mandates and thus strategic direction of NSOs. The contracting results could be explained by the contemporary nature of NSOs, which – as Parent et al. (2021) found – no longer operate in an informal, "kitchen table" style. Since NSOs now operate in a more professionalized manner with paid staff central to the operations of the organizations and volunteers responsible for its overall governance (Parent et al., 2021), these structural changes arguably resulted in a shift in the type of culture fragmentation experienced in these organizations.

In addition, the nature of the culture challenges faced by NSOs could also be explained by (1) internal stakeholder pressures, (2) economic pressures, and (3) system-based pressures. First, the internal stakeholder pressures stemming from the sport system structure, where – as this study highlighted – many smaller P/TSOs were more concerned with participation, than high-performance. Second, economic pressures NSOs face as a result of stagnant or declining

funding could have led these organizations to seek to develop participation-based programs and the revenues associated it them. Third, system-based pressures from funding bodies such as Sport Canada and OTP could have caused a shift in the strategic focus of NSOs. Funding partners themselves are beginning to focus more on participation, rather than exclusively on high performance. For instance, recent OTP discourse used in a news release highlights this potential focus shift: "[OTP] believes in the value that participation in sport and physical activity at all levels – from the playground to the podium – holds for creating healthy, vibrant communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast." (SIRC, 2021, para. 4). In a similar vein, Sport Canada has recently pledged three million dollars for initiatives targeted to increasing women and girls' participation in sport (The Canadian Press, 2019). Sport Canada also announced a *Community Sport for All Initiative* specifically targeted toward sport participation (Canadian Heritage, 2021).

Linked to this third point, the present study responds to Feddersen et al.'s (2020, p. 13) call to consider whether "changes to funding conditions influence the context for culture change." Although not the original intent of the study, the results highlight how systemic factors in NSOs' external environment – in this case financial changes in the Canadian sport system – can constrain their change processes as these factors impact their organizations' cultures and subcultures, which in turn, then impact other broader changes (cf. Feddersen, Morris, Abrahamsen, et al., 2021).

In relations to culture change, there are several findings worth discussing. Feddersen et al. (2020) concluded that "organisational culture is not an attribute that can be manipulated at will." The present study's findings appear to contradict this assertion in that NSO leaders can engage in a culture change by "manipulating" an organization's existing culture through tools and strategies such as culture workshops, facilitators, and stakeholder turnover. Workshops allow

a variety of stakeholders to be part of the change, supporting Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) recommendation to have the entire organization involved in the change process. In addition, the study supports Hemme et al. (2021) who discussed the need to consistently reinforce change initiatives. Changing organizational culture requires an enduring, long-term view (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016). Persistent reinforcement is critical in preventing organizational cultures from reverting back.

Finally, the importance of organizational context and histories in influencing organizational change outcomes cannot be overstated. This is especially relevant for organizations with new/incoming staff and Board members tasked with leading change. If they are from outside of the sport, these individuals may not understand the historical wound which may lead to stakeholders (e.g., existing staff, members, athletes) to having negative perceptions of the changes and, in turn, resist change. Thus, new/incoming staff members should first understand the organizational context by, for instance, turning to existing stakeholders who hold institutional knowledge and can provide gaps in knowledge (e.g., existing staff, Board, or committee members with longer tenure; cf. Thompson, 2018).

Contributions

The study contributes to both theory and practice. In relation to theory, although the study's findings support existing literature, there are several novel findings which contribute to existing understanding of organizational culture and change worth discussing. First, the study contributes to existing understandings of organizational culture and change beyond examining culture change. That is, findings highlight not only the dual role of organizational culture during a change process as previously stipulated, but also the dynamic nature of organizational culture during change, where culture takes on different roles during the change process. Second, findings

highlight the systemic issues contributing to existing, negative NSO culture, which, in turn, create conflict and constrain organizational change processes. Third, the study contributes to existing understandings of organizational culture and change as it demonstrates how a culture change – through workshops, facilitators, and turnover – can be used to manipulate an organization's existing negative culture, thereby enabling future changes. Finally, this study moves beyond the simplistic variable views of organizational culture and answers Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) call to examine the complex and dynamic process of organizational culture. The study supports the use of Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) perspective in the case of organizational culture and change in NPSOs, thereby extending its contextual boundaries (cf. Whetten, 1989).

In terms of practical contributions, the study's findings help managers understand the role organizational culture plays and its importance in organizational change initiatives. Specifically, organizations which have more disruptive cultures should seek to engage in culture change first, before embarking on other types of changes. This can be done by using workshops, facilitators, or turnover. Findings also highlight the importance of reinforcing culture changes on an ongoing basis; this can be done by aligning other organizational elements such as processes and policies with the new culture. Finally, sport managers could use annual check-ins or reviews to facilitate and reinforce culture change.

Limitations and Future Directions

In terms of limitations, there are several stakeholder voices which were omitted in the study, including external stakeholders such as NSO members and athletes. Although the research purpose did not initially necessitate these voices, the results indicate a potential need to include them in future research given the impact organizational culture and change has on these groups.

As such, researchers should consider expanding future organizational culture and change studies to stakeholders (e.g., athletes, members) beyond staff and Board members in an effort to understand the scope and impact of organizational culture and change in NSOs (cf. Thompson & Parent, 2021). This could potentially shed light on the diverse subcultures that exist and how stakeholder groups navigate these subcultures and organizational changes.

In addition, given the time needed to change a culture, future research should examine organizational culture and change in real-time over an extended period of time. Longitudinal studies in sport have demonstrated the benefits of examining organizational change overtime (e.g., Amis et al., 2004a, 2004b; Kikulis et al., 1995b). This longitudinal approach would better highlight the influence of, for example, reinforcement strategies. Finally, given the systemic issues found, future research could broaden the scope of this research to not only organizational-level culture, but also culture at the systemic level. Depending on the research objectives, this could be done through, for instance, interviews, focus groups, observations, or a combination of these methods, providing further insight into the connections between organizational- and systemic-level culture change issues.

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Chapter IV: Organizational Change and Organizational Politics in NPSOs: Interests, Conflict, and Power

Thompson, A. & Parent, M. M. (In preparation). Organizational change and organizational politics in NPSOs: Interests, conflict, and power. *European Sport Management Quarterly*.

Introduction

Organizational politics is central to organizational change (Buchanan & Badham, 1999) and is defined as, "those activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices" (Pfeffer, 1992, p. 7). Power, in this case, is "the potential ability to influence behaviour, to change the course of events, to overcome resistance, and to get people to do things that they would not otherwise do" (Pfeffer, 1992, p. 30). Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016) argued political actions such as bargaining, negotiating, and persuading are innate, not only in organizational processes overall, but in organizational change in particular. Organizational change is defined as the process by which organizational characteristics, activities, or ideas are altered (cf. Van de Ven, 2021).

Despite its importance, Burnes (2017) asserted organizational politics remains a poorly understood aspect of organizational change. In the management literature, seminal works which had previously overlooked political issues have recently acknowledged their importance in organizational change. For example, the first edition of *The Handbook of Organizational Change and Innovation* by Poole and Van de Ven (2004) omitted discussions around organizational politics. But, in their second edition, the authors discussed why they added new perspectives around politics, stating the importance of this topic for organizational change scholars (Poole & Van de Ven, 2021).

The present authors argue this is also the case in organizational change research in sport management. Except for a few key studies (e.g., Amis et al., 2004; McLeod et al., 2021), organizational politics has been largely silent in sport management change research. This is problematic because politics has the potential to impact change outcomes, whether positively by

enabling change or negatively by constraining change (Burnes, 2017). Thus, research examining the impact of organizational politics on organizational change is warranted given the continued evidence pointing to high failure rates of organizational change initiatives (Burnes, 2017). The present authors argue politics could help explain these trends given its potential for enabling or constraining organizational change.

In addition, NPSOs could provide a rich context to study politics and change given recent issues around corruption and other politics-related issues (Chappelet, 2018; Thompson et al., 2022). For example, the Canadian men's rugby players recently boycotted their training camp in an effort to prevent their NSO from making changes in the structure of the national team program, thus anecdotally highlighting how politics could constrain organizational change (Davidson, 2018). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how organizational politics enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This study follows the process approach to change. Unlike other approaches where change is characterized as having a distinct start and end point (Kotter, 2007; Lewin, 1951), the process approach views organizational change as ongoing (Dawson, 2019). Change can occur in many different areas in organizations such as, structures, systems, strategies, processes, people, technology, products, and culture (see Table 4.1; Daft, 2021; McCann, 1991; Slack & Parent, 2006). During organizational change, organizations can engage in these various types of changes simultaneously (cf. Heckmann et al., 2016; Meyer & Stensaker, 2006).

The next section begins by conceptualizing organizational politics then presents an overview of existing research and identifies key gaps. Following this, Morgan's (2006) framework of organizational politics comprised of interests, conflict, and power is presented.

Table 4.1

Types of Organizational Change

Type of Change	Definition
Systems, structures, and strategy change	Systems, structures, and strategy change includes altering the administrative aspects of the organization (e.g., organizational structure, policies, strategy, and budgeting, reward, control, and information systems).
People change	People change "involves modifications to the way people think and act and the way they relate to each other" as well as changes in the number of people in the organization.
Product change	Product changes include adding, modifying, or removing existing goods or services in an organization's portfolio.
Technology change	Technology change refers to the changes in production processes, including knowledge and skills.
Culture change	Culture change includes altering the values, beliefs, basic assumptions, attitudes, and behaviours of people in an organization.

Note. From Daft (2021), McCann (1991), and Slack and Parent (2006, p. 240)

Organizational Politics

Early developments in organizational politics centred on micro-level politics, or politics at the individual level (e.g., Burns, 1961). These scholars often portrayed politics in a negative light, stirring up images of backroom deals and negotiations which benefit a few people to the consequence of the many (e.g., Buchanan, 2008; Ferris & Treadway, 2012).

However, other scholars began to examine politics at the macro, organizational, level (e.g., Bacharach & Lawler, 1980; Morgan, 2006; Pfeffer, 1992). With this level of analysis came the idea that politics was not negative per se but simply a natural aspect of organizational life. Politics was found to be a necessary component of managers' jobs, and political actions helped shape organizational change (Buchanan, 2008). Arguably, if politics is a natural occurrence of organizational life, then it should be viewed no more negatively than any other aspects such as

culture, strategy, or governance. Bacharach and Lawler (1980, p. 2) proposed that, "in describing the processes of organizations as political acts, we are not making a moral judgment; we simply are making an observation about a process." Thus, in this study, we follow a positive politics perspective and, in turn, view politics from a macro, organizational level.

Organizational Politics and Change

Organizational politics can generate many different emotions and, sometimes, irrational actions and behaviours (Ferris & Treadway, 2012). Burnes (2017) argued organizational politics remains a poorly understood and underdeveloped area of organizational change research. This is likewise the case in sport management.

Most studies in sport management touching on politics have predominantly focused on its sub-components like interests and power (e.g., Amis et al., 2004; McLeod et al., 2021). For example, Amis et al. (2004) examined the role interests and power played in organizational change and found interests served to either enable or constrain NSOs' abilities to change. Different groups either allowed or blocked changes from occurring depending on whether these changes favoured their interests or not. In addition, Amis et al. found NSOs having power structures dispersed or shared among different stakeholder groups were more likely to successfully change.

In addition, other studies on organizational change in sport have alluded to the impact of power during change. Although the focus of these studies was not on power per se, their results highlighted power issues which arose when implementing change. For example, Danylchuk et al. (2015, p. 66) found "individuals or groups within an organization may also be successful at accelerating or impeding change based on the power they hold within the organization" while Riehl et al. (2019, p. 6) found "participants acknowledged the power and control that Board

members have within an organization and the influence they have within the change process." Although Danylchuk et al. (2015) and Riehl et al. (2019) did not provide further analysis on these power issues, these studies do articulate the prevalence of power – and thus possibly politics – in sport organizations. Thus, this present study builds off these findings to explore issues of power – and most importantly – politics in organizational change.

Finally, we argue existing research has incorrectly used concepts of power and politics interchangeably. An example of this issue is Feddersen et al. (2021, p. 313) who noted: "Morgan (2006) suggested that examining power relations should involve examining different interests because it can help identify subunits (e.g., groups or individuals) and conflict." However, as presented below, Morgan (2006) suggested interests and conflicts can be used to examine *politics*, not power. In other words, there is a distinction between the concepts of power and politics (Burnes, 2017).

In sum, the literature allude to the potential impact organizational politics has in enabling or constraining organizational change. The present study builds on these initial findings to explore how organizational politics can enable or constrain organizational change. In doing so, Morgan's (2006) framework is used and described next.

Morgan's Organizational Politics Framework: Interests, Conflict, and Power

Morgan (2006, p. 156) asserted that, to understand the day-to-day politics in organizations, researchers must explore the "detailed processes through which people engage in politics." Thus, he suggested politics can be analyzed by understanding the connections between three components of organizations: interests, conflict, and power. Morgan (2006, p. 157) argued this framework provides – through each aspect of interests, conflict, and power – a more systematic way of analyzing organizational politics that makes "the analysis of organizational

politics as rigorous as the analysis of any other aspect of organizational life." The following section explains each part of the framework.

Interests

Interests are the motivations "to enhance or sustain shares of scarce and valued resources" (Hinings & Greenwood, 1988, p. 44) which determine whether individuals act in one manner rather than another (Morgan, 2006). It is the shared interests of different groups which is the focus (Hinings & Greenwood, 1998); different groups in organizations share different sets of interests which can differ from, and often be "at odds" with, other groups. This has implications for organizational change processes as the differing interests can cause conflict related to the changes (planned or emergent; cf. Morgan, 2006). As individuals in organizations seek to protect their own interests, they must generate support by forming interest groups (i.e., a group of individuals who share common goals, objectives, and/or responsibilities) and coalitions (i.e., a grouping of interest groups who are committed to achieving a common goal and will oppose other interest groups who threaten their own goals and interests; Bacharach & Lawler, 1980; Pettigrew, 1973, 1985). Thus, in the case of organizational change, the extent to which varying interest groups and coalitions are content with how their interests are satisfied will become either a pressure for or against change (Amis et al., 2004).

Conflict

When these different groups' interests collide, conflict arises (Morgan, 2006). Although conflict is typically viewed as dysfunctional, it can also be viewed as critical for organizational change, and therefore, for the success of organizations (Ferris & Treadway, 2012; Morgan, 2006): conflict "can have positive effects that include encouraging competition, maintaining a balance of power within the system, and ensuring a reasonably equitable distribution of system

resources (Amis et al., 1995, p. 2). Conflict, whether explicit or implicit, can become institutionalized in an organization's culture (i.e., a culture which unconsciously values conflict; Morgan, 2006). Morgan (2006) argued conflict is not only interpersonal but can equally be embedded in organizations' structural elements (i.e., organizational structures and designs). Amis et al. (1995) supported this claim when they discussed how NSOs' organizational design – consisting of a volunteer Board and paid staff members – could exacerbate conflict. Although their study was not in the context of organizational change, the findings could provide insights for the present study: during organizational change, conflict can arise about the types of changes taking place, if those changes threaten the interests of stakeholders (cf. Morgan, 2006).

Power

Conflicts are resolved through power. Power can be understood as a resource someone possesses and as an influence one has over something or someone else (Morgan, 2006). In other words, power is the ability to influence outcomes through the coordination of activities (Amis et al., 2004). As Amis et al. (2004) argued, power is the driving force of meaningful organizational change; change tends to occur if a new interest group or coalition gains power or if the current dominant interest group or coalition sees change as favourable in keeping their existing power and interests. Pettigrew (1973) discussed the challenges with operationalizing the concept of power for researchers seeking to examine power and politics in organizations. Thus, Morgan's (2006) 14 sources of power provide a systematic way of examining various sources of power as it provides a variety of distinct sources. Table 4.2 defines each of Morgan's sources of power. Power can also manifest at the individual and organizational levels (cf. Slack & Parent, 2006). Morgan's sources of power focus more on the organizational level while other scholars such as Raven and French (1959) and Burns and Stalker (1994) were more concerned with power at the

individual level (Ferris & Treadway, 2012). In the context of organizational change, one could obtain these sources of power and leverage them to ensure their interests are maintained by either allowing or blocking changes from occurring. In addition, these sources of power could be leveraged at different levels during change. All sources of power will be considered in this study.

Table 4.2

Sources of Power in Organizations

Source of Power	Characteristics
Formal authority	Formal authority is "a form of legitimized power that is respected and acknowledged by those with whom one interacts" (Morgan, 2006, p. 166). It is legitimized based on the organizational structure (i.e., position held by someone in the organization).
Control of scarce resources	Ability to control scarce resources such as financial, material, technology, having support from key stakeholders, and important skills.
Use of organizational structure, rules, and regulations	The use of the existing organizational structure (i.e., position) and rules and regulations (e.g., policies and bylaws) as vehicles to gain political control.
Control over decision processes	The control of decision-making processes includes controlling the strategies used to make decisions (e.g., who makes decisions, what committee).
Control over knowledge and information	By having knowledge and information about certain issues, a person can create dependency.
Control over boundaries	Also known as boundary management, refers to controlling the relationship and interactions between elements in an organization (e.g., between different work groups or subunits).
Ability to cope with uncertainty	The ability to cope with uncertainties which can negatively influence an organization's day-to-day operations creates a degree of interdependence and gives power to those who hold this ability.
Control over technology	As organizations rely on technology to conduct their business, having control over this technology and being able to use it to your advantage will give an individual or group power.

Interpersonal alliances, networks, and control of "informal organization"	The use of alliances and networks (e.g., friends, sponsors, mentors, coalitions) provide sources of power where those involved can advance their own interests.
Control over counterorganizations	Counterorganizations such as the creation of trade unions occurs when people build coalitions against those with established power. It is a means of influencing organizations when one is not part of the existing established power.
Symbolism and the management of meaning	When one is able to persuade others to act in ways which promotes their own interests.
Gender and the management of gender relations	The gender-related values in place in organizations which favours one sex (typically male) over the other.
Structural factors that define the stage of action	The structural factors and logics (e.g., economics, race, social class, etc.) which can limit a person's ability to act on their existing power (e.g., a manager may have considerable power from various sources above, but may not be able to act on their power due to poor economic conditions in the environment).
The power one already has	The use of one's existing power to acquire more power.

Notes. From Morgan (2006). See also Pfeffer (1981) and Salancik and Pfeffer (1974, 1977).

Methodology

A collective case study (Stake, 1995) of five Canadian NSOs was employed. NSOs operate at the highest level in a federated model (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2020) and are responsible for governing every aspect of their sport nationally. Their roles and responsibilities include:

> Governing all aspects of a sport within Canada; managing their high performance programs; selecting and managing their national teams; implementing national initiatives to develop and promote their sport; sanctioning national level competitions and tournaments; providing professional development for coaches and officials in their sport; and, proposing and supporting bids for international competitions in Canada. (Government of Canada, 2021, para. 2)

NSOs' internal affairs (e.g., bylaws, election processes, funding reporting requirements) are governed by the NFP Act (Government of Canada, 2018; Parent et al., 2021) and their

funding comes primarily through public funds (e.g., grants), commercial sources (e.g., sponsorship), and membership fees (Parent et al., 2021).

Data Collection

A purposeful and convenience sampling strategy (Andrew et al., 2011; Marshall, 1996) was used which included the following criteria: (a) NSOs located in Canada; and (b) that have self-identified as having gone through one or more of the aforementioned types of changes (e.g., structure, processes, culture, digital technology, people) in approximately the last five years. As change takes time to unfold (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021), this time frame provides an opportunity to explore changes retrospectively and as they occurred in real-time, while also allowing for the exploration of changes occurring before the pandemic.

Although the study's ethics certificate does not permit the disclosure of the NSOs' identities, including any contextual identifying information, the overall sample included Sport Canada-funded NSOs, winter (*n*=2) and summer (*n*=3) sports, as well as Olympic (*n*=4) and non-Olympic (*n*=1) sports. NSOs' total personnel (i.e., staff and Board members) ranged from 12 to 27, with a range of four to 16 staff members and seven to 11 Board members. Akin to Parent et al.'s (2021) archetypes, three NSOs aligned with the Board-led archetype, one with the Executive-led archetype, and one with the Professional archetype. NSO names as well as individual research participant names were replaced with pseudonyms.

Data were gathered from two sources: semi-structured interviews with staff and Board members of each NSO as well as organizational documents. Forty-nine interviews were completed ranging from 41 to 132 minutes in length with an average of 62 minutes. Theoretical saturation was used to determine when to stop conducting interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Legg et al., 2016). An interview guide was developed from previous literature (e.g., Alvesson &

Sveningsson, 2016; Morgan, 2006) and included questions about the participant's background, the changes undergone in their organization, and regarding issues of interests, conflict, and power. The interview guide was pilot tested with an expert who previously worked in NSOs in Canada (Smith & Sparkes, 2016).

Documents, such as NSOs' bylaws, strategic plans, annual reports, and policies were gathered from the NSOs, either from their websites or the main contact person for the NSO (e.g., the CEO). A total of 151 documents were collected, averaging 30 documents per case (see Appendix D). Documents were collected following the acceptance of each NSO in the research study which provided information related to the research contexts and the specific changes undergone (e.g., bylaw changes, branding changes). In addition, documents were also collected throughout the interview process if relevant (i.e., if a research participant noted the existence of the document and if it related to interviewee's discussions). Documents collected at this point in the research process aided to provide additional supporting contextual information but also for data source triangulation purposes (Braun & Clarke, 2021; see below).

Data Analysis

Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, and sent back to participants for member-checking (Burke, 2016). All data were analyzed following Braun and Clarke's (2022) thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a process of developing patterns across a dataset and includes six iterative phases. First, data familiarization included reading the transcripts, documents, and notes taken during data collection, to gain a deeper understanding of the dataset. Second, data coding included tagging meaningful segments of the data (i.e., interviews and documents) both deductively and inductively as well as latent and semantically. Third, initial theme generation included clustering codes into higher-level patterns or candidate themes.

Fourth, theme development and review included assessing the candidate themes for fit in relation to the coded data and across the dataset. Fifth, theme refining, defining, and naming included writing a short description and narrative of each theme. Sixth, theme write-up included expanding on the short description in greater depth as well as selecting the most vivid and compelling data extracts which illustrate the analytic narrative presented in the results below (Braun & Clarke, 2022). As highlighted in these analytic phases, interviews and documents were central to the study. Documents provided support to what research participants discussed in their interviews. For instance, the presence of documents outlining the roles and responsibilities (e.g., executive limitations of Board and senior staff members such as the CEO provides further support to the discussions on power leveraged by both Board and senior staff members. In the analysis phase two, this was coded under the respective stakeholder power (i.e., *Board power* and *staff power*, respectively) along with the relevant passages from the interviews.

Several steps were taken to enhance the quality of the research findings. Peer-debriefing was employed during weekly meetings between the authors and their colleagues (Burke, 2016). These meetings allowed the authors to engage in reflexive discussions about the data analysis and subsequent results. In addition to the member-checking done with each individual research participant, preliminary findings were subjected to member-checking at the organization level with the NSOs' senior leader (e.g., CEO). Last, data source triangulation from the interviews and documents was used, not as a means of increasing the accuracy of the analysis but to strengthen analytic claims and obtain "a richer or fuller story" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 286).

Results

Results showed how NSOs and their stakeholders used politics to enable or constrain organizational change. Themes centred on how stakeholder groups formed diverging interests, which led to conflicts, and were then resolved by distinct sources of power.

Diverging Interest Groups: Member, Board, Staff, Athlete, and Funder Interests

Participants noted how NSO stakeholders came with their own interests and agendas which could impact the direction and types of changes undertaken. These interests were tied to the type of stakeholder and their role in the NSO ecosystem. Different stakeholders, such as coaches or members (e.g., P/TSO), had different interests which aligned with their mandate:

> Everybody has their own personal interests, right? What's important to a coach who gets paid based on athlete performance versus what's important to a P/TSO who's getting funded by a provincial or territorial body for this, versus what we're trying to do, none of us are actually headed towards the same goal. And so that creates a ton of politics. And so yeah, everybody is basically speaking for their own interests, not for the good of the sport. (Ricky, NSO 4, staff member)

In particular, different interests formed around strategic changes as well as changes in funding allocations. These interests were tied to five different stakeholder groups: NSO members, Board members, staff members, athletes from different disciplines[4], and funding partners. Each is described below.

NSO Member Interests

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[4] The International Olympic Committee (IOC) defines a sport discipline as "a branch of a sport comprising one or more events" (IOC, 2021, para. 2).

NSO members such as P/TSOs came with their own interests rooted in their mandate to run provincial programs. These mandates differed from NSOs' which were focused on their national and international programs: "I mean, the provincial person is trying to run a provincial program or trying to have an event back in their province, right? Whereas [the NSO's] trying to get athletes training and competing internationally. It's just two different perspectives" (Jordan, NSO 4, staff member). These diverging interests stemmed from the different priorities set forth by provincial government requirements and funding differences. For example, some P/TSOs were more interested in high performance while others focused on participation:

> Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories, you know, all of these provinces and territories that have a small population and small programs. In terms of high-performance, it's not necessarily the main reason why they're joining [NSO name]. The bulk of their membership is essentially recreational [participation]. It doesn't mean that they don't have any high-performance programs. But it's kind of minimal. ... From time to time, you can see some good athletes emerging from those provinces, but certainly not on a regular basis. [Then] you have Quebec and Ontario, for example, who may be a lot more focused on high performance. And that can also be a reflection of the provincial and territorial sport policies. In Quebec, it's very high-performance oriented. Most of the P/TSOs get money for performance, and about nothing for recreation [participation]. As opposed to other P/TSOs where it can be the opposite. And we [the NSO] have to satisfy each of those members. ... So, it's kind of a game of tug-of-war very often. But where small P/TSOs feel that they're totally out of the loop in terms of high-performance and they don't feel concerned, it can be a challenge to convince them that there's still great benefits of being members of [NSO name]. And that's part of actually what led to some

> change in trying to rebrand ourselves and follow through with specific programs that will be more pertinent for those P/TSOs that essentially have more recreational [participation] membership. (Hunter, NSO 4, staff member)

Board Member Interests

Board members entrenched in their sport came with their own personal interests which could be aligned with their community or P/TSO region. The nature of the Canadian sport system fostered interests-related issues as Board members were oftentimes voted on by their P/TSOs. Being a Board member brought certain benefits for themselves and their athletes or children (in the case of parents who sit on the Board). For example, benefits could include having the athletes from their provinces/territories and local/community sport organizations compete on the national team or providing a steppingstone for career advancements such as being elected to their respective IF:

> I think that the more people you have on the Board that are in a conflict of interest, the more inclined they are to want to be operational, because there's benefits to being operational. So, like personal benefits, friends' benefits, you can make promises for votes, benefits, if you can touch the operational. So, I think the more political the people are on the Board, and I mean, anybody that thinks that sport is not political has never worked in sport. I mean, it is at every level, but at a national level, it's kind of a whole different beast. And depending on who's on the Board, some of the guys that are more sports specifically based like they're really coming in with their only skillset being that they do [Name of sport], they tend to have international aspirations that supersede the national Board. So, they want to be involved in the operations so that they can kind of

> argue why they should be moving up in the world to be on a Pan-Am Board or an international Board. (Jules, NSO 3, staff member)

Staff Member Interests

Results showed how staff also benefitted from structure changes specifically, as it led to the creation of their roles: “I think my job exists because of the changes” (Ryan, NSO 2, staff member). Thus, staff interests included keeping their jobs. In addition, like members and Board members, staff had their own interests tied to high performance or participation focus, depending on the nature of their role in the NSO: “When we actually introduced more [participation] as being a priority, that caused quite a lot of issues within the staff, because they don’t have people assigned to that task specifically” (Riley, NSO 4, Board member). Last, staff interests in NSOs also included having governance Boards since the governance structure allows them to continue to do their jobs more efficiently as operational decisions are made by them. As Peyton (NSO 3, staff member) explained when asked about whether it was in the staff’s interest to have a governance Board versus an operational Board:

> Oh, it makes your life so much easier. If you don’t have to answer to seven people every day, on seven different items, which is terrible and I’ve been a part of that with operations, where you were literally serving seven people every day, that’s very tough. With a policy Board, they leave you alone. You’re expected to step up at Board meetings and tell them what they want to know and ensure that you know, you’re moving forward with some good things. But yeah, absolutely. A policy Board is much more preferable to an operational Board.

Athletes: Sport Discipline Interests

Participants alluded to how different sport disciplines in NSOs came with their own interests which often stemmed from issues related to resources. In particular, Hayden (NSO 1, staff member) explained how some disciplines had more financial resources available compared to others, describing these disciplines as the "haves" and the "have nots":

> It's a hard one because it's, I would say, largely predicated on access to resources. And our resources are almost exclusively reliant upon Sport Canada. ... So, it makes it hard when you've got two, you know, dominant disciplines; yet, you've got the haves and the have nots. And so, everything flows from there.

As such, different disciplines had financial interests in resource allocation changes made by NSOs. Changes to NSO priorities and subsequent funding structures could impact the financial resources available to different disciplines. As discussed later in this article (see p. 127), these interests around financial resources, led to conflict between disciplines.

Funding Partner Interests

A final stakeholder group which played an important role in NSO changes is funding partners. Given the funding structure of amateur sport in Canada, where most NSO funding stems from partner (e.g., Sport Canada, COC, OTP) grants, funding partners came with their own mandates (i.e., interests) which may or may not align with NSOs' interests or those of their other stakeholders, such as members. Thus, as Charlie (NSO 4, Board member) discussed, NSOs had to navigate these varying stakeholders' interests as well as their own when deciding the direction of the changes, which could create a misalignment in the organizations:

> Staff are being given these funds and these resources for athletes, the highest level, from [a funding partner] who has a different mandate and objectives. So those two are often competing. And it's hard for us as a Board to align ourselves with that because that's not

> who we're accountable to. So it creates a weird tension. I don't know if tension's the right word, just a lack of alignment, I would say, is something I've noticed.

Conflict

As a result of these varying, often opposing interests, conflict manifested in a few different ways: between (a) high performance and participation, (b) the different disciplines, and (c) the NSOs and their funding partners.

One of the main areas of conflict in the NSOs was around what the strategic focus of their organizations should be: high performance or participation. This conflict manifested among staff members and between the NSOs and its members. Between staff members, NSOs' organizational structures caused conflicts as some staff members had roles dedicated to high performance while other staff members were focused on participation. As Jordan (NSO 4, staff member) noted, the nature of these different roles brought about conflict: "I would say it's created friction, for sure ... because I think the majority of your staff are there to win Olympic and Paralympic medals." Conflict about high performance versus participation also manifested between the NSO and its members. Much of this conflict was linked to the different interests stemming from the geographic differences between the members and their provincial/territorial governments' demands:

> I remember my first AGM, several years ago, there was a lot of hostility between different regions [P/TSOs]. ... Some were focused on high performance, some were focused on participation. ... And I sensed there was a real struggle between the two and almost, you know, it was one or the other. ... You know, "if you weren't with us, you're against us." (Tony, NSO 4, Board member)

As one participant noted, the conflicts between high performance and participation stemmed from broader systemic issues in the way the Canadian NSO system is structured and funded:

> I think one of the major stumbling blocks from achieving wholesale progress within the sport or sport system ... is a mindset shift at the federal level – when I say federal, I mean coming from Sport Canada. And I do wish that Canada, as a sporting nation, would rethink its priorities in terms of higher drive success for the national bodies. At the moment, they're rewarded by medals and podium success, whereas it completely negates probably 99% of the population, which is also engaged in sport at some level. (Bonnie, NSO 5, Board member)

In addition, Sophie (NSO 1, Board member) explained how NSOs experienced conflict between their different sport disciplines: "I would say the greatest part of the political rift ... is the different disciplines. ... And everyone wants to believe that their discipline is the best discipline." As Hayden (NSO 1, staff member) described in the interests section above (see p. 125), this conflict was largely predicated on the financial resources available to each discipline, with some disciplines dominating in terms of financial resources.

Finally, as described above (see pp. 126-127), divergent interests between NSOs and their funding partners created a misalignment or conflict in the NSOs, particularly because NSOs are first and foremost accountable to their member organizations (see Charlie's [NSO 4, Board member] quotation on pp. 126-127).

Power

At the time of the study, some conflict experienced by NSOs because of varying stakeholder interests remained unresolved, as Nichol (NSO 5, Board member) noted:

> So, the changes are ongoing, as is the conflict. So again, I can't say we have strong resolution on any matters yet. Again, we've got some direction and I believe we're making positive progress. We're slowly figuring these things out. But, yes, there continues to be conflict.

However, in other instances, various stakeholder groups – mainly Board members, NSO members, staff members, and funding partners – leveraged their power to resolve conflict and safeguard their interests regarding change. Given the governance regulations in which NSOs operate, NSO Boards had the ability to exert power through their decision-making authority. For example, Boards' roles included hiring the CEO and creating parameters in which the CEO operates like setting executive limitations and creating CEO compensation packages which include goals that align with the Board's focus: "We had to restructure the CEO's compensation so that they are focused on what the Board wants them to do" (Sydney, NSO 1, Board member). NSO Boards were also responsible for setting the strategic direction of their organizations, including its mission, vision, goals, and objectives; as such, power could be exerted by changing the strategic direction which would subsequently have a domino effect for other changes. In addition, NSO Board members could engage in governance-related changes to enact power. For example, Sydney (NSO 1, Board member) explained how Board members could exert power through policy changes:

> The only way to [change] is through ... policy. And so, if we [the Board] can continue to drive forth policy [changes] ... inside of the organization, that will effectively change the culture I think as well. But without that policy, people aren't just going to change.

On the other hand, NSO members, such as P/TSOs, used their voting power to maintain their interests. Members could thus control who is elected to NSO Boards and committees.

Elected Board members could be pressured to act in particular ways and engage in specific organizational changes:

> Our Board of Directors are nominated by our provincial and territorial sport bodies. ... So, [these bodies] nominate our Board, and the Board hires our CEO. And our P/TSOs basically are representative of our larger [sport] community. And so, our community has its concerns, right? P/TSOs nominate who they want on the Board that's going to steer the organization the way they think it needs to be steered. (Sawyer, NSO 4, staff member)

Members had the ability to influence bylaw changes, as these have to be voted on at AGMs. For example, in one NSO, members who held more voting power were able to prevent a bylaw change from occurring which would have removed some of their power:

> We proposed a change to the voting structure at the director level. So, whenever we were proposing that we'd move from a tiered voting system to a one-member-one-vote system for director elections, there was a significant amount of opposition from the larger provinces who construed that as them giving up some power or giving up something. ... Their argument was, "Well, why should we do that whenever we provide the funding that we do, and we have larger memberships, so we should be rewarded." I can see that point of view, but it's super self-serving and it doesn't necessarily help open up opportunities for those provinces that are maybe struggling to get levels of participation up or even, dare I say it, get athletes onto a podium. (Bonnie, NSO 5, Board member)

Members also exerted power through the financial resources they already possessed:

> Some of the reluctance to change and move forward is that provinces that are well funded in a certain area, don't see any need to change, because they have all the resources they need. Whereas provinces that may not have funding in those areas are looking for change

> ... have to find a better way, or a more effective way or efficient way, to accomplish these things because they're not able to get the resources they need. (Taylor, NSO 1, Board member)

In addition, staff members exerted their power through various means. Staff members could leverage the NSO's authority to enable certain changes (e.g., policy and procedure-related changes) to take place. In a similar vein, staff members could leverage existing policy and procedure documents when seeking to resolve certain conflicts. Skylar (NSO 3, staff member) best described this sentiment:

> I think it comes to the point where we just have to put our foot down because we are the NSO. ... We have a lot of documents to be like, "it says right here that you have to do it this way." So, then they don't really have a choice.

Staff members could also leverage power by education and training stakeholders about the changes. In one NSO undergoing governance changes, staff and Board members undertook a "governance education program" (Addison, NSO 4, Board member). This training educated stakeholders about the new governance changes whereby the Board went from an operational Board to a governance Board. This education helped Board members understand their new governance roles and allowed the staff to ensure Board members remained at a governance level, rather than operational.

Last, as previously discussed, funding partners are the main source of financial resources for Canadian NSOs. These organizations provide NSOs with annual "core" funding as well as additional "top-up" funding contingent on NSOs' abilities to perform at the international level. Through these funding opportunities, partners could place restrictions on NSOs, which could, in

turn, affect the types of changes they seek to make. This is highlighted by Jules (NSO 3, staff member):

> But the thing is that we really don't have a choice right now [to make specific changes]. So, where the Board used to have sort of full authority to say this is what we want for our organization, now, there's these other external limits coming in. So, I think that's also making them want to be more involved in the stuff that isn't being third-party mandated, but it is causing a greater difference between governance and operations, because the governance stuff is being so regulated that they don't have as much freedom with it.

Funding partners also provided funding for specific change initiatives such as rebranding projects which allow NSOs to engage in change:

> The rebranding, to my understanding, only occurred because either Sport Canada or the [Canadian] Olympic Committee or something like that gave us money to do it. I assume it went out to everybody to modernize themselves a little bit in look and feel. So that necessarily hasn't come out of our budget. (Sawyer, NSO 5, staff member)

In sum, results highlight how various (distinct) stakeholder interests – particularly around high-performance and participation – lead to conflicts around these issues and are ultimately resolved through stakeholders' use of distinct sources of power.

Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, the study's findings demonstrate how organizational politics can be both an enabler and a constrainer to organizational change. Specifically, NSO stakeholders come with diverging interests that either align or oppose proposed organizational changes (cf. Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Morgan, 2006). Thus, stakeholders whose interests stand at odds with the proposed changes could block those changes from occurring and vice versa for stakeholders

whose interests align with the proposed changes. Not only do stakeholder groups' interests differ, the reasons behind these interests also differ. In the case of members, interests appear to be linked to their purposes and mandates which are influenced by the external government environment while staff interests are rooted in the nature of their jobs. Thus, when changes proposed which would impact stakeholders' interests by removing their share of resources (cf. Morgan, 2006), conflicts developed. These conflicts centred on issues between high performance and participation, between disciplines and financial resources, and in a misalignment between NSOs and funding partners. It appears that the nature of the conflicts stems from distinct contextual characteristics of NSOs and the sport system. Thus, these findings point to the need to understand context when examining politics and change, echoing the arguments made by both Pettigrew (1985) and Ferris and Treadway (2012).

In addition, the results support Morgan's (2006) assertions that conflict is not only interpersonal but found in organizations' structural elements. Specifically, structural elements can foster conflict in NSOs – in this case, the types of staff roles and responsibilities perpetuated conflict between NSOs' two mandates: high-performance or participation. These findings support Amis et al. (1995) who also discussed how conflict was not only interpersonal but rooted in structural elements.

As a way of navigating these conflicts and enabling or blocking certain changes from taking place, stakeholder groups leveraged power, supporting Danylchuk et al. (2015) and Riehl et al.'s (2019) initial claims. However, extending these initial studies, the present findings highlight how different stakeholders leveraged distinct sources of power to enable or constrain organizational change. Table 4.3 summarizes the distinct sources of power by stakeholder group, and thus, the different levels. NSO Board, staff, and members can leverage their formal authority

to enable changes that suit their interests, while funding partners leverage their control of scarce financial resources. The use of organizational structure, rules, and regulations – in this case policies – can be used by the Board, staff, and members. NSO Board members can leverage their decision-making processes, through committees such as human resources committees to influence decisions regarding change. Athletes and members can form alliances around certain issues – such as, in this case, high-performance and participation – which can be used to advance their own interests (cf. Morgan, 2006). Structural factors around financial resources can prevent stakeholders such as staff and Board members to act on said power. Finally, through each of these examples, stakeholders already possess certain sources of power which could be used to further gain other sources, such as members who have greater financial resources and voting power. Although these findings support Amis et al.'s findings (2004) regarding power dispersed among stakeholders leading to successful change, the present study goes beyond Amis et al.'s findings to show that, in the context of organizational change, it is not only about power dispersion but more importantly about the distinct sources of power different stakeholder groups can leverage to enable or constrain change (depending on their interests).

In addition, there was no evidence to support the use of seven of the 14 sources of power in Morgan's (2006) framework: control over knowledge and information; control over boundaries; the ability to cope with uncertainty; control over technology; control over counterorganizations; symbolism and the management of meaning; and gender and the management of gender relations. Possible explanations for this absence could be due to the NSO context, such as the lack of counterorganizations (e.g., unions) in this population of organizations or the importance of the used sources of power compared to those not used. As these findings show, various stakeholder groups use different sources of power during change, in turn,

highlighting power at the systemic and organizational levels, rather than the individual level (see Table 4.3). All sources discussed above were at the organizational level, while systemic level sources of power included: control of scarce resources, interpersonal alliances, networks, and control of "informal organization", and the power one already has.

Table 4.3

Sources of Power Used by Stakeholder Group

Source of Power (Morgan, 2006)	Stakeholder Group	Levels of Power
Formal authority	Board members; staff members; NSO members	Organizational
Control of scarce resources	Funding partners	Systemic, organizational
Use of organizational structure, rules, and regulations	Board members; staff members; NSO members	Organizational
Control over decision processes	Board members	Organizational
Control over knowledge and information	Not used	Not used
Control over boundaries	Not used	Not used
Ability to cope with uncertainty	Not used	Not used
Control over technology	Not used	Not used
Interpersonal alliances, networks, and control of "informal organization"	Athletes; NSO members	Systemic, organizational
Control over counterorganizations	Not used	Not used
Symbolism and the management of meaning	Not used	Not used
Gender and the management of gender relations	Not used	Not used
Structural factors that define the stage of action	Staff and Board members	Organizational
The power one already has	Board members; staff members; NSO members; Athletes; Funding partners	Systemic, organizational

In terms of organizational politics more broadly, the study's findings also provide a different image of politics and change in organizations, stepping away from the image of dual coalitions battling for power, where the victor has complete control over the outcomes of change (e.g., Amis et al., 1995, 2004); rather, the present study depicts how different groups of stakeholders (or coalitions) are formed around specific interests who co-exist and use their distinct sources of power to negotiate proposed changes. Thus, change occurs not through a process of domination but one of diplomacy via negotiation. This aligns with a more positive view of politics as opposed to the negative, backroom dealings perpetuated by some scholars (Ferris & Threadway, 2012).

The study's findings also highlight the systemic issues in NSOs' ecosystems which contribute to their organizational politics. In particular, the funding structure in the sport system appears to be a root cause of much of these interests and subsequent conflicts as stakeholders (e.g., staff, members, athletes) seek to maintain their financial "piece of the pie." As such, in the context of change, politics should not only be considered at the organizational level but also at the system level in terms of enabling or constraining organizational change.

Finally, the study highlights how politics should be examined using a multi-dimensional framework like Morgan's (2006). Specifically, the findings demonstrate the interplay between interests, conflict, and power as a means of understanding how politics enables and constrains organizational change. Examining only one concept provides a limited view of politics and change. For instance, looking only at power would have noted the different sources of power NSOs can use to enable or constrain change; however, it would have failed to provide insight into the underlying rationale – why certain stakeholders use distinct sources of power. These reasons can only be known if interests and conflicts are also taken into consideration. For

example, how NSO members were able to block certain bylaw changes from occurring simply shows how they were able to block these changes. However, when taking into consideration their interests and conflicts, one can see these were motivated by a perceived loss of financial resources by some members. Thus, researchers and practitioners are in a better position to negotiate change when they understand where their various stakeholders are coming from. As such, during change, NSOs should determine which source of power they possess and use that to either block or enable change to take place.

Contributions

The study contributes to both theory and practice. The study highlights how organizational politics – through interests, conflict, and power – can shape organizational change processes by either enabling or constraining change, answering recent calls on this topic (e.g., Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). In addition, the study demonstrates the value in examining organizational politics from a multi-faceted framework like Morgan's (2006), as it provides a means of conceptualizing a vague and intangible concept (Bacharach, 1989; Corley & Gioia, 2011), via three components: interests, conflict, and power. This demonstrates the suitability of Morgan's (2006) framework in the context of organizational change research. In addition, the study shows the applicability of Morgan's (2006) framework in the context of NSOs and organizational change, extending its contextual boundaries (cf. Whetten, 1989). Last, the study highlights how power is simultaneously leveraged by different stakeholders and levels during organizational change.

Practically, the study highlights how different stakeholders have distinct sources of power which they can use to manage change (i.e., enable or constrain change) – for example, how athletes can form alliances while members can leverage voting power. As such, during

organizational change, sport managers should determine the stakeholders involved in, or impacted by, the change process and determine what source(s) of power they possess and determine if these sources will enable or constrain the proposed changes, moving to mitigate negative impacts.

Limitations and Future Directions

The perspectives obtain in this study were limited to staff and Board members. As such, the author did not speak directly with members, apart from those who sit on the Board. Future research should consider expanding the scope of perspectives to external stakeholders (e.g., members, athletes, funding partners) as this has been previously shown to provide rich insight into organizational change (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021).

In addition, the study focused on the organization as the unit of analysis which could explain the lack of individual-level sources of power found. As such, future research could focus on incorporating more individual level perspectives as well as – based on the study findings – examining organizational politics and change at the systemic, organizational, and individual levels. This would further highlight the connections and impacts between the different levels (i.e., system, organizational, and individual levels) during organizational change in NPSOs. This could be done through interviews or focus groups with the various stakeholders mentioned above (e.g., staff and Board members, athletes, funding partners).

Finally, research study was limited to NSOs in Canada. Future research could consider issues of macro-organizational politics and change in different contexts, such as other types of NPSOs in different countries, which would further explore the contextual boundaries and contribute to further theory development (cf. Whetten, 1989). This is particularly relevant given the contextual issues found in this study regarding interests, conflict, and power.

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Chapter V: Exploring Digital Technology and Organizational Change in NPSOs

Thompson, A. & Parent, M. M. (In preparation). Exploring digital technology and organizational change in NPSOs. *Managing Sport and Leisure*.

Introduction

Digital technology, such as the Internet, big data analytics, cloud computing, mobile connectivity, and social media (Moreira et al., 2018), has transcended society and organizations. In this digital revolution, organizations must adapt and integrate digital technology or fail to survive (Neugebauer, 2018; Ready et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the use of digital technologies in organizations, as many people began working remotely (Alexander et al., 2020; Van de Ven, 2021).

Digital technology has been categorized into small "d" digital and big "D" digital (Stone, 2019), with each corresponding to the types of discussions existing in the literature and the scale in which digital technology impacts organizations. Small "d" digital refers to micro-level impacts of digital technology like when organizations incorporate new digital tools and change communication and information technology (IT) systems. Big "D" digital – also known as digital transformation – refers to macro-level impacts of digital technology like when organizations leverage digital technology to "enable major business improvements" (Fitzgerald et al., 2013, p. 2). For instance, in LEGO's digital transformation efforts, the organization integrated digital technology in its strategy (referring to its business strategy as a *digital business strategy*) and structure (i.e., changing its structure by moving information technology (IT) employees from their own isolated function to other functional areas in the organization like marketing and human resources; Thompson & Parent, in press). The focus of this article is on both small "d" and big "D" digital technology in organizations.

Digital technology in organizations has permeated many different areas of sport management research, including research directly related to digital technology like social media, artificial intelligence, and blockchain technology (e.g., Naraine, 2019a, 2019b; Naraine &

Wanless, 2020; Pegoraro, 2014), as well as research indirectly related to digital technology, like virtual volunteering (Lachance, 2021). One area of research which has been slower to acknowledge and understand the potential impact of digital technology has been organizational change (Thompson & Parent, in press), especially in NPSOs that face significant capacity issues (Parent et al., 2018), which could be improved by digital technology. Organizational change is defined as the process by which organizational characteristics, activities, or ideas are altered (cf. Van de Ven, 2021). Change initiatives are failing at alarming rates (Burnes, 2017); with the growth of digital technology in society and the need for organizations to adapt to these trends, understanding the enabling or constraining impact of digital technology on organizational change in NPSOs is warranted. Research examining digital technology and organizational change in NPSOs has focused at the small "d" level and on one aspect of digital technology like social media (e.g., Naraine & Parent, 2017a). There is a need to expand existing understandings of digital technology in NPSOs beyond social media and explore digital technology and change at both small "d" and big "D" levels.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how digital technology enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs. To address this research purpose, it is important to first understand the nature of digital technology use in NPSOs (i.e., focus on small "d" digital) and then explore how these digital technologies enable or constrain other organizational changes (big "D" digital). Thus, the study's research questions are: (1) How are NPSOs integrating digital technology in their organizations? and (2) How does digital technology enable or constrain organizational change in NPSOs?

Literature Review

The following section provides an overview of organizational change in sport, followed by digital technology and organizational change in NPSOs specifically.

Organizational Change in Sport

Organizations can undergo change in a variety of areas like strategy, structure, systems, processes, culture, people, products (goods and services) and digital technology (Daft, 2021; Slack & Parent, 2006; Thompson & Parent, 2021). Changes in structures, strategy, and systems includes “modifications to areas of a sport organization such as its division of labor, its authority structure, or its control systems.” (Slack & Parent, 2006, pp. 239-240). Culture change includes changes to the values, beliefs, basic assumptions, attitudes, and behaviours of people in an organization (Daft, 2021). Changes in people includes changes in staff and other human resource personnel (e.g., Board members) in addition to their skills, abilities, and commitments to the organization. Changes in products refers to when an organization alters or removes an existing good or service or when they add new products to their existing portfolio (Daft, 2021; McCann, 1991; Slack & Parent, 2006). Of interest to this study, technology change refers to the changes “that occur in an organization’s production process, the skills, and methods it uses to deliver its services, or its knowledge base” (Slack & Parent, 2006, p. 239). As discussed below, technology also includes the incorporation of new digital technologies in organizations.

Existing research on organizational change in NPSOs is vast. Among other topics, scholars have examined why organizations change (e.g., Legg et al., 2016) as well as the different types of changes such as structure and design changes (Amis et al., 2004b; Kikulis et al., 1992, 1995), culture changes (e.g., Cruickshank et al., 2015; Cruickshank & Collins, 2012; Feddersen et al., 2020; Feddersen et al., 2021; Frontiera, 2010; Hemme et al., 2021), program

changes (e.g., Danylchuk et al., 2015), and leadership changes (e.g., Flint et al., 2014; Soebbing et al., 2015; Soebbing & Washington, 2011). Despite the plethora of literature on organizational change, research shows the majority of organizational change initiatives fail (Burnes, 2017; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). Ewenstein et al. (2015) argued existing change models are outdated and neglect to consider the contemporary issues organizations face – such as digital technology – thereby contributing to the failure rate of change initiatives. Ewenstein et al. also noted many change models and theories pre-date the digital technology boom of the past two decades; an assumption exists that these pre-digital change models explain the phenomenon in today's technologically focused world (Ewenstein et al., 2015). However, this is problematic given the general impact of digital technology on contemporary society and organizations. Existing research has highlighted how digital technology impacts other aspects of organizations like human resources (e.g., Lachance, 2021), strategy (e.g., Naraine & Parent, 2017b), and processes (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021), echoing Ewenstein et al., one could argue that this is no different for organizational change. As such, it becomes important to consider digital technology in organizational change management practices.

Digital Technology and Organizational Change in NPSOs

Daft (2021, p. 12) argued "the digital revolution has changed everything – not just how we communicate with one another, find information, and share ideas, but also how organizations are designed and managed, how businesses operate, and how employees do their jobs." In the context of organizational change, digital technology can hold a dual role: it can be a type of change (referred to as "small 'd' digital technology change) or it can be a tool to leverage other changes mentioned above (e.g., strategy, structure, culture, people, products). Although research on digital technology has predominantly focused on the for-profit context (Thompson & Parent,

in press), in the past few years, scholars (e.g., Hoeber & Hoeber, 2012; Naraine & Parent, 2016, 2017a, 2017b) have begun to empirically examine the use of digital technology in NPSOs. The focus of these studies has been on small "d" digital technology change, rather than on big "D" digital transformations.

Small "d" Digital Technology Change

In the context of organizational change, small "d" digital technology change includes the addition, modification, or removal of digital technologies in organizations, such as changes in communication and IT processes, the use of new platforms to help with operations, and the use of social media (Thompson & Parent, in press). Research on digital technology in NPSOs has been largely centered on one form of digital technology, social media. For instance, Naraine and Parent (2016, 2017a, 2017b) discussed how NSOs adopted social media practices in their organizations. Naraine and Parent (2017b) highlighted how NSOs adopted social media practices because of expectations from stakeholders; despite this adoption, the authors found these changes were only minor or "subdued" due to capacity issues. In other words, the study's findings demonstrate how one type of digital technology, social media, remained at a small "d" digital level, rather than a big "D" digital transformation. Naraine and Parent (2017a) noted the benefits of this form of digital technology for NSOs, including how it was an additional avenue to promote their organization and communicate with stakeholders, increasing innovation and creativity around the NSOs' communication practices, and the added credibility gained among stakeholders from having a social media presence. Naraine and Parent (2016) provided further evidence to suggest NSOs used social media for communication purposes, particularly as a means of reporting, informing, and promoting content to stakeholders.

In turn, Hoeber and Hoeber (2012) examined a technological innovation in an adult soccer league. Although we agree with the authors that organizational change and innovation are distinct bodies of research, in this case, their findings demonstrate how NPSOs are engaging in digital change. Specifically, organizers of the adult soccer league in their study changed their game sheets from a paper-based format to an electronic version. The electronic scoring system was used to register players prior to the games using ID cards, keep track of each player's statistics, and record the scores at the end of each match. Results showed how the electronic system was more beneficial for the NPSO as it allowed them to standardize these processes across the organization and increasing staff efficiencies as it removed tedious post-game data entry tasks (Hoeber & Hoeber, 2012).

Beyond these studies which explicitly examined digital technology, other researchers have indirectly discussed digital technology in NPSOs. Thompson and Parent (2021) examined the impact of organizational change on the effectiveness of one NPSO. Part of the organization's changes included a digital technology change through the development of an online platform to help with the management of their operations. Although not the focus of their study, the findings highlight how some NPSOs are integrating digital technology change in their organizations.

Despite these studies which, directly or indirectly, focus on a specific type of digital technology change (e.g., social media, a technological innovation, a new online platform), existing research has yet to understand NPSOs' broader integration of digital technology in their organizations. This is problematic given the prevalence of digital technology in society requiring all organizations – including NPSOs – to adapt to this environmental trend or risk failure (Neugebauer, 2018; Ready et al., 2020). Thompson and Parent (in press) have called for

empirical studies on the topic. Thus, the present study answers this call and empirically explores the integration of digital technology in NPSOs.

Big "D" Digital Transformation

Unlike digital change which focuses on implementing new digital technologies, digital transformation is about using new digital technologies "to enable major business improvements" (Fitzgerald et al., 2013, p. 2); it is the ability for organizations to leverage digital technology to enable other non-digital changes in their strategies, structures, systems processes, people, and/or cultures (Stone, 2019; Thompson & Parent, in press). One important assumption in this definition is the focus on digital technology's enabling features. Arguably, if digital technology can enable these types of changes to occur, it could also potentially constrain these changes from occurring.

In the context of organizational change research in sport management[5], Thompson and Parent (in press) noted the lack of empirical research examining digital transformations, especially in NPSOs. The authors go on to suggest how digital transformation could manifest in NPSOs. In particular, digital transformations in NPSOs could occur in three main areas: strategy, structure and designs, and human resource practices. Digital transformations in NPSOs' strategies involve incorporating aspects of digital technology in their organizations' strategic direction (i.e., their mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives). Digital transformation in structure and design could be expressed through NPSOs that operate in a complete (or partial) virtual model. These organizations would leverage digital technologies, such as Zoom, Microsoft 365, G Suite to function. In the context of human resources, Thompson and Parent (in press)

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[5] There is a body of research on digital transformation in sport marketing research discussing digital transformation (for more information, see the review by Stegmann et al., 2021).

discussed the need for NPSOs to hire digitally-savvy leaders who have the digital skills needed to lead their organizations as well as other staff at other levels in the organization who are also digitally adept. In addition, the authors presented emerging trends regarding NPSOs and digital technology including: (a) the rise of the virtual-based model, (b) the need to develop stronger digital infrastructures, and (c) the increasing importance of cybersecurity.

Furthermore, Thompson and Parent (in press; based on Andal-Ancion et al., 2003) discussed six drivers of digital transformation in NPSOs: (1) the ability for products and services to be delivered using digital technology; (2) the ability for NPSOs to use digital technology to share information with stakeholders; (3) the ability for NPSOs to use digital technology to customize products; (4) the ability for NPSOs to interact in real-time with consumers; (5) the ability for NPSOs to leverage digital technology to standardize processes; and (6) the ability for NPSOs to use digital technology to facilitate relationships with external partners or create alliances.

Researchers (e.g., Andal-Ancion et al., 2003; Bharadwaj et al., 2013; El Sawy et al., 2016; Fenton et al., 2019; Neugebauer, 2018; Stone, 2019) have praised the benefits of digital transformations in for-profit organizations, and this should no less be the case for NPSOs. NPSOs face similar environmental challenges as other types of organizations and thus must also learn to adapt to survive (Thompson & Parent, 2021). As such, it is worth examining digital transformations in these organizations or how digital technology enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs, if at all.

Methodology

The study focused on national sport organizations (NSOs) given that previous research on both digital technology and organizational change has focused on this population of NPSOs,

which provides an opportunity for comparison. Thus, a collective case study (Stake, 1995) was built with five Canadian NSOs undergoing organizational change. The following section provides an overview of the research context, the data collection and analysis methods, and the quality measures followed.

Research Context

As a federated model (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2020), amateur sport in Canada is governed at the national, provincial/territorial, and local levels. NSOs are responsible for governing their respective sport at the national level. Their responsibilities include managing the high-performance program and the national teams, developing and training coaches and officials, promoting the sport through national initiatives, sanctioning national events and competitions, and placing bids for hosting international competitions (Government of Canada, 2021). Their main source of revenue comes from grants (i.e., public funds), sponsorships (i.e., commercial funds), and membership fees (Parent et al., 2021). As NPSOs, NSOs are legislated by the NFP Act which stipulates for example how Board members are elected, bylaw content, and their financial reporting obligations (Government of Canada, 2018; Parent et al., 2021).

NSOs were selected based on a purposeful and convenience sampling strategy (Andrew et al., 2011; Marshall, 1996). To participate, the NSO must be located in Canada, and self-identified as having gone through one or more types of changes (e.g., culture change, digital technology change, structure change, people change) in the last five years. Given that change take several years to materialize (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021), this timing allows us to examine change retrospectively and as it progressed in real-time, in turn, accounting for contextual events (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic).

Although the ethics certificate prohibits the sharing of any identifying information of the Sport Canada-funded NSO, general sample characteristics included winter (*n*=2) and summers (*n*=3) sports, as well as Olympic (*n*=4) and non-Olympic (*n*=1) sports. NSOs' total personnel ranged from 12 to 27, with a range of four to 16 staff members and seven to 11 Board members. In line with Parent et al.'s (2021) archetypes, three NSOs were akin to the Board-led archetype, one to the Executive-led archetype, and one to the Professional archetype. The NSOs' and individual research participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms to protect their anonymity.

Data Collection

Data included semi-structured interviews and documents. A total of 49 interviews were conducted with NSO Board and staff members and were on average 62 minutes in length (ranging from 41 to 132 minutes). Interviews began in October 2020 and ended in March 2021 when theoretical saturation was reached (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Legg et al., 2016). An interview guide was developed based on the above-mentioned literature and pilot tested with an industry expert who previously worked in NSOs (Smith & Sparkes, 2016). Participants were asked about their background in the organization, the changes that occurred/were occurring, the use of digital technology in their organization, and how this technology impacted the changes previously discussed (if at all). Furthermore, once NSOs agreed to participate in the research study, documents were gathered from the NSO directly or through its website (e.g., strategic plans, policies, bylaws, and annual reports) and were used to provide contextual information about the organization and the changes undergone. Additional documents were also gathered during the interview process, should an interviewee reference a document not previously gathered, and thus, became relevant for the study. These documents were useful for gaining a

deeper understanding of the research context and for data source triangulation (Braun & Clarke, 2013; see discussion below). A total of 151 documents were collected, resulting in an average of 30 documents per case (see Appendix D).

Data Analysis

Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were sent to participants for member-checking (Burke, 2016). The dataset was analyzed thematically (Braun & Clarke, 2022) through a set of iterative phases: (1) data familiarization; (2) data coding; (3) initial theme generation; (4) theme development and review; (5) theme refining, defining, and naming; and (6) writing up the themes. The first phase involved reading the transcripts, documents, and notes taken during the interviews to become familiar or immersed in the data. At this point, any interesting idea or thought was noted. The second phase included coding segments of the data (i.e., interviews and documents) which were relevant, interesting, and potentially meaningful in answering the research purpose. Data were coded both deductively (based on the literature; e.g., use of social media) and inductively (e.g., creation of registration software) as well as at the semantic (i.e., capturing meaning at the surface level) and latent levels (i.e., capturing meaning on a deeper, more implicit level). The third phase involved clustering codes into higher-ordered shared patterns (e.g., types of digital technologies used), resulting in initial candidate themes. The fourth phase included re-assessing the candidate themes in terms of their fit both within the theme itself (i.e., the codes that make up the theme) as well as among the other themes in the dataset as a whole. The fifth phase included writing a short synopsis or description of the themes to define their scope and content. The sixth phase involved expanding the initial synopsis to provide a richer and more detailed explanation of each theme and sub-theme. This more detailed description included vivid and compelling data extracts to illustrate the theme and

is presented below. As the above phases demonstrate, data analysis relied on both interviews and documents. Documents were used to provide additional support to what interview participants were discussing. For instance, news releases discussing the implementation of national registration systems provided further information to the researchers. These news releases were coded in phase two along with participants' discussions of registration systems.

Research Quality

In addition to member-checking, several measures were implemented to increase the quality of the research findings. Specifically, through the interviews and documents, data source triangulation was employed. The purpose of triangulation here is not to obtain a more accurate story of the data but to strengthen the analytic claims to obtain a richer and fuller story (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In addition, peer-debriefing (Burke, 2016) was employed via weekly meetings between the authors and their colleagues. These meetings allowed them to share initial ideas regarding the analysis and results and obtain feedback, thereby strengthening the analysis and results.

Results

The results are centered around three overarching themes: (1) digital technology in NSOs: uses, benefits, and downsides; (2) digital technology as an enabler of organizational change; and (3) there is still a long way to go. The following section describes these results in-depth.

Digital Technology in NSOs: Uses, Benefits, and Downsides

Over the years, NSOs have adopted digital technology at a micro level to assist in their operations, in part because many NSOs have transitioned to either hybrid or completely virtual models. Participants discussed the use of various technologies: Zoom, Microsoft Office 365

(e.g., Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint, Teams), G Suite (Gmail, Docs, Sheets, Forms), Dropbox, Email, Samepage, WhatsApp, MailChimp, accounting software such as QuickBooks, Survey Monkey, Adobe Suite, as well as various social media platforms (e.g., Twitter, Instagram, Facebook). The use of these technologies was consistent across all NSOs, regardless of their virtual status. Even NSOs considered by their peers as more "tech-savvy", were still using the basic digital tools described above, supporting the idea that NSOs do not require fancy/high-tech tools:

> Like I was having meetings with a few of my colleagues, you know, after COVID hit, because they were like, "What do you use?" I'm like, "Google Meets." It's not fancy. ... You know, we could be far more fancier than we really are. Sometimes, it's just good old school, kind of, you know, Google Sheets. You don't need a fancy database sometimes. So, I would say that we don't have any secret sauce. We don't have like any crazy host of tech stuff. We're not techy at all. Um, but just leveraging what you have and not, you know, overthinking it. (Hayden, NSO 1, staff member)

For some NSOs, the COVID-19 pandemic introduced them to the possibilities of digital technology in their organizations: "I think for most of these NSOs ... it's been COVID that started to introduce a lot of technology in new ways" (Jordan, NSO 4, staff member). As Sawyer (NSO 4, staff member) explained, the pandemic accelerated some of these digital technology trends in NSOs, which would have traditionally taken much longer to come to fruition: "I think COVID in a lot of ways brought change that maybe would have taken 10 years and it brought it to us in one year." Addison (NSO 4, Board member) further explained how their NSO was relying on in-person meeting or teleconferencing platforms pre-pandemic, but COVID-19 forced

them to meet virtually and helped transition them to videoconferencing platforms like Zoom, which increased stakeholder connections:

> We weren't even using videoconferencing up until COVID. We were still using phone conference calls. And so, one of the positive outcomes from COVID, is that we're able to, I think, create some really interesting connections because of Zoom, right? Like this call [the Zoom interview] is way better, because I can see you, right? That's so much more meaningful to me. And I think our Board meetings are better, and we're feeling more connected, because we can see each other's faces.

Further, the pandemic allowed some NSOs to try virtual models: "So it was a perfect opportunity for us ... to test if the organization was going to be able to hold up with the flexibility of working from home" (Bailey, NSO 2, staff member).

For other NSOs, the pandemic did not impact their technology use as significantly as they were already implementing digital technologies such as videoconferencing platforms. For example, Sydney (NSO 1, Board member) described it as "business as usual" while Hayden (NSO 1, staff member) explained NSOs that were previously digitally savvy were better prepared once the pandemic started: "It was certainly, you know in the context of COVID, a benefit to us already being very comfortable and adept within a virtual world. We didn't have to run into the issues of having to navigate that."

Some NSOs were beginning to develop their own software to help them keep track of important information regarding members, athletes, and events. These software platforms were developed in collaboration with external organizations that bring the digital technology expertise. For example, some NSOs were in the process of creating national registration systems to track

the participation levels in their sport. Avery (NSO 5, Board member) best described this sentiment:

> So, one of the biggest things that the organization did was to create a national registry for people who are going to participate in the sport. And prior to that, it had all been done at the provincial level. So, collecting data was impossible and having a platform that was national in scope and looked national in scope didn't exist. ... And so having the technology that allowed us at a cost-effective level to create a national registry, then allowed the provincial organizations to opt in, not because it was forced on them, but because they could see that it was going to be better and cheaper for them. So, technology allowed us to do a lot of things at a better level at a lower cost.

Respondents discussed the various benefits afforded from these digital technologies such as having information in one central area for Board and staff members (e.g., through Dropbox) and members and athletes (e.g., through the NSO websites), being able to keep track of athlete and member data, and enabling greater connection among stakeholders. The most prevalent benefit identified was how digital technologies like Zoom enabled NSOs to deal with the geographical limitations of stakeholders. NSOs could meet more frequently with different stakeholders which came with both time and cost-related benefits. Dakota (NSO 5, staff member) described this sentiment:

> Canada is obviously a huge country, like four and a half time zones. It's always been very difficult to organize things on a national basis. Access to technology such as this, has really changed how we do many things, because physical presence in a single location is no longer required. And, frankly, moving on past this, we will probably still do many things in this way. ... So, I think it's had some very positive changes, because it's really

> helped to shrink the distances that we have to go. And it's helped, I believe, putting together NSO-P/TSO calls, for example, that we have now. I think it really helped to bring everyone together, bring us all on the same page.

Although participants noted the benefits of digital technology, they also expressed how face-to-face interaction and communication were better. There were downsides to digital technology including stakeholders feeling less connected, being "Zoomed out" or exhausted from the constant videoconferencing, increasing expectations to communicate and engage because it is easier to do via digital technology:

> Some people don't feel as connected because we're not physically coming together. And some of the cooler chats don't happen. ... Everything seems to have to happen on Zoom. ... My days are filled with Zoom meetings. ... I don't know how often you're on Zoom but like, by the end of the day, my eyes hurt. (Brooklyn, NSO 4, staff member)

Digital Technology as an Enabler of Organizational Change

Results showed how digital technology was more of an enabler than a constrainer of organizational change. Specifically, digital technology facilitated communication and engagement among NSOs and their stakeholders during change.

Digital technology enabled better, one-way communication among stakeholders. NSOs could leverage digital technologies like videoconferencing platforms (e.g., Zoom), websites, and emailing to better inform stakeholders about the progress of change. As most participants noted, communication is in and of itself a critical enabler of change as it allows stakeholders to feel like they are a part of the changes and have a say. When stakeholders feel part of the change, it has the potential for reducing the amount of resistance: "The community can become quite polarized very quickly, unless communication is good, and then that can stymie a willingness to move

forward in processes for sure” (Rory, NSO 4, staff member). Thus, these digital technologies facilitated this process given their cost-efficient nature and ability to transcend geographical boundaries (as noted in the previous section). Digital technologies like Zoom also facilitated communication between in-person meetings such as annual general meetings. As Charlie (NSO 4, Board member) described, this provided an opportunity to update stakeholders more frequently about the changes:

> I guess it gives us more abilities to collaborate with our members in between the annual general meeting because we have some platforms in place. Like the [name of committee], they meet also through Zoom. And, you know, our chair attends those meetings, and they can present materials to them. So, I think we have more tools now, maybe than we used to, to keep those connections going in between face-to-face things.

In addition, digital technology allowed for better two-way stakeholder engagement. NSOs could have more frequent meetings via videoconferencing platforms with members to collaborate on specific change projects. NSOs were having virtual town halls with stakeholders like athletes and members as a means of informing stakeholders about the upcoming changes, but most importantly, gaining stakeholder feedback:

> The one piece that I would have to say that the team has embraced, and then that COVID has really helped us take a leap, has been on town halls. So back to engagement and communication. ... That has honestly been a game changer for the organization. (Riley, NSO 4, Board member)

In these town halls, stakeholders could ask questions and share concerns directly with NSO staff and Board members, which fostered greater NSO transparency and accountability:

> I think Zoom has helped. ... It's hard to ignore someone when you're seeing their face. So that has helped break down a couple of walls or tensions. So it's kind of indirect, but I think that has had a big change, and helped support the culture change. ... I think tools like Zoom and the regular monthly meetings gave a way for [our members] to have a bit of a voice. (Mark, NSO 4, staff member)

The town halls also facilitated the communication among members who can share their experiences and best practices related to facilitating change:

> Especially through COVID, nationally, we had provinces that were in full lockdown and others that were almost completely opened up. And so, there was a lot of work that was being accomplished and a lot of dialogue that was going on. You know, particularly as groups were opening up, they were able to benefit from the lessons learned from those groups that had been ahead of them. ... The advantage of technology is that we are finding those opportunities where groups are sharing and finding ways to communicate and facilitate change. (Taylor, NSO 1, Board member)

There is Still a Long Way to Go

Although the above findings point to how digital technology could enable organizational change, participants also noted there is still a long way to go. NSOs saw the value of digital technology in enabling change, but they believed they have yet to fully capitalize on it. For instance, when asked whether or not their NSO leveraged digital technology to implement their changes, Riley (NSO 4, Board member) responded: "Not as well as I would have hoped." Ryan (NSO 2, staff member) also noted how NSOs have yet to leverage digital technologies:

> I don't know if ... we've seen real technological change in how we do things. We all spend a lot of time on our phones and a lot of time on our computers, but we tend to do things maybe the old school way.

Andy (NSO 4, Board member) echoed a similar sentiment: "I don't think we've used technology as efficiently as we could have. ... I think that we maybe haven't been as quick to embrace some of the digital technologies that are there to do a variety of things." The implications of these findings are further elaborated on in the discussion section below.

In sum, digital technology enabled NSOs' change processes – especially culture changes – as it increased the overall communication and consultation with stakeholders, in turn, reducing resistance to the proposed changes. However, NSOs did note that despite the use and value of digital technology in enabling organization change, there is still a long way to go; NSOs have yet to fully capitalize on the benefits digital technologies can bring to their organizations.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to explore how digital technology enables or constrains organizational change in NPSOs, specifically: (1) How are NPSOs integrating digital technology in their organizations? and (2) How does digital technology enable or constrain organizational change in NPSOs?

How are NPSOs Integrating Digital Technology in their Organizations?

The study's findings highlight how NPSOs are leveraging various digital technologies beyond social media, which extends previous work on digital technology and change in sport management (e.g., Hoeber & Hoeber, 2012; Naraine & Parent, 2016, 2017a, 2017b).

These technologies are used to aid with stakeholder communication (e.g., Zoom, MS Teams, WhatsApp) and NSO operations (QuickBooks, Outlook, Dropbox, Same Page, G Suite).

This finding extends Naraine and Parent's (2017a) who found one type of technology – social media – allowed NSOs to better communicate with stakeholders. While the complexity of these technologies remains minimal (cf. Damanpour's, 1987), NPSOs are beginning to integrate more complex digital technologies, such as the development of registration systems, to assist in their operations which help increase overall efficiencies. This finding also echoes those of Hoeber and Hoeber (2012), Hoeber et al. (2015), and Thompson and Parent, (2021).

Results indicated the wide use of videoconferencing platforms (e.g., Zoom, MS Teams, Google Meets). However, this finding is perhaps unsurprising given the COVID-19 pandemic, which has required the development of work-from-home practices (Amis & Greenwood, 2021). The pandemic appears to have had lasting impacts on NPSOs' digital technology use with some NSOs alluding to their continued use of these videoconferencing platforms post-pandemic. In other words, digital technology use in NPSOs has been accelerated by this particular environmental jolt. As Meyer (1982) contended, environmental jolts – or sudden, unpredictable events – provide opportunities to introduce unanticipated organizational change.

Also perhaps unsurprisingly, NPSOs are leveraging social media in their organizations, supporting existing research in this area (cf. Naraine & Parent, 2016, 2017a, 2017b). However, despite the use of social media, the present study's findings demonstrate that social media was a less prevalent point of discussion compared to the other technologies. This finding could be explained by the timing of data collection – during the COVID-19 pandemic – where NPSOs were relying more on other types of digital technologies to operate their organizations (e.g., Zoom).

In sum, the study's findings demonstrate how digital technology remains predominantly at a small "d" level in NPSOs; in other words, NPSOs engage in digital change by incorporating

new digital tools (e.g., new registration platforms). However, there was evidence to support the idea that NPSO are leveraging some digital technologies to enable other changes to take place. The following section addresses these findings.

How Does Digital Technology Enable or Constrain Organizational Change in NPSOs?

The study's findings highlight how digital technology enables organizational change, demonstrating aspects of digital transformation in NPSOs (Thompson & Parent, in press). In addition, despite some NSOs discussing downsides to digital technology, these did not appear to constrain any of the changes undergone in these organizations.

The study supports some of Thompson and Parent's (in press) claims about how digital transformation manifests in NPSOs. In terms of structure and design, the findings did not support the idea that NPSOs are changing their structure and design to integrate digital technology, such as hiring staff members for their specific role or function (e.g., marketing, finance) but who are also digitally savvy. However, the study does highlight how NPSOs are transitioning to virtual models and leveraging some of the aforementioned technologies (e.g., Zoom, Samepage) to do so.

In terms of strategy, the results also showed how digital technology indirectly enables strategic changes: digital communication tools act as a vehicle to enable strategic changes by allowing organizations to inform their stakeholders about the changes and engage them in the process. However, evidence pointing to the ability for digital technology to directly enable strategic change appears insufficient. The results did not point to NPSOs leveraging digital technology to alter their strategy, such as incorporating digital aspects in NPSO strategies. A review of NSOs' strategic plans supports this finding. In similar vein, there was little evidence supporting digital technology's impact on human resource practices: Results did not point to the

integration of digitally specific positions nor the purposeful hiring of digitally-savvy people, contrasting Thompson and Parent’s (in press) recommendations.

In addition, the present study found four of the six drivers of the digital transformation proposed by Thompson and Parent (2021; see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1

Drivers of Digital Transformation in NPSOs

Driver (Thompson & Parent, in press)	Explanation
(1) The ability for products and services to be delivered using digital technology	The use of online registration systems as a means of delivering services to athletes.
(2) The ability for NPSOs to use digital technology to share information with stakeholders	The use of Zoom to deliver information to stakeholders.
(3) The ability for NPSOs to use digital technology to customize products	No evidence found.
(4) The ability for NPSOs to interact in real-time with consumers	The use of WhatsApp to communicate directly with stakeholders.
(5) The ability for NPSOs to leverage digital technology to standardize processes	The use of the national registration systems across the different levels in a sport.
(6) The ability for NPSOs to use digital technology to facilitate relationships with external partners or create alliances	No evidence found in relation to communicating with external partners (e.g., Sport Canada, COC, OTP) but rather communication was focused on internal stakeholders (e.g., Staff, Board members, NSO members, athletes).

Overall, the findings illuminate the extent to which NPSOs are leveraging digital technology to enable broader organizational changes – in other words, engaging in digital transformations. Given the above discussion, it appears that NPSOs are more digital transformation-*light*. This finding is perhaps unsurprising given that these organizations have historically been slower to adopt to technological trends (cf. Damanpour, 1987; Naraine & Parent, 2017b). However, there is promising evidence pointing to the evolution of digital

technology use in these organizations, especially during change, where NPSOs are moving from incorporating digital technology at a small “d” level towards big “D”, digital transformations.

Conclusions

Overall, the study demonstrates how digital technology enables organizational change in NPSOs. The remainder of this paper addresses the study contributions, limitations, and future directions.

Contributions

First, the study extends existing understanding of digital technology changes in NPSOs beyond social media. In doing so, it highlights the variety of digital technologies used by NPSOs to operate their organizations. In addition, the findings demonstrate that NPSOs remain predominantly at a small “d” level (i.e., digital technology as a type of change), indicating that NPSOs do not appear to be sophisticated users of digital technology compared to for instance for-profit organizations (e.g., Thompson & Parent, in press). At the same time, the study also shows that NPSOs are beginning to leverage digital technology to enable other changes to take place, in other words, engaging in digital transformation efforts.

Practically, managers can use the study results to understand what digital tools their NPSO colleagues are using in general and to successfully engage in change. Specifically, the findings demonstrate how NPSOs are using digital tools beyond the popular G Suite or Microsoft 365 software, such as the development of their own registration systems. However, the study also highlights that NPSOs do not need to leverage complex technologies to successfully change and operate; basic tools (e.g., G Suite, Zoom, SamePage) are appropriate enough for this type of organization.

Limitation and Future Directions

The study's limitations surround the time of data collection. As interviews were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, this could have influenced the research findings, such as the types of digital technologies discussed by participants and their potential impact on organizational change. Themes concerning communication through Zoom and other videoconferencing platforms could be reflective of the circumstances at the time. As such, future research could consider re-examining digital technology and change in NPSOs post-pandemic to understand the long-term effects (if any) of the pandemic on digital technology changes in NPSOs. Potential research questions associated with this line of inquire could include: What type of digital technologies are NPSOs leveraging post-pandemic (if at all)? How has the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital technology use in NPSOs long-term? In addition, future research could consider examining more complex digital transformations in NPSOs – for example, through action research, researchers could work directly with NPSOs interested in integrating digital transformations in their organizations' strategies and structures.

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Chapter VI: Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the impact of regulating dynamics on the process of organizational change in NPSOs. This chapter is structured in the following way. First, the findings are discussed considering the dissertation's theoretical background: The processual approach. Second, regulating dynamics and organizational change are discussed in terms of the reoccurring systemic, organizational, and individual-level themes that crosscut the dissertation. Third, the dissertation's overall contributions are presented, including contributions to theory and practice. Fourth, the dissertation concludes with future research directions.

Organizational Change and Regulating Dynamics

As discussed in Chapter I, despite the criticality of organizational change in today's environment, planned change initiatives fail more than half of the time (Burnes, 2017; Poole & Van de Ven, 2021). Poole and Van de Ven (2021) argued that change initiatives continue to fail because existing research on organizational change has predominantly focused on understanding *why* organizations change and *what* they change (e.g., Amis et al., 2004b; Clausen et al., 2018; Kikulis et al., 1992, 1995b; Legg et al., 2016; Ruoranen et al., 2018). The present dissertation extends this research and existing understandings of organizational change in sport by answering the call to better understand *how* organizations change (Clausen et al., 2018), or in other words, the change process. As Poole and Van de Ven further contended, understanding the *how* or the change process – in this case through the concept of regulating dynamics (i.e., capacity for change, organizational culture, organizational politics, and digital technology).

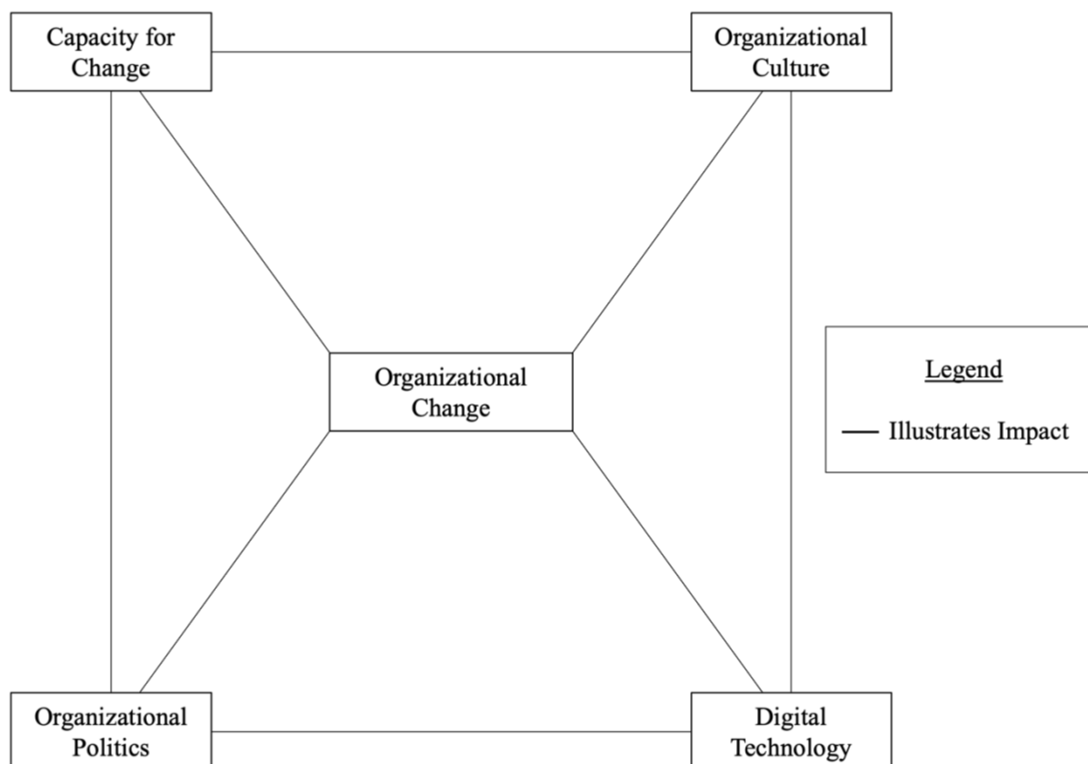
The study extends Greenwood and Hinings (1988, 1993, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988) initial conceptualizations of regulating dynamics beyond their micro-level concepts (e.g., values, power) to their more macro-level concepts (e.g., organizational culture, organizational

politics). In doing so, it highlights the value of understanding these concepts from their broader macro-level, in turn, providing a more complete understanding of the phenomenon. As discussed in Chapter IV, focusing only on power would have shown the different sources of power NSOs can use to enable or constrain change, however, it would fail to provide insight into the underlying rationale – the why – certain stakeholders use distinct sources of power. This information was understood by examining interests and conflicts.

The dissertation highlights not only the individual impact of regulating dynamics on organizational change (as Chapters II, III, IV, and V show), but also how regulating dynamics both enable *and/or* constrain change concurrently (simultaneously) during change processes (see Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1

Regulating Dynamics and Organizational Change Processes



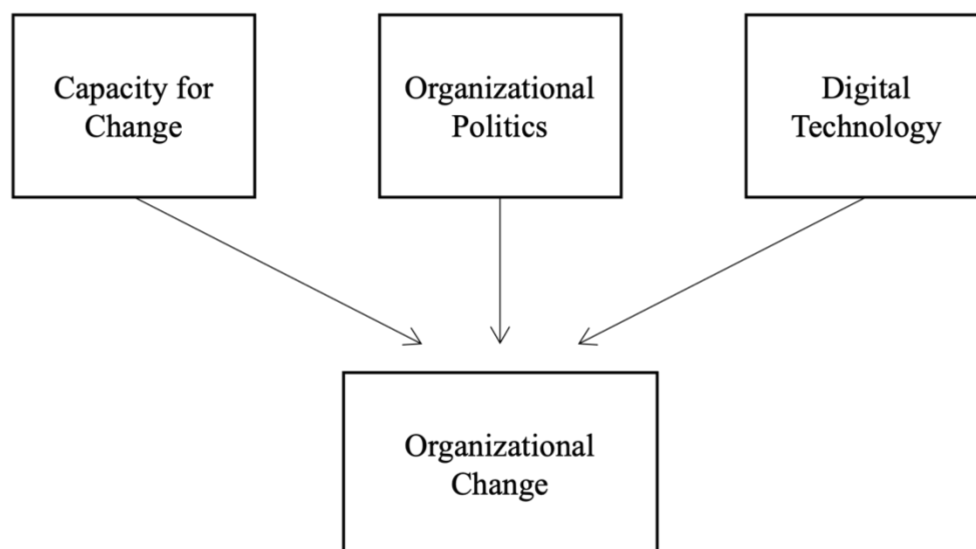
Note. Figure style adapted from Hinings and Greenwood (1988)

The fact that all dynamics had some enabling and/or constraining impact during NSOs' change processes demonstrates this point. This is perhaps unsurprising given that organizations go through multiple changes simultaneously (Heckmann et al., 2016). Nevertheless, this finding contrasts Hinings and Greenwood's (1988) initial conceptualization of regulating dynamics as either enabling *or* constraining organizational change (i.e., one or the other, not both). Further, this finding highlights the complexities of the regulating dynamics during change, indicating potential connections between dynamics. These connections are discussed later in this chapter (see p. 181).

In addition, linked to the above point, when examining each regulating dynamic individually, the dissertation highlights how regulating dynamics enable and/or constrain change *concurrently* (simultaneously) and/or *sequentially*. On the one hand, capacity for change, organizational politics, and digital technology enabled and/or constrained organizational change concurrently (see Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2

Illustration of the Concurrent Nature within Regulating Dynamics

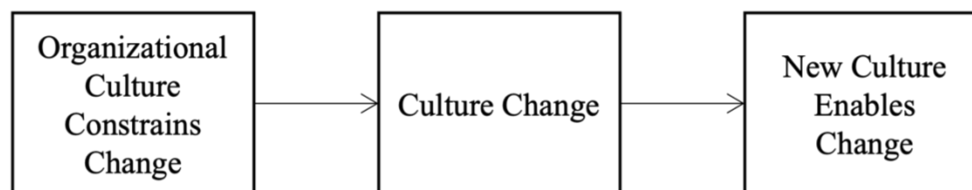


In terms of capacity for change, some sources of capacity enabled some types of changes while other sources constrained other changes (see Chapter II). This was a similar case for organizational politics where results showed how organizational politics enabled and/or constrained the change process concurrently. Specifically, various stakeholder groups simultaneously used their distinct sources of power to allow or block certain changes from taking place (see Chapter IV). Last, in relation to digital technology, NPSOs used various types of technologies simultaneously to enable organizational changes (see Chapter V).

On the other hand, organizational culture enabled and/or constrained change sequentially (see Figure 6.3). Initially, the divisive culture *constrained* the progress of change but, once the NPSO engaged in culture change, the new (more positive) culture *enabled* other changes to take place (see Chapter III).

Figure 6.3

Illustration of the Sequential Nature within Regulating Dynamics



These findings demonstrate how organizational change is a dynamic[6] process, evolving over time, echoing Dawson's (2019) argument. Not only is organizational change non-linear (Pettigrew, 1985), but the dynamics which regulate change – in this case capacity for change, organizational culture, organizational politics, and digital technology – are also non-linear, manifesting sequentially and concurrently. In addition, the lack of formal planning undertaken by

[6] In this case, dynamic (adjective) is "marked by usually continuous and productive activity" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

NSOs supports arguments made by scholars from the emergent approach (e.g., Beer & Nohria, 2000; Falconer, 2002; Weick, 2000) that change cannot be planned for from the outset, contrasting planned approaches (e.g., Kotter, 2007; Lewin, 1951).

Sociocultural/Political Dynamics and Change Processes

The dissertation also highlights the sociocultural aspects apparent in organizational change processes – in this case the prevalence of organizational culture and politics in shaping change outcomes. These findings support the assertions of process scholars (e.g., Dawson, 2019; Pettigrew, 1985) who have noted the prevalence of cultural and political aspects of change previously ignored by proponents of the planned approach.

The dissertation also extends the idea that regulating dynamics are connected (Amis et al., 2004a). In particular, the results found in Chapter III (organizational culture) and Chapter IV (organizational politics) show the close connection between cultural and political issues and change processes. Recurring themes around the high-performance and participation challenges in Chapters III and IV shows how political issues (in this case related to interests) are also manifested in cultural issues surrounding NPSOs' purpose and mandates. The culture-politics connection contrasts existing planned approaches to change which fail to account for cultural and political dynamics influencing organizational change processes (Burnes, 2017) and supports assertions from process scholars like Pettigrew (1985) and Dawson (2019) who note that political and cultural elements of change are likely to overlap. In this case, Feddersen et al. (2020, 2021) noted the close "entanglement" of power issues and culture change. Thus, the dissertation findings extend those of Feddersen et al. (2020) beyond power to organizational politics. In addition, the dissertation extends existing understandings of organizational politics and culture in sport beyond culture changes. In other words, the findings demonstrate the close

"entanglement" of organizational politics and culture, not only on culture change, but on other types of organizational changes (e.g., governance, people).

Technical Dynamics and Change Processes

Although the dissertation supports the presence of sociocultural and sociopolitical dynamics (Burnes, 2017; Dawson, 2019; Greenwood & Hinings, 1988, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988), it also noted the prevalence of both sociocultural/political (as noted in the above paragraph) *and* technical aspects of organizational change processes. Specifically, in addition to organizational culture and politics discussed above, capacity for change and digital technology were also critical in enabling and/or constraining change. Thus, moving forward, process-based research on organizational change should not only account for the sociocultural aspects previously espoused but also the technical aspects (i.e., capacity for change and digital technology). Finally, similar to the connections between sociocultural/political dynamics, a further analysis of the research findings highlights the connection between technical dynamics and organizational change. The connection is demonstrated in how digital technology is an aspect of capacity for change – namely linked to infrastructure and process capacity (see Chapter II).

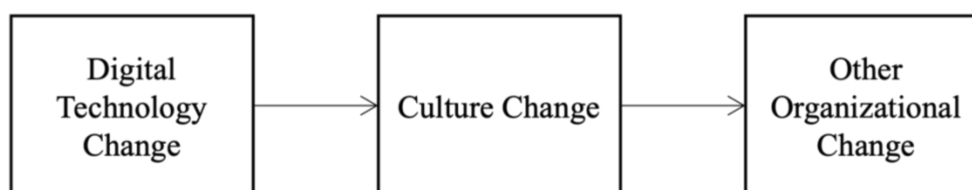
Connections Between Sociocultural and Technical Dynamics and Change Processes

In addition to the connections discussed above, the results found in Chapter III (organizational culture) and Chapter V (digital technology) shows the close connection between organizational culture and digital technology and change processes (see Figure 6.4). In particular, the Chapter III findings highlight how digital technology enables organizational change in general, but culture change specifically, thus highlighting how digital technology change could be a critical first step for NPSOs seeking to enable the change process, followed by

culture change and then other types of organizational changes per Chapter III recommendations. In other words, digital technology change enables organizational culture change, which in turn, enables other types of organizational changes (e.g., changes in governance, people, systems, structures, and processes). The importance of digital technology in enabling change provides empirical support to the initial claims that change theories are pre-digital and fail to take into account the contemporary practices of (sport) organizations (Ewenstein et al., 2015).

Figure 6.4

Connections Between Organizational Culture and Digital Technology and Change Processes



Finally, similar to how digital technology is connected to capacity for change, organizational culture as a sociocultural dynamic is also connected to the technical dynamic of capacity for change. This connection exists because organizational culture is an aspect of infrastructure and process capacity (see Chapter II).

Context, History, Regulating Dynamics, and Change Processes

Among the study's results were several recurring themes which appeared to be contextually based: (1) themes around the sport context, (2) high-performance and participation, (3) structure and funding of the sport system, (4) NPSO histories, and (5) the COVID-19 pandemic allude to the importance of context in organizational change. This echoes arguments by several scholars (e.g., Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Dawson, 2019; Pettigrew, 1987) about the need to take context into account when examining change.

In this case, context appeared to both enable and constrain organizational change. In the case of human resources capacity for change, knowledge of the sport (i.e., context) was discussed as useful in navigating change (see Chapter II). This sport context also ties into the recurring theme of history in NPSOs. History in some dynamics like culture appeared to constrain change as it was said to be the cause of the divisive cultures (see Chapter III). Thus, the dissertation highlights the connection between history and organizational culture (Dawson, 2019).

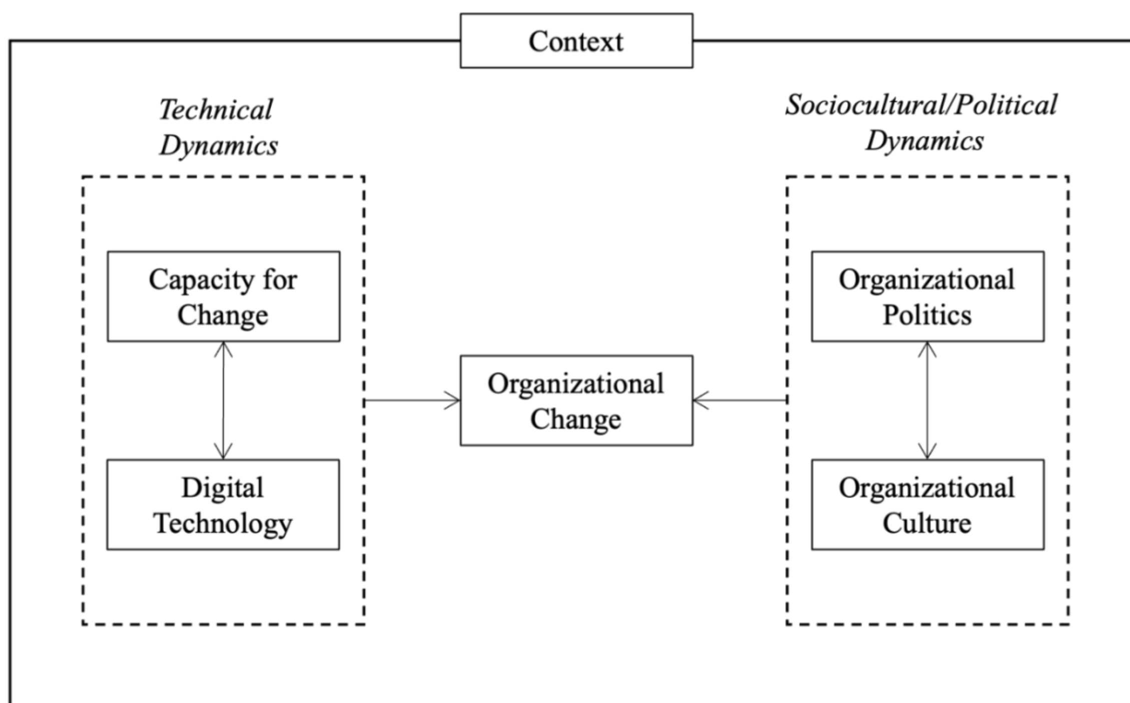
In addition, recurring themes around high-performance and participation also resulted in conflict in NPSOs (see Chapter III and IV). Thus, in this case, context appeared to constrain organizational change. This was also the case for themes around the structure and funding in the sport system (see Chapter II, III, IV). In this case, the findings showed how reduced funding at the system level could constrain change for NPSOs. The opposite was found for times when the sport system has greater funding opportunities through available grants. Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic appeared to enable digital technology changes to take place (see Chapter V).

In sum, considering the Figure 6.1 initially discussed, a revised figure is presented (see Figure 6.5). This figure is a culmination of the discussion points provided above, illustrating the technical and sociocultural/political dynamics at play as well as the importance of context. This figure incorporates the four regulating dynamics initially discussed but rearranges them in terms of whether they are technical or sociocultural/political dynamics. The connections between technical dynamics (i.e., between capacity for change and digital technology) and sociocultural and political dynamics (i.e., between organizational culture and politics) are also depicted. Finally, the figure is bounded by the organizational context which includes issues around the

sport context, high-performance and participation, structure and funding of the sport system, NPSO histories, and the COVID-19 pandemic discussed above.

Figure 6.5

Revised: Regulating Dynamics and Organizational Change Processes



Regulating Dynamics in NPSOs: Systemic, Organizational, and Individual Levels

The dissertation extends existing understandings of regulating dynamics beyond the organizational level (e.g., Greenwood & Hinings, 1988, 1993, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988) and demonstrates the prevalence and importance of considering regulating dynamics at two additional levels: systemic and individual levels. In other words, regulating dynamics are not only present at the organization level, but also the system and individual levels. Table 6.1 shows at what level each regulating dynamic was found.

At the system level, the study shows the regulating dynamics of capacity for change, organizational culture, and organizational politics as impacting change. In the case of capacity

for change, results show how capacity issues (e.g., financial and human resources) in the system can enable or constrain an NPSO's ability to change. In the case of financial capacity, a lack of financial resources in the sport system overall results in less available funds for NPSOs specifically. However, when there is financial capacity in the system, NPSOs can leverage federal grants to temporarily grow their own capacity. In addition, human resources capacity issues in the system constrains NPSOs' ability to implement change initiatives. In particular, a lack of available human resources in NSO members such as P/TSOs prevented these organizations from implementing changes prescribed by the NSO. In the case of organizational culture, internal stakeholder pressures, financial (economic) pressures, and funding partner pressures were contributing factors to NSOs' poor, divided cultures, which in turn, initially constrained change. In terms of organizational politics, linked to the three aforementioned pressures, the way the sport system was structured fostered conflicts around high-performance and participation issues. The system-level issues can likely be explained by the federate model (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2020) which this particular group of NPSOs operate as well as by the nature of their funding structure, where NPSOs rely heavily on financial resources from public funds (Parent et al., 2021).

Table 6.1

Regulating Dynamics: Systemic, Organizational, and Individual Levels

Regulating Dynamic	Level		
	Systemic	Organizational	Individual
Capacity for Change	✓	✓	✓
Organizational Culture	✓	✓	
Organizational Politics	✓	✓	
Digital Technology		✓	

At the organizational level, naturally, all dynamics were present given that the organization is the central unit of analysis in this dissertation. In particular, the results highlighted how digital technology enabled organizational change only, while capacity for change, organizational culture, and organizational politics both enabled and constrained organizational change. At the individual level, the study's findings demonstrate how capacity for change was the central focus. In particular, human resources capacity for change – through individuals' (e.g., staff and Board members) skills, knowledge, experience, and personality – can enable change.

Reflections on the Dissertation Process

When thinking back on the dissertation process, several main points of reflection arise. The first is the challenge associated with recruiting NSOs and individual research participants. As the findings in this dissertation demonstrate, NSOs deal with limited time and so finding organizations to commit to this study was a challenge. Several NSOs initially approached found the study interesting and relevant but ultimately declined to participate because of the time commitment of their already busy staff. The pandemic certainly contributed to this sentiment given the uncertainty of the world at the time.

However, the fact that Zoom and other video-conferencing platforms became the norm during to the pandemic, interviews were conducted via Zoom as opposed to phone interviews used in previous research studies. The ability to see the interviewee allowed the author to quickly develop a rapport with participants. In addition, video-conferencing allowed the author to assess non-verbal cues, thereby allowing her to adjust the interview questions and tone based of the interviewee's cues. Thus, video-conferencing platforms can permit researchers (particularly PhD

students) to conduct interviews in a cost-effective way while also reaping the benefits of in-person interviews (i.e., non-verbal cues).

Finally, in terms of the research process, the importance of epistemological, theoretical, and methodological alignment cannot be more emphasized. This dissertation reflects this learning through the alignment of my epistemology (i.e., constructivism), theory (i.e., a process approach), and methodology (e.g., Stake's [1995] case study approach).

Dissertation Contributions

According to Corley and Gioia (2011), theoretical contributions fall under two main criteria: originality and utility. Originality is reflected in the idea that the addition of a novel variable significantly changes existing understanding of a phenomena (Whetten, 1989). These insights can be more incremental, or they can be revelatory such as when "theory reveals what we otherwise had not seen, known, or conceived" (Corley & Gioia, 201, p. 17). Utility is further categorized as scientific and practical utility. Scientific utility refers to "an advance that improves conceptual rigor or the specificity of an idea and/or enhances its potential to be operationalized and tested" while practical utility refers to when theory can be used to solve managerial or practitioner problems (Corley & Gioia, 2011, pp. 17-18).

In addition to the contributions specified at the end of Chapters II, III, IV, and V, this dissertation overall contributes to both theory and practice. These contributions are presented below.

Contributions to Theory and Research

The dissertation addresses recent calls by several scholars (e.g., Poole & Van de Ven, 2021; Van de Ven, 2021) to examine the "how" of change or, in other words, the change process. Previous research examining organizational change in NPSOs has focused on the "what" and

"why" of change but has neglected to understand "how" organizations change. As Poole and Van de Ven (2021) argued, addressing the "how" or the change process can begin to provide insights into why change initiatives fail. Contrasting existing research on organizational change in sport organizations which focuses on planned approaches to change (e.g., Kikulis et al., 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Legg et al., 2016), this dissertation – through a process approach – provides new insights into organizational change in NPSO, which as Dawson (2019) argued, provides a more practical account of organizational change.

In addition, the dissertation contributes to existing understandings of regulating dynamics several ways. First, it goes beyond the context of organizational design change to incorporate other types of changes such as governance, structure, processes, culture, and people change. This provides a new perspective on an existing phenomenon, thus showing the originality of the dissertation (cf. Corley & Gioia, 2011). Second, this research further develops the construct of regulating dynamics beyond the micro-concepts originally conceptualized by Greenwood and Hinings (1988, 1996; e.g., interpretive schemes, interests, power) to more macro-level concepts (e.g., culture, politics), improving the conceptual rigour of the phenomenon thus highlighting the scientific utility (Corley & Gioia, 2011) of the findings. Third, the dissertation also demonstrates the sequential and concurrent nature across and within regulating dynamics. Fourth, it demonstrates the sociocultural/political and technical aspects of regulating dynamics as well as the connections among sociocultural/political and technical dynamics. Fifth, the findings reinforce the importance and consideration of context for organizational change in general but also for regulating dynamics specifically. Sixth, the study contributes to existing understandings of regulating dynamics at the organizational level but also highlights how regulating dynamics manifest at two additional levels: the system and individual levels.

Finally, from a research perspective, this dissertation demonstrates the importance of examining organizational change from a variety of perspectives (i.e., staff at varying levels in the organization, Board members) in NPSOs, not only senior leaders, echoing similar sentiments from other change scholars (e.g., Thompson & Parent, 2021). In this case, without the perspective of staff and Board members, the findings would have depicted a one-sided view of enabling dynamics and change; for instance, in terms of organizational politics and change, interviewing only senior leaders like the CEO would have only highlighted their source of power. In doing so, it would have failed to understand how the different groups (e.g., Board members) use distinct sources of power during change.

Contributions to Practice

Despite their importance for organizational survival, change initiatives fail at alarming rates (Burnes, 2017). This creates an inherent problem for managers in today's turbulent environment. Through regulating dynamics, this dissertation helps managers understand the challenges they may face when implementing change, whether due to a lack of capacity for change, poor organizational culture, complex political dynamics, or failing to capitalize on the benefits of digital technology. In terms of capacity for change, managers should leverage a variety of different sources when one capacity source is not available during change. In terms of organizational culture and digital technology, the dissertation demonstrates how managers should first engage in digital technology change, followed by culture changes, and then other types of organizational changes (e.g., governance change, people change). In particular, managers can leverage different types of technologies (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Office, G Suite, Adobe Suite, MailChimp) to undergo change. In terms of organizational politics, managers should determine who are the key stakeholder groups involves or impacted by the changes and

understand their distinct source of power that could either enable the changes to occur or block them from taking place. Finally, the findings highlight how managers should move beyond n-step, prescribed models, and view change as a more fluid and flexible phenomenon that requires adaptation as it progresses.

Future Directions

In addition to those mentioned in Chapters II, III, IV, and V, there are additional areas of future research worth considering. First, future research should consider examining regulating dynamics from internal stakeholders (i.e., staff and Board members) but also external stakeholders such as funding partners, athletes, and member organizations, given the systemic issues at play and the nature of the federated model in the Canadian sport system. These additional perspectives could be useful in further examining regulating dynamics, especially the political and cultural dynamics at play. This could be done through interviews with external stakeholder groups to gain their insights.

Second, this research examined organizational change as an overall phenomenon. Although the findings alluded to the differences between various types of changes, future research could consider uncovering the nuances of regulating dynamics in light of specific changes. In other words, future research could examine how enabling dynamics change, if at all, under different types of changes. This could be achieved more systematically through for example structured interviews or a questionnaire.

Third, given the importance of regulating dynamics at different levels (i.e., systemic, organizational, and individual levels), future research should examine the different levels more systematically as this would provide further insights into the connections between the different levels in impacting organizational change processes. Further understanding the different levels is

warranted in countries like Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom given the structure of these sport systems as federated models with system- and organizational-level stakeholders (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2020). This research could shed light on the transferability (Braun & Clarke, 2013) of the dissertation findings and could be done through either qualitative (e.g., interviews and documents), quantitative (e.g., questionnaire), or mixed methods (e.g., interviews, documents, and a questionnaire).

Fourth, this research was completed retrospectively and in real-time – meaning the changes undergone in the NSOs had already occurred or were in the process of unfolding as the data were gathered. Future research should consider conducting more longitudinal research in real-time given that organizational change and regulating dynamics can take a long time to materialize. For example, studies which have been conducted longitudinally have reported that 12 years was appropriate (e.g., Amis et al., 2004b).

In concluding this dissertation, organizational change, despite its challenges is critical for sport organizations to engage to survive. Sport organizations must consider the sociocultural and technical dynamics which impact the change process as these dynamics can enable and/or constrain organizational change.

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Appendix A: Information Letter

Organizational Change in Not-for-profit Sport Organizations

Research Study Information Letter

To whom it may concern,

My name is Ashley Thompson and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Human Kinetics at the University of Ottawa under the supervision of Professor Milena M. Parent. I am currently conducting a research project on organizational change in Canadian National Sport Organizations (NSOs). Your organization has kindly agreed to participate in the research project as you have undergone major organizational change in the past few years.

The aim of the project is to examine this change. More specifically, it is to understand how capacity, culture, politics, and digital technology have either helped to facilitate or potentially impeded the changes you have experienced. This project will help develop best practices and recommendations to benefit your NSO and others in the Canadian sport system as you embark on future changes.

As part of this research, I am interviewing your NSO's current and former paid staff and Board members who can speak to the recent changes, to understand their perspectives on the changes which have taken place. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your involvement will allow me to better understand how NSOs can successfully change while also learning about how to mitigate challenges of the change process.

Should you agree to participate, I will use pseudonyms to protect your identity and your organization's identity. Any identifiable information (e.g., your role in the organization) will be removed or replaced with more general terms. Contextual information (e.g., years of experience) will also be modified or removed to protect your identity.

Your involvement is voluntary, and no compensation will be offered. The data will be retained for 5 years beginning once the dissertation becomes available on uO Research. Data will be kept on a password-protected USB key in a locked filing cabinet in the supervisor's locked university office. Any physical/hard copies (if applicable) will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the supervisor's locked university office. Only the study's researchers will have access to this information. The findings of the study can be made available to you should you so wish.

This study has received approval by the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board (REB). If you have any ethical questions, comments or concerns, please contact the principal researcher's project supervisor, Professor Milena M. Parent, or the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity at ethics@uottawa.ca.

Sincerely,

Ashley Thompson

Doctoral Candidate | Candidate au doctorat

School of Human Kinetics | École des sciences de l'activité physique

University of Ottawa | Université d'Ottawa

Appendix B: Consent Form

Consent Form

Title of the study: Organizational Change in Not-for-profit Sport Organizations

Invitation to Participate: You are invited to participate in a research study seeking to understand organizational change in Canadian National Sport Organizations (NSOs). The study is conducted by Ashley Thompson, a doctoral candidate in the School of Human Kinetics at the University of Ottawa, under the supervision of Professor Milena M. Parent.

Principal investigator: Ashley Thompson

Research project supervisor: Professor Milena M. Parent

Purpose of the study: The purpose of the study is to examine the major changes undergone in your NSO in the last few years. Specifically, the goal of this project is to understand how capacity, culture, politics, and digital technology has either helped to facilitate or potentially impeded the major changes your NSO has recently experienced.

Inclusion criteria: In order to be eligible to participate in the study you must: (1) be a current or former Board member or paid staff of [NSO Name]; and (2) be able to speak to the major changes made by your NSO.

Participation: If you choose to participate in the research study:

- You will be interviewed by the principal investigator one-on-one with no other person present;
- Your name and identifiable information will not appear in any of the research publications;
- Your interview is scheduled to last about one hour but could last up to two hours, with the potential for a follow-up interview to further elaborate on your experience;
- You consent to being audio recorded so the principal investigator can transcribe and analyze information from the session. This will help ensure accurate representation of your experiences. You will have a chance to review this transcript before it is analyzed.

Benefits: Your organization as well as other NSOs in the Canadian sport system will benefit from this study by gaining a better understanding of how capacity, culture, politics, digital technology can help facilitate or impede change. This knowledge will be beneficial for NSOs (your own and others) as it will help develop best practices for NSOs engaging in future changes.

Risks: There may be some potential risks such as social repercussions as you will be providing your perspective about the changes undergone; however, the researchers have measures in place to mitigate any potential risk (please see confidentiality and anonymity section below). You may withdraw from the study at any point. If you choose to withdraw, your data will not be used in the study and be destroyed.

Compensation: You will not be compensated for your involvement in the study.

Confidentiality and anonymity: All information provided throughout the research process will be kept with the strictest confidence by the principal investigator and her supervisor and will only be used for academic purposes (publications, technical reports). Your answers may be used in presentations and publications, but your name will not appear in the research findings and will be replaced by pseudonyms. Personal, identifiable information will be removed or replaced with generic titles (e.g., NSO 1; Winter sport).

Participant feedback: The data will be transcribed and analyzed using the software programs NVivo. To ensure the accuracy of the information, you will have the opportunity to review your transcript and modify it if necessary. You may choose to have your transcript sent to your work or personal email. Please note, if you choose to have your transcript sent via email, there is a potential for security risks (i.e., the everyday risk of interference associated with this mode of communication). The study's results will be made available in the form of technical reports, presentations, the dissertation, and articles submitted to scientific journals.

Data retention: The data collected (archival material, audio recordings of interviews, transcripts, notes, and data analysis files) will be retained for a period of 5 years. The retention period will begin when the dissertation becomes available on uO Research. Data will be kept on a password-protected USB key in a locked filing cabinet in the supervisor's locked university office. Any physical/hard copies (if applicable)

will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the supervisor's locked university office. Only the study's researchers will have access to this information.

The ethical aspect of this study has received approval by the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board (REB). Participants should save or print a copy of the consent form to keep for their personal records.

ACCEPTANCE

I, ______________________________________, hereby consent to participate in the above research study conducted by Ashley Thompson of the School of Human Kinetics and supervised by Professor Milena M. Parent of the same affiliation. If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the researcher or her supervisor. If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5; tel.: (613) 562-5387; email: ethics@uottawa.ca

____________________________	____________________________
Participant's Signature	Date
____________________________	____________________________
Researcher's Signature	Date

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. To reiterate, the purpose of this study is to understand some of the factors which can enable or constrain organizational change. The factors I am specifically looking at are capacity, culture, politics, and technology. Please try to answer the questions to the best of your knowledge; there are no right or wrong answers. I will be recording this interview so I can transcribe the information and ensure I accurately represent your experiences. You will have the opportunity to review your transcript and make any modifications if necessary. The information you give today will remain anonymous. Your name will not appear in any of the research findings and only myself and my research supervisor, Professor Milena M. Parent, will have access to this information. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

[audio recording beings]

Background Information

1. How long you been with [NSO name]?
2. As the [Name of position], can you briefly describe your role in the organization?
3. Have you held any other positions in this organization?

Organizational Change

4. Can you tell me about any changes which have occurred at [NSO name] recently or over the past few years?
    a. Probe: What types of changes have occurred in the organization in the past few years?
    b. Probe for changes in structures, systems, strategy, people, culture, products and/or services, technology

5. Why did these changes occur? / What caused them?
6. Did you feel you would benefit from the changes (If so why; if not, why not?)
7. Did you feel your interests would be threatened by the changes (e.g., lose resources)?
8. How did you react when you heard about the changes and when they were being implemented?
9. How did your colleagues react to the changes?
10. In your opinion, what elements or things helped facilitate these changes?
11. What elements or things constrained or hindered these changes?
12. How has capacity impacted your organization's ability to change?
13. How did your organization's financial resources (assets, revenues, expenses, liabilities) affect your organization's ability to change?
    a. Financial capacity: the ability to develop and use financial capital (revenues, expenses, assets, and liabilities) during the change process.
14. How has your organization's human resources or people (e.g., staff, Board members, volunteers) impact your ability to change?
    a. Probe: Did you have enough people? Who were the key people in the change process? Why were they key?
    b. Human resource capacity: the ability to develop and use people in the organization as well as what they bring to the organization in terms of knowledge, skill, motives, attitudes, etc. to the change process.
15. Were you able to use your organization's network or existing relationships to help you through the change?

   a. Relationship and network capacity: the ability to draw on relationships with clients, members, funders, partners, government, media, volunteers, other organizations, and/or the general public during the change process).

16. How did your organization's infrastructure (e.g., office) impact your ability to change?
    a. Infrastructure and process capacity: the ability to use or rely on infrastructure, processes, and culture (e.g., communication, manuals, policies, procedures, information technology, and organizational culture, physical office space) during the change process.
17. How did your organizational processes related to internal structure or day-to-day operations (e.g., databases, manuals, policies and procedures, information technology), impact your organization's ability to change and the change process?
18. How did planning impact your organization's ability to change and the change process? (Did it enable or constrain your change?)
    a. Did you use plans (e.g., policies, procedures, plans regarding the changes, strategic plans, etc.) to help your organization successfully change?
    b. Planning, development, and research capacity: the ability to develop and draw on strategic plans, program plans and design, policies, proposals, and other planning processes related to the change
19. Can you describe the process and research that went into planning for your organization's changes?
20. How has organizational politics impacted the changes undergone in your organization, if at all?

21. Were there some conflicts or tensions regarding the proposed changes and when they were implemented?
    a. Probe, if conflict was present: How was this conflict resolved (if at all)?
22. Who had the power [authority] to make decisions related to the changes?
23. What did you do to ensure your interests regarding the change were maintained?
24. What was the culture like in your organization before the change?
25. In your opinion, how has your organization's culture impact your ability to change as an organization?
26. How has digital technology impacted your organization in the past few years?
27. Have you leveraged digital technology to make changes in your organization?
    a. Probe: Has digital technology impacted your organization's ability to engage in the changes we previously discussed (e.g., structure, systems, culture, products, services)?
    b. Probe: How do you feel about the digital technology changes which have been implemented?
    c. Probe: How did your colleagues react to the technology changes?

That's all the questions I have for you today. Thank you so much for your time. Do you have anything else to add?

Appendix D: Documents

NSO	**Number of Documents**
NSO 1	41
NSO 2	20
NSO 3	29
NSO 4	33
NSO 5	28
Total	**151**
Average	**30**