

Match-fixing:  
Women's experiences studying and working  
in sport management in Aotearoa New Zealand

By  
Sally Anne Rae

Faculty of Culture and Society  
Te Ara Kete Aronui

Submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements of the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

April 2020

Match-fixing:  
Women's experiences studying and working  
in sport management in Aotearoa New Zealand

Author

Rae, Sally

Published

09 April 2020

Thesis Type

Thesis (PhD Doctorate)

Faculty

Public Policy

Copyright Statement

The author owns the copyright in this thesis, unless otherwise stated

Download from

[http:](http://)

## Abstract

This study investigates women's experiences while studying and working in sport management in Aotearoa / New Zealand (NZ), through an intergenerational analysis of the expectations and perceptions of female students, graduates and practitioners.

In NZ, women are significantly underrepresented in middle and senior sport management. While the International Olympic Committee (IOC) exerts pressure for NZ sport organisations to report on gender formal equality and representation at a board level, limited information exists about women at the various levels of sport management or as students of sport management.

Feminist theorising underpins the study and assumes NZ is gendered at all levels of society. The study is overlaid by a hermeneutic methodological approach to explore, capture, analyse and interpret the data from the women's lived experiences. This framework of feminist theorising and hermeneutic methodology enabled the researcher to reveal, interpret and understand the meanings of the taken-for-granted everyday experiences of women studying and working in sport management in their diverse historical, social and cultural settings.

Women experience gender discrimination as embedded in a setting strongly influenced by patriarchal hegemonic practices, in both NZ's wider society and within the sporting industry. Advocates for substantive equality and access for women in all areas of sport management have led to calls for a critical spotlight to be placed on the deeply entrenched, visible and invisible structures and practices which continue to marginalise groups of women. Listening to the voices of 11 students, 13 graduates and 12 practitioners in focus groups and semi-structured interviews, and examining their perceptions of studying and working in NZ sport management, reveals an industry which is highly gendered, complex, and multi-dimensional. The analysis of the women's experiences provides a unique vantage point from which to consider the multifaceted nature of how gender is enacted within NZ sport organisations. Understanding how these women interpreted their experiences helps explain the paucity of women in sport management roles and the barriers of gender formal equality which limit their involvement. Women's minority presence within sport

management continues to limit women having a voice in shaping sport and the delivery of sport in NZ. Sport has a transformative power to contest sexism within sport and wider society.

The contribution of this thesis is to bring together the voices and perspectives of students, graduates and practitioners in order to comprehend how women perceive working and having ongoing employment in sport management. Understanding their gendered experiences and presenting their voices allows for the critiquing of policies, structures and practices in NZ's sports sector; enables women to realise they are not alone in their experiences and has the potential to deepen sport management teaching practice. The women revealed inequitable, historic cultures, structures and practices such as the lack of women mentors, the 'old boys' club', long and inflexible hours, male appointment boards, and exclusion, all of which are barriers to women working and progressing in NZ sport management. The women called for support to help balance their sport management jobs and family care responsibilities. The study is of particular importance to those with an interest in women studying sport management and the decisions those women make about navigating a career in this sector.

# Contents

Abstract .....	i
Contents .....	iii
List of Figures .....	viii
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Appendices .....	ix
Attestation of Authorship .....	x
Acknowledgements.....	xi
Key to Acronyms .....	xiv
Key to Māori Words .....	xv
Ethics Approval.....	xvi
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 The impetus for the study.....	2
1.2 Research question and theoretical position .....	4
1.3 An interpretive feminist hermeneutic enquiry .....	6
1.4 Research context and limitations.....	8
1.5 My personal background .....	8
1.6 My beginning position.....	12
1.7 Significance and contribution to academia and practice .....	13
1.8 Structure of the thesis.....	14
1.8.1 An overview of the chapters .....	15
Chapter 2 Feminism and feminist research .....	17
2.1 Feminist ontology.....	17
2.1.1 Key advancements for women’s legal formal equality in NZ .....	20
2.2 Feminist research and knowledge building .....	20
2.2.1 Feminist research values.....	22
2.2.2 Feminist standpoint .....	23
2.2.3 Women’s Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind ..	28
2.3 Chapter summary.....	29
Chapter 3 Broadening horizons through literature .....	30
3.1 Introduction .....	30
3.2 NZ’s culture of patriarchal hegemonic masculinity .....	31
3.2.1 The multilevel analytic framework .....	32
3.3 Distinguishing formal equality, substantive equality and equity .....	33
3.4 NZers’ attitudes towards gender .....	36
3.5 NZ’s workforce statistics .....	38
3.6 Sport.....	40

3.6.1	Definition of sport .....	40
3.6.2	Significance of sport in NZ.....	40
3.6.3	Government and sport in NZ .....	43
3.6.4	Structure of the NZ sport industry .....	45
3.6.5	Sport as a gendered space - alienating stereotypes, structures and practices .....	46
3.6.6	Substantive equality initiatives and people of influence.....	55
3.7	The sport management tertiary environment.....	61
3.8	Stereotypes, self-efficacy and self-confidence .....	66
3.8.1	Stereotypes: The gender binary and micro-individual effects.....	66
3.8.2	Sport and self .....	70
3.9	Chapter summary.....	72
Chapter 4 Research design, methodology and method .....		73
4.1	The nature of the inquiry .....	73
4.2	Philosophical assumptions.....	74
4.3	Research terminology .....	74
4.4	Interpretive paradigm .....	75
4.5	Constructivist epistemology.....	76
4.6	Hermeneutics .....	77
4.6.1	Methodology.....	77
4.6.2	Hermeneutics compared to other methodologies .....	77
4.6.3	Phenomenology and hermeneutics are closely aligned .....	78
4.6.4	Critical hermeneutics .....	85
4.6.5	Feminist hermeneutics.....	86
4.6.6	Feminist-informed hermeneutic inquiry.....	87
4.7	Research design and methodology summary.....	88
4.8	Method.....	89
4.8.1	Reflexivity and voice .....	89
4.8.2	Ethics .....	91
4.9	Data collection .....	93
4.10	Theory – Focus groups .....	93
4.11	Theory – Interviews.....	95
4.12	Participant selection .....	96
4.12.1	Intersectionality .....	96
4.12.2	Participant focus groups in this research.....	99
4.12.3	Participant interviewees in this research.....	100
4.13	Questions .....	101
4.13.1	Focus groups .....	102
4.13.2	Interviews.....	105
4.14	Recording and transcribing focus groups and interviews.....	107
4.14.1	Analysing data from a feminist hermeneutic perspective.....	108

4.14.2	Actual analysis of the research project's data .....	111
4.15	The issue of trustworthiness in feminist hermeneutic research .....	117
4.16	Chapter summary.....	118
Chapter 5	Findings: Sport management university students' voices .....	120
5.1	Voices of the university students.....	120
5.2	Meet the university student participants .....	121
5.2.1	Student Focus Group 1.....	121
5.2.2	Student Focus Group 2.....	124
5.2.3	Student Focus Group 3.....	127
5.3	Overview of Chapter Five.....	129
5.4	Upbringing.....	129
5.4.1	Family influence .....	129
5.4.2	Sport.....	133
5.4.3	Education .....	137
5.5	Self-confidence.....	140
5.5.1	Confidence as a gendered constraint? .....	140
5.5.2	University .....	144
5.6	Work aspirations .....	146
5.6.1	Sport management career plan .....	146
5.6.2	Children or no children – a choice .....	153
5.7	Gendered perception of the sport industry.....	154
5.7.1	Summary .....	156
5.8	Chapter summary.....	157
Chapter 6	Findings: Sport management university graduates' voices .....	158
6.1	Voices of the sport management university graduates.....	158
6.2	Meet the sport management graduate participants.....	159
6.2.1	Graduate Focus Group 1 .....	159
6.2.2	Graduate Focus Group 2 .....	163
6.2.3	Graduate Focus Group 3 .....	166
6.3	Overview of Chapter Six.....	169
6.4	Upbringing.....	169
6.4.1	Family .....	169
6.5	Career.....	173
6.5.1	Sport management career plan .....	173
6.5.2	Entering the sport management workforce .....	174
6.5.3	First paid sport management job.....	179
6.5.4	Career development .....	185
6.6	The NZ sports sector .....	189
6.6.1	Job barriers.....	189
6.6.2	Influential industry people .....	193

6.6.3	Children and parenting .....	196
6.7	Chapter summary.....	198
Chapter 7	Findings: Sport management practitioners’ voices.....	199
7.1	Meet the sport management practitioners .....	199
7.2	Practitioners’ upbringing - Experiences and interpretations.....	207
7.2.1	How my family shaped my worldview - Confidence is in my DNA .....	207
7.2.2	How my schooling shaped my worldview.....	210
7.2.3	How sport shaped my worldview – The winning formula .....	211
7.2.4	Practitioners’ upbringing - Summary .....	213
7.3	Practitioners working – Experiences and interpretations .....	214
7.3.1	Women practitioners’ ways of seeing the NZ sport sector .....	214
7.3.2	Women’s sport management career entry points .....	215
7.3.3	Self-imposed factors – The personal lens .....	216
7.3.4	Sector-imposed factors – The industry lens .....	223
7.4	Who did or could assist women’s sport management careers?.....	235
7.4.1	Sport NZ.....	237
7.4.2	Initiatives .....	238
7.4.3	Conclusion .....	239
7.5	Chapter summary.....	239
Chapter 8	Discussion: Match-fixing and substantive inequality.....	241
8.1	Introduction .....	241
8.2	Player selection or deselection .....	242
8.2.1	Barriers and enablers .....	243
8.3	What level playing field? Gendered NZ sport .....	256
8.3.1	Sport NZ.....	257
8.3.2	Sports organisations.....	258
8.3.3	Working conditions .....	259
8.3.4	Gendered organisations - hierarchies, roles and codes.....	262
8.3.5	Initiatives .....	269
8.3.6	Distancing self from feminism – not a ‘troublemaker’ .....	271
8.3.7	Mentors, networks and role models.....	272
8.4	Chapter summary.....	274
Chapter 9	Limitations, significance, contributions, recommendations and concluding thoughts .....	275
9.1	Introduction .....	275
9.2	Limitations.....	276
9.3	Significance and contributions of the findings.....	277
9.3.1	Overcoming match-fixing and substantive inequality .....	277
9.3.2	Practical and policy contributions.....	278
9.4	Reflections on and contribution to the research process .....	280

9.4.1	Methodological underpinnings.....	280
9.4.2	Research methods.....	282
9.5	Significance and contributions of findings.....	282
9.5.1	Contribution to scholarship .....	283
9.6	Recommendations .....	286
9.6.1	For the sector .....	286
9.6.2	For educators .....	289
9.6.3	For women .....	290
9.6.4	For further research .....	291
9.7	Concluding thoughts .....	294
	References.....	296
	Appendices.....	321

## List of Figures

Figure 3.1: Equity and equality explanations used in this thesis .....	36
Figure 4.1: Thematic question guide – Focus group (1-Students) 2016 01 12 .....	102
Figure 4.2: Thematic question guide – Focus group (1-Students) 2016 09 05 .....	103
Figure 4.3: Thematic question guide – Practitioner interviews 2017 07 21 .....	106
Figure 4.4: The three-stage interpretive process of analysis.....	112

## List of Tables

Table 3.1: Total population and employment figures in NZ .....	38
Table 3.2: Total labour force and women’s ethnic employment figures in NZ .....	39
Table 3.3: Women’s presence on Regional Sports Trust Boards .....	53
Table 5.1: Herstory and family background of participants in Student FG1 .....	122
Table 5.2: Herstory and family background of participants in Student FG2 .....	125
Table 5.3: Herstory and family background of participants in Student FG3 .....	128
Table 6.1: Herstory and family background of participants in Graduate FG1 .....	160
Table 6.2: Herstory and family background of participants in Graduate FG2 .....	164
Table 6.3: Herstory and family background of participants in Graduate FG3 .....	167
Table 7.1: Herstory and family background of the practitioners .....	201

## List of Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval .....	321
Appendix B: Tools.....	322
Appendix C: Sample of coding framework.....	329
Appendix D: Sample of chronological, analytic framework.....	331

## Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sally Anne Rae', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Signed: Sally Anne Rae

Date: 9 April 2020

## Acknowledgements

Ēhara tāku toa i te takitini, he toa takitahi.

(This whakataukī specifies that success belongs not to the individual but to the collective contribution of all members of the group). I am thankful for the trail-blazing women who have gone before me and made a stand on issues of equality for women, not just in NZ, but globally. Your courage in the face of adversity humbles me but also provides strength to speak out and act on behalf of those who are marginalised and encounter discrimination.

My sincere thanks go to the 37 students, graduates, pilot interviewee and practitioners who generously and openly shared their stories. I felt privileged you shared your stories and your time with me. Your voices need and deserve to be heard. I trust I have listened to and worked with your stories with integrity, and that the discussion and conclusions resonate with you all. Without you, this research project would not have been possible. I trust this study's findings, discussion and recommendations may improve gender substantive equality in NZ sport management by highlighting practices and structures which marginalise women and other minorities.

A special thanks goes to my academic supervisors, Professor Dame Marilyn Waring and Dr Irene Ryan for their guidance and expertise. My primary supervisor, Marilyn – you were a wealth of knowledge and wisdom that never ceased to amaze, inform and intrigue me. Your humanness helped me to succeed. My second supervisor Irene – your passion to open doors for women in sport management is relentless. When the going got tough, Irene, you certainly helped me to get going. If I had acknowledged that I was a feminist when I first approached you to supervise me, I would have finished this research project two years earlier. Realising I was and had always been a feminist was life-changing. “Trusting the process” for qualitative research was far easier said than done. Thank you both for understanding and helping me navigate the demands of work, study and family during my doctoral study.

My cousin and semi-sister Lizzie, who is exactly four weeks older than me, thank you for being there; your friendship, support and integrity throughout the years have made me a better person.

I remember hearing throughout my childhood accounts of the challenges faced by my mother, grandmothers, great-grandmothers and aunties. The stories of the obstacles they overcame, and their perseverance, inspired and guided me.

A heart-felt thanks goes to my Auntie Fluff, Rowena Rowntree, my second mum, who was always there for me and my academic pursuits.

My colleagues, especially Tracy Molloy, Trish Lucas and Judith Pullen-Burry. David Parker, thank you for your gentle and diplomatic academic support, and for encouraging and helping me find my confidence to develop my voice. Steph Clout, thank you for emailing me snippets from the library that “I may be interested in” and your joyful help with my ongoing literature reviews. Andrew South, thank you for your repeated help with Endnote. Sue Knox and your great help with my long document. Deb Spence and Liz Smythe, thank you for showing me the pathway to hermeneutic phenomenology; this methodology is a natural fit for me, a real coming home. In the beginning, I could not pronounce the term, let alone understand it. Thank you to Gwen Ferguson, whose friendship and administrative support was reassuring, and to Marilyn’s ‘Pot Luck Group’, particularly Quentin Allen and Filippo Katavake-McGrath for their encouragement and friendship over the years. To my friends, thank you for understanding and for giving me the space to finish this study. I promise to attend all future engagements, especially fishing, golf, tennis, dinner parties, movie nights, and travelling without harping on about my study.

Without the generous Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Doctoral Study Awards, I would not have secured the time to complete this thesis, especially given my circumstances as the sole provider and carer for my two daughters and the main care provider for my two elderly parents, Nancy and Jack Rae, both of whom died in the final year of my study. A heartfelt thank you. I am also indebted to AUT for providing the necessary resources and allowing me to further develop my professional qualifications. Many AUT university colleagues, both academic and administrative, have encouraged and supported my journey.

I dedicate this thesis to my two inspirational daughters, Phoebe and Raphaella, for extending, challenging and enriching my understanding of life. Your support, love and encouragement have made completing this research possible. I love you both very

much, I value your friendship, and I am proud of the strong, confident and competent young women that you are. You have been the best and most rewarding part of my life. Kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui - to be strong, be brave, be steadfast.

I also dedicate this thesis to my number one mum, Nancy Rae (née Gemmell) for a mother's love and unwavering belief in me. She started this journey with me in 2012, cutting out newspaper articles, but died just before completion. Throughout my life, mum told me "Sally, you can do and be whatever you want to be". Those words were an impetus for this study, they echoed in the stories of many of my participants and, hopefully, I have instilled this self-belief in my daughters.

## Key to Acronyms

BIM	Briefing to Incoming Ministers
CAAWS	Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CE	Chief Executive
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
GM	General Manager
HPSNZ	High Performance Sport New Zealand
HRC	Human Rights Commission
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IWG	International Working Group on Women and Sport
NFP	Not-For-Profit
NRO	National Recreation Organisation
NSO	National Sport Organisation
NZOC	New Zealand Olympic Committee
PBE	Public Benefit Entity
PE	Physical Education
RSO	Regional Sport Organisation
RST	Regional Sports Trust
Sport NZ	Sport New Zealand
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning
WISPA	Women in Sport Aotearoa

## Key to Māori Words

Aotearoa	land of the long white cloud (Māori name for New Zealand)
Atua	ancestor or spiritual being with influence
Iwi	kinship group, tribe, nation or people descended from a common ancestor from a specified area
Kaupapa	someone's purpose or objective ( <a href="#">Hapeta, Palmer, &amp; Kuroda, 2018</a> )
Mana	prestige, power and influence, give the person authority to lead and make decisions regarding social and political matters
Māori	the collective identity of indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand ( <a href="#">Palmer &amp; Masters, 2010</a> )
Pākehā	non-Māori; often used to refer to Aotearoa New Zealanders of European (predominantly British) descent ( <a href="#">Hapeta et al., 2018</a> ; <a href="#">Palmer &amp; Masters, 2010</a> )
Tangata whenua	people of the land, indigenous people ( <a href="#">Carpenter &amp; McMurchy-Pilkington, 2008</a> )
Te Reo	the Māori language
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	the Treaty of Waitangi is an agreement, the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand between Māori and the British Crown first signed on the February 6, 1840
Tikanga	customs ( <a href="#">Carpenter &amp; McMurchy-Pilkington, 2008</a> )
Whakataukī	Māori proverb

## Ethics Approval

Faculty of Culture and Society / Te Ara Kete Aronui

Re Ethics Application: 16/79 What are the experiences of women studying, and working in, 'Aotearoa New Zealand sport management'?

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 13 May 2019.

## Chapter 1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is twofold: firstly, it aims to explore what influences women in Aotearoa / New Zealand (NZ) to study sport management at the tertiary level and what are their work aspirations in sport management once they graduate. Secondly, this research aims to shed light on the experiences of women who work in management roles in Public Benefit Entity (PBE) sport organisations in the Not-For-Profit (NFP) sector. There is very little research that has explored what influences the aspirations of female students or the experiences of recent sport management female graduates. This study explores the meanings made from the everyday life experiences of 36 multi-generational women studying and working in what research has clearly identified as a gendered domain of sport management ([Abdel-Shehid & Kalman-Lamb, 2011](#); [Adriaanse, 2017](#); [Cameron, 1996](#); [Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012](#); [Fink, 2015](#); [Hancock, Grappendorf, Wells, & Burton, 2017](#); [McKay, 1991](#); [Messner, 2007](#); [O'Shea, 2017](#); [Schull, Shaw, & Kihl, 2013](#); [Shaw & Leberman, 2015](#)).

This study seeks to explore why, in NZ, women hold significantly fewer paid sport management and leadership positions than men. The context of localised historical and cultural practices is the essential element that structures the interconnections between sport and the dearth of female representation in management roles ([Jackson & Parry, 2011](#); [Klenke, 2011](#)). Similarly, gendered practices and processes in organisations are shaped by dominant and often taken-for-granted, culturally scripted gender norms devised under patriarchy ([Acker, 2006](#); [Martin, 2006](#)). [Park, Choi, and Yoon \(2019\)](#) define match-fixing “as behavior in which a match is played according to a predetermined course or to a preset outcome” (p. 1). Are women working or wanting to work in the NZ sport management sector entering into a match-fixed environment where women’s success is shaped by traditional patriarchal structures and practices with predetermined outcomes? The impetus behind the study is to challenge sport policymakers, boards, senior managers, educators, and media in relation to the structures and practices which perpetuate the lack of women in decision-making roles within sport management.

This chapter discusses the impetus, purpose, rationale and context of the study. I include my historical context to provide transparency from my perspective as

researcher. I outline the research process and specify the contributions and significance of this feminist interpretive study to sport management in both academic and practice settings. Finally, I detail the structure of the research thesis and the individual chapters.

## 1.1 The impetus for the study

Sport holds a powerful meaning for NZers, and sport is our country's most pervasive form of collective behaviour ([Leberman, Collins, & Trenberth, 2012](#)). Sport provides many of our high-profile rituals and ceremonies, and sporting personalities are depicted as national heroes revered above other high profile public figures ([Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)). Being a competent sport athlete is idealised. Furthermore, research shows the persistence of traditional gender roles ([EEO Trust, 2012](#); [Fursman & Callister, 2009](#); [Ministry for Women, 2018a](#)), which is exemplified in the heteronormative practices and attitudes which are associated with sport. Similar to other NZ business sectors ([J. McGregor, 2012b](#)), women hold significantly fewer paid sport management positions than men.

Sport in NZ is a long way from being gender equitable. This research comes at a critical time as there is growing unease within Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) and the New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) about the low number of women in management and leadership roles in NZ sports organisations ([Ardern & Robertson, 2018](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#)). While the NZOC has led some initiatives in recent years to increase the profile of women in leadership, the relevant Crown agency, Sport NZ, was, until 2018, slow to act to redress what has been clearly identified as a glaring anomaly. Since the 1990's the Crown agencies for sport have introduced some short-lived gender substantive equality initiatives which were influenced by the NZ government in power at the time. In 2013, Sport NZ, in conjunction with the NZOC, launched a Women in Sport Leadership training programme to address the imbalance. The NZOC in 2017, commenced the Women's Sport Leadership Academy (NZ) to develop the leadership skills of 18 retired NZ female Olympians. The NZOC initiatives align with those of influential international organisations which are promoting strategies and similar initiatives aimed at increasing the number and variety of roles that women hold in sport management and leadership. Such initiatives include the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Female Leadership Development 2015-

2018, the Women Leaders in Sport programme offered by the Australian Sport Commission (which in 2018 became Sport Australia) and the 2014 Women and Leadership Program offered by the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS).

According to [Brooks and Hesse-Biber \(2007\)](#), it is the researcher's lived experiences and worldviews which initiate, influence and shape the research. This was indeed the case for me. A further impetus for this study is my position as an AUT University sport management academic working for the School of Sport and Recreation. I am the academic supervisor for many students fulfilling their final work-integrated learning (WIL) paper – also known as a work practicum, or co-operative education – that combines their academic learning with practice in a work environment. I consider WIL to be far more than an academic requirement to complete the degree; it provides an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge developed through university study and grow their confidence in a 'real' work situation. I thoroughly enjoy helping the students, especially the women, work towards realising their personal and work aspirations. A component of WIL involves the students writing a learning agreement which specifies personal and business areas they want to develop. WIL spans one to two semesters and includes weekly contact with each student. During this period, I usually develop a close professional working relationship with the students. Being the academic supervisor of these students throughout this stage of their studies, I am in a position to see and assess some of their academic work and workplace performance and to read their industry and personal reflective feedback.

Through this experience with the WIL paper, and over the past 11 years as a sport management lecturer in NZ, I have encountered many female students who are reluctant to apply for jobs at the end of their university training and after completing their WIL, despite being competent. The women tend to lack confidence. Their male student counterparts, irrespective of academic performance, readily apply for the jobs whereas the women do not. The following extract from my personal journal outlines some of my observations.

*As she left my office, I shut the door behind her. Again, I am left feeling bewildered and disappointed. I have been a university lecturer, mentoring the WIL students for years, and this I have seen all too often. I am left wondering why this capable young*

*woman of 23 years, who has just completed 2 degrees and nine months of practical work experience has such low self-esteem and such a limited belief in her ability. I see some of my younger self in them. I ask myself – ‘Why is it these competent and articulate women have a lack of ‘self-belief’ when their male counterparts are ready to conquer the world and win the medal?’ I have changed my teaching style to try and address the apparent lack of self-esteem these women have. I draw their attention to this disparity of self-esteem that I have observed over the years and advise them to focus some of their personal learning objectives that address their low self-esteem. (December 7, 2010)*

Similar observations have been reported by Sarah Leberman and Sally Shaw ([2012](#), [2015](#)), who lecture and research in management and sport at Massey University and Otago University in NZ. I want to understand why capable women in the final stages of their university study display such reluctance to put themselves forward for roles within sport management. How could high academic achieving students question their ability to achieve success in the workplace? Can they not see the value of the skills they have developed? My observations and experiences, therefore, provided the initial impetus to study this phenomenon.

## 1.2 Research question and theoretical position

This present study is underpinned by a feminist hermeneutic approach and aims to shed new light on how women in NZ sport management perceive, choose, and navigate their sport management roles. The study is interpretive, where meanings will be developed from the women’s lived experiences which will provide insights on women’s work progression in NZ sport management.

Countries such as NZ exude a powerful self-image, one that suggests an ideal of egalitarianism and consensus prevails ([Nolan, 2007](#)). A review of sport management academic literature indicates the low numbers of women in sport management and leadership both within NZ ([Cameron, 2000](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#); [McKay, 1997](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)) and globally ([Acosta & Carpenter, 2014](#); [Adriaanse, 2017](#); [Aitchison, Jordan, & Brackenridge, 1999](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008](#); [Hancock, Darwin, & Walker, 2018](#); [Messner, 2007](#); [Shaw & Frisby, 2006](#); [Shaw & Hoerber, 2003](#)). Despite several rounds of initiatives, by Sport NZ and the NZOC, the numbers of women in management positions continue to remain low although the number of women in sport board positions has risen (Kereyn Smith,

personal communication, October 26, 2017).<sup>1</sup> NZ's egalitarian self-image fails to deliver at the level of sport participation as well. Women spent an average 12% less time participating in sport and recreation than men in 2017, and though women wanted to participate more, they felt they faced more barriers to do so ([Sport New Zealand, 2018a](#)).

Improving the plight of women in sport management is an issue that continues to be absent from most publicly available documents, including the Briefing to Incoming Ministers (BIMs)<sup>2</sup> and Sport NZ annual reports and strategic plans. Two key exceptions are the Human Rights Commission (HRC) reports on women's participation in 2010 and 2012 (now discontinued) and the 2018 NZ government strategy on women and girls in sport and active recreation. The 2018 government strategy for women and girls in sport recognised women held 27% of positions in sport governance, 40% of positions in leadership and management, and 76% of administrative and support services roles ([Sport New Zealand & New Zealand Government, 2018](#)). [Shaw \(2007\)](#) warned about placing the focus on increasing the numbers of women in management and leadership roles and overlooking the underlying gendered values and practices which perpetuate marginalisation. This study seeks to capture these values and practices through the stories, experiences and working choices of women, both as students and as practitioners working in the sport management context.

I discussed my concerns with several men and women academic colleagues and encountered diverse responses; some recognised the difference as possibly being gendered, and others adamantly affirmed access into sport management was equal for men and women. However, there was sufficient literature and anecdotal evidence to indicate that other academics observed a gendered difference in sport management work access and that provided further impetus for me to follow my intuition. This

---

<sup>1</sup> Kereyn Smith is the first woman CE of the NZOC in its 100-year history. Other roles Smith has fulfilled in her sport management career include being the CE of the New Zealand Academy of Sport for the South Island, General Manager of the Hillary Commission, CE of the Southern Sports Trust, Vice-President of International Netball, and Chair of New Zealand Netball. She played a pivotal role in instigating the Brighton Declaration (see section 3.6.6). Smith has supported the development of many women in sport leadership. In 2015, Smith was named as a Member of New Zealand Order of Merit for services to sports governance.

<sup>2</sup> A Briefing to Incoming Ministers (BIMs) is a detailed document for each of the NZ government portfolios which summarises key areas of policy and related policy issues

drove my decision to explore “the experiences of women studying, and working in, Aotearoa New Zealand sport management”.

### 1.3 An interpretive feminist hermeneutic enquiry

My quantitative science and marketing background coloured my view of research before I embarked on this study. Yet, for me, a positivist approach did not fully answer the ‘why’ questions which I needed to address in order to glean an understanding of complex human nature. Opening my mind to another reality made the process of choosing an appropriate framework to guide this research project particularly challenging. Interpretive approaches attracted me with the possibility of accessing insights into people and their actions. Wanting to explore women’s individual experiences and the meanings they made of them directed me into an interpretive feminist landscape where women’s experiences were central. At the same time, I needed to situate women’s experiences in a socio-economic and cultural time context.

The possibility of positioning this study as a feminist study was my second challenge. I was averse to embarking on a feminist study because I considered feminists to be perceived by others, such as employers, colleagues and some men, as ‘troublemakers’. I was well aware of not wanting to compromise my current or future financial security by overtly labelling myself as a feminist. I spent a year wrestling with the fear that my career could be compromised. During this time, I researched feminism, read Carol Gilligan’s (1982) *In a Different Voice*, discussed my possible feminist framework with others, and finally embraced embarking on a feminist study.

The women who participated in this study came from a historical, socio-economic and cultural past which influences their interpretations and meanings of their present-day experiences of studying and working in NZ sport management. These experiences are often ‘taken-for-granted’ moments in their lives, with no or little importance being placed upon their day-to-day experiences as they unfold. This research aimed to explore the women’s experiences and the meanings made from them, extending the work conducted by [Leberman and Shaw \(2015\)](#) and shedding further light on reasons for the imbalance in the number of women, compared to the number of men, working in NZ sport management.

The ramifications of gendering and limited access for women are both social and political. The women's experiences of growing up, studying and working in patriarchal NZ are different from those of men. Socially constructed stereotypes and social conditioning about jobs and behaviour dominate our worlds from birth. They create a complex and dynamic structure which is interwoven with the interpretations and meanings made from our daily experiences. Damning reports by New Zealand Cricket in 2016 ([New Zealand Cricket, 2016](#)) and New Zealand Rugby in 2017 ([Cockburn & Atkinson, 2017](#)) have clearly acknowledged that women have not been included in areas such as participation, leadership and visibility. In 2017, the NZ Labour Party, with centre-left policies, won the national election, and the new Sport and Recreation Minister, Grant Robertson, identified improving access to sport for women as his priority. On October 11, 2018, the NZ Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Robertson "launched a new strategy that champions equality for New Zealand women and girls in sport and active recreation" ([Ardern & Robertson, 2018, para. 1](#)).

Hermeneutics provides the philosophical scope for the women's historically affected consciousness to be interpreted through their present-day experiences. The hermeneutic circle metaphorically describes the process of thinking wherein the parts are considered in relation to the whole and the whole, in turn, is reconsidered in relation to the parts. This mode of thought enables various aspects of the women's stories and my pre-conceived ideas to be interpreted through the issue at hand, the low representation of women. The meaning that arises from this process is considered to fuse the individual's component parts or horizons with another, resulting in an expanded collective understanding, called the 'fusion of horizons' ([Gadamer, 1975](#)). One failing of philosophical hermeneutics is the lack of critical praxis ([Buker, 1990](#)). However, feminist theory provides the political critique deemed to be missing from a purely hermeneutic study.

The feminist hermeneutic framework recognises the nature of the experiences of women who are studying and working in NZ sport management. Hermeneutics facilitates the complexity of being human. Feminism provides a critique that can positively influence social change and ultimately improve the lived experience for women. In combination, these philosophies provide a research framework that draws inspiration from prior gender research by Laura Burton, Sarah Leberman, Sally Shaw,

Johanna Adriaanse, Toni Schofield, Michelle O'Shea and Janet Fink on women's work experience and career progression in sport management ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Fink, 2016](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#); [O'Shea, 2017](#)).

#### 1.4 Research context and limitations

The context for this study is the sports industry in NZ. The participants are women who were born and raised in NZ and who are: 1] studying sport management at one of three NZ universities; or, 2] have graduated from these university sport management programmes between 2010 and 2016 and who have embarked on work in sport management; or 3] experienced practitioners who hold leadership or management roles in sport organisations in NZ. Thus, the research is centred on women whose upbringing was influenced by NZ's cultures, structures and practices and is not representative of the experiences of immigrants or women practitioners who have more recently transitioned into the sport management sector from other industries.

The feminist framework centres on the women's lived experiences, as opposed to the experiences of women compared to men. I realised interviewing men would provide different data, but the purpose of this study was to give voice to women and construct women centred knowledge, for women, who have continuously been marginalised in the space of the 'other'.

Hermeneutics does not claim to provide generalisable conclusions ([van Manen, 1990](#)). It does, however, disclose women's experiences of covered-over and taken-for-granted gendered structures and practices which have allowed and perpetuated women's marginalised experiences in sport management.

#### 1.5 My personal background

Empathy for someone's historical past is part of the hermeneutic consciousness, the sense of being is shaped by history and within history ([Gadamer, 1975](#)). In some of my women university students, I recognised my own intermittent lack of confidence which I tried, mostly successfully, to ignore and hide. Being a mother of two young women, I wanted to understand my thought processes to stop my daughters being limited by similar bouts of self-doubt. For me to conduct this research enquiry, it had to be meaningful to me and other women and act a useful tool to challenge the status quo.

As part of developing that understanding of my thought process, I have written a short personal history in the following paragraphs in which I try to capture the family behaviours and values which impacted the meanings I made from my upbringing.

My mother was born in 1933, the second daughter and youngest of three children. Her father died in World War Two. Mum's mum single-handedly raised her three children on a War Widow's Pension. The Great Depression and World War Two meant financial resources were lean, and my mother owned her first pair of shoes at nine years of age. Her family was heavily involved in their local tennis club, and mum also would row her wooden dingy out from the beach and around the reefs each day in an attempt to cure her asthma. After high school, my mother trained and worked as a primary school teacher. She married my father when she was 23 years-of-age. When she was aged 25, she was forced to stop work due to her pregnancy with my oldest brother.

My father was the significant first-born child, in 1929, in his strongly patriarchal family. He was nine years senior to his sister, his only sibling. Dad's father was in paid employment and his family supplemented their household income during the Depression with several hundred poultry and a cow. Dad's father owned a quarter share in an Auckland golf club but was forced to sell it during the Depression. Dad's dyslexia went undiagnosed throughout most of his life. He struggled to read and write which undermined his self-confidence. Dad told me the Catholic nuns in his first year of school would repeatedly hit him across the knuckles with a wooden ruler because he could not read. Despite having limited reading ability, dad trained as a refrigeration engineer. Dad raced small yachts, competed nationally in basketball and surf lifesaving and, like his father, was an accomplished golfer.

After mum and dad were married, my mother's family encouraged them to start a refrigeration business. Mum and dad owned and operated their business from our family home until my two older brothers took the business over in the 1980s. My father always referred to the business as 'his', although my mother was the receptionist, and bookkeeper and equally contributed to the venture. Mum's work also included cultivating our 150m<sup>2</sup> garden, making all of the family's clothes, cooking, preserving, and cleaning the house. Dad's household chores included most of the

house maintenance, mowing the lawns and putting the rubbish on the road for collection.

I was born in 1962, in the largest city in NZ, Auckland. I was the only daughter and youngest of three children. My father and his family revered my eldest brother. He was the firstborn child, a son who would carry on the family name. The second child was also a son, which was another feather in my father's cap. My family life was traditionally gendered. Mum became my role model, schooling me in baking, cooking, bottling, sewing, gardening, and housework. Being a teacher, she gave me additional tutoring in English, French and mathematics. My brothers were guided by my father, mowing the lawns and developing mechanical, metal and woodwork skills. My parents were both relentlessly hard-working, and the Depression and war years contributed to their spendthrift disposition. Dad abided by conventional rules; he was a conformist, honest, and reliable. He considered his role was to provide financially for our family, which he successfully did. Mum challenged the rules, pushed the boundaries and, above all, was an innovator. She was forever creating family adventures and inventing exciting and fun activities. She opened doors for me to many opportunities. I joined an environmental community science group at nine years of age and over the next seven years mum and I would attend science meetings on a Friday night at the local all-boys high school or lectures in biology and geology at Auckland University.

As a family we participated in a lot of sport and recreation. My father attended the boy's rugby games and my mother came to every one of my field hockey games. Mum and dad joined the golf course across the road from our house.

I used getting badges at Brownies and Girl Guides as an avenue to access 'male' pursuits, such as building, tramping, archaeology and orienteering. As a family, we built a two-storey beach house which, on occasion, because we had limited labour, meant I was allowed to do some of the building. All of our family were innovative, building and designing things because resources were limited. I developed a very innate 'number 8 fence wire'<sup>3</sup> mentality.

---

<sup>3</sup> Number 8 fence wire is a gauge of steel wire used extensively in NZ agricultural fencing. Early European settlers of NZ were isolated and had to rely on their ingenuity to repair and make things, and they often

My brothers did not apply themselves to their academic studies and did not pass the examinations necessary for university entrance. I, on the other hand, did. My father considered it a 'shame' that I had inherited the academic intelligence and not my brothers because he held the opinion that a woman left school, possibly to work for a few years as a secretary, or teacher, and then, once married, became a housewife and mother. My mother always encouraged me to be whatever I wanted to be. My high-school teachers also assumed with my grades I would be going to university and only ever asked, "What will you be studying at university?" I remember one weekend towards the end of my final high-school year, mum and dad had gone away for the weekend. They had spent the weekend discussing if I should be permitted to go to university. On their return, they informed me they had decided that I could go to university. This was news to me, since the assumption by my teachers was that I was going to university after finishing high school, and the questions which remained unanswered for me were; which university and which programme of study? I had wanted to train as an airline pilot, but there were no women training then. Dad advised me that if I ever got married, I would have to leave my job if I earned more than my husband. According to him, "male egos were rather fragile".

When I began my doctoral research, my parents were in their 80s. My father was affronted with my feminist study; he implied I was a man-hater, and my 'kind' were responsible for the demise of NZ society. If I mentioned my research, my father would make our weekly family gatherings unpleasant or he would be nasty to my mother for days. I soon stopped talking about my studies in front of dad. My mother was different; from the beginning of my doctoral journey, she would cut articles from the newspaper and eagerly tell me about pertinent interviews on the radio.

Looking back through my life, I could not trace being marginalised as a girl or woman to any one incident but realised being marginalised in NZ had been a continuous series of gender-infused moments. My personal background was the filter through which I tried to understand my students' reluctance to start their first sport management role post-university and my interpretation of the stories told by my participants.

---

resorted to using number 8 fence wire. The phrase has come to represent NZers who solve problems resourcefully using an innovative mindset.

## 1.6 My beginning position

I had observed that many of the female students in my classes lacked confidence, which made them reluctant to apply for their first job after completing their studies. I recognised their behaviour because I have periods of low self-confidence, where I question my ability. I wanted to understand why and how low confidence was more prevalent in my female students as opposed to my male students. My thoughts kept directing me to suspect that the limitations and expectations imposed upon me by my father within my family home, which were different from my brothers' experiences, somehow undermined my confidence. I suspected my female students might have shared similar experiences and corresponding negative thought processes. I anticipated that my research participants would share similar stories to my own. Moreover, if this was the case, I wanted to help put a stop to women's self-limiting thoughts and behaviours. I do not want my daughters, or my daughters' daughters, to encounter gender-limiting stereotypes.

As noted earlier, when my doctoral supervisors for this study hinted at the possibility of my research being a feminist study, I strongly rejected their suggestion. I had been raised in a household, where popular culture, framed by mass media, had crafted 'feminists' to mean troublemakers, men haters, and lesbians. Growing up, I had 'taken for granted' the 'truth' of the deliberate male attribution of these characteristics to feminism. Furthermore, I anticipated that my colleagues, my current employer and any future employers would consider my thesis as coming from a political and divisive standpoint ([Sinclair, 2019](#)). My elder daughter, who was 13 years of age when I affirmed my study was underpinned by feminist thought, was appalled. She and her school peers viewed feminists as 'man haters'. She refused to talk to me about my research for two years. My quiet and reserved 11-year-old daughter was different; she claimed she was a feminist from the outset. During the research journey, as my understanding of feminism grew, I gently discussed my changing perspectives with my daughters. Together we saw my research as a means to empower women by revealing that women are not to blame for their circumstances and that other women may share similar experiences and gain confidence knowing they were not alone. During the course of the doctoral journey my eldest daughter proudly became a staunch feminist,

publicly affirming women's rights and in 2018 she secured three NCEA scholarships, all of which were underpinned by feminism.

I also expected the feminist label for my study would generate reluctance from several of my participants for the same reasons as me. I wrestled with the notion of a feminist position within my study for well over a year before I was finally drawn to using a feminist lens. Interestingly, I initially told very few people that my thesis was underpinned by feminist theory simply because of the concerns expressed above. What does my reticence tell us about the wider world I experience? In the final three years, I openly identified as a feminist, questioned others' misinformed definitions of feminists, and readily acknowledged my research was a feminist study.

Feminist research encourages the researcher to reflect on and draw from her own experiences and her interpretations of those experiences during the course of the research ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#)). My participants' stories, the theory and my reflection 'linked the dots' and revealed how I had accepted the invisible and taken-for-granted nature of my marginalisation.

## 1.7 Significance and contribution to academia and practice

This thesis contributes to current methodological, theoretical and practical knowledge. Hermeneutics methodology involves the uncovering of taken-for-granted concrete lived experiences ([van Manen, 1990](#)). According to [Figal and Espinet \(2012\)](#), feminist research, about women and for women, provides hermeneutics with a political call for action. Cunningham and Sagas ([2007](#)) noted that much of the research on women's experiences in sport management have been based in America and within university athletic departments, and claimed more diverse research is needed. A hermeneutic study underpinned by feminist theory to investigate women's lived experiences of studying and working in sport management in NZ provides a unique and new contribution to methodological and practical knowledge. Overall, the breadth of cross-generational women's perspectives ([Coomes & DeBard, 2004](#)) from sport management students, graduates and longer-standing practitioners across a range of sporting organisations is the key contribution of this thesis.

Cunningham and Sagas (2007) also called for more research which uses a multilevel analytic framework of macro-societal, meso-organisational and micro-individual layers to frame the factors influencing women's experiences. According to O'Shea (2017) and Shaw and Leberman (2015), past studies investigating women's experiences in sport management have included women in sport leadership, board or governance roles, with less research on women in their entry or in middle management positions. This study serves to shed light on these areas through the voices of women working in their early lower-level sport management roles.

Gendered experiences within sport provide insights into the gender binary of femininity and masculinity, and the inequitable structures and practices which prioritise masculine attributes over feminine ones and constrain women's work progression (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007; Cunningham & Sagas, 2007; O'Shea, 2017; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003). Traditionally, roles in sport decision-making in NZ have been dominated by men who hold positions of hierarchical power and influence (Ryan & Dickson, 2016; Shaw & Leberman, 2015). Shaw (2006) claimed undoing the gendered roles and hierarchies in sport management is a governing role for which both men and women are responsible.

An important contribution of this thesis is the students' perspectives on the barriers and enablers for successful employment in sport management in NZ. Shaw and Leberman (2015) note there is limited research on students' and graduates' experiences or their anticipated sport management work expectations. Hancock, Darwin, et al.'s (2018) study, and Sauder, Mudrick and DeLuca's (2018) research which used the Career Barrier Index (CBI), reaffirmed in a North American context that women students experienced barriers of male dominance and sexism within the university and anticipated this in ways which inhibited their future working in sport management. In NZ, no literature mentioned students' perceptions of sexism or male dominance in university sport management courses.

## 1.8 Structure of the thesis

My interpretive feminist hermeneutic approach was based on some of the methodological ideas of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975) and Max van Manen (1990, 2014), and the feminist theories of Sandra Harding (1987), and Hesse-Biber and Leavy

([2007b](#)). In 2017, women students, recent graduates, and experienced practitioners in sport management were asked by an NZ-born, sport management lecturer-researcher to describe their experiences in NZ sport management. The findings of the study are therefore constituted by meanings derived from: being a woman; being a student or graduate of sport management; being a practitioner of sport management; and being from and in NZ.

### 1.8.1 An overview of the chapters

Chapter Two outlines feminist theory and draws on the combination of feminist standpoint theory and the work of feminist writers Mary Belenky, Blythe Clinchy, Nancy Goldberger and Jill Tarule ([1997](#)) (*Women's Ways of Knowing*), which sets the stage for me to explore the women's experiences. [Belenky et al. \(1997\)](#) examined women's ways of knowing and described five different perspectives from which women view reality and draw conclusions about truth, knowledge, and authority. [Belenky et al. \(1997\)](#) explained how women struggle to claim the power of their own minds, and in particular, focused on the ways in which both family and school promote and hinder women's development. The use of the three inter-generational participant groups in this study was intended to provide a range of experiences and where they aligned with Belenky et al.'s five perspectives.

Chapter Three initially establishes the historical and present-day context of 2019 as it relates to NZ. Understanding the differences between equality and equity is critical for this study. For the purpose of this study 'formal equality' is where men and women are treated equally and given the same opportunities or resources. However, under patriarchy women are marginalised and more often than not achieve different outcomes. Substantive equality acknowledges that in male dominated cultures women need additional resources or opportunities to achieve the same outcome as men. Equity refers to pay equity where men and women receive the same pay for the same work. The chapter then presents an overview of the nature of the sports industry, focussing mainly on sport management, where aspects of sport as a gendered space are highlighted.

Chapter Four sets out the research framework and is titled "Research design, methodology and method". An overview of phenomenology and the development of

hermeneutics follows, with particular attention paid to [van Manen \(2014\)](#) with *Phenomenology of practice: Meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research and writing* as the text guiding this research project. Van Manen's (2014) practical method of research within professional centred practice draws on real world experiences. Van Manen was strongly influenced by key phenomenological and hermeneutic philosophers. Their thinking underpinned van Manen's meaning making within cultural and historical contexts. The chapter combines hermeneutics and feminism as the basis of political knowledge building. The chapter takes the reader from the methodology to the applied method and specifies how the study process was carried out. Details about focus groups and one-on-one interviews highlight how the data was collected. The chapter discusses the trustworthiness of the study, including the use of reflexivity and rigour. The audit trail describes how the interpretive process was implemented.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven present the findings from the students, graduates and practitioners in a chronological progression from upbringing through university studies to working in sport management. The women's own voices guide the reader through these chapters.

In Chapter Eight, the feminist hermeneutic inquiry weaves three strands of knowledge, namely the findings of the meanings women made from their experiences, feminist standpoint theory and my own pre-understanding as the researcher. Two key themes, 'match-fixing' and 'player selection' emerged from this process, which were supported by various sub-themes. The hermeneutic circle mediates between the parts and the whole, merging the horizons of the participant's stories, the theory and my perspectives as the researcher.

The final chapter, Chapter Nine, synthesises and discusses the main themes which emerge from the findings of the study. The chapter presents the contributions, significance, limitations and recommendations from the thesis. Suggestions are made for further research. The chapter concludes with my final thoughts.

## Chapter 2 Feminism and feminist research

This chapter outlines feminism and the feminist ontology, theory, research, intersectionality and standpoint used in this thesis. The concluding section of this chapter provides an overview of a significant feminist publication *Women's ways of knowing* by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1997) which sheds light on understanding women's different stages in knowledge acquisition.

### 2.1 Feminist ontology

Ontology is the exploration of the nature of reality from a given perspective. "‘Woman’ is a socially and politically constructed category" ([Stanley & Wise, 1990/2013, p. 21](#)), the lived experiences of women opposing gender discrimination is the basis of feminist ontology and the analysis of their experiences becomes the feminist epistemology ([Stanley, 1990/2013](#)). Feminist ontology explores what it means to be a woman living in a society where power and identity struggles exist, based on gendered privilege or oppression ([Brooks, 2007](#); [Creswell, 2013](#); [Sprague & Zimmerman, 1993](#)). Feminists' views and perspectives challenge historically constituted political, social and cultural norms which have been reproduced and perpetuate the oppression of women ([Harding, 1987](#)). Although women share the experience of oppression, each woman experiences oppression differently shaped by their social context. This implies there is no one feminist ontology, since women and their experiences are extremely diverse ([Stanley & Wise, 1990/2013](#)).

Central to feminism is the quest to rectify the imbalance of power and gender which authorises the dominant group at the expense of marginalised groups ([Brooks, 2007](#); [Baker, 1990](#); [Harding, 1987](#); [Hartsock, 1987](#); [Leckenby, 2007](#)). Feminist assumptions are not concerned with men, but with the socially constructed gender package that maintains male privilege ([Brooks, 2007](#); [Stanley & Wise, 1990/2013](#)). Although societies have evolved in the material world, patriarchal hierarchies maintain inequities within cultures.

Groups within society share the knowledge and meanings distinctive and unique to them. Feminist theorists have asserted that women, as a societal group, view the world differently from men. There will be heterogeneity among the group members

and women within the same group will deviate in their knowledge, experiences and meanings. Women's ways of knowing and multiplicative and diverse ([Reinharz & Davidman, 1992](#)).

Simone de Beauvoir was a key contributor to feminist theory. De Beauvoir explained that women were often referred to as being different to men, and if no gender was given, the taken for granted gender by default was men. In doing so, [de Beauvoir \(2011\)](#) exposed how women in relation to men become "the inessential in front of the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other" (p. 6). [Tester \(2014\)](#) proposed that by viewing the world from the women's vantage point as the marginalized and excluded 'inessential other' provided an opportunity to understand how women develop a different knowledge than men. [D. Smith \(1990\)](#) insisted that women must resist being positioned as 'other' and claim their different and unique knowledge. This would generate new knowledge where women's experiences are the main focus and not simply included as a matter of course ([Hartstock, 1983, as cited in Hekman, 1997](#)).

Modern Western feminism has its origins in the democratic revolutions of the 18<sup>th</sup> century ([Disch & Hawkesworth, 2016](#)). The metaphoric 'waves' of feminism which developed correspond with cycles of intense collective action by those fighting for women's rights against those in power, followed by periods of relative calm ([Charles & Wadia, 2018](#)). Various scholars attribute feminist theory to a particular wave period ([Disch & Hawkesworth, 2016](#); [Mann & Huffman, 2005](#)), although some feminists debate the accuracy and significance of waves within the global setting and the multiplicity of feminisms ([Nicholson, 2013](#)). "Multiple feminist lenses wake up to layers of sexist, racist, homophobic, and colonialist points of view" ([Hesse-Biber, 2013, p. 4](#)).

Feminism spanning the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries focused on rectifying inherent gender legal inequalities and fought against women's treatment as second-class citizens without a voice ([Ehlers, 2016](#)). Throughout this period, feminists campaigned for equal rights for women in terms of property ownership and political enfranchisement for women ([Phillips & Cree, 2014](#)). The fundamental argument was that women and men should have the same legal and political rights.

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, critical feminist voices broadened the debate to include social and cultural inequalities, claiming political inequalities and gender discrimination were inextricably linked ([Brookes, 2016](#); [Rei, 1998](#)). Feminists during this era challenged gender norms and the role of women in society and demanded an end to gender discrimination. Feminism from this point forward expanded the focus from white middle- and upper-class women to include women of different races and encompassed women's multiple diversities. In the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, women joined the workforce in higher numbers, and employment inequalities based on gender became increasingly apparent ([Ehlers, 2016](#)). Women were paid at a lower rate than men for the same work, and equal pay and equal employment rights for women were at the forefront of feminist campaigns.

Current feminist voices use the Internet and social media to build strong, diverse, instantaneous, and reactive public awareness ([Brookes, 2016](#); [Charles & Wadia, 2018](#); [Long, 2012](#); [Scraton, 2018](#)). The word 'feminist' is being reclaimed in social media and by young women who are reclaiming the feminist identity and are driving for change ([Scraton, 2018](#)). Feminist online campaigns are facilitating the political voice of women on issues such as sexual harassment, exclusion, violence, discrimination, domestic violence, sexting and body-shaming. Campaigns such as #Bringbackourgirls, #metoo, #istandwithwomen and #heforshe have empowered individual women to be political and to join together to be collectively powerful ([Brookes, 2016](#); [Knappe & Lang, 2014](#)). Modern feminists are not isolated, and the online platforms serve to connect women working night and day shifts in the home and office.

Increasing the opportunities for women attracts criticism from various quarters. Opponents of feminism argue that advancements in equality for women reduce the power and influence of men and alienate some men ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Harding, 2007](#)). Furthermore, feminists encounter negative stereotyping which undermines the feminist movement and dissuades some women from identifying as a feminist ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Gundersen & Kunst, 2018](#); [hooks, 2015](#); [Sinclair, 2019](#)).

### 2.1.1 Key advancements for women's legal formal equality in NZ

In 1885, the New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union was established and led the campaign for women's suffrage, headed by Kate Sheppard ([Bunkle & Hughes, 1980](#)), and NZ Māori and Pākehā women became the first women globally to win the right to vote in parliamentary elections under the Electoral Act 1893 which became law on September 19, 1893 ([Atkinson & McIntyre, n.d.](#); [Pierce, 1995](#)). Legislative changes started to override some pervasive gender narratives and stereotypes. The National Council of Women was formed in 1896, uniting women's unions and political groups and was strongly linked to the International Council for Women ([Pierce, 1995](#)). In the same year, the National Council of Women began to lobby the government for equal pay ([Statistics New Zealand, 1990](#)). In 1919 women won the right to stand for parliament and, in 1933, the first woman was elected ([Cook, 2011](#)). The Ministry of Women's Affairs was established in 1984 with a mandate to advise the government about equality issues for women ([Statistics New Zealand, 2013](#)). Further efforts for workplace equality for women came with the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987 for women and men ([Pierce, 1995](#); [M. Wilson, 1998](#)). By 1990 NZ's government had just over 16% elected female members of Parliament ([Atkinson & McIntyre, n.d.](#)) and women accounted for 43% of the total paid workforce ([Pierce, 1995](#)). The NZ Bill of Rights Act 1990 was passed to protect all NZ citizens from discrimination on the basis of sex. In NZ's 2017 election, 38.4% of members of parliament were women, and Jacinda Ardern was elected to be Prime Minister. Ardern had been the youngest female state leader since the NZ 2017 election, however in December 2019, 34-year-old Sanna Marin became Finland's Prime Minister and the new youngest female state leader. Ardern was only the second woman to have a baby during her term as Prime Minister of a country. But many issues continue to marginalise, silence, limit and oppress women, providing the motivation for four decades of women-centred research.

## 2.2 Feminist research and knowledge building

[Olesen \(2008\)](#) argued, feminist qualitative research is diverse and like [Harding \(1987\)](#), claimed that there was no one specific feminist research methodology or method. Instead, feminist researchers argue, researchers should select the methodology (approaches to collecting and analysing the data), and method (tools for data

collection), that most suitably enable answering their specific research question within the integrity of their epistemology and ontology ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Harding, 1987](#); [Stanley, 1990/2013](#)). The evolutionary nature of feminist research allows the feminist researcher to employ the best methodological approaches, or adaptations of these, needed to address their specific question while holding steadfast to the epistemological or paradigmatic underpinnings ([Baker, 1990](#); [Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)). Feminist researchers' views vary, based on their understanding of the construction of knowledge, and their epistemological position ([Du Plessis & Alice, 1998](#); [Hekman, 1997](#)), as women have different ways of interpreting and making meaning. Emerging feminist research allows situated experiences, subjectivity, emotion and embodiment, positionality and worldview to become legitimate aspects of data collection and new knowledge building ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Grbich, 2013](#); [Haraway, 1991](#); [Jaggar, 2004](#); [Olesen, 2008](#)). However, it is important to be aware of the different methodological approaches that have their unique limitations and advantages ([Grbich, 2013](#)), each with their own critics ([Olesen, 2008](#)).

The goals of feminist research are to empower women or other marginalised groups by making them central in the research and then use the research to advocate for change ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Du Plessis & Alice, 1998](#)). Feminist research is a political practice which acknowledges women are the knowledge authors; and it is women who establish what is included in the research ([Bryman, 2004](#); [Du Plessis & Alice, 1998](#); [Hekman, 1997](#); [J. Nielsen, 1990](#); [Reinharz, 1990](#)). The crucial stance of feminist research emphasises the insidious nature of everyday structures and practices which systematically marginalise women ([Ackerly & True, 2010](#)). Feminist research is taken from women's subjective, lived perspectives which are different from the lived experience of men and from the traditionally practised and accepted research. Feminist research claims that women's subordinate positions enable women to provide a less biased and more comprehensive social realism than men ([Harding, 1991](#)). [Harding \(1991\)](#) claimed that the more oppressed a group is, the more inclined they are to produce a more truthful account of the social world.

[Harding \(1990\)](#) stated:

The development of feminist thinking about knowledge is a consequence of women's attempts to explain the world—to become 'agents of knowledge' rather than only passive objects of others' claims to purported knowledge. We have been denied this fundamental human right to know from the perspective of our lives by the police, the courts, the health-care system, the economy, the state, and by those who make public policy on 'the family'. Refusal to entertain the possibility of such knowledge distorts women's and men's understandings of ourselves and our lives, as well as our understandings of the rest of the world. (p. 96)

From a feminist theoretical perspective, feminists argue, in a patriarchal society, the knowers have been men, and it is men's realities that have been acknowledged as 'truth'. Women were not included and were spoken for in the realms of research ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Baker, 1990](#); [D. Smith, 1987](#)). The focus on women's perspectives in research undermined the claimed objective, value-free, neutral truth of positivist social science research ([Harding, 1987](#); [Leckenby, 2007](#)). [Hesse-Biber and Leavy \(2007a\)](#) side lined positivist research's privileged location and proposed that developing feminist research could include elements of interpretation, emotions, subjectivity, perspective, and embodiment which enhance knowledge and understanding. Feminist research is also predominantly based on values as opposed to methodologies ([Sarantakos, 2013](#)).

### 2.2.1 Feminist research values

Feminist research is reflexive, as the researcher is self-aware, acknowledging the values, life experiences and prejudices their being brings into the research. Reflexivity enables the researcher to be part of the research process, and the researcher is integrated into the study ([Sarantakos, 2013](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)). Feminist principles that inform the entire research process ([Grbich, 2013](#)), include the empowerment of female participants, research from the perspective of women's experiences, and equal power between researcher and participants ([Harding, 1987](#)). Johnston's (1998) requirements of Māori research, and the need for Māori research to empower Māori and provide a mechanism for political action.

Underpinning this entire research project is a feminist theoretical framework. Central to feminist theories is the raising of women's individual and collective consciousness of their construction and interpretation of life experiences in a patriarchal world ([Liamputtong, 2007](#)). [Harding \(1990\)](#) argued that science and epistemology have at

their very core been androcentric and Western; consequently, she challenges feminist researchers to shelve traditional methodologies and critically reflect on their integrity as they conduct their research. Not only have women been invisible as “objects” of study but so too have women’s perspectives ([Belenky et al., 1997](#); [Gilligan, 1982](#); [Harding, 1987, 1990](#); [Hesse-Biber, 2013](#); [Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)). Feminists argue that women are the knowers and that women’s accounts have been ignored and misrepresented. For example, [Kissack \(2010\)](#) said that the unheard voices within organisational life need to be heard above those that dominate.

### 2.2.2 Feminist standpoint

Feminist standpoint theory emerged in the early 1980s and provided a tool to identify women’s oppression that was grounded in the concrete truth of women’s lived experiences ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Hekman, 1997](#); [Hesse-Biber, 2012](#)). Feminist standpoint assumes that knowledge is produced within a specific context, and women in different contexts generate multiple standpoints ([Hekman, 1997](#)).

[Harding \(1987\)](#) argued for the feminist research voice to be from actual people within the marginalised, since they are the real knowers and the people with the knowledge. Women must be the authors of women’s knowledge, ([Harding, 1987](#)), a knowledge which is particular and not universal ([Baker, 1990](#); [Harding, 1987](#); [Hekman, 1997](#)). In her book, *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan ([1963](#)) explained that it is only by looking closely at women’s experiences that the issues facing women are identified as different from those of men and consequently named. Sexual harassment in the workplace and postnatal depression are examples. Friedan ([1963](#)) showed how giving a name to problems facing women unites, arms and empowers women toward social change and, in the process, takes the self-blame away from women. Feminist standpoint is a unique knowledge production approach that calls on researchers to recognise women’s oppression from women’s perspectives and use that knowledge to action political change ([Leckenby, 2007](#)).

Feminist standpoint scholars claim that every woman presents a unique lived experience and, as such, should be valued. Valuable new knowledge is built through both similarities and differences. Belenky et al. (1986) found that women of varying ages, backgrounds, and social conditioning come to understand and see their world

based on these experiences. A feminist standpoint highlights commonalities across women's lives without ignoring the differences and the uniqueness of each participant ([Buzzanell, 2003](#); [Stanley & Wise, 1990/2013](#)). [Haraway \(1991\)](#) wanted us to embrace and learn from the differences between women's experiences as these are the sites critical in building new knowledge.

Women's oppression changes from invisible to obvious through feminist research and women's feminist standpoint ([Hekman, 1997](#)). Research drawing on feminist standpoint theory allows for an understanding of women's gendered experience and provides a means of understanding the nature of women's being in the world. According to [Leckenby \(2007\)](#), "Feminist standpoint epistemology requires the fusion of knowledge and practice. ... It is both a theory of knowledge building and a method of doing research – an approach to knowledge construction and a call to political action" (p. 55).

Nancy Hartsock, in her presentation of feminist standpoint theory in *Money, Sex, and Power*, (as cited in [Hekman, 1997](#)), claimed that men under patriarchy have a less complete perspective than the more comprehensive understanding of the world women as the oppressed 'other' hold. The construction of knowledge has been focused on maintaining the interests of the dominant group and disregarded their domination over and exploitation of minorities ([Jaggar, 2004](#)). Oppressed women have unique experiences from their different standpoints, and these provide different insights and perspectives for viewing the world and advocating for social change ([Creswell, 2013](#); [Hekman, 2000](#); [Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)).

Feminist sociologist [D. Smith \(1987\)](#), acknowledged for founding feminist standpoint theory, exposed sociological studies and frameworks which failed to reflect and represent female students' lives. Social theories and research taught within universities lacked knowledge and understanding around women's social construction of their everyday lives and roles, which are very different from men's ([Harding, 1987](#)). Research had been conducted by men, accounting for their version of women ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Baker, 1990](#); [Harding, 1987](#); [Hekman, 1997](#); [D. Smith, 1987](#)). The glaring incongruity between the existing research and women's self-knowledge evoked new approaches to knowledge-building based on the research of women by women

for women. Feminist standpoint theory evolved through this enlightenment and challenges patriarchal thinking and theory.

Grouping women is encouraged by Longino (1999) to promote discourse, sharing ideas from different standpoints to provide opportunities for women to broaden their horizons and build communities. Women uniting through their distinct experiences and meanings enables women to co-operate, advocate for change whilst maintaining their diversity (Leckenby, 2007). The multiple participant groups acknowledge that women with different standpoints, developed at different times and under various conditions, develop different knowledge, and it is these differences which capture the researcher's attention (Longino, 1993). The more different standpoints that are encountered, the broader the knowledge is that is built, and the more is learnt about society (Brooks, 2007). Feminist standpoint theory, therefore, requires women to be at the centre of the research and, according to feminist standpoint scholar Patricia Hill Collins (1990), all knowledge is developed from the women's "concrete experience" (p. 209).

To achieve a feminist standpoint, one must engage in the intellectual and political struggle necessary to see natural and social life from the point of view of that disdained activity which produces women's social experiences, instead of from the partial and perverse perspective available from the 'ruling gender' experience of men (Harding, 1987, p. 185). Hekman (1997) claims a critical element of feminist standpoint is that it creates "a counterhegemonic discourse that works to destabilize hegemonic discourse" (p. 355).

Contemporary feminist standpoint research is, therefore, an innovative, multidimensional approach that places a marginalised group's experiences, in this instance women's experiences, at the centre of knowledge building and empowers them in the process.

Moreover, a feminist standpoint advocates research that creates the opportunities for women to share the diversity of their oppression and stop the associated self-blame, perpetuated by patriarchy, by raising their consciousness and interpreting the nature of their oppression from a new perspective (Leckenby, 2007). This is reflected in the hermeneutic philosopher Jürgen Habermas's critical social theory, which is closely

aligned to feminist standpoint with his impetus for stopping exploitation combined with the drive for social change. Society is critically examined from a women's perspective in a way that enhances our understanding of the mechanisms of male dominance ([Jaggar, 2004](#)) and in the process exposes and empowers alternative choices about new ways of being for women ([J. Nielsen, 1990](#)).

### Double consciousness

Feminist standpoint scholars argue that women's perspectives and experiences of how the dominant group in patriarchal society functions and operates, combined with their experiences as an oppressed group, creates a 'double consciousness' ([J. Nielsen, 1990](#)). Double consciousness gives women an epistemological advantage by generating knowledge about the social reality from dual sources, both dominant and marginalised, which is more accurate and reliable and creates the opportunity to generate a more equitable society ([Jaggar, 2004](#); [J. Nielsen, 1990](#)). Historically, women had to navigate two worlds: firstly, their caring for others, the household, and the children; and, secondly, the stereotypical world of men ([D. Smith, 1990](#)). [bell hooks \(2004\)](#) considered double consciousness to be an opportunity to instigate change. [O'Leary \(1998\)](#) supported hooks' ([1990](#)) position which acknowledges when women's different standpoints come together and are shared, the women's worldviews are expanded. There are similarities with feminist standpoint and double consciousness which align to Gadamer's ([1975](#)) hermeneutic "fusion of horizons" (p. 317) (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four), where the research participants' and researcher's experiences, along with theory, are integrated to create a new and expanded collective horizon of knowledge and understanding. This greater understanding becomes a new position from which to action change ([Leckenby, 2007](#); [J. Nielsen, 1990](#)).

### Critics of feminist standpoint

Critics of feminist standpoint theory include [Hawthornthwaite \(1989\)](#) who perceived it to be overly simplistic and unable to encapsulate complexity. [Longino \(1993\)](#) questioned the ability to unpack and make sense of the varying perspectives of the participants using feminist standpoint theory. [hooks \(2004\)](#), claimed feminist standpoint lacked an emphasis on the inequalities of race and class. [Collins \(2002\)](#) also criticised feminist standpoint because she considered that knowledge of the traditions among women of

colour are overlooked. Marxist feminists are also critical of feminist standpoint, with their emphasis being on the class structure and the economy first and foremost, arguing issues of gender, including sex and patriarchy are secondary to inequality ([Stanley & Wise, 1990/2013](#)).

#### Māori as critics of feminist standpoint

NZ is a bicultural nation consisting of Māori who are tangata whenua, the indigenous people of Aotearoa ([Carpenter & McMurchy-Pilkington, 2008](#)), and other NZers who are not Māori. In 1840, Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), was signed by the representatives of many Māori tribal groups and representatives of the British crown ([Glynn, 1998](#)). Te Tiriti o Waitangi is described by many as the founding document of NZ, and the basis of the country's bicultural construct ([Brookes, 2016](#); [Du Plessis & Alice, 1998](#); [Rei, 1998](#)). Māori women lived within a different political, social and cultural context before the arrival of the Pākehā and Te Tiriti o Waitangi compromised Māori women's position within the newly established bicultural order of NZ society. Many NZers consider Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles of partnership, equality and power sharing in decision making have not been honoured, and the interpretation and application are continually contested ([Carpenter & McMurchy-Pilkington, 2008](#); [Glynn, 1998, 2015](#)).

Māori women have, throughout their colonial history, encountered feminist and racial oppression, where Māori oppose Pākehā and women oppose men ([P. Johnston, 1998](#)). Māori feminists have distanced themselves from Pākehā feminist discussions which have ignored or silenced the voices of Māori women ([P. Johnston, 1998](#)). Māori women have a different standpoint and a different way of being of value in sport management in NZ than non-Māori women, and the voices of Māori women are virtually absent in sport management research ([Palmer & Masters, 2010](#)). In their sport management roles Māori women have to navigate both their gender and culture ([Palmer & Masters, 2010](#)). By constructing their own knowledge, Māori women are determined to empower and validate and reclaim Māori women's differences ([P. Johnston, 1998](#)).

The following and final section of this chapter explores the text, *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*, which reveals how women experience knowledge acquisition which differs to that of men.

### 2.2.3 Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind

Mary Belenky, Blythe Clinchy, Nancy Goldberger and Jill Tarule (1986) conducted in-depth research interviews of 135 diverse female participants to explore and understand women's ways of knowing. From this research collaboration [Belenky et al. \(1997\)](#) identified five progressive perspectives which outline how women view reality, construct knowledge, perceived themselves and their control of their ideas. The five perspectives are:

*silence*, a position in which women experience themselves as mindless and voiceless and subject to the whims of external authority; *received knowledge*, a perspective from which women conceive of themselves as capable of receiving, even reproducing, knowledge from the all-knowing external authorities but not capable of creating knowledge on their own; *subjective knowledge*, a perspective from which truth and knowledge are conceived of as personal, private, and subjectively known or intuited; *procedural knowledge*, a position in which women are invested in learning and applying objective procedures for obtaining and communicating knowledge; and *constructed knowledge*, a position in which women view all knowledge as contextual, experience themselves as creators of knowledge, and value both subjective and objective strategies for knowing. (p. 15)

Knowledge constructed from the women's stories unites feminist standpoint theory with a new understanding of women's ways of knowing which are different from men's. [Belenky et al. \(1997\)](#) found women built knowledge predominantly within one of the five categories and changed categories dependent on their stage of life, personal development or experiences, and education. Socio-economic class and the knowledge building categories of their parents influenced the women's operational category.

Research has shown that women and girls experience more difficulty being assertive and presenting themselves as knowledgeable, publicly presenting their ideas and having those ideas heard and respected, and being fully utilised in their roles within a society that was created by men for men ([Belenky et al., 1997](#)). Stereotypical feminine

descriptors of emotion, relation and intuition had fuelled women's experiences of being undervalued compared to prized masculine stereotypical characteristics.

Belenky et al.'s ([1997](#)) findings revealed within *Women's Ways of Knowing* justified the inclusion of the three distinct groups of intergenerational women participants within this study.

### 2.3 Chapter summary

A feminist lens illuminates this entire research project. The feminist standpoint position enables a researcher to view the complex and individual position of each woman, her experiences and prior understandings. Particular attention was given to feminist standpoint which was critical for the voices of the multi-generational women participants in this study. It acknowledges that women are players in a male-dominated society, where structural and cultural processes have provided women with a privileged opportunity to experience and develop meaning from a marginalised position within the dominant domain. Women's ways of knowing are developed through their family, education, and work life experiences and are told from their various standpoints. A feminist standpoint also embraces diversity within historical and temporal settings. Research from the standpoint of women can support an understanding of women's gendered experience and provides a means of understanding the nature of women's being in the world. Feminist standpoint, therefore, aligns with a hermeneutic methodology by embracing interpretation, understanding and application.

## Chapter 3 Broadening horizons through literature

### 3.1 Introduction

“Sexism is detrimental to all of us, not just women.” ([Fink, 2016, p. 1](#))

The chapter provides an overview of the relevant sport management literature that is significant for women studying and working in sport management in NZ. The chapter begins by establishing the NZ cultural context and then overlays this with a sport management context. The ensuing section concentrates on sport management literature separated within a multilevel, macro-societal, meso-organisational, and micro-individual analytic framework ([Burton, 2015](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Cunningham, 2019](#); [Cunningham & Sagas, 2007](#); [Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009](#); [Taylor & Wells, 2017](#)) with four key themes: defining sport significance and structure in NZ; sport as a gendered space; substantive equality; and studying sport management at university. [Cunningham and Sagas \(2007\)](#) and [Burton and Leberman \(2017b\)](#) advocate for more gender research in sport management using this multilevel approach. To end, the chapter finally explores the state of play for women working in the field and the development of gender stereotypes and their impact on women’s self-efficacy and self-confidence.

The central question posed by this thesis is: What are the experiences of women studying, and working in, Aotearoa New Zealand sport management? In this thesis, I explore why, in NZ, some women lacked the confidence to apply for sport management roles, and why significantly fewer paid sport management and leadership positions are held by women compared with the number held by men. The significance of context, that is, localised historical, political and cultural practices, is an essential element in which the multilevel factors of the sport industry establish the dearth of female representation in management roles ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Harris, Grappendorf, Aicher, & Veraldo, 2015](#); [Jackson & Parry, 2011](#); [Klenke, 2011](#); [Palmer & Masters, 2010](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)).

Similarly, the gendering structures, practices and processes in organisations are shaped by dominant, invisible, and often unchallenged and taken-for-granted, culturally scripted gender norms ([Acker, 2006](#); [Martin, 2006](#)) which lie embedded in

sports organisations ([Fink, 2008](#)). Women are frequently referred to as 'other' in the socially constructed sport domain ([Kane, 1995](#)). Burton ([2015](#)), Burton and Leberman ([2017b](#)), Cunningham ([2019](#)), Fink ([2016](#)), O'Shea ([2017](#)), and Shaw and Leberman ([2015](#)) affirm inequality continues within sport organisations, and was evidenced by the National Council of Women's Gender Attitudes Survey ([National Council of Women of New Zealand, 2018](#)). Nevertheless, claims to the contrary from certain quarters believe that equality has been achieved in NZ ([Brookes, 2016](#)).

### 3.2 NZ's culture of patriarchal hegemonic masculinity

This section clarifies the definitions used within the context of this research.

In NZ the dominant culture is patriarchal, hegemonic and masculine ([McKay, 1991](#); [R. Pringle, 2001](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#); [Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013](#); [Wolfe et al., 2005](#)). Culture is the socially learnt knowledge of values, beliefs, rituals and behaviours through which the members interpret their experiences ([McCurdy, Spradley, & Shandy, 2005](#)). Culture is a combination of tacit culture learned through observing members within a particular society and explicit culture which is taught through language. Patriarchy consists of the social structures and practices ([Walby, 1989](#)) which create a culture where men are the normal and legitimate possessors of power, and women and other minorities are marginalised ([Butler, 1990](#); [Eagly & Wood, 2011](#); [Patterson, Mavin, & Turner, 2012](#); [Walby, 1989](#)). Hegemony is the supreme leadership or dominance of one group over another, a situation where knowledge is produced by right and remains undisputed, natural and normal ([Billing & Alvesson, 2000](#); [Hekman, 1997](#); [T. Miller, 1998](#); [Sinclair, 2013](#); [Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013](#)). McKay ([1991](#)) declares that hegemonic structures and practices reside within our conscious and unconscious being and permeate broadly and deeply in our everyday lives. Hegemonic values and meanings are reinforced through institutional spheres – sport, religion, education, science, medicine, law, the media, the family, politics and economics ([McKay, 1991, p. 21](#)). Simpson and Lewis ([2005](#)) claimed that male hegemony has become so entrenched and taken for granted that it is rendered invisible. According to Miller ([as cited in O'Shea, 2017](#)), when male hegemony and masculinity are combined, behaviours such as domestic violence and sexism become prevalent, and they limit women's productivity, well-being, work satisfaction and success.

Gender is not biologically determined as male or female but is socially constructed by separating masculine and feminine behaviours within cultural contexts ([Messner et al., 1999](#); [Patterson et al., 2012](#)) into gendered stereotypes which form the gendered global order of society ([Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000](#); [Gherardi, 1994](#)). [Patterson et al. \(2012\)](#) and Billing and Alvesson ([2000](#)) described the gender binary as the hierarchical dominance of masculinity over femininity. An individual behaving in accordance with gender stereotype expectations is 'doing gender', and such behaviour aligns with social role theory ([Eagly & Wood, 2011](#)) and the gendered hierarchy of society. Women entering traditionally male fields or behaving differently to their expected gender norms disrupt the readily accepted social order ([Marvin & Grandy, 2013](#)).

Discourses critiquing patriarchy contend, in many instances, that men and assumptions of masculinity are preferred ahead of women and femininity in many sport management, governance and leadership roles in sport ([Shaw & Hoerber, 2003](#)). [Scruton and Flintoff \(2013\)](#) warn that such claims about patriarchy may situate all men as oppressors and enforcers of marginalising behaviour without accepting some men are themselves marginalised within dominant patriarchy or resist notions of gendered superiority. As [McKay \(1991\)](#) emphasised, men have not consciously and systematically conspired to create a sport sector which empowers men and subjugates women. [McKay \(1991\)](#) claimed that historical practices have validated men's domination, power and control.

### 3.2.1 The multilevel analytic framework

Numerous studies have investigated the paucity of women in sport leadership and management ([Burton, 2015](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#); [Shaw & Frisby, 2006](#); [Taylor & Wells, 2017](#)). Since 2000, the technology explosion has led to an inundation of research, reports and publications ([Barnett, 2000](#)) making the understanding, interpretation, synthesis and assessment of women's experiences in the world of sport management a daunting task ([Weatherford, Wagner, & Block, 2018](#)). The breadth of research seeking to explain the scarcity of women in senior sport management and leadership positions highlights the complex nature of the issue ([Burton, 2015](#)).

A three-tier or multilevel analytic framework consisting of macro, meso and micro-layers is useful to capture the salient factors which contribute to the understanding and analysing of women's experiences in sport management. Once collected, the information within the framework can be used to identify strategies to create a more equitable system ([Burton, 2015](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Cunningham, 2010](#); [Cunningham & Sagas, 2007](#); [Kozlowski & Klein, 2000](#); [Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009](#); [Taylor & Wells, 2017](#)). Gendered macro-societal level factors include patriarchy ([Abdel-Shehid & Kalman-Lamb, 2011](#)), sexism, cultural stereotypes, social class ([Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)), political, and structural factors ([Cunningham, 2010](#)), the sport industry's hegemonic masculinity, exclusionary media ([Bruce, 2008](#)), stakeholder expectations ([Taylor & Wells, 2017](#)), institutional discrimination ([Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#)), policies and funding.

Meso-level factors include gendered sport organisations and tertiary sport management providers ([Taylor & Wells, 2017](#)), occupational segregation, old boys' networks, demanding hours, low pay ([Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#)), and the often invisible and taken-for-granted discrimination, processes, policies, structures and decision-making practices ([Cunningham, 2010](#); [Cunningham & Sagas, 2007](#); [Taylor & Wells, 2017](#)) which perpetuate inequality. Micro factors included self-efficacy, gender socialization, career intentions, self-limiting behaviours ([Bandura, 1977](#)), and human and social capital ([Taylor & Wells, 2017](#)). Women's sport leadership and management experiences are underpinned by societal and organisational gendering ([Burton, 2015](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#); [Schull et al., 2013](#)), which reinforce and perpetuate a women's gendered upbringing. To achieve true equality, change is required at political, societal, institutional, organisational, community, family and individual levels ([National Council of Women of New Zealand, 2015](#)).

### 3.3 Distinguishing formal equality, substantive equality and equity

The United Nations international human rights treaty known as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) defined gender equality to be the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities without difference based on a person's biological sex ([United Nations, 1979](#)). CEDAW stipulated that governments are obliged to make sure women and men have equal access to and experience the same economic, social, political, civil and cultural rights ([United](#)

[Nations, 1979](#)). Gender equality means “gender-neutral treatment, the principle of treating everyone the same” ([Waring, 1996, p. 133](#)) which is more accurately termed ‘formal equality’. CEDAW noted that even with governments supporting equal rights for both genders (formal equality), women continue to encounter extensive discrimination ([United Nations, 1979](#)). Formal equality in practice has not changed cultural attitudes or structures and practices which advantage men and systemically discriminate against women. CEDAW specified that discrimination against women on the basis of sex including acts of distinction, exclusion or restriction which has the purpose of limiting women’s access in any area compared with men ([United Nations, 1979](#)).

Proclaiming formal equality has the opposite effect to creating equality by allowing the mechanisms of discrimination to continue behind a gender-neutral facade. Equality, according to [M. Wilson \(1998\)](#), can be stipulated through the conditions that women are just like men and that qualified women ought to receive the identical treatment as men with comparable experience.

The model of formal equality uses a male standard of equality and renders women copies of their male counterparts. Thus women are forced to argue either that they are the same as men and should be treated the same, that they are different and should be treated as if they were the same, or that they are different and should be accorded special treatment. (Rebecca Cook, as cited in Waring, 1996, p. 133)

[Cunningham \(2008\)](#) reported that, over time, sport’s processes and structures have become legitimised, and taken for granted. Those working within sport assume the sector is gender neutral and formal equality perpetuates the patriarchal system ([Burton, as cited in Burton & Leberman, 2017a](#)). For those individuals working in sport organizations, assumptions of gender neutral work practices and meritocracy means male dominance in sport leadership is unquestioned.

Cumulative historical social construction has advantaged men and disadvantaged women, and has created a gender bias against women. Substantive equality acknowledges that in these traditional patriarchies women need additional help to access the same rights, opportunities and advancements as men ([United Nations, 1979](#)). The substantively unequal conditions mean that, even if treated with formal equality women remain unable to access the same civil, cultural, economic, political

and social rights as men ([Waring, 1996](#)). CEDAW stipulates governments, enterprises, organisations and people need to implement the necessary legislative, regulatory, cultural, and procedural instruments to mitigate discrimination against women ([United Nations, 1979, Part I, Article 2\(f\)](#)). “Substantive equality demands an examination of the actual conditions experienced by groups and individuals, and requires the elimination of discriminatory structural barriers” ([Waring, 1996, p. 136](#)). The Beijing Declaration stated that “Women’s empowerment and their full participation on the basis of [substantive] equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of [formal] equality, development and peace” ([United Nations, 1996, p. 3, Annex I, Point 13](#)).

Women in NZ have “suffered from social subordination, systemic abuse and deprivation of social power, resources and respect” ([Waring, 1996, p. 138](#)) and cannot be treated the same as men. Systemic discrimination is the result of ongoing practices and structures which grant preferential access for men over women despite formal equality legislation. In NZ, domestic law is given precedence over international treaty standards as long as domestic law remains well-explained and explicit ([Waring, 1996](#)). NZ’s HRC is the government agency, established in 1977, which operates under the Human Rights Act 1993 with the mandate to promote and protect the human rights of all NZers. The HRC’s role in regard to substantive equality, is to police minority discrimination in the workplace and facilitate working environments where diversity is valued, employees’ dignity and rights are protected, and people can maximise their working potential.

[M. Wilson \(1998\)](#) described how she and other feminists working in public policy development in NZ initiated discourses of equity rather than equality. In 2015, the NZ government established the Joint Working Group on Pay Equity Principles to formulate recommendations on The Equal Pay Act 1972 to overcome the issue of women being underpaid in female-dominated industries compared to men who used similar skills in male-dominated sectors ([Dew, 2017](#)). Various sport management researchers and practitioners use the term ‘gender equity’ in a broader context than pay ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#)) when they are addressing women’s marginalisation, whereas they are in fact referring to substantive equality which recognises some women require

different resources to be able to arrive at the same endpoint as men. This thesis uses the terms 'formal equality' and 'substantive equality'.

<p><b>Pay equity</b> – equal pay for work of equal value</p> <p><b>Gender equity</b> – equal number of male and female members on boards or in management</p> <p><b>Formal equality</b> – men and women have an equal legal right to play sport and apply for jobs</p> <p><b>Substantive equality</b> – the need to change customs, practices, and structures to remove barriers for women to succeed in playing sport and securing</p>
---

Figure 3.1: Equity and equality explanations used in this thesis

### 3.4 NZers' attitudes towards gender

NZ had a population of 4,917,100 million people at the end of 2018 ([Statistics New Zealand, 2018](#)). The people are culturally diverse, and the diversity is constantly changing with the significant influx of new immigrants. Despite successive NZ governments' talk of fairness and equality in the workplace, gender practices undermine actual practice ([Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#)). The 2017 Gender Attitudes Survey conducted for the National Council of Women in NZ by an independent research company was primarily tasked with gathering the general public's attitudes towards gender equality within the country. The online survey aimed to have a nationally representative sample of NZ respondents, with quotas placed on gender, age, and region. Valid responses came from 1,251 people who were aged 18 years or over from the 60,000 possible participants in the NZ arm of the Survey Sampling International database. Overall the results showed that

gender inequality today has an unacceptable impact on the wellbeing of individual New Zealanders, their families and our country – no matter their gender. Too many people, right across the spectrum, cannot realise their full potential. Moreover, this impacts on intergenerational wellbeing. Stereotypes, norms and attitudes are limiting for us all. ([National Council of Women of New Zealand, 2018, p. 3](#))

Furthermore, the findings obtained from the survey reinforced the gender binary, masking any possibility of an alternate gender choice. The survey found that 50% of

the respondents believed that gender equality had mostly been attained ([National Council of Women of New Zealand, 2018](#)). At the same time, the survey substantiated masculinity was valued ahead of femininity. The results from the Gender Attitudes Survey 2017 highlighted the gendered cultural assumptions women and girls living in NZ experience in their day-to-day encounters which shape their expectations and perceptions. Boys were deemed to be better leaders than girls by 9% of the respondents, 6% considered boys were smarter than girls, and 7% believed sons should be encouraged more than daughters to attend university.

On the home front, the survey indicated 84% of respondents thought household tasks should be shared, with 14% believing women were more responsible for cooking meals and grocery shopping while 9% deemed women were more responsible for looking after the family's children. Men, on the other hand, were named by 13% of the respondents as being more responsible for earning the household income. Significantly, the survey showed that 54% of women felt they had to choose between being a working professional and being a good mother.

The Gender Attitudes Survey also revealed the workplace as a further site of inequality, as 31% of respondents signalled gender inequality existed in the workplace with 37% believing gender inequality was more prevalent in senior management ([National Council of Women of New Zealand, 2018](#)). Furthermore, 22% of participants cited gender inequalities in the sports sector needed rectifying, especially in sports media (50%). There were 7% of participants who believed men were the best suited to be business leaders compared to 1% who believed women were best suited for such roles. Holding a position of power in organisations was more important for 21% of men as opposed to 2% of women. Furthermore, the survey revealed having a well-paid job was more critical for 14% of men as opposed to 1% of women. Caring in the workplace was seen as important for women by 18% of respondents and relatively insignificant for men, as only 1% saw it as an important male attribute. Overall, a significant 92% considered men or women could be bosses or business leaders. The participants recognised gender inequality impacts access to jobs (62%), discriminates against women in senior management (55%), and caused remuneration for women to be compromised (55%).

### 3.5 NZ's workforce statistics

Culturally accepted roles for all women have changed within NZ society. Women's proportion of the labour market in 1991 was 21%, and in 2018, women made up 51% of the population and 48% of the total workforce ([Statistics New Zealand, 1991, 2018](#)). Just over 64% of women in NZ are in paid employment compared with 75.4% of men ([National Council of Women of New Zealand, 2018](#)). After the 2017 election, women occupied 48 of 120 seats in NZ's parliament ([Ministry for Women, 2018a](#)), the greatest number of female members of parliament in NZ history. The gender pay gap, which represents the difference between women's and men's earnings stood at 16.3% in 1998 and 9.2% in 2018 ([Ministry for Women, 2018a](#)). Women who choose to become a parent seek flexible jobs or leave positions in the workforce to meet family work commitments, and the motherhood effect increased the gender pay gap to 17% ([National Council of Women of New Zealand, 2015](#)). The New Zealand Time Use Survey 2009/2010 disclosed men were paid for 63% of their time and women were paid for 35% of their time spent on labour force activities, household work, child and family care, purchasing goods and services, and community service ([Statistics New Zealand, 2011](#)). Women's unpaid work continues not to be included in economic calculations, and women's work in the home is called unproductive ([Waring, 1988](#)).

Table 3.1: Total population and employment figures in NZ

<b>Total label</b>	<b>Total value</b>	<b>Male label</b>	<b>Male total</b>	<b>Female label</b>	<b>Female total</b>
Popn 2018	4,917,100	males	2,454,000	female	2,491,600
FT total	2,147,900	FT male	1,261,000	FT female	886,900
PT total	583,900	PT male	174,100	PT female	409,800
Popn 2010	4,368,300	males	2,136,300	female	2,232,000
FT total	1,771,100	FT male	1,065,700	FT female	705,400
PT total	526,800	PT male	149,800	PT female	377,000
Popn 2000	3,869,000	males	1,898,000	female	1,970,300
FT total	1,475,600	FT male	923,200	FT female	552,400
PT total	441,100	PT male	123,700	PT female	317,400
Popn 1991	3,481,500	males	1,712,100	female	1,769,400
FT total	1,336,300	FT male	859,600	FT female	476,700
PT total	352,000	PT male	89,900	PT female	262,100

([Statistics New Zealand, 1992, 2000, 2010, 2018](#))

Key for abbreviations: Popn – population, FT – full-time employment, PT – part-time employment

In 2015, women only held 18% of directorships on the boards of companies publicly listed on the NZ Stock Exchange ([Ministry for Women, 2018a](#)), and across most industries women are underrepresented in senior management ([Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 2012](#); [J. McGregor, 2012b](#)), despite women earning 63% of the bachelor's degrees ([Ministry for Women, 2018a](#)). Higher numbers of women are found in mid-level administration and management or in support positions such as personal assistants ([Dann, 2018](#)). In 2018, an extensive NZ workplace gender survey was undertaken of 29 companies and polled 81,000 employees, from non-managers to board members ([Champions for Change, 2018](#)). The survey revealed an underrepresentation of women from board level down through the management layers. Women held 35.4 % of board roles, 33 % of Chief Executive (CE) or equivalent roles, 30.5 % of general manager or equivalent roles, 39 % of senior manager roles, 45 % of other managerial roles and 51% of non-managerial roles. Women's increased participation in the workforce has done little to disrupt the systemic occupational segregation that is evident in stereotypically gendered jobs (horizontal segregation), and up through the layers of the management hierarchy (vertical segregation) ([Ryan, Ravenswood, & Pringle, 2014](#)).

Table 3.2: Total labour force and women's ethnic employment figures in NZ

Year	Maori Women		Pacific Women		European Women		TOTAL Labour Force
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	
2018	Incomplete data						3,776,355
2013	74,247	36,033	33,876	12,795	479,442	99,402	3,376,419
2006	73,563	34,659	32,526	11,931	418,137	85,368	3,160,371
2001	56,967	30,267	25,557	10,284	430,407	88,794	2,889,534

(Statistics New Zealand, 2001, 2006, 2013, 2018)

Key for abbreviations: FT – full-time employment, PT – part-time employment

One final point needs to be made. In 2018 the NZ working population was comprised of 68.3% European, 12.0% Māori, 6.9% Pacific Islander, and 12.8% Asian and other ([Statistics New Zealand, 2018](#)). When researching women's voices in NZ being attentive to intersectionality means being aware of the ethnic diversity within the population and hearing the voices of Māori, Pacific Island, and Asian women.

## 3.6 Sport

### 3.6.1 Definition of sport

This research study used the following definition of sport: “institutionalized competitive activities that involve rigorous competitive physical exertion or use of relatively complex physical skills by individuals whose participation is motivated by a combination of personal enjoyment and external rewards” ([Coakley, as cited in Leberman et al., 2012, p. 7](#)).

[Leberman et al. \(2012\)](#) noted sport definitions are contested. This reflects what we think sport should be and how the meanings attached to sport are subject to change. Sport is a socially constructed phenomenon, shaped by the social, political, cultural and structural contexts in which it exists.

### 3.6.2 Significance of sport in NZ

Sport is deeply embedded in the NZ culture and way of life, shaping local communities and national patriotism. Sport helps define who we are as a nation and how we are viewed by the rest of the world. Sport holds powerful meaning for NZers; it is our most pervasive form of collective behaviour ([Leberman et al., 2012](#)). According to [Sport New Zealand \(2018a\)](#), whether NZers are playing, coaching, refereeing, volunteering, managing or supporting – the power of sport helps build social cohesion that binds individuals, families, communities, regions and the nation together. [Fink \(2016\)](#) explained how her childhood sports participation helped her overcome shyness, increased her self-confidence and ambition and gave her a sense of belonging. Sport NZ advocates that sport enriches the nation’s culture and economy and facilitates an individual’s leadership and confidence. Nonetheless, a number of NZ men who are national sporting heroes, commit a range of criminal offenses and their negative behaviour is relayed through mainstream media ([Adams, 2017, May](#)).

The NZ government became involved in the promotion of health and physical activities through their sport agency. The NZ crown agency’s historical progression began in 1973, when the centre-left Labour government formed the Ministry of Recreation and Sport and the New Zealand Council for Recreation and Sport after passing the Recreation and Sport Act ([McKay, 1997](#)). The Recreation and Sport Act was revised in 1987, and the previous two entities were replaced by the Hillary Commission for Recreation and Sport ([McKay, 1997](#)). In 1992, the crown agency was renamed the

Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness, Leisure and Administration ([Cameron, 1996](#)). In 2003, new legislation for the crown's sporting agency saw it renamed Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC). Subsequently, in 2012, when community and high performance sport were differentiated, the legislated crown agency responsible for overseeing the delivery of PBE community and grassroots sport in NZ was named Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) and in the process Sport NZ's elite athlete subsidiary High Performance Sport New Zealand Limited (HPSNZ) was formed. HPSNZ's key objective is for NZ to be the most successful sporting country by investing strategically in high performance sport ([Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)). The Sport NZ Group includes Sport NZ and HPSNZ.

Sport is a point of power, where dominance and privilege shape social structure, identities and knowledge ([Dewar, 1991](#)). Furthermore, research shows the persistence of traditional gender roles ([EEO Trust, 2012](#)), exemplified by the heteronormative practices associated with sport ([Ryan, 2010](#)). In a similar manner to other NZ business sectors ([J. McGregor, 2012b](#)), there are significantly fewer paid middle and executive sport management positions held by women compared with the number held by men, which mimics the global trend of the domination of sport by men ([Aitchison, 2005](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Leberman & Palmer, 2009](#); [McKay, 1997](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)). Leberman and Shaw's (2012) NZ research, which included sport management graduates and CEs, noted women's remuneration was generally less than men.

Globally, there is a long way to go to achieve boardroom gender balance across all sports organisations ([Walker, Schaeperkoetter, & Darwin, 2017](#); [Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)). Men outnumber women in positions of power and decision making, whereas women dominate the supporting and lower level roles ([Shaw & Hoerber, 2003](#)). Women's progress to senior management and leadership appears constrained by a 'glass ceiling' ([Burton, Barr, Fink, & Bruening, 2009](#); [Galloway, 2012](#); [Hancock, Darwin, et al., 2018](#); [Sagas & Cunningham, 2004](#); [Sauder et al., 2018](#); [Shaw & Frisby, 2006](#); [Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013](#)). Women hold more senior level roles in traditional women's sports, disability sports, community, and minority sports. The paucity of women role models across sport governance, senior leadership and management limits incoming women's and girls' sport management work aspirations ([Melton & Bryant, 2017](#)). [Hancock, Darwin, et al. \(2018\)](#) indicate that the success of women such

as Raelene Castle (the current CE of Australian Rugby) in entering what previously were male-only domains suggests the impenetrable glass ceiling has finally, developed some cracks.

'Glass wall' was a term first used by [W. Miller, Kerr, and Reid \(1999\)](#) to describe barriers to women's horizontal movement into various leadership roles. The metaphor aptly suits the barriers women encounter moving horizontally into other organisations, other roles and, often, men's sports codes, which women have seldom accessed ([Walker et al., 2017](#)).

Contrary views, exposing the negative aspects of sport are not given as much voice. Commentators such as Jim [McKay \(1991\)](#), noted how sport reinforced inequalities, oppression, normalisation, violence and 'groupthink', a thought process which condones men's abusive and aggressive behaviour towards women. Sexism teaches boys early that acting or throwing like a girl or exhibiting feminine characteristics are contrary to being a man or masculine and are absolutely inferior ([Fink, 2016](#)). [McKay \(1991\)](#) and [Ryan and Dickson \(2016\)](#) contend sport has contributed significantly to the construction of hegemonic masculinity and the marginalisation of women in NZ. Sport is seen to perpetuate male domination through valuing and profiling male-dominated sports such as rugby (the 'All Blacks'<sup>4</sup>) and sailing ('Team New Zealand'<sup>5</sup>). [R. Pringle \(2001\)](#) challenged the NZ government agencies' 'wholesomeness of sport' philosophy and described how masculine hegemony is forged on the rugby field where "heavy contact sports are positioned predominantly as producers of hard unreflexive men imbued with sexist and homophobic values" (p. 426). [Fink \(2016\)](#) and Shaw and Frisby ([2006](#)) proposed that sport's transformative power should be used to contest sexist attitudes, values, and behaviours within sport and wider society.

Rugby is the sport in NZ with the highest profile. New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRU) is responsible for setting the strategy, direction and policy for the sport. The NZRU invested NZ\$191 million into rugby in the 2018 financial year ([New Zealand Rugby](#)

---

<sup>4</sup> The NZ men's national rugby union team is called the 'All Blacks'. Rugby Union is NZ's dominant men's national sport, capturing prime media coverage and sponsorship.

<sup>5</sup> 'Team New Zealand' is an all-male sailing team which represents the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron and competes in the America's Cup yachting race. NZ was the first country outside America to win and successfully defend the America's Cup, and is the current holder of the America's Cup.

[Union, 2018](#)). The NZ women's rugby representative team, the 'Black Ferns'<sup>6</sup> team has won five World Cups and in 2017 was named the World Rugby Team of the Year. Women have been accepted into the game. In 2016, the NZRU's acquired their first female board member, Farah Palmer. She was not elected but acquired her board position through her capacity as Chair on the Māori Rugby Board; in contrast, in 2018, netball, the most popular women's sport, 25% of board members were male ([Netball New Zealand, 2019](#)).

Coakley (2009) argues that in the sporting sector, divisive and gendered structures and cultural and social stereotypes are interconnected and shape interactions amongst people in wider society ([Coakley, 2009](#)). Yet, in wider society overt sexism is contested, whereas in sport, sexism, it is deeply entrenched, obvious, but overlooked, ignored ([Fink, 2016](#)), invisible, and institutionalised ([Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#); [Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013](#)). Sport's unchallenged institutional practices continue to marginalise and undervalue women; examples of such practices include the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions, minimal and inconvenient media coverage, limited resourcing and financing, limited sponsorship, and minimal public rituals displaying women's sporting success ([Burton, Grappendorf, & Henderson, 2011](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Shaw & Amis, 2001](#); [Shaw & Frisby, 2006](#)). Sport has the power to enhance and enrich society; however, by not recognising and valuing women's contribution to sport, the government, sporting organisations, the media and wider society perpetuate the gendered discourses and marginalisation of women in wider NZ society ([Cleaver, 2018, August 8](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)).

### 3.6.3 Government and sport in NZ

The NZ government's sport strategies are outlined in the BIMs following a general election. Centre-left governments in NZ are more inclined to support community sport and wellbeing and minority interests, whereas centre-right governments support more the high performance sports. In 1989 the Labour government identified a disparity with women's participation in sport and introduced the Women in Physical Recreation

---

<sup>6</sup> Women in NZ also play rugby, the women's representative team is the 'Black Ferns'. Across NZ there are over 157,218 registered players, 27,838 or 17.7% are women. In 2018 the NZRU employed 149 people, 74 women, and 75 men. Women accounted for three of the 10 members executive team members, and one (Farah Palmer) of the 12 board members, although Palmer is there as the Māori representative (New Zealand Rugby Union, 2018).

and Sport programme ([McKay, 1991](#)). In 1993, under the centre-right National government, resourcing for the women's programme ended. In 2010 the NZ HRC reported women were underrepresented at the board level within the NZOC and their affiliated sporting bodies, with only six female CEs and 47 male CEs ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#)). That same year, the NZOC launched a six-month programme to train women who aspired to become board members of sporting organisations. The programme was short lived. Since then Sport NZ and the NZOC developed women's governance representation targets, 33% by 2015 and 40% by 2020. The 2012 figures showed that women constitute 24% of the National Sport Organisation (NSO) board memberships, 1.6% of them were Māori women and none were Pacific Island women ([Sport New Zealand & New Zealand Government, 2018](#)).

In 2017, a centre-left coalition Labour government was elected, replacing the centre-right National government. NZ's new government was led by 38-year-old Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, the youngest female state leader in the world and the third woman out of 40 NZ Prime Ministers since 1856 ([Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern named as one of the most powerful women in the world, 2018, December 5](#)). Following the 2017 election, the Labour government instigated a much-needed positive strategy for gender substantive equality in sport. On October 2018, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Grant Robertson, publicly launched a NZ\$10 million strategy to overcome the inequalities faced by women and girls in participation, leadership, and visibility in sport. Grant Robertson stated at the launch that

Delivery of the strategy will be in partnership with the community. Sport NZ will lead from the front in mobilising and giving momentum to that collective action. We want all organisations in the sport and recreation sector to consider how they can work through the strategy to help create equality for women and girls. ([Ardern & Robertson, 2018](#))

The NZ government's sport campaign strategy from 2018 to 2021 includes showcasing successful women athletes, driving for women athlete's pay equity, growing the number of women coaches, increasing the number of women on Sport NZ and HPSNZ boards and encouraging NSOs to increase women in governance and leadership ([L. Bennett, 2018, October 11](#)). Robertson reinforced a target of 40% females on all boards across the sport and recreation sector by 2021 ([Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)).

The Sport NZ Group *Annual Report* for the year ended 30 June 2018 for the first time included equity reporting, the internal pay gender gap, and such as placing a greater emphasis on sport appropriate for Māori. The same report acknowledged female staff dominated lower salary bands, and a greater number of men occupied the upper bands ([Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)). The report also claimed the pay gender gap in Sport NZ and HPSNZ was 21.8%, which was 12.6% higher than the national gender gap of 9.2% ([Ardern & Robertson, 2018](#); [D. McGregor, 2019](#); [Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#); [Statistics New Zealand, 2018](#)). Sport NZ claimed in the report that they had plans to recruit and promote women to reduce the gender imbalance ([Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)). As of July 2018, for the first time, Sport NZ and HPSNZ boards and the senior leadership team had equal gender representation ([Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)).

### 3.6.4 Structure of the NZ sport industry

Sport is a significant business sector both in NZ and internationally. In NZ sport is shaped by the entrepreneurial 'For-Profit' sector, the NFP or PBE sector, and government. Many people fail to recognise the importance, size and growth of the international and national sports industries. Sports organisations are powerful symbolic institutions ([Hovden, 2012](#)). According to the Active New Zealand 2017 Participation Report, 95% of young people and 73% of adults participate in sport and active recreation in any one week ([Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)). Sport and, consequently, sporting organisations are central to society. Employment growth in NZ's sport sector has been exceptional, with employment figures growing from 14,530 people in 1991, to 22,489 in 1999 ([Goodchild, Harris, Nina, & Russell, 2000](#)), and the 2013 Census showed 53,904 ([Dalziel, 2015](#)) or 2.8% of all employed people were employed in sport. The 2013/14 Active New Zealand survey showed the NZ sports sector was supported by approximately 810,000 volunteers, who contributed 67.7 million hours, with an estimated market value of NZ\$1,030.5 million ([Dalziel, 2015](#)). Sports economic activity was assessed at NZ\$4.9 billion or 2.3% of gross domestic product ([Dalziel, 2015](#)). Households spend NZ\$1.7 billion annually on sporting services, goods and equipment ([Dalziel, 2015](#)).

The Sport NZ Group's total expenditure on sport for the year ending 30 June 2018 was NZ\$138.6 million. Of this, NZ\$85.5 million was from Crown funding and NZ\$62.8 million were proceeds from gambling ([Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)). Left-wing Labour governments allocate more money to community sport and getting people active, whereas the right-wing

National governments prioritise their spending on elite sport and winning medals in events which matter to NZers. The incumbent Labour government took office in 2017 and the 2018 Sport NZ Group's financial report reflects the allocated spend and strategy of the previous National government where over 50% of the total spending of government, Sport NZ and HPSNZ was on high performance-related expenses with the majority of sports organisations spending skewed towards winning medals instead of getting people active and engaged in sport through grassroots and community sport. Simply put, the more medals a sport secured, the higher the profile, the more Sport NZ and HPSNZ allocated funding, which left limited money for recreation, grassroots, minority and children's sports. At the local government level, councils also invest over NZ\$1 billion dollars annually in the delivery of sport, events and the maintenance of sport's fields, stadia, and other recreational facilities such as forests and tracks ([Dalziel, 2015](#)).

NZ's sporting industry generally operates with three levels. Sport NZ and HPSNZ are at the top, NSOs, National Recreation Organisations (NROs), and non-government organisations lie beneath them, and Regional Sport Organisations (RSOs), Regional Sports Trusts (RSTs), and clubs sit further down the hierarchy. Sport NZ's strategic plans provide operational and performance guidelines for NSOs such as Hockey New Zealand, Triathlon New Zealand or Waka Ama New Zealand to develop their strategic plans. Popular sporting NSOs which align with Sport NZ's strategy are more likely to access Sport NZ and HPSNZ funds to invest in their sport code. Typically, under the NSOs are the RSOs, such as Canterbury Hockey or Wellington Hockey, which coordinate their sports code at a regional level. RSOs are supported by local government or councils, RSTs, clubs and schools to deliver the sporting code at a local level. There are over 15,000 PBE sports clubs associated with the delivery of sport ([Sport New Zealand, 2013](#)). A wide array of for-profit organisations also service the NZ sporting sector, covering, for example, sports medicine, sponsorship, sporting franchises, apparel, player's agencies, media and events.

### 3.6.5 Sport as a gendered space - alienating stereotypes, structures and practices

Over the past 30 years, the management of sport has progressed significantly, moving from the metaphorical kitchen table to the board room, and demanding a more organised, strategic and professional approach ([Stewart, 2007](#)). Cunningham and Sagas ([2007](#)) acknowledged the prominence of American, gender-based sport management research centred on college and university athletics and urge a broadening of organisational, and

localised research. As an emergent industry, the sporting sector in NZ is now reflective of many other of the country's industrial sectors, accepting and normalising male dominance and allowing men to continue in positions of privilege and power ([Cameron, 1996](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#); [McKay, 1991](#)). It has long been established that there are gender inequalities, and that women are underrepresented in sport management ([Cameron, 2000](#); [Leberman & Palmer, 2009](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#); [J. McGregor, 2012b](#); [Ryan, 2010](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#); [Shaw, 2006](#)), pay inequality exists, and women are overrepresented in support roles. Contrary to popular belief, opportunities for women in sport management are not readily available should women choose to apply ([McKay, 1991](#)). Women require additional measures to be taken to level the playing field and to allow them to move up the sport management hierarchy. Leberman and Shaw ([2012](#)) conceded in their study that to improve women's sport management working experiences, there needed to be changes made in women's employment processes, transparency in pay and promotion practices and for women to improve their negotiating skills.

“Sport has always been a sexual battlefield. The issue of gender and the representation of the biological difference between the sexes has long been central to our perceptions of sport in society” ([Boyle & Haynes, 2000, p. 127](#)). The social gender order with two opposite and mutually exclusive gender categories attributes the sex differences to their abilities, behaviour and attitudes rather than the historic cultural and social stereotypes of gender ([Hovden, 2012](#)). Processes, behaviours and practices in roles associated with masculinity are valued over femininity ([Burton, 2015](#); [Cunningham, 2010](#); [O'Shea, 2017](#); [Patterson et al., 2012](#)).

In NZ, the Human Rights Act 1993 states that it is illegal to discriminate on the grounds of sex. However, exceptions for sport are outlined in section 49 of the Act, which specifies sport can be separated on a sex basis where “strength, stamina, or physique of competitors is relevant” (Subsection (1)). For example, competitive sport classifies and categorises bodies through celebrations of physical differences, the most apparent difference being between men and women ([R. Pringle, 2001](#)). [Hovden \(2012\)](#) declared women and men mainly compete in separate sex-based competitions, where men's sport is mostly prioritized based on men's biological strength and a perception of men's 'natural' sport superiority. [Taylor and Wells \(2017\)](#) concluded, that the socially constructed value of sport continues to perceive men's sport as the default normal and

women's sport as inferior. The preferential ranking of men's sport is replicated beyond just the field and is rife in the appointment of men to roles in sport management and leadership. Shaw and Frisby (2006) claimed gender powerfully shapes the interactions, structures and processes in sport organisations. Schull, Shaw and Khil (2013) went further, stating that gender plays a substantial role in defining a sports organisation. Burton (2015) claimed that research at the meso-level centred on gendered organisational practices and structures could shed light on barriers to women's advancement to sport senior management and leadership roles and facilitate gender substantive equality.

**Stereotypes: The gender binary and macro-societal and meso-organisational effects**

Cultural and social evolution has ascribed stereotypical gender education, roles and occupations to men and women and in the process has limited the job choices for both (Acker, 2006; Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Eccles, 1994). The origins of gender stereotypes are based on the premise of the gender binary (Gherardi, 1994).

Compliance with gender stereotypes reinforces socially constructed gender behaviour and ascribed meanings (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008), and sport actively reproduces masculinity (Anderson, 2009).

These stereotypes lead to similar outcomes around the world. Women in the Netherlands and America have been underrepresented in sport management and leadership positions, and are given less support and resources and encounter greater scrutiny (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Hancock et al., 2017). Adriaanse and Schofield's (2014) Australian study found masculine hegemonic regimes in NSOs where male dominance was natural and totally accepted, it was women's fault they were underrepresented on boards and not the board's responsibility to seek more women. Women undertaking a role in a gender-neutral sector possessed more self-confidence than women employed in male-dominated sectors (Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers, & Wentworth, 2007). By contrast, Claringbould and Knoppers (2008) posited that women in male-dominated Dutch sporting boards experienced more stereotyping when dominant behaviours, values, rules and norms existed. Globally, employees reinforce a sporting organisation's socially constructed gender ideologies through operational structures and practices, and social cultures, values and behaviours (Britton & Logan, 2008; Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Schull et al., 2013).

Conversely, Shaw (2006), identified 'undoing gender' in NZ was a governing process rather than a structural issue, and the responsibility of both women and men. Consequently, quotas could provide a mechanism to disrupt gender stereotypes and social order, and purposive government appointments do the same.

Traditional expectations of a leader's behaviour align more with male leadership characteristics than with women's leadership characteristics (Eagly & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001; Hancock, Darvin, et al., 2018; Sinclair, 2013). Stereotypical masculine attributes include dominance, ambition, independence, daring, aggression, self-confidence, and competitiveness and are revered in sport management and leadership, and thus preferred over the stereotypical characteristics of women (Acker, 2006; Burton et al., 2009; Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Cunningham, 2010; Cunningham & Sagas, 2007; Fink, 2008; McKay, 1991; Ryan, 2010; Ryan & Dickson, 2016; Shaw & Frisby, 2006). Women's managerial and leadership agentic attributes are communal, being kind, affectionate, sympathetic, nurturing, relational, (Eagly & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001; Hancock, Cintron, & Darvin, 2018; McKay, 1991), cooperative, collaborative and realistic, and women are inclined to be less hierarchical (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Eagly & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001).

Claringbould and Knoppers (2008) found Norwegian women on NSO boards occupied a difficult position. If the Norwegian women in the study behaved in a stereotypically gendered way their value was undermined, yet they were criticised if they behaved like men or, if they were perceived as feminists, they were ignored (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008). Women 'do gender' by acting in accordance with their stereotypically gendered traits and reinforcing gender differences, and 'undo gender' by challenging hegemonic behaviour and expectations (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Shaw & Frisby, 2006). The fact that the more revered traditional and successful leadership traits have been stereotypically male traits and considered best embodied by men has meant women wanting a role in sport leadership were confronted with more barriers than their male counterparts (Boyle & Haynes, 2000). Women are perceived to lack credibility (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012; Hardin & Whiteside, 2012; Sauder et al., 2018; Schull et al., 2013) and are reluctant to apply for senior management and leadership roles, and assertive women in the male domain of sport management are

referred to in derogatory terms ([Hancock, Darvin, et al., 2018](#); [McKay, Lawrence, Miller, & Rowe, 2001](#)).

The gender binary and the male bias claim men as the natural and legitimate figures of authority ([Simpson & Lewis, 2005](#); [Sinclair, 2007](#)). This has created a hierarchical layering of society, business ([Acker, 2006](#); [Katila & Meriläinen, 1999](#)) and the sporting world through which women are continually dominated, side-lined and marginalised ([Cunningham & Sagas, 2007](#)). The existence and the acceptance of sport's patriarchy and hierarchical power structure has positioned women as 'other' and perpetuated the imbalance to the extent that it has become normalized and invisible to most in society ([Burton & Leberman, 2017a](#); [Fink, 2016](#); [Peachey & Burton, 2011](#); [Shaw, 2006](#); [Simpson & Lewis, 2005](#)). Furthermore, the subordinate position of women in sport is evident with women's historically limited access to 'unsuitable and unladylike' sports, and women cheerleaders supporting men's sporting events ([McKay, 1991](#)). [Connell \(2009\)](#) identified four interwoven dimensions that created "gender regimes" on sports boards: production relations (work and roles are gendered); power relations (power, control and authority are gendered); emotional relations (support and conflict are gendered); and symbolic relations (beliefs, values and behaviours are gendered) (p. 72). Sport and the media create, replicate, reinforce and communicate the stereotypes within society, marginalising women and often maintaining their invisibility ([Boyle & Haynes, 2000](#)). The gendered world where patriarchy exists as a complex system of interwoven social structures and entrenched practices ([Walby, 1990](#)), manifests in a sustainable situation where women's lives are misrepresented or overlooked altogether ([Butler, 1990](#)) and a schema where men and masculinity are advantaged ([Sinclair, 2013](#)).

The 'old boys' club' is an informal gender-based network, consisting of mostly white middle-aged men, providing exclusive structures, systems and support for other white men ([Acosta & Carpenter, 2014](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Cunningham, 2008](#); [Knoppers, 1987](#); [Lovett & Lowry, 1994](#); [Shaw, 2006](#); [Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013](#)). [Shaw \(2006\)](#) claimed that while an old girls' network exists, the old boys' network is more influential, especially in relation to appointments. Male members of the old boys' network exhibit their bias in the process of sponsoring, hiring and the promotion of other homogeneous white males whom they recognise as appropriate candidates suitably aligned with their white male standpoint ([Acker, 2006](#)). Male homogeneity is destined to perpetuate the current management style; bluntly put, it is business 'as usual' ([Anderson, 2009](#); [Ramirez, 2004](#)).

This means maintaining control and, in the process, excluding women ([Lough & Grappendorf, 2007](#); [Whisenant, 2003](#)) and other minorities. Hiring the 'best person' for the job masks the inherent gender employment bias of the old boys' club ([Hoffman, 2011](#); [Kanter, 1977](#); [Whisenant, Miller, & Pedersen, 2005](#)). Claringbould and Knoppers' (2007) Norwegian study found male-dominated boards recruited women who were well educated, had no young children, could work with flexible hours, were not positioned as feminists, and were knowledgeable in their sport code. In glaring contrast to the practices of the old boys' network are the voices of the scarce male champions of gender substantive equality who are advocating for a structural change in sport ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#)).

Within sporting organisations the dominant culture is reinforced through institutional practices which perpetuate male dominance, power and leadership, deliver on male interests, and continue to marginalise and disadvantage women ([Anderson, 2009](#); [Shaw & Frisby, 2006](#); [Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013](#); [Walker et al., 2017](#)). At a meso-level, gendered organisational practices and processes are taken for granted and normalised to such an extent that their existence is invisible ([Acker, 2006](#)) and remains unchallenged within sport ([Acker, 2006](#); [Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012](#)).

Although the following two studies were conducted over 20 years ago, their findings read as if the research was completed yesterday. Both [McKay \(1997\)](#) and [Cameron \(1996\)](#) noted women in NZ sporting environments considered their sport management job advancement was limited because they felt isolated and excluded despite possessing the necessary skills. McKay's (1997) study reported that 90% of the men believed that, within their sporting organisation, advancement was based on being the most qualified person for the position and that gender was irrelevant to those on the appointment panel. Almost every woman in McKay's (1997) study considered a lack of self-confidence was a barrier they had to master, yet not one man in the study saw low self-confidence as an issue. Men believed women were underrepresented in sport management because of tradition, society or natural sexual differences. Women perceived their barriers to be men's networks, and women's family commitments ([Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#); [McKay, 1997](#); [O'Shea, 2017](#)). Knoppers and Anthonissen (2008) explained that men in senior management could commit to long work hours because their wives undertook the family responsibilities. The men in the sporting organisations stated that they very rarely thought about gender issues in the workplace.

Lack of women in sport decision-making positions has had multiple effects. Firstly, the voices, concerns and needs of women are not included in decision-making processes. Secondly, [Kanter \(1977\)](#) found having low numbers of women on boards – for example, less than three – rendered the women directors ‘ineffective’ in advancing gender equality. Finally, the performance and outcomes of the organisation, and wider society, suffer from the absent voice of women ([S. Nielsen & Huse, 2010a, 2010b](#); [Terjesen, Sealy, & Singh, 2009](#); [Torchia, Calabro, & Huse, 2011](#); [van der Walt & Ingley, 2003](#)). [J. Nielsen \(1990\)](#) explained that women in an oppressed situation need to be familiar with women’s and men’s ways of operating, becoming attuned to both their own and men’s ways of operating, and behaving. Nonetheless, research has found women’s socially constructed relational management styles bring different and valuable strengths of innovation, customer-centred thinking ([Terjesen et al., 2009](#)), financial performance ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#)), and problem-solving characteristics ([Adriaanse, 2016](#); [Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#)), which reinforces the importance of having women in these roles ([Eagly & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001](#)).

[Simon-Kumar \(2011\)](#) identified a dichotomy within NZ. Women’s equal rights, opportunities and choices are confronted with entrenched economic and structural gender inequalities that privilege and legitimise men. On account of the persistence of the gender pay gap, women in sport management are collecting a much lower wage ([J. McGregor, 2012b](#)). Women are more prevalent in volunteer coaching positions and as coaches of individuals from lower ranking and younger age group teams ([Human Rights Commission, 2012a](#)). Even though the HRC ([J. McGregor, 2010](#)) reported that sport is central to NZ’s identity and way of life and women’s participation as athletes, officials, volunteers and administrators is substantial.

The table below depicts the gender representation of NZ RST Boards during 2012 and 2018. Only one woman held a board chair position in 2018.

Table 3.3: Women's presence on Regional Sports Trust Boards

Regional Sports Trust	Women on Board	Board Size	% Women in	
	2018		2018	2012
Counties Manukau Sport	2	7	29%	0%
Harbour Sport	2	9	22%	22%
Sport Auckland	2	7	29%	29%
Sport Bay of Plenty	3	8	38%	43%
Sport Canterbury	2	7	29%	29%
Sport Gisborne	2	8	25%	43%
Sport Hawkes Bay	3	8	38%	33%
Sport Manawatu	4	8	50%	11%
Sport Northland	4	8	50%	23%
Sport Otago	(Chair) 3	8	38%	50%
Sport Southland	2	6	33%	33%
Sport Taranaki	3	11	27%	33%
Sport Tasman	4	8	50%	11%
Sport Waikato	2	9	22%	33%
Sport Waitakere	4	7	57%	38%
Sport Whanganui	3	9	33%	11%
Sport Wellington	7	10	70%	33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>28%</b>

*Note.* Data sourced from Sport New Zealand (2013) and individual RST websites: cmsport.co.nz; sportcanterbury.org.nz; harboursport.co.nz; sportauckland.org.nz; sportbop.co.nz; sportgisborne.org.nz; sporthb.net.nz; sportmanuwatu.org.nz; sportnorthland.co.nz; sportotago.co.nz; sportsouthland.co.nz; sporttasman.org.nz; sportwaikato.org.nz; sportwaitakere.co.nz; sportwhanganui.co.nz; sportwellington.org.nz

Women more than men in NZ are more likely to need workplace flexibility since they will probably be the family's primary caregiver ([Ministry for Women, 2018b](#)). Sports practices marginalise women in sport management and leadership positions by demanding long, inflexible hours and frequent weekend work which is detrimental to their family commitments ([Burton, 2015](#); [Dixon & Bruening, 2005](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#); [Melton & Bryant, 2017](#)). Ensuing conflicts from 'juggling' the ideal parent and the ideal worker may translate to women's experiences of parental guilt and damaged self-worth ([D. Johnston & Swanson, 2007](#); [Swanson, Damniels, & Tokar, 1996](#)). Cameron's ([1996](#)) NZ study found that female sports administrators were more likely to have no dependents and not be married. Workplaces, especially male-dominated sport workplaces, still maintain inflexible structures and practices, constraining

women's work access and choices more than men's owing to interview and promotion bias ([Aicher & Sagas, 2009](#); [Burton, 2015](#); [Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007, 2012](#); [Hoffman, 2011](#); [Taylor & Hardin, 2016](#); [Whisenant, 2003](#)). Despite the significant number of women in paid work, socio-cultural expectations and workplace structures have not changed quickly enough to accommodate the needs of working mothers ([Christopher, 2012](#)). Parenting decisions and responsibilities impact women's work aspirations, satisfaction ([Whitmarsh et al., 2007](#)) and motivation.

### The media

The media plays a pivotal role in influencing and shaping gender issues in society ([French, 2013](#)), especially for younger people ([Bruce & Saunders, 2005](#)). Media content is considered to be implicitly male and inherently sexist, which reinforces male dominance. This is not surprising in the sport context given most of the sports journalists are men ([Bruce, 2008](#); [Hovden & von der Lippe, 2019](#)). [McKay \(1997\)](#) blamed the traditional mass media of the 1990s for their part in constructing hegemonic masculinity and promoting feminine stereotypes. The mass media has perpetuated the gender binary and reinforced men's physical superiority and skill ([Bruce, 2008](#)). Conversely, women who are perceived as successful in sport are often marginalised, trivialised and sexualised ([Bruce, 2008, 2016](#); [Cooky, Messner, & Hextrum, 2013](#); [Dewar, 1991](#); [J. McGregor & Fountaine, 1997](#); [Toffoletti, 2016](#)). Women in NZ do not receive an equitable share of sports media coverage ([Bruce, 2008](#)), they are underrepresented, misrepresented ([Toffoletti, 2016](#)), patronised ([Bruce, 2016](#); [McKay, 1997](#)), and belittled women by referring to them as 'girls' and 'ladies' ([Fink, 2015](#)). Much global sport media refers to how women look, as opposed to their sporting skills ([Fink, 2015](#); [McKay, 1997](#)). Women are frequently depicted in sport in their supporting roles, such as cheer leaders or as wives of the athletes ([Hovden, 2012](#)). [Bruce \(2016\)](#) noted an emerging global media discourse on women's sport where women are presented as pretty and powerful. Media is important because it depicts role models. Women need to see other women to know their behaviour is acceptable.

The visibility of women's sport via the print, web and televised media has historically been low and continues to be so. [French \(2013\)](#) claimed women's exclusion warrants debate and intervention with sports media coverage targets to be established for

women. In her NZ study, [French \(2013\)](#) found that sportswomen continued to be virtually invisible, with sportswomen receiving 6.1% of print media coverage whereas sportsmen received 73.6%. This trend is replicated globally across all traditional media ([Hovden & von der Lippe, 2019](#)), as well as in the newer online media ([Cooky et al., 2013](#); [Fink, 2015](#)). [French \(2013\)](#) called for political intervention to enforce the media to implement substantive equality measures ensuring gender equitable sports coverage in NZ.

### 3.6.6 Substantive equality initiatives and people of influence

#### Initiatives

Sports participation by women and girls has increased over the past three decades but the representation of women in leadership and management roles has not kept abreast with this growth, either internationally ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Taylor & Hardin, 2016](#)) or domestically ([Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)). Several initiatives have been implemented over this period to address the sport management gender imbalance. The International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG) was devised on a yacht in Wellington harbour by the keynotes speakers Anita White (United Kingdom), Marianne Lay (Canada), Sue Baker-Finch (Australia), Kereyn Smith (Hillary Commission) and several other attendees from the 1993 Hillary Commission's Women in Sport Women's Conference. The women realised that the way to advocate the greatest change was at policy, strategic, investment, and leadership levels in the organisation (Kereyn Smith, personal communication, October 26, 2017). The IWG proposed an international declaration aimed at empowering women and increasing their representation in society and sport. The 1<sup>st</sup> World Conference on Women and Sport of the IWG was held in Brighton in 1994 and delegates from 82 countries adopted the Brighton Declaration (Susie Simcock, personal communication, November 12, 2018). By the 6<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women and Sport of the IWG, 100 countries and 441 organisations had adopted the updated Brighton plus the Helsinki 2014 Declaration ([Adriaanse, 2017, p. 86](#)). The IWG 8<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women and Sport in 2022 will be held in NZ, the country where the idea originated 28 years earlier.

In NZ after the signing of the Brighton Declaration in 1994, an advisory group wrote the Winning Women Charter (based on the Brighton Declaration) and launched the Charter in 1995. The Charter focused on promoting, advocating and leading sport programmes which enhanced women's participation and involvement in sport with national sports

organisations. When the Charter was launched, leaders of NZ's NSOs were invited, since there was only one female NSO leader, she was the only one to sign the Charter, the rest who signed were men ([Cameron, 1996](#)). The Charter became the starting point of the Hillary Commission's women's sport initiatives (Kereyn Smith, personal communication, October 26, 2017).

Several NZ gender substantive equality initiatives aiming to increase the numbers and presence of women in sport management and leadership roles have gained traction. These "programs that develop women's and girls' self-confidence, self-awareness, resilience, and networks, as well as social capital, are not about 'fixing the women' but about enabling them to seek those positions of power and authority" ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b, p. 11](#)). Included in these are the NZOC and Sport NZ's NSO governance development programme and retired athlete leadership programme; and Women in Sport Aotearoa (WISPA).<sup>7</sup> WISPA is a proactive, independent group of women with the foci of the group being to challenge the system, be the voice, make the connections, and lead the change for women in sport in NZ. As of 2016, various sports codes had outsourced the compilation of a report investigating the state of play for women and girls within their codes. The first sport code report, *Women and Cricket Cricket and Women* (sic), completed in November 2016, revealed glaring neglect and disregard of women and the women's cricket game. The report has yet to be made publicly available. In 2017, NZR released their *Respect and responsibility review* of the state of play of the rugby in NZ. Since the release of these reports both cricket and rugby have implemented substantive equality changes. In 2018 NZR for the first time paid the 'Black Ferns' a retainer which was NZ\$20,000 plus match and assembly fees. This amount is a glaring disproportionate amount to the corresponding men's 'All Blacks' members who can earn in excess of NZ\$1,000,000 and means that members of the 'Black Ferns' are forced to secure part-time work to supplement their retainer if they choose to continue playing representative rugby. In August 2019 the NZ women's representative cricketers the 'White Ferns' renegotiated their playee agreement to be able to earn up to \$80,000 a year, nearly double their previous rate.

---

<sup>7</sup>Women in Sport Aotearoa (WISPA) is a NZ womens' sports advocacy organisation. It was officially launched in March 2017 to improve sport for women and girls by increasing participation, and growing future leaders and role models. The inspiration came from Julie Paterson, the current CE of Tennis New Zealand, who co-chairs WISPA with Sarah Leberman, a Professor of Leadership from Massey University in NZ (Julie Paterson, personal communication, October 24, 2017).

### People - networks, role models, and mentors

Men's dominance in senior sport management creates distinct disadvantages in networking, role modelling and mentoring for women ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Hancock et al., 2017](#); [Harris et al., 2015](#); [Sagas & Cunningham, 2005](#); [Schull et al., 2013](#)). This in effect, has added to the increased number of women in lower level management roles ([Hancock & Hums, 2015](#)). [Hancock, Darwin, et al. \(2018\)](#) considered women in sport management have limited access to mentors, networks and role models which is a significant barrier to their advancement to senior management and leadership roles. Men in sport management roles, naturally bonding through their male-dominated networks, and remain ambivalent about the gendered privilege their networks afford them ([Knoppers & Anthonissen, 2008](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#)). Leberman and Shaw's (2012) NZ research with recent graduates and CE practitioners indicated the old boys' networks were a barrier for women in sport management. A lack of access to male networks and the concentrated number of men within management roles disadvantages the work advancement of women in the sector. O'Shea (2017) outlined how gender reflexive work practices can positively change people's workplace experiences.

According to [Hancock et al. \(2017\)](#) and [Kumra and Vinnicombe \(2010\)](#), mentors provide professional advice, networking, protection, advancement, problem-solving and role modelling support. Furthermore, a mentor's support increases promotional success, the negotiation of higher salaries and increased job satisfaction and commitment ([Bower & Hums, 2014](#); [Grappendorf & Henderson, 2008](#); [Hancock et al., 2017](#); [Shaw, 2006](#)). Multiple role model mentors had a more pronounced effect on aspirations ([Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2006](#)). Mentors can reside inside or outside the organisation, and they can be any gender. Seeking the support of mentors early in one's working life creates more opportunities for career success ([Blickle, Witzki, & Schneider, 2009](#); [Bower, 2009](#); [Hancock et al., 2017](#)). A lack of mentors, especially women in senior-level positions, is a concern for both current industry practitioners ([Taylor & Hardin, 2016](#)) and female undergraduate students aspiring to work in sport ([Sauder et al., 2018](#)). Male and female mentors 'undid gender' by supporting women to apply for non-traditional female roles or challenged stereotypical behaviour and practices ([Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008](#)). Claringbould and Knoppers (2008)

highlighted the strong message men in senior positions sent to the sports sector by 'undoing gender' and challenging dominant gender norms.

The sport management landscape in NZ has been influenced by key women such as Raelene Castle and Farah Palmer, who have been the first women in what were previously male-only roles. Raelene Castle was born in 1970 in Wagga Wagga, Australia to NZ parents. As a very young child Castle and her family returned to NZ. Castle excelled as a young sportswoman, playing netball, tennis and lawn bowls to representative level. Before working in the NZ sports sector, Castle held various roles in the commercial sector. She is the current CE of Rugby Australia. Her past roles include being the CE of Netball New Zealand, and the first female CE of a National Rugby League (NRL) organisation, the Australian Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs, since the league's inception in 1998. An article in *The New Zealand Herald* ("[Trailblazers: Raelene Castle](#)" 2018) called Castle a "pioneering sports administrator". In 2015 Castle was appointed as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit.

Farah Palmer has inspired young women playing rugby. She was a member of NZ's women's representative rugby team, the 'Black Ferns' for 10 years, captaining the team for nine years. In 2014, Palmer was inducted into World Rugby Union's Hall of Fame as one of the best women players in history. As noted earlier, in 2016, Palmer acquired a seat on the NZRU board through her capacity as the Chair of the Māori Rugby Board, in doing so, Palmer became the first and only woman to serve on the board in its 124-year history. Palmer lectures at Massey University and publishes academic research in sport ([McKendry, 2016](#)).

### Quotas

Any talk of quotas prompts debate. Yet, despite decades of calls for more women on boards, progress towards equal representation had been laboriously slow. Diverse cultural, political and organisational factors have led to women's underrepresentation on boards ([Iannotta, Gatti, & Huse, 2016](#)). Gender equality on boards is most strongly influenced by gendered public policy, politics and legislation ([Terjesen, Aguilera, & Lorenz, 2015](#)), institutional policies and practices, and labour force composition and cultural stereotypical role expectations ([Iannotta et al., 2016](#)), rather than organisational factors. More gender-balanced boards reported improved board

effectiveness and governance ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#)), recognised women raised different questions and provided different solutions ([Ahmadi, Nakaa, & Bouri, 2018](#)), and identified more women role models who in turn empowered other women candidates to apply for roles ([Leszczynska, 2017](#)). Gender equality is sometimes measured numerically; for example, a minimum of 40% of either gender on a board ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#); [Iannotta et al., 2016](#)). Early work by [Kanter \(1977\)](#) established that where women on boards were less than 15%, their board membership was ineffective. Women were silenced and succumbed to the behaviour of the dominant group and reinforced the status quo. Sport NZ and the NZOC set 'soft', non-binding targets for women's membership of NSO sport boards of 33% by 2015 and 40% by 2020 ([French, 2013](#)). However, in 2019, a directive from the NZ Minister of Sport as part of the strategy for women and girls in sport and active recreation, set a target of 40% minimum gender board representation by 2021, with financial penalties for non-compliance.

[Stroebe, Barreto, and Ellemers \(2010\)](#) noted that unless people personally experience discrimination, they disregard the possibility that discrimination exists even when supplied with supporting evidence. Historically, the extensive personal, social, and business networks of many men ([Leszczynska, 2017](#)) have led to men being overrepresented on appointment panels, which has disadvantaged women candidates, especially in sport ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Hancock, Darwin, et al., 2018](#); [Hancock & Hums, 2016](#); [Leszczynska, 2017](#); [O'Shea, 2017](#); [Sagas & Cunningham, 2004](#)). Palmer and Masters ([2010](#)) found that Māori women were doubly marginalised by their gender and their ethnicity. Quotas provide the mechanism to disrupt the current discriminatory biases and practices women face ([Terjesen et al., 2015](#); [Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)).

A gender quota is a radical, legally binding, speedy and effective tool which, if incorporated into an organisation's constitution, provides more women with access into roles which patriarchy has historically controlled ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#); [Leszczynska, 2017](#); [Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)). Quotas override entrenched conscious or unconscious discrimination. They help organisations overcome the gendered beliefs of merit ([Seierstad, 2016](#)) and can enable a critical mass of female employees to access sport leadership positions to action change ([Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)). Some women

appointed by affirmative action feel they will be marginalised, viewed as less competent or considered as a mere token ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#); [Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007](#); [Leszczynska, 2017](#); [Skirstad, 2009](#); [Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)). Therefore, for quotas to be effective, organisational strategies and processes must align, and there needs to be public accountability and reward structures with penalties for non-compliance ([Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)). By not using quotas as mechanisms of preferential hiring, women's discrimination is allowed to continue.

Norway was the first country to legislate for gender diversity for state-owned organisations, with a 40 (women):40 (men):20(either) board quota rule ([Leszczynska, 2017](#); [Terjesen et al., 2015](#); [Torchia et al., 2011](#)). In 2012, Norway had 39.4% of women on their NSO boards, which shows gender quotas can work in increasing the number of women on sport boards ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#)). Quotas in Norway readily became accepted within five years of the legislation being implemented ([Seierstad, 2016](#); [Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)).

A growing body of empirical studies measuring the impacts of quotas and affirmative employment practices have been undertaken since the introduction of quotas ([Adriaanse, 2017](#); [Leszczynska, 2017](#); [Stroebe et al., 2010](#); [Terjesen et al., 2015](#); [Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)). An Australia NSO study investigated the impact of gender quotas on board governance and gender equality, and found a minimum quota of three women advanced gender equality ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#)). [Claringbould and Knoppers \(2008\)](#) revealed the more the board held strong hegemonic masculine values, the more they blamed women rather than the organisation for women's low numbers on boards. This was supported by [Whelan and Wood \(2012\)](#), who found Australian women board members appointed under a quota system experienced greater negativism where sexist cultural conditions were prevalent. Not surprisingly, negativism was more prevalent when the appointments were in male dominated environments or in roles unusual for women to occupy.

The debate regarding the benefits and limitations of quotas is intensely polarised, and research surrounding the impacts of women's representation from quotas is scarce, especially in sport PBEs ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#)). [Whelan and Wood \(2012\)](#) warned that much of the research and the initiatives are focused on increasing the

number of women on boards as opposed to increasing women in senior management and leadership.

In the next section, I discuss how gender practices and structures influence women through their sport management experiences at university.

### 3.7 The sport management tertiary environment

Sport management has its peculiarities, which differentiates the 'sport product' from other products and therefore sport's management from general business management ([Brown, Willett, Goldfine, & Goldfine, 2018](#); [Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2011](#)).

[Leberman et al. \(2012\)](#) listed some of these differences as including: intangibility, unpredictability, perishability, financial seasonality, uniqueness and uncertainty, complexity of stakeholders and competitor involvement. Recognition of these differences as the sports industry has evolved has driven the demand for sport management specialists and the demand for formalised sport management training programmes. In 1966 the first sport administration programme began in the United States at Ohio University ([Brassie, 1989](#); [Parkhouse & Pitts, 2001](#)). Leisure management was offered as a tertiary qualification in the mid-1970s in the United Kingdom. The United States National Association for Sport and Physical Education advocated a university sport management programme should include: business specialty teaching, such as economics and marketing; sport context, including sport law; and a practical component, such as an internship, practicum or WIL ([Brassie, 1989](#)). Simultaneously, sport management professional organisations such as the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM), Sports Management Association of Australia and New Zealand (SMAANZ) and the European Association of Sports Management (EASM) were established to support the tertiary programmes. By 2010, just over 300 sport management programmes were offered at colleges and universities in the United States ([NASSM, 2010](#)) and July 2017 saw 572 sport management programmes offered worldwide, 488 of which were delivered in the United States ([NASSM, 2017](#)).

[Parks, Quaterman, and Thibault \(2011\)](#) suggested that sport management competencies are universal and include interpersonal skills, communication skills, planning and the ability to interact in a global and multicultural society.

The overview of selected literature in the previous sections raises the question of why women choose to enter an overly gendered domain. Worldwide, there is little research about women studying and working in sport management ([Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#)). According to [Jones, Brooks, and Mak \(2008\)](#), there is limited literature and research outlining the factors influencing women choosing to study and work in sport management ([Henderson & Bialeschki, 1993](#); [Sauder et al., 2018](#)). [Hancock and Greenwell \(2013\)](#) and [Schwab et al. \(2013\)](#) found a deep sports interest or enjoyment were the prime reasons male and female students were attracted to study sport management at university. Since 1991, the United Kingdom research showed a growing number of women were choosing to study and pursue work in sport management, an area that had been historically male-dominated ([Aitchison, 2005](#); [Aitchison et al., 1999](#); [Bacon, 1991](#)).

Swanson et al. ([1996](#)) identified 13 barriers that university students considered impacted upon their choices to enter a particular sector. The findings from their research were formulated into a Career Barrier Inventory (CBI). The 13 barriers in the CBI are:

sexual discrimination, lack of confidence, multiple-role conflict, conflict between children and career demands, racial discrimination, inadequate preparation, disapproval by significant others, decision-making difficulties, dissatisfaction with career, discouragement from choosing non-traditional careers, disability/health concerns, job market constraints, and difficulties with networking or socialization. ([Harris et al., 2015, p. 13](#))

[Harris et al. \(2015\)](#) and Sauder et al. ([2018](#)) reported women were underrepresented in American sport management undergraduate university programmes. Henderson and Bialeschki's ([1993](#)) research was triggered by the increasing number of American women majoring in sport at tertiary institutes where male students outnumber female students by 20-40% ([Jones et al., 2008](#); [Moore, Parkhouse, & Konrad, 2004](#); [Schwab et al., 2013](#)). [Jones et al. \(2008\)](#) as cited in [Sauder et al. \(2018\)](#) found in the United States, 29% of sport management university programmes lacked female lecturers. Smith, Taylor, and Hardin ([2017](#)) claimed that, in the United States, men outnumbered women sport management coaches and administrators, and as university teachers and students. Smith et al. ([2017](#)) suggested the dominant masculine gender skew may facilitate sport workplace sexual assault or harassment and proposed discussing these

issues in the tertiary classroom. Hancock, Darvin et al. (2018) recommended that women studying sport management in American universities may benefit from having male as well as female advocates and guest speakers in the lecture rooms.

[Schwab et al. \(2013\)](#) conducted a study in the United States investigating the backgrounds of 443 sport management students, specifically targeting their opinions about their course of study, job organisation and work aspirations. The study found 70% of all sport management students were male, 96% of all students were active or very active in sport in their formative years, 78% were die-hard sports fans, and 79% felt their identity was strongly connected to sport. Overall, 89% of all students were compelled by their love for sport to study sport management with the hopes of a job in elite sport. Although over 60% of the students responded that they understood the jobs and roles available after graduating, the study found specifics relating to their work aspirations were lacking.

[Cunningham, Sagas, Dixon, and Turner \(2005\)](#), [Harris et al. \(2015\)](#) and [Sauder et al. \(2018\)](#) conducted studies of North American students and their perceptions of their future working environment. Women in all three studies expected gender discrimination would hinder their work prospects. [Sauder et al. \(2018\)](#) identified a disproportionately low number of women lecturers in sport management across the United States. The studies by [Sauder et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Harris et al. \(2015\)](#) established that female sport management students' expected to encounter stereotyping, difficulty networking, limited resources, long hours and low pay in their sport management jobs after they graduated and yet, despite this, the women were excited to be entering the sector.

[Timmerman, Schwab, Wells, and Dustin \(2012\)](#) reported that only 66% of those who graduated from tertiary sport management programmes in America ended up working in the sport sector, and this number declined further to 33% over time ([as cited in Schwab et al., 2015](#)). An outcome from the study by [Schwab et al. \(2015\)](#) was the importance of job support for sport management students. [Schwab et al. \(2015\)](#) also considered graduate work success was influenced by internships, industry networks, and postgraduate qualifications.

In NZ there is very little research on women's university experiences while studying sport management or their expectations and experiences as they seek to progress a career in sport management ([Leberman & Shaw, 2012, 2015](#)). Leberman and Shaw ([2012](#)) sought to understand women's experience of studying sport management at university and what their work expectations entailed through research with recent graduates and CEs. The mixed method approach using the online platform, Survey Monkey and semi-structured interviews focused on three key areas: skills, barriers, and the gendered nature of the NZ sports industry. Overall, the women CEs identified the most important skills needed for young female graduates to be successful in the NZ sport management sector was the ability to relate to people, communicate and build networks ([Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#)). Several graduates reported that being a woman and in a minority had hindered them reaching their working potential ([Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#)). The graduates from the study also reported that men's opinions and ideas were heard in preference to women's, and the women felt that they had to prove themselves more than their male colleagues. The CEs identified several barriers, including lower pay rates than their male counterparts, the old boys' network and family responsibilities.

Internship, practicum, work-integrated learning (WIL) or cooperative education (co-op) Many university programmes (e.g. engineering, business related subjects, teaching) include a component of study which integrates theoretical study into an applied practical workplace, including sport management ([G. Bennett, Henson, & Drane, 2003](#); [Brown et al., 2018](#); [DeLuca & Braunstein-Minkove, 2016](#); [Fleming & Ferkins, 2005](#); [Oodio, 2017](#); [Oodio & Kerwin, 2016](#); [Parkhouse, 1987](#); [Sattler, 2018](#); [Sauder et al., 2018](#); [Sibson & Russell, 2011](#)). As suggested by the subheading used above, the terminology and the parameters of the practical work vary between countries and across programmes of study ([Oodio, 2017](#); [Sauder & Mudrick, 2018](#)). [Polito, Kros, and Watson \(2004\)](#) described experiential learning as a transformational process where theoretical knowledge is embellished with practical knowledge in the workplace. [Brown et al. \(2018\)](#) stated that in North America 77% of sport management programmes have a compulsory WIL component.

Students value the WIL placement opportunity to develop their skills, network, self-evaluate, accumulate work information, problem solve, prove themselves, and help

secure a full-time job ([Bower, 2014](#); [Brown et al., 2018](#); [Ferkins, 2002](#); [Odio & Kerwin, 2016](#); [Sauder & Mudrick, 2018](#); [Sibson & Russell, 2011](#)). According to [Brzovic and Matz \(2009\)](#), students develop academically, socially and emotionally through the duration of their WIL placement. [Bower \(2013\)](#) and Sauder et al. ([2018](#)) found that students studying sport management learn particularly well through WIL. [Leberman and Shaw \(2015\)](#) claimed that student's chances of securing a job is more likely to be a successful after their WIL experience. This is reinforced by Odio and Kerwin's ([2016](#)) findings where increasing the level of challenge in a WIL placement, effectively raised the student's WIL satisfaction.

Undergraduate sport management students considered their WIL to be the most useful content of their entire programme of study ([Brown et al., 2018](#); [Sauder & Mudrick, 2018](#)) and crucial in helping them transition from academia into the workplace ([Odio & Kerwin, 2016](#)). Odio's ([2017](#)) research supported claims that American sport management students considered being paid, timing, job prospects and location impacted their WIL placement choice. However, an earlier study by [Odio, Sagas, and Kerwin \(2014\)](#) revealed many students lacked work goals, strategy, and plans before starting their WIL placement. Brown et al. ([2018](#)) conveyed the diverse roles, responsibilities and circumstances of a WIL placement, which impacted upon student satisfaction. The WIL hosting organisation, supervisor and job scope are critical to the student's knowledge and skill acquisition, the student's perceived value given the complexity of tasks ([Cunningham et al., 2005](#)) and their success and satisfaction during their placement ([Odio & Kerwin, 2016](#); [Sauder & Mudrick, 2018](#); [Yoh & Choi, 2011](#)). [Odio and Kerwin \(2016\)](#) also discovered that bad WIL experiences negatively impacted upon sport management students' decisions to enter the sport management field after graduating, whereas other students found WIL to be a progression to their first job ([Odio, 2017](#)).

WIL is relevant for employers as well, with 64.5% preferring to hire candidates with relevant work experience and 56% of those preferring to hire graduates who had completed a WIL component as part of their studies ([Brown et al., 2018](#)). [Petersen and Pierce \(2009\)](#) inferred that employers identify WIL as the most crucial component of the curriculum. [Gault, Redington, and Schlager \(2000\)](#) found that WIL organisations benefitted from the student's new ideas. A student's performance during WIL allows

the hosting organisation to evaluate the student as a potential employee over a long period. [B. King \(2009\)](#) discovered that, in the United States, sport management professionals preferred hiring business graduates ahead of sport management graduates.

The following section moves away from a consideration of the influential factors at the macro- and meso-levels which shape women's working potential in sport management, and instead focuses on the micro-level, the individual factors which impact women's work aspirations.

### 3.8 Stereotypes, self-efficacy and self-confidence

#### 3.8.1 Stereotypes: The gender binary and micro-individual effects

Social theorists argue that gender is not determined biologically, where one is biologically male, female ([Billing & Alvesson, 2000](#)) or intersex. Gender is time- and context-specific and a culturally and socially constructed concept, manifested through the interplay of various factors. Gender differentiation ([Messerschmidt, 2009](#)) or, as de Beauvoir ([2011](#)) suggested, the meaning of what it is to be a 'woman', is manifested within the constructs of patriarchy. Individuals and their roles are predominantly categorised as being masculine or feminine ([Maier, 1999](#)). Gender behaviour displays how individuals of a particular sex choose to exhibit behaviours that comply with the socially acceptable behaviours of a particular sex ([Eagly et al., 2000](#)).

Self-confidence is a strong determinant of achievement ([Lirgg, 1992](#)). [Lirgg \(1992\)](#) identified three models that link confidence to achievement: Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, Harter's competence motivational theory, and Eccles' expectancy-value model. Self-efficacy is defined by [Lirgg \(1992\)](#) as a "judgement about one's capability to organize and execute courses of action to attain a specific outcome" (p. 158) or, simply stated, self-efficacy is one's confidence to perform a specific task ([Bussey & Bandura, 1999](#)). Self-efficacy is an aspect of a wider encompassing self-confidence. According to Bussey and Bandura ([1999](#)), the foundation of Bandura's social cognitive theory links to how societal influences permeate the individual who in turn exhibits certain behaviours. Self-efficacy expectations influence a person's thoughts, emotional responses and ultimately their behaviour ([Lirgg, 1992](#)). Harter identified that a person's reliance on external approval towards a task led to experiences of

incompetence and lack of control ([Lirgg, 1992](#)). Eccles' expectancy-value model found achievement and achievement-related choices are determined by a person's subjective predicted expectation of success and the value placed on the task. [Eccles and Harold \(1991\)](#) applied the expectancy-value model to boys' and girls' sport and discovered a girls' competence at a certain sport was dependent on how gender appropriate the girl and her parents considered the sport.

According to [Bussey and Bandura \(1999\)](#) and [Olsson and Martiny \(2018\)](#), gender differentiation originates at birth and is further constructed through the interplay of various societal subsystems, such as familial, peer, educational, structural, social, media and self. These fundamentally shape the gendered individual's self-efficacy and confidence, their educational, recreational and job aspirations, their role in society and within the family, and their emotional development and social interactions throughout life. A child's competence is firstly shaped by others' approval and secondly by success ([Lirgg, 1992](#)). Harter found that while boys were less inclined to seek external approval, girls frequently sought external approval and were sometimes confused when encountering gender stereotypes that negated their success ([Lirgg, 1991](#)). [Slaby and Frey \(1975\)](#) identified three factors relating to gender identity: labelling self as girl or boy; gender stability, that is, the idea that one's gender will not change over time; and gender consistency, the idea that, irrespective of clothes or roles, gender does not change.

Gender stereotypes are profoundly ingrained within society and the systems in which people function ([Banaji & Hardin, 1996](#)). The gender concept of self and stereotypical gender-associated actions are manifested before six years of age. It is at the ages of three and four that children reward their peers based on the correct or incorrect stereotypical gender behaviour ([Bussey & Bandura, 1999](#)). [Gottfredson \(1981\)](#), Eagly et al. ([2000](#)), and [Olsson and Martiny \(2018\)](#) considered that, from the age of six onwards, individuals begin anticipating career paths based on alleged suitably socialised beliefs and kudos. "Children are exposed to gender roles in their immediate environment through their parents, siblings, relatives, neighbours, peers, and teachers, but also through educational resources, media, and popular culture" ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018, p. 2](#)). [Olsson and Martiny \(2018\)](#) claimed a paucity of theories linking childhood gendered stereotypes and behaviours with adult gender behaviour. On the

other hand, [Wigfield and Eccles \(2000\)](#) found gendered stereotypes affected childhood capability development, which in turn guided adult work choices.

The importance and profound influence of modelling in gender development is hugely significant ([Bandura, 1986](#)). The ability to rehearse modelled behaviour increases competence and perceived self-efficacy, and reduces performance limiting thoughts ([Bandura, 1977](#)). When children's experiences are congruent with the expectations of their gender role models, the children feel positively towards the activity, feel stronger in their coping self-efficacy and make more confident decisions ([Bussey & Bandura, 1999](#)). Gender modelling may result in rewards such as power, position and financial remuneration for men, and this can explain some women's desire to emulate perceived male gendered behaviours to raise their status in life.

Understanding and learning about gender accumulates all through a person's life. Theories concentrating on gender role development and appropriate gender congruent work choices, aspirations, and behaviours mirroring their gender role models include Martin and Halverson's gender schema theory and Eagly and Wood's social role theory ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#)). The primary thought process of gender schema theory is along the following lines: girls play with dolls, therefore dolls are for girls; I am a girl, and therefore I play with dolls ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#)). Social role theory is based on the premise that adults possess inherently gendered stereotypes developed through observational learning, for example, women are relational and are therefore nurturing and caring ([Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011](#); [Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#); [Powell & Butterfield, 1979](#)). Being male is not the problem; instead, the problem lies in the pervasive and value-laden gendered stereotypical 'normative behaviour.'

[Eagly et al. \(2000\)](#) recognised gendered beliefs can lead to the construction of a psychological barrier to a particular career. For example, women may interpret a lack of women role models in leadership exists because women do not possess the necessary skills to perform the role ([Eagly et al., 2000](#)). However, daughters whose mothers work full time or in counter-stereotypical roles are more flexible in their job choices, behave less stereotypically as an adult, and experience reduced career-marriage conflict ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#)). Girls subjected to early childhood counter-

stereotypes were less likely to use gender stereotypes to limit their job choices, but still held firmly to gendered household work and placing family commitments ahead of her career ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#)). According to [Olsson and Martiny \(2018\)](#), public policies, including counter-stereotypical role models and options, have been created to disrupt traditional patriarchal beliefs and behaviour, especially for young children, teenagers and young adults. Sustained exposure to disruptive practices had a more significant effect on long-term gender stereotypes ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#)).

Gender role stereotyping has shown that men typically rate their self-efficacy beliefs higher than their female counterparts in areas that have traditionally been dominated by men, such as mathematics and athletics, whereas women have had higher efficacy ratings in areas such as grammar and languages ([Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998](#)). [Eccles et al. \(1998\)](#) also found that men overestimated how well they think they would perform on future tasks, whereas women tended to underestimate their abilities and how well they would perform.

Negative thought processes, including the 'imposter syndrome',<sup>8</sup> self-doubt and perfectionism undermine an individual's self-confidence. Imposter syndrome is the result of an individual's fear of being discovered as a fake or incompetent when others consider the individual is more competent than the individual perceives themselves to be ([Nedegaard, 2016](#); [Ramsey & Spencer, 2019](#)). Individuals disregard their success even when evidence of their success is present. Imposter syndrome is experienced at least once in their life by over 70% of the population ([Sakulku & Alexander, 2011](#)) and becomes increasingly predominant during periods of uncertainty or change ([LaDonna, Ginsburg, & Watling, 2018](#)). Imposter syndrome

[Breeze \(2018\)](#) claimed an individual's propensity to suffer from imposter syndrome was triggered by three sources of antecedents external to the individual which may have attributed to an individual's sense of being a fraud. These external areas included the individual's; 1] macro-level socio-political environment where gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and caring responsibilities intersect, 2] meso-level where organisational structures dominated by competition and insecure employment meet, and 3] micro-

---

<sup>8</sup> The imposter syndrome, also referred to as imposter phenomenon, impostorism, and fraud syndrome, is a successful person's psychological pattern in which they doubt their achievements, and is accompanied by a persistent internalised fear of being exposed as a fraud.

level where an individual's construction of knowledge occurs within various structural ([Breeze, 2018](#)).

Perfectionism is another form of a negative internal thought, attributed by the fear of making mistakes, self-doubt and not meeting expectations ([Vekas & Wade, 2017](#)).

Ramsey and Spencer's ([2019](#)) research with student interns revealed asking for help, admitting what they do not know and realising they are not alone helps alleviate the negative head talk.

### 3.8.2 Sport and self

Work choice and success are fundamentally gender stereotyped and undoubtedly influence women's self-belief, perceived opportunities, work choices and career expectations. Gender stereotypes have been identified in various studies as being influencers of self-efficacy and contributing to the gender differences in sport management ([Burton et al., 2009](#); [Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008](#); [Eagly & Karau, 2002](#); [Rydell, Rydell, & Boucher, 2010](#); [Shaw & Hoerber, 2003](#)). Research conducted in NZ by Leberman and Palmer (2009) ([Leberman & Palmer, 2009](#)) found that mothers who held elite sport leadership roles challenged stereotypical behaviours and identities, signalling a reconfiguration of gendered expectations. Studies have found a brief exposure to a female counter-stereotypical science, technology, engineering or mathematics role model could enhance female students self-efficacy, ambition, performance and determination, especially if the women have a personal relationship with the role model ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#)).

Jay [Coakley \(2009\)](#) found that students who participated in American school sport know sport can have implications for their self-efficacy, image and confidence, educational achievement, work opportunities, and overall well-being. Shaw and Hoerber ([2003](#)) found that masculine attributes were preferential in most sport leadership roles and senior sport management positions, and men and masculine discourses dominated decision-making arenas.

At a micro-level perspective, women are individually responsible for acquiring educational capability, and for using their relationships to develop social networks ([Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012](#); [Sagas & Cunningham, 2004](#)). Macro- and meso-level factors clash with women's micro-level beliefs and aspirations when women start

working in sport management roles ([Sartore & Cunningham, 2007](#)). Accessing roles in sport management and working in organisations which overtly prioritise management attributes of masculinity, undermined women's confidence and triggered self-limiting thoughts and actions ([Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008](#); [Sartore & Cunningham, 2007](#); [Shaw & Hoeber, 2003](#)).

The majority of studies exploring the self-limiting behaviours of women in sport-dominated cultures are American and centred on coaching sport ([Burton, 2015](#)). These found women coaches were less ambitious, blended into the masculine discourse and had lower self-efficacy ([Sartore & Cunningham, 2007](#); [Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013](#)). Burton ([2015](#)) has agitated for more multilevel research examining issues beyond gender and Fink ([2008](#)) advocated for more intersectional exploration.

[Whitmarsh et al. \(2007\)](#) highlighted parental support as the most critical factor impacting their children's confidence when choosing an employment option. [Eccles \(1994\)](#) considered an individual's expectation for success is determined by their lived experiences and the meanings and interpretations they made from those experiences. Children by the age of 5 have developed a comprehensive understanding of gender stereotypical behaviour and children self-regulate their behaviours against the defined behaviour and trait set ([Eccles, 1994](#)).

Cameron ([1996](#)) found that women in sport management working within NZ identified family responsibilities as overwhelmingly the most significant working potential constraint. The women working in sport management roles in Cameron's study were less likely to be mothers in comparison to their peers. Women who felt they were unable to balance family and work left their roles in sport management ([Dixon & Bruening, 2005](#)).

The explanations above contribute to our growing understanding of the underrepresentation of women in senior sport management and leadership positions in NZ. The issue is gendered, multifaceted and complicated, with a myriad of contributing factors culminating in women's underrepresentation.

### 3.9 Chapter summary

The effects NZ's entrenched patriarchal and masculine culture on women in sport management is evident at the macro-societal, meso-organisational and micro-individual levels. Widely accepted, normalised and often invisible stereotypes of expected women's attributes and work roles have been a barrier to women entering sport management. These messages have been reiterated through mass media and the old boys' club. The structures and practices in NZ sports organisations have reinforced men as the normal and legitimate holders of power and as such women are marginalised. The individual woman is impacted by these influences which culminates in her compromised confidence, efficacy and career aspirations.

## Chapter 4 Research design, methodology and method

“Nothing is more meaningful than the quest for meaning, the mystery of meaning, how meaning originates and occurs ... confronting the unexamined assumptions of our personal, cultural, political, and social beliefs, values, and theories.” ([van Manen, 2014, p. 13](#))

This chapter serves to outline the research design framework used to guide this feminist research project, and the hermeneutic methodology that examines the concrete lived experiences of women studying and working in NZ sport management. This chapter is structured to outline the literature pertinent to this research and the theoretical frameworks chosen for this research. Feminist theory is central to this framework, and was discussed in Chapter Two. After some reflections on the interpretivist paradigm, feminist ontology, and constructivist epistemology, the chapter continues with an analysis of the philosophical origins of phenomenology and hermeneutics, and the main philosophers whose ideas have shaped this research project. I argue the case for using feminist hermeneutics to critically understand how women make sport management career decisions in a gendered space where masculinity is valued over femininity, and sporting practices reproduce hegemonic heterosexual masculinity and subordinate women ([Anderson, 2009](#); [Burton, 2015](#); [McKay, 1991](#)). The chapter ends with a discussion of how I have interpreted and merged feminist theory and hermeneutics, and taken van Manen’s (2014) *Phenomenology of practice: Meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research and writing* as the text guiding my use of the methodology in this research project.

### 4.1 The nature of the inquiry

Hermeneutics, influenced by semiotics and language philosophers such as Heidegger, argues that the research project comes out of a particular language community which is shaped by culture and history. Hermeneutics argues that researchers constitute the object of inquiry out of their traditions, institutions, social context and other habit producing guides. Knowledge depends on a specific cultural-historical context for its validity. ([Buker, 1990, p. 29](#))

This research project seeks to explore the meaning that women as students, graduates and practitioners in NZ sport management have made from their lived experiences and how these meanings have influenced and will influence their career. Young women,

capable and ready to graduate but reluctant to apply for jobs, were the primary motivation for this research. My student's behaviour led me to the research question: "What are the experiences of women studying, and working in, Aotearoa New Zealand sport management"?

## 4.2 Philosophical assumptions

There is a connection between the philosophical assumptions held by a researcher and the critical framework used to undertake qualitative research ([Creswell, 2014](#)).

Philosophical assumptions are shaped by the researcher as a multicultural person ([Denzin & Lincoln, 2011](#)), factors which include personal history, views held relating to themselves and others, values, biographies ([J. Nielsen, 1990](#)) and ethical and political influences ([Creswell, 2013](#)). Overlying the philosophical assumptions and shaping the research scaffold is a collection of theories, paradigms and perspectives that form the basic set of beliefs guiding the research process. The researcher needs to be both aware and considerate of how all of this shapes ([Huff, 2009](#)) and is incorporated into ([Creswell, 2014](#)) the research, the analysis and the presentation.

## 4.3 Research terminology

The feminist framework that guided this research project is complex and interwoven and is shaped by several elements, namely: the theoretical perspective, ontology, epistemology, methodology, and method. The theoretical, epistemological, and methodological positions espoused for this research study are outlined briefly here before an in-depth analysis later in this chapter.

*Theoretical perspective:* Feminist standpoint theory (as discussed in Chapter Two) is underpinned by the idea that women's experiences are founded in a gendered reality, and that understanding is continuously an interpretation of their experiences ([Hekman, 1997](#); [Leckenby, 2007](#)). Feminist standpoint theory is the lens through which the epistemology, methodology and method need to be considered.

*Paradigm:* A particular worldview, and approach to knowledge building" ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#))

*Epistemology:* A theory of knowledge is that based on assumptions about the social world and what counts as authoritative knowledge, including who can be a knower and what can be known ([Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#); [van Manen, 2014](#))

*Constructivism:* The epistemological position adopted for this research project holds that individuals construct subjective meanings of their interactions with the complex world in which they live and that their given meanings are varied and multiple ([Creswell, 2014](#)). [Hesse-Biber and Leavy \(2007a\)](#) claimed that the researcher makes decisions rooted in these assumptions, and these decisions, in turn, influence what is studied (based on what *can* be studied) and how the study is to be conducted.

*Methodology:* Methodology is the theory of how research should be conducted. The *hermeneutic* methodology involves the theory of peoples' interpretation and meaning-making of their everyday experiences ([Moules, McCaffrey, Field, & Laing, 2015](#); [Prasad, 2005](#); [van Manen, 1990, 2014](#)).

*Method:* includes the approaches and techniques for gathering data. The methods for this research project will be discussed later in this chapter.

#### 4.4 Interpretive paradigm

Interpretivists view humans as interpretive beings who can only know the world through their experiences in the world. We are cultural objects shaped by the cultural and social meanings which operate in our daily lives ([Olesen, 2011](#)). Interpretivists consider factors such as religion, age, gender and social class as interwoven and understand that, together, these create a societal framework; they do not view each factor in isolation or consider them to be distinct and separate from each other ([Bryman, 2004](#); [Creswell, 2014](#)). In contrast, quantitative approaches may endeavour to explain societal factors independently and in isolation but fail to capture the complex and interdependent nature of societal issues.

Interpretive researchers start with the assumption that access to reality is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings. The philosophical base of interpretive research is hermeneutics and phenomenology ([van Manen, 1990](#)). Interpretive studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them. Interpretive research does not

predefine dependent and independent variables but focuses on the full complexity of human sense-making as the situation emerges ([Bryman, 2004](#); [Creswell, 2014](#); [Denzin & Lincoln, 2011](#); [Moules et al., 2015](#)).

#### 4.5 Constructivist epistemology

Epistemology outlines a way of knowing, specifically, what constitutes and validates knowledge, and, what the relationship is between who can know and what can be known ([Stanley & Wise, 1990/2013](#)). The constructivist epistemology positions knowledge and experience as both realist, as actually having happened, and relativist, pertinent to each individual. All knowledge is constructed through the interactions between people in their worlds and within their socio-cultural context ([Crotty, 1998](#); [Grbich, 2013](#)). Reality is time- and place-dependent with multiple realities; and in the research context is constructed iteratively as a result of the interaction between the researcher and the data.

Adherents of social constructivism have been among the most ardent opponents of positivistic approaches to the study of human behaviour. Societies are continually evolving, and their meanings and knowledge are historically specific. Constructivism enables people to understand the society in which they live and work, even if that understanding may only be valid for the moment in time and in the context in which it was constructed and in which its meaning is conveyed ([Creswell, 2014](#)). The constructivist position, therefore, claims anyone can be a knower ([Schwandt, 1994](#)) and that social diversity is abundant and historical. [Schwandt \(1994\)](#) commented that constructivist and interpretivist approaches are concerned with issues of knowing and being, as opposed to the methods of research. In the research process, constructions can be obtained only through the interaction between participants and the researcher. Constructivist epistemologies allow for findings to be constructed at the data gathering stage as it is through this process that how the researcher knows and what there is to be known, is revealed ([Guba & Lincoln, 1994](#)). The final construction is more developed than any of the previous constructions ([Guba & Lincoln, 1994](#)). The understanding of the researcher is continuously changing, and knowledge, therefore, is indeterminate.

It is through spoken or written language or other social processes that meaning and knowledge are communicated. With social constructivism, the distinction between ontology and epistemology, as found in positivism, no longer exists, since what there is to be known and how it is known is a social construction. A constructivist approach is critical to interpreting and meaning-making of the women's experiences of studying and working in NZ sport management.

The next section introduces hermeneutics, which is the research methodology for this project.

## 4.6 Hermeneutics

This section initially outlines the philosophical origins of hermeneutics and phenomenology and the work of four key philosophers who have informed these methodologies, Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Max van Manen. The section continues by introducing a critical perspective to hermeneutics. Feminist standpoint theory and hermeneutics embrace diversity within historical and temporal settings and facilitate interpretation, understanding and application from women's lived experiences.

### 4.6.1 Methodology

The methodology is concerned with the 'getting of knowledge'. This research project seeks to unearth meanings that can provide an insight into the lived experience of the unique phenomenon of women studying and working in NZ sport management.

The methodologies used in this thesis are hermeneutics and phenomenology. Feminism has drawn upon and challenged hermeneutic and phenomenological principles in the feminist endeavour to reveal things that have been obscured through gendered structures, cultures, politics and practices ([van Manen, 2014](#)).

### 4.6.2 Hermeneutics compared to other methodologies

The methodology for this research project had to be able to investigate how women's taken-for-granted historical and everyday experiences influenced their decision to study and work in NZ sport management. Ethnography, narrative inquiry, and case study were methodologies also considered for the interpretive and feminist vantage points for this research project, before a hermeneutic approach was decided upon.

Ethnography would have provided an observation of the women over a finite period but would fail to provide insights into the meanings made from their historical lives and the impact of those meanings on the women studying and working in sport management. Narrative inquiry could provide an understanding of how the marginalised women used narratives to communicate their stories and could reveal the meaning of the narratives used, but that would be more about the narratives than the women's lived experiences and the meaning made from those experiences. A case study would be more useful as a research methodology once the meanings had been established and positive interventions made to increase the number of women working in NZ sport management. Smythe and Spence (2012) describe hermeneutics as the art of interpretation and this fits well with the aims of this research. Allen-Collinson (2011) claimed very little research in sport has used modern phenomenology. Hermeneutic methodology does not build theory, nor does it make empirical generalisations, but it does provide insights into people's understandings and experiences in the everyday taken for granted world (Moules et al., 2015; van Manen, 2014). This research project seeks to understand, interpret and make meaning from the concrete experiences of women studying and working in sport management in NZ.

Van Manen (2014) *Phenomenology of practice: Meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research and writing* was the hermeneutic text that guided this research along with feminist hermeneutic writers Eloise Buker (1990), and Louise Tester (2014). This feminist hermeneutic approach reflects both my theoretical position and my philosophical stance, as articulated in the first part of this chapter.

#### 4.6.3 Phenomenology and hermeneutics are closely aligned

Phenomenology and hermeneutics are closely related, and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably (van Manen, 1990). For this study, phenomenology describes what it is to be human through rich descriptions of the everyday lived experiences, whereas hermeneutics is the practice of understanding, interpreting and making meaning of those experiences in the everyday world. Van Manen (2014) claimed "that all or much of phenomenology has hermeneutic (interpretive) elements – but not all hermeneutics is phenomenology" (p. 26).

### Hermeneutic research approach

Hermeneutics interprets the phenomenon of the human experience ([Creswell, 2013](#); [Laverty, 2003](#); [Malterud, 2001](#); [Prasad, 2005](#); [van Manen, 1990, 2014](#)). The adjective 'hermeneutic' is derived from the Greek verb *hermeneuein*, which means to interpret ([Crotty, 1998](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)) and history links hermeneutics to the Greek god, Hermes, the messenger, whose role it was to interpret between the gods and humans ([Allan, 2017](#); [Creswell, 2013](#); [Prasad, 2005](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)). Historically, hermeneutics described the art or theory of interpretation (predominantly of texts) and was prevalent in disciplines such as theology and law ([Gadamer, 1975](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)). According to [Buker \(1990\)](#), the philosophical development of hermeneutics has argued for an open and broad-minded approach, yet feminist research and women's perspectives have not been included in its development. Philosophical hermeneutics does, however, offer a philosophical practise which promotes a give-and-take relationship between the researcher and the research participants ([Buker, 1990](#)). Feminism uncovers a symbiotic partnership with hermeneutics ([Buker, 1990](#)).

A hermeneutic research approach allows us (everyone) to really understand something from the lived experiences and interpretations of others who have gone before us and this, in turn, enables us to broaden our understandings and make more informed decisions in the present. Hermeneutics "offers us the possibility of plausible insights that brings us in more direct contact with the world" ([van Manen, 2014, p. 66](#)).

Hermeneutics argues that theory and data construction depend on historical experience as well as on commitments to a perspective of the good. For hermeneutics research moves forward in two directions: first, toward understanding more about the world out there – the others, the objects of inquiry – second, toward understanding more about the self and the society that shaped that self. Self-knowledge involves knowing one's own prejudices and values more clearly, so that one can choose to embrace them as productive of the good, or reject them if they lead toward the ill. ([Buker, 1990, p. 26](#))

The hermeneutic approach uncovers what is covered over by looking closely at the taken-for-granted everyday mode of being ([van Manen, 2014](#)) and understanding. The rich descriptions of everyday experiences, their interpretation and meanings, are intended to expose a broader and deeper understanding of what it is to be human ([Moules et al., 2015](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)).

### Origins of hermeneutics and phenomenology

Hermeneutics has a long history, deeply rooted in philosophy, with thinking and practice that was initially used to navigate the pluralism encountered interpreting theology and law ([Moules et al., 2015](#)). [Baker \(1990\)](#) explained that theologians started hermeneutic inquiry with the questions such as: what is the meaning behind the biblical texts and what does that tell readers about how to live in their contemporary world? Answering the question required an interpretation of an historically situated text within the context of contemporary society ([van Manen, 2014](#)).

Both hermeneutics and phenomenology are intimately related philosophical and social science approaches to understanding people's lived experience and, as such, their philosophical origins are linked. The key shapers of phenomenology began with Friedrich Schleiermacher [1768-1834], a German theologian and philosopher who was considered the father of modern hermeneutics with his conveying of meaning being grounded in a philosophy of language ([Prasad, 2005](#); [Sikh & Spence, 2016](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)). German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey [1833–1911] redefined hermeneutics as a science of historical understanding and sought a method for deriving objectively valid interpretations, and introduced the notion of 'the lived experience' ([van Manen, 2014](#)). Edmund Husserl [1859-1939], a German mathematician, positivist and philosopher, emphasised knowledge and going 'back to the things themselves' and the living present ([Dowling, 2007](#)). Martin Heidegger [1889-1976], a German philosopher and colleague of Husserl ([Lavery, 2003](#)), progressed ontological hermeneutics ([Silverman, 1991](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)) and was concerned with interpreting experiences, self-understanding, 'Dasein' and later 'Being.' Edith Stein [1891-1942], a Prussian member of the women's suffrage movement investigated feeling and sensual empathy, and primordial experiences. Stein worked with Husserl and Heidegger, was recommended by Husserl for a professorship, but was denied the position because she was a woman. Her public criticism of Pope Pius XI's collaboration with the Nazi policies led to her execution in Auschwitz ([van Manen, 2014](#)). Hans-Georg Gadamer [1900-2002], another German philosopher, explored the applicative nature of understanding and the use of text in constructing meaning ([Allan, 2017](#); [Prasad, 2005](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)). Finally, van Manen [1942-current day], a Dutch-born Canadian scholar, bridged

the gap between phenomenology's interpretive European and practical North American approaches to research, mainly as it related to professional practice. From this brief overview, it can be seen that the philosophers who were central to shaping hermeneutics and phenomenology were mainly European men.

#### *Husserl and phenomenological reduction*

Husserl's phenomenological reduction focused on the description of lived experience and identified the experience as the original source and meaning of knowledge ([Koch, 1995](#)). Husserl differentiated between normal, taken-for-granted, everyday awareness and the phenomenological attitude which permits a systematic, intentional analysis of lived experience to get to the essence of the thing itself ([Husserl, 1900/2001](#)).

Achieving this meant removing everything extraneous to make the thing recognisable as itself and Husserl referred to this process as phenomenological reduction ([Moules et al., 2015](#)). Part of the reduction process required the researcher to 'bracket' out the researcher's own prejudices or pre-understanding about the phenomenon ([Husserl, as cited in van Manen, 1990, p. 33](#)). This means that Husserl does not acknowledge pre-understanding, gender, power and structures as influential unless acknowledged by the participants in his research, which makes Husserl's phenomenology unsuitable for feminist research.

#### *Heidegger and ontological hermeneutics*

Heidegger endeavoured to fathom the relationship between the person and the world: the lifeworld and the nature of reality. Heidegger veered away from Husserl's thinking and proposed that people did not exist as separate from the world, describing what they observed; instead, in his book *Being and Time* ([Heidegger, 1953/1996](#)), he identified the notion of 'Dasein' which literally means to be there in an authentic way of knowing oneself by being in amongst and inseparable from the world. According to [Moules et al. \(2015\)](#), Heidegger's understanding was embedded in the ontological construction of *Dasein*, especially temporality, being and existence. [Heidegger \(1953/1996\)](#) focused on the set of interrelated events that one needs to live through to understand the meaning of one's being, and not on the subjective knowledge of the phenomenon, as Husserl had done. He viewed Husserl's fundamental phenomenological perspective of self-reflection as deficient, and introduced hermeneutic ontology to phenomenology with self-understanding and being as an

interpretation of life that goes beyond everyday self-reflection ([Dowling, 2007](#); [Figal & Espinet, 2012](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)).

### *Historicity and the hermeneutic circle*

Historicity is an essential component of Dasein, and Heidegger posited that understanding is viewed through the historical experiences, meanings and traditions of an individual's being in the world ([van Manen, 1990](#)). Being in the world is time-specific, situated, and temporal. Heidegger's 'being' is interpreted and understood in the everyday experiences, with 'being' subject to transformation and new meaning-making over time. Uncovering and understanding, and making meaning of Dasein, for Heidegger, evolved through the imaginary 'hermeneutic circle' ([Koch, 1996](#)) where a dialectic flow occurred between the whole and its component parts ([Moules et al., 2015](#)). The whole receives its sense from the parts, and the parts take their meaning from the whole. Likewise, the past is never gone, but impacts the present and the future: they are the parts of the same whole. The hermeneutic circle or the circle of understanding is in a circle that is forever expanding ([Gadamer, 1975](#)). Schleiermacher considered every aspect of thought constituted a part in the entire context of a person's life ([Gadamer, 1975](#)). Heidegger argued that a commonality of understanding could be created from the interpretations of experience from different social and cultural perspectives. Thus, a synergy between ontological hermeneutics and a feminist standpoint is established through the possibility of a commonality of understanding that allows for gendered historicity.

### *Gadamer and philosophical hermeneutics*

Gadamer is acknowledged as a dominant contemporary hermeneutic philosopher. Gadamer claimed the hermeneutic approach views knowledge as being socially constructed from the interpretation of the participants' historical subjective experience, and this underpins all qualitative research ([Dowling, 2007](#)). Furthermore, he considered "human life [to be] inseparable from understanding, so that a philosophy of understanding itself has direct relevance to how people negotiate all aspects of their existence" ([Gadamer, as cited in Moules et al., 2015, p. 9](#)). Key concepts in Gadamer's hermeneutics include self-understanding, historical consciousness, prejudice, and the fusion of horizons. The hermeneutic understanding of our world which is constantly evolving and, in the process, we foreground that

which is different ([Kögler, 1996](#)). The fusion of horizons is the integration of individual's experiences to create an expanded collective understanding. According to [J. Nielsen \(1990\)](#), ideas about horizons further standpoint epistemologies because the fusion of the horizon implies a new position beyond both original perspectives. The concepts underpinning hermeneutics mean to me, that when we have a new experience, we interpret the new experience based on our past experiences and the meanings we made from past experiences which are brought into the current situation. We interpret the current situation based on the past, the present and the possible future. When we share with others our experiences and the meanings we make from those experiences, even if they are different from our own, we develop an enlarged understanding of our world.

### *Understanding*

[Gadamer \(1975\)](#), like Heidegger, placed a strong emphasis on self-understanding. However, for Gadamer, all understanding is self-understanding ([Dowling, 2007](#)). Therefore, understanding becomes applicative to one's own particular situation at any given time. Gadamer's hermeneutics differs further from phenomenology in the analysis of the data description which evolves into understanding. For hermeneutics, the self-showing is both immediate and overwhelming, thereby limiting pure phenomenological interpretation ([Figal & Espinet, 2012](#)). "Self-understanding is not the intuitive and immediate access of one's own being but rather the elucidation of one's life in or via something that is understood" ([Figal & Espinet, 2012, p. 499](#)). Gadamer's (1975) hermeneutic perspective draws from critical theory as he asks: 'what shapes the way we understand?' ([Figal & Espinet, 2012](#)). [Gadamer \(1975\)](#), also posited that understanding is viewed through the historical experiences, meanings and traditions of an individual.

### *Historicity and the hermeneutic circle*

Objective knowledge of reality was not possible, according to Gadamer and Heidegger, as all people are situated in a reality that they have interpreted through both language and experience ([Gadamer, 1975](#); [Moules et al., 2015](#)). Gadamer advocated that hermeneutic researchers do not attempt, nor is it possible, to isolate or 'bracket' their prejudice, their prior knowledge, values, interests and understandings ([Laverty, 2003](#)). Instead, Gadamer advised researchers to make explicit their pre-understanding and

incorporate them into the study ([Smythe, Ironside, Sims, Swenson, & Spence, 2007](#)). According to [Gadamer \(1975\)](#), 'historical consciousness' is the careful consideration of the historical, cultural and social context in which the research project is undertaken. "Prejudices are the conditions whereby something is experienced as having meaning. Prejudices constitute the understanding through which interpretation becomes possible" ([Spence, 2001, p. 73](#)). The skeletons of history are always retracting us into the past, recycling us into an embellished present and propelling us into a newly imagined future in a never-ending pattern. This forms the basis for understanding as the 'fusion of horizons' or, in German, *horizontverschmelzung* ([Gadamer, 1975](#)). The hermeneutic analytic process requires the researcher to open their thinking, to allow them to accommodate the experiences and thinking of others, creating a new understanding which extends beyond the researchers original horizon ([Gadamer, as cited in Smythe & Spence, 2012](#)). This journey establishes a direct relationship between the understanding of the present and the 'truth', the meaning and interpretation of the past ([Kafle, 2011](#)). Gadamer's ([1975](#)) explanation of the horizon included that everything which can be seen from an individual's standpoint point. The fusion occurs through an understanding gleaned from the merging of multiple horizons ([Koch, 1996](#)) from two sources: firstly, our historical past, complete with discovered and hidden meanings, as a tool to aid our present-day understanding; and secondly, a merging of existing horizons with new knowledge and circumstances ([Moules et al., 2015](#)).

The hermeneutic circle has no beginning or end that can be concretely defined; it is an experience of persistently questioning phenomena ([Gadamer, 1975](#)), and the findings are open to ongoing reinterpretation.

### *Van Manen*

Max van Manen (1942-present), born in the Netherlands, studied and practiced teaching. In 1967, van Manen moved to Canada, and became a contemporary educational researcher where he developed a practical method to hermeneutic phenomenological research ([Allan, 2017](#); [Dowling, 2007](#)). Van Manen ([2014](#)) used a less procedural approach to his hermeneutic phenomenological research but underpinned his method with the underpinnings of the phenomenological and hermeneutic scholars mentioned earlier. To van Manen, the hermeneutic

phenomenological approach did not infer a series of procedural steps, but rather key philosophical considerations ([2014](#)). These considerations included; the researcher needing to research in their professional field of practice, research that originates from real lived experience and not theory, writing and rewriting which allowed the researcher to become closer to and reflect on the essence of the experience, letting the data speak for itself as the parts and the whole become woven together ([Errasti-Ibarrondo, Jordán, Díez-Del-Corral, & Arantzamendi, 2018](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)).

Van Manen's ([2014](#)) hermeneutic phenomenology explored not just the experience but the meaning of the experience. Van Manen was concerned with the components which impacted the meaning making of a unique experience, without which, the experience would be something different ([Dowling, 2007](#); [van Manen, 1990, 2014](#); [Verheijen, 2018](#)). Van Manen's ([2014](#)) practical phenomenological interpretation method suggests the components are themes which are woven to create the unique experience. Van Manen signals that hermeneutic phenomenological meaning is complex and capable of being interpreted in differing ways ([Allan, 2017](#); [Errasti-Ibarrondo et al., 2018](#); [Tester, 2014](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)). However, he asserts there is a critical point in the interpretation of the texts where the understanding and meaning making resonates with others, causing the phenomenological nod ([van Manen, 1990](#)).

#### 4.6.4 Critical hermeneutics

One of the best-known exponents of 20<sup>th</sup> century critical social theory is Jürgen Habermas. His desire to stop exploitation combined with his drive for social change closely aligns Habermas with feminist standpoint epistemology. Habermas argued that Gadamer placed too much importance on tradition, prejudice, and the universal nature of hermeneutics and that this stopped Gadamer critiquing social power from his philosophical perspective ([Buker, 1990](#)). Habermas identified a disconnect within Gadamer's attachment to a tradition that caused hermeneutics to be 'out of touch' with the issues of contemporary society ([Buker, 1990](#)).

Kögler ([1996](#)) argued that the very nature of hermeneutic reflection and interpretation means that if the layers of meaning are continually peeled away, a critical position will eventually prevail. In contrast, [Buker \(1990\)](#) claimed that, on its own, hermeneutics lacked political impetus. Buker ([Buker, 1990](#)) further claimed that feminist theory can

enrich hermeneutics and “feminism can become more effective to the degree that it takes the insights of philosophical hermeneutics into consideration in organizing and articulating its account of social reality and its prospects for embodying a life that feminists can call Good” ([Buker, 1990, p. 23](#)). Given these criticisms that challenge the lack of criticality in Gadamer’s hermeneutic philosophy, and his deep attachment to tradition ([Buker, 1990](#)), the feminist perspective openly informs the hermeneutic analysis for this research project.

#### 4.6.5 Feminist hermeneutics

Feminists have used hermeneutics and phenomenology to challenge the empirical and theoretical frameworks that have justified the historical marginalisation and inferiority of women ([van Manen, 2014](#)). Feminist hermeneutics has enabled women to critically assess the structures of men’s dominance and develop a self-understanding as minority people intersecting with the dominant ([Buker, 1990](#)). Early existential feminist writer Simone de Beauvoir [1908-1986], known for her works *The Second Sex* and *The Coming of Age*, described women as being ‘man’s other’ ([H. Fielding, 2012](#)) and highlighted the control by the powerful over the powerless ([van Manen, 2014](#)). Many of de Beauvoir’s philosophical works reflected her interest in living a self-conscious life of personal choices “that fully face the challenges and consequences of individual freedom, responsibility, and authenticity ... focusing on women who take responsibility for themselves by making life-altering decisions” ([van Manen, 2014, pp. 124-125](#)). De Beauvoir believed men used the mysterious gendered image of women as the basis for not accepting women as their equals. De Beauvoir also challenged Husserl’s traditional phenomenology with her trans-disciplinary inclusion, existentialism, feminism and political challenge ([H. Fielding, 2012](#)).

[Buker \(1990\)](#) explained that feminist research in the 1960s considered a person’s hermeneutic understanding revealed a social knowledge comparable to biblical or philosophical texts. Feminist users of phenomenology include Luce Irigaray, with her works *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1985) and *This Sex Which is Not One* (1985), and Iris Young in her essay *Throwing like a girl* (1980), which depicts the social conditioning of women’s restricted body movement and the understanding that women’s bodies are fragile. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Gloria Bowles have created a dialectic between feminism and hermeneutic texts ([Buker, 1990](#)) which facilitates feminist

interpretation. These feminist writers have moved understanding beyond traditional scientific frameworks by centralising women's experiences, proposing alternative methodologies and offering different ways of knowing for women. In a similar manner van Manen shifted from philosophical to applicable hermeneutics.

Feminist research allows for the subjective understandings and knowledge of the researcher to be incorporated into the study for the fullness of the meaning to be made complete. [Baker \(1990\)](#) claimed:

By urging the value of women, feminism inspires political critique and social action. By insisting on social equality for women, it calls for political transformations. Feminism, therefore, can rescue hermeneutics from its open system and give it a political project with enough variety to accommodate multiple layers of interpretation, but with enough direction to assert itself as a force in social transformation. (p. 27)

Similarly, H. Fielding ([2012](#)) stated that feminism and hermeneutics intersect by exposing, understanding and interpreting the gender biases in everyday experiences that marginalise women. Feminist theory adds praxis to hermeneutics, bringing women's experiences and work from the margins to the centre. Feminist standpoint and hermeneutics embrace diversity within historical and temporal settings. Research from the standpoint of women can support an understanding of women's gendered experience and provides a means of understanding the nature of women's being in the world. In this research, then, both feminist standpoint and hermeneutics will guide the questions when trying to uncover the root cause of the gendered experiences of women.

#### 4.6.6 Feminist-informed hermeneutic inquiry

The thinking that accompanies hermeneutical scholarship is reflective, reflexive, and circular in nature ([Smythe et al., 2007](#)). However, describing the process of hermeneutical research may suggest linearity and a stepwise structure that belies the seamless, fluid nature of this approach to inquiry. [Gadamer \(1975\)](#) poignantly stated human truths are not created methodically, therefore, interpreting and understanding humans cannot be achieved through systematic processes. Van Manen ([2014](#)) specified that a hermeneutic method is not a prescribed, predetermined schema; however, not describing the process implies a thoughtless or haphazard approach that

does not reflect the scholarliness of hermeneutical research ([Smythe et al., 2007](#)).

Based on this argument, Eloise Buker's ([1990](#)), three-stage hermeneutic inquiry process became the guide for this research study:

1. A pre-understanding or familiarity with the social and historical context of the research and questions that synthesis raises which inform the research question.
2. Collate or synthesise transcriptions, identifying patterns that inform the research question ([Gadamer, 1975](#)).
3. Interpretations and new understandings with possible solutions to the research question are developed from the dialectic flow between pre-understanding, the participant texts, academic research, publications and the researcher.

These three stages of hermeneutic process, moving from text to meaning, have been followed for this research project. The first stage of hermeneutic process was completed in Chapters One where I acknowledged my pre-understanding captured in the initial stages of the research project, in Chapter Two where I framed the cultural feminist context and in Chapter Three where I brought aspects of the macro, meso and micro-layers to the fore to establish the NZ cultural and sport context. The remaining two stages of the three-stage hermeneutic inquiry process are discussed in greater detail in section 4.14.1 on analysing data.

#### 4.7 Research design and methodology summary

Hermeneutics, according to [van Manen \(2014\)](#), does not provide an exact answer or conclusion; nor does it make empirical claims or generalise from the narrow to the universal. According to [Buker \(1990\)](#), hermeneutics is a significant and powerful mechanism for constructing theoretical understanding, but on its own, hermeneutics lacks social and political drive. Feminist standpoint theory provides this energy in the present research. A hermeneutic approach is characterised by a recognition of the idea that knowledge is socially constructed from the interpretation of subjective historical experience. "On the surface, hermeneutics can appear to have a charming, ebullient, and almost illiterate face, but there is a deep and long-standing tradition of literacy, rigour, and integrity beneath it" ([Moules et al., 2015, p. 7](#)). The understanding and interpretation of experiences are communicated through text ([Figal & Espinet, 2012](#)).

Therefore, the focus of hermeneutics is on allowing the researcher to portray the meanings of language from the perspective of the participant while remaining authentic to the participant's social and historical context.

## 4.8 Method

Feminist, hermeneutic and interpretive scholars have noted that all research contains historical and context specific prejudices, biases and values, which influence the knowledge and understanding constructed from that research ([Mauthner & Doucet, 1998](#)). [Harding \(1991\)](#) claimed feminist interpretive research incurs less bias than the positivist research of traditional patriarchy because women's experiences are deemed the basis of knowledge, and women's knowledge is more representative of broader society because of their oppression.

This section details the method and research design for this study and begins with the reflexive and ethical considerations in this study. A piece on data collection follows, including data sourcing and triangulation. The next section outlines focus group and interview best practice, participant recruitment, and formulation of the question guides used in the data collection. The central data source for this study is the stories gathered from women, through three student and three graduate focus groups and from personal one-on-one interviews with 12 experienced practitioners. The final sections describe the process for collecting, analysing and interpreting the data and how I approached trustworthiness. Although a plan had been formulated for the collection of data, reflexivity provides a reminder that hermeneutics is the foreseeing of the unforeseeable ([Moules et al., 2015](#)), and the data ultimately drives the analysis.

### 4.8.1 Reflexivity and voice

The reflexive nature of feminist hermeneutics starts with the researcher understanding how their own prejudices, beliefs, values, and attitudes influence the research process ([Leavy, 2007](#)). Such understanding begins well before collecting primary data ([Harding, 1987](#)). Reflexivity calls for feminist researchers to be cognisant of how their life package, including their lived experience, worldview, location, assumptions and culture can enhance or distract the quality of knowledge developed through the research process ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Harding, 1987](#); [Leavy, 2007](#)). Additionally, knowledge construction is influenced by the researcher's axiology, which

covers interests, values, politics, ambitions, biases, and feelings ([Leavy, 2007](#)). Feminist and hermeneutic research is congruent with the inclusion of the researcher in the

same critical plane as the overt subject matter. ... That is, the class, race, culture, and gender assumptions, beliefs, and behaviors of the researcher her/himself must be placed within the frame of the picture that she/he attempts to paint. ... Thus the researcher appears to us not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires and interests. ([Harding, 1987, p. 9](#))

Humphries ([as cited in Olesen, 2005](#)) considered that the researcher must have integrity in all stages of the research. This is especially the case when she examines the tensions, and inconsistencies in her participant's description of their lived experiences. Hermeneutics aligns with feminist research. [Van Manen \(2014\)](#) claims the hermeneutic researcher must first and foremost be able to identify the prejudices which shape our understanding. [Olesen \(2005\)](#) warned researchers must remain vigilant of their own complexity and circumstances where they as the researcher may reveal an unanticipated perspective. The researcher needs to be continually aware and conscious of the situated context from which all the voices came and the situated context in which they were interpreted. In this feminist hermeneutic research process, the researcher is ultimately responsible for interpreting and giving voice to the text.

In this present study, researcher reflexivity started by capturing my pre-understanding in a personal statement written at the outset of this research project, and in more detail during my researcher interview undertaken before the data analysis. Both the written statement and interview endeavoured to capture my background, prejudices, beliefs, knowledge and assumptions at that time. Throughout the study, changes in my pre-understanding were reflected on and recorded in memos. My role as a researcher has been to understand the richness and complexity of the students', graduates' and practitioners' experiences and to fuse their stories with my interpretation and the academic literature to broaden the horizon. [Moules et al. \(2015\)](#) explained that "The interviewer brings something to the interview, as does the participant, and it is unlikely that either will depart from the interview [or focus group] unchanged as a result" (p. 98). All the time, I have striven to remain mindful of my historically affected consciousness and my research position, in order to achieve integrity throughout the

research process. I was aware I was an outsider, a researcher, and an insider, a woman, within the university and sports industry ([Hesse-Biber, 2007](#)).

#### 4.8.2 Ethics

Ethical and feminist considerations have remained central foci for this research project. My pre-understandings were that gendered issues and low self-confidence were central to women's experiences of studying and working in NZ sport management. My integrity motivated me to disclose to the participants during the selection phase that this was a feminist study. Before starting this study, I had held a negative perception of the term 'feminism' and did not want to surprise any participants who may have felt the same way by not disclosing at the outset that this was a feminist study. I used the initial contact as an opportunity to explain to my participants my newly acquired interpretation of feminism.

The design of this research project, entitled "What are the experiences of women studying, and working in, Aotearoa New Zealand sport management? was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC), on 13 May 2016 (Ethics Application Number 16/79, see Appendix A).

The information sheets, ethics and consent forms (Appendix B) were sent by email to each participant before either the focus group or the personal interview. All emails were quickly followed up by a telephone call. When meeting face-to-face for the first time the focus group participants signed confidentiality and consent forms, the practitioners signed only consent forms and all participants completed a version of the socio-demographic survey specific to each participant group. I then explained the nature of voluntary participation; I emphasised that they did not need to answer any questions they were not comfortable answering and that they could withdraw from the study at any point until the data analysis began ([Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#); [N. King & Horrocks, 2010](#)).

The approved ethics application on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016 indicated the student data collections was from AUT, Massey and Waikato universities. However as often happens on a research journey circumstances changed which enabled the inclusion of students voices from a South Island university. The academic supervisors overseeing the project

agreed and explained that it was acceptable to change the locale of the collection group only without having to be redirected to the Ethics Committee.

#### Power and conflict of interest

The issue of power is ever present in research ([Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)) even though feminist research calls for the participant and researcher to be on the same hierarchical level ([Harding, 1987](#)). A possible power imbalance during data collection may have been created by my appearance as a tall, broad, strong, confident, middle-class, older, fair NZ female and because I am known as a university lecturer. I sought to mitigate any power imbalance by using everyday language, I endeavoured to let my participants take as much control of their verbal contribution as possible without compromising their input. Subjectivity was central to this research project, and all endeavours were made for sharing the power equally with the participants.

Before, during and after the study, I held the position of Senior Lecturer at AUT in Auckland. My employment was made known to all of the participants at the outset, and many of the participants knew me through my role at the university. I was mindful of the perceived power of my position as a lecturer amongst the sport management students and graduates. My relationships with people in the industry and other lecturers may have made the students and graduates feel vulnerable. Any students I taught were excluded from the study to avoid any conflict of interest or coercion. AUT students invited to be involved in the research were initially contacted by someone other than myself. I continually reminded all participants of the confidential nature of the study.

#### Anonymity

Anonymity was a vital consideration in that NZ is a relatively small country, and the sports industry employs about 60,000 people. Senior sport managers and board members are predominantly male, and anonymity for the participants was to protect them and their careers now and in the future from any backlash or prejudice. The nature of the stories makes the practitioners far more identifiable than the graduates, with the students being the least identifiable. All participants were given a choice to select a pseudonym, some did, and others wanted to decide later. Given the sensitive nature of some comments, the small size of the NZ's sports industry, and the

participant-protective nature of feminist research, I decided to assign a pseudonym to all participants who had not selected to do so. Data was stored on an AUT cloud storage site which required a password to access.

## 4.9 Data collection

### Triangulation

Triangulation is a practical qualitative research strategy intended to ensure credibility in the research findings and discussion by sourcing data from multiple avenues ([Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014](#); [Patton, 1990](#)). [Jick \(1979\)](#) maintained that using triangulation provided a more complete representation of the participants, and triangulation can reduce the risk of misinterpretation and increase credibility ([Creswell, 2014](#); [Denzin, 1989](#)). Unlike positivist claims, interpretive truths emerging from the data are partial and incomplete. A research method is a process of moving towards a truth where there is no one 'right answer' but many suitable responses ([van Manen, 2014](#)). This research uses focus groups and interviews as methods for collecting primary data. The primary data for this research adopts low-level triangulation from three sources: focus groups with female sport management students and female sport management graduates; and personal one-on-one interviews with female sport management practitioners. Focus groups support the sharing and development of ideas through conversation and raising issues an individual may have overlooked ([Carter et al., 2014](#)), whereas the nature of personal interviews can elicit rich information about someone's lived experience and allow for spontaneity and probing ([Carter et al., 2014](#); [Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)). The nature of data generated through focus groups and interviews will differ, but essentially it will be complementary ([Carter et al., 2014](#)). [Barbour \(1998\)](#) suggested reflexive journaling during data analysis and writing up to ensure that one data source does not dominate others.

## 4.10 Theory – Focus groups

### A feminist hermeneutic approach to focus groups

Focus groups as a research method can be viewed as an efficient and convenient way to collect information in a compact time frame from multiple sources on specific topics chosen by the researcher ([Sarantakos, 2013](#); [Savin-Baden & Major, 2013](#); [Sprague,](#)

[2005](#)). Focus groups enable members to provide information in an interactive manner ([Wilkinson, 1999a, 1999b](#)). The use of a focus group method and the role of the researcher using focus groups is dependent on the researcher's ontological, epistemological and theoretical framework ([Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#); [Sprague, 2005](#); [Stanley, 1990/2013](#)). Focus groups are suitable for interpretive research questions ([Wilkinson, 1999a](#)) to achieve an in-depth and detailed description of experiences. Through the focus group, members can reflect and share their individual experiences and, possibly, with the group, hermeneutically merge their horizons to develop a new point of understanding. Focus groups differ from group interviews in two ways: firstly, focus groups facilitate discussions which generate depth as opposed to breadth of content; and secondly, they allow more for discussion and sharing of ideas ([Bryman, 2004](#)).

Focus groups are also particularly appropriate for feminist research ([Sarantakos, 2013](#)). Their suitability is multifaceted, as it involves: researching women in a process that mirrors closely everyday natural conversation ([Wilkinson, 1999a](#)); the non-hierarchical role of the researcher as moderator ([Harding, 1987](#); [Kitzinger, 1994](#); [Krueger, 1994](#); [Leavy, 2007](#)), as opposed to controller, in an equal power dynamic; the opportunity for women to tell and share their stories, and for the research to empower some women whose voices are not heard in everyday life ([Sprague, 2005](#)); and finally, the opportunity for women to discover meaning within their social context ([Sarantakos, 2013](#); [Wilkinson, 1998](#)). Other critical aspects of feminist focus groups include accessing experiences, interpretations and insights of groups who have been marginalized or silenced ([Leavy, 2007](#)), and generating conversations that are more relevant to the values and priorities of the participants than the researcher ([Kitzinger, 1994](#)).

Focus groups may culminate in rich data from women adding to and reinforcing other participants' recounting of their experience ([Leavy, 2007](#)). They allow for in-depth discussion and broader insights, especially into the meaning ([Sarantakos, 2013](#)) held by the individual members of the focus group. Furthermore, focus groups can provide a mechanism for enabling women to uncover and raise awareness of oppression that has become accepted as natural ([Hesse-Biber, 2013](#)). Focus groups enable the space for participants to relay their individual experiences and, through peer interaction,

ratify or challenge member contributions ([Sprague, 2005](#)) so that the members develop a background-related group understanding. In this way, the discussion will lead to an interplay between personal experiences and collective experiences ([Pini, 2002](#)). A limitation of focus groups can be that the information generated in a focus group may be limited due to there being less time and space for in-depth description.

The next section will discuss the value of personal interviews within feminist hermeneutic research for a different participant group, the practitioners.

#### 4.11 Theory – Interviews

##### A feminist hermeneutic approach to interviewing

Interviews as a research method are informed by theoretical, epistemological and methodological frameworks ([Leavy, 2007](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)). Interviews range from very formal to informal, exploratory and conversational ([Leavy, 2007](#)). [Moules et al. \(2015\)](#) claimed that there is no hermeneutic interview method, but a hermeneutic approach that shapes the interview format with the interviewer showing a genuine curiosity and desire to learn and create a shared understanding. Hermeneutic interviewing acknowledges the interpretive components of the participant's social, contextual and historical being.

The feminist interview process is a valuable research method to glean insight into the subjugated knowledge of the diversity of women's realities most of which are concealed and silenced ([Hesse-Biber, 2007](#)). Central to feminist interviews are important issues for women, especially in areas of women's oppression or where social change is needed. [Reinharz \(1990\)](#) explained the jewel of feminist hermeneutic research is in accessing women's

ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than the words of the researcher. This asset is particularly important for the study of women because this way of learning from women is an antidote to centuries of ignoring women's ideas altogether or having men speak for women. ([as cited in Hesse-Biber, 2016, p. 19](#))

Feminist hermeneutic interviewing methods provide a means to solicit individuals stories from their own perspectives and in a manner where they can provide their interpretations of how their individual axiology and context have shaped their

understanding ([Ayudhya, Smithson, & Lewis, 2014](#)). The more conversation-like the interview is, the less the power dynamic is perceived. Throughout the interview process, reflexivity by the researcher regarding positions of power must be undertaken ([Hesse-Biber, 2013](#)).

A semi-structured interview format follows a series of questions that need to be covered in an interview, the order of which is not very important. The flexibility supports a comfortable conversation flow, builds relationships and delves into topics that may be of interest to the participant, allows for some spontaneity with probing and new questions, and uncovers topics that may have otherwise been overlooked ([Leavy, 2007](#)). A participant's perceptions, content and experiences recounted during research may vary depending on their context. Listening, "right behind the eyes" was identified as the most critical component when collecting hermeneutic data, according to [Moules et al. \(2015\)](#): "listening right behind your eyes requires watchfulness, openness, and searching to find truth in what the other is saying" (p. 94).

## 4.12 Participant selection

### 4.12.1 Intersectionality

Intersectionality is widely acknowledged as one of the most important intellectual and well-travelled developments in feminism and gender studies today (Acker, 2012; Crenshaw, 2011). Originally formulated as a political project by Black American legal scholar Kimberlé [Crenshaw \(1991\)](#) to make visible African American women's plight navigating the legal justice system, intersectionality allowed for the open acknowledgement of differences among women and varying experiences of oppression. Intersectionality moves beyond gender to recognise how other demographic groupings such as sexual orientation, age, marital status and social class are interwoven into women's social complexity ([Acker, 2006](#); [Carbado, Crenshaw, Mays, & Tomlinson, 2013](#); [Collins, 2002](#); [Dill & Kohlman, 2012](#); [Jaggar, 2004](#); [Melton & Bryant, 2017](#)). Intersectionality is the concept that "not all women are the same, and as such hold multiple identities, some of which are more immediately apparent including race, ethnicity, and disability, and others which are not, such as sexuality, class, and religion" ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b, pp. 4,5](#)). The concept of intersectionality recognises oppression as more complex than merely gender and

included women's multiple diversities ([Carbado et al., 2013](#); [Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)). According to [Brooks \(2007\)](#):

While many [feminists] share some common goals, such as gender equality, social justice for women, and an emphasis on the concerns and issues of women and other oppressed groups, not all feminists are cut from the same cloth, nor do they share the same values, perspectives and interests. ... It is imperative, however, to recognize that most feminist views and perspectives are not simply ideas, or ideologies, but rooted in the very real lives, struggles, and experiences of women. (pp. 2-3)

The focus of feminist research is to treat gender as its own analytic category ([Schwandt, 1994](#)) and to try and understand how gender has been socially constructed. [Ropers-Huilman and Winters \(2011\)](#) argued that in order to understand an individual's perspective, one must not analyse individual identity dimensions separately, but view the person as a whole which is multiplicative, intersectional and interconnected ([Carbado et al., 2013](#); [Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)). Therefore, feminists themselves are diverse and represent all sectors of society, sharing different life experiences and belonging to different backgrounds, races, ethnicities, social classes, religions, cultures and ages ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#); [Dill & Kohlman, 2012](#); [Hesse-Biber, 2012](#); [Jaggar, 2004](#); [Sinclair, 2019](#)). Applying multiple lenses heightens our awareness of other forms of discrimination hidden beneath layers of oppression ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#)). Intersectional fractured identities have multiple interpretations which weaken the impetus for social change and justice for women ([Hekman, 1997](#); [Leckenby, 2007](#); [Longino, 1999](#)).

Māori feminists embraced intersectionality and in the process acknowledged Māori women's difference, social inequality and multiplicity of oppression ([Palmer & Masters, 2010](#)).

Women's historical and social context further adds to their complexity ([Buker, 1990](#); [Harding, 1987](#); [Palmer & Masters, 2010](#); [Walker & Melton, 2015](#)). It is through understanding the complex and interlocking differences between each other, we can begin to understand the individual's experiences as they lived them ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#)). Feminist sport research, using an intersectional approach has contributed to an understanding of the complex interplay of culture, sexuality, age, and socio-

economic class that shapes women's experiences and careers in sport management ([O'Shea, 2017](#)).

A purposive or selective sample was chosen to allow for the views of women from diverse backgrounds and experiences, who could provide rich descriptions of their experiences surrounding the phenomena of sport management ([H. Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991](#)). This approach is often used in feminist and hermeneutic research ([Hesse-Biber, 2013](#); [Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007b](#); [Moules et al., 2015](#)). While, this research sought to include a diverse range of female voices, sport management in NZ does not attract a diverse cross section of women. Despite this, the self-identified demographic profile of the women in this study included several different ethnicities, one woman with a disability, a gay woman, women in heterosexual relationships with and without children, single women, women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and women of different ages and stages of their life course. Each woman had a combination of visible and invisible demographic characteristics and depending on the context, she may self-identify differently at any one specific point in time. In this research I adopted what [McBride, Hebson, and Holgate \(2014\)](#) identify as an 'intersectionally sensitive' approach in contrast to using a specific intersectional methodology or framework to study demographic inequalities. An intersectionally sensitive approach recognizes where intersections occur, more specifically the simultaneous interplay between gender and other categories of difference that organically emerge from a specific organisational and sectoral context. Convenience and access for the participants was also a consideration, and the sampling became a purposive convenience recruitment process ([Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)).

#### Focus group member and interviewee selection

[Savin-Baden and Major \(2013\)](#) recommended that each focus group should range from four to 12 purposively selected members, although groups of six to eight members are more common ([Wilkinson, 1999b](#)). A benefit of convenience purposive sampling meant that the participants shared common interests of sport management and lived or worked locally. This commonality or homogeneity among the focus group participants supports feminist ideals in allowing for more 'ease', an environment that facilitates a speedier rapport among the group members and more in-depth conversations ([Leavy, 2007](#); [Sprague, 2005](#))

“Hermeneutic research is not validated by the numbers, but by the completeness of examining the topic under study and the fullness and depth to which the interpretation extends understanding” ([Moules et al., 2015, p. 14](#)). According to [N. King and Horrocks \(2010\)](#), 15 to 20 participants is the ideal number for qualitative interviews. [Patton \(2002\)](#) argued that there was no prescribed sample size in qualitative research, however he suggested that the research question, purpose for the research and resources are some of the considerations to be kept in mind when determining sample size.

#### 4.12.2 Participant focus groups in this research

##### Student focus groups

**Three 60- to 90-minute focus groups of NZ-born female students who were studying sport management in NZ universities.**

Three sport management student focus groups (referred to as Student FG1, Student FG2 and Student FG3) were conducted at three universities, two in NZ’s North Island and one in the South Island. As noted earlier, the ethics application was for three conveniently located North Island universities, however, my family circumstances changed and with the agreement of my supervisors, I was able to include a group of sport management students from a South Island university. There were three or four student participants in each focus group, ranging from years 1-4 of their university studies. One student, Ange, was born outside of NZ but had a NZ father and was raised in NZ.

These students were invited to be part of the study through an electronic invitation and a mass verbal invitation from an academic lecturer during a sport management lecture. An exception was made for potential student participants at AUT, who were invited by someone other than the researcher to avoid the potential conflict of interest noted earlier. All students who met the criteria and were able to attend were accepted into one of the three focus groups of women studying sport management.

### Graduate focus groups

**Three 60- to 90-minute focus groups of NZ-born female graduates who had studied sport management in NZ universities and who were working in sport management roles within NZ.**

Three sport management graduate focus groups (referred to as Graduate FG1, Graduate FG2 and Graduate FG3) were conducted, two in the North Island and one in the South Island. The number of graduates in each focus group was either three or five. One graduate, Amelia, had been born and raised in a Pacific nation outside of NZ and had studied sport management at university in NZ.

Initially, some graduates known to the researcher were purposefully selected and invited to join the focus group directly through email, or a telephone call. Also, graduates who agreed to be part of the study were asked to nominate other potential participants in a snowball sampling approach, and these leads were followed up. Other potential participants were conveniently and purposefully selected, as defined by [Patton \(2002\)](#), through sport management organisational charts on the internet, and the researcher 'cold called' these individuals.

#### 4.12.3 Participant interviewees in this research

##### Practitioner one-on-one interviews

**One-on-one, semi-structured 40- to 70-minute interviews with 12 NZ-born practitioners currently working in the NZ sport management sector.**

Initially, six women who were working in NZ sport management were purposefully selected to be in the study. Their selection was based on their diversity, such as their position in an organisation's hierarchy, ethnicity, ability and age. Some of the women were already known to the researcher while others were recommended to me, or I found them through organisational charts on the internet. After considering Patton's ([2002](#)) strategy that seeks to maximise participant variation, I included another six women practitioners whose experience I considered would be valuable to the research project. Two of the additional practitioners did not meet the eligibility criteria, but their contributions were unique. One was born and educated in the United Kingdom but had worked in NZ sport management for 11 years, and the other was born in

Australia, but lived most of her life in NZ. She has worked in the NZ and Australian sport management sector for well over a decade. Additional practitioners requested to be included but were declined since enough practitioners had been selected.

A brief overview of each participant will accompany the findings in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

#### 4.13 Questions

According to [Moules et al. \(2015\)](#), efficacious hermeneutic questions are invitations to reflect and lead to rich data. [Hesse-Biber \(2016\)](#), suggested using a framework which meant identifying the broader abstract topics that promote discussion and then navigating a route to the specific line of inquiry questions that allow for probing or to generate depth or direct answers. Different types of questions were included in the research project. Opening questions invited the participants to become comfortable, led gently towards the phenomena to be discussed ([Moules et al., 2015](#)) and built trust ([Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007a](#)). Next were follow-up questions that probed deeper into aspects of their stories, followed by interpretive questions ([Hesse-Biber, 2013](#); [Moules et al., 2015](#)). The questions varied slightly between open-ended and exploratory.

According to [Smythe et al. \(2007\)](#), hermeneutic questioning requires a balance between maintaining a focus and an openness that allows the participant to tell the stories that matter to them around the phenomena.

The feminist hermeneutic questions were shaped to enable themes related to participants' experiences in sport management to be uncovered and, at the same time, understand the women's lives and advocate for social change. The feminist research process allows women who are experts in their life to tell their stories ([Baker, 1990](#); [Harding, 1987](#); [Leckenby, 2007](#)).

#### Evolution of the questions used in this research

This section describes the process of developing the research questions and some of the pivotal thoughts behind several of the questions. Different thematic question guides were developed for each of the three participant groups. For each participant group, the thematic question guide went through five iterations over the course of eight months in 2016. The questions changed for a variety of reasons: relationship and trust building, double-barrelled questions; and off-topic, vague or leading questions. As

an example of this process, the following section outlines the process I went through developing the questions for the student focus group.

#### 4.13.1 Focus groups

##### Focus group students' question guide

On January 12, 2016, in accordance with the advice of [Hesse-Biber \(2016\)](#), the following question framework was created:

<p><b><u>THEMATIC QUESTION GUIDE – Focus Group (1- Students) 2016 01 12</u></b></p> <p>MAIN QUESTION</p> <p>What are the experiences of women studying and working in Aotearoa New Zealand 'sport management'?</p> <p>SECONDARY QUESTIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What influences women to study sport management?</li><li>2. What are the meanings behind the factors that influenced their decision?</li><li>3. What are final year University women sport management student's career aspirations?</li></ol>
--

Figure 4.1: Thematic question guide – Focus group (1-Students) 2016 01 12

Although the questions addressed the topics I wanted to be covered in the focus group, my initial questions were too direct. The questions would not ease the participants into the study. The fifth iteration of the questions resulted in the following guide.

<b><u>THEMATIC QUESTION GUIDE – Focus Group (1- Students) 2016 09 05</u></b>
<b>MAIN QUESTION</b>
What are the experiences of women studying and working in Aotearoa New Zealand ‘sport management’?
<b>SECONDARY QUESTIONS</b>
1. Tell me ... why sports management?
2. What roles in sport management are you aware of in NZ?
3. What kind of role do you see yourself in?
4. Do you have any role models who have influenced your career goals?
5. If you reflect back over your life, are there any factors that may have influenced your expectations of your career in sport management?
5b. If you reflect back over your life, are there any barriers that may have influenced your expectations of your career in sport management?
6. Would you apply for this sort of job? (The same job description was given to each – See Appendix B)
7. Are there some jobs you would not apply for?
8. Can you anticipate any barriers to your career?
9. What experiences or information are these barriers based on?

Figure 4.2: Thematic question guide – Focus group (1-Students) 2016 09 05

Question one was an introducing open-ended ([Bryman, 2004](#)) or ‘ice-breaker’ question, a chance for the women to tell some of their stories and get to know the other women in the focus group. It was also a chance for the transcriber to get to know the voices. I suffer from the hearing disability tinnitus, especially when many people are in a room, and having the women speak casually about the not-so-critical elements gave me a chance to learn how to listen to each of the participants and to start listening to each participant from behind my eyes.

The second question was intended to uncover the student's breadth of knowledge of jobs and organisations in NZ sport management. Question three was a direct question ([Bryman, 2004](#)), and the purpose was to ascertain the types of roles they anticipated chasing after graduating. Through question four I was interested in finding out if sport management role models had enticed the students to pursue a career in the sports industry. Question five was intended to uncover childhood experiences and the women’s interpretation of those experiences that may have impacted upon their work choices. I spent a lot of focus group time on question five, unpacking the factors and their impacts on the women’s occupation decisions. I intermittently cajoled them to

elicit richer and deeper answers with a question such as “Could you explain that for me?” and “Why was that so important for you?” Question six asked the women to read a job advertisement for an event volunteer manager with a salary of over NZ\$80,000. I was interested in their comments about their expectations of the job’s responsibility, role title, expectations, salaries, sports codes, and so forth. The advertisement led to question seven, where I wanted to uncover what jobs the women would not want to apply for in the sports sector. I prompted question seven with “Would you have applied for this role if it was in rugby?”

Questions eight and nine were open-ended questions and allowed the participants to share their future job expectations. I was mindful during their responses and listened for the women’s interpretations of their past experiences and the impact of these experiences on their future job aspirations in sport management.

#### Focus groups in action

The focus groups were conducted from October 2016 to June 2017. The focus groups included three to five participants; the smaller group provided a stronger connection with the participants, whereas a larger group had conversations that were more varied. The commonality or homogeneity among the focus group participants supported feminist ideals in allowing for more ‘ease’, an environment that facilitates a speedier rapport among the group members and meaningful conversations ([Leavy, 2007](#); [Sprague, 2005](#)). Each focus group member gave their consent to be audio-recorded. Several women mentioned not liking the sound of their own recorded voices, but they were all in agreement with the process. I used both an electronic recording device and a mobile phone to record the interviews. On two occasions, the electronic device failed to record. I heeded the advice from [Wilkinson \(1999a\)](#) and limited the focus group duration to one to two hours and asked between 10 and 12 questions. To further increase the success of the focus groups, I considered suggestions from [Savin-Baden and Major \(2013\)](#) on aspects of focus group work that included: ground rules, duration, process, and signalling the process and progression to the participants. I provided refreshments and food for the participants and myself.

I was slightly nervous in all focus groups, fearing that the data would be insufficient, but I need not have worried as the women provided many fascinating and insightful

glimpses into their experiences. An excerpt from the fieldnote memo ([Bryman, 2004](#)), I wrote following the first student focus group read:

*Wow, what an experience – the first focus group I have ever conducted. I thought my mind would go blank and that I would be nervous – but it was great. Their stories were so interesting. I was captivated by both the consensus and the diversity. Once we were finished, the group thanked me for such an awesome experience, and I left them with their cell phones working as they created a networking group amongst themselves (Memo dated October 5, 2016).*

#### 4.13.2 Interviews

##### Pilot interview

Before the research interviews, one pilot interview was conducted in July 2017, with an associate professor colleague. The pilot interview provided the opportunity to trial the research format and the questions. The data obtained through the pilot interview was not included in the study. Nonetheless, the data obtained through the pilot interview was very rich, and my pilot participant was supportive of the research and keen to share her stories and her interpretations of working in NZ sport management and leadership.

I changed several questions after the pilot interview. I wanted to balance the question on work barriers with a question for the women relating to work enablers. My pre-understanding and intuition directed me to include two more questions about the barriers and enablers in their childhood that may have influenced the practitioner's careers. Feedback from my pilot participant about my interview techniques also shaped my interview technique. She suggested that asking her to elicit specific examples in several of the questions helped her to focus and recall specific stories. [Van Manen \(2014\)](#) supported the ideas that questions are more helpful if they direct the participant to focus on a single concrete experience. I was concerned that her academic background might have influenced the dynamics of the pilot interview, but subsequent interviews proved this was not the case. I was also aware that my pilot participant and I shared an insider status ([Hesse-Biber, 2007](#)), as we were both academics, and had work, gender, and age in common and knew each other. I memoed these concerns in my journal and reflected on them before conducting the first couple of participant interviews.

## Interview practitioners' question guide

The final practitioner one-on-one interview questions were:

<p><b><u>THEMATIC QUESTION GUIDE – Practitioner Interviews 2017 07 21</u></b></p> <p><b>MAIN QUESTION</b></p> <p>What are the experiences of women studying and working in Aotearoa New Zealand “sport management”?</p> <p><b>SECONDARY QUESTIONS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How come you are in sport management?</li><li>2. Have you experienced any enablers during your career? Can you give specific examples or experiences? (External / Internal)</li><li>3. Have you experienced any barriers during your career? Can you give specific examples or experiences? (External / Internal)</li><li>4. Has anything from your upbringing helped your career?</li><li>5. Has anything from your upbringing limited your career?</li><li>6. Is there is anything that you consider needs to change in sport management that would make it more accessible to women?</li><li>7. What advice would you give to young women deciding to pursue a career in NZ sport management?</li><li>8. What does your future working life / roles look like?</li><li>9. What is the diversity landscape of sport management in your organisation?</li></ol>
---

Figure 4.3: Thematic question guide – Practitioner interviews 2017 07 21

### Interviews in action

Twelve, one-on-one, semi-structured interviews with female sport managers and executives were completed between July and December 2017. The age of the practitioners ranged from 38 to 60 years-of-age. Seven practitioners have been CEs, another practitioner had stepped down a few years earlier from being a CE to senior management, and the remaining four practitioners occupied middle and senior management roles. The women's sport management and leadership roles covered a range from sport administration and operations manager to CE, member of a board of directors to international federation official. The organisations they worked for were equally diverse. The practitioners chose their interview location, which was either at a café or their place of work. Each interview was audio recorded on an electronic recording device and a mobile telephone, and the duration ranged from 40 to 70 minutes. I was nervous about inviting some of the well-known women practitioners to

be part of the study. My initial thoughts were that they would decline. I was astounded and very relieved when the practitioners expressed interest in being part of the research project and were very keen to know the outcomes from the study. A memo from a practitioner field note ([Bryman, 2004](#)) captures my self-limiting thoughts:

*WOW – I was expecting [anonymous] to be more sophisticated – it is interesting how I perceive those in governance roles or senior management positions with [named organisation] as being ‘up there’ not really approachable and certainly with much higher intelligence, capability and capacity than me... Yet she was simply a ‘me’ person, a normal, everyday woman that I would mingle with. (November 7, 2017)*

The lack of diversity in women in sport management and leadership is evident from the following memo written after one personal interview:

*Many of these women are like me – educated / 50ish / sporty / normal background / privileged... which is interesting. I sometimes think “If I can do it anyone can”, but then I reflect... well not anyone has had the opportunities, experiences, and attitudes that I have had. I know my mother’s words “Sally you can be anything you want to be” echo in my mind when I feel challenged. It is at this point that I recognise my privilege and realise other women have not walked in my shoes and they may need a helping hand.*

Throughout the interview process, I was mindful of the principles of feminist research, especially maintaining equal power, helping the women to feel that they were the authority figures of their life experiences and that their stories were valuable, and reinforcing that this research was about women, for women and to help improve the circumstances of women.

#### 4.14 Recording and transcribing focus groups and interviews

The focus group and interview frameworks provided the opportunity for the participants to delve into their current and past experiences, interpretations, future expectations and the meanings of their lives around their careers in sport management in NZ. Especially critical for feminist hermeneutic research is the notion that “Participation in research [focus groups and] interviews is not about taking something away but about creating something that adds to understanding, enriches our knowledge, and offers portals to interpretation” ([Moules et al., 2015, p. 114](#)).

Field notes were written after each focus group, capturing salient aspects that appeared significant and memorable from the focus group participants' interactions, and my own subjective responses. Audio recordings were transcribed. The process of transcription is to

translate from an oral language, with its own set of rules, to a written language with another set of rules. The transformation of the data from voice to text removed aspects of the interchange such as atmosphere, anxiety and feeling. Transcripts or 'data sources' are not copies or representation of some original reality; they are interpretive constructions that are useful tools for given purposes. ([Bazeley & Jackson, 2013, p. 57](#))

The transcriptions were sent through to a professional transcriber who transcribed them by intelligent verbatim. Intelligent verbatim edits the fillers and repetitions within the transcripts, which can detract from the content ([Tessier, 2012](#)). I then checked each transcript by listening to the recordings again while I read the transcript.

#### 4.14.1 Analysing data from a feminist hermeneutic perspective

Throughout any data analysis process, philosophical and theoretical considerations are always present. The impetus for feminist hermeneutic analysis is to allow for more understanding and insights to emerge as the researcher reads, thinks, writes, talks, and ponders in an ongoing cycle ([Smythe et al., 2007](#)). Feminist hermeneutic researchers incorporate their pre-understanding into the interpretation of the texts. The researcher undertaking feminist hermeneutic analysis needs to consider the text, emerging themes, language, culture and relationships.

Feminist hermeneutic data analysis is not prescriptive. As stated earlier, Buker's ([1990](#)) three-stage feminist hermeneutic inquiry process informs the interpretative guidelines for this research project:

- 1) A pre-understanding or familiarity with the social and historical context of the research and questions that synthesis raises which inform the research question.
- 2) Collate or synthesise texts, identifying patterns that inform the research question ([Gadamer, 1975](#)).

- 3) Interpretations and new understandings with possible solutions to the research question are developed from the dialectic flow between pre-understanding, the participant texts, academic research, publications and the researcher.

Stage one involves a historical and current day environmental scope, accessing information that can deepen the understanding of the contextual nature of the phenomena. This information enriches the pre-understanding the researcher holds around the phenomena and shapes the data collection method(s). The researcher then needs to record and set aside their pre-understandings, prejudices, presumptions, ([Heidegger, 1953/1996](#)) frameworks and theories ([Gadamer, 1975](#); [van Manen, 1990, 2014](#)) allowing the participants stories to direct the second stage of data analysis as much as possible.

The second stage of the data analysis is an iterative process of looking both forward and backward for familiarisation by reading and summarising the participant's texts ([Ackerly & True, 2010](#); [van Manen, 1990](#)), crafting poignant narratives ([Grbich, 2013](#); [Hesse-Biber, 2013](#); [Smythe et al., 2007](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)), developing a coding framework that highlights patterns within the data, and reduction or the construction of meaning through reflection and interpretation ([van Manen, 2014](#)). Hermeneutic 'reduction', which means to lead back, invites the researcher to confront "traditions, assumptions, languages, evocations, and cognitions in order to understand the 'facticities' of everyday lived experience" ([van Manen, 2014, p. 42](#)). Nevertheless, the analysis of the data was predominantly inductive, identifying similarities in the data, which led to the data-driven coding ([Gibbs, 2007](#)). Codes in qualitative data analysis are researcher-generated ([Gibbs, 2007](#)) "constructs that symbolize and thus attribute interpreted meaning to each individual datum for later purposes of pattern detection, categorization [into themes], theory building, and other analytic processes" ([Saldana, 2015, p. 4](#)). The codes are determined by finding patterns and consistencies, commonalities ([Saldana, 2015](#)) or patterned variations ([Agar, as cited in Saldana, 2015](#)), and then the coding process occurs as passages in the text are assigned to one or multiple codes. Coding is the step which takes the researcher from a specific piece of data to an idea, the location of the idea is the collection point of all of the data relating to it ([Richards & Morse, as cited in Saldana, 2015](#)). Codifying is the process of structuring and grouping codes ([Grbich, 2013](#)). Qualitative research collects more data

than can be analysed, so during these stages, the researcher has to determine which data is kept and which data is disregarded ([Creswell, 2014](#)).

Data collection, familiarisation with texts and developing early concepts shapes the key themes in the data ([Bazeley & Jackson, 2013](#)) that represent a theoretical or descriptive idea ([Gibbs, 2007](#)). NVivo is a computer program that assists the storing, recording, coding, thematic analysis and other management of data ([N. Fielding & Lee, 1998](#)). NVivo readily supports the linking of themes, frequencies, divergent views, matrices, diagrams, models and charts within a model framework which, in turn, supports rigorous qualitative analysis ([Bazeley, 2009](#)). Codes are referred to as 'nodes' when using NVivo.

In this study, the building of themes occurred during stage two as the texts were read, reflected upon, organised, interpreted and synthesised until resonating, significant meanings of the experiences evolved. However, as [Bazeley \(2009\)](#) proposed, meaningful qualitative analysis is more than categorising; it includes a process of describing, comparing and linking of themes within a model or coding framework. The coding framework was readily achieved in this research through the use of NVivo software and from my own understanding of the data and the relationships between the themes and subcategories' codes or nodes.

Stage three involves a continuous interplay between the experiences of the participants, their historical context and the meaning from their world which shaped the analysis, along with academic literature and the researcher's experiences and pre-understandings ([van Manen, 2014](#)). Feminist hermeneutic interpretation resonates when something of what was said rings true and there is familiarity, kinship, resonance, and likeness as well as difference ([Moules et al., 2015](#)). [Gadamer \(1975\)](#) explained that "We can understand a text only when we've understood the question to which it is an answer" (p. 333). At the heart of hermeneutics is the idea of *aletheia*, a Greek word meaning the point of concealment and unconcealment ([Caputo, as cited in Moules et al., 2015](#)). Kant ([as cited in van Manen, 2014](#)) stated, "clarity is achieved through argument, but also through intuition, which grasps something in a vocative manner through concrete examples that we recognize" (p.48). Furthermore, Heidegger ([1953/1996](#)) considered interpretation needs to be sensitive to let that which shows

itself, show itself. The hermeneutic interpretation and meaning-making are pivotal, especially in stage three of the analysis. Smythe et al. (2007) highlighted the hermeneutic responsibility of listening to understand the text's meaning and write in a provocative manner.

As the data analysis progresses, patterns of meaning emerge, incorporating theory and the participants and researcher's individual experiences (Creswell, 2014). I was aware that the texts could have been interpreted differently from different standpoints and under different philosophical frameworks or in different cultural, social and historical settings (Smythe et al., 2007).

Overwhelmingly, qualitative methodologists stipulate the importance of the need for the researcher to memo extensively during the coding or analysis phase as the project progresses, and hunches and ideas emerge, change or take shape (Hesse-Biber, 2013; Saldana, 2015). Analytic memo writing assists in the recording of the process and development of the data into themes or meaning. The analytic memo assists researcher reflexivity around the data and the analysis process.

"Feminists have had to accept that there is no technique of analysing or methodological logic that can neutralize the social nature of interpretation" (Maynard & Purvis, 2002, p. 7). Moreover, "feminist researchers can only try to explain the grounds on which selective interpretations have been made by making explicit the process of decision-making which produces the interpretation, and the logic of method on which these decisions are based" (Holland & Ramazanoglu, as cited in Maynard & Purvis, 2002, p. 113).

#### 4.14.2 Actual analysis of the research project's data

This section outlines the feminist hermeneutic analytic process I developed and used in this research project which was informed by Buker (1990). The diagram below visually represents the analytic process, and the following paragraphs explain the three-stage interpretive process.

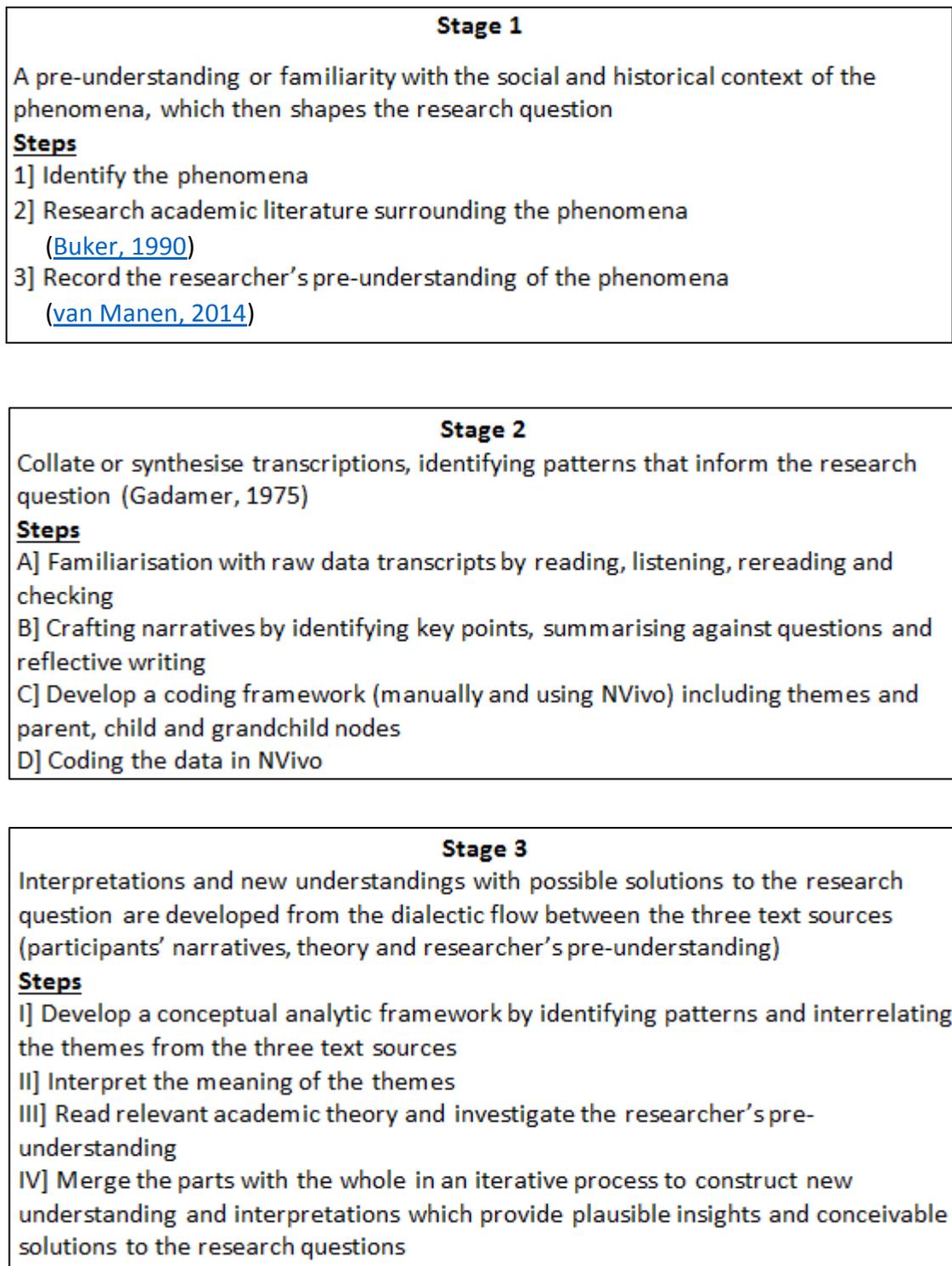


Figure 4.4: The three-stage interpretive process of analysis

A feminist hermeneutic interpretation process was used to understand what has been learnt from the women's stories of their experiences of NZ sport in their current historical, social and cultural setting. Stage one of the researcher's feminist hermeneutic analytic process was initially instigated by my women students showing a reluctance to apply for their first sport management job after completing their

bachelor's degree in sport management. The first stage of analysis required an environmental scoping of the NZ sport management industry, observing and collecting anecdotal information, reading academic literature and government and organisations' documents. Focus groups and interviews were selected as the appropriate methods of data collection and women students, graduates and practitioners were chosen. My understanding grew as the participants shared their historical context and their experiences that they believed shaped their worldviews.

Stage two required a familiarisation with the texts. The recordings were transcribed by a professional transcriber using intelligent verbatim. The transcriptions were then checked against the recordings for accuracy and verbal and non-verbal cues, pauses, intonation, excitement and hesitations not evident in the written transcript. Narratives, with a focus on the research question and interview/focus group questions, were then crafted from the transcripts ([Caelli, 2001](#)).

The process of engagement with the texts and the determination of a coding framework started as I began to identify salient words, phrases and topics, potential themes or nodes ([van Manen, 2014](#)), uncovered possible meanings and developed an understanding from the participants' texts ([Grbich, 2013](#)). I was continually checking with myself for biases or my inferred meaning, comparing my experience with the participants' experience, and comparing participant with participant and interviewee with focus group and looking for similarities and divergences.

Using low-level triangulation, I wrote the key points from the interviews under the interview questions and brought in the demographic and interview information, creating a variation of Grbich's ([2013](#)) "face sheet" (p. 22) and added this to the narratives. For each of the participant groups, I made lists with the headings 'Unexpected list' and 'What I did not hear?'. During this stage, I felt messy, confused and uncertain because this is a stage at which a researcher simply does not know what to think yet; according to [Mauthner and Doucet \(1998\)](#), this is quite usual, uncomfortable yet exciting.

The coding focused on identifying patterns that assisted with the capture of 'true' participant meaning ([Bazeley & Jackson, 2013](#); [van Manen, 2014](#)). I manually formed an initial coding framework centred on three theme categories of upbringing, career,

and society on a whiteboard on April 16 2018 (see Appendix C). Self, family and the sports industry were prominent areas of influence for the women at this early stage of the analysis. The coding framework developed outwards from the three themes with parent and child nodes. As the coding framework developed, the three theme categories of upbringing, career and society remained unchanged, but 49 parent, child and grandchild nodes were added. There was a continual iteration for me between the participants' data, and the emergence of the themes and nodes that formed the best coding framework ([Creswell, 2014](#); [Gibbs, 2017](#)). I then used a function of NVivo to determine if NVivo generated a similar coding priority that I had generated manually.

Each node was defined by what was and what was not included and would become more detailed as the coding progressed. The nodes developed for this study were 'in vivo' or 'indigenous nodes' which means they are from the data driven by the bracketing and reduction, as opposed to 'a priori nodes' which are pre-determined by the theory ([Creswell, 2014](#)). Nodes could be based on what was said or not said, why it was interesting, and what relation it had to the research question and the actual questions.

I tested the coding framework against a transcript from each of the three participant groups. One additional theme category was added, on April 27, 2018, and that was to include nodes such as 'great quotes', 'confused then' and 'confused now'. Once satisfied, I entered the coding framework into NVivo for data management and coding purposes. On May 25, 2018, I started coding the data and made a few minor parent, child and grandchild node changes. For example, under the Theme Node – 01 Upbringing, was a Parent Node – Role Model. I changed Role Model into a child node and repositioned it under the Parent Node - Family.

The final version of the coding framework was completed on July 17, 2018, and had four theme categories, 20 parent nodes, 31 child nodes and three grandchild nodes (see Appendix C). (However, after coding was finished, only 27 of the child nodes contained actual data, and the theme categories, parent nodes and grandchild nodes were empty.) Some child nodes held both positive and negative data, e.g., 'Champions' under the parent node subheading 'Influences' and 'Mindset' under the parent node subheading 'Self'. Information that I deemed relevant from the transcripts was coded

to one or more nodes. NVivo's annotation function was used to highlight any point that needed further consideration and, by doing this, I was able to make notes around my thinking ([Bazeley & Jackson, 2013](#)). After I coded each transcript, I reflected on what were the significant highlights, ideas and confusions that came through from each focus group or practitioner. I then listened once more to the recordings in solitude, where I could relive the interview again in my mind and listen from behind the eyes to capture any salient comments that I had missed. I returned to NVivo and coded a few comments I had originally considered irrelevant.

Field notes, reflections, diaries and memos were used to capture possible 'extra' information and to track the analysis process, thereby possibly enriching the analytic processes and the writing stages.

The concerns about the use of technology that [Bazeley and Jackson \(2013\)](#) refer to, such as distancing one's self from the data and mechanising the analysis, are not issues in this study since I only used NVivo to manage, store, sort, code and retrieve the data and to check my node identification. NVivo allowed me to get closer to the data as I was continually reading, analysing, constructing possible relationships, categorising, manipulating and positioning the contents of the data to the nodes without being distracted by elements of a manual process.

While the coding was underway and as the data unfolded, I started developing the conceptual, analytic framework that would form the basis of the findings chapters ([Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016](#); [Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014](#); [Saldana, 2015](#)). The initial conceptual, analytic framework created on August 10, 2018, was chronological and included three categories: 1] Upbringing – the inadvertent apprentice, 2] Career – Team selection or Trials, and 3] Industry – High Performance or Game time (see Appendix C). I also tried to superimpose the macro-, meso- and micro-analytic frameworks on top of each category. I then retrieved the data from the NVivo codes and started crafting the findings chapters.

During the writing of the finding chapters, I encountered two significant problems. Firstly, introducing all 36 participants from three different participant groups to the reader at once was impossible. Secondly, I was bringing theory and context into the analytic stage too early, rather than letting the women's voices lead the analysis. The

first conceptual, analytic framework became the 'tail that wagged the dog'. On August 23, 2018, I restructured the conceptual, analytic framework, again with three categories: 1] Defensive tactics – limits success, 2] Affirmative tactics – positions women well, and 3] Transitional Play – improving the state of the game for women (see Appendix D). However, this structure held the same issues as the first conceptual, analytic framework. I finally decided to write the findings chapters based on the chronological life of the three participant groups 1] Students, 2] Graduates, and 3] Practitioners.

According to [Mauthner and Doucet \(1998\)](#) the "process between 'data gathering' and transmitting 'those voices' has received only sparse attention in feminist research and the more general field of qualitative research" (p. 140). Each text from the focus groups and the interviews allowed for the uncovering of different layers of interpretation that were constructed by me from within my social locations and cultural context. "Meaning lies in the identification of the dominant themes in the encounter between [the researcher] and [the] participants through a light form of thematic analysis where the data is kept largely intact" ([Grbich, 2013, p. 96](#))

Stage 3 of Buker's ([1990](#)) feminist hermeneutic analytic process required the iterative process of bringing together the parts and to create a whole. That included blending the participants' voices with my own, while being situated within the NZ sport management context and then incorporating academic literature with the outcome of interpreting and making meaning of the women's experiences. Instantly, I recognised that my reluctance to cast judgement, make assumptions and determine meanings on behalf of someone else was a significant hurdle. My history of being judged and misunderstood distanced me from crafting my interpretations and meanings into the women's stories without them being present to inform my decisions continually.

[Smythe and Giddings \(2007\)](#) intimated that the interpretive process requires patience, courage, trust and a belief that the insights will emerge. I also realised that, up until this stage, I had been doing the 'right academic' process as I perceived it to be; now I wanted to rely on the data, the hermeneutic methodology and the feminist framework to guide my interpretation, in the same way the data had guided the coding. I wanted to explore the data without rigid rules and limitations. At this point, I recalled Gadamer's ([1975](#)) interpretive notion of 'play', where all of the parts come together to

elicit meaning. I no longer wanted to interact with the data from a limiting and fearful place. Interpretation and letting the meanings appear involves surrendering one's conscious self to something larger. It is through play that the spectators, players, intention, equipment and convention join in the same interpretive event. I finally felt the courage to 'let go' and 'trust the process' and make the 'interpretive leap'. [Smythe et al. \(2007\)](#) summarised this well:

One must live the experience, drawing from who one is and is becoming. The choice to 'do it this way' is known as resonance, attunement, and a sense of 'goodness of fit'. Everything from our past lies within the soil from which thinking arises and bears fruit. We feed the soil by reading, again and again, the writings of Heidegger and related philosophers, so our thinking is already poised for the moment when the possibility of understanding opens. ... Heidegger's understanding of Dasein as being-there, being-open, being in-the-play, going with what comes [and] awaiting the moment of understanding. (pp. 1391-1392)

#### 4.15 The issue of trustworthiness in feminist hermeneutic research

##### Validity and reliability

"Validation of findings occurs throughout the steps in the process of research" ([Creswell, 2014, p. 201](#)). Validity in qualitative research is the plausibility of the statement or proposition, and the substance of the verification provided that backs the claim. Validity in qualitative research encompasses the integrity of the research process as opposed to the findings and truths of quantitative research ([Bryman, 2004](#)). Issues of validity in qualitative research, according to [Sandelowski \(1993\)](#), should be aligned with "trustworthiness" as opposed to positivist "truth" or "value" (p. 2). Lived experience research employs a variety of analytical models and incorporates varying approaches to rigour. Addressing the issue of validity requires integrity and congruency aligning with the feminist theoretical perspective, constructivist epistemology, hermeneutic methodology and method implementation. The feminist theoretical perspective stipulates the research must satisfy feminist principles of research for women, empowerment of women and giving women voices ([Harding, 1987](#)).

Validity – in other words, ensuring researchers', participants' and readers' perspectives are congruent – is established by maintaining authenticity, credibility and trustworthiness ([Creswell & Miller, 2000](#); [Gibbs, 2007](#)). Validity is achieved by adopting

multiple approaches, including member checking, triangulation, transcript checking code definitions and memoing. Member checking is not a requirement of hermeneutics (van Manen, 2014). Providing the participants with further opportunities to consider or provide additional information over extended periods also increases validity. Outlying and negative responses are acknowledged, and their impact is included in the study and the analysis of the themes.

Reliability ([Bryman, 2004](#); [Creswell, 2014](#); [Gibbs, 2007](#)) or dependability ([Guba & Lincoln, 1994](#)), for qualitative research, is generated by adhering to the research process, the research procedures and the reporting of the findings which are assumed to be multiple. Qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, does not demand the replicability of a research study to verify a truth as a criterion for reliability ([van Manen, 2014](#)). An 'audit trail' maintains the reliability of the research: 1) the participants included in the research; 2) data collection, accuracy, storage and analysis; and 3) consistency between recordings of interviews and transcripts ([Guba & Lincoln, 1994](#)). Van Manen ([1990](#)) stated that poignant hermeneutic "description is collected by lived experience and recollects lived experience – is validated by lived experience and it validates lived experience" (p. 27). Interpretive qualitative research presents truths that are both partial and incomplete.

[Maxwell \(2013\)](#) proposed that, throughout the research process, the researcher documents a systematic process that captures assumptions, biases and prejudices. In my journal, I recorded ideas, concerns, changes in my analysis or themes, concepts as they developed. I balanced personal reflexivity with reflection on my biases, and input from other researchers and participants, which has enhanced the validity. The diversity of the audit trail strengthened the research reliability and trustworthiness.

#### 4.16 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the research design surrounding the research process incorporated into this research project. I have shown how the feminist and hermeneutic theories have guided the implementation of my methods of gathering the data. The use of various data sources highlighted the way I strengthened the research with triangulation. A combination of convenient and purposive sampling was the strategy used to recruit the 11 students, 13 graduates and 12 practitioners. The

research question, with its focus on the experiences of women studying and working in NZ sport management, was approached using focus groups and one-on-one interviews. The collective safety of the focus group was the preferred method for collecting the younger women's stories, whereas one-on-one semi-structured interviews provided flexibility and the opportunity to delve more deeply into the experiences of the practitioners.

Feminist standpoint theory highlighted the importance of women telling stories of their own experiences, and hermeneutic interpretation provided the mechanism for interpretation of and making of meaning from these experiences. The analysis techniques respected the women's interpretations of their experiences and enabled me to go beyond their texts and think about the meanings behind their decisions, experiences and aspirations regarding careers in sport management in NZ.

In the following chapters, Chapters Five, Six and Seven, you will meet my participants and hear their stories.

## Chapter 5 Findings: Sport management university students' voices

“What we call ‘themes’ are not necessarily ‘the same thing’, but rather an understanding we have seen something that matters significantly, something that we wish to point the reader towards.” ([Smythe et al., 2007, p. 1392](#))

Chapters Five, Six and Seven present the findings, compiled from the voices of each of the three participant groups – university students, early working-life graduates and practitioners – and contain the initial stage of the data analysis. During the data collection stage, each participant group’s history, experiences and interpretations of situated past experiences were explored in relation to studying and working in NZ sport management. The headings and subheadings in these chapters capture the key factors revealed in the women’s dialogues that have influenced and shaped their interpretations of their experiences. These factors formed the coding framework. In Chapter Five, the students’ journeys to sport management at university were explored. The graduates’ voices in Chapter Six explore their unknown and undetermined futures in sport management. The sport practitioners’ concise and direct voices are presented in Chapter Seven; these voices contrast with the exploratory voices of the students and graduates in Chapters Five and Six.

### 5.1 Voices of the university students

In this chapter, the lens is on the university students who volunteered to be part of this research. The chapter subheadings – upbringing, sport, education, self-confidence, university, work aspirations, and gendered perceptions of the sports industry – capture the women’s key historical experiences that shaped their choices to study sport management. Shared and divergent patterns emerged within and across the student focus groups that provided insights into the women’s interpretations of their lives. During the focus groups, the students were invited to contribute on all topics, and, in some instances, individual students chose not to add anything further to the conversation.

The university students’ ages ranged from 17 to 28 years old. The students had been studying at university for between three weeks and three-and-a-half years when the focus groups were conducted. Most students had a goal to complete their study in sport management and then work in a management role within the sports sector. Two

students 'ended up' studying sport management even though it had not been their first preference; one did so as the result of an injury, and the other was thrilled to be able to add sport management elective papers to her Bachelor of Commerce. Nonetheless, their motivation to study sport management was embedded in their love of sport and wanting to work in the sports industry.

As discussed in Chapter Two, critically underpinning the students' decisions to study sport management was their historical life context, the availability of individual papers and, if desired, an undergraduate sport management-focused tertiary degree (see Chapter 4). This signals the professionalisation and growth of the sports industry in NZ (Parkhouse & Pitts, 2001). Six of the eight NZ universities offer sport management or similar programmes.

## 5.2 Meet the university student participants

Three female-only, student focus groups were conducted across three NZ universities which offered sport management programmes. To ensure anonymity, each focus group is referred to as Student FG1, Student FG2, and Student FG3. In this section, a brief introduction to each focus group is given, followed by a brief synopsis of each focus group member's background. Focus group members were attributed pseudonyms.

### 5.2.1 Student Focus Group 1

Student Focus Group 1 (Student FG1), conducted in October 2016 in the North Island, had four members, with an age range of 20-28 years. Three students had worked for at least two years before university, and only one student came to university straight from school. They were in years one to four of their university studies. Student FG1 was energetic, confident and enthusiastic. They were keen to be part of the research, and a relaxed and open sense of comradery was established early. Three members knew each other before the focus group meeting, and all members contributed readily within the group.

Table 5.1: Herstory and family background of participants in Student FG1

Name	Age (University year) Ethnicity	Herstory and key quotes	Family
Sarah	20 (3rd Year) NZ European	<p>Sarah was gentle, reserved and friendly. She was in her final year of undergraduate studies and wanted to continue with sport management postgraduate studies. Sarah had no work or volunteering experience. She was nearing the end of her 350-hour WIL placement within a traditional women's sports code, with a female CEO and women managing nearly every department which "was cool". Sarah did not think an employer would recognise her WIL hours as 'real' experience. She still played sport. Sarah held a traditional approach to parenting; she anticipated being a stay-at-home mum, letting her husband be the income earner while she raised the children.</p> <p>"I have my heart set on working in community sport."            "I want a family; most workplaces understand that."</p>	<p>Sarah grew up in a large metropolitan North Island centre. She has a supportive father and an older sister. Sarah played netball. Her father accompanied her to a University Open Day he wanted her to study nursing like her mother, but Sarah showed him sport management was a viable career option.</p>
Rona	23 (4th Year) NZ European	<p>Rona spent a period of her high school years studying in France. She travelled before going to university. She was in her final year studying for two degrees, one in business and the other in sport management. She had just completed her 400-hour WIL placement, within a national PBE under a progressive-thinking female CEO. Rona was forthright, sincere and confident. Rona had a male partner; she was ambivalent as to who would be the primary child carer or income earner within her family. Rona had worked part-time and had no volunteering experience. She still played sport.</p> <p>"I want to work in the logistics and operations of major sporting events."            "I feel like I have got the skills and confidence to pick things up quickly."</p>	<p>Rona grew up in a large metropolitan North Island centre, she had supportive parents who encouraged her to be happy, work hard and do what she loved. Her only sibling, her sister, is five years older. Her childhood dream was to be an Olympic gymnast.</p>

Name	Age (University year) Ethnicity	Herstory and key quotes	Family
Alex	26 (3rd Year) NZ European	Alex was her high school's head girl and an excellent academic. She spent one year at another university studying for an arts degree but did not enjoy it. She worked in corporate management for several years where she experienced sexism and then learnt strategies from her mother to counteract its limitations. Her 350-hour WIL placement was with a PBE, and she found she was not challenged enough in the not-for-profit portion of the sport industry. Alex had been working for two years part-time in a private for-profit sport event management company. She was confident and highly motivated to get on with her planned career, to be the next Raelene Castle. She had no volunteering experience. Alex played sport and exercised at a gym. "Mum and I are not girly girls... I was a tomboy." "I look straight at the salary, anything above \$80,000 is my kind of number."	Alex grew up in a large metropolitan North Island centre. She was an only child, raised by her single mother until she was six then her stepdad joined them. She was in childcare from six months old. Alex had a very close relationship with her mother who is a successful career businesswoman. Her mother had to adopt some stereotypical masculine leadership traits to work her way up the corporate ladder. Alex's mum was proactive in mentoring her regarding having a successful career. Alex had a very sporty childhood.
Lisa	28 (1st Year) ½ Pacific Islander ½ NZ European	Lisa was married for ten years and separated from her husband for one year. She had worked for ten years; two were in a sport management role overseas and another eight years in NZ. Lisa was in the first year of her undergraduate sport management programme. She worked part-time, did not volunteer, and trained for an Olympic sport. "My confidence and self-love have grown in the past year." "The sports industry is male-dominated; that is a barrier, but also a challenge. We can be the people who bring change into the boardrooms."	Lisa was born on a Pacific Island but raised in a large South Island city in NZ. She had one younger and one older sister and three brothers. Lisa was not exposed to sport as a young child. Instead, she was given the opportunity for dance and music, whereas her brothers were steered towards childhood sport.

Footnote: Asians are people from a country in the Asian region, e.g. Japan, India, and China.

Footnote: Māori are the people of the land or the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand (Carpenter & McMurchy-Pilkington, 2008).

Footnote: New Zealanders are people whose identity aligns with a NZ nationality, rather than a particular ethnicity within the country.

Footnote: New Zealand Europeans are people whose identity aligns with a NZ nationality and a European ethnicity.

Footnote: Pacific Islanders are peoples from the three main Pacific Island groups of Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia, e.g. Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa.

Footnote: Pākehā are non-Māori or foreigner; a word used for "generally Anglo-Saxons" (Hapeta, Palmer & Kuroda, 2018, p. 182).

Footnote: Statistics New Zealand explain ethnicity on their website as a person's race, ancestry, nationality, and cultural affiliation ... which includes "social, historical, geographical, linguistic, behavioural, religious and self-perceived affinity between a person and an ethnic group" ([Statistics New Zealand, 2010](#)).

### 5.2.2 Student Focus Group 2

Student Focus Group 2 (Student FG2), conducted in March 2017 in the South Island, had four younger female participants. Two of the students had transitioned directly from high school to university, and two students had worked for a year before university. Three students were in the fifth week of their first year of study, and the remaining student was a second-year student. Their ages ranged from 18 to 20 years old. A 'realness' exuded from these grounded, frank and eager women. All were open and forthcoming with their contributions. These students knew each other and belonged to the same extracurricular university club. All students had attended single-sex schools, three of them had attended the same private school, and the other student had come from a lower-decile school in the same city.

Table 5.2: Herstory and family background of participants in Student FG2

Name	Age (University year) Ethnicity	Herstory and key quotes	Family
Leonie	18 (1st year) NZ European	<p>Leonie attended an all-girls decile six public high school. She was her school's student head of sport and was very successful in a variety of sports. Her high school sports coordinator was her friend and mentor. Leonie looked for jobs in sport management on the IOC website when she was 15 years old. Leonie worked for a year before university. Her ideal role after graduating would be marketing sports events or working in sport with special needs children. She played competitively in a women's sports code and volunteered in sport.</p> <p>"I think getting a foot in the sport's door is my barrier." "I have my nana's sports badges."</p>	<p>Leonie grew up in a smaller semi-rural town in the South Island. She has one younger brother. Her family had a long history in a sporting code in which her father held a senior position. All family members volunteered and helped deliver events, and the family talked about their code at home "all of the time". Leonie's family prioritised the family budget so she and her siblings could participate in a variety of sports. Leonie's nana was a successful athlete.</p>
Viv	18 (1st Year) NZ European	<p>Viv attended an all-girls, decile 10, private high school. Viv was a high-performing athlete in a sports code which she loved. She wanted to teach PE or become a school sports coordinator, giving other young women the same sports opportunities she enjoyed. She wanted to pursue her code in a league at the next representative level. She played and volunteered in sport and had a part-time job.</p> <p>"The 'Black Caps' team gets tons of television coverage, but the women's cricket team gets very little." "I think mum plays a big deal in what I do."</p>	<p>Viv grew up in a metropolitan South Island centre. She has two younger brothers. Her mother coached in a sports code and encouraged Viv to coach a high school team in the same code from age 15. Viv was very passionate about her sports code. Her dad played for an international sports franchise; he regretted not going to university, and he encouraged Viv's sporting and studying aspirations.</p>

Name	Age (University year) Ethnicity	Herstory and key quotes	Family
Hannah	18 (1st Year) Pākehā	<p>Hannah was a day student for seven years at an all-girls, decile 10, private high school. She was a self-contained and confident young woman. She wanted a solid business background from her studies and anticipated studying sport psychology at a postgraduate level. Hannah preferred to administrate or umpire sport rather than play sport. She had volunteered in third world countries.</p> <p>"I like the management side because I can be quite bossy so that will work out for me in my career."</p> <p>"I would jump right in. Even if I feel like I do not have a chance."</p>	<p>Hannah grew up in a metropolitan centre in the South Island. She had two younger brothers. Since age four she occasionally accompanied her father to his work in sport event merchandising. At age 14 she started working with her father, and before the focus group met, she was part-time managing a team of 30 people including her father. When growing up, she wanted to be the first 'All Blacks' woman referee.</p>
Mavis	20 (2nd Year) NZ European	<p>Mavis boarded for five years at an all-girls, decile 10, private high school, where she played lots of sport and was very involved in school life. After finishing school, she worked for a year on the family farm and travelled. Mavis had been active in taking on a role in her university sports management club. Mavis volunteered for two sports organisations, competed internationally in a male-dominated minority sport, and exercised regularly. Her dream jobs would be to manage the 'All Blacks' or the 'Boston Red Sox'.</p> <p>"There was no chance of me becoming a girly-girl."</p> <p>"The coaches and managers on the side-line were in the thick of things. I want to do that."</p> <p>"I grew up to shoot for the stars. Just see what happens."</p>	<p>Mavis's family farmed in a remote part of the South Island. She had two older brothers with whom she played backyard cricket and rugby after school. Her sports choices were traditional and limited in her remote rural hometown. She claimed she had a tomboy streak. Mavis wanted to be a 'Silver Fern' or a men's national rugby tournament referee when she was growing up.</p>

Footnote: Decile ratings have been developed by NZ's Ministry of Education to rate a school from 1-10 to reflect the number of students living in low socio-economic or poorer communities. Decile 1 reflects the largest proportion of students living in low socio-economic or poorer communities; decile 10 reflects the smallest proportion of students living in high socio-economic or affluent communities. The Ministry of Education funds schools according to their decile rating, with lower decile-rated schools receiving more funding ([www.govt.nz](http://www.govt.nz)).

### 5.2.3 Student Focus Group 3

Student Focus Group 3 (Student FG3) was conducted in early March 2017 in the North Island with three participants aged from 17–23. Two students had come to university straight from high school and were in week three of their first year, and the other student, who was in her third year of an undergraduate business programme, had elected to undertake some sport management papers. The participants in Student FG3 were reserved and cautious; they did not know what to expect as research participants.

Table 5.3: Herstory and family background of participants in Student FG3

Name	Age (University year) Ethnicity	Herstory and key quotes	Family
Jess	23 (3rd Year) ½ NZ European, ½ Asian	<p>Jess first studied at a polytechnic, then worked for several years before she studied commerce at university. Jess loved sport and decided to blend sport into her commerce degree. She owned a fledging recreating business, and was also contemplating a career in the corporate world where she could see herself climbing the corporate ladder. Until recently she worked two part-time jobs. She volunteered in recreation and played sport.</p> <p>"I decided to do a business degree rather than sport and recreations, because the business world, especially in New Zealand, is bigger with more stable and respected companies."</p> <p>"I love owning my own business and managing it... It is the best decision I made in my life, but also the scariest."</p>	Jess grew up in a metropolitan centre in the North Island. Her younger brother was studying science at university; her younger sister was in high school. Jess's mum and dad were proud that she had started her own small company.
Kylie	18 (1st Year) NZ European	<p>Kylie came to university straight from school. She worked part-time at the weekends. She did not volunteer in sport, and she played for three teams in the same sports code.</p> <p>"If you come from a money background, you are confident and used to being at the top in management... if your dad is a janitor you do not, you worry."</p> <p>"You need to go to university, spend the money to get a degree and get a job that is higher up."</p> <p>"If you want to pursue a job in sport, you need to know something about the code, especially for a girl."</p>	Kylie lived in a small rural community, on the outskirts of a large North island metropolitan centre. Her family were very supportive of her studying sport at university.
Lily	17 (1st Year) New Zealander	<p>Lily came straight from school to university. She had been working part-time in hospitality for several years and had been promoted numerous times. Lily was both a volunteer and played a significant amount of sport.</p> <p>"My mum took me to a 'Silver Ferns' game once, and it was cool."</p>	Lily lived in a small coastal township. She had a smart younger brother and a much older half-sister. Lily considered herself physically oriented rather than academic. Her father wanted her to join the armed forces, but an injury prevented her from applying. A friend suggested she would like sport management studies.

### 5.3 Overview of Chapter Five

The students in this study identified their family life, involvement in sport, and their 'love' of sport as significant factors which influenced their decisions to study sport management as conducive to pursuing sport management as a career. This chapter initially explores aspects of the student's upbringing, namely: family influences, sports, and education. The chapter continues with the students discussing their self-confidence, and barriers to and enablers of their work aspirations. Finally, their perceptions of the NZ sports industry are analysed.

The student sample was significantly biased, with most coming from comfortable, double income, and NZer or Pākehā family homes. All of the participants were part of two-parent families for the majority of their upbringing.

### 5.4 Upbringing

This section on upbringing analyses the student experiences and influences of family, sport and education on the student's decisions to study sport management. Aspects of family influence explored include ideals, influential family members, home location, and access to resources. Childhood sporting experiences in the context of their family were significant, along with the sense of belonging and confidence produced through sport. This section concludes by looking at educational experiences that influenced the students' job choices.

#### 5.4.1 Family influence

The family influences which were most significant to the student focus group participants were: family ideals, influential family members, the geographic location of their homes and socio-economic considerations.

##### Ideals and values

Several students identified positive family values from their upbringing which have shaped their university and work choices. Rona recited her family motto "*do well, put the hard work in, and have fun*". Alex's successful corporate mum raised stoic and hard-working Alex to "*be the best you can be*", encompassed in a "*hard work breeds*

*success*" approach. Mavis's farming family's philosophy was to *"work hard, shoot for the stars and see what happens"*.

### Influential family members

All participants identified family members who had a significant impact on their confidence and work aspirations. To illustrate this, Viv commented: *"My parents helped grow my love of sport and my desire to do sport management"*. Similarly, Jess stated: *"My parents have encouraged me to start my business"*.

Mothers and other prominent women in their family were weighty influences for many of the students. Six students, Leonie, Viv, Alex, Rona, Sarah and Lisa, mentioned female family members positively influencing their 'love' of sport. For example: *"My nana was a skinny lady, and in the cold of winter when she came down to watch my netball she would wear 40 layers of clothing. She was so supportive and so encouraging of my netball"* (Leonie). Viv spoke of how *"my mum played a big role in what I did, she loved being involved with sport, and loved coaching in her teenage years. That helped me get into netball coaching at high school"*.

Alex's mother's hard work approach was influential for her. *"Mum did not go to university, and she has done well for herself despite being a working solo mum. She is a very strong woman and worked her way up the corporate ladder"*. Alex also explained her mother adopted stereotypical male characteristics to facilitate her climbing the corporate ladder: *"She became a 'hard arse'; I did not like that, but she did what she needed to do to get ahead"*. Alex described herself as a miniature version of her mother.

Rona and Sarah were encouraged by their older sisters to get a university degree. Rona's older sister also educated her in salary negotiations, saying *"you can do this"*, while Sarah's older sister encouraged her to *"complete post-graduate studies"*. Lisa was encouraged by her older and younger sisters *"to go to university and get a qualification"*.

Male family members were particularly influential for six members of the student focus groups. Lily, Sarah, Viv, Hannah, Leonie and Mavis identified their fathers as shaping their future work aspirations, and Mavis's brothers also influenced her

confidence and “tomboy” attitude. Viv described her father’s influence on her sporting prowess and work aspirations: *“My dad influenced me, he is huge on sport and played for an international rugby franchise team. He was always encouraging me and my two younger brothers to study and succeed in sport”*. Similarly, Hannah’s father worked in sport management across the country, selling merchandise at sporting events. Hannah remembered accompanying him to work on occasions from the age of four, and then: *“Dad influenced me to join his organisation; I worked part-time when I was 14 years old. I am 18 now and I still work part-time managing 30 staff, including my father”*. Leonie’s father’s sport governance role inspired her to pursue a career in sport management.

Mavis’s confidence was influenced by her father’s success in his position in local government. Lily’s father wanted her to *“join the armed forces”*. Sarah’s dad accompanied her to a university information evening and discussed plausible job options with her. *“Dad came with me to the university open night. He wanted me to do nursing. He came to the sport briefing instead. He said, okay, I can see there are so many opportunities for you”* (Sarah).

For Mavis, playing sport with her two older brothers, saw her become very competitive, and develop a *“love for rugby and cricket”*.

Overall, the conversations between the members of the three focus groups demonstrated the significant impact family members had on their direction and the confidence to pursue sport management at university and as a career.

#### Geographic location of home

It was evident within the student focus groups that the experience of participants who grew up in a rural environment differed from those living in main city centres. One forthright student, Mavis, stated: *“I grew up on a dairy farm in remote NZ. I have two older brothers, and my extended family is mainly male. There was no chance of me becoming a ‘girly-girl’. I have always had a tomboy streak”*. Mavis had few neighbours which caused her to play either backyard rugby or cricket with her brothers on their farm after school. Her small traditional community limited her choice of sports teams to join. *“In our small community, we have rugby, netball, and league. Cricket and hockey are very minor. Other sports, including minority sports, miss out on the*

*resources and funding*" (Mavis). On entering high school, Mavis enrolled in a boarding school in a large city. She was amazed: *"The sporting competitiveness went up, and the variety of sports went up, I just loved it"*. Mavis's main sport was an individual and predominantly masculine sport which reflected her rural background.

Lily and Kylie's semi-rural locations within an hours drive of a large northern metropolitan centre offered more competitive team sporting choices but required substantial travel to the venues. Kylie lived closer to the city, and the *"commute to her sports hub was easier"*. Lily lived further afield and, like Mavis, she focused on *"localised community sport"* offerings. Leonie also lived in a small semi-rural township on the outskirts of a large southern city, and her parents prioritised their time and resources for her and her brother to access their sporting choices. *"We live out of town, so they made sure I could get into town for sport"* (Leonie). The remaining students grew up living in large metropolitan centres and were able to access a variety of organised competitive sport.

#### Socioeconomic

Leonie was conscious of sporting costs, and she considered herself fortunate that her parents prioritised sport in the family's limited budget. Leonie explained: *"We are not well off at all but whatever sport I wanted to do [my parents] made sure it was possible for me to do it. I think I was doing four sports at one time, and they managed to find a way for it to all be paid for and for me to get there"*.

Kylie's family was concerned with their financial position, and that impacted upon her outlook and confidence:

*My family are not that affluent, and we worry about money. If you come from a background of money, you are used to being at the top, and you expect to enter work in an advanced role because you are used to that. Richer people are more confident because they do not have to worry about money, and they expect to be put straight into a management role; other people do not.*

Kylie stated that she wants *"any role"* in sport management as soon as she graduates *"to start repaying her student loan"*.

Alex's working mother was single until Alex turned six and she *"had done what she had to do to get ahead but we are in a really good position now"*. No students indicated that they had an unemployed or stay-at-home parent.

### Summary

Listening to the voices of the students in the focus groups reflecting on their upbringing, it is apparent how critical their family experiences and ideals have been in shaping their understanding, outlook, and interpretation of life. No one factor can be isolated as being more significant for all the women. Their everyday experiences and the meanings the young women took from those experiences had, in part, shaped their perceptions of a career in sport management.

### 5.4.2 Sport

The impacts childhood sport had on building confidence, cultivating an identity and a sense of belonging, and developing skills, cannot be underestimated. Sporting prowess was idealised, placed on a pedestal, a competency that was revered by all students except one, she was already successful in business so prioritised the learning in the business space over being an accomplished athlete. This section identifies how sports choices, the family's sports code and volunteering steered the women to opt for a sport management career path. For 10 of the 11 students, family life revolved around sport. Lisa's family life did not have a sports focus. As such, she could not contribute much to the family sports discussion.

#### Sport extra-curricular activities

All students except Lisa spoke of the positive influence childhood sport had on their lives and that their passion for sport developed at a young age. Much of their leisure time was spent playing, coaching, umpiring, volunteering, managing and watching sport. Some women explained: *"Growing up I played a lot of netball"* (Mavis, Jess and Lily); *"I've always loved sport, it's a big thing in my family"* (Hannah); *"Growing up I always loved sport"* (Rona); and *"My parents got me involved with sport ever since I was young"* (Viv).

In contrast, Lisa, a 28-year-old mixed, Pacific Island and European NZer, regretted she was directed away from sport: *"I never ever thought that I would be working in the*

*sports industry, when I was at school I was definitely not a fitness person ... I wished I had done sport*". She and her sisters were not allowed to participate in extra-curricular sporting activities when they were young, yet their brothers were allowed to play sport. Instead of sport, their mother enrolled Lisa and her sisters in dancing and piano. Lisa said that *"we were only allowed to do 'girly' stuff, like dancing"* and she openly envied her brothers' choices of *"sporty stuff"* for after-school activities. Lisa's disapproval of her mother's decision implied her brothers enjoyed the more prestigious and male choice of after-school activities. Responding to Lisa's story, Alex, a 26-year-old third-year in the same focus group, added: *"On a societal level, I think boys are raised differently"*. Both students appeared to overlook the possibility that guidelines imposed on Lisa and her sisters may have been underpinned by her culture or religion.

Jess, who self-identified as half-Asian and half-NZ European, participated heavily in sport, especially dance, but also in swimming since she was a child. Jess loved these childhood activities, and her early adult years significantly revolved around them.

#### Childhood sporting dreams

Four students reminisced about their childhood dreams of becoming representative players or officials: *"When I was 12, in Year 8, I dreamt that I wanted to be the first woman referee in the ITM Cup"* (Mavis); *"At five I dreamt of going to the Olympics"* (Rona); and *"I used to think about being on the Olympic committee. I used to look on their website all the time"* (Leonie). Hannah recalled a conversation she had with her mother: *"I remember telling mum I want to be the first 'All Blacks' woman referee. Mum said, 'good luck with that', and I thought 'bring it on'"*. Hannah's immediate response was to reject her mother's gendered, career-limiting comment.<sup>9</sup>

#### Family and individual sports code

Investing in one main sports code appeared to provide the students, as athletes, volunteers and employees, with a 'badge of pride', confidence or a sense of belonging. During the study, the participants were keen to identify either their 'family's sports code' or their own 'individual sports code'.

---

<sup>9</sup> In 2018, Rebecca Mahoney became the first NZ female referee in a first-class men's rugby match.

Two families had a family sports code, giving their children exposure to diverse roles or deep emersion within the one code. These students were keen to acknowledge their identity and sense of belonging to that particular code. Leonie, an athlete and volunteer in her family's minority sports code, affirmed this:

*My family is massively involved in [our sports code]. I have always had sport around me. When I was born, my dad was a coach, and there are photos of me as a newborn with my cousins at the [sport club]. My dad went on to be the regional [senior official] for our code. All the time my parents would talk about managing various high-performance athletes. It has always been around me; I just have to go.*

Viv explained that *"my mum's loved being involved with [code] and getting involved with coaching. She got me into coaching [sports code]; I have been coaching since I was 11. I just love everything about the sport"*.

Some students nominated the individual sports code they belonged to: *"I am highly involved in netball. That is my sport, and I love it. I want to continue with my netball, maybe competing at a higher level"* (Viv); *"My sport is netball. I like to play competitively"* (Leonie); *"My sport is netball, but I do not really play. I umpire and do the administration side of it"* (Hannah); *"I am a [minority sports code] competitor. I would love to medal at a world championship"* (Mavis); and *"I play hockey, and I play in three different teams, so that takes up most of my time"* (Kylie). Finally, Jess claimed that *"my dancing is my passion. My parents are supportive. Dad thinks since I have been doing dancing for 23 years, I will not stop now"*.

Viv, Mavis and Leonie were the three students who played a sports code their parents played or had played regularly.

Despite some families focusing on one sport, most families, especially when the participants were younger, treated sport like a smorgasbord. They sampled whatever sport took their fancy at a particular point in time: *"Whatever sport I wanted to do, they made sure it was possible for me to do it"* (Leonie); *"My childhood sport started with gymnastics, swimming and trampolining. I just love sport"* (Viv); *"Everyone in my family loves sport"* (Hannah and Rona); *"Growing up I played a bit of everything, one of those kids"* (Jess); and *"I played a lot of sport growing up"* (Lily, Mavis and Alex).

### Sport representation

Being a sporting representative,<sup>10</sup> or being related to one, appeared to invoke a strong sense of pride and confidence in the students. Three students were successful athletes in netball or dance, which are stereotypical women's sports, with another involved in regional field hockey, whereas another three students were representatives in atypical female sports, clay target shooting, Olympic weightlifting, and judo. Two students had sporting representatives in their family, Viv's dad *"played for an international rugby franchise team"* and Leonie's nana was a representative netball player. *"My nana showed me her yearbook, and she got second in the long jump, first in the high jump. She was the head of sport for her school. I did the exact same thing. She influenced me a lot"* (Leonie). All of these students spoke proudly of these sporting accomplishments.

### Skills acquired through childhood sporting experiences

Eight of the 10 students involved in childhood sport had no explicit awareness of acquiring a sports management skillset through playing or volunteering in childhood sport. Viv had *"been coaching netball since Year 11 at high school"*. Coaching netball requires organisational, time management and communication skills; Viv did not acknowledge developing, practising or possessing any of these skills while coaching, yet these skills are needed for coaching and are critical for a sport management job. Furthermore, Viv appeared to lack an awareness of the value a future employer would place on her coaching and playing experiences. *"I have no experience. You almost wonder how much experience is enough to get a [sport management] job"* (Viv). Mavis, Leonie, and Hannah agreed. Yet Hannah had four years of part-time experience in sport event management *"managing 30 staff"*, and had worked in *"importing, and sales"*.

Hannah and Leonie were somewhat cognisant of developing an understanding of aspects of the sports sector. Hannah *"knew what was going on"* in the sports event sector from listening to people. Leonie cultivated an invaluable operational understanding of the sports sector when she participated and volunteered in her family's sports code and through listening to discussions at home. Leonie proudly recalled stories of being taken as a baby to sport club practices and national

---

<sup>10</sup> A sporting representative is an elite, high-performance athlete selected to play sport for their region and/or nation.

competitions, and when she grew older, she was assigned various roles to assist her parents in delivering events for their sports code. *"A lot of work goes on behind the scenes running a sporting event. I have seen that through helping out with them since I was 12 years old. All four of us children have a certain part to play in delivering the event"* (Leonie). Over the years, Leonie had worked in nearly every aspect of the code's delivery. As a first-year university student, she had implicit knowledge of the volumes of 'behind the scenes' work, which was required to deliver sporting events that the general public does not see. However, the only sense in which Leonie appeared to connect her childhood skill acquisition and her future sport management career was her understanding of what it took to deliver sports events:

*My barrier is just getting the foot in the door, getting that first set of experience. Once you get that experience, it will be a lot easier to move on and move up, but [in] a lot of the applications they always want experience, and I have not really had the chance to get that experience yet.*

Leonie and Hannah were the only students who inferred that a limited acquisition of knowledge or understanding developed through their childhood sport participation and volunteering experiences could be useful for their future jobs in sport management.

### Summary

There is a direct connection between the participants' childhood sporting experiences and their choice of working in sport management. Ten of the 11 student participants had significant access to sport and really enjoyed their sporting experiences.

Connection to one sports code or representative level success in sport evoked a stronger sense of belonging and confidence for those students. There was an overall absence of awareness among the students that the skills acquired through their childhood sports experiences could be an asset to their jobs in sport management.

### 5.4.3 Education

#### School philosophy

In NZ, most children attend school from 5 to 18 years of age. The school experience became a key topic, mainly for Student FG2, whose four participants attended girls-only high schools. Three of the four students went to the same decile 10, private high

school and were proud of their school and recognised the privileges and opportunities that gave them. The private school students' confidence and personal empowerment appeared to be underpinned by their socio-economic advantage and their school's reaffirming message that *"girls can do anything"* (Hannah and Viv). The remaining student in that focus group, Leonie, attended a decile six, all-girls public school in the same region. Leonie's success as a sportswoman, being the *"student head of sport in her high school"*, and her family's status in their 'sports code' appeared to give her confidence to hold her own in the focus group. Schooling was not a key topic in the other two focus groups.

### Career counsellors

The attitude of high school career counsellors was raised as a contentious point by the Student FG2 participants. Private school student, Hannah, and public school student, Leonie, sought sport management career advice from their older, female, school career counsellors. Attempts were made by the career counsellors to dissuade both students from a sport management career path. Leonie struggled with her bemusement and anger as she was told: *"Do not study sport and leisure management, there are no jobs, especially for women. Enter the trades instead; plumbing is good"*. Leonie was disillusioned with her career advisor who could not see the work opportunities that Leonie's generation and those involved in sport could see. *"I think the younger generation is seeing opportunities for careers in sport, but not the older generation"* (Leonie).

Similarly, Hannah explained that *"the [female] career counsellor at school told me not to study sport management, [because] there are no jobs. Which I knew was not true. I had heard about lots of jobs from graduates and other people"*. Hannah chose to study sport management after being employed part-time in a sport management role for four years, where she had seen a plethora of job opportunities. *"I work in sports events around NZ; I talk to management, I hear their conversations, I hear about jobs, jobs that I want"* (Hannah). She had also heard affirming stories from previous students who had graduated in sport management and seen their careers take off. Hannah was most emphatic, and Mavis and Leonie nodded eagerly as she spoke:

*Almost everyone I talked to knew someone who had studied sport and recreation management, and they were doing really well. One of the girls that I used to umpire water polo with, she did it; she is now the lead development officer for a [regional sports code]. Another person is working in sport in England. I just keep hearing of more and more opportunities to do with this degree.*

With utter disbelief, the participants in Student FG2 disclosed the glaring disparity in the fact that their male university colleagues from neighbouring regional boys-only high schools *“had been encouraged by their career counsellors to study sport management”* (Leonie). As high school girls, they were being advised away from the sports sector, while boys were simultaneously being encouraged into the sector. Career advice was not raised by any other focus student group.

### Guest speakers

High school guest speakers from the sports industry were a common career influence for members of Student FG2 and one student from Student FG3. The students found the talks from guest speakers provided an exciting, empowering and captivating medium to offer insights into career options in different industries and professions. The message Mavis took from the guest speakers was *“if they can do it I can too”*. The students could recall the names, *“terrific jobs”* and stories of the male and female sport management guest speakers.

Mavis indicated that the *“Women of the ‘All Blacks’ career evening at school was the catalyst for my studying sport management. I decided they have got a great job”*. She did not clarify whether it was the female guest speakers, their jobs, or the prestigious ‘All Blacks’ the guest speakers worked for that was her specific motivator, or a combination of all three. Jess recalled a male sport management speaker from NZ Football as being interesting. She remembered thinking working in NZ football *“is something I would be interested in doing”* (Jess).

Student head of sports Leonie had no sport management guest speakers at her all-girls school. Instead, she had a woman athlete come and present. Leonie intimated that the absence of guest speakers could limit *“other girls choosing a career in sport management”* and their absence could *“reinforce”* the advice of the career counsellors, that there were *“no jobs for women in sport management”*. Leonie

acknowledged she sought further career advice from her school sports coordinator mentor: *"I was quite close with her. She was quite supportive. When I told her I was coming here, she was really excited and said, 'that is perfect for you'"*.

### Summary

In this section, we can see that schooling experiences, both formal and informal, play a crucial role in shaping the student's values, capabilities, aspirations and career choices. Gendered career advice from school career counsellors perpetuated stereotypes and gendered roles. Despite the private school having a motto of *"girls can do anything"*, not all people within the schooling environment shared the same view. However, the presence of the weighty industry guest speakers provided another perspective.

## 5.5 Self-confidence

Self-confidence was an underlying anxiety that most students perceived as being gender related. The students were aware of their own confidence levels, and their discussions implied a degree of self-reflection and analysis around the gendered nature of confidence. Self-confidence was discussed in the context of unfamiliar and challenging situations, such as negotiating pay, WIL experiences, and leaving university.

### 5.5.1 Confidence as a gendered constraint?

Self-confidence and their anticipated competency in a future sport management industry position were the topics of reflection for all of the students. Kylie had identified periods of low confidence in herself, as well as in other women. She explained the tension between women's confidence and their internal dialogues. *"Women judge themselves harshly, and they worry too much"* (Kylie). A discussion on this topic proved enlightening across the three student focus groups. Other participants reflected: *"Guys do not think forward as much as women. They just roll with the punches"* (Mavis); *"Guys do not forward think and worry as much as girls do"* (Alex); *"Guys do not over-think things, they go with the flow and see what happens"* (Hannah); and *"Girls over-think everything, and that gets me stressed"* (Kylie). In unison with these disclosures came a choreographed nodding of agreement, as the women all agreed with the points being made.

Kylie, a first-semester, first-year student, described situations that had accentuated her anxiety. *"When something is new, I get stressed and worried"*. She attributed this to *"not wanting to fail, and wanting to do well"*, and explained how her *"nerves are dispelled"* over time as she accumulated experience in the new situation. Several participants from Student FG2 and Student FG3 also raised anxiety and confidence concerns. The consensus was that unless the students could control their anxiety and low confidence, this had the potential to impact on their working potential.

Seven of the 11 students had some work experience, yet all but two of these women failed to see the value of their past work experience. Seven women were concerned about their lack of confidence or employability. Jess, Kylie and Lily thought confidence levels were more an *"individual"* phenomenon, and explained men in NZ are expected to be *"tough, confident and not scared"* (Kylie), *"big and handle everything"* (Jess), and *"unemotional and do not cry"* (Lily). Sarah was the only student with no work experience and limited volunteering experience.

The students with paid management experience, namely Alex, Rona, Jess, Lisa and Hannah, exhibited the most confidence and inner strength. These students came to university with management and, for most, travel experience, and they had more clarity around their work aspirations. Their discussions related to higher self-confidence levels increased through efficacy, mentoring, success, and experience. Lisa, with 10 years of sport management experience, explained: *"I am confident I would be able to do a sport management job. I have done management jobs before. I have learnt a lot of skills which I could transfer to another job"*. Alex, mentored by her mother, claimed: *"I am a mini version of my mum. She is a very strong woman, and she works in the corporate sector, and she is very ruthless. ... My vision statement for myself is to break gender barriers in the sporting industry"*. Rona specified: *"I do not have a significant amount of experience, but I feel like I have got the skills, transferable from my current management positions. I feel I have got the confidence, and the ability to pick up skills quickly"*. Jess had confidence in her abilities; she had backed herself and started her recreating business.

Kylie and Jess discussed what it would be like for women in senior sport management positions in NZ: *"I think you would have to probably work a lot harder than a man"*

*would have to – you would have to prove yourself more” (Kylie); and “Once you had the job, you’d always be under the eye. You would have to live up to expectations” (Jess).*

#### Gendered value of skills, self-worth and pay rates

Pay rates, as a component of self-worth, became a topic of interest and scrutiny for Student FG1. Student FG1’s collective perception was that women feel awkward, scared and uncomfortable when negotiating their pay rates with employers. Alex had learnt from experiences in her earlier corporate management roles to stand her ground when discussing salary or requesting a pay rise, despite feeling uncomfortable about it. Experience, a firm grasp of her self-worth and advice from her mother enabled Alex to confidently and skilfully negotiate payment for her WIL placement. Most students agree to an unpaid WIL placement. Securing payment for her WIL was a significant accomplishment for Alex, and her delight and inner confidence radiated from her as she shared the success of her negotiations with the other group members. Alex’s growing sense of self-confidence came through clearly as she disclosed having *“the right negotiation skills and the confidence to have the conversation”*. The group agreed with the awkwardness of talking ‘money’, but their amazement, admiration and envy at Alex’s courage.

Developing pay negotiation skills was the focus of a tale from Rona, another member of Student FG1. Her story involved being coached by her older sister around pay discussions. Rona’s sister challenged Rona to ask for a higher remuneration from a potential employer which both Rona and her sister believed was more reflective of Rona’s *“worth”*. Rona’s sister encouraged Rona by reaffirming *“you can do this, you are capable of asking for more money”*, and she mitigated Rona’s fear by adding *“the worst outcome is that they say no”*. Triumphant Rona concluded her story with *“I took [my sister’s] advice and got the money”*. Nonetheless, Rona’s newly acquired pay negotiations skills were fragile, and Rona disclosed that *“it would be significantly easier asking for a pay increase in writing, thereby removing myself from the verbal confrontation”*. This provoked an exchange with Alex, who immediately interjected and challenged Rona’s defensive position. Alex coached Rona, saying: *“To be confident asking for a pay rise, you must be able to say how much you are worth in person. You need to frame it in your head ahead of time. Be clear on how much your input is*

worth." Alex's interjection signalled her linking self-confidence, self-worth and 'true' remuneration.

By contrast, Rona attributed negative descriptions to her sister's pay negotiation behaviour as "*relentless*" and "*ruthless*". Her choice of these strong adjectives reflected and reinforced the discomfort and negative feelings she already held towards negotiating pay, justifying her reluctance to enter into salary discussions.

The issue of gender was introduced to the remuneration discussion by Alex, and discomfort turned to tension. The tension in Student FG1 quickly escalated when Alex and Lisa affirmed that pay rates were gendered, and they had evidence to prove it. Alex shared that she had already discussed gendered salaries with her successful corporate mother, and Lisa spontaneously told a story of a male business graduate insisting on more money at a job interview than what was initially advertised. Lisa simply concluded her story with an astonished, "*the company agreed*". Lisa was in aghast with his assertiveness, and her demeanour indicated that she wanted to have the confidence and self-belief to emulate his approach. The reality of the story Lisa told did not appear to surprise the other focus group participants; they were quiet, and it appeared that they were checking their internal calibration, hoping they could have acted accordingly. Lisa continued with a remark on historical gender disparity, explaining "*girls are raised differently. ... There is a relationship between your self-worth and how much you think you should be paid.*" Lisa did not consider challenging the status quo.

Sarah and Rona watched this heated interchange; their negative body language portrayed their disbelief that pay rates could be gendered. This truth and Rona's realisation of it shocked her into action. She leant forward, and she fought back: "*I never thought pay differences could be gendered until now. I never thought that I could be treated differently simply because I am female. That is not a thought process that I go through. I am worth just as much as any guy.*" Rona was tense and struggled to find an explanation that justified any difference. Then, with resignation, she recalled an academic management journal article that stated: "*Women generally asked for lower starting salaries and were less likely to ask for a pay rise*". Rona had joined forces with Alex and Lisa over the problem of gendered pay rates. Sarah remained quiet, distanced

and unconvinced. *"I have never seen gender discrimination before. I do not know what it is like"* (Sarah).

### 5.5.2 University

The length of time the students had been at university ranged from four weeks to four years. The gender mix in the three universities' sport and recreation management classes was *"equal"* (Kylie, Sarah, Rona, Jess and Leonie). My impression from having spent over five hours with the students in the three focus groups was the prospect of WIL and leaving university and entering full-time work encountered mixed reactions. In this section, the student's responses to anticipated failure, stress and anxiety, or hope and opportunity, are laid bare.

#### Internships

All students in the focus groups, except for Jess, were expected to complete a WIL sport management placement as part of the undergraduate qualification. At the time of the focus group meetings, Alex (Student FG1) had completed her WIL, Rona and Sarah (both from Student FG1) were in the midst of theirs, and seven of the remaining eight sport management students had yet to do their WILs. Jess (Student FG3), did not have to do a sport management WIL as she was a third-year commerce student doing elective papers in sport management.

#### *Internship losses and wins*

The students readily anticipated WIL opportunities such as *"networking and making some connections"*, *"applying their learning"*, *"sampling a couple of roles"* and *"getting some real-world experience"*. Kylie, a first-year student, opened herself up and proposed quietly that the WIL experience will

*help you get some confidence and make you less fearful of failure. You can get that little feeling of: I have done this, I know I can do it. You get anxious about things, then you end up doing it and [realise] it is not a big deal, and you got yourself all worked up over nothing.*

Kylie's comments indicated she had experienced fear and anxiety, but also, more importantly, she had cultivated strategies to counteract them.

Rona and Sarah had strongly differing responses to the WIL experiences. Both students had women CEs and senior managers. Rona had significant prior management experience. She had a positive and affirming experience, was expanding her industry knowledge and building her networks. Rona clearly saw value in the WIL experience and could confidently articulate her future career aspirations in major event management. She excitedly declared:

*I can now see there are so many different roles, CE, board, and finance, marketing, logistics, and other departmental managers and opportunities within the sports sector. I now know I want to go into logistical operations or writing proposals for major sporting events, such as the Olympics, para Olympics, and world cups.*

However, 20-year-old Sarah struggled to see how any employer could find value in her 350-hour WIL when she could not see the value in it herself: *"I do not know if people would take a 350-hour internship seriously. I feel like I need to gain more experience. I am still finishing my [WIL] placement. I do not really feel I have the knowledge or experience. What experience do I have?"*.

Rona tried to affirm Sarah's experience, observing that "a 400-hour placement is equivalent to a full-time role for a semester".

#### Fear of leaving university

Fear and anxiety around leaving university and entering the workforce intensified as the students neared the end of their studies: *"Leaving university is scary. That first graduate job could prove to be a wee bit tricky"* (Mavis); and *"It is a scary thought, leaving university. Why would you not be nervous?"* (Viv). These feelings are amplified for students with low self-confidence, and this was signalled as a significant barrier for students transitioning to the working phase of their life, whereas students with confidence embraced work beyond their university.

Alex and Rona's strong sense of self-confidence came through clearly as did their excitement about leaving university. Alex was focused on her own planned career path, scaling the corporate ladder, and she was eager to complete her studies and get started. *"I am a bit older, my life is on pause while I study and I want to catch my friends up on the corporate ladder"*. Rona's confidence radiated:

*This course has been a real step in the door. The content for the programme is useful, but more so are the other skills that you get from being within the university and sporting environment. Such as being surrounded by like-minded people, lecturers and tutors with knowledge, and practical experience in the real [sport] world environment.*

The difference in confidence levels between the younger and older participants with paid management experience was glaringly obvious. The older students coming to university with management experience were much less likely to raise the issue of anxiety and appeared to have developed some skills to assuage their anxiety.

### Summary

Self-confidence significantly shaped the students' work and pay expectations. Negotiating pay proved to be an area of contention which several students indicated they would avoid. Some students struggled with the prospect of leaving the familiarity and safety of university and entering the workforce. Students identified repetition, experience in new situations and practice as mechanisms to reduce their anxiety and grow their self-confidence. All but Sarah recognised the value of WIL, which provided an opportunity for students to give them 'real' workplace experience, increase their self-confidence, and grow their networks. Sarah with no work and little volunteering involvement could not believe that an employer would value the student's 350-hour workplace experience.

## 5.6 Work aspirations

### 5.6.1 Sport management career plan

The students choosing a sport management career arrived at university from a multitude of avenues. Nine of the students followed their passion for sport and sport management was their preferred course of university study. The remaining two students initially chose an alternate career path, but circumstances directed them to their second option, which was sport.

#### Reasons to study sport management

Inspiration, pressure, realisation and choice were identified by the students as their primary reasons for studying sport management. Inspirational factors were shared by all of the students, and they included: previous successful sport management

graduates; passionate physical education (PE) teachers and sports coordinators; personal enjoyment of and participation in sport; wanting to share their sporting enjoyment; and working with high-performance athletes and teams. Two students felt pressured to study “*something*” at university. Five students realised their athletic performance was insufficient for them to become professional athletes, and they then considered sport management as an alternative career option to stay in the sports sector. Mavis said, “*I got to the point where I realised, I am not going to be a ‘Silver Fern’,<sup>11</sup> and then I started to think if I cannot be an athlete, then what else can I do?*”

Several students' sporty upbringing shaped their decision to study sport management. Leonie's upbringing had paved the way for her sport management career, she then took control and had the initiative to look for possible IOC jobs, starting when she was in high school. Leonie then identified university studies in sport management was her 'stepping stone' towards her ultimate work goal.

Most of the students selected a tertiary sport management qualification because it built capabilities in both sport and management, leading to broader career and sector choices: “*The reason why I chose sport management instead of business management is because I have always loved sport*” (Hannah); “*I liked the idea of working with people, and I was very good at organisation. Management is a good skill to have and is one of the biggest fields for jobs, sport was an added bonus*” (Sarah); “*I knew I was quite interested in sport and ... sport management is open to a multitude of roles when you are finished it. The business side of things gives you choice*” (Kylie); “*Sport and recreation management gives you the opportunity to go multiple places*” (Leonie); “*I really enjoyed business through high school, and I also enjoyed sport, so why not mix them together?*” (Lily); and “*The good thing about sport management is the management skills are transferable ... I can use my skills in another sector*” (Alex and Lisa).

When sport-loving Alex left high school eight years ago, at first she did not consider studying sport because the sport industry appeared less professional with less scope for a career than other sectors. Sport at school was the

---

<sup>11</sup> The 'Silver Ferns' is the NZ women's national netball team.

*'losers' way out, and there was no future in sport. Now the sports industry has changed. I could make a career out of sport and earn some decent money. I was passionate and good at what I did in the corporate sector, and I thought, 'maybe I can do this in the sports industry'. (Alex)*

Jess was different. Her parents advised her that a business qualification opened more work choices:

*I did not actually know there was a sport management degree when I came to university. I was deciding between doing a sport and recreation degree or business degree. I wanted to own my own recreating business, so I thought I would get a business degree.*

Two women were encouraged to study sport management at university by friends in their sports teams: *"She studied sport management, and she has a senior management role within the gym industry"* (Kylie); and *"One of my close friends I played netball with, she is in her second year here. She convinced me to come to this course because she thought I would really enjoy it. We are similar people"* (Lily).

Rona encountered a different response to her decision to study sport management: *"People think you are not academic or capable. I do not think people understand the amount of knowledge and skill needed to run sports"*.

In addition to the students who were advised by their school career counsellors not to study sport management (discussed earlier in this chapter), Kylie and Jess experienced people outside of the sport industry trying to dissuade them from studying sport management. Kylie rejected other people advising her *"that sport management was for non-academic people"* because her experience of childhood sport provided her with a different understanding. Similarly, Kylie commented *"I think people underestimate the knowledge and skill that goes into running sport"*.

Jess succumbed to the pressure of others and studied commerce but included elective sport management papers. Jess was influenced by family and other people's opinions that NZ *"corporate organisations are larger, more stable and more respected than sports organisations"*, and they felt that corporate organisations would provide her with *"better career opportunities"*. Jess agreed that general management skills are transferable across sectors, despite different sector idiosyncrasies. Jess's career strategy revolved around her working and acquiring experience in the corporate

sector, and transitioning into sport at senior management or CE level later in her working life.

Since the 1990s, the sport and recreation industry had become more diverse and professional, but the public perception of jobs in sport management has failed to evolve with it. Alex had witnessed the evolution of the sports sector since leaving high school, 10 years earlier. Alex explained that, when she first left school, she

*never considered sport as a career option. I thought sport was not academic; the industry has become more professional with many management specific sports roles. My whole mindset changed – I now know I can make a career out of sport.*

The increased professionalism, the greater choice of paid sport management roles, and the number of women securing prominent roles in the sports sector had caused Alex to reconsider her career options.

#### A career in sport management?

Despite a shared passion for sport, the majority of students beginning their sport management studies had very little knowledge of sport management jobs, organisations and career paths after graduating. Before coming to university, *"I did not know a lot about jobs in the recreation industry"* (Mavis, Kylie and Lily). The first-year students identified the following roles in sport they were aware of and would consider working in after graduating: *"team management"* (Mavis); *"teacher or school sports co-ordinator"* (Viv); *"youth development manager"* (Kylie); *"event management and promotion"* (Leonie, Alex and Hannah); *"children's special needs facilitator"* (Leonie); *"facility manager"* (Lily); *"high performance athlete or team manager"* (Lily, Mavis, Hannah, and Alex); *"logistics"* (Rona); and *"promoting community sports campaigns"* (Jess). Sarah and Lisa could not identify a specific job, but knew they wanted to work in the community improving people's physical health, nutrition and mental wellbeing: *"I have my heart set on community"* (Sarah). The roles were indicative of their prior sporting and working experiences. They named Sport NZ, RSTs, and NSOs, IOC, schools and two PBEs as organisations which employed people in sport management.

Student FG2 and Student FG3 were strongly encouraged by their lecturers to volunteer during their university studies and were more knowledgeable of job opportunities and

organisations within the sports sector: "My lecturers have advertised jobs, internships and volunteering opportunities, which has been great" (Sarah); and "We are encouraged by our lecturers to volunteer" (Lily, Leonie and Mavis). Through volunteering, Mavis, a second-year student, became involved with a national sports advisory group which expanded her knowledge of employment choices.

*People seem to have this perception that there are no jobs in sport. Sport is more than sports teams; it also includes councils, local parks, national parks, events, daily recreation such as swimming and walking, and tourism. I am becoming more aware of the huge variety of sport management jobs. There are so many. I am learning that now. (Mavis)*

Mavis cited a recent conversation with some unemployed sport management graduates as proof of the importance of volunteering:

*I met some recent graduates who finished their third year at the end of last year, and they had been declined jobs because they did not have experience on their CVs. They did not get experience volunteering while they were studying. They did their 120 hours WIL, but it was not enough".*

Leonie, Hannah and Viv had attended the same event, they had heard the conversations and nodded in agreement. The students appeared fixated on experience being the limiting factor and had not considered other reasons.

#### Advertisements and the metaphorical corporate ladder

The wording within the advertised event volunteer manager's role elicited various responses from the students. Some students reacted to the implications of 'manager', others to 'experience' or 'football.'

The advertisement influenced the student's corporate ladder mentality and their levels of self-confidence. Seven of the 11 students immediately deselected themselves as potential candidates and indicated they would not apply for an advertised sports management role with the word 'manager' in the title. They claimed that they did not have the experience or confidence to fulfil a manager's role, especially given the skills and responsibilities required at that level. The older students and the first-year student with experience were attracted by roles with the word 'manager' in them and acknowledged that they would "look good" on a résumé. Kylie's lack of confidence

made her reluctant to apply for roles in unfamiliar codes, whereas Hannah confidently indicated she would only apply for jobs in codes that she liked.

Three younger students, Hannah, Mavis and Leonie, resisted the necessity of proving their self-worth. They indicated that, given the opportunity, they would consider jumping several layers in the corporate hierarchy and applying for management roles after graduating from university: *"Have a go and see what happens"* (Mavis); *"Give it a try. You have got nothing to lose"* (Hannah); and *"Go for gold and see what happens. If not the manager role, I may then be considered for the assistant manager's role"* (Leonie). Hannah, an 18-year-old, first-year student, entered university with significant management experience. She was intrinsically capable, confident and not driven to prove herself. Hannah indicated that she would *"definitely apply"*.

Demonstrating skill competency before ascending the corporate hierarchy was deemed essential by all of the students. Eight students explained the importance of *"proving"* their self-worth and *"earning their place"* first before climbing to the next level within an organisation, preferring entry-level administrator and coordinator roles as their career starting point: *"Start at the bottom. There is always stuff that you need to learn, from the bottom, from the roots of the business"* (Lily); and *"I feel like it is a cultural thing in NZ, that regardless of gender we would all want to start at the bottom and work up."* (Jess). Eighteen-year-old Kylie's fear of failure steered her first sport management job prospects towards roles where she could work within her perceived competency level, where mistakes would have minimal impact and where she could abdicate responsibility to people in positions above her. *"If you are at the bottom with someone above you, if something goes wrong, it is their fault. It is a comfort thing, as you get more comfortable, you work your way up"* (Kylie).

Positive life experiences had lessened the thoughts that limited careers, and grew confidence and boldness in the older and work experienced students. Alex, 26 years-of-age, and experienced, eagerly outlined her career plans:

*In 2017, I am moving to a sport management role in [an Australian city], the hub of professional sport in the southern hemisphere. My ten-year plan is to enter franchise sport, in a management or a CE role. I would love to be the next Raelene Castle, running a sports organisation, providing that vision and leadership at the elite level.*

Lisa, 28 years-of-age, with two years of international sports management experience, claimed that her generation expected to work their way up the corporate ladder.

The student's affiliation with the sports code in an advertised position was another point of self-selection or deselection. *"I would not be inclined to apply for a role if I did not like or know the sport"* (Hannah, Jess, Kylie and Mavis), and Lily would not apply for a role in a minority sport which had limited potential to develop her management skills. Viv and Kylie would not consider applying for jobs in male-centred sports codes because their applications would be overlooked. Kylie went a step further when she explained the culture and community behind a certain male-dominated sports codes:

*I would not apply for a job in rugby. It is quite a male-run sport, and I do not have enough knowledge about rugby strategy. Especially for a girl. I feel like you would be looked at as she does not really know what she is talking about. Even if you did have great knowledge of rugby and you knew everything about the game, you would just be overlooked.*

Alex recognised gender appointment bias existed, but she explained that would not stop her application:

*If the hiring board are all middle-aged men, I am less likely to get the job over my male counterpart who is also 26, with the same experience as me. You hire people that you are familiar with. Although I would not avoid male-dominated codes, I am just aware that they may provide a challenge.*

The mention of *"relevant sporting experience"* were key words which proved there are barriers, as mentioned earlier, for the students without previous paid work experience. Leonie considered *"Getting your foot in the door, getting that first set of experience"* was difficult.

Alex provided an insight into her strategy to get a job. She described the NZ sport sector as

*such a small industry. Getting a job and getting ahead is all about whom you know. I thought this degree was the best way to get my name out there and get some contacts. That is the main reason why I chose to study sport management at university. I got my part-time job through the university.*

## Summary

'Working their way up' the metaphorical corporate ladder appears deeply entrenched in the students' psychology, and may be derived from their sporting experiences or the professional player pathway, working history or family and societal expectations. Irrespective of the origin of the student, their adherence to the idea of climbing the corporate ladder within both sporting organisations and the sporting sector structure will restrict their career progression.

### 5.6.2 Children or no children – a choice

Parenting impacts career decisions and family resource allocation. All students participating in the study had thought about children and parenting. Their decisions included: having no children; having many children; being a stay-at-home mum; taking maternity leave and then returning to paid work; taking a few weeks off before going back to work, and having a stay-at-home partner.

Three very different parenting prospects were set out by the three members of Student FG1. Rona, for example, wanted a large family and did not consider children would hinder her career although it would mean a *"break in my career, after which it could be difficult getting back into the workforce"*. The logistics of parenting were flexible for Rona, and she had choices to make: *"I would love to spend time off with my children, but equally my partner is more than happy to be a stay-at-home dad, and I will probably be the bigger income earner"*. Rona collected evidence through her WIL experience that supported her ability to have a family and a successful career. Rona was empowered with the structural flexibility of her WIL workplace and realised *"organisations are becoming more flexible, providing opportunities to work from home, and different hours. The younger generation coming through, we expect more."* Rona observed that *"in my WIL placement, three of the six women around the parenting age have children. They have successful careers and kids"*. Rona's eagerness in sharing what she learnt with the other participants implied that she had been struggling with her decisions around parenting and the consequences of those decisions. She wanted everyone to know that there were more options than she had first contemplated.

Alex's outlook, by contrast, was the polar opposite of Rona's. Alex was adamant; she wanted a partner, but no children. She was surprised during her WIL experience to

discover that two of the four women on the board and six of the eight women on the staff *“were all childless; one [Alex] knew had chosen her career over a family”*. Alex did not want to have children, but she was *“fascinated to see that other people have made that sacrifice”*. Alex recalled reading an article that explained *“that long-standing, successful NZ CEs were the ones that did not have to worry about housework and cooking. They are traditionally men unless it was a woman who had a cook or no children”* (Alex).

Sarah wanted a family and had not considered the implications that would have on her career. *“I want a family. I think that most workplaces understand that. I do not see having children as a career barrier. I would work around it”*. Her decision is shaped in part by her personality and approach to life.

### Summary

The issue of returning to paid employment after raising children concerned several participants. Those who considered being a stay-at-home mum acknowledged potential barriers to re-entering the sector. Overall, considering parenting and navigating the consequences was a thought process all of the participants had been through. Parenting choices are influencing the career decisions and aspirations of the participants from a young age. The students' generation expects more workplace flexibility, and they are open to alternate choices that include working remotely, stay-at-home dads and being child free.

### 5.7 Gendered perception of the sport industry

Despite having limited knowledge, the students were very critical of rampant gender discrimination across the NZ sports sector. The students were aware of gendered sports codes, and the disproportionate funding that men's rugby and men's cricket received compared to women's netball. Their overwhelming anger exploded over the lack of exposure of women's sport in the media, particularly, television coverage. Mavis identified the extensive coverage enjoyed by traditional sports such as *“sailing, rugby, cricket, rowing and cycling that earnt significant sponsorship dollars, secured volumes of television coverage and collected copious funding from Sport NZ and HPSNZ”*. Viv stated that *“the ‘Black Caps’ get tons of television news coverage”* and the *“women's cricket team, the ‘White Ferns’, broadcast is substantially less”*. Kylie was

appalled with the way women's sport was presented in the media. *"It comes across as if they are doing women's rugby or women a favour for putting their sport on television. It is a pity spot"* (Kylie), and Lily added, *"it appears as if – women's sport we have not aired that in the last month, let us chuck it in, we have got five extra minutes"*. The remaining students complained of other women's sports that failed to secure coverage, especially at suitable times, compared to men's games.

Applying for roles in male-dominated codes made five students feel rather dubious. As discussed earlier, Kylie and Viv raised their concerns about gender-biased appointments in gendered codes. Sarah refrained from judgement related to gender-biased appointments; she was ambivalent about any gender discrimination and posed the idea that *"gender could be a barrier, but I have not seen a gender bias"*.

Alex was derisive of the old boys' club which she had first encountered in her previous corporate roles and again coordinating [sports code] events:

*I hate [the] old boys' club with a passion. Boys are looking after boys, and if you are a young female, you are not worth anything. There are some lovely men out there, but the old boys' club that exists in some codes is a very old school, chauvinistic attitude where you cannot get ahead because of your sex. It is unfair. ... The old boys' club attitude is changing. The boards of most elite sport franchises are middle-aged white men, and while they may have daughters similar to me it does not mean they necessarily want to be working with people like their daughters. An older man needs to see what I can bring to the table, and it is going to be different from him, and him appreciating those differences is where there is a massive gap.*

Alex, Mavis, Rona, Lisa and Viv agreed there was a gender imbalance, and more men were employed in *"top-level sport management"* (Rona) and leadership in most sports codes. These women felt that times are changing, and the imbalance is more a challenge than a barrier to the generation coming through. Rona identified horizontal gender segregation. She claimed that *"in athletics, women are in the community sector, school engagement, and men dominate high performance"*.

Alex, Leonie and Mavis exuberantly stated *"stereotypes are being broken down"*, especially in *"alpha male"* sports and they expected that pattern to continue. They cited two high-profile women in sport management, Raelene Castle then the CE of the

Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs, and Farah Palmer on the board of the NZRU who had broken down barriers and were showing us *"it does not have to be that way"* (Mavis).

Rona claimed the elimination of sexism required a *"societal change"*. Lisa added, *"and a cultural change as well"*. Alex, Viv, Lisa and Mavis said women were *"ready to challenge"* gender boundaries, and Lisa claimed that *"the industry at the moment is very male-dominated. That is a big barrier. We can be the people to make a change and make these boardrooms more diverse for the next generation to come in"*. The women asserted *"we are not facing the barriers the generations before us faced"* (Mavis). Hope or naivety shone through, with three students Kylie, Lily and Rona, expecting their promotions to be related to performance rather than gender. Sarah was not conscious of encountering sexism but had not worked in a *"male-dominated organisation"*.

Kylie and Jess from Student FG2 mentioned feeling intimidated by older, passionate and physically larger men, people who are entirely different from them and their peer group: *"It would be more difficult to have a voice or make changes"* (Jess). They were concerned that this intimidation could inhibit them from applying for jobs or tabling their ideas at meetings, especially if their ideas were contrary to those of the men.

Rona and Sarah were both working in WIL organisations. Rona appreciated the feminine gendered nature of her WIL placement: *"My CE is a woman and so are the majority of managers in our high-performance area. It is great coming into a female dominated organisation where you feel your opinions are valid and really important"*.

### 5.7.1 Summary

The students' experiences had exposed them to gender discrimination in the sports sector regarding resourcing, funding and media coverage, in all of which the women's game came a very distant second. Several students were reluctant to apply for jobs in male-dominated sports codes, thinking their job applications may be overlooked, or they may feel physically dominated by male colleagues. Nonetheless, a few brave students were prepared to engage with and overcome any discrimination they encounter.

## 5.8 Chapter summary

As discussed in this chapter, the impact of the female student's childhood and their childhood experiences was shaped by the meanings the women themselves made of those everyday experiences. These meanings, whether limiting or enhancing, will translate into actions that shape each student's future. A family's total commitment to sport provided grounds for their daughters to find their sports passion. I was somewhat surprised that the students offered little in the way of cause-and-effect explanations in relation to their life to date. My understanding is that the students cannot stand outside of themselves and recognise a process without the experience that many years provide. It is hard to recognise a process while you are still within the process and when you have a limited range of 'other' experiences to compare it with. Nonetheless, as a result of their familial, sporting and societal conditioning, the focus group students' decisions culminated in furthering their aspirations for a career in sport management.

The study revealed that most early entry university students knew very little about sport management roles and organisations employing graduates within the NZ sports sector. Their positive sporting experiences before attending university strongly influenced the sport management roles they anticipated applying for after graduating. Their university WIL and volunteering experiences expanded their job opportunity horizons. Student reactions to job advertisements provided a vehicle to further explore the thinking behind their decisions to either apply or not apply for specific roles. Parenting proved to be a pivotal decision pertaining to career planning and job choice.

The next chapter explores the experiences of NZ sport management graduates as they leave university and embark on their sport management careers.

## Chapter 6 Findings: Sport management university graduates' voices

*"A few months ago I realised I like sport. I work in sport. I study sport. I volunteer in sport. Everything I do is sport." (Dee)*

### 6.1 Voices of the sport management university graduates

The central aim of this chapter is to explore and identify the significant experiences and personal aspirations of sport management graduates as a basis for understanding how their careers developed in the NZ sports sector. In this chapter, the events of the lives of the graduates are captured as they transition from university into the sport management workforce and experience the early stages of their sport management careers.

Reflecting on their upbringing, involvement with sport, and experiences at university, the graduates make meaning of their world in the context of the sport management sector they have joined. Their ability and confidence in navigating that world are directly related to their historically affected consciousness.

The process of leaving education and entering paid work was an upheaval which challenged many of the graduates' perceptions of self. The transition from university to their first paid job tested their confidence levels. After securing their first sport management job, each graduate's self-efficacy increased as they grew into their working roles. Anticipating their future lives, the graduates considered career prospects and, for most, the possibility of having children.

The sports sector presented challenges for the women graduates. A unifying theme was the realisation of a gendered workplace and evidence of the old boys' club in action. For some graduates, some restrictions on their career were beginning to manifest themselves. Some graduates developed mechanisms to work with gendered expectations and stereotypes, and the longer-serving graduates encountered barriers to career progression.

The graduates grasped the focus group as an opportunity to connect, talk about the sector and their roles and share their stories.

## 6.2 Meet the sport management graduate participants

Three female-only focus groups were conducted with sport management university graduates from NZ universities. The 13 graduate participants were spread across two focus groups in North Island and one in the South Island. The graduates' ages ranged from 22 to 31 years old. Their experience in the sport management field varied from six months to seven years, and they started working in the NZ sports sector between 2009 and 2016. Preference during participant selection was given to graduates who were born and grew up in NZ society. Focus group members were attributed pseudonyms.

In the next three subsections, a short overview of each focus group is given, followed by a brief synopsis of the individual participants. The bias in the graduate sample resembled that of the student sample, with most participants self-identifying as NZers, or NZ Europeans. One graduate identified as NZ European and Māori, and another as a Pacific Islander. All but one of the graduates came from financially comfortable, two-parent families.

### 6.2.1 Graduate Focus Group 1

Graduate Focus Group 1 (Graduate FG1), with five members, was conducted in May 2017 in the North Island. All participants attended North Island universities, four studied at the same university, and two of them were in the same year. Several of the graduates had encountered each other during their work in sport management. The women immediately discovered common ground with their passion for sport and their interest in one another's jobs. The ensuing chatter was lively. The women were eager to share their work stories and hear the issues of their colleagues. The introductions, focus group and nibbles spanned two hours, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

Table 6.1: Herstory and family background of participants in Graduate FG1.

Name	Age Ethnicity Years working Organisation	Role Tasks Number of organisations worked for since graduating Quotes	Herstory Volunteer Athlete
Suzanne	22 NZ European Six months working RSO 20 hours and school sports coordinator full- time	Role: Sports code administrator and school sports coordinator. Tasks: Administration and coordination. Number of organisations: Two. "I have been applying for any role". "I have a mentor in [my code], and I want her job".	Suzanne grew up in a large North Island metropolitan area, in a two parent, middle- to high-income family. She had one younger sister. Suzanne worked part-time coaching during her university years. She majored in sport management. Suzanne finished university eight months before the focus group took place. After leaving university, she tried to find a full-time sport administration role within her sports code but only managed to get a 20 hours per week flexible administrative role. Suzanne needed more hours, and so she had applied for over twelve entry-level sport management roles before she finally secured a full-time school sports coordinator position. She then worked both jobs. Suzanne anticipated her long-term career goal would include a management role in her sports code at their national headquarters. Volunteer: Coach and club administrator. Athlete now: Sports code.
Lyndsay	26 New Zealander Five years working NSO	Role: Team coordinator. Tasks: Sports development, team manager and coordinator. Number of organisations: Three. "I love my job, it is unique and I will keep doing it until I have nothing left to offer."	Lyndsay was raised in a large North Island city in a middle-low income family with two parents. She had never been a sport representative in her childhood. Lyndsay majored in sport management and secured her first job through her RSO WIL placement but in a different department. She had recently obtained a role within the code's NSO. The next job Lyndsay intended to apply for will be a manager's role. Lyndsay was focused and considered she had worked hard to be successful and had actively developed networks to help her career. She intended to pursue postgraduate studies in business. Volunteer: High performance team manager. Athlete now: No.

Name	Age Ethnicity Years working Organisation	Role Tasks Number of organisations worked for since graduating Quotes	Herstory Volunteer Athlete
Milly	28 NZ European Six years working PBE sport organisation	<p>Roles: Sponsorship manager, fundraising manager, marketing and communications manager.</p> <p>Tasks: Administration, marketing, public relations, sponsorship and grants.</p> <p>Number of organisations: Three.</p> <p>"Sport needs to be more innovative and not rely on grants and funding."</p> <p>"Volunteering at university was an important part of my journey."</p>	<p>Milly grew up in a large North Island metropolitan area. She came from a two parent, three sibling, and middle- to high-income family. Milly had been a sport representative in two codes. She had completed a degree in sport management, marketing and events and a postgraduate qualification in public relations. She had strategically chosen her two WIL placements to learn from two very different aspects of the sport management sector, and she had strategically planned her career progression. Milly had developed expansive networks and had already been recommended for a role through her networks.</p> <p>Volunteer: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Sports code and gym.</p>
Amelia	31 Pacific Islander Seven years working PBE sport organisation	<p>Role: Community manager of minority groups.</p> <p>Tasks: Sports programme delivery and minority community engagement.</p> <p>Number of organisations: Three.</p> <p>"Being a Pacific Island woman ... I just never had a voice going into this organisation."</p> <p>"I wanted to represent our Pacific Island young women in sport and provide opportunities and mentoring for them."</p>	<p>Amelia was born on a Pacific Island where she attended a Catholic school. Although Amelia had majored in exercise science and nutrition, her sport degree had included some sport management papers. Her WIL placement led to a full-time job which became redundant because of funding cuts a year later. She worked in the fitness industry for six months before being employed by a large PBE where her role included helping minority communities access sport. Amelia was studying postgraduate nutrition. Her future career options included starting her own nutrition company aimed at providing services for Pacific Island people or becoming a general manager in sport.</p> <p>Volunteer: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Sports code.</p>

Name	Age Ethnicity Years working Organisation	Role Tasks Number of organisations worked for since graduating Quotes	Herstory Volunteer Athlete
Pru	28 European Seven years working PBE sport organisation	Role: Marketing manager. Tasks: Communications, marketing and public relations. Number of organisations: One. "I have to work hard to satisfy all stakeholders it is not easy. Saying no is tough." "I am a jack of all trades and a master of none."	Pru grew up in a small Northland town in a middle-income home with two working parents and three younger sisters. She went to university to train to be a personal trainer, but found her passion in sport management. Pru's WIL placement led to her first coordinator job when she replaced a woman on maternity leave. Pru had stayed with the same organisation and had been promoted vertically to a management role. She was a mother of one with her second child on the way. With her first child, Pru took a total of ten months extended leave which included 12 weeks' of paid maternity leave. Pru's sister helped with childcare when needed over and above day care. After having her first child she returned to the same role on fewer hours and with an increase in her hourly rate. Volunteer: No. Athlete now: No.

### 6.2.2 Graduate Focus Group 2

Graduate Focus Group 2 (Graduate FG2), conducted in July 2017, was also from the North Island and included three participants. They knew each other and had graduated from the same North Island university. This focus group resembled meeting at a café and sharing time over a coffee with old friends. Two of the participants were pregnant, and there was an excitement in chattering about babies, a recent house purchase and, finally, work. Their ages spanned 24 to 26 years, and they had experience working in sport management that ranged from two to four years.

Table 6.2: Herstory and family background of participants in Graduate FG2

Name	Age Ethnicity Years working Organisation	Role Tasks Number of organisations worked for since graduating Quotes	Herstory Volunteer Athlete
Ann	24 New Zealander Two years working RSO	<p>Role: Senior sport administrator.</p> <p>Tasks: Organising competitions and overseeing game days and travelling in the weekends throughout the city overseeing game day for the code she works in.</p> <p>Number of organisations: One.</p> <p>"It is where I ended up to get my foot in the door."</p> <p>"I always did netball through school ... it is what all girls do when you go to an all-girls school."</p>	<p>Ann grew up in a large metropolitan area in the North Island, in a single-parent, middle-to low-income family. She had an older brother who is studying computing. Ann found her passion for a sports code in her late teens. She studied sport and majored in physical activity and nutrition. Ann was pregnant at the time of the interview. Ann travelled a lot, especially in the weekend for her job. Ann found that her close work team shaped her job satisfaction and success. She also envisaged that being a parent would slow her career progression. Ann worked in a traditional male-dominated code.</p> <p>Volunteer: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Fitness.</p>
Harper	25 NZ European Four years working PBE Facility	<p>Role: Event manager.</p> <p>Tasks: Marketing and event management.</p> <p>Number of organisations: One.</p> <p>"I was in marketing ... however, operations and management was more my area."</p> <p>"I am pretty lucky to land straight in the premier [role] everyone in my industry wants."</p>	<p>Harper grew up in a middle-income family on a lifestyle blocks on the fringes of three different large North Island cities. Her childhood was surrounded by sport, and she tried to play everything. Her family had a family sports code, and her father had been a national sporting representative in another code. Harper had a degree in business and another in sport. Harper secured her first job through her WIL placement, and since then she had moved horizontally and had been promoted vertically. She described herself as a calm perfectionist. Recently she purchased her first house with her partner.</p> <p>Volunteer: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Two sports codes.</p>

Name	Age Ethnicity Years working Organisation	Role Tasks Number of organisations worked for since graduating Quotes	Herstory Volunteer Athlete
Hinemoa	26 NZ European/ Māori Four years working NSO	<p>Role: Events and special projects.</p> <p>Tasks: Organising and delivering competitions, logistics and health and safety.</p> <p>Number of organisations: One.</p> <p>“My sport is really family orientated, and it has got good tikanga.”</p> <p>“My ideal role would be something community based, Māori health, getting people active, and looking after my people.”</p>	<p>Hinemoa grew up an urban setting in a remote, North Island coastal town. Her middle-income, very supportive family loved sport. Hinemoa was a representative in two of the family's sports codes. Her two-parent family were still heavily involved in a family-shared sport. Her father was on the board of a sports code. Working in sport, especially the code she worked for, was a natural fit. Hinemoa had graduated with a degree in both sport and business and secured her first role through her WIL placement. Her role required her to travel internationally occasionally and nationally every weekend during the season, overseeing competitions. The code she worked for had a \$1 million turnover, 5,000 registered athletes, and employed two full-time and two part-time staff. Hinemoa was pregnant at the time of the interview.</p> <p>Volunteer: Yes.</p> <p>Athlete now: Two sports codes.</p>

### 6.2.3 Graduate Focus Group 3

Graduate Focus Group 3 (Graduate FG3), with five participants, was conducted in the South Island in April 2017. The graduates' ages spanned 24 to 26 years old, and their working experience in sport management ranged from two to four years. All participants were born in the South Island, but Harriet and Tui attended a university in the North Island whereas the remaining three graduates attended the same South Island university. The women knew some, if not all, of the other members within their focus group. Two graduates, Karen and Tui, worked in the same RSO. The participants in Focus Group 3 became more animated and energised when the questions focused on their decisions to enter sport management training and subsequent career development.

Table 6.3: Herstory and family background of participants in Graduate FG3

Name	Age Ethnicity Years working Organisation	Role Tasks Number of organisations worked for since graduating Quotes	Herstory Volunteer Athlete
Karen	23 New Zealander Two and a half RSO	<p>Role: Youth and development coordinator.</p> <p>Tasks: Deliver programmes through schools, run the after-school programmes and manage coaching clinics.</p> <p>Number of organisations: One.</p> <p><i>"I do not have much experience; I get stressed, I need more confidence."</i></p> <p><i>"My role model has shown me there are opportunities for females everywhere, even in male-dominated sports."</i></p>	<p>Karen grew up in a small rural South Island town. She was from a two-parent, middle socioeconomic family. Karen had two older brothers and a younger and older sister. She was a regional representative in sport and a national representative in dance. She moved to a large South Island metropolitan area for university where she studied sport and minored in tourism. Karen successfully applied for her first sport management role five months before finishing her studies.</p> <p>Volunteer: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Two sports codes.</p>
Tui	23 New Zealander One RSO	<p>Role: Marketing and events coordinator.</p> <p>Tasks: Marketing, managing and delivering competitions, tournaments and game days.</p> <p>Number of organisations: Two.</p> <p><i>"I have learnt in sport management; you cannot please everyone."</i></p> <p><i>"I applied for the job anyway and thought; I will give it a shot."</i></p>	<p>Tui grew up in a South Island metropolitan area and studied at a North Island university. Her parents and three older brothers enjoyed a financially secure family lifestyle. Tui completed two degrees, one in business and another in sport majoring in sport and exercise science. Tui completed her WIL placement in her family's South Island city. After graduating, Tui enjoyed a summer holiday and then got the second job she applied for. She had previously been employed part-time in hospitality.</p> <p>Volunteer: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Gym.</p>
Bailey	23 NZ European Two and a half Sport PBE	<p>Role: General manager.</p> <p>Tasks: Managing people, financial reporting, resource allocation and grant applications.</p> <p>No. of organisations: One.</p> <p><i>"I want to finish my Masters first."</i></p> <p><i>"I am on a permanent contract, but the funding could run out."</i></p>	<p>Bailey was raised in a South Island metropolitan city. She applied for one sport PBE job as a general manager in her home town before she finished her studies. She got the role and started the week after her final examinations. Bailey was surprised she got the role since she expected the PBE wanted to employ someone who was older and had experience.</p> <p>Volunteer: Yes.</p> <p>Athlete now: One sports code.</p>

Name	Age Ethnicity Years working Organisation	Role Tasks Number of organisations worked for since graduating Quotes	Herstory Volunteer Athlete
Dee	23 NZ European Two and a half NSO	<p>Role: Development officer.</p> <p>Tasks: Policy writing and training, financial reporting and grant applications, national facilities planning, managing staff, delivering programmes, resource management and delivering sports events.</p> <p>Number of organisations: One.</p> <p><i>"I would love to work in high performance sport."</i></p> <p><i>"The sports sector is great, stressful but great."</i></p>	<p>Dee grew up in a metropolitan area in the South Island. She worked part-time in retail while she attended university. Dee started job hunting five months before graduating. She got the first and only job she applied for and started working in the role full-time once university finished. Since then, she had started studying part-time in a post-graduate programme.</p> <p>Volunteering: RSO committee, umpiring, umpire mentoring and club captain.</p> <p>Athlete now: Sports code and gym.</p>
Harriet	28 New Zealander Three and a half Sport RSO	<p>Role: Manager.</p> <p>Tasks: Strategic development, training and implementation, operations management and funding.</p> <p>Number of organisations: Four.</p> <p><i>"I have done a lot of strategic planning; I help organisations design what it is they want."</i></p> <p><i>"I have got a very independent, curious child; everyone thinks she is bossy... I tell them she is a fierce leader."</i></p>	<p>Harriet was raised rurally in the South Island in a middle-income family with two parents. Growing up, Harriet was a sport representative in several codes. Harriet completed two degrees, one in business and the other in sport, majoring in management. At the time of the interview, Harriet was married and had two young children, one of whom had health issues. Harriet had been highly motivated and driven to scale the corporate ladder in sport management, but having children had changed her outlook on life. Harriet's wife had recently taken over the role of main income earner and Harriet was mainly the stay-at-home mum. Harriet was increasingly stressed with job insecurity and her inability to find another full-time sport management role after her previous fixed-term contract ended. Prior to this, Harriet had fulfilled four short-term management and strategy contracts with NSOs and RSOs across the country. Harriet had enjoyed a career before university, but an injury enticed her to change careers.</p> <p>Volunteer: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Two sports codes.</p>

### 6.3 Overview of Chapter Six

This chapter starts by briefly outlining aspects of the graduates' upbringing, namely: influential family members, family culture and ethnicity, and childhood sport and how these various elements in their upbringing have impacted upon the women's worldviews and sport management careers. The chapter progresses with the graduates discussing their early understanding of sport management roles and sporting organisations in NZ. The chapter continues with an exploration of the graduates' experiences as they neared the end of their studies, undertook a WIL placement and secured their first paid sport management job. The chapter then examines the women's first work experiences, their career development, influential industry people who have impacted upon their careers, and decisions around parenting and childrearing. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the graduates' deepening perception of the NZ sports industry they are working within.

### 6.4 Upbringing

This section addresses the role family played during childhood in shaping the graduates' worldviews, confidence and sport management careers. The combined influence of family enriched with childhood sport cannot be underestimated as antecedents to a career in sport. Direct family-related questions were not included in the graduate focus group format. Nevertheless, for some graduates, familial components such as influential family members, culture, and ethnicity were posited briefly, as if in passing. The graduates' immediate and pressing recollections related more to their university experiences, newly acquired sport management positions and career aspirations rather than their more distant memories of childhood.

#### 6.4.1 Family

##### Family influencers, culture, and ethnicity

The influences of family members, culture, and ethnicity were acknowledged by five graduates.

Mothers were paramount in shaping two of the graduates' work attitudes. Harper and Ann's commitment to their jobs was sown by their mothers' role modelling. Harper elaborated: *"Mum has got a good work ethic ... she has always encouraged and helped*

me". Ann's mother was a big influence despite not *"finishing school, or going to university"*:

*She went overseas, had her kids young and worked at a job she did not enjoy. Somehow, she ended up owning two houses mortgage-free. Now she is studying IT, topping her classes, and getting As. Mum has got there. She is secretly quite smart.*

Harper was also proud of her father with his national sporting representative success. She explained: *"My father represented the country in sport"* (Harper). No other graduates mentioned influential family members.

Harriet illustrated how her family's gender-neutral culture shaped her worldview. Harriet, now a mother of two, recalled someone describing her curious daughter as *"bossy"*. Harriet naturally corrected them by claiming her daughter was *"a fierce leader"*, and at that moment Harriet recognised her divergent worldview. Harriet acknowledged and appreciated *"that one's view of the world is relative to how one was raised"*; her childhood had been free from gendering language, and she was adamant her daughter would enjoy that lack of restriction too.

Six graduates self-identified as NZ European, five as NZers, Hinemoa as both Māori and NZ European, and Amelia as Pacific Islander. Cultural identity was acknowledged by Hinemoa and Amelia as influencing their career direction, and their workplace and job choices. Both Hinemoa and Amelia saw their future, their 'Atua',<sup>12</sup> in *"building our [cultural] communities and improving the health of our people"* (Hinemoa and Amelia). Hinemoa spoke of the alignment her childhood family sports code had with her family's Māori heritage and values. Hinemoa chose her WIL placement to work within that code and had been there ever since. Amelia declared that *"being a Pacific Island woman, I love sport, love my job, love the community"* and she secured a role which enabled her to fulfil her purpose *"to inspire and mobilise Pacific Islanders, especially the women"*.

None of the other graduates remarked on their family members, culture or ethnicity influencing their sport management careers.

---

<sup>12</sup> In Māoridom *"there is a notion that when a child is born, they have a seed from the Atua, the heavens or the spirit realm, and that part of your life journey is finding out and knowing who you are and where you are supposed to be"* (Sigrid – one of the practitioner participants in Chapter Seven).

### Childhood sport

The motivators for graduates to initiate a career in sport management were:

*“improving deficiencies in the sector”* (Milly); *“personal love for or a sense of the ‘buzz’ of sport”* (all of the graduates); *“sharing their sporting enjoyment with others”* (Bailey, Harriet, Tui and Karen); *“working in their hobby”* (Dee); *“developing Māori and Pacific communities through physical and mental well-being”* (Hinemoa and Amelia); *“giving back to their communities”* (Ann, Lyndsay, Bailey, Suzanne and Karen); and *“recognising they did not have the skills to become a high-performance athlete”* (Suzanne).

Family sport proved to be a major influence for all but one of the graduates' choice of a career in sport. Sport consumption ranged from one family with no family sport to several families who were *“sport mad”*. Ann's family did not have a sports focus:

*My family was not sporty. My brother is a businessman. My mum has always been into gym fitness but not sport-focused. I always did netball; it was what you did at my all-girls school. I got into sport through [fitness] when I was 16. My love for [a specialised fitness code] led me to study sport at university.*

Sport was entrenched in Hinemoa's and Harper's family lives, and this inspired them to consider a sports career:

*My family are into [the family sports code]. My family has always followed sport ... I played everything from a young age, netball, basketball, hockey and then touch, I tried them all. I really enjoy sport. I always wanted to work in sport, but being a personal trainer, teacher, or fitness instructor did not appeal. (Harper)*

*My family played a lot of sport, they were and are all involved in sport. A career in sport was a natural pathway. I had to study something to do with sport. I just always knew growing up that was where I wanted to go. (Hinemoa)*

Hinemoa's sport-saturated family life combined with her Māori heritage attracted her to a career in specific sports codes which embodied her cultural values:

*I started studying exercise science, which I enjoyed, but that was not a personal fit. I wanted a career that was people-based, impacting communities and not high-performance sport. I work in a very family- and community-*

*orientated sport. It has good 'tikanga'<sup>13</sup> because it comes from Polynesia. (Hinemoa)*

Suzanne recognised that her talents were insufficient for her to become a high-performance athlete, so studying sport management provided the mechanism to foster a career in the sector. Suzanne recognised that *“sport management was the vehicle to do that. Studying sport management was the best way for me to stay connected with my sport and the sports industry”*.

Milly, 28-years-old, reaped a dramatically different benefit from childhood sport. She recognised in her teenage years, while being an athlete and volunteer in sport, that there were obvious operational inefficiencies. Milly recalled:

*When I was younger, I watched how some of the sports organisations I played for managed their volunteers. They were trying to do jobs which they did not have the skills to do. I wondered if there was a university option I could take to assist them with their productivity and performance.*

Although Dee grew up *“loving and playing a lot of sport”*, she acquired a self-limiting understanding from her childhood sporting experiences. Throughout her life, Dee had believed *“men are physically better athletes than women”*, and she interpreted this to mean *“men are always better”*. Dee had a sudden epiphany within the focus groups and reclaimed her power, saying: *“Men are not better than me. I am just as good as any guy”*.

### Summary of childhood

The graduates revealed through their narratives that family and childhood sport had influenced their perspectives and desire to pursue a career in sport management. The influence of hard-working mothers and a representative father, culture and ethnicity had left a strong imprint on some graduates. Sport was a way of family life for all but one of the graduates' families, and involvement in sport appeared to provide the impetus for all the participants to pursue a career in the sector. Overall, positive childhood sporting experiences, an exposure to a plethora of sports combined with the successes achieved through sport, shaped the graduates' career aspirations.

---

<sup>13</sup> Tikanga has diverse meanings for Māori, but usually it describes behavioural guidelines and ways of interacting in Māori culture, which has been handed down through the generations ([Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa, n.d.](#)).

## 6.5 Career

The NZ sports sector is diverse, as are the motivations which led the women to study and pursue a career in sport management. The graduates, like the students, had limited knowledge of sport management roles before embarking on their university studies. For most of the graduates, their knowledge of sport management roles and organisations grew as their studies and internships progressed, and their graduation loomed. Once they were working in the sector, their knowledge of sport management jobs grew exponentially.

### 6.5.1 Sport management career plan

Who employs sport management graduates? Moreover, in what roles?

Before enrolling in their undergraduate studies, most graduates did not know where a sport or sport management qualification would lead. The women had limited knowledge of roles or of organisations that would employ sport management graduates. The graduates were aware of *“regional sporting trusts”* (Bailey, Karen, Tui and Dee), *“event management”* (Lyndsay), and *“NSOs and RSOs, Olympics and national elite sports teams”* (Dee, Milly, Hinemoa and Harriet). As the graduates attempted to name organisations, Karen admitted, she had not considered *“NSOs or RSOs as employers”*.

The graduates found that the term ‘sport management’ was all-encompassing.

Hinemoa and Ann explained: *“Sport management is a broad term. It includes an office job but does not pinpoint specific jobs. You could go anywhere and do anything”*.

Bailey, Dee and Lyndsay disclosed: *“At the start of my sport degree I did not know what sport or leisure management roles would entail”*. The graduates compared the destinations of sport management qualifications against other qualifications. Ann rationalised it as follows: *“If you study accounting, you become an accountant. In sport management, the jobs are so different”*.

All of the participants’ undergraduate degrees entailed a few or many sport management papers, depending on the focus of the graduate’s interest during their studies and their degree pathways. Most graduates had completed a sport management degree or a sports degree with management papers. Some students changed their sport exercise science interest to sport management during their

studies. Pru, Tui and Hinemoa were three such graduates: *"I initially studied to be a fitness instructor, but hated it. I studied sport management, and I loved it"* (Pru); *"I enrolled thinking I would be a personal trainer, but you just need to have so much energy and enthusiasm to do that, I changed to sport management"* (Tui); and as stated earlier Hinemoa changed from exercise science to sport management to help 'her' people.

Starting their sport studies, Harper and Karen were clear that they *"did not want to be a teacher, personal trainer or fitness instructor"*; Karen preferred *"the administration and managerial side of sport and the direction that can take you"* and Milly wanted to *"improve sport"* delivery. The remaining students *"loved sport"* and wanted *"to do something in the sector"*.

Amelia shared her anxiety about securing a sport management role while she was still a student. She perceived *"there are not many jobs in our industry and a lot of graduates apply for the jobs"*. Several other graduates held the same outlook on job scarcity. Five of the eight graduates who had not secured a job through their WIL placement applied for jobs before finishing their university studies. All graduates found that, after working in the sector, their job scarcity mindset disappeared. (Finding employment will be discussed later in this chapter.)

The graduates' anxiety about getting their first job was further fuelled by people outside of the sector. Some members of the public held the opinion that *"there are no jobs in sport management"* (Tui and Dee), and studying sport only led to becoming a *"physical education teacher"* (Suzanne) or a *"personal trainer"* (Tui). Dee told a tale about her friend, *"an economics graduate, who had applied for 14 jobs, got six interviews and did not get any of the jobs. I thought there are not many jobs in my region in the sports sector. I am never going to get a job"*. Dee got the first sport management job she applied for and this was five months before she graduated.

### 6.5.2 Entering the sport management workforce

The graduates ascended to their first sport management positions through two different avenues: WIL or applying for advertised jobs. WIL placements of 350 hours or more led to five of the 13 graduates gaining employment at their placement. None of

the graduates whose WIL was 200 hours or less secured a job from their WIL placement. Five of the eight graduates not employed through WIL successfully *“applied for full-time jobs before graduating”*. The remaining three students were Tui and Ann, who left job hunting until after their summer break, and Suzanne who waited for a *“full-time role”* to appear in her sports code, but it never eventuated. Overall, the 13 graduates' first full-time roles were: three with NSOs, four with RSOs, three with PBEs, one with a sporting venue, one with the local council, and one was employed as a school sports coordinator.

### Securing their first role through WIL

All the graduates had completed a tertiary sport, recreation or leisure degree which included a university-required WIL component. WIL provided a mechanism for university students to gain work experience in the sports sector and for sporting organisations to trial potential employees.

Sport management experience through WIL emerged as a significant factor in several graduates' career initiation. Many of the graduates cited their WIL as supporting their development of networks, knowledge, efficacy, and confidence. *“Getting jobs goes back to your university days and using WIL to put yourself out there, get the experience and make those networks”* (Lyndsay, Milly and Amelia). Through WIL, Milly learnt *“about management and running community programmes”*. Suzanne found *“the experiences from my WIL helped me a lot”*. Amelia, 31 years of age, felt that through WIL she was able *“to prove [herself]”* to others which reaffirmed she was indeed proficient.

The graduates' WIL roles were varied and encompassed programme delivery, marketing, event management, operations, sponsorship, and coaching. Milly's degree required her to complete two WIL placements, and she strategically chose the placements which provided her with different learning opportunities: *“One internship was with a commercial sports team, the other was with an RST. I chose them because they were so diverse, especially with their financial approaches”*. Harper found:

*Sport management is very broad. I got to the end of my degree and had so much choice. I could not focus my attention and look for a specific job. Nevertheless, the breadth led to a variety of opportunities and different*

*pathways. Sport management opened more doors than studying exercise science, coaching or being a personal trainer.*

Five graduates, Pru, Amelia, Lyndsay, Hinemoa and Harper, secured jobs through their WIL placement. The WIL sporting organisations which employed their WIL graduates included a sports venue for Harper, a PBE for Pru, the local council kept Amelia, Hinemoa stayed with her NSO, and Lyndsay continued with her RSO. The women explained: *"I started here doing my WIL, in an assistant role. I was employed in that role, then my boss left, and I secured her job. I am still here"* (Pru); *"I did my WIL with the council, and that turned into a job with them. Unfortunately, the funding ended a year later, and the programme was closed down"* (Amelia).

*My WIL placement was in the marketing team working two days per week. I ended up being paid an additional day working for them during my placement. Once my WIL finished, I stayed working for them three days per week on a renewable three-month contract. Then I applied for the role I have now.*  
(Harper)

*After I finished my WIL placement my NSO did not have enough funding to employ me full-time, so I started part-time, then slowly I got more hours, and it just evolved into being a full-time job, and I have been here ever since.*  
(Hinemoa).

*I chose a WIL placement with an RSO whose sport I enjoyed. I worked hard, proved myself, and got noticed. I met the right people and got a foot in the door. I have ended up in a different department. I started part-time, worked my way up, and now I have moved over to the national body. I have not left the code since.* (Lyndsay)

Harper, Hinemoa, Lyndsay and Pru have remained with their WIL organisations for more than five years. Hinemoa and Pru had been promoted vertically, Harper was promoted both vertically and horizontally, and Lyndsay had been promoted from the RSO to the NSO. Hinemoa joked, *"I do not think I am ever going to be allowed to leave"*. Pru's WIL started seven years ago, and now she holds a management role in the same department in the same organisation. *"I figured you could get a job out of your internship, so you go somewhere that you want to end up working"* (Pru). Amelia was the exception; although she was initially employed by her WIL organisation, the *"funding [for her role] ended"*, and her job was disestablished after one year.

Employment as a progression of WIL within the same organisation enabled two graduates to bypass the hurdle of applying and being interviewed for their first job. Pru claimed that *"I have never had to apply for a job because the only job I have ever had I got through my WIL placement"*, and Hinemoa agreed.

#### Applying for jobs before graduating

Anticipated competition from all of the sport management graduates descending on the job market at the same time motivated five of the eight graduates not employed through their WIL placement – Bailey, Dee, Karen, Milly and Harriet – to apply for jobs before finishing their university studies. Dee and Karen started *"looking for jobs five months before finishing [their] exams"*. Bailey started from *"peer pressure"* after her fellow students, Dee and Karen, found jobs.

The eight graduates who went through the application, response and interview process found it harrowing. The *"relief"* and sheer joy the graduates expressed when they recounted their stories around being interviewed and subsequently employed in their first 'real' job was evidence of their burgeoning self-confidence. The graduates mentioned being surprised, excited, and relieved, especially when, for some, it was their first application which generated a job: *"I applied for the job, I was not expecting to get it. Then I got an interview, and then I got the job. I was quite surprised. I went straight from exams into my job"* (Dee); *"I thought I would be lucky to get a reply. I had a reply within three days. I got the first job I applied for. I thought it would be a longer process"* (Karen); and *"I was not expecting to get a reply. I was certainly not expecting to get the first job I applied for"* (Bailey).

Dee, Karen and Bailey also predicted their job applications would be rejected and considered their early applications to be practice. Their initial doubts were a tempered combination of self-doubt and their perceived expectations of employers, but these doubts did not stop the graduates from following through with their applications.

*I almost did not apply for it because I did not think I would be good enough or they would be looking for a graduate, and I knew nothing about the code. I did not think I would be suitable because they would want someone older or more experienced. I only really applied for the interview experience. I am glad I applied for the job. (Dee)*

*I knew it would be difficult getting a job since we had a strong third-year base of 30 students. I knew I needed to get in early so that I did not miss out on a job. (Karen)*

*I never expected to get the first job I applied for; I just wanted to get the experience of going through the process. I did not think they would go for a graduate. A week after exams I was in my role, starting. (Bailey)*

The other two graduates who applied for roles early were Harriet and Milly. Harriet's need to support her stay-at-home wife drove her to apply early. Harriet had been through the interview process in her "previous career", and she expected to secure the role she applied for:

*I got a full-time job before I finished university. I applied for jobs regardless of location. I applied for a job in [a city], I thought I could do and I got it. I had to support my wife and myself.*

Harriet also explained that "Women need to be more confident applying for roles. We are not lucky we get a job, we are skilled". Milly was "highly motivated to find a job" and start her career, and she considered her volunteering experiences proved to be a vital component of her successful employment:

*At university [her named female lecturer] pushed us into a lot of volunteer roles. I volunteered at a World Cup and other various events. Volunteering put me in a situation to see where and in what roles my sports management degree could take me. I found volunteering to be an important part of my journey. Volunteering gave me a 'foot in the door'.*

The remaining three graduates who had not applied for jobs before graduating – Tui, Ann and Suzanne – found the competition for available jobs increased after the recent graduates entered the job market. The strong competition reduced the graduates' job-hunting success and negatively impacted upon their confidence. They shared their anxiety at being out of university and out of work, and questioned their ability. They recalled there being very few advertised jobs and not getting through to the job interview stage, which further compounded their anxiety:

*I graduated in December and had a break over summer. I started looking for jobs in February. I applied for three or four jobs and got a couple of interviews but no job. I saw a locally advertised job with an RSO and applied for it even though I knew nothing about the sporting code and had no experience. I did*

*not think I would get it. The next day I got a response, and they asked me in for an interview. (Tui)*

Suzanne was biding her time waiting for a role to emerge within her sports code. She secured a flexible 20 hours per week in an administrative RSO role, but an increase in her work hours within the role never happened. Suzanne needed the stability of more hours and additional work, but she struggled to get a full-time job. *"I had been applying for anything. I had applied for about five sport coordinator roles. Recently I got a full-time sports coordinator role, and I can still do the RSO administration work on the side".*

Ann described her experience of this period:

*I was looking on Seek and Trademe for any entry-level sport management job, such as administration and gymnasium sales. I applied for everything, including part-time, contract and seasonal work. I was finding it hard getting a job in sport. I applied for so many [jobs] and hardly got any interviews. I felt like no one wanted to look at my résumé. I just wanted to get my foot in the door, get the experience and make contacts. I was lucky the organisation which employed me wanted someone 'fresh' to bring a non-biased opinion.*

Despite the anxiety and delay in securing their first post-university sport management role, these graduates were rebuilding their confidence.

### 6.5.3 First paid sport management job

#### Assessing their sport management jobs

The graduates reflected on their first jobs. Several enjoyed the variety their jobs provided: *"I like the balance between inside administration and outside running an event"* (Tui); *"One day you are delivering sport to a three-year-old, the next day you are filing a major financial report, and the next writing policy"* (Bailey); Ann and Karen *"did not know what I was expecting coming into this job. Then a few weeks went by, I was working, and it was good, busy, and I was doing so many different things"; "I thought a sports management job would be boring, sitting at a desk and writing emails; my job and roles are more than I ever imagined"* (Harper); and *"My role is exciting with a broad range of things that I do"* (Hinemoa). Other graduates enjoyed the human interaction: *"I like helping and developing people"* (Bailey and Ann). The sheer joy of working their passion was reflected in two comments *"My job has blown my*

*expectations*" (Hinemoa); and *"My job is more than I expected. The full extent of what goes on behind the scenes at events was far greater than I ever realised"* (Harper).

Despite their love of sport, all of the graduates complained about their time-deficient and under-resourced sport management roles and organisations. The graduates made the following comments about their jobs: *"demanding, intensely busy, lacking in time which then hinders performance with no time to plan or reflect"* (Milly, Lyndsay and Amelia); *"chaotic and stressful"* (Dee and Harper); *"political"* (Pru and Lyndsay); *"spread 'too thin'"* (Amelia and Pru); *"underpaid"* (Tui, Milly, Harriet, Karen, Bailey and Dee); *"nothing like your standard a nine-to-five job"* (Karen); *"tournaments, game day and events make your hours a bit crazy"* (Hinemoa, Tui, Dee and Harper); *"job descriptions are different to reality"* (Pru and Harriet); and *"more than I expected and a jack of all trades and master of none"* (Pru).

Hinemoa started her demanding role in events and special projects as an intern five years ago. She worked in her job *"six days per week"* travelling to and coordinating the delivery of regional, national and international events. Each weekend, Hinemoa's *"sports code hosted at least two events with up to 900 competitors. On event day [she] worked from 6 am until 10 pm"*. Despite lamenting the huge time commitment, Hinemoa counteracted any thought of quitting, reaffirmed her continuation in her role and added, *"I love what I do, and it is a cool sport"*. Event manager Harper's role meant *"working longer hours on the build-up to event day. I have a set date, and everything has to be done by then. Event days are 17-hour days"*, and she claimed she had a job *"everyone in my industry wants"*.

A solution to address the demanding nature of under-resourced sport management jobs was provided by Milly. She proposed that the *"workloads of sport management employees must include time to allow for networking with mentors and colleagues, to share ideas, and find solutions"*. Milly identified the need for the sports sector to invest in formalised time for middle management to network across the sector and share ideas which would *"improve the performance of the sector"*. Without *"time"*, Milly and Lyndsay believed their career development would be compromised.

Once the women entered the sports sector, their knowledge of sport management jobs and employing organisations expanded rapidly: *"Through university and WIL, I had*

*an idea of some sport management jobs. Now I am in the industry, I know of so many more. We have probably not heard of each other's roles"* (Lyndsay); and *"There are definitely more roles than I first considered when I was at university and first looking"* (Milly, Amelia and Suzanne).

### Comparison of the sports sector to other sectors

In 2019 sport management roles are highly contested and sought-after. Despite the changes in the sports industry, the graduates' perceptions were clear: *"The sports sector is less professional than other sectors"* (Dee and Milly); and *"The staff are poorly paid"* (Karen, Harriet and Tui). Milly claimed *"the sports sector has always operated like a charity, but there is a slow movement towards commercialisation and innovation. Without a mind shift, everyone is competing for the same dollar"*. The constant demand for resources and the financial constraints placed on the sector impacted upon employment conditions which may prove detrimental to the sports sector since *"the sports sector is a tough place to work"* (Milly and Harriet), and Harriet considered *"working in the corporate sector"*. The graduates bemoaned their working conditions and were well aware of attractive conditions in other sectors.

Banking and other commercial sectors proved attractive to the graduates because the sectors had *"structured linear career pathways and more widely available paid developmental internships"* (Dee). All of the graduate groups became excited when they recalled discussions with friends, critically comparing the advantages of the corporate sector over the sporting sector. The commercial sectors further outshone the sports sector with *"mentors"* (Pru and Harriet), *"bonuses and salary increments"* (Dee), *"nine-to-five jobs"*, and *"higher starting salaries"* (Dee, Tui, Milly, Harriet and Karen). Notwithstanding the obvious deficiencies of their sports positions compared with the work their friends in other sectors were doing, the graduates remained loyal, driven by their initial career motivators, their love of sport and the pleasure their jobs provided: *"Every day can be different, and that is why we stay, we love the challenge"* (Tui, Hinemoa and Lyndsay); *"Working in sport is great"* (Dee and Amelia); and *"I am in this role because I am passionate about what I do. I am not here for the money; I am here for the passion"* (Karen). Harriet was the only graduate who anticipated her circumstances would be *"more secure"* if she found employment in another sector.

### Skill acquisition through their first sport management role

The graduates' skills flourished in their first paid sport management jobs. They recognised the value of the skills, contacts and confidence acquired since graduating.

They enjoyed listing their diverse new skills:

*managing staff and resources; sport programme design and delivery; financial reporting; policy writing; writing and implementing strategic plans; funding applications; marketing and communications; managing special projects; organising and delivering competitions, tournaments and game days; coach development programmes; logistics; health and safety; and event delivery and management.*

The graduates were all aware that the skills they had developed were transferable "across codes", but only Harriet and Milly mentioned their skills being "transferable" out of the sector.

Five graduates reflected on their knowledge acquired through their degrees and the applicability of that knowledge in their workplaces:

*What I studied is so different from what you do in a sports organisation. Some of the basic principles I learnt at university were useful, such as how sports organisations work together, but you learn a lot more talking and working with them. (Harper, Hinemoa, Ann and Milly)*

Pru considered:

*Coming out of university you are a bit naïve. It took about six months until I really understood my role, the organisation and my area of the industry. At university you do not learn about work and sports politics; you have to learn that while you are working, which is challenging.*

### Self-confidence

Increased self-confidence dominated the discussions. It was evident aspects of tertiary training, WIL, volunteering and experience in paid work had grown all of the graduates' self-confidence. For 12 of the graduates, the sustained growth in self-confidence since leaving university was overwhelming. Amelia described her newly acquired self-confidence in the following anecdote:

*Coming out of university was scary ... I never had a voice going into this organisation. I now have a voice, I table my opinions, I stand my ground, and I own my role. This experience has morphed me into this person that I am*

*today. Today, I am very different from the person I was five years ago. I am a manager now, and these are my projects, and I have every right to put forward my opinions.*

Lyndsay excitedly recognised Amelia's experiences as much like her own.

*Through experience, you put forward more ideas, become more opinionated and take risks. That has benefitted me in my role. My colleagues listen to me now, my opinion is heard, and I have built a reputation. I have worked hard to get to this point. (Lyndsay)*

The other graduates displayed their increased self-confidence through a variety of comments: *"I am the event manager, managing events with thousands of people. My team brings all the service providers and key stakeholders together to put on a successful event"* (Harper); *"I organise and manage senior community competitions with nearly 200 teams in our region"* (Ann); *"My title is events and special projects. Half of my time I manage events and the other half I am my boss's understudy. She is training me to do her job"* (Hinemoa); and *"I would feel more confident applying for jobs now. I have more options within my networks and [with] my newly acquired skills"* (Dee).

Pru's confidence fluctuated in different situations within the same role. She was confident in her *"management of her commercial team"*, but felt she was being *"overlooked by executive management"*. Pru considered her non-specific skill set limited her job advancement, which in turn eroded her self-confidence.

Harriet had successfully transitioned from university to the sport management sector five years earlier, and her confidence steadily increased as she took on and successfully delivered on more demanding management and strategy roles. Harriet admitted that her confidence had declined recently. One of Harriet's young children had health issues which created stress and uncertainty around Harriet's work opportunities. Harriet described her negative thought process,

*My illogical brain sees fewer opportunities and is driven by fear and a lack of confidence, and the messages are: this will be too hard, someone else will be better than you, you do not have enough experience. My rational or logical brain sees a wider choice of opportunities than my illogical or irrational brain.*

Harriet's situation and her resilience have been challenged by external factors.

Harriet explained the prominence of confidence discussions across the groups. Her perception of low self-confidence was gendered:

*I think women are our own worst enemies; we do not think we can do many things. Most of the time, women are less confident. We devalue ourselves. Instead of thinking, "I could do this job, I am just as good as that guy", women think less of themselves. Women also like to please people and women take less risks. I am very aware of the instances and circumstances when I am more confident.*

### Security of roles

Eleven graduate salaries were covered by external funding sources, which mainly included grants, but also sponsorships and high-performance monies. Insecure external funding to cover salaries meant eight of the 11 graduates considered their roles to be vulnerable:

*At a recent staff meeting, the accountant showed funding for my salary and another woman's salary was short. The nature of being a not-for-profit organisation is that if the funding runs out, you might not have a job the next day. I am on a permanent contract, but the money can run out. (Dee)*

Karen and Bailey's situations were the same: "My salary is based on funding and grants alone. The grants cover my salary for a year, if they do not get the funding from alternate sources, I will not have a job next year" (Karen); and "I am on a permanent contract, but the funding could run out. Being the GM, I apply for the funding for me and my staff salaries. I made that very clear to anyone new whom I hire" (Bailey).

Amelia had already had two of her roles disestablished because of "non-renewed funding". Suzanne disclosed her RSO organisation "lost a major sponsor two weeks ago. Management told me, three jobs would have to go, possibly my part-time role". Amelia concurred with the view that "jobs in sport are not very secure, because of the funding", and Suzanne and Milly were adamant they "would not apply for jobs with a sport whose funding was uncertain".

Five graduates whose roles were considered more financially secure were in areas of sport development, such as the women's game and minority group engagement, and in organisations with multiple revenue streams. Lyndsay considered her role was "more secure than most. We are still trying to grow the women's game". Amelia was "reasonably secure because there is a massive push to get Pacific Islanders into

*sport and into developing healthy Pacific communities". Milly and Bailey "sourced the external funding" for their jobs, which afforded them a degree of control over and security about their future. Pru's job felt secure for different reasons: "I work for a larger not-for-profit organisation with diversified income streams. My team is responsible for bringing people in through the door".*

Despite job uncertainty attributed to insufficient funding, the graduates did not appear overly concerned. Most of the graduates had developed contacts in the sports sector and had increased their knowledge of possible jobs. Pru had seven years of work experience and had developed an extensive sport network, and she stated: *"I am confident that if I lost my current job due to funding cuts, I would be fine"*. Dee, with two and a half years of experience with an NSO, held the same view, noting that *"I have more skills and choices now"*.

The short fixed-term contract was another source of job insecurity. Harper, Ann, Amelia, and Harriet had experienced short fixed-term employment contracts during their fledgling careers. Harper and Harriet explained *"towards the end of my three-month contract I started looking for other jobs. I wanted something permanent to base future decisions on. Harriet considered her wife and children and added: "I am uncertain if I would continue working in the sports sector, the jobs are not stable enough, I need something to support my family and other sectors are more professional"*. Ann, Tui, Hinemoa and Pru would not *"apply for any jobs which were temporary. They wanted security"*.

Harper had recently provided a student with a WIL placement. Harper explained that the woman had since graduated and chosen short-term contracts at international mega-events, *"travelling from sporting event to sporting event. She enjoyed that lifestyle"*.

#### 6.5.4 Career development

A 'manager's role', ready or not?

The sample 12-month event volunteer manager's job advertisements shown to the student participants invoked different reactions among the graduates. All of the graduates acknowledged the prestige a manager's role would add to their résumé, yet

applying for a manager's role at this stage in the graduates' career met with two responses. Generally, the newer graduates were not ready to become managers, and the experienced graduates were ready for the management challenge, which corresponded to their increased experience and self-efficacy.

A reluctance to apply for managers' jobs, which resonated with the students' responses, was voiced by five of the six early career graduates – Tui, Karen, Dee, Suzanne and Ann – who had one or two years of work experience. Their preference was for roles labelled as assistant, coordinator or administrator, thereby avoiding the “sole” responsibility held by managers. Tui explained that her reluctance was because *“the manager title makes you responsible, the decision maker, on your own”*. Karen concurred with Tui and stated she would apply for a management role in another two or three years when she had more experience: *“I would feel more comfortable being the assistant manager or coordinator, not the manager. I am still in that learning phase, one year out of university”*. Dee and Suzanne perceived that *“if something goes wrong, the manager is to blame”*. Ann said that *“having a manager above you means you have a safety net”*. The recent graduates lacked experience, had under-developed self-efficacy and feared failure. These factors caused this cohort to focus on the negative eventualities and their own deficiencies rather than viewing a manager's role as a learning opportunity.

The one exception was 21-year-old Bailey, who went straight from university into a general manager's role. She announced: *“I would consider this role, even if tournaments and event hours get a bit crazy. If something goes wrong on game day, I would have to be ready right there and then to make a decision”*.

Seven graduates' role titles already contained the word ‘manager’. Five of the longer-serving graduates, who had left university between three and seven years earlier, had been promoted to the role of manager since graduating. Lyndsay had been working for five years, and although she had been promoted, she had yet to secure a job with the word ‘manager’ in the title. Lyndsay explained: *“I have had executive and coordinator roles. Getting a role and the experience at a manager's level would be amazing. I am ready for the challenge”*. Hinemoa's role was devoid of a hierarchical descriptor; her role was *“Events and Special Projects”*.

### Jobs the graduates did not want

Favoured employer organisations and codes were readily identified by the graduates. The graduates proposed avoiding jobs with councils and schools. The rationale for these perceptions included: *“bureaucracy, slow with decision making, and drawn out processes”* (Hinemoa, Tui, Bailey and Harper); and *“little room for innovation”* (Milly, Harper and Hinemoa). Suzanne applied for several jobs as a sports coordinator because the role fed into events with her sports code. Other organisations were identified as organisations to avoid because of their *“salary uncertainty”* (Suzanne, Milly, Pru, Harriet and Harper); *“male-dominated work environments”* (Harper, Milly, Karen and Pru); *“little scope to progress management and personal skills”* (Lyndsay, Dee, Bailey and Amelia); *“lack of interest, preferring to work in a code [they] knew and liked”* (Lyndsay and Hinemoa); and *“morality”* (Hinemoa).

Milly elaborated further with her experience working in a male-led sports code:

*I hated working for a professional male [sports team] in their male-dominated environment. The boards of those organisations are run by the old boys' club, and it is hard to function when your board is not on the same page with other areas in the organisation. It is especially hard being a woman in a male-dominated sport. I have seen some changes within this specific organisation, but I would probably never go back.*

Lyndsay *“worked in a traditional male code, with a large number of male staff”*; she found men *“get straight to the point and get things done”*. Lyndsay declared she *“would avoid female-dominated codes such as netball because netball has too many women”*. Lyndsay's perspective on organisations with mainly female employees involved a culture with *“gossip, politics, and cattiness”*, and a workplace where *“there would be a bit of mucking around”*. Milly quickly challenged Lyndsay's perception. Milly cited her experience in a female-enriched workplace as evidence: *“We have a staff of 12, nine women and three guys. We are all so to the point and proactive in the sports sector. I think we are all a bit tom-boyish”*.

All members of Graduate FG3 intended, for moral reasons, to avoid organisations which received significant Sport NZ or HPSNZ funding combined with low athlete participation rates. The graduates claimed a moral high ground, preferring not to work

for organisations which supported privileged athletes at the expense of community sport. Hinemoa explained:

*Canoeing is high-performance driven with a focus on one or two athletes. They only have 170 registered athletes across NZ, and they get heaps of funding. They are not community focused. They are not interested in the long game, just the short game, and who gets the money.*

Ann was the only graduate who surprised herself because she *“had never thought about jobs I would not apply for”*.

### Career progression

The graduates were all excited about their expanding work options and life prospects. Since graduating, seven of the 13 participants had been promoted, seven had changed sporting organisations, and three had moved horizontally. Eleven of the 13 graduates' roles had evolved with 'sliding door' moments, taking opportunities as they arose as opposed to pre-planned career pathways. Only two participants, Milly and Harriet, had been more strategic in their choice of roles. Milly and Harriet had selected jobs which developed the skills and knowledge they wanted to acquire to *“perform better”* (Milly) and develop my *“strategic capabilities”* (Harriet). Milly described the change in her approach to job hunting: *“When I first came out of university, I was applying for anything that was in sport”,* whereas now she was *“picky”*.

The graduates with lengthier experience were decisive and readily forthcoming with their 5- to 10-year career aspirations. Nine graduates, including some with or intending to have children, could see themselves in GM or CE roles in the next 10 to 15 years: *“A corporate management role such as a GM or CE”* (Harriet, Karen, Pru, Lyndsay, Amelia, Hinemoa and Tui); and *“Get more commercial experience and scale the event operations corporate ladder”* (Harper and Milly). The remaining four graduates were less intent on climbing the hierarchy. Instead they wanted to: *“Manage events for [my code's] NSO”* (Suzanne); *“Finish my Masters”* (Bailey); *“Have a community-based role and work outside with people and have a good family and work balance”* (Ann); and *“Work in high performance sport”* (Dee).

The four graduates most decisive about their career direction were Hinemoa, Pru, Dee and Milly. Hinemoa, 26, pregnant with her first child, claimed any job change would have to be

*people based, in Māori physical health or mental wellbeing, getting my people active, and making an impact on my community. Something that makes a difference rather than high performance sport. Possibly a CE role without the hours. I wanted to work for Sport NZ when I first graduated, but I am not sure Sport NZ is the place to make a difference.*

The second member of this group, Pru, had worked with the one organisation for eight years and was promoted to management status after four years. She aspired to “work in human resources or secure a GM role and work towards becoming a CE. I also intend to work on some boards” (Pru). Dee had planned her working future:

*This role has been a really good start. I have made some great contacts in NSOs, RSTs and Sport NZ. I am doing my honours part-time, I might do a doctorate, and I want to get into high performance.*

Milly was focused on developing her “commercial acumen” and working towards “a GM or CE role”.

Six graduates recognised the need to further themselves academically. Milly and Amelia identified that postgraduate management studies had already assisted their successful promotion. Bailey and Dee were part-way through their postgraduate studies. Dee also had eyes on “doing a doctorate”. Lyndsay was contemplating “a GM role in sport. To get there, I probably need postgraduate studies and more of a business background”, and Pru needed “some postgraduate human resource training”.

## 6.6 The NZ sports sector

### 6.6.1 Job barriers

#### Lack of diversity

Milly was aware that the country’s sports sector had become a more professional sporting environment than the one she had participated in during her childhood. Milly compared her experiences across two decades: “The professionalism in sport management in NZ is starting to grow. There has been a big shift [since my childhood]”. However, diversity in sport management had not made significant progress.

The graduates were aware of and disgruntled with the lack of diversity on boards. In particular, they identified inequities in gender, race and age. Hinemoa recounted with disbelief her attendance at a Sport NZ conference; she was frustrated by and somewhat cynical about what she observed:

*They were talking about diversity, I looked around the room, and the make-up of the room did not reflect the diversity discussion. The attendees were 60-year-old European male clones, talking to themselves about the same thing. They are not going to change; it is like talking to a brick wall. Eventually, it will be a new generation, with a new perspective, people with an open mind, and that is exciting. Being a Māori, it is a little bit different, cool different, with a new perspective. (Hinemoa)*

Milly “*absolutely hated*” her WIL experience because of the male-dominated environment and the “*old boys’ club*” mentality. Several years have passed since her internship and, despite noticing some changes in the organisation’s culture, she emphatically stated she would never consider returning, even with the prestige the organisation would add to her résumé. The heads of the other participants resolutely nodded, and stories of similar experiences flowed readily.

Gender formal inequality on boards and in senior executive roles was the most commonly recognised issue raised by the graduates, and some graduates were angry about it. The graduates blamed “*the older white males that were stubborn in their ways*” (Pru, Harper and Hinemoa) for slowing “*progress and change*” (Hinemoa), “*limiting their inclusion*” (Harper) or blocking “*their promotions*” (Pru). Confused, the graduates tried to find reasons for this situation. Harper, Ann, Milly, Harriet and Pru contemplated their experiences of all-white, all-male, senior sport management and suggested “*men appoint men because they identify with their male traits*”, “*male bias of women being the main childcare provider*”, “*women lack the confidence to apply for executive positions*” and “*men get ahead, by promoting their agenda and their voice gets heard*”.

The graduate's university programmes had an “*equitable gender split*” (Tui, Pru, Karen, Milly and Dee), and the women started exploring the gender ratios in sports codes in an attempt to explain the differences. “*Rowing, hockey and baseball are 50:50 men and women*” (Suzanne and Dee), and “*rugby and cricket are male sports and are resource-rich, and netball is more women, but their resources are a lot less*” (Dee).

Within her RSO role, Lyndsay found *“more resources go into the men’s game when the women are the ones performing”*. The graduates were perplexed since none of the suggestions appeared to explain the prevalence of the gender disparity on boards and in senior executive positions. Two comments appeared to shed light on the situation: *“Sport NZ still has more males”* (Harriet, Pru, Harper and Hinemoa), and *“despite women breaking into senior executive roles, a lot of lower-level administrators are women”* (Harriet).

The graduates complained about *“being disrespected by people that have a ‘historical’ perception of how women should conduct themselves and operate at work”* (Pru); *“feeling silenced by men”* (Ann, Amelia and Pru); *“being excluded”* (Pru and Harper); and *“feeling invisible and ignored as younger women”* (Pru, Hinemoa, and Harper). Ann explained that *“guys are friendly with guys, so you help your mates [get promoted]”* and Hinemoa added *“boards, gendered interview panels and CEs in sport subconsciously appoint like-minded people”*. Harriet’s response echoed Hinemoa’s remark, but Harriet also claimed: *“The people hiring clearly think the person they hired is the best person, sometimes the beer goggles override their decision”*.

Two graduates spoke of resorting to manipulative tactics when dealing with ‘old school’ thinking among men in senior management. Pru and Amelia used the same style of tactics which included: implying that other senior males within the organisation *“backed their ideas”*, *“introducing ideas and directing discussions”* so senior male colleagues would consider the women’s ideas were, in fact, their own (Amelia); and seeking the *“support of male colleagues”* before meetings (Pru).

The women from Graduate FG3 appeared beaten by this issue; then, suddenly, Ann sat upright and excitedly told the group, *“Oh, we have got a woman in senior management, and our new CE he is quite young, he is in his 40s, and our new commercial manager is in his mid-30s”*. Other graduates began to smile, remembering some job advertisements wanted *“someone that was fresh”* (Ann and Tui).

### Promotions

A general feeling across the graduate focus groups was an expectation that their future promotions would be based on their performance and not their gender. Dee, Harper, Hinemoa, Ann and Harriet anticipated *“gender would be irrelevant in 10 years with the*

*next generation coming through and then promotions would be based on personal skills and performance*". Karen expected equal representation within the "next 15 to 20 years", and Pru's time frame was "in the next 20-40 years". Amelia was surprised; she claimed equality already reigned in her RST organisation. She explained that, in her organisation, work "progression, is not about being female or male, it is about proving yourself and your experience. My CE, she has created a culture that feeds equality down" (Amelia).

Pru described her frustration with her limited chances of promotion. She attributed this to her "board being male, white and old". Pru considered herself doubly disadvantaged by her gender and age. Amelia and Lyndsay considered age as opposed to gender was limiting their career progression, saying "age is a massive barrier". Both women had a sense of having to "over-prove" themselves and felt powerless to challenge the status quo. Milly claimed she had moved beyond the level where gender, age, and hair colour were her limitations:

*As a woman, when I first started out it took a while to get to that level of respect, now I have the respect. When you are a young woman with blond hair working for a male-dominated organisation with players that are men, it was quite hard to get respect from other people within that organisation. Eventually, when you have earned that respect, things change.*

#### Quotas and equal representation

All the graduates recognised that equal opportunity did not exist for women in NZ sport management. The graduates saw employment and promotion were influenced by gender and age and did not entirely reflect an individual's skill set; they hoped the future would be different. Harper acknowledged the likelihood that she will increasingly encounter gender resistance climbing the organisational ladder. Irrespective of the inequality, Pru and Dee were averse to gender affirmative representation policies or quotas. They claimed to want their appointments to be based on "skills and being the right person for the job" (Dee), and "not [being] the token female to get the numbers up" (Pru). Pru and Dee also believed society was changing, and women were becoming more equal.

## 6.6.2 Influential industry people

### Networking

The majority of graduates mentioned supportive people and networking as possible antecedents to their employment. The graduates recognised many sport management jobs were not advertised but were filled by connections within networks. Lyndsay explained that *“the NZ sports industry is so small, we all probably know someone who knows someone, and they influence where you end up”*. Dee earnestly summed up the point that WIL opportunities and working in the sector were great ways to *“build contacts which would help career progression”*.

Harriet's home life uncertainty meant she held residual concerns over her next job. The other graduates were not nervous about getting another job because of *“the connections [we] have made”*, and *“the skills we have learnt”*. Milly cited herself as a perfect example:

*I got a call from someone in my networks, he was a CE in the sports industry and he suggested I apply for a role. More sports organisations in NZ are waiting for the right person. There are a lot of word-of-mouth referrals, someone recommending someone you know is good and works hard.*

Milly recognised the power of networking extended beyond employment and she explained:

*I would like to see more opportunities to network and learn within the sports industry, especially with people doing similar roles to you. It does not need to be in the same code, because there are similar issues across codes. There are more networking opportunities in governance, CE and leadership levels, but there is nothing in that middle management area.*

The enthusiasm of the workplace discussions which took place during the graduate focus groups supported the scope of networking initiatives.

### Influential women

Women breaking through the management ranks and being the 'first' women in specific sports executive positions was exciting for the graduates. The graduates relished their successes and were excited to see women entering male-dominated domains. Milly elaborated *“Raelene Castle would probably be my role model. She is the first woman to be a CE in the NRL. It is just good to see that women can get there,”* and

Tui, Pru, Bailey and Dee concurred: *“An RSO in our area had appointed its first ever female CE. She has shown me there are opportunities for females everywhere, even in male-dominated sports”*. The visibility of successful, senior women and women in governance roles had created the precedent which suggested that these graduates have increasing choices. Karen claimed: *“It shows that [as a woman] you can get to that top level in sport, the landscape is changing. Ten or 15 years ago, you would not have had a female CE at some sports organisations”*.

Ten graduates – Pru, Ann, Milly, Karen, Bailey, Tui, Suzanne, Hinemoa, Amelia and Dee – had encountered female role models and mentors in their university studies, WIL placements or daily sport management interactions, and these women were: lecturers; CEs of RSOs, NSOs, and a PBE; a line manager; and a board member. Five graduates mentioned being influenced by their female lecturers to: *“volunteer”* (Karen, Bailey, Tui, Dee and Milly); *“love business and sport management”* (Pru and Harriet); and *“develop a passion for nutrition”* (Ann). No graduates mentioned being influenced by their male lecturers.

Karen and Milly sought jobs in their employer organisation based on the fact they had female CEs: *“I chose my role simply to learn her leadership style and observe how she leads. She is a very good role model”* (Milly). Tui and Karen were delighted their *“CE was a woman”*, and Tui further described interactions with her CE were *“like talking to a good friend”*.

Suzanne worked with her inspiring mentor. *“She has absolutely been there for me when I have had questions and needed advice or help”* (Suzanne), and Hinemoa claimed:

*She is a workhorse, a CE and is an ISO president. She works selflessly. She makes you feel like you have to do the same, giving [your job] everything you have got. She is amazing and cool. She flies over the top of barriers, and we follow her. She says jump, and we say how high?*

Milly and Amelia remarked on how their current, strongly female organisation led by a female CE made them feel *“female opinions are valid, really important and influential”*.

The power of their female mentors and role models and the awe which emanated from the graduates as they disclosed their admiration was overwhelming.

Pru said she felt silenced in her organisation's old-school, male environment. However, she was encouraged by a female board member's assertive interaction with the men on her board. Pru recalled with awe: *"The men listened. The way male executives responded to her was so refreshing and inspirational."* In that brief moment, the graduate experienced an alternate reality, albeit someone else's, and she identified a possibility for herself, a chance to act differently. Pru explained:

*I watched her lead, and I evaluated her leadership style. I chose my role so that I can learn from her. I want to be like her and act confidently without being ignored. I want her to be my mentor.*

### Influential men

One male manager and mentor greatly influenced Amelia's career, and his guidance helped her to grow her self-confidence. Amelia described how her progressive and non-traditional male line manager had coached and encouraged her to:

*Find my voice, voice my opinion and put my ideas forward, stand my ground and own my role. His encouragement and guidance have morphed me into this person that I am today. Five years ago, I definitely would not have been the person I am today. He has had a massive influence in mentoring me.*

Her male manager's reassurance helped to expand Amelia's skills and confidence, which enabled her work competency to take flight. Amelia's persona in the focus group was calm, direct, proud, clear, and self-confident. Amelia's sport management role required her to *"provide opportunities and mentoring"* for young Pacific Island women.

The actions of male colleague champions, challenging the inequitable *"treatment of women"*, were reported by Pru and Ann, and gave the graduates 'hope'.

*I think about my male colleagues and how annoyed they get when females get treated the way we do. At some point, they will be the CEs and on the board with a gender-inclusive attitude. At that point, 20, 30 or 40 years away, I do not think gender will be an issue. (Pru)*

The other graduate was jubilant when she stated, *"a few of the guys in my team are my age, plus our boss, he is 40, and they are all keen for change towards diversity and inclusivity"* (Ann).

### 6.6.3 Children and parenting

#### Factoring in parenting

The graduates' discussions indicated women in heterosexual relationships were generally the partner with the key responsibility for raising the children, and in same-sex partner relationships, the role was negotiated. *"Child caring is predominantly done by the mum"* (Harriet). All of the graduates without children anticipated having children and had a sense of navigating a family and their work: *"Children are definitely on my horizon in the next 5 to 10 years. I would choose a part-time or a full-time sport management job that enabled me to manage both home and work"* (Karen, Dee, Bailey, Tui, Milly and Lyndsay). Ann already indicated she would not return to her role within an RSO role as *"the hours were too demanding with a young baby or child"*, and not conducive to being a parent.

Four women preferred staying at home for longer than the paid parental leave period.<sup>14</sup> Amelia, Lyndsay, Karen and Tui expected to *"take a couple of years off to raise the children"*, and they also did not anticipate returning to a sport management job to be a hurdle. Lyndsay explained, *"I think I have proven myself at work and I have created the networks needed to re-enter the workforce after children"*. All of the graduates in heterosexual relationships saw themselves as the traditional main child caregiver.

Harriet, at 28 years-of-age, was in a same-sex marriage and a mother of two children. Before having children Harriet was focused on scaling the corporate ladder, and becoming a CE as quickly as possible, but becoming a mother transformed her values. Harriet's wife birthed their children and Harriet had continued working. One of their children's demanding health issues required one parent to be the main income earner and the other to provide household and childcaring roles. *"I am currently in a position where we need to have a parent at home"* (Harriet). Harriet had recently swapped roles with her wife because she *"had been unable to secure another contract after her recent fixed-term sport management contract finished"*.

Pru was also 28 years of age, a mother of one and pregnant with her second. Pru chose to return to her management role after giving birth and taking *"12 weeks paid parental*

---

<sup>14</sup> Paid parental leave in NZ during 2017 covered 22 paid weeks for the primary carer.

leave" followed by "28 weeks maternity leave". Pru had negotiated reduced working hours, and her organisation had "increased her hourly rate". Pru proudly stated that "flexible working hours are a new thing" for her organisation. At the time of the graduate focus groups, Hinemoa, Amelia and Ann were pregnant with their first babies.

The repercussions for women taking time away from the workforce to have and raise children concerned all of the graduate focus group members. Harriet and Karen claimed: "If a woman takes time out of the workforce to raise children, she is missing out on that one to three years' experience, so men would have three years more experience to climb the [career] ladder", and "Men do not interrupt their careers" (Harper and Ann); and "Guys get that bit further ahead with their careers" (Tui). Nonetheless, irrespective of parenting choices, all the graduates held similar aspirations to "stay within sport management" for the long term in some capacity after having a family.

Milly and the four other participants in Graduate FG3 named three NZ women sports CEs who had successfully created a family work-life balance. The graduates believed it was possible for a working mother in sport management to "be a CE". Milly had already planned "if I were going to have children I would learn from my CE and how she structured and managed her life". Milly painted the picture of her perception of an ideal parenting and working landscape for the other participants to see. Milly considered a man's response to parenting: "I could not see a male CE going home to look after his kids between those hours".

The five members of Graduate FG3 enthusiastically recounted their admiration of their three CE role models. They described these women as "superwomen" (Harriet) or "wonder women" (Bailey and Karen) who were "incredible" (Dee) in successfully juggling work and family. Tui explained: "Our local RSO appointed its first ever woman CE. She is over 30 and has two children. She manages amazingly". Harriet was awe-inspired with the other CE's "management of her kids, and her CE's position". Karen described the women as being

*great role models for every female, showing you can get to that top level in sport. Showing sport is changing. Ten or 15 years ago a woman would not have been appointed as the CE of an RSO in bowls or rugby league.*

The graduates' recollections about female sport managers and CEs successfully juggling family and work demonstrated the significant effect role-modelling and mentoring could have on career formation. The graduates' stories also highlighted how those sports managers' ways of being reflected the behaviours and choices the graduates identified as relevant and admirable, and how the graduates' sense of worth and belief was furthered by the accomplished women leaders in their lives.

## 6.7 Chapter summary

This chapter identified some of the factors of the graduates' past and current experiences which I interpreted as particularly significant to decisions around sport management careers. Decisions made and actions taken were an interpretation of the graduates' lived experiences and meanings made from those experiences. Across the experiences of growing up, family and sport emerged as strong determinants of the graduates' propensity to study and work in the sports sector. The women's motivation was sharing their love for sport and enabling others to enjoy what they had experienced. Since graduating and entering the sport management workforce, the women recognised the networks they had developed, the skills they had crafted, and the self-confidence they had grown. However, these women had a growing disillusionment with some sports people and organisations which had provided their childhoods with so much joy.

The next chapter explores the experiences of long-standing sport management practitioners in the NZ sports sector.

## Chapter 7 Findings: Sport management practitioners' voices

This chapter presents the findings from interviews with the practitioner group of 12 women, each of whom had more than seven years of sport management experience in NZ. The nature of this chapter differs from the voices of the students and graduates in the two preceding findings chapters in that the practitioners' voices in this chapter, given their years of experience, talk more frankly. Firstly, I report aspects of the practitioners' upbringing, which they consider have impacted upon them working in sport management. Secondly, the focus shifts to the personal attributes of the practitioners that they described as impacting upon their careers in sport management until the interviews took place in 2017. Finally, the lens shifts to the women's perceptions of the industry where they have worked. Throughout this chapter, the practitioners provide advice for early professional women in sport management and the sport management sector as a whole.

### 7.1 Meet the sport management practitioners

The practitioners interviewed for this research began to enter the NZ sports sector after 1988. At that time, the sector was not professional, nor did any definitive sport management career pathways exist. Sport management university programmes only emerged in NZ in 1992. Previously, many women who were interested in a sports career enrolled in a University of Otago three-year undergraduate PE degree with the intention of becoming a PE teacher. Three practitioners taught for a few years and then left teaching to pursue sport management roles while the industry was in its fledgling stage.

These early-entry practitioners found themselves in new roles, often within recently created sports organisations. The 'newness' gave the practitioners significant scope to shape their roles. Competition for sport management positions was limited, the roles lacked credibility, and sport management had no track record as a viable work option. To illustrate, Raphaella applied for her first sports management role with a sport RST in 1988 *"when sporting trusts were first evolving"*. Isobel's first role was *"the Netball Development Officer for [a region] ... in the 1980s"*. Olivia merged her corporate experience and sport. She stated that *"when I started the sports industry was infantile and where I have progressed to was not on the horizon, and it certainly was not*

*planned. No one was doing then, what I am doing now.*" In the 1990s, with a combination of the evolving sports sector and the emergence of the first sport management graduates, a more linear sport management career pathway started to emerge. By the end of the 1990s, eight of the practitioners worked in management roles within NZ sport. Interviewees were attributed pseudonyms.

Table 7.1: Herstory and family background of the practitioners

Name	Age range Ethnicity	Work / sport / family now / quotes	Herstory
Edna	31-35 NZ European	<p>Family: Single, with no children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Three tertiary diplomas.</p> <p>Work: Outdoor instruction, ski patrol and operations management.</p> <p>Organisations: School, outdoor PBEs and for-profit.</p> <p>Current role: Operations manager.</p> <p>Volunteer now: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Run, bike, white water kayak, tramping and skiing.</p> <p><i>"Be confident and believe in yourself, which is often women's biggest downfall."</i></p>	<p>Edna was from a large South Island metropolitan area. She described her family as loving and stable. Edna had two parents and an older sister and younger brother. Growing up, her family was active in recreation and the outdoors. They hiked, skied, fished and pursued a variety of water sports at their coastal bach. She had been with her current organisation for seven years. The organisation's core business was personal development within an outdoor setting and required her to live in a remote part of NZ. Edna's dream was to work in the Antarctic.</p>
Raye	36-40 New Zealander	<p>Family: Married, a husband and two children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Business psychology.</p> <p>Work: Sport code development, team manager and strategic planning.</p> <p>Organisations: RSO, European NSO, a European and A NZ RST.</p> <p>Current role: Community sport manager, and senior executive.</p> <p>Volunteer now: Sports team manager.</p> <p>Athlete now: Sports code.</p> <p><i>"I like to push myself outside my comfort zone. I always want to evolve, learn and experience new opportunities."</i></p> <p><i>"Everyone has equal rights, or should do ... it comes down to the individual, their drive and self-belief."</i></p>	<p>Raye grew up rurally on the fringe of a small Northland town. She attended a decile one rural area high school. Raye followed in her mother's sports code footsteps, and they both played the same sport during her childhood. Raye represented NZ at a Masters level in sport. Her grandfather was a national coach, her uncle was an Olympian, and her cousin was a national and international representative. Her family motto was <i>"do what you love"</i>. At the time of the interview, Raye lived on a lifestyle block near a remote rural South Island township.</p>

Name	Age range Ethnicity	Work / sport / family now / quotes	Herstory
Sigrid	51-55 Māori / Chinese	<p>Family: Married, a husband and three children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Psychology.</p> <p>Work: Community development, health promotion, co-ordination and management, Māori development and sport strategy.</p> <p>Organisations: Health board, RST and a crown agency.</p> <p>Current role: Manager of targeted populations.</p> <p>Volunteer now: Coach and committee member.</p> <p>Athlete now: No.</p> <p><i>"I wanted to be proactive for the community and not the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff."</i></p>	<p>Sigrid was born in a metropolitan area in the North Island. Her Chinese mother and her Māori father both came from sporty families. Sigrid had two older brothers and a younger sister, a large extended family and a close relationship with her father's family. The family's sports code, Māoridom and the Rātana church dominated her childhood. Following in her brother's footsteps, at 17 years of age, Sigrid spent one year at high school in America on a sport scholarship. Sigrid and her husband have shared the raising of their children and being the main income earner. Sigrid shifted from health to sport when she was in her 40s. At the time of the interview, Sigrid lived away from home for work and commuted home weekly. Her husband looked after their youngest child during the weekdays.</p>
Olivia	46-50 NZ Pākehā	<p>Family: Married, a husband and two children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Specialised commerce.</p> <p>Work: Management, contractor, consultant, governance, strategy, writing constitutions and specialist business advisor.</p> <p>Organisations: For-profit, NSOs, RSOs, athlete advisor and ISOs.</p> <p>Current role: Corporate sport specialist.</p> <p>Volunteer now: ISO boards.</p> <p>Athlete now: Tramping and recreating.</p> <p><i>"I am not the sort of person to let an opportunity go by."</i></p> <p><i>"I never felt discriminated against, but in reflection, as a woman, I was treated differently."</i></p>	<p>Olivia was raised in a semi-urban North Island town on a half-hectare block with an array of sporting facilities and equipment. Olivia's family was very active and sporty. Her mum played sport until Olivia was 10 years of age, and her dad coached sport. She had one older, very competitive and competent sporty brother. Her parents were teachers. As a child, Olivia was encouraged to take every opportunity, dance, music, drama and sport, which she embraced successfully.</p>

Name	Age range Ethnicity	Work / sport / family now / quotes	Herstory
Phoebe	46-50 European – 32 <sup>nd</sup> Māori	<p>Family: Married, a husband and no children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Commerce.</p> <p>Work: CEO, governance, management and administration, sales, finance now and strategy.</p> <p>Organisations: For-profit commerce, NSO and an international sport franchise.</p> <p>Current role: CEO.</p> <p>Volunteer now: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: No.</p> <p><i>"I have an innate competitive spirit, I like winning".</i></p> <p><i>"I could use my commercial experience to actually make a difference in a sport".</i></p>	<p>Phoebe was raised in a North Island metropolitan area. She and her older brother were the only children of two sports representative parents and lived in a family littered with sport. Her mother worked in commerce and her father was a builder. Phoebe had a very independent childhood, encouraged to do things for herself and in the process built 'life skills'. Her family's attitude was <i>"be the best you can be"</i>. She always wanted to work in sport and considered a commercial grounding was her best avenue.</p>
Lizzie	51-55 Pākehā	<p>Family: Single, and no children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Secretary and commerce.</p> <p>Work: Secretarial, human resources, finance, legal and IT.</p> <p>Organisations: NSO and PBEs.</p> <p>Current role: Operations manager.</p> <p>Volunteer now: RSO board.</p> <p>Athlete now: No.</p> <p><i>"Mum and dad did not see the need for me to go to university."</i></p> <p><i>"I never think I am quite good enough."</i></p>	<p>Lizzie was raised in a North Island metropolitan area where her parents operated a small business. She had four older brothers and was the only daughter. She played a variety of childhood sports. Her family liked to watch sport while she was growing up. Her parents were both traditional and much older, and her family life was very patriarchal. Lizzie attended a Catholic school where the careers girls were encouraged to pursue included teaching, nursing, or secretarial work. After leaving school, Lizzie initially trained as a secretary, she subsequently retrained in commerce. Her four brothers left school and trained and worked in commerce.</p>

Name	Age range Ethnicity	Work / sport / family now / quotes	Herstory
Nancy	40-45 European	<p>Family: Married, a husband and two children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Sport science and administration.</p> <p>Work: Disabled athlete advisor, educator, operations manager and leadership.</p> <p>Organisations: RST and PBEs.</p> <p>Current role: CEO.</p> <p>Volunteer now: International and national boards and committees.</p> <p>Athlete now: Walks and cycles.</p> <p><i>"In my leadership role, I aspire to change society to ensure there is an equitable society for everyone."</i></p>	<p>Nancy was born and raised in rural Europe. She was educated through until the end of her university studies in Europe.</p> <p>Nancy came from a non-sporty, two-parent family, and she had two sisters and one brother. She loved sport throughout school and represented her country in sport, which made her family very proud. Initially, Nancy hoped to become a PE teacher, but an internship with a disabled girl changed her career direction. Nancy came to NZ in her 30's. Nancy took six months of maternity leave from her current CEO job to have her two children.</p>
Penelope	51-55 NZ European	<p>Family: Married, a husband, one older stepdaughter and two children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: No.</p> <p>Work: GM, CEO and governance.</p> <p>Organisations: Regional government, regional sport franchise, RSO and an NSO.</p> <p>Current role: CEO.</p> <p>Volunteer now: Chair of two boards – RSO and a PBE.</p> <p>Athlete now: No.</p> <p><i>"I had no plan or interest to work in sport management."</i></p> <p><i>"I realised there are pink jobs and blue jobs in New Zealand sport."</i></p>	<p>Penelope grew up on a South Island farm with her parents and two sisters. They drove tractors, baled hay, and drenched sheep. Penelope went to an all-girls school where she played netball. There were no other sports in Penelope's family life, and she had no interest in working in the sporting sector. Penelope had worked in sport management with an RSO before she and her husband moved from the South Island to a North Island metropolitan area for another role with an RSO.</p>

Name	Age range Ethnicity	Work / sport / family now / quotes	Herstory
Raphaella	56-60 New Zealander	<p>Family: Married, a husband and no children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: PE, teacher training and commercial administration.</p> <p>Work: Teacher, administration, high performance, Director, GM, CEO and governance.</p> <p>Organisations: School, RST, crown agency, NSO and a PBE.</p> <p>Current role: CEO.</p> <p>Volunteer now: National and international high-profile positions.</p> <p>Athlete now: Recreating, sports code, exercising.</p> <p><i>"I know the rules of rugby, and I can talk rugby. I think it helps."</i></p> <p><i>"This role gives me a platform ... I am confident to use my voice."</i></p>	<p>Raphaella grew up on a South Island farm with two parents, four brothers, and one sister. She played rugby with her siblings, rode her horse, and was totally immersed in childhood sport. Farming life gave her a <i>"no barrier"</i> worldview. The first time Raphaella became aware of major differences for boys and girls was by studying sport sociology at university.</p>
Ngaire	41-45 Pākehā	<p>Family: Single, and no children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Commerce and sport management.</p> <p>Work: Administration, event management, management, strategy and governance.</p> <p>Organisations: RST, NSO and an ISO.</p> <p>Current role: CEO.</p> <p>Volunteer now: President of ISO and board member.</p> <p>Athlete now: Sports code.</p> <p><i>"When I do something, I do it 100%."</i></p> <p><i>"I have never had a job interview."</i></p> <p><i>"At Sport NZ meetings there are more women, but that is where diversity stops."</i></p>	<p>Ngaire was born an only child in the 1970s to parents who held strong equality beliefs and practices. Ngaire played lots of childhood sport. Her grandmother was a national netball representative. Ngaire completed a 400-hour WIL placement as part of her university studies which turned into a full-time paid role. Her two applications for sport governance and leadership training were declined twice by Sport NZ. Ngaire had rewritten her sport code's constitution and managed her sport's code into a financially viable position.</p>

Name	Age range Ethnicity	Work / sport / family now / quotes	Herstory
Zoe	56-60 NZ European Pākehā	<p>Family: Divorced, and one adult child.</p> <p>Tertiary study: PE, teaching and commerce.</p> <p>Work: PE teaching, sports coordination, management, strategy, CEO and governance.</p> <p>Organisations: schools, commercial, council, crown agency, RST and PBEs.</p> <p>Current role: Senior management.</p> <p>Volunteer now: Board.</p> <p>Athlete now: Sports code.</p> <p><i>"We were not expected to be housewives."</i></p>	<p>Zoe grew up semi-rurally on the fringe of a large North Island metropolitan area. Both parents worked, and Zoe, the eldest of three girls, was responsible for getting her sisters to school in the morning. Her parents and grandparents were sporty, and Zoe was a regional sports representative. She trained in PE, had a child and then completed her teacher training.</p>
Isobel	46-50 NZ European	<p>Family: Married, a husband and two children.</p> <p>Tertiary study: Arts and teaching.</p> <p>Work: Teaching, sport development, management, strategy and governance.</p> <p>Organisations: school, RST and a PBE.</p> <p>Current role: CEO.</p> <p>Volunteer now: No.</p> <p>Athlete now: Sports code and exercising.</p> <p><i>"When there are females that are not putting up their hands, I do not quite get it."</i></p> <p><i>"I just saw the job, applied for it and got it ... Whether I had the skills and experience or not."</i></p>	<p>Isobel was raised in a metropolitan area in the North Island. She had a hectic, sporty and active family life, participating in guides, and sport and active recreation. Isobel's family message growing up was: if you want to do it, then just <u>do</u> it. She had a family sports code, which meant she was playing, coaching and umpiring from childhood. Her mother worked in sports management. She attended a feminist all-girls school which fuelled her feminist stance. Isobel successfully applied for her first CEO role at 27 years of age. She took 5-6 weeks of maternity leave after birthing each of her two children.</p>

## 7.2 Practitioners' upbringing - Experiences and interpretations

The practitioners saw their childhood experiences as influencing their sport management work choices. Unlike the students and graduates in the two earlier chapters, the practitioners' longer life experience and greater opportunity for reflection meant they were more emphatic in identifying important aspects of their upbringing and sporting experiences which had shaped their values, self-confidence and careers.

### 7.2.1 How my family shaped my worldview - Confidence is in my DNA

Family materialised as a significant location for practitioners' meaning-making. Prominent childhood familial experiences identified by the practitioners which shaped their understanding of life were their participation in diverse extra-curricular activities, where they lived, values and family role models, and family perceptions around equality and culture.

#### Family culture and activities shaped my confidence

Childhood was full of a multitude of extra-curricular activities for the practitioners. All made specific mention of being 'busy' in their formative years, and had assumed that *"all [NZ] families were busy"* while they were growing up. Busy childhoods meant a variety of: *"sports participation"* (all participants); *"volunteering"* (Isobel, Olivia, Sigrid, Raye, Phoebe and Zoe), *"outdoor recreating"* (Edna and Olivia), music, *"farm activities"* (Raphaella, Zoe and Penelope), family chores, arts, church, clubs such as *"Girl Guides, and Duke of Edinburgh Award"* activities (Isobel), and *"caring for siblings"* (Zoe). Isobel drew attention to her *"privileged upbringing"* and was aware *"other people were not as privileged"*.

Edna and Lizzie enjoyed sport but, unlike the other practitioners, Edna and Lizzie did not disclose any life-long messages gleaned from their involvement in sport. The other 10 practitioners' worldviews were strongly impacted by their extra-curricular activities. Olivia *"was always encouraged to take opportunities, make the most of them and see what happened. Through my upbringing, I developed a 'no barrier to sport, no barrier to life' concept"*. Phoebe explained how her engagement with childhood activities opened doors for her to successfully master the innate and very Kiwi, *"Number 8 wire fence"* mentality, knowing how *"to fix stuff, not being afraid to get [my] hands dirty"*

*and solving problems. Experiences, and success within those experiences, build confidence”.*

Childhood family aspirational messages evolved around extra-curricular activities: *“never doubt your ability”* (Isobel, Phoebe, Raye and Zoe), *“a can-do attitude”* (Phoebe, Olivia, Ngaire and Penelope), *“get back on the horse”* (Olivia and Raphaella), *“winning is an expectation”* (Raye and Phoebe), *“make the most of the opportunities”* (Nancy, Olivia and Sigrid), and *“girls can do anything”* (Isobel, Penelope, Zoe, Raphaella, Phoebe and Ngaire). Phoebe’s parents reinforced her participation with *“strive to be the best that you can be. ... It does not matter whether you are playing sport, studying or cooking dinner ... you just want to do it to the best of your capability”*. Ten of the 12 practitioners acknowledged their lifelong confident disposition had roots embedded in their upbringing.

Perceived gender equality was affirmed within five practitioner families, and 10 of the 12 practitioners stipulated they were treated the same as the boys. Olivia claimed *“we never discussed gender in our house, there was no girl’s sport or boy’s sport, it was simply sport”* and Phoebe’s father *“was a builder and he taught me how to swing a hammer no differently than he taught my brother”*. Growing up, Penelope *“did not experience gender discrimination. I left my home environment knowing without a doubt, girls can do anything. I had been protected”*, with Raphaella, Zoe, and Nancy expressing similar sentiments. Ngaire described how she was brought up to *“never doubt my ability. Now, even in a room full of males, I do not feel inferior”*, and Isobel had experienced a similar family culture.

Edna and Lizzie experienced periods of self-doubt. Edna explained:

*I have reasonable confidence, I am good at what I do, but we are not taught to say we are good at something; maybe it was my parents. I have still got massive insecurities, and it does not take a lot to knock my confidence.*

Lizzie had experienced periods of *“self-doubt”* which she noted had restricted her career progression. She was the youngest child of five and the only daughter. She felt her upbringing had been gendered. While encouraged to play sport which her parents came to watch, her parents held very gendered work expectations for Lizzie, which were very different to her four older brothers. *“My older brothers went to university ...*

*But mum and dad did not see the need. One of my brothers suggested I should go to university, but my parents disagreed” (Lizzie). Lizzie’s Catholic school and parents determined her job options; they were different from her brothers, and limited to teaching, nursing or secretarial work.*

#### Being Māori shaped my worldview

Sigrid’s Māori and Chinese background and the Rātana Church<sup>15</sup> shaped the “*values and life philosophies*” which she holds as an adult. Sigrid’s Māori worldview, her understanding of Atua and her parents’ influence were central to her “*finding her place in the world*”. “*Balance*” – centred on family, sport and work, but also encompassing [substantive] equality, harmony and empathy – was an “*imperative*” for Sigrid’s wellbeing. She also described “*the growing thread over my work to be connected to Māori development in some way*”. Walking in two worlds provided Sigrid with multiple insights and unique perspectives which were not available to non-Māori practitioners: “*I wear many hats at any given time, which provides me with a holistic picture of sport by weaving them all together*”.

#### Where we lived shaped my confidence

Where someone lives is more complex than their simple geographic location, as it is a place of experiential, social and historical nuances. Two practitioners who were raised on farms found the freedom of rural life significantly shaped their lives.

*I grew up playing rugby with [my four brothers and sister], riding a horse and being on the farm. I was totally immersed in sport and outdoor life. Living in the country, you do not have any sense that there are any barriers. My upbringing impacted how I approach life and the opportunities I see.  
(Raphaella)*

Penelope’s rural upbringing meant no gendered job segregation; everyone ‘pitched in’: “*My sisters and I grew up on a sheep farm, and we were expected to do anything and everything. We drove tractors, drenched sheep, dug drains and baled hay*”.

Geography also influenced the sport that the practitioners could play. Formal seasonal sport with a structured competition format was played mainly by the urban families.

---

<sup>15</sup> Rātana Church founded by Tahupotiki Wiremu Rātana, a Methodist Māori farmer and healer, is an interdenominational Christian church with a political stance to redress land confiscations and breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi, and to unite Māori tribes.

By contrast, in rural families, it was more common to be involved in informal sport, with casual and intermittent participation, riding bikes and horses or playing rugby in the backyard. Only Edna's suburban family identified non-formal outdoor recreation as opposed to sport. Edna's family holiday home was coastal and remote, which led to her family being "very outdoorsy". Her family preferred extracurricular activities of "water skiing, swimming, hiking, and fishing".

#### We had strong family role models

Female family members emerged as important sources of childhood influence for two practitioners. Isobel and Zoe recalled being positively influenced by their mother's "hard work" ethic. Zoe admired her mother's commitment to her teaching career.

*My mum was a career teacher and went back to teaching when my youngest sister turned five. I was 10, and I looked after my sisters. We had a very good role model in my mum. ... We were not expected to be housewives; we were expected to have a career (Zoe).*

All 12 practitioners had mothers who engaged in paid work outside of the home.

Five practitioners identified influential male family members. Sigrid's father significantly shaped her family's worldview through "Māoridom, the Rātana Church and [the family's sports code]", and she was encouraged by her parents and her brother to follow her brother's "sport scholarship" footsteps. Lizzie's older brother "encouraged [her] to retrain", Phoebe's father treated her "the same as" her brother, Penelope's father "expected" her to complete farm chores, and Olivia's older brother impacted upon her through their backyard sports competitions. Olivia gave the example of racing their go-karts, and "when I crashed, I would get back on, even if I was bleeding". Olivia claimed that their competitive interplay taught her to hold her own, never give up and that she would be okay. This upbringing shaped how she approaches life and thinks about things.

#### 7.2.2 How my schooling shaped my worldview

School in NZ provided two critical learnings for the practitioners. Firstly, PE teachers fuelled some practitioners' love for sport; and secondly, the school philosophies guided two practitioners' ways of being.

Four practitioners were influenced by their PE teachers to study PE at university, with the goal of becoming a PE teacher themselves. School sport gave three practitioners the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with the school's PE staff.

Raphaella explained: *"If you are sporty, your PE teachers are often your mentors.*

*Female PE teachers can have a profound impact on girls and their ambitions and*

*aspirations. I just wanted to be like my PE teachers".* Zoe's experience was different:

*At school, the PE programme was split into girls and boys. The boys had very cool PE teachers, and they did 'cool' things and had a great time. We got the [another subject] teacher who never got out of her dress and high-heel shoes. I hated PE, but I loved my sport. I thought this is just terrible; PE has got to be better than this. So I trained in PE. I went with the determination for PE to be a good experience for girls".*

School philosophy and culture provided divergent educational experiences for two practitioners during the 1970s and 1980s. Lizzie was educated in a traditional conformist Catholic school, and her education was tailored to limit her work options (as mentioned earlier). By contrast, Isobel's educational experience was vastly different. She was taught in a feminist environment, which advocated equal opportunities for women. *"I went to [named all girls' high school] and if you want a feminist school that is the number one".* Isobel adopted her school philosophy as her life philosophy, *"I have never questioned the fact that I might or might not be able to do something".*

### 7.2.3 How sport shaped my worldview – The winning formula

Sporting experiences were central to the practitioners' childhood recollections. The practitioners claimed that childhood involvement in sport, belonging to their family's sports code or the honour of being a sporting representative provided significant life lessons.

#### Sport glued our family together

Boundless childhood sport or recreation was experienced by 10 of the practitioners.

They revealed: *"We played a variety of sport: netball, rugby, swimming, football and athletics from a young age. The whole family enjoyed watching and playing sport but*

*not to a representative level"* (Lizzie); *"I was totally immersed in sport and the outdoor*

*life"* (Raphaella, Ngaire, Zoe, Sigrid, Isobel, Raye and Olivia); *"Sport taught me to hold*

*my own"* (Olivia); *"My family are very outdoorsy ... we skied, sailed, swam and fished. I played lots of formal sport in school, but I was pretty average"* (Edna); and *"I grew up in a household that was littered with sport. Both of my parents played for NZ. I describe sport as the glue that brought our family together"* (Phoebe).

Sigrid proudly stated my *"mum and dad met at sport"*. When Sigrid was young, her father met an American sports coach, John Wooten, and was greatly influenced by Wooten's *"coaching philosophy and pyramid of success"*. For Sigrid's family, *"sport had been a doorway to a lot of things"* and Wooten's philosophy enriched her family's sporting and life experiences.

Family life was very different for the two remaining practitioners, Penelope and Nancy. Penelope's farming rural family life was not sport focused, and her only sporting activity was *"netball at school"*. Nancy's parents, brother and two sisters were *"not interested in sport"*, but Nancy *"loved sport and represented [my country]"* which made her supportive family proud.

#### I am in the 'in crowd'

Some families were mainly affiliated to one specific code, the 'family sports code'. A family sports code demanded a high level of commitment and, in return, provided the practitioners with pride and a strong sense of membership of a special community. Families with more than one family sports code were large families, sport representative families or families with siblings of both genders. Nine practitioners' families' had a family sports code or codes and, for eight of the families, their sports code aligned with the sports code of one or both parents. *"My mum and dad met at sport, and as a family, we went around the country to the competitions for [our code]"* (Sigrid). *"My mum played [a code], so I guess I was on the sideline with her; that is how I got started"* (Raye). For Zoe, each parent had their own sports code, and she had to choose between the two.

*I started playing [mum's code] when I was six and [dad's code] at seven. Then I had a big decision to make: was I going to stay with [mum's code], or was I going to play [dad's code]? I went [with dad's sports code] with my little purple flare-y skirt on the muddy pitch and loved it from the first day. (Zoe)*

### Sports representation grew my confidence

Practitioners who had become national or regional sport representative players, or had family members who had done so, were proud and confident. In nine practitioners' families, at least one member had become a sports representative. *"My grandmother was pretty sporty. She played for NZ"* (Ngairé), and *"We have got two Olympians in the family"* (Raye). Phoebe's father and mother both represented NZ in sport, and Sigrid's father was a regional sport representative.

As noted earlier, Penelope and Nancy were the only practitioners whose families were not really interested in sport. Yet Nancy became a national sport representative. Nancy listed the skills she developed as a national athlete, which included *"coping with stress, performance analysis and progression, how to reduce anxiety, relationship building, navigating grief, and problem-solving"*.

### Inadvertent apprenticeship

Childhood sport participation and, in particular, volunteering developed valuable sport management skills. Isobel recalled:

*My mother was a netball volunteer. So for a few years, starting at nine years of age, my friend and I used to run the netball, game-day, administration office. That involved all teams filling out game cards, paying for additional players, distributing umpiring cards, and answering rule queries. We had to have an adult there so that people would listen to us but, in fact, we knew more than the adult. That gave us a good understanding of how a sports business runs, from an operational point of view on the day of sport.*

Isobel also explained how childhood volunteering enhanced her self-efficacy, knowledge and confidence. Isobel did not become a volunteer to develop sport management skills but, in hindsight, the volunteering had achieved that end.

### 7.2.4 Practitioners' upbringing - Summary

Childhood stories from the practitioners identified family, school and sport as being significantly influential in their lives. Affirming family messages shaped their childhoods and became deeply ingrained in their behaviour. Access to and involvement in sport provided crucial building blocks in the practitioners' personal development. The 'family sports code' appeared central in many of their lives and provided a source of pride and belonging.

### 7.3 Practitioners working – Experiences and interpretations

The remainder of this chapter reveals the practitioners' ways of viewing, entering and working in sport management in NZ. This part of the chapter begins with two brief subsections that cover the practitioners' ways of seeing the sports sector in NZ, and how they came to take management roles. Then, the factors identified by the practitioners as influencing their sport management careers are addressed. These factors have been divided into self-imposed or sector-imposed categories.

Self-imposed factors include the personal aspects of their experiences which the women sport managers have full or some control over; they are encapsulated in the section title, "Self-imposed – personal lens". Self-imposed factors include confidence, perfectionism, parenting, and life choices. The section on "Sector-imposed – industry lens" incorporates the external factors sport managers have little or no control over. Sector-imposed factors encompass culture and values, [formal] inequality, [substantive] inequality, the old boys' club, appointments, quotas, hierarchies, people of influence, and initiatives.

Throughout these sections, the practitioners provide insights into how they have navigated these factors within the sport management context.

#### 7.3.1 Women practitioners' ways of seeing the NZ sport sector

The practitioners identified NZ sport management as difficult to navigate compared to other sectors. Further descriptions of the sport industry were: "*political and opinionated*" (Penelope); "*under-resourced and underpaid*" (Penelope and Raphaella); "*labour intensive*" (Penelope, Raphaella and Ngaire); "*volunteer-based, passionate, and competitive*" (Penelope and Raphaella); and having "*conservative structures, constitutions and memberships*" (Zoe and Raphaella). The dominant characteristic was the exclusionary power of the old boys' club and the "*blokey*" culture (Lizzie, Phoebe, Raphaella, Zoe, Olivia and Penelope). Edna, in particular, held an extremely narrow and insular perspective on the sports sector due to her organisation's physically, socially and technologically "*isolated*" circumstances.

Some practitioners described sport management as "*tricky and highly contested terrain*". For example, Ngaire and Phoebe considered sport management work options

were limited, with too many sport management graduates for too few jobs. Ngaire claimed that *"there are not a lot of opportunities. New sport managers may need a more focused skill set, legal or business papers, and most importantly people skills"*, and Phoebe added that *"we have too many sport management degrees that are selling young academic people the dream that they can never deliver on"*. Raphaella and Isobel held an opposing view, saying *"there are plenty of opportunities for women in sport management"* in NZ. Raye and Zoe believed *"proactive people, getting immersed by volunteering, being a lackey or doing a [WIL] placement"* had a greater chance of accessing a job in the sector.

### 7.3.2 Women's sport management career entry points

The sport management practitioners came to sport either after working in other sectors or straight from university. They entered an industry *"where there was no career pathway"* and seized *"opportunities"* as they arose (Olivia, Raphaella and Isobel). Three ex-teachers, Isobel, Zoe and Raphaella, used their knowledge of sport, plus their teaching, communicating, and organising skills to secure their first sport management job. Lizzie, Olivia, and Phoebe transitioned from the corporate world to sport, and they explained: *"I enjoy working in an environment that is for the greater good as opposed to being profit-driven"* (Lizzie); *"I combined work and sport"* (Olivia); and *"I felt like a kid in a lolly shop. I could legitimately talk about sport all day"* (Phoebe). Sigrid came to sport from the health sector, and wanted to *"inspire people rather than being the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff"*. Raye studied business and psychology at university but was always intent on *"working in the sports sector. ... It is my passion"*. The remaining three younger practitioners, Ngaire, Edna and Nancy, chose sport as a career before starting at university, and they claimed their university training helped them get their first job. *"If I had not done my degree, I would not be doing what I am doing now. The degree I did was a platform. The [WIL] paper was key to me moving forward"* (Ngaire). Ngaire's WIL placement in an RST became her first job in sport management.

Overall, a passion for sport or a desire to improve people's mental and physical well-being motivated 11 of the 12 practitioners to work in sport management. Penelope was an anomaly and had played only netball at school during her childhood. She

transitioned into sport from a local government general manager role. *"I had no plan to work in sport management. I knew nothing about sport or sport management when I got my first sport CE role"*. Penelope found that *"the first three years were incredibly difficult. I did not understand sport politics"*. Penelope had since learnt the power of sport to *"build communities, and enhance people's lives, especially young women athletes"*.

### 7.3.3 Self-imposed factors – The personal lens

In this section, I place an internal, personal lens on factors influencing women's experiences of working in sport management. The practitioners had recognised these factors either within themselves or had observed them in other women in sport management. Confidence is the first self-imposed factor addressed.

#### Confidence - Be brave and put your hand up

The low numbers of women climbing the sport management ladder are in part attributed to *"women not applying for the roles"* and *"holding themselves back"* due to low self-confidence (Olivia, Isobel, Phoebe, Raphaella, Penelope and Zoe). Isobel elaborated: *"If women had put their hand up ... they would have got [the job]. But they did not apply because they did not think they were good enough. I just do not understand it"*.

Phoebe explained that women sometimes blame external conditions for not getting a job, whereas the *"real issue"* may be personal, that is to say, it is women's self-confidence. Phoebe claimed:

*Women need to be brave enough to hold their hand up for the job, stand up and sell their skills and capability to do the job. ... Many women just do not believe being a CE is possible. I think the sport's glass ceiling is sometimes imagined because it is an easier excuse as to why I did not get the job.*

Phoebe was frank and believed *"women should take responsibility for their inaction"*, rather than placing the responsibility for inequality on men.

Ngaire, Raphaella, Zoe, Sigrid and Olivia held an opposing view to Phoebe's. *"It is not as easy as telling more women to put their hands up. A bigger cultural shift is required"* (Ngaire), and *"the systems need to change before people's attitudes and behaviours*

*will change to enable Māori, women, and minorities” (Sigrid). (Culture and structure will be discussed in the section on “Sector-imposed” factors, below).*

Raye considered the low representation of women in senior executive positions was more attributable to a deficit in the women’s personal drive, capability, and willingness. *“Whether they can or cannot do [something] will determine their overall success. ... Everyone has equal rights to be able to go to university, to study, to be a volunteer, to work their way through the ranks as much as they want to” (Raye).*

Self-confidence was the most significant feature of practitioner success. The practitioners considered self-confidence enabled others to *“believe in you too” (Raye)*. Ten of the 12 practitioners spoke of being confident in a way that empowered them to make and take opportunities. Most practitioners stated that they never second-guessed their skills nor their ability to perform their roles. Raye said:

*I do not have any internal personal barriers, I always try to find a way around things. I believe in myself, and others support and believe in me too. I arm myself with the right knowledge and the right attitude, and I can achieve anything I want to do.*

Isobel gave the example of herself, as a teenager, running her region’s netball game days. She explained how those experiences helped her secure employment.

*I just saw the job, applied for it and got it. Other people would not have put themselves forward, but I did, despite whether I had the skills and experience or not. Then I thought, I had better get on with it. For example, I applied for a CE role with no experience, got the job and ended up running a business needing logistics, administration, and financial skills. No one taught me how to do those things. I learnt and figured that out myself [on the job]. I used my common sense to run the business, the same common sense you would use to run a house or your children. You work out what you should do, and you simply do it. (Isobel)*

Olivia had been encouraged by her parents to *“take every opportunity and see what happens. I just thought I could do it”*. Phoebe recalled her father describing her as a child: *“You just had no fear. You were prepared to put yourself out there, and you were brave enough to back yourself”*.

Phoebe, Olivia and Raye considered their innate *“competitive”* spirit had added to their success at work. *“It is being the best that you can be to be successful. I like winning”*

(Phoebe). Ngaire described her previous role where *"her abilities were being wasted. I could do more, I had proven myself, but I just needed that opportunity"*.

Six practitioners, Nancy, Ngaire, Sigrid, Penelope, Edna and Lizzie, revealed insights into their changing self-confidence. Nancy highlighted two limiting thoughts: firstly, *"listening to voices in [her] head which questioned her capability for the next challenge"*; and, secondly, her concern with what *"other people might think"*. Despite these, she had over the past seven years, *"proven herself"* as CE in her initially male-dominated organisation. She had found her niche and voice, and did not *"take much heed"* of these thoughts anymore.

Ngaire acknowledged that at the start of her working life, she was *"extremely shy and could not ring up to order a pizza"*. Ngaire realised *"I had to get out of my comfort zone and become more confident"*. She acquired knowledge and skills and now, 20 years later, *"I am the President of an international sport federation, speaking in front of thousands of people, sometimes live on television"*.

Sigrid's cultural etiquette, her Māori humility meant she did not willingly praise herself. In her earlier life, she too was *"a quiet observer, whereas now, I am more confident and outspoken"*. Sigrid's confidence developed through her *"faith in finding my reason for being here"*. In Māoridom, this is called her *"Atua"*. Her confidence was exhibited through her courage to change careers in her 40s, and in advocating for *"a Māori inclusive system"* in a European and patriarchal sports sector which may not *"value the contribution of Māori women"*.

Penelope encountered self-doubt midway through her career when she realised *"gender discrimination"* within some sports codes could confine her to netball. Penelope admitted there were codes, *"rugby, football, league and cricket"* where a female job application would have been overlooked 10 years ago. She had since seen a cultural and value change within the sports sector and now felt empowered to *"apply for those roles"*.

Edna and Lizzie came across as the two practitioners who wrestled the most with their confidence. Edna grappled with occasions of career-limiting, low self-confidence and recalled learning when as young as *"one or two years of age, that men are built"*

*stronger than females*". Doubts about her strength and ability to compete against men accompanied Edna into her working life.

The following excerpts demonstrated Edna's self-limiting thoughts:

*I was aware as a new graduate that I was young and lacked experience. I thought the organisation would hire the person with the experience over the one without. ... Women are notoriously hard on themselves. I have high expectations and low confidence, not low competence. Once I have the experience, then my confidence grows, but underlying that, I am very insecure. That is often women's biggest downfall. I look at the men doing exactly the same job, and I think that I am not doing as good a job as them. ... That is a natural thing with me. I am not sure I am quite ready for the next step. I never think that I am quite good enough to do what I need to do, even though everyone tells me that I have got good skills. It is an internal female thing. Males are more confident naturally or they fake confidence; it is a societal expectation.*

Edna added *"I have never not got a job because I am a woman ... and the older I get the more my confidence grows"*. Edna thought, sometimes *"I have reasonable confidence, I am pretty good at what I do but, we are not taught to say we are good at something, maybe it was my parents"*. She admitted that any new confidence she had was fragile and easily undermined. Edna was adamant she would not apply for a board role with her organisation since *"neither my skillset nor my introvert personality"* meet the requirements of a board member.

Lizzie described herself as *"normally quite confident"* but admitted she had periods where her confidence fluctuated. Intermittent bouts of low confidence were blocking her next governance appointment. *"I never think I am quite good enough, despite people claiming I am. It is an internal female thing"*. Lizzie's alternate behaviour was *"forthright, speaking my own mind and prepared to have a robust discussion"*. She described herself as *"risk averse"*, yet confidently claimed her greatest personal attribute was her *"perseverance and ability to push ahead when times were hard"*.

Both Edna and Lizzie believed the more experiences and skills they acquired, and the more they proved themselves, the more their confidence grew. Edna's advice to young women undertaking a job in sport management was *"to be confident and believe in yourself. Stop comparing yourself to others"*. Edna had begun to recognise that her

female skill set included *“different skill traits to her male colleagues, including people skills”*.

#### Imposter syndrome surprised me

Olivia was always very confident and capable, but she described an unexpected confrontation with the 'imposter syndrome' a few years ago, when she was in her late 40s, as she became worried about other people's opinions about her. *“I put the [self-doubt] barrier up with ‘I cannot do that’, I was second-guessing my ability”* (Olivia). The imposter syndrome was usually something she mentored other sport managers to handle. *“I think sometimes the barrier to women succeeding in various roles is themselves and their ability to help themselves and work out for themselves what their goals are and how they are going to get there”* (Olivia). Olivia realised it took her a year to develop the strength, confidence and resilience to overcome her self-doubt.

#### Perfectionism or 10 out of 10

Perfectionism and fear of failure were cited by several practitioners as barriers when applying for jobs or promotions. Phoebe gave an example: *“When I place a list of 10 job competency skills in front of a group of men and women [in the 40-year-old age group or over], the men look at the list and go: I can do five of those, and I am going to apply for that job. The women look at the list and see five that they cannot do and go: I do not think I can apply for that job”*. Zoe agreed with Phoebe *“Men will go for it and women will not”*. Phoebe did not see this behaviour so frequently in the younger generation.

Olivia had experienced being driven by perfectionism earlier in her career, but now:

*I no longer think my abilities have to be a 10/10 before putting my hand up. I have changed. Recently I applied for two roles knowing I only had 8/10 skills necessary. I also knew no one else had got even the little bit I have got. ... I have learnt along the way that I have significant experience, a diverse skill set and the confidence to find a solution. If I get stuck, I know I can also call people.*

#### Skill acquisition on the job is ok so apply if you are a 5 out of 10

Skill acquisition 'on the job' is acceptable and normal. Eight practitioners admitted developing skills after getting their sport management jobs. Penelope and Sigrid described their *“steep ‘on-the-job’ learning curve”* when they transitioned to sport

from other industries. Their employers knew they did not have sports industry knowledge but recognised their *“other knowledge and capabilities”*. The three ex-teachers also developed their sport management skills ‘on the job’.

In contrast, Phoebe did not think anyone could develop the commercial acumen necessary for sport management while working in sport management. Phoebe advised young women to first get

*five to seven years of corporate experience, building commercial skills and business acumen. The commercial sector gives you knowledge with systems, structures and processes across various business areas such as finance, marketing and logistics. Corporates have enormous training budgets, and they teach you how to build a proper business case. Training on the job in sport management does not provide commercial experience opportunities; they are too time, resource and financially poor.*

Confidence was by far the most significant self-imposed factor that the practitioners identified as being essential to career success for women in sport management in NZ. The remainder of this section addresses two other self-imposed factors, children and age-related aspects of work-life balance, which also influenced their career success.

#### Children or no children

Having children and structuring parenting into their sport management careers was a major consideration for the practitioners. Eleven practitioners had already made decisions around having children. Five practitioners, Phoebe, Raphaella, Ngaire, Edna and Lizzie, did not have children, and seven practitioners were parents. *“Not having children”* enabled Edna, Phoebe and Raphaella to work in their current roles and benefitted their careers. The women who were parents used their immediate and *“extended families to help with childcare”* (Raye, Sigrid and Isobel) and *“hired a nanny”* (Olivia and Isobel). The mothers preferred *“child-friendly workplaces”* (Isobel), with *“flexible locations and hours”* (Raye, Olivia and Nancy), and jobs which *“required limited travel”* (Raye). Often, finding multiple solutions facilitated the practitioner’s ability to successfully balance work and family. *“My husband works close to home, and my parents are moving here to help with the children. The support structure and time with my children is important, and so too is flexibility”* (Raye).

Two practitioners, Sigrid and Raye, indicated that having children had restricted their career progression, and both claimed that *“having a family was a limitation they embraced”*. The practitioners deemed many sport management jobs to be detrimental to family life and argued that *“systemic barriers to a career in sport and having a family”* existed (Sigrid). Women who managed both family and work were occasionally labelled as ‘superwomen’ and those who compromised family experienced ‘parental guilt’. Phoebe commented:

*You cannot be both a CE and a mum who is there for all of the swim meets, cricket practices, bathing the kids at five o'clock, giving them dinner and reading stories. You need a house husband or a nanny. Superwomen do not exist. Successful male CEs for the last 50 years have not been super parents as well as super CEs.*

Lizzie was *“amazed”* watching colleagues with families *“fit everything in”*.

Nancy's perspective differed. She had been a CE for 11 years and had her children while continuing as the CE. She acknowledged that having a family changed her and her priorities. Nancy claimed she was *“more maternal now both at home and in her CE role”*. Nancy returned to work six months after the birth of each child on the proviso she worked shorter hours (9 am to 3:30 pm), *“so that I could spend time with the children at four o'clock, cook dinner and get them ready for bed”*. Nancy was *“particularly proud of [her] board”* affording her the flexibility and this, hopefully, had enabled her to *“change the norm, pass the flexibility idea on and inspire others to do the same. Let people have the best of both worlds and create a work-life balance”*. Nancy claimed that her organisation was a preferred workplace for working parents because it offered flexible hours and work locations, and a healthy work–life balance and culture. Nancy and Penelope wanted other organisations *“to provide more flexibility and increasingly challenge the traditional structure”*. Nancy considered being on call 24/7 for the demands of the job was not realistic or attainable and, ultimately, was unhealthy for those with family commitments. She was adamant that *“factoring in personal time, like yoga”* into her daily work schedule, and prioritising some *“me time”*, was critical and she encouraged her team to do the same. Nancy's organisation's structure had inspired other women practitioners in the process.

### Who wants to be a CE at my age?

Several practitioners, 50 years of age and over, were more focused on work–life balance than career advancement. Four practitioners raised the idea that women nearing retirement are choosing less stress and more 'down time' as opposed to continuing to climb the corporate ladder. Zoe said *"I do not want to be a CE again. ... Most men in my position are considering a CE role. I think a man becoming a CE was just an expectation"*. Phoebe believed she had another *"10 to 15 years"* in a CE role before dedicating her time to *"trans-Tasman governance board roles"*.

### Conclusion

This section addressed the three key self-imposed factors of confidence, children and work–life balance which influenced the experiences, success and numbers of women working in sport management in NZ. Confidence was both prominent and multifaceted, with some practitioners reflecting on how they had been able to navigate a lack of confidence, which can limit women's work potential.

The following section frames the sector-imposed elements the practitioners saw influencing women's potential as they worked in sport management in NZ.

#### 7.3.4 Sector-imposed factors – The industry lens

Various external factors identified by the practitioners impacted upon women's experiences in sport management and influenced their career progression. As stated earlier, sport management roles often translated to long and inflexible work hours, and being under-resourced and underpaid. One practitioner, Edna, was an anomaly in identifying sector-imposed factors as impeding women. She worked in an isolated recreation organisation and was not cognisant of inequality in either her organisation or the wider sport management sector.

While the practitioners were somewhat reluctant to definitively describe the attributes women contributed to sport management as either male or female, eight practitioners did generalise on gendered points of difference. They considered women sport managers *"create a culture of emotional connectivity, a family"*, *"are nurturing and caring"*, *"have better emotional intelligence"*, *"have softer personal skills"*, *"are good around building culture"*, *"are less ego-driven"*, and *"are balanced and focused"*.

Central to all this was the point that “*women tend to approach things differently, and that is the value of gender diversity that is massively important*” (Raphaella). Ngaire, Isobel, Olivia and Phoebe thought the younger generation would encounter fewer gendered job stereotypes, with more women entering the sports sector and bringing different qualities, values and behaviours. The remaining practitioners did not ascribe any specific characteristics to a particular gender.

Most practitioners agreed that the sports industry needed to value and support women to increase women's numbers in management roles. To illustrate, Raphaella commented:

*For sport to be more accessible for women, it is more than telling women to 'put their hand up'. It requires a bigger cultural shift for women to desire to take on governance and management roles. That cultural shift involves Sport NZ, the sector and the community getting behind women, valuing them, believing in their ability, empowering them and supporting them to make a difference in sport.*

Sigrid agreed. She said that the attitudes and behaviours of people in NZ needed to change, and the system had to change too:

*In NZ, there is absolutely no reason why everybody cannot get on [the access to sports journey], and the systems need to support that. The current emphasis is on people changing their attitudes and behaviours, but it is the systems and structures that need to change to enable Māori, women and other minorities to succeed. In NZ, we have two systems, Māoridom which operated pre-1840, pre-Treaty, and a dominant 'mainstream' system that does not suit everyone. The Māori system is unique and one we can learn from and try to connect more strongly to for all NZers. [Moving forward,] we need a system which holds a Māori-inclusive foundation based on balance, equity [substantive equality] and fairness which may be more conducive to minorities; women, Māori, or disability. In NZ, there is so much potential, and everybody should be on that journey, and the systems need to support that. That will define success.*

Sigrid perceived that “*Māori women are not valued in the sporting sector, yet we are in Māoridom because there is so much to do*”. She considered “[*Māori*] women as managers and CEs” were crucial to ‘weaving’ a Māori-inclusive system into sport and ‘bringing it to life’.

Isobel, Lizzie, Zoe, Raphaella and Nancy acknowledged their organisations were not *“very diverse”* nor did they *“reflect NZ’s societal”* mix. Raphaella explained that *“although our organisation has policies around diversity ... they are not mandatory”*. Other practitioners mentioned the lack of diversity within sports organisations which failed to *“represent”* the diversity of the athletes within their code (Ngaire, Phoebe, and Raphaella).

Even so, Olivia claimed: *“[The inequality is] so much a societal issue that it is almost too hard [to change]”*. She held the view there was *“nothing structurally wrong”* with *“how the sports industry operates in NZ”*.

#### The only woman in the room

All practitioners except Edna were well aware of the underrepresentation of women in senior management and on the boards of sport organisations. Penelope claimed that *“there are not enough female sport managers”*, and Nancy would *“like to see more women appointed in senior leadership teams which would reflect an organisation’s commitment to inclusivity and provide opportunities and inspiration to other women”*. Ten of the 12 practitioners acknowledged being significantly outnumbered by men during the early stages or the entirety of their working life in sport management – so much so that Phoebe, Olivia and Nancy *“never really thought about”, “did not notice”, “were not conscious of”* or *“normalised”* the absence of women. Isobel, Raphaella and Penelope were aware women were missing but *“just got on with it”*. Either way, both groups accepted the absence of women as *“business as usual”* (Penelope and Olivia). Lizzie and Raye were the two practitioners who gave no indication of being outnumbered by men in their organisations over their sport management careers.

Nancy, Penelope, Zoe and Raphaella lived their lives believing *“women are equal to men”*, yet recognised that ideal was *“not embedded in the fabric of our society”*. Penelope elaborated on this point by saying: *“We think we live in a really equal society in NZ, and actually, we do not”*. Five practitioners, raised in families which were equality affirming, were shocked at experiencing gender discrimination for the first time at university or after starting their working life in NZ: *“There were gendered roles, jobs and sports codes”* (Penelope and Raphaella); and *“In retrospect, I realised I was on a different workload and pay rate”* (Olivia). When interviewed for a sport management

job, Zoe was asked if her husband supported her job application; and Isobel was asked if she planned to have children soon when she applied for her first CE role.

Most practitioners were vigilant about and constantly nudged away at inequality and championed change. The practitioners challenged the gender inequality evident in constitutions, boards, meetings and panels. All supported staff training, profiled women in the media and on social media, and formed advocacy groups. Raphaella reflected:

*I love the personal challenge and find [challenging the status quo] quite fun. I am not as scared as I once was, I am confident in my own position, and I have a platform to use my voice. I feel that I can do that now, whereas I am not sure that other people feel they can do that.*

Phoebe considered that, although she would like to see more females at the table,

*I personally think being the only woman in the room is made a much bigger deal than it probably should be. Do not get me wrong, I think diversity is important. But we should be empowering women with their applications.*

Inequity (substantive inequality), as opposed to inequality (formal inequality), was also a significant consideration for the practitioners. Sigrid claimed that “*for sport management to be more accessible for women, there needs to be more equity [substantive equality]*”. Raphaella elaborated:

*The lack of equity [substantive equality] for women in sport is not just a NZ issue, it is a significant [global] systemic issue. For women to have equitable access to sport, people have to believe that it is the right thing to do. We need leadership, people talking about it, people championing it, and people believing that if we are more inclusive and if women and girls are involved across our sport and recreation sector, we will be stronger and better for it.*

Ngaire described this as being “*fair*” with people “*considering the bigger picture*”. She recognised “*there needs to be more opportunity, encouragement, and empowerment given to minorities to seize opportunities because support for them in the past has not been there*”. Sigrid agreed: “*Over the last 10 to 15 years, there is less emphasis on equity [substantive equality] issues in policy. We live in a type of ‘paradise’, and not everyone has access to sport, general well-being, and a good quality of life*”. Sigrid claimed the focus needs to be on helping those who need more help to have equal

benefits. *"I felt I have had a privileged life playing, volunteering and working in sport and I would like to enable others [to have] the access if they do so choose it"*.

Three critical issues – values, being outnumbered, and championing equality – were raised by the practitioners regarding women's appointments to senior management and boards. Firstly, a 'kaupapa'<sup>16</sup> Māori principle reinforced the importance of women bringing with them the values of the women they represent. Sigrid explained women in sport management or governance need to be present *"as woman"* or *"as Māori woman"*, *"carrying with them and being willing and equipped with that kaupapa, otherwise their presence is pointless"*. Olivia reinforced Sigrid's sentiments: *"I was always really conscious I did not want to act like a boy to get the work. But I have always had to be quite strong, resilient, and not hard"*. Most practitioners emphasised women on boards needed to focus on not *"playing like a man"* and, instead, bringing their values, attributes and behaviours as women with them.

Three practitioners, Ngaire, Zoe and Penelope, used the example of Farah Palmer's appointment to the Board of the NZRU in 2016 as the Māori representative. They recognised the difficulties Farah would encounter and her effectiveness in actioning change since she was the only woman on the board. *"She is not going to make a difference if the board operates with a majority win, especially if the rest of the board think the same way they have done in the past"* (Ngaire and Penelope). Two practitioners considered NZRU got *"two diversity ticks"*, culture and gender, *"for the one appointment"* (Ngaire and Zoe).

Finally, several practitioners emphasised board appointments are not 'status objectives' but openings to *"implement changes and opportunities for girls and women"* (Zoe, Raphaella and Lizzie). Women's board appointments were just the first step in their role to action change for women and girls in sport.

#### Lack of diversity – Stale, pale, and male

The practitioners identified the old boys' club as a barrier to women's success and progression in sport management in NZ. Traditional members of the old boys' club,

---

<sup>16</sup> Kaupapa for Māori, means "principles and ideas which act as a base or foundation for action. A kaupapa is a set of values, principles and plans which people have agreed on as a foundation for their actions" (Royal, n.d.)

*“cemented their bond by drinking together”, “blokes gave blokes work on the golf course”, and excluded women (Olivia). Lizzie explained the workings of the old boys’ network “they go to university together, or play rugby or sport together. Once one gets into a position of influence, then they bring through others who are of the same ilk or the same background”.*

The majority of the practitioners were vocal and critical of gendered limitations imposed by members of the old boys’ club. They used the terms *“older men, white, lacking diversity, sexist, dark-ages, barrier, chauvinistic, ‘old school’, traditional, disrespectful, golfers, fuddy-duddy and closed-minded”* to describe the stoic members of the traditional old boys’ network. The practitioners were adamant that the exclusionary, traditional, and antiquated old boys’ club mentality and behaviour were no longer acceptable. Lizzie argued that *“the old boys’ network needs to be smashed”*.

Phoebe, Nancy, Raphaella, Zoe and Olivia invested time and effort to develop networks with men and secured themselves a ‘seat’ in what had been all-male spaces. Playing golf had proven useful for Raphaella, Zoe and Phoebe, granting them access to a further male space. Olivia could see the benefit of *“playing golf”* with influential men or *“inviting men to a sports event”* but neither resonated with her. Cultivating men’s networks included: making *“men [their] advocates”* (Olivia); *“establishing relationships and building credibility with men ... playing golf ... talking sport [rugby] at a strategic and functional level ... partaking in Friday night drinks to create ‘in-roads’”* (Phoebe); and *“being on the boards of male sports codes”* (Raphaella and Zoe).

Raye had a different approach to dealing with *“old school thinking and typically male boards”*. She would engineer discussions *“so the men would think my idea was their idea”* (Raye).

Overall, the practitioners unanimously agreed that sport governance, leadership and senior management lacked diversity. Zoe had always been cognisant of *“gender inequity [formal equality]”* as opposed to diversity, but experience had broadened her understanding of diverse perspectives. Ngaire claimed people whose appearances were ethnically diverse did not always bring diverse opinions and people whose appearance on the surface may seem non-diverse may in fact champion diversity for minority groups. *“You cannot expect diverse people to think diversely if they do not*

*have diverse minds*" (Ngaire). Penelope recalled a conversation she had with a male sport CE who said

*it had never occurred to him to be interested in developing the women's game and he realised the terrible disservice he had been doing to women. ... He also added that male coaches were using the women's game as a stepping stone to becoming a men's coach because that is where the money is.*

Isobel, Zoe, Raphaella and Ngaire *"preferred to work in organisations which are diverse"*, with Isobel adding *"they are more inclined to make the right decisions"*.

Three experienced practitioners expressed concern for the younger women entering sport management whom they felt may be unaware of the difficulties women may encounter because of gender driven formal inequality brought on specifically by the old boys' club. Four practitioners, Zoe, Raphaella, Ngaire and Phoebe, identified different and empathetic qualities in the younger generation. They claimed: *"Younger 30-year-old men are coming through without the attitudes that the older men have"* (Zoe); *"I am really excited by the quality of young people coming through in sport"* (Raphaella); *"Younger people have a complete acceptance that everyone has the ability"* (Ngaire); and

*I now work in an office where diversity, LGBTQ, race, creed and gender is 'normal'. The next generation is the future ... there will no longer be glass ceilings as there have been for me and the women 20 years before me. Diversity will be just normal.* (Phoebe)

Raye was part of the younger generation which embraced diversity, and she had the intention of *"studying Te Reo, to converse respectfully with local iwi"*.

Olivia recalled her *"bravery"* very early in her working life when she questioned gendered behaviour by a senior male manager for the first time. She commented that *"the more they raised the challenge, the easier it became"* (Olivia).

The practitioners were appreciative of men advocating for equality during meetings, conferences, and everyday sport management business. Olivia was encouraged by a male colleague to *"call out gender inequity [formal inequality]"* because he considered Olivia was in a *"secure"* enough position to do so. Zoe encountered two gender substantive equality advocates: firstly, a *"former male board member"* with *"credibility*

*in the organisation*" advising the current board to push for "gender diversity"; and, secondly, "a new manager within her organisation" who was constantly "raising the diversity conversation".

Lizzie recognised that the old boys' club could work in reverse. Her latest appointment was made through her "old girls' network". Lizzie's previous female manager had contacted her and offered her a role. Lizzie claimed a critical difference between the two networks was "there are just a lot more old boys' networks than old girls' networks". She did stipulate her appointment was based on her "proven and valuable skillset". Lizzie considered homogeneous appointments reflected an "unconscious bias", and her solution was for "organisations to implement a diversity strategy".

Some practitioners made reference to more pressing inequities beyond gender. For example, Ngaire was both the CE of and an athlete in a predominantly Māori and Pacific sports code which she had been involved with for over 20 years. Ethnic diversity and ethnic support were more prominent than gender diversity in her discussions. "99% of my time is working and being in a Māori/ Pacific sport, so [as a Pākehā], I sought advice from people with a Māori worldview. Most other sports in NZ would not even consider it" (Ngaire). Her experience at a recent Sport NZ meeting was that "Sport NZ parked the Māori sports programme because a spokesperson for Māori sports was not there. Every sport in NZ should have Māori sport on their radar because it is a Treaty obligation". Ngaire concluded that "even if people do not appear physically diverse, they can think and act diversely. There is diversity of looks and diversity of attitudes. Empathy".

Nancy explained how she had spent the last 10 years advocating for more "inclusion of disabled athletes in sport", and her voice had been "unpopular". She explained, "gender was also part of that diversity narrative". Nancy believed "society should be more equitable" and her career driver was for "societal change in every person's perception of what a disabled person is capable of, irrespective of gender or colour". Nancy claimed she had seen a "change in diversity and inclusion" and explained part of this was attributable to "society policing inclusion through social media, with immediate behavioural feedback".

Two women felt doubly disadvantaged. Edna found she was overlooked by being a woman and *"too young"* whereas Lizzie, as a woman over 50-years-old, felt *"invisible"* in the job market. Lizzie found when last searching for a sport management job, that *"women over 50 years-of-age are not seen"*. She considered *"older men"* would not encounter the gender and age barriers to the *"same extent she had"*. Alternatively, Raye claimed that being younger afforded her an advantage. Raye was included in her organisation's executive leadership team because *"they wanted my input and I come with fresher, younger thinking"*.

### Appointment panels

The practitioners affirmed that NZ sport appointment panels have been male-dominated, traditionally appointing or re-electing other men. The practitioners observed *"men employing men, jobs for the boys"*, *"the men will not vote their mates out"*, and *"men's appointments have been based on homogeneity between the members rather than diversity"*, which led ultimately to men employing other men whom they consider are *"the best person for the job"*. Zoe observed that being a business owner or having money were the credentials needed to secure a club board position. Zoe professed: *"Seriously, there are women members with skills that could add value to this sports organisation, and the women do not recognise their skill set or capability"*. The practitioners also raised the concern that boards prolific with old boys' club mentality and practices had limited succession planning.

All of the practitioners, except for Lizzie, had at least one of their appointments made by a male-dominated appointment panel. While in her early 30s, Nancy replaced a male CE. She was appointed by an older, male-dominated board with *"old-school thinking"* but they knew she brought *"different skills, insights, perspectives and attributes"* with her into the role. Nancy listed her female attributes: *"emotional intelligence and connectivity, nurturing, and caring"*. Despite her successful appointment, Nancy *"felt additional pressure to prove herself in the male-dominated organisation"*. Raye claimed *"I have never encountered gender disparity in any job appointment. I was chosen by a man, over another male applicant, for my role"* managing an international women's sports team.

Zoe, Lizzie, Isobel, Raphaella and Nancy recognised that when they led the appointment panels, especially if the appointment panel was female-dominated, they *"employed more women"* (Zoe, Isobel and Nancy). Zoe claimed, *"When there is not a male bias on the interview panel, it seems that women get jobs or otherwise women want to work for women"* (Zoe). Penelope found *"women on governance boards impact appointment decisions for CE, head coach, and senior management roles"*. Lizzie preferred *"employing someone with qualities that [were] more similar than less similar to mine ... old girls' network"*. Zoe, Raphaella and Isobel claimed that once they had recognised their own pattern of behaviour, they then consciously employed men or people from diverse backgrounds, preferring more balanced work environments.

#### Rectifying the imbalance through quotas and constitutional change

All practitioners supported more *"diversity on boards"*, yet the use of quotas, as a means to achieve diversity, divided the practitioners. Phoebe and Ngaire were emphatically against quotas and the perception of the *"token female"* (Ngaire). They claimed women should be appointed *"because they are the best person for the job, respected for their skills and capabilities"*, which meant the process provided *"immediate credibility"* (Phoebe). Raye and Olivia supported quotas, stating that they made *"opportunities for minorities"*. Raphaella and Zoe stipulated that the effective way to implement quotas was through changing *"governance policies and constitutions"*. Zoe discovered, after making gender-affirming amendments to her club's constitution, the *"women members' first response"* was to aspire to meet the *"minimum representation of women"* rather than exceeding the minimum. Zoe and Olivia were concerned that even if gender-inclusive policies and strategies were implemented at the NSO level, *"inclusion at the club level would be difficult"* with sexism so deeply entrenched in NZ society. Olivia explained it thus: *"Picture the local rugby club being instructed to include four women on their traditionally all-male board; that will not be well received"*.

#### Gendered sport management roles and hierarchies

In the interviews, all of the practitioners made reference to the ways vertical and horizontal gendered segregation are well established within the sports systems, structures and practices of NZ. A positive was that more women were working in sport management, albeit in *"lower level positions"* (Phoebe and Zoe). Only a few women

are advancing to *“senior management and executive levels, except in netball”* and a few minority, community and disability sports (Phoebe, Zoe, Raye and Raphaella). *“Men continue to outnumber women”* further up the sport management ladder (Zoe, Lizzie, Ngaire, Olivia, Nancy and Penelope). As mentioned earlier, the practitioners fully supported more women in senior management and on boards.

Raphaella recognised that, over the last 10 years, women had been represented in governance roles in progressively higher numbers, but not in senior leadership and management positions:

*The statistics at the moment [August 2017], show many women are working in sports organisations; in the NZOC, NSOs and sports trusts, about 70% of staff are female. Women on boards occupy about 35% at the moment and tracking to 40% compared to 18% in 2008. However, the numbers of women making it to the executive management level are not happening. (Raphaella)*

Raphaella explained how the IOC required the monitoring of women CEOs of NSOs, and she was *“really surprised to hear that so few women are CEOs in NZ RSOs ... Women seem to just get to a level in sport”*.

Raye and Phoebe did not consider women's low representation in senior management and on boards to be an issue. Instead, they were optimistic about the increased *“numbers of women working in sport management”* (Raye), albeit in low-level roles. Phoebe was *“thrilled that 39% of her code's employees were female and was disappointed that the women in her organisations were not jubilant with the growing numbers”*.

The horizontal gendering of roles was also evident in sport management, with *“blue jobs and pink jobs”* (Penelope). The practitioners identified more women working in functional areas such as nutrition, events, public relations and marketing, and disability, minority, community, and school sport. Male-dominated functional areas were *“high-performance”* (Zoe) and *“team management, and coaching”* (Raphaella). Seven practitioners raised their concerns about the *“absence of women”* in these areas with no women in the 'pipeline', training to replace them (Penelope, Zoe, Raphaella, Olivia, Nancy, Lizzie and Phoebe). Penelope surmised: *“There seem to be barriers for women accessing ... high-performance manager and head coach roles”*. Zoe, Penelope,

Olivia and Raphaella raised the issue of women coaches being an *“endangered species”* and a *“dying breed”*.

#### Netball – Women’s sport management training field

Traditionally, netball had been a female sports code in NZ, dominating the sports scene for girls and women. Netball *“struggled to compete”* with the opposing equivalent men’s game, rugby, in terms of *“sponsorship, finance, resources and media coverage”* (Penelope and Lizzie). Nevertheless, netball was the *“training ground for many NZ female sports managers”* including Raphaella, Isobel, Lizzie, Phoebe and Penelope. Raphaella’s sport management career evolved through her *“playing, volunteering and then working in netball”*. Raphaella described netball as *“a women’s leadership academy, enriched with some wise and internationally revered women within a female environment. Netball helped me get my confidence to lead and to navigate issues at a young stage in my leadership career”*.

Phoebe refuted gendered sports codes were the cause for the low number of women in senior sport management. Phoebe provided the 2012 NZ Netball restructure as an example:

*Netball was reduced from 12 regions to 5 zones. 5 ‘chairmen’ were needed. After advertising, women applied to be the chair for only two zones. For a female sport, with lots of female support, the most supportive governance/leadership female environment you could possibly have in NZ, and three zones did not get a single female applicant.*

#### Distancing self from feminism

Several practitioners believed feminist and substantive equality advocates were sometimes labelled as *“troublesome”* and *“a bit out there”* (Raphaella). Penelope noted that *“people tend to roll their eyes a bit, here they are ‘banging’ on about equality and feminism again. I was really nervous about [raising feminist issues]”*.

Nancy and Olivia distanced themselves from feminism, saying *“there could be repercussions. Many sports positions on boards are elected ... Mine is not a feminist position as such, I do it [questioning inequality] because it is the right thing to be doing. I will drop things in [various situations], in a practical way. I do not want to make a scene about it”* (Olivia), and *“I am not really a feminist. I think women are equal to*

men" (Nancy). Zoe provided an explanatory reason: *"A lot of men occupy senior roles and are gatekeepers for women's careers"*.

Olivia had been challenged by a male associate to *"advocate more for equality"* since she was in a privileged and powerful position and *"unlikely to lose her job"* or be reprimanded. Raphaella had a strategy to progress gender equality, and she said:

*Consideration needs to be given how to best articulate your thoughts and rationale to win people over. Connect, influence and galvanise people. Sell the aspiration and vision. Do not create dissension and get them to believe in the bigger picture.*

Isobel identified as a feminist and claimed that *"everyone who believes in equal opportunities for women is a feminist, and that includes my husband"*. Achieving equality for women was an aspect of nine practitioners' regular working day.

## Conclusion

This section focused on how the gendered nature of sport management influenced women's work experience. The old boys' club behaviour and mentality, and the exclusion of women, permeated the experiences reported in this section. Several practitioners explained their techniques to work within the dominant structure. Of key importance were the three critical factors relating to women's appointments: working 'as' women, not being silenced, and actively championing change once appointed.

## 7.4 Who did or could assist women's sport management careers?

This final section in this chapter gives an insight into the various ways different groups of people have facilitated the practitioners' sport management careers.

Board members and senior managers were recognised by the practitioners as the people who had been most helpful during their careers. Ngairé's appointment as CE of an NSO was made possible because *"I had the support of Sport NZ and the board"*. Nine practitioners recalled either board or senior management support during their early work experiences. Senior management and board support of the practitioner's projects and performance cultivated the practitioner's confidence. *"People more senior than me have supported my ideas, empowered me and given me the resources to get the job done. People who encourage me, give me the best kind of support they could*

*possibly give*" (Zoe). Of the remaining three practitioners, Edna and Lizzie did not mention senior executive support and Penelope disclosed she had not been well supported by one of her boards.

Networking with good people was critical and benefitted the practitioners' confidence, knowledge, career progression, credibility, support, survival, connection and personal development. *"A lot of career opportunities come down to networks and who you know"* (Nancy). Raphaella concurred: *"We need to appreciate the need and power of networking"*. The practitioners believed that, without networking, especially male networks, women would find progressing to senior management quite challenging. The practitioners' network groups varied and included both genders, work colleagues, people in other sports, social groups, advisory groups, conference attendees, and professional associations. *"There are many women's networks, but women's networks alone are not going to change society"* (Nancy).

Attributes the practitioners looked for in mentors were: specialist or sports sector knowledge; personal development skills; and being further up the corporate ladder. *"The person whom I looked to for a lot of advice [in sport management] was Jane Huria<sup>17</sup>. She was really helpful in being able to navigate change and governance. She has a Māori worldview as well"* (Ngairi); *"Susie Simcock<sup>18</sup> has been a huge mentor of mine"* (Raphaella); *"my amazingly strong female senior manager encouraged and supported me to speak my voice"* (Olivia); and *"my mentor, he is my sounding board for*

---

<sup>17</sup> Jane Huria is Ngai Tahu and affiliates to Ngai Tuahuriri and has held governance roles on a diverse range of public and private sector boards since 1994 and is a fellow of the NZ Institute of Directors. Her current boards include ACC, Winter Games NZ, the NZ Red Cross, the Earthquake Commission, and Heritage Farms NZ Limited; and she chairs the Advisory Board of the Canterbury Earthquake Appeal Trust. She is also Deputy Chair of the Electoral Commission. She serves on the Sir Peter Blake Leadership Awards selection panel and is a lay member of the Health Practitioners' Disciplinary Tribunal. She provides governance advisory services through HRS Governance Limited and mentors women into governance roles. Previous board roles have included directorship of Ngāi Tahu Holdings Corporation Limited and several subsidiary companies. Ms Huria has also chaired the Ngāi Tahu-mandated He Oranga Pounamu ([Governor-General, 2012](#)).

<sup>18</sup> Susie Simcock started working as a volunteer in squash administration in 1972. She won the Auckland Sport 'Administrator of the Year' in 1986 and 1994. In 1995 Simcock was a consultant in the High Performance Sport Review Committee. She went on to become the "Governor of the [NZ] Sports Foundation, ... [and elected as the] International Vice-President of the World Squash Federation" ([Cameron, 1996, p. 205](#)). Simcock was a board member of the NZOC for 12 years and was chair of the NZOC's Women in Sport Committee. From 2002 to 2010 she was a governor for the International Masters Games Association. In 2008, Simcock was an elected council member of the General Assembly of International Sporting Federations. Simcock's outstanding contribution for women in sport meant she was awarded the IOC Women in Sport Award in 2010. In 2018 Simcock was awarded an NZ Order of Merit ([New Zealand Olympic Committee, 2018](#)).

*decision making and problem-solving; we share a business style and a cultural philosophy*" (Phoebe). The practitioners had both men and women mentors. The practitioners often referred to their mentors as trusted friends.

All practitioners mentored other women in sport management, and most mentored men as well. Sigrid also *"guided younger Māori men"* in sport management. Zoe was very aware of her influence and considered an important part of her senior management role was to *"open doors for other women"*. Phoebe mentors women in middle sport management looking to move up the sport management ladder, advising them to *"solicit the support from others if they are unable to find the strength within themselves. ... We should be empowering women to be braver in the applications they make and the jobs they apply for"*. Olivia also mentored young male and female specialist sport managers:

*I now am really conscious and wanting to find those women who are like me and just need a bit of a pull-up. But I am not prepared to dig in the depths and pull them right up. People have got to be prepared to use their networks. They have got to have some drive to do it because it is hard, and you have got to be pretty resilient. People like me have got to back more women.*

The practitioners' view was that female role models in NZ sport management were *"scarce"* (Penelope, Phoebe, Olivia and Zoe) and *"barely visible"* (Raphaella, Ngaire and Lizzie). Several practitioners within the study conceded being *"surprised"* at discovering they were role models for other women. Phoebe recollected, *"women stop me in the street and say to me, I just want to thank you. I never believed it was possible and you proved to me it is possible"*. Before this, Phoebe *"had not thought about how [her] career progression impacted those women"*.

#### 7.4.1 Sport NZ

Zoe, Ngaire, Penelope and Raphaella noted gender *"equality and diversity"* had been absent from the policies and actions of the NZ government agencies responsible for delivering sport for decades. The practitioners considered Sport NZ was unable to lead the charge when their board and senior executives were *"not diverse"* (Penelope). *"If you look at Sport NZ, white, middle-aged men are running the show. Diversity and change need to come from the top"* (Lizzie). The women said: *"Organisations need resources, support and ideas on how to implement change"* (Raphaella); *"Sport NZ and*

*sport leadership organisations need to be seen role modelling and making people believe that [diversity] is the right thing to do"* (Raphaella and Isobel); *"At Sport NZ's annual conferences, there has been a growing number of women, but diversity stops there"* (Ngaire); *"The sport sector is lagging behind other sectors in embracing diversity"* (Zoe, Lizzie and Raphaella); *"Set diversity expectations directly related to public funding"* (Raphaella); and *"Sport leaders should be calling out unacceptable behaviour, not focusing on jobs, work and tasks"* (Zoe). Diversity within Sport NZ would generate a *"wider understanding of what the community needs"* (Lizzie).

#### 7.4.2 Initiatives

Raphaella declared the way to instigate the *"greatest change was at a policy, strategic, investment, and leadership level in the organisation"*. Raphaella considered the *"Brighton Declaration gave an international framework to have the tactical change conversation"*. Changes in governments and the *"philosophy and leadership"* of the sport government agencies have either provided or removed an *"emphasis on women and diversity"* in sport (Raphaella). Raphaella considered *"sports organisations are under real pressure to change"* but they do not know how to achieve change. She added that *"organisations within the public funding framework"* need to be expected to change. Ngaire agreed with Raphaella and believed if Sport NZ *"invested in training existing board members in diversity thinking"*, it would help to achieve change.

Raphaella was also aware of being *"sympathetic for men"* given the huge focus on improving women's sport.

Edna's isolation meant she was the only practitioner unaware of a joint NZOC and Sport NZ initiative *"advocating, supporting, and encouraging women to put themselves forward for national federation board appointments"* (Raphaella and Penelope). Most women were also aware and supportive of WISPA. Penelope participated in the Sport NZ governance mentor programme, describing it as *"awesome"*. Ngaire had applied and was not selected for two Sport NZ leadership training programmes because her *"sports code was too small"*. Penelope recommended improving the women's upskilling leadership initiatives with

*continued support and connection after graduating; follow-up surveys; the use of graduates as part of the next intake of women; training programmes*

*starting five years before the board and CE appointments (at senior management stage); and showcasing SM, CE and board opportunities and pathways earlier in women's careers.*

Most practitioners were aware of the cricket and rugby reports, and they had mixed reactions ranging from being elated gender was on the table and dismayed with the state of play for women. *"The Cricket Report in 2016 around change was brutally honest"* (Zoe and Olivia), yet the report was not made publicly available. Raphaella explained *"the quality of the culture within sport"* and the organisations is critical for improving substantive equality.

### 7.4.3 Conclusion

This section acknowledged the people available to influence the success of women in sport management. The practitioners listed the attributes and benefits of boards, networks, mentors and role models. The practitioners also discussed their experiences as mentors and role models. They emphasised the vital role SportNZ needs to play in leading diversity. Finally, the practitioners evaluated the initiatives available to upskill senior sports managers and potential board members.

## 7.5 Chapter summary

In conclusion, this chapter set out to identify the key themes that I interpreted as being particularly significant from the practitioners' recollection of their childhood and their time working in sport management. The practitioners' voices are mostly strong and clear, displaying well considered and succinct self-reflections across a multitude of factors. The practitioners' childhoods were busy, and they were influenced by where they lived, their school environment and their family's involvement in sport. Self-confidence and self-efficacy were founded in the diverse extra-curricular and sporting activities and, once they were established, confidence and efficacy embellished their sport management careers. This theme indicated how sport provided a multitude of building blocks which enhanced and grew the practitioners' life and work skills. Interesting threads of self-efficacy and confidence run through the chapter.

The practitioner's experiences of working in sport management uncovered self-imposed and sector-imposed factors that influenced their careers. Confidence reigned as critical to career advancement; without it, women were not putting themselves

forward for various sport management positions. Across their work experiences, a strong sense of a gender barricade blocking their careers emerged. Various coping mechanisms and strategies were proposed to mitigate the impact or flip the adverse situations into opportunities. Of fundamental importance were the three critical factors relating to women's appointments: working 'as' women, not being silenced and actively championing change once appointed. The practitioners highlighted the people who supported their careers, and several practitioners placed the responsibility to lead and champion gender and diversity on Sport NZ.

The next chapter discusses the finding that have been presented in the previous three chapters on the lived experiences of the women studying and working in NZ sport management.

## Chapter 8 Discussion: Match-fixing and substantive inequality

*“For sport to be more accessible for women, it is more than telling women to ‘put their hand up’. It requires a bigger cultural shift for women to desire to take on governance and management roles. That cultural shift involves Sport NZ, the sector and the community getting behind women, valuing them, believing in their ability, empowering them and supporting them to make a difference in sport.” (Raphaella)*

### 8.1 Introduction

The purpose of this feminist hermeneutic research study was to examine, what are the experiences of women studying, and working in, Aotearoa New Zealand sport management? The aim was to listen, interpret and find meaning in the groups of women's stories, uncover what had been covered over, ignored, overlooked or hidden in their everyday lives and which had shaped their employment aspirations and perceptions of working in NZ sport management.

Chapter Five disclosed how the influences of their upbringing, namely, family, sport, education, and self-confidence, shaped the work aspirations of women studying sport management at university in NZ. Chapter Six revealed the barriers and enablers the graduates encountered during their time spent studying and working in NZ sport management. Chapter Seven outlined the sport management practitioners' experiences and reflections on their upbringing and subsequent sport management careers. All participants provided important recollections, insights, and advice that will be beneficial for stakeholders of the NZ sport management sector.

In this chapter, the findings from the participant groups are merged with current literature and my life experiences to create an expanded collective understanding on the research questions that framed this research. The structure for what is pertinent to this chapter is framed by Gadamer's (1975) hermeneutic circle, linking the parts such as culture, structure, interpersonal and personal (Prasad, 2005) to construct the meaning of the whole within the broader context of sport management in NZ. A multilevel analytic framework provides a useful tool to identify the relational nature of the micro-individual, with the meso-organisational and macro-societal levels.

I was struck by two sudden flashes of insight which Heidegger refers to as the “core of the beginning of the meaning of being” ([van Manen, 2014, p. 235](#)). The first of these sudden flashes was recognising the pervasive understanding that NZ society, and in particular the sport sector, men and boys were valued ahead of women and girls. The second sudden flash was that women undervalued themselves, probably in light of not being valued. These insights were made possible by the component parts of Gadamer’s hermeneutic circle which in this study included the women’s stories, the literature and my self-understanding coming together to form a hermeneutic whole.

*Throughout this research, I considered the shared experience of my women participants was studying and working in NZ sport management. I bracketed my prejudices and all ‘other’ preconceived notions of what ‘else’ the participant’s experiences and texts would reveal. However, on December 13, 2018, at 4.37am, the data from my participants revealed to me, two, of Gadamer’s hermeneutic ‘wholes’, the constraints of living and working in NZ’s patriarchal, hegemonic and masculine society, and possibly related, women with low confidence not backing themselves. (My personal journal, December 13, 2018)*

Throughout the chapter, I explain the various factors which cause the women to select or deselect themselves or cause others to select or deselect women for roles in sport management. The first section of the chapter, titled ‘Player selection or deselection’, discusses, at the meso- and micro-layers, methods women have developed to survive and succeed inside the dominant structures and cultures within NZ and the sport management sector. The second half of this chapter, titled ‘Match-fixing’, centres the discussion on the meso- and macro-levels, the underlying cultural norms of NZ’s patriarchal society, and discloses how groups of women are marginalised within sport and its management. Match-fixing was defined in Chapter One as a “match [being] played according to a predetermined course or to a preset outcome” ([Park et al., 2019, p. 1](#)).

## 8.2 Player selection or deselection

This section of the discussion chapter turns the lens on the women, their beliefs, values, and behaviours which influenced their propensity to either put themselves forward to be selected for a role in sport management, or deselect themselves and not apply. In addition to hearing about the barriers the participants faced, this research also sought to understand the enablers to the women’s career successes and their

intention to work in sport management. The students' comments centred on their anticipated entry into the sector, and their first job. The graduates reflected on their working experiences following graduation and their anticipated futures. The practitioners provided reflection, insights and personal advice for young women entering the sector. Gadamer ([1975](#)) stated that "long before we understand ourselves through the process of self-examination, we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society and state in which we live" (p.289). The practitioners had more of "life's accumulated meaningful and reflective experiences" ([van Manen, 2014, p. 40](#)), which added depth to their understanding and explanation of their circumstances.

### 8.2.1 Barriers and enablers

#### The gender binary - masculinity and femininity

Most of the participants' parents appeared to have resisted traditional patriarchal conditioning within the family environment and most parents had provided equal opportunities and sporting experiences to their children regardless of gender. Enjoying an equitable home life meant several women participants recalled with shock the moment when they first encountered gender bias at school or in the workplace. In accordance with [Olsson and Martiny \(2018\)](#), many of the participants across all three groups recognised they had learnt the gendered stereotypes and expectations outside of the home environment through social conditioning, during sport, work and school, and through the media, and their career prospects appeared strongly constrained by them. After the age of six years, women begin to shape their work choices on what those around them prescribe as socially acceptable roles ([Eagly & Karau, 2002](#); [Eagly et al., 2000](#); [Gottfredson, 1981](#); [Hancock, Darvin, et al., 2018](#); [O'Shea, 2017](#)). Patriarchal messages are so embedded in cultural practices, they are considered normal or are simply invisible, with their constraints being taken for granted in everyday living ([Eagly & Wood, 2011](#)). Only when we stop and reflect on the gendered meaning of our experiences do we see gendered practices in action, resulting in women being an underutilised, undervalued and underappreciated group ([National Council of Women of New Zealand, 2018](#)).

Almost all of the women experienced their childhood in a two-parent family, with double incomes, privilege, access to sport and parental encouragement. The women recalled developing lifelong values such as being competitive, doing your best, working hard, doing what makes you happy, having no fear, not doubting yourself, and believing in yourself. The findings indicated that busy childhoods, with diverse experiences, provided the women with opportunities to grow their self-efficacy by developing new skills through effort and perseverance ([Bandura, 1977](#)). Participants spoke of being strongly influenced by both parents' hard work ethic, volunteering and sport participation. Two participants experienced a few years with only one parent, and one participant's household had limited disposable income. These particular childhood experiences provided most of the women with enough self-confidence to consider or undertake sport management as a career.

Sampson ([as cited in Belenky et al., 1997](#)) listed the gender stereotypes of "women's thinking as emotional, intuitive, and personalized", which the participants generally agreed with; however, they disagreed with the view that this led to a "devaluation of women's minds and contributions" (p. 6). Instead, the participants claimed the attributes the women brought with them to their sport management roles enhanced their organisations. The graduates and practitioners claimed some men in sport management decision-making roles were competitive, individualistic, ego-driven, unemotional, and focused on their organisation's financial performance characteristics, which, without balance, were not beneficial for the sports industry. The issue lies not with men, but with the prestige men's value-laden stereotypes are accorded ([Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#); [Sinclair, 2013](#)).

Several participants recognised the inequalities and sex-role stereotyping outside of their own home, where "boys and girls [were] raised differently". Most participants considered they were raised in gender equitable homes. I was astonished but, initially, somewhat relieved to find that only two other women had experienced active gender discrimination within their families. The two women spoke of their inconsistent self-confidence. One practitioner's parents imposed gendered constraints on her career, which were further reinforced through her Catholic school, while another mature Pasifika student was only allowed to do ballet and not a sport. [Belenky et al. \(1997\)](#) labelled this phase of knowledge construction as, received knowledge, where

authorities dictate what happens, and women listen. Both of the women's brothers were not constrained by the same gender limitations.

My upbringing was a mix of the women's experiences outlined above. My father's leading patriarchal voice was offset by my mother's determined matriarchal one. My mother and her siblings were raised by their war-widow mother, and everyone in her childhood home had to perform all chores regardless of their gender. The dominant voice in my upbringing, telling me I could be and do anything, was my mother's; she was the person I spent most of my time with and the person I relied upon. My father tried to discourage me from attending university, and he was disappointed I had the academic capability which my brothers lacked. My father considered secretarial work and teaching were my two work options before I got married and became a mother. My father told me that if I did go to university and ended up earning more money than my husband I would have to resign from my job as women should not earn more money than their husbands, and men's egos were fragile and readily undermined. Roles in my family were gendered, and I realised growing up that my brothers were acquiring skills, such as building and mechanical repairs, that I wanted and knew would be useful, cost-effective and would render me more independent in life.

I had expected more of my women participants, especially the practitioners, who were closer to my age, to have had a similar gendered family life to mine. With further reflection on the few women in sport management who had experienced gender discrimination within their home, I also considered that women who had experienced discrimination and lost confidence because of discrimination may have never made it to university to study sport management or worked in the sector which may explain their absence from the study. Absent women may have no longer held the self-belief or had the strength to combat the gendered stereotypes and expectations, and a career in sport management became an unfathomable and an unachievable option for them.

The culturally and socially constructed gender binary in a patriarchal society values masculine traits over feminine characteristics which, in turn, subordinates women ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [Coakley, 2009](#); [Hovden, 2012](#)), and categorises women as man's 'other' ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#); [de Beauvoir, 2011](#)). As a woman,

encountering these overt and gendered messages had conflicted with and confused my self-belief, especially when I was younger. The result caused me to second guess myself and my abilities, which aligned with Belenky et al.'s (1997) concept of women 'silenced' by dominant male authorities.

### Childhood sport

Traditional heterosexual physical dominance is highly valued in NZ sport, especially in rural locations where the success of white male rugby players dominates the sports scene (Adams, 2017, May; McKay, 1991). Two participants learnt while growing up that male athletes were generally physically stronger and better than women athletes. Hovden (2012) found the mass media reinforced the gender binary by amplifying and idealising the superiority of men's strength and sexualising women, often in supportive roles. Both these women participants had evolved their understandings over time to mean that men are better than women overall, even though as older women they knew this extended meaning was not the truth. The women's earlier beliefs still tended to undermine their self-confidence as older women.

The fundamental understanding is that sport was inherently designed by men, for men. Within a patriarchal sporting world, sporting success is measured by being the fastest, strongest or biggest, or achieving the highest score. Sporting heroes are idolised and idealised. In the majority of instances, men outperform women physically (McKay, 1991; Messner et al., 1999). Therefore, men in every regard are considered to be better than women full stop. Men outperforming women legitimises men in holding the power, control, protect and dominate women in society at large (Connell, 2009). The corollary of this argument is that women are, therefore, second class. These overt and covert patriarchal messages of superiority in everyday living (Acker, 2006; Adriaanse & Crosswhite, 2008; Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014; Aitchison, 2005; Burton, 2015; Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003) could have reinforced the women's underlying beliefs.

Aspirations, according to Heidegger (1953/1996), are influenced by our historical understanding of the past, which once experienced is not left in the past, but accompanies us in the present and the future; therefore our past is "something which already goes ahead" of us shaping our future (p. 41). Most women's initial childhood

sport revolved around the family, with some describing sport as the bond that held the family together. The participants' stories showed that parents who had built a family culture which revolved around sports participation, volunteering or viewing cultivated their children's love of sport at a young age. This passion became the central motivation to study or work in sport management and share their positive sporting experiences with others ([Cunningham et al., 2005](#); [Gottfredson, 1981](#); [Hancock, Cintron, et al., 2018](#)). Six of the eight present or past CEs in this study came from such families.

Most participants reinforced Fink's ([2016](#)) and Sport NZ's ([2018b](#)) understanding that childhood sport provided many of the women with a sense of community, networks, confidence, and ambition. Women belonging to families who were involved in a lot of sport or whose family contained a sports representative or had a family sports code were more likely to have a career in sport and progress further up the corporate ladder. Participants in these families also developed a greater sense of belonging, identity and confidence. Several students and graduates were able to name the people within their sports networks who had suggested they study sport management.

Using feminine terms as 'put downs' in sport further denigrates women ([Bruce, 2008](#); [Fink, 2016](#)). Claiming certain men lack sporting ability because they 'throw or run like a girl' is a prime example which positions men's abilities as preferred over and superior to women's. The pervasive understanding of 'sport' is 'men's sport', and then there is 'women's sport', meaning 'other'. The notion of male superiority explains why two students in the study renounced aspects of their femininity and claimed not to be a "girly-girl". Several practitioners have used masculine gender modelling to build their self-image and two students labelled themselves as "tomboys" ([Bandura, 1986](#)). One participant cited the necessity of adopting strong masculine characteristics to be successful in her working life. I also have utilised all of these strategies to compete against men and prove my self-worth in a world which I perceive is constantly underestimating my ability.

In my childhood, I was encouraged to play 'acceptable' women's sports. I was discouraged from competitive swimming. I already had a strong, athletic, Amazonian figure and my parents thought swimming would broaden my shoulders even further.

Of course, my father insisted I was trained in Scottish Highland dancing. I competed aggressively with my older brothers playing backyard rugby, and in surfing, fishing, basketball and cycling. My mother came to all of my hockey games, while my father watched all of my brother's rugby games. I was sent to a girl's finishing school at the age of 16 years in an attempt to make me more feminine and compliant. I failed the course. The other graduates received a certificate, and I was given a diet programme.

### Applying for sport management jobs

The majority of students, graduates and a few practitioners described their fear, reluctance and anxiety in applying for their first role in sport management. The women doubted their ability, with lack of experience, young age, status as a woman, other job applicants being more suitable, and not meeting all of the job criteria being career barriers ([Harris et al., 2015](#); [Lirgg, 1991](#); [Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#)). The graduates who had applied for advertised jobs and had not had a response or had been declined found their fear and anxiety grew, and their self-confidence decreased. One graduate who took longer than expected to find her first job initially doubted her skill set, then her qualification and finally the relevance of her WIL experience. Those women who applied and secured a job, in many cases with their first application, were surprised and elated. I was intrigued to find over half of the graduates, and a few practitioners, were employed in sports organisations or codes which they knew nothing or very little about. Their confidence to apply for roles with codes they knew little about indicated to me that the women were prepared to learn about the code on the job, but they were less comfortable with the notion of developing the necessary management skills on the job, an issue which will be discussed later.

The findings showed that most of the students and graduates had enrolled in a sport management undergraduate programme with very little knowledge of sport management roles and the organisations who employed sport management graduates. My research findings reaffirmed Leberman and Shaw's ([2012](#)) research which indicated women students of sport management want more information on sport management career pathways as well as training in negotiation strategies when applying for roles. Women in my study especially wanted negotiation training to include remuneration. Leberman and Shaw's participants also wanted to know more about pay rates and workplace hour requirements.

Many of the practitioners had entered the sector in its fledgling stages with little knowledge of what their roles would entail. For this group and most of the other participants, their work interests were initiated by early positive sports encounters and progressed through their educational experiences ([Hancock, Cintron, et al., 2018](#)). The women found the term 'sport management' to be non-specific, vague, broad, and all-encompassing, and the women discovered a similar perception was commonplace among the wider public. Globally, and within NZ the sport industry has matured, though the scope of the industry remains unnoticed by many working outside of the sector. Several participants who told people they were studying or had studied sport management were then asked if they intended to be a PE teacher or a personal trainer. Knowledge of the types of sport management jobs, employing organisations and career paths were limited, not only among the students during their studies and when they looked for their WIL placement, but also among the graduates when they sought their first job. This indicates that tertiary institutions offering sport management qualifications need to provide more career information to prospective students and school career counsellors in a format and medium suitable for those audiences. In light of the low numbers and visibility of women role models in sport management, this is more important for young women who are interested in a career in sport management than for young men.

The findings show how some women deselected themselves and preferred not to apply for a job, especially with a male athlete-dominated sports code. Participants spoke of how they expected to encounter barriers of blatant masculine practices and gender discrimination. [Fink \(2016\)](#), found that,

[in] sport, it is normal to think that women are not suitable for certain jobs solely due to their gender when, in fact, gender has nothing to do with their capacity for success. Instead, it is our unchecked attitudes about gender that continue to negatively impact girls' and women's experiences in sport. (p.3)

The 16 women students in Harris et al.'s ([2015](#)) study, and most of the students and graduates in this research study, expected to encounter sexual discrimination and isolation in male-dominated sports codes, even if they were very knowledgeable about the code. Women might be 'into' sport, but they are not 'natural' senior sport managers.

Employment criteria needed for men to secure a senior sport management role were not applicable to women. For men, sport knowledge and passion are two prescribed masculine stereotypes essential for a man's appointment at a senior level. Yet for women there is a disjuncture, being 'sporty' or passionate about sport does not necessarily translate into being seen as attributes for senior sport management roles, by male gatekeepers and biased appointment panels. The ingrained masculine stereotypes clash with popular perceptions of women and femininity which are contrary to the criteria for a sport manager.

A quarter of Leberman and Shaw's (2012) graduate participants considered that, as women, their careers would be limited by the exclusionary nature of the old boys' club, and the prospect of being the primary child carer. Within my study only two of the women who had worked in male-dominated sports codes felt they had successfully worked in the code and had not encountered personal discrimination; the others believed they had been subjected to isolation and exclusion. My research findings indicate that the students and graduates considered their young age and lack of work experience were detrimental to their job applications. This study however, did not compare appointments of male and female graduates to sport management roles. It might seem inconsistent that women who had experienced such positive relationships with sport in their younger years should feel so hesitant applying for paid roles in sport management. Some participants for example, believed they were not able to transfer their athlete self-efficacy into the self-confidence needed to apply for sport management roles.

The student and graduate groups within my study reported an equal sex ratio among their lecturers, and more often spoke of their interactions with female lecturers in contrast to male lecturers. In NZ the majority of students and graduates did not experience sexism within their sport management universities programmes. The graduates once working in the sector experienced sexism, yet the students did not expect that being a woman would confine their sport management career. These findings differed to those from Sauder et al.'s (2018) American study, where there were low numbers of female sport management students and low numbers of female lecturers, sexism was prevalent within their sport management university classes and the students expected to encounter sexism on the job.

Reluctance to apply for roles was also evident further up the sport management hierarchy. Several practitioners commented on the disinclination of women to apply for senior leadership and governance roles, even in female sports codes, claiming “if they had applied, they would have got the job”. The practitioners advocate for more support and initiatives to encourage and assist women in being braver with their job applications. The practitioners’ comments corresponded with what I have observed supervising women in the sport management students’ final year WIL paper and the extra support and encouragement many young women need to boost their self-confidence and courage to put their résumés forward.

In contrast to the women who acknowledged their low self-confidence, other participants’ indicated how positive experiences during their childhood and teenage years volunteering in sport provided a platform to develop their skill sets, gain industry knowledge, take on responsibilities and grow their confidence and persistence, which would benefit future careers ([Sauder et al., 2018](#)). Here they reflected on the skills they had inadvertently developed by volunteering or through paid employment and how, much to their surprise, these were transferable to a sport management role. This highlights some participants ascending to the third of Belenky et al.’s ([1997](#)) knowledge perspectives, subjective knowledge, which is personally constructed and acquired knowledge. These women recognised the value of their skills and transitioned more readily into their first sport management role. This finding tends to support Bandura’s ([1986](#)) theory and Lirgg’s ([1992](#)) findings on the development of self-efficacy and confidence through becoming proficient in new skills. However, most of the younger participants were oblivious to their inadvertent skill development and the value of those skills in a sport management role.

The overwhelming benefits of enhanced self-efficacy and confidence built by participants during their youth by volunteering support the value and importance of WIL as a part of sport management studies. Leberman and Shaw ([2012](#)) also found their NZ sport management graduate participants considered part-time work and WIL experiences as valuable. Furthermore, lecturers encouraging the university students to maximise their volunteering experiences before graduating would increase their confidence and courage and their employability ([Harris et al., 2015](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#); [Sauder et al., 2018](#)). Some graduates in this study continue to volunteer in

community and high-performance team coaching and management, and one has been involved in sport governance since graduating. Most practitioners volunteered during their paid working life, many in governance roles where they have used their industry knowledge to advance sport domestically, and internationally.

Eighteen participants across all three groups had completed a WIL placement as part of their university studies. All of the women had found their WIL provided them with opportunities to grow their self-confidence and networks, identify mentors, shape their career path, and apply their theoretical knowledge to real situations ([Hancock, Cintron, et al., 2018](#)). One student who had partially completed her WIL placement did not recognise the value a future employer would see in her WIL work experience. The few women who had been in paid employment before beginning their university education developed vastly more self-confidence by strategically choosing their WIL placements and, were the most ambitious to scale the sport management hierarchy. Several practitioners who were familiar with WIL supported the experience and the professional and personal development associated with the programmes. They to, sought to encourage students to be more strategic when selecting where their WIL placement might be. These practitioners awareness of the issues in their sport working environment and the advice they give to help other women navigate the inherent obstacles aligns with Belenky et al.'s ([1997](#)) ultimate knowledge perspective, constructed knowledge. Many students and graduates saw WIL as an interim step to securing a job within their WIL placement organisation, with the practitioners seizing the WIL opportunity to trial a potential new employee. The women explained their WIL experiences reduced fear by making the unknown known with some women valuing being externally validated by someone in the industry. [Lirgg \(1991\)](#) noted however, that reliance on external feedback can lead to feelings of incompetence, especially when women may be confused by stereotypical gender expectations.

In contrast to the students and graduates, many of the practitioners believed in their ability to progress to senior sport management positions and confidently applied for such jobs. Through reflection, they had come to understand that values and attitudes learnt during their childhood positively impacted upon their self-confidence and subsequent work aspirations and success. [Eccles et al. \(1998\)](#) claimed that women tended to underestimate their future ability to learn on the job, whereas men tended

to overestimate their ability to acquire the necessary skills after being employed.

[Bandura \(1977\)](#) identified the most influential antecedent of self-efficacy as mastery of experience which grows self-confidence. Those most comfortable with learning on the job were the practitioners, and the least comfortable were the students. The findings showed that most of the practitioners applied for jobs knowing they did not have the experience or skills, but fully believed in their ability to learn on the job and get the work done. Most of the graduates were beginning to recognise this. On the job, they were successfully growing their skillset and their corresponding self-efficacy, and with that came an expanding self-confidence. Most of the student participants, as well as the students I have supervised, did not understand the normality of learning on the job, and how their negative thinking needed to change to a 'can do' attitude ([Bandura, 1977](#)).

It was therefore no surprise, when mostly the students, and graduates listed the following prominent career limiting thought patterns: lack of confidence; overthinking things; undervaluing themselves and judging themselves harshly. What I did not expect was a very senior practitioner to reveal experiencing what she termed, the imposter syndrome later in her career and how she found this debilitating. She laid the blame fully on her own lack of confidence and did not consider how the external factors proposed by [Breeze \(2018\)](#) of socio-politics, knowledge production nor the competitive sport management job market may have shaped her self-doubt.

This label, imposter syndrome, struck me: I immediately recognised it as applicable to my working life experiences. I have intermittently experienced imposter syndrome and hidden my self-doubt from others. I never knew my affliction had a name, and that the negative thought process was typical. [van Manen \(1990\)](#) explained how, as a hermeneutist, one knows that one's own experiences are also the possible experiences of others. On reflection, I also recognised imposter syndrome in some of my past students, my children, friends, and colleagues, and other participants in this study. Avoiding the anxiety imposed by the imposter syndrome could be a component of women's reluctance to apply for positions without first possessing and mastering the required skills. The findings indicated that, once in a role, the practitioners and graduates' confidence grew, especially in situations when those further up the organisational hierarchy supported their ideas ([Lirgg, 1991](#)). However, 16 of the less

experienced women in this study claimed they would instead choose to develop their skills and prove their worth before applying for a role or promotion ([Lirgg, 1992](#)). This realisation made me wonder, does women's fear of failure and desire for self-preservation overshadow their hope for success? This epiphany has already informed my teaching, and now I discuss imposter syndrome in my WIL forum classes to raise the awareness and help the students realise the majority of the population will encounter it in their lifetime ([Ramsey & Spencer, 2019](#)).

Eight graduates and practitioners in the study still felt they had to prove themselves by working harder than their male colleagues. This mirrors the assumption of a patriarchal mindset, that women are second rate and they will never be as good as the men ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#); [Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007, 2008](#)). Those women who work harder than their male counterparts succeed through sheer tenacity and refuse to be overlooked.

#### Job applications, remuneration and value

The ongoing debate regarding the value, contribution and performance of women in sport management ([Leszczynska, 2017](#)) is a reflection of the undervaluing of women in broader society ([J. McGregor, 2012b](#)). If women are continually intercepting overt and subliminal messages relating to the value of their contribution, it is then understandable that some younger participants in this study voiced concerns about applying for jobs and promotions, and negotiating pay rates. The findings revealed it was mainly the younger and inexperienced women who described a lack of confidence and did not fully comprehend their value from an employer's perspective, especially a male employer. Hence, several of them understood how a woman's lack of confidence meant they asked for lower pay rates and were less likely to apply for promotions ([Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007](#)). Three women remained unconvinced that their promotions could be anything but performance-based and were aghast at the thought that their promotion could be undermined by their sex. To counteract gendered pay gaps and pay equity issues, women from each of the participant groups suggested training for women regarding pay negotiations and promotion processes would be beneficial particularly given the small size of many organisations in the not-for-profit and public (government), sport sector.

### Competing with other job applicants

The findings indicate that sport management roles are highly sought after, mainly by sports enthusiasts with either a business or a sport management qualification, despite the sector's reputation for low pay. There was a division between participants across all three groups on the availability of sport management roles for women in NZ. Two participants claimed there were too few jobs for too many graduates, whereas others saw a lot of opportunities for women in sport decision-making roles. Three women recalled how their school career counsellors had recognised the barriers for women entering the field of sport management and advised their women students to pursue a different career. Conversely, 'sporty' male students were encouraged by their school career counsellors into the sport management field. The counsellors' gendered advice was counter to the plethora of loud voices claiming the need for equality for women in sport management in NZ ([Hillary Commission for Sport Fitness and Leisure, 1998](#); [J. McGregor, 2012b](#); [New Zealand Cricket, 2016](#); [New Zealand Rugby Union, 2017](#)) and more recently, the demand that women's voices must be heard in sport management decision making.

One practitioner, aged over 50 years, explained how her older age made her feel vulnerable and invisible to future employers, despite her experience and specialist skill set. In addition, three older women practitioners spoke about choosing to descend the corporate ladder to a lower level role which provided them with a better work-life balance ([Dixon & Bruening, 2007](#)). They remarked how this decision came at a time when they foresaw their corresponding male colleagues striving for more senior positions and ascending the sport management career ladder. These insights indicate that older women, in particular, might have a different success or work satisfaction perspective from men.

In summary, the majority of all participants were motivated to follow a career in sport because they believed in sharing their positive sporting experiences with others, inspiring people, and improving people's mental health and well-being. However, from birth, women are shaped by patriarchal constructed stereotypes and values which privilege men over women. Furthermore, the practices and structures erected within political and organisational day-to-day activities continue to marginalise women and support men. The gendered advice from school counsellors further exasperates the

barriers women face entering the sport management field. Some practitioners revealed that their goals towards the end of their careers may differ from men's.

### 8.3 What level playing field? Gendered NZ sport

This section discusses the pervasive, taken-for-granted dominance of patriarchy in NZ culture and the sporting subculture ([Cameron, 2000](#); [J. McGregor & Fountaine, 1997](#); [McKay, 1991](#); [Ryan, 2010](#)). The findings show how sport is deeply embedded in the culture and was dominant in all of the women's lives. Sport and sporting events are highly regarded and the best performing athletes of predominantly men's sports are portrayed as heroes ([Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)). Despite perceptions of a 'level playing field' created by equal rights legislation, the traditional structures and masculine practices which persist across NZ's broader culture and are mirrored within sport deter women from climbing the sport management hierarchy ([Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#); [J. McGregor, 2012b](#)).

Patriarchy is deeply entrenched in NZ society ([Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#); [McKay, 1991](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#); [Shaw, 2006](#)). Despite the gains women have made, women's inclusion in sport leadership and senior management remains an arduous journey ([Shaw, 2018](#)). Women encounter many discriminatory practices, most of which are invisible on their own, but collectively, gender discrimination, as most participants noted, is almost too hard to change. Belenky et al.'s ([1997](#)) proposition still stands: "Women learn that men hold the power and in society's eyes, have the ultimate authority. They are the esteemed teachers, the religious spokesmen, the medical, the military, the corporate, the respected creators" (p. 58). Boys and men hear the same messages as girls and women without realising the disadvantages facing women, and accept the male's privileged status. Gendered society, and in particular sport, has been created and replicated by men, benefiting men at the expense of the 'Other', women ([Eagly & Wood, 2011](#); [Fink, 2016](#); [Patterson et al., 2012](#)).

Eighteen women in this study acknowledged the significance of having more women in senior sport management roles, but the issue is more complex ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#)). To successfully achieve substantive equality, more women need to have the courage to apply for roles, and society also needs a cultural shift, to openly value the attributes, skills and perspectives women bring with them as women. While debate

continues over the existence of differences in gender management and leadership attributes ([Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008](#); [Shaw, 2006](#)), this group felt women manage and lead differently from men. Some participants suggested women: carry the capacity to develop relationships and enhance culture; are emotionally aware, risk-averse and less ego-driven; and approach things differently ([Fink, 2008](#); [Hancock, Darwin, et al., 2018](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#); [Shaw & Frisby, 2006](#)). Participants stated that women in decision-making positions need to retain their kaupapa, to 'do gender' and retain their feminine values, attributes and behaviours. Similarly, Shaw ([2006](#)) calls on women in leadership roles in sport to 'undo gender', by being the voice advocating for change for the women in sport whom they represent. To do so, this minority group of women, need to be committed, and willing to act, bearing in mind women need to be appointed in sufficient numbers so as not to be silenced by the overwhelming male majority ([Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007](#)).

### 8.3.1 Sport NZ

Governments and their representative agencies retain the power to disseminate knowledge and influence behaviour within society to effect macro-societal level change. Sport NZ is the government agency responsible for overseeing the delivery of sport and its corresponding values and messages across the country. Sport NZ's role is especially compelling given the infatuation NZer's have with sport ([Leberman et al., 2012](#)). The participants in this study were critical of Sport NZ's lack of any genuine effort to improve gender equality and diversity in sport governance and senior sport management. The women did not expect gains in gender equality in the foreseeable future unless Sport NZ implemented change within their organisation. The women thought it was hypocritical of Sport NZ to direct gender change when they did not have gender substantive equality on the Sport NZ board or the HPSNZ board, and even fewer women in senior management. Furthermore, the participants understood how lack of action, within Sport NZ impedes change further down the sport hierarchy at the NSO, RSO, RST, and club levels. Sport NZ is the crown entity and is supposed to implement and report to the EEO on gender equality. The women were adamant Sport NZ needs to take a visible leadership role from the top, and resource initiatives and training for other sports organisations to effectively implement gender equality. It should be noted that the focus groups and interviews in this study occurred between

October 2016 and October 2017. In September 2017 the Labour-led coalition became the government of NZ. The main focus for the new Labour Minister of Sport and Recreation was greater access for women and girls in sport and active recreation ([Sport New Zealand & New Zealand Government, 2018](#)) and this led the way in July 2018 for the first time, the boards of Sport NZ and HPSNZ and the senior leadership team of Sport NZ had equal gender representation.

### 8.3.2 Sports organisations

The findings also highlight how sports organisations' practices and structures privilege men and allow men to hold power ([Burton, 2015](#); [Fink, 2016](#); [Leberman & Palmer, 2009](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#); [Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)). Most graduates and some practitioners referred to sporting boards, and many in senior management, as belonging to the old boys' club and being 'pale, stale and male' with traditional 'old-school' attitudes. Many participants accepted change was phenomenally slow or near impossible within the majority of the current governance and leadership groups of sporting organisations. In saying this, the recent New Zealand Cricket report, *Women and Cricket – Cricket and Women*, and the NZRU *Respect and Responsibility* review have both raised the visibility of gender inequality and provided an impetus to address it. The women acknowledged, readily named, and were grateful for the 'male champions' who publicly advocated for gender equality in sport. This group commanded the attention of their male peers because they were speaking out on an issue seemingly outside their self-interest and actively listening to women's voices. The participants were also optimistic about the change they saw in the next generations coming through, especially the millennials. Many participants stated the millennials would not tolerate marginalisation and discrimination. The core question remains: will this optimism be enough to overcome the embedded systemic culture which currently exists in society and is enacted by many men in positions of power in sport organisations? Despite previous groups of women being ever hopeful of change, progress towards gender substantive equality in sport has been minimal ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#)). This highlights the need for something more than mere optimism to enact change, such as mandatory quotas or financial penalties. Future actions of this nature will be discussed later in this chapter.

### 8.3.3 Working conditions

The graduates and practitioners working in NFP sport organisations spoke of how the organisations are notoriously under-resourced, which in turn affects the working conditions of employees. This contrasted with the student's perceptions who were significantly unaware of how under-resourcing in the sports sector could impact on their working conditions. Harris et al. ([2015](#)) found American sport management students were well aware of how roles in sports often meant long hours, low pay, and with women underrepresented. My research found that it was only after starting their jobs in sport management that the graduates discovered they were poorly paid, their roles were labour intensive, with long and erratic hours. They commented how their working conditions and pay paled in comparison with those of their friends in other sectors. The graduate participants also found their job descriptions failed to match reality. The graduates and some students in my research also complained about the absence of a defined and linear sport management career path.

Here, one practitioner's advice to women considering a senior decision-making role within sport management resonates. She suggested they first acquire five to seven years of commercial experience. She considered the corporate sector had the finances, time and resources to invest in personal development and training on the job which the financially strapped sport sector could not provide. Nevertheless, 11 practitioners successfully developed their sport management skills working in the sport sector with only two of them choosing postgraduate studies to supplement their professional development.

#### Insecure funds to cover salaries

Many graduates faced job uncertainty when securing their first role in the sport environment. They did not realise that often PBEs in the not-for-profit sector meant the salaries were covered by grants which were unguaranteed and externally sourced. Graduates with family and work commitments found uncertain financial employment conditions frightening and this challenged their future security. Many graduates and practitioners relied on volunteers to fulfil operational roles where, again, there was limited or no budget to cover the resources necessary to deliver the sport.

Remuneration and job security impacted upon the students' and graduates' financial

well-being and their ability to plan long-term, for example, to buy a house. This caused various participants to question whether their uncertain financial situation would allow them to stay in the industry. The stress and uncertainty generated by the ongoing insecurity of funding for PBE staff salaries particularly prevalent in the NZ not-for-profit sector appears to be invisible in the sport management literature.

Despite the political and competitive working environment and the insecurity of their income, most of the graduate participants enjoyed their sport management jobs and wanted to stay in the sector. The majority of participants were motivated to follow a career in sport because they believed in sharing their positive sporting experiences with others, inspiring people, and improving people's mental health and well-being.

### Parenting

The findings highlighted that the graduates' and practitioners' demanding and somewhat erratic work hours were generally not conducive to being a parent. Indeed 16 graduates and practitioners considered the long hours to be a structural barrier to childbearing and parenting. This gendered bias against women as child bearers and primary caregivers was made evident when one practitioner was asked during a job interview if she was going to have children, and another was asked if her husband approved of her job application. Four practitioners suggested being child free had been beneficial for their career progression.

Graduates and practitioners had progressed their careers and transferred to new roles; three were pregnant with their first child (during the research), and six others had young children. None of the participants who had become parents since 2000 mentioned encountering any parenting bias within the workplace. However, discussions with the women who were already mothers of young children, or were thinking of having children, revealed most women had selected roles, job criteria, and organisations which facilitated a conducive work-family life balance. One student had already elected not to have children, opting instead for a high-level sport management position. The graduate participants spoke about how their demanding jobs in sport management might have impacted upon their decisions about having children. Their considerations had included whether to become a parent or not, the length of parental leave, which parent took parental leave, and whether to return to work at all or in a

part-time or full-time role after having children. The graduates also suspected the arduous nature of sport management roles would be especially relevant for women who would be the ongoing primary caregivers in the family. The women believed if sport organisations offered flexible hours and periods where they could work from home, it would be easier to negotiate the demands of parenting and work, and would make the transition back to work easier. The women believed flexibility would mean they were more inclined to continue working in the sporting sector and progress their careers. The graduates also saw low pay and the cost of childcare as additional considerations in their parenting decisions.

Seventeen students and graduates further acknowledged how time away from the traditional sport management workplace bearing and raising children would reduce their work experience and slow their career progression. Three practitioners' experiences supported this concern. Most women viewed time away from work raising children as an opportunity for their male counterparts to 'get ahead'. Nonetheless, some practitioners were, and some graduates knew of, women who were juggling parenting, other commitments and working in senior sport management roles.

The women felt the effects of the entrenched social and cultural expectations of women as the primary child carers continues to constrict women's careers. This viewpoint is well supported in the findings from other research, for example [Burton \(2015\)](#), [Cameron \(1996\)](#), [Christopher \(2012\)](#), [Claringbould and Knoppers \(2012\)](#), [Harris et al. \(2015\)](#), [Knoppers and Anthonissen \(2008\)](#), [National Council of Women of New Zealand \(2018\)](#), [Terjesen et al. \(2015\)](#), and [Shaw and Hoeber \(2003\)](#). Advocating for radically different structures to remove the parenting barriers was an alternative possibility, a topic raised by nine participants. Six of the eight practitioners and graduates with children had implemented reduced work hours to span 'child-friendly' hours of 9 am to 3.30 pm, brought their children to work, and implemented workplace flexibility to balance family and work. By implementing structural changes, one organisation became a preferred employer organisation for other working mothers in the sport sector. This one example illustrates how a fundamental cultural shift can reduce some of the structural inequalities within the sport management sector ([Burton, 2015](#); [Connell, 2009](#); [Leberman & Burton, 2017](#); [Shaw & Frisby, 2006](#)).

Without any flexibility, women feel pressured by the gendered expectation to be both a full-time worker and parent, becoming 'superwomen' and sacrificing personal needs for work and family. I was concerned that other women in the sector might feel these 'superwomen' are setting a precedent which they have to follow. People refer to me as a 'superwoman' with all of the roles I perform. Nevertheless, as a full-time working single mother of two, I struggle to juggle my commitments. The compromise between my commitments outside the family and my commitment to being a mother triggers my internal guilt barometer. Sometimes, when I am at work, I feel I should be with my children, and when I am with my children, I feel I should be at work. Whichever way I compromise, everyone loses, but I feel my children and I lose more.

#### 8.3.4 Gendered organisations - hierarchies, roles and codes

Gendered hierarchies.

Research shows, and the practitioners and graduates knew, that men increasingly outnumbered women at each progressive step up the sport management hierarchy ([Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014](#)). At the time of data collection, many graduates and practitioners recognised women were overrepresented in front-line administration and lower-level sport management roles, which aligns with the findings of Hancock, Darwin, et al. ([2018](#)). The women described facets of what we would term as traditional patriarchy and the persistence of old boys' club practices which created more resistance for women further up the hierarchy, giving the perception of a 'sport glass ceiling' ([Galloway, 2012](#)). The gender imbalance is impeding women's promotion opportunities and the number of women in the pipeline from decision making positions ([Adriaanse, 2017](#); [Hancock & Hums, 2016](#); [Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)).

The practitioners felt women successfully scaling the corporate ladder were anomalies except in netball, historically constructed as the women's game and a few minority, community and disability sports. The students and graduates were aware more women had been appointed to sport management, senior leadership and governance roles in the last 10 to 15 years than in the past. Many mentioned Raelene Castle as the most successful, especially for being one of the first woman to break into traditionally male-dominated domains. Her high profile and visible success had inspired many student and graduate participants.

### Gendered roles and codes

The participants considered the historical and persistent exclusion of women from decision-making roles, especially in male-dominated sports such as rugby and cricket, meant gender substantive equality directives would have limited success without a change in attitudes. Over half of the students and graduates were attracted to complete their WIL placement or work in organisations with a high number of female employees or a female CE. Their reasoning was to be part of a female-led culture, and to be heard, mentored and able to grow their capabilities. Five of the practitioners acknowledged their careers had been cultivated and nurtured in the women-dominated realms of netball. Those who had worked in organisations with either a majority or high representation of women in decision-making roles found the workplace to be supportive and productive ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#)). The pervasive dominance of negative female stereotypes caused a few of the younger participants to express a reluctance to work in organisations with a significant number of women for fear that the work culture would be too 'gossipy' and unproductive ([Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008](#)). However, the reality of working with women strongly contrasts with the devaluing stereotypical myths of 'women's behaviour'.

Several women suggested that men use women's and community sports as a stepping stone to men's sports and the higher paying jobs ([Cameron, 1996](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#)). Several participants applauded the growing number of women overcoming the 'glass wall' ([Walker et al., 2017](#)) and the 'glass ceiling' ([Hancock, Darvin, et al., 2018](#)) in sport management, especially in traditionally male sports codes. Olsson and Martiny's ([2018](#)) research indicated subjecting girls to counter-stereotypical role models early in life meant that, as women, their career choices were less limited. This claim was reinforced by the younger women's aspirations to become sport CEs.

The findings showed that most of the participants were first employed in minority, community, grassroots, women's or young persons' sports. Many of the practitioners had remained in those organisations, with only a few progressing to high-profile sports codes or for-profit sports organisations. Women confined to invisible roles within low-profile sports organisations continue to experience the career-limiting and financially unstable work conditions which tend to replicate the structural inequalities found within the sporting sector. The participants stated netball was the only sport code

where a significant number of women were appointed to senior leadership roles in a comparatively high-profile sport in NZ.

### Gender and ethnic stereotypes

Most of the women in the study identified their ethnicity as European, New Zealand European, Pākehā, Kiwi or New Zealander. A few women identified as having one of these ethnicities combined with another such as Māori, Pacific Island, or Asian. Only one participant referred to herself as both Māori and Asian, and another as being a full Pacific Islander. Gender self-identification in NZ has changed from the gender binary of male and female and now allows for people to express what they consider to be a more accurate representation of how they identify themselves, for example, gender fluid or transgender. Ethnicity in NZ is following a similar trend, with many people choosing not to accept the traditional choices such as Māori, Asian or European and choosing instead an alternate ethnic label which they consider more accurately represents them.

Women of colour are anticipating or already are working in an industry which is predominantly led by white, traditionally patriarchal and privileged men. The voices of women of colour are necessary. They bring ethnic and gender diversity to the sport decision-making table. Theirs is a unique way of viewing and valuing the sporting world that others would not be privileged to know or understand. This fits well with intersectionality ([Brookes, 2016](#); [Palmer & Masters, 2010](#)) and feminist understandings ([Baker, 1990](#); [Hekman, 1997](#); [Leckenby, 2007](#)). Māori and Pacific Island women were motivated to secure a place in sport management to help their communities by improving their people's health, nutrition, and mental wellbeing. They wanted to be associated with sports that had the right tikanga.

The sports sector in NZ is not providing sport for Māori in the partnership envisaged by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Treaty of Waitangi ([Brookes, 2016](#)). Several participants suggested the existing sports sector in NZ did not meet the needs of marginalised groups and proposed significant structural change. One suggestion included having two sports systems, the current system and another system which provided equitable access for 'others'. Several senior practitioners claimed to use their positions and

voices to better the sector, improve access for marginalised groups, and change social perceptions of who can participate in sport.

Although none of the women who identified as being Māori, Pacific Islander or Asian acknowledged encountering a white male bias, two graduates found their Māori or Pacific ethnicity helped them secure their role and work effectively in their role. Two practitioners who identified as New Zealand European spoke of the traditional sport management interview processes, where white European cultural expectations contradicted cultural behaviours of Māori and Pacific Island people, for example, expecting an interview candidate to proudly talk about their success or accomplishments. One practitioner explained that when an interview style complementary to the culture of an interviewee was adopted, the employment outcome was significantly more favourable for the employee.

#### Organisational fit

Preferred employer organisations and codes were readily identified by the women. In addition to avoiding traditional male sports codes, most women anticipated avoiding bureaucratic or small organisations, and schools. The rationale for these comments included: little room for innovation; drawn-out promotion processes; and little scope to progress their management skills. I was surprised to find many graduates and students chose to avoid organisations which received significant Sport NZ funding with low athlete participation rates. The graduates claimed the moral high ground, preferring not to work for organisations which used resources to support privileged elite athletes at the expense of community sport, health and well-being.

#### Invisible and normal – Business as usual

The findings reiterated how the overrepresentation of men in positions of power in NZ sport is pervasive, culturally accepted, and routine. Most practitioners also observed that they had become accustomed to the lack of women in senior sport management and leadership and seldom noticed their absence. Aicher and Sagas (2009) claimed that men's discriminatory practices of hiring other men remained unchallenged and ensured homologous reproduction. Many graduates and practitioners referred to the limited female presence in strategy and decision-making meetings as 'business as usual'. However, in this study, over half of the practitioners publicly challenged

discriminatory behaviour, and a few of the graduates' and practitioners' male colleagues were proactive in championing gender equality in sport. The longer-standing and more influential practitioners were challenging some of the restraining patriarchal structures and practices which were marginalising women, on a macro- and meso-level.

An element of co-option, in other words, 'pleasing the lads' was echoed in the interviews especially of the practitioners. The few women who had broken into the traditionally male realms of senior sport leadership did so, often as lone voices. Once in the role as a minority voice, women feel pressured to manage their situation, maintain stability and keep their career intact, by buying into the rules of the dominant culture, often quite pragmatically, to simply get things done. This means women having to work in the system even as they personally, may struggle with it and try to change it from within. For example, some participants spoke of how they had learnt to make their point in a roundabout way, take those who were unaware on a journey of change, rather than antagonising them in the process.

On a personal, micro-level, many practitioners had developed strategies to access the old boys' networks and 'participate in the game' that being in leader roles required them to play. Several practitioners exhibited their 'double consciousness' and recognised how to work with men in a male paradigm to ensure their survival ([J. Nielsen, 1990](#)). The women's mechanisms to navigate the old boys' club ranged from befriending the members and working within their paradigm, playing golf with them, talking sport and sport strategy, to being silenced and avoiding interaction with them, and finally to manipulating the men to achieve the women's objectives.

Many graduates and a few students recognised the low numbers of women in decision-making roles but did not consider themselves empowered to enact change. The graduate cohort were the groups whose early experiences within the sector had made them aware of the entrenched gender barriers and sexism which exist within the sport management sector. Some graduates were beginning to develop strategies to work within the confines of 'stale, pale, and male' sports organisations and other graduates were considering leaving the sector. However, for most students, the sporting industry's patriarchal characteristics remained invisible. One practitioner

voiced her concern for the students coming into the sector and being confronted by the old boys' club in action. In my opinion, raising students' awareness of the gendered nature of sport management needs to be a compulsory element in tertiary curricula, especially during their WIL placement.

Several participants' intersectional identity (e.g. Māori and Pākehā) meant they held different views on equality ([Melton & Bryant, 2017](#)). Māori cultural foundations shaped some participants' primary focus on access and substantive equality for Māori and Māori women. A practitioner's sporting organisations servicing athletes with disabilities meant her substantive equality worldview was broader than just gender. These views and experiences led some participants to advocate for sport to create radical new structures, different from the existing patriarchal structures, which would enable marginalised groups to have a voice and control their own sport. For decades 'business as usual' has normalised the exclusion of 'others' from sport decision-making, allowing men to make decisions about women's sport, in the absence of women ([Cockburn & Atkinson, 2017](#); [New Zealand Cricket, 2016](#)).

Mass media is a powerful and constant reinforcement of hegemonic masculinity ([Boyle & Haynes, 2000](#); [Bruce, 2008, 2016](#); [Fink, 2015](#); [J. McGregor & Fountaine, 1997](#); [McKay, 1991](#)). In this study, the women reported they found the media treated women and women's sport differently, devalued women and was dismissive of women. Several women acknowledged the duration, timing and content of men's sport conveyed priority, preference and prominence over women's sport, although a few acknowledged they had observed an improvement in the media content recently. The women explained how men's sport on television in NZ almost always appears ahead of any women's sport, even when women won international sporting events. Several participants noted times when women such as the African-American tennis player Serena Williams challenged the normal gendered behaviour and, as a result, was subjected to humiliation through the media. Across all groups, several participants anticipated the capacity of social media could provide a way to disrupt the way women's sport was covered and also disseminate messages and calls to action regarding discriminatory behaviour. I reflected on the pervasive, easy access and portable nature of the media and recognised only too well that without a gender

equitable change in the practices within all sports media, male privilege and men's sport would remain uncontested and preferential ([Bruce, 2016](#)).

### Substantive equality precedes formal equality

The terms equity and equality were used interchangeably by many of the participants. However, the distinction between the two terms is critical to understanding the plight of many women in NZ raised under the 'equal rights illusion' ([M. Wilson, 1998](#)). Formal equality masks the underlying discriminatory structures and practices which stop women being as successful as men in the sports sector, namely: the old boys' club, where masculinity is valued over femininity; gendered interview panels in sports codes, practices and jobs; and gendered parenting. Formal equality claims a level playing field and provides patriarchy with the opportunity to blame women for not making use of their equality and 'fixing themselves' ([Burton & Leberman, 2017b](#)).

When asked, the women were forthcoming with suggestions which they considered would enable more women to be successful in sport management. Several women recognised more equal outcomes could be achieved when a substantive equality approach had first been applied. In saying this, most participants, realised women in NZ were systemically disadvantaged by their gender, implying substantive inequality exists within the country. Substantive equality approaches identified by the participants began with quick-fix and straightforward solutions such as: regular networking opportunities supporting women in middle management; informing female sport management students about the old boys' club and how to navigate it; substantive equality training; and flexible work conditions and help to return to work after having children. The women also suggested more complex substantive equality approaches such as: gender quotas; constitutional changes; reporting on gendered employment numbers and pay gaps; non-gendered jobs; fairer women's sponsorship deals and media coverage; and diversity on Sport NZ boards and at Sport NZ conferences. These approaches override inherent male privileged structures and practices in the sports sector and work on creating a more equal outcome for women. It was evident that given the opportunity to have a voice and be heard, the women had 'real solutions' to 'real problems'. Sport is often portrayed as a mirror of wider society – hence what was suggested needs to be more widely applied – or sport could lead the way in practicing and showcasing substantive equality in action.

There were two dissenting voices among the participants. One of the most accomplished practitioners considered *“gender inequality is made a much bigger deal than it should be”*. She was the first in her field to break some glass ceilings; she had ‘made it through’ in sport management. She and another practitioner were frustrated that some women do not possess the courage to apply for some sport management roles. One believed the sector needed to help those women to become braver in their job applications. The other believed that every woman had an equal opportunity to progress. Both women held a formal equality perspective, which assumes an equal playing field with no gender discrimination. They believed the problem lay with women themselves. Career success for NZ women in traditionally male jobs and industries has been match-fixed against women. The position of formal equality masks historical, systemic, socially constructed, cumulative disadvantage ([Waring, 1996](#)).

Overall, most participants recognised the need for seismic systemic change, so that all women can apply for roles with confidence, knowing that, regardless of gender, all applicants will be treated in the same way.

### 8.3.5 Initiatives

#### IWG, Sport NZ, NZOC, and WISPA

Over the past three decades, several of the senior practitioners in this research had been proactive in developing initiatives aimed at increasing the inclusion of women in decision-making roles in sport, such as the IWG, NZOC and Sport NZ leadership training, and WISPA. However, most practitioners believed that without government or sport agency backing and adequate resourcing, most strategies would fail to deliver long-term and widespread sustainable change. The 2018 Labour-led coalition government initiative demonstrates a new commitment responding to calls for equality in women’s sport by providing NZ\$10 million. The Minister for Sport, Grant Robertson, has directed the funding to be invested by Sport NZ in programmes to “help create equality for women and girls” in sport ([Ardern & Robertson, 2018, para. 10](#)). Creating true equality requires radical interventions described earlier in this chapter, to disrupt and totally change the deeply ingrained hegemonic prejudices and practices in the sector. Advocating the government sport agency to have gender-equal boards, report on gender representation throughout the sport management hierarchy

of all sporting organisations that come under their mantle, and report on the gender pay differences, are steps towards progressing radical change.

### Quotas

Five women across all participant groups proposed quotas as a mechanism to raise the number of women in governance and senior management within sporting organisations. Quotas would provide a mechanism to disrupt and change men's normative power dominance, quicken the access to and numbers of women in sport decision-making roles and rectify social inequalities ([Hovden, 2012](#)). Quota regulations would enforce gender equality, which has been targeted by Sport NZ and the NZOC but not enacted in PBE sporting organisations and communities in NZ. Two practitioners proposed quotas for boards of publicly funded sporting organisations enacted through constitutional change or new public policy. Organisations which failed to comply would have their public funding cut.

Quotas are a tool to give women additional assistance to gain entry onto boards.

Quotas, as a substantive equality tool, enforce minimal gender representation, which unsettles the status quo, and provides the opportunity to work towards a cultural shift and more equality. Both men and women are required to take responsibility to establish gender substantive equality (Shaw, 2006). Men need to embrace a significant cultural shift in attitudes towards women, disestablish the old boys' club, let go of the control of women's sport and allow women to be fully involved in sport decision-making. Women, on the other hand, as five practitioners also noted, need to be open to an alternative reality which would dispel their marginalisation. One practitioner's example of a constitutional quota change, highlighted women members settling for a minimum quota rather than striving for a maximum representation.

Another argument raised in the literature, but not by any of the participants, was that one measurement of board performance might be how successful or not they had been in increasing the number of women. Many studies propose some form of organisational performance measurement ([Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)), but I believe more contentious issues supersede such measures. Who has historically measured men's performance? All measurements and performance indicators have been established

within a patriarchal system where what is measured and valued reflects the interests of the dominant decision-making group ahead of those that are marginalised.

Fewer women in the study opposed quotas than supported quotas. The opponents of quotas in my study believed quotas eroded women's self-confidence through tokenism and not necessarily being selected based on the 'best person for the job', which supported Claringbould and Knoppers's (2007) findings. None of my participants proposed that the criteria for 'the best person for the job' in NZ would have been determined by men in a heavily patriarchal environment.

### 8.3.6 Distancing self from feminism – not a 'troublemaker'

All participants, but one practitioner and one student, thought NZ society and sport needed to be more gender equitable. Six participants proudly claimed their feminist position and the practitioners among them were in a position to be proactive in contesting practices which marginalised women in their organisation and the wider sport sector. Such practices ranged from drawing attention to sexist structures and practices, enrolling others in the gender equitable vision, and changing constitutions and organisational structures, to flatly refusing any form of gender disparity in their workplaces. The practitioners and graduates claimed the most successful route to substantive equality was to align men with the women's vision, by "winning them over", rather than alienating them through confrontation.

Generally, senior practitioners were prepared to use their positions to publicly 'call out' discrimination they encountered and promote equal and fair representation of women. These senior and successful practitioners considered their positions were relatively 'safe' from backlash for publicly challenging the discriminatory systems and practices within the sport management sector. The examples of the backlash they identified were losing their jobs, being ostracised, and being denied access to promotion or possible future job opportunities.

Over half of the participants were not prepared to alienate or antagonise others by identifying themselves as feminists. Most students in the safety of the focus groups claimed they would challenge any formal inequality they encountered in the workplace. I considered this bravado would be short-lived after I heard the graduates

acknowledge they felt their careers would be further compromised if they challenged the patriarchal status quo or voiced their concerns. The graduates' experience aligns with Belenky et al.'s (1997) findings that the women in their study "were apt to hide their opinions and then suffer quietly the frustration of not standing up to others" (p. 84).

Fifteen of the participants distanced themselves from feminism, claiming "I am not really a feminist". At the start of this study, I also resisted the feminist label because of the connotations, which often come with the term. I reflect on this further in Chapter Nine. In my lifetime, the feminist label has accrued negative connotations, with feminists widely regarded as 'lesbian man-haters' and 'troublemakers'. The pervasive acceptance of this extreme characterisation of feminists has undermined the feminist movement as an advocate for a truly equal society and alienated or silenced many supporters of gender substantive equality. Fink (2016), observed that "the mere mention of the word sexism may send some folks into resistance mode" (p. 1). In NZ there are plentiful role models in the struggle for substantive equality, including Kate Sheppard, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, Governors-General Silvia Cartwright and Marilyn Waring, Farah Palmer, and Mary Ann Müller.

### 8.3.7 Mentors, networks and role models

The women recognised mentoring and networking would provide valuable opportunities to secure jobs and career progression, build industry knowledge, facilitate personal development, and assist in the return to the workforce after having children. The lower- and mid-level practitioners felt they had limited occasions to grow their networks due to their resource-poor and small organisations, their time deficiency, family commitments, and the lack of women mentors and sport managers.

Almost half the practitioners, a third of the graduates and several students had used their networks to secure a job or a WIL placement. They selected mentors based on their skill, seniority, connections, protection, and knowledge. My experience while lecturing has been that the WIL students and WIL graduates have extensively used social media to expand their networks and stay engaged with their contacts.

Networking is especially crucial in NZ sport management with its small and interconnected population. Many sport management jobs are not advertised; instead, many organisations employ new staff from connections within their networks, and the practitioners and graduates recognised this. The practitioners supported Sagas and Cunningham ([2004](#)) and Taylor and Wells's ([2017](#)) claims that the dominance of men in positions of power under the status quo meant that, without men in their networks or as mentors, women would find progressing to senior management and governance quite challenging. As a lecturer my interactions with students and while listening to the participants, has caused me to believe that the students had limited networks and that the less confident women struggled with self-confidence, courage and strategy, and were more reluctant to network. These women would struggle to enter the existing sport management sector and progress their positions. Educators need to emphasise the increased self-confidence networking and mentoring provide ([Sauder & Mudrick, 2018](#)).

Fifteen of the graduates and most practitioners were mentors for other women. The practitioners with a formal equality perspective expected women to seize the formally equal opportunities which presented themselves. Those with a formal equality approach tended to select women who, like themselves, are motivated, ready to help themselves, and just need a bit of a hand up. By contrast, other mentor practitioners who saw formal equality as substantive inequality recognised some women needed more or different help to progress their sport management careers. They recognised that not every woman is fitted out with the same toolkit; some women need extra help to work their way up.

The findings revealed that women as sport management role models such as Farah Palmer, Raelene Castle, Suzie Simcock, and Kereyn Smith were scarce, and those who were known became visible either through the media or women's networks. Several practitioners emphasised the importance of those women role models whose success had inspired some of the participants across all of the groups ([Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#)). Several students and graduates translated the success of the role models breaking the glass walls and ceilings into a 'can-do' attitude which grew the young women's confidence and disrupted patriarchal practices, and this supported [Olsson and Martiny \(2018\)](#) findings.

I was surprised by the impact high school guest speakers of either gender played as role models in shaping the student's sport management career decision. The gender of the guest speakers did not appear to influence the meaning the young women took from the presentations, but their organisations, roles and the stories they told did. The brief presence of the guest speakers with 'real sport management' work experience held more reliability and credibility than the school career counsellors.

#### 8.4 Chapter summary

Making women's concrete experiences the source of new knowledge, and granting authentic expression to their voices, starts to rectify the decades of silence. Women's experiences and meanings made from those experiences draw attention to inequalities and injustices within the sport management field. Gender is socially constructed and, when born, women enter a world where structures and practices are match-fixed and they are constantly marginalised. Women's systematic oppression impacts their confidence to put themselves forward for certain roles within the sport sector. Gender stereotypes further contribute to women deselecting themselves and being deselected by male-dominated appointment panels for sport management and leadership roles because male attributes are widely regarded and socially accepted as superior.

## Chapter 9 Limitations, significance, contributions, recommendations and concluding thoughts

### 9.1 Introduction

“The quest ... is not to provide answers, for that shuts down and closes thinking. It is rather to invite the reader to make their own journey, to be exposed to the thinking of the authors and to listen for the call of their own thinking. ... Every person [reading this research report] will take away their own thoughts, already connecting their past experiences with future possibilities of the ‘thisness’ of their own situation.” ([Smythe et al., 2007, p. 1393](#))

The beginnings of this research stemmed from my observations. After a decade teaching my outwardly capable final-year women students who had studied sport management appeared to lack confidence in transitioning from university to their first paid sport and recreation job. The issue plagued me. I wrestled with finding a satisfactory explanation for this phenomenon and I could not leave it alone. Little did I know my discomfort would lead me on a ten-year doctoral journey which led to developing the core research question that has guided my journey: What are experiences of women studying, and working in, Aotearoa New Zealand sport management? I have unpacked aspects of NZ’s gendered sport management sector and extracted factors which had insidiously marginalised women and compromised their self-confidence.

Now, as I reflect back on this journey, the choice to use a feminist hermeneutic inquiry has provided a pathway to enter into the lived experiences of women studying and working in NZ sport management. Focus groups with sport management students and graduates and face-to-face interviews with women practitioners who have worked in sport for many years has allowed their rich stories to emerge. New insights from these three perspectives make a significant contribution to our understanding of women’s experiences at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels of studying and working in NZ’s sport management field.

The aim of Chapter Nine is to reflect on the entire research process. To begin, I present the limitations of my study. Then, I explain the significance and contributions of my findings for the sector, educators, policy writers, women and researchers. The chapter

Chapter Nine - Limitations, significance, contributions, recommendations and concluding thoughts progresses with a reflection on the methodological underpinnings and the research methods used. Chapter Nine continues with recommendations for the sector, and suggestions for future research. The chapter and thesis conclude with my final reflective remarks.

## 9.2 Limitations

There are limitations to this study, and these are outlined in this section. Most of the participants within this study came from supportive, two-parent, affluent families, and all except two had a family background infused with sport. During the course of this research, I frequently asked myself: What might be different if I was asking 'other' and different women these questions? For example, other women's voices and experiences not included in this study were women who had studied sport management at university but are no longer working in the sector because of the insurmountable barriers they encountered or choose not to work in the sport sector, finding employment elsewhere

A further limitation is that this study only included the voices of 11 undergraduate female students from three NZ universities, 13 graduates with less than seven years working in sport management, and 12 practitioners with longer-standing sport management work experience. For this study, I purposefully tried to choose women who were born and raised within NZ to provide an insight into how an upbringing within our country's borders shaped the women's experiences. This limited sample of participants meant the findings did not necessarily include the diverse, intersectional voices and experiences of women studying and working in NZ sport management. A different group of women may have provided another set of experiences and alternative interpretations: women from different organisations within the sports industry; different levels in the sport management hierarchy; different tertiary institutions; different socioeconomic backgrounds; different degrees of childhood access to sport; different countries of origin; different non-binary gender identities; intersex; and different sporting abilities.

From an intersectional perspective, my participants were able to nominate their ethnic identities as opposed to being given set options such as European, Māori or Asian. I do not consider this a limitation, because, like gender, I see ethnicity as an evolving

multifaceted personal identity choice. Nevertheless, I would have liked to have increased the number of women who identified as Māori to let their marginalised voices come through and other minority ethnic groups (e.g. Pacifica) as a way to uphold the partnership obligations implicit in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Both Māori and Pacifica groups contribute in very visible ways to the NZ sport environment. Due to these limitations, I caution against the generalisation of my findings to all women students, graduates and practitioners of sport management in NZ.

Bias is a concern in any study related to perceptions and opinions. Though I took steps to address my bias, by acknowledging my starting position and being systematically reflexive, I am aware that I brought my pre-understandings and biases to the study. This study sought to gain understanding from the women's everyday, taken-for-granted experiences, knowing that each of us in our life context could have interpreted the experiences differently ([van Manen, 1990, 2014](#)). The interpretations of this hermeneutic study are boundless and, as such, this can be perceived as a limitation for researchers chasing theory, generalisations and replication. The aim of hermeneutics is not to uncover one truth but to provide plausible insights.

### 9.3 Significance and contributions of the findings

#### 9.3.1 Overcoming match-fixing and substantive inequality

The results of this research come at a crucial time. They provide further evidence on why in 2018, the Government in NZ began pursuing an unprecedented drive to champion equality for women and girls in sport and recreation. The historical underrepresentation of women in sport management and governance roles in nearly every sports code in NZ signals cricket and rugby are not the only codes where women's voices and inclusion have been disregarded. This research concurs with the findings from the 2016 New Zealand cricket report (although the full report has not yet been publicly released), which concluded that women in cricket have been marginalised, disempowered and overlooked. It also supports findings from the 2017 NZRU women and rugby review which, in looking to future, indicates a commitment and willingness to deliver rugby in a more inclusive manner. Yet despite this commitment, recent events at the NSO level are not reflected at the club level – see, for example, the sexist murals at the Takapuna Rugby Club (Auckland) only being

removed in May 2019, nearly two years after the release of the women and rugby review (Lawton, 2019). This leads one to surmise, inclusion into what?

Sport matters to NZers ([Ryan & Dickson, 2016](#)). Sport entities in the public benefit sector could be the champions of substantive equality. Sport media could also play an integral role in shaping equitable discourses and in the non-sexist portrayal of women's sport and its athletes. Change needs to be sustainable and it must shift cultural mind-sets to embrace women's inclusion; it must not simply be a tick-the-box veneer. The research shows there is much work to be done by women and men to dismantle the inequality practices and match-fixing barriers which have limited women's career progression in sport management. Reconfiguring male-centred structures, processes and practices, will make space for women to overcome substantive inequality conditions and, consequently, provide entry to all levels within the sport management hierarchy. To facilitate a sector wide responsibility to provide for women's substantive equality, publicly reporting annually on gender criteria will allow for transparency and external accountability.

### 9.3.2 Practical and policy contributions

#### Government and the government sport agencies

The 2017 Labour-led coalition government has prioritised gender equality in sport. The Minister of Sport has made a commitment to invest NZ\$10 million in an initiative aimed at increasing women's inclusion in sport over the next three years ([Ardern & Robertson, 2018](#)). Coinciding with this and perhaps not surprisingly as a crown identity, is the 2018 Sport NZ Group Annual Report which, for the first time, publicly reported on the numbers of women in the Sport NZ Group's governance, and senior, middle and lower management positions. The Annual Report also reported on a gender pay gap within Sport NZ and HPSNZ of 21.8%, revealing a gap 12.6% higher than the national average of 9.2% ([D. McGregor, 2019](#); [Sport New Zealand, 2018b](#)). This is the first time in NZ's history, that a government is overtly backing substantive equality in public and not-for-profit sport. This research has shown that, overwhelmingly, the participants wanted Sport NZ to lead gender equality and inclusion by example. Participants believed such initiatives could create a flow-on effect through the sport industry.

### Sector

First and foremost, the task for the sport sector in NZ is to acknowledge the long standing substantive inequalities which have discriminated against women and excluded their equal access to sport. Only then can change to the culture, structures, practices and processes enable equal access to occur. Cultural change, including valuing and listening to women, needs to happen at all levels within the sport sector. Women need to be heard and this should be reflected in policies, constitutions and reporting if sustainable substantive equality transformation is to be realised. The participant's voices provide one further conduit to transform the dialogues of policy makers, leaders, managers, and administrators charged with the delivery of sport. It is no longer acceptable to hide behind their unconscious and taken-for-granted discriminatory, exclusionary or patronising behaviour. No longer can they hide behind wilful ignorance.

Looking towards the future, practitioners, including those with and without children, recognised that the stereotypical roles of parenting and childcare are changing and advocated for the sport sector and organisational structures to change accordingly, especially workplace location and flexibility in work hours. The students claimed their generation expected workplace flexibility. What flexibility means and how it is enacted in terms of career progression (or not) remains an unanswered question. I also remain sceptical of the younger participant's assumption that their male colleagues will retain their diverse thinking as they themselves seek career progression to the limited number of roles after years of grooming under traditional 'old school' male management.

### Educators

My research has provided WIL insights from multi-generational participants. The practitioners recommended that the students should strategically choose their WIL placements. The practitioners also viewed WIL as a chance to trial a potential employee before having to make a full commitment. Only one graduate and one student had strategically chosen their WIL placement. The importance of choosing a WIL placement based on potential learning opportunities or securing a permanent job needs to be accentuated by educators before WIL placements are considered.

I anticipated that, in some capacity, low confidence, self-doubt or fear would be raised by my participants as self-imposed barriers to their career progression, as indeed they were. However, I was surprised to find imposter syndrome and perfectionism, factors I had not considered, were barriers for women from all groups. Educators and their students need to share their experiences and discuss these barriers, rather than be afraid of or ignore them. Students will be less surprised, will realise they are not alone, and will have developed some mechanisms to deal with them if they encounter these destructive thoughts and feelings in the future.

## 9.4 Reflections on and contribution to the research process

### 9.4.1 Methodological underpinnings

This feminist hermeneutic research explored, with openness, the meaning and interpretation, of what it is like to be a NZ woman studying and working in NZ sport management ([van Manen, 2014, p. 107](#)). The power of this methodological approach was the opportunity to hear the 36 voices of multi-generational women at a particular time in NZ's sport management history. Feminist hermeneutics uses the women's stories of their everyday life experiences to broaden our knowledge and understanding, of what it is like for groups of women to study and work within a male-privileged culture. It brings women's activities from "the margins into the center", as a way to evoke political action ([Baker, 1990, p. 30](#)).

Hermeneutics was an extremely comfortable and natural 'fit' for me, which mirrored my way of interacting with people, sharing stories, seeing the world from their perspectives and overlaying their experiences with mine. According to van Manen ([2014](#)), perspective – in a hermeneutic sense – enables us to view part of something from any given vantage point. By changing our perspective or vantage point we may reveal another view of the phenomenon we are observing. My research contributed to feminist knowledge on sport management by giving three groups of women at different stages of their career journey, an opportunity to have their voices heard and to create their own women's knowledge. This study contributed to expanding feminist hermeneutic knowledge, especially in sport. This thesis has become part of the fuel needed to power a reduction in wilful ignorance.

Gadamer (1975) insisted that all knowledge consisted of (value-laden) pre-understanding which originates in the researcher's historical and cultural context. Even though I captured my starting point and pre-understanding at the outset and consciously practised reflexivity throughout the research process, I am aware some of my prejudices may have shaped the analysis, findings and discussion. Gadamer argues that “these values, rather than getting in the way of research, make research meaningful to the society in which it emerges” (Baker, 1990, p. 26). Incorporating myself into the analysis (Gadamer, 1975; van Manen, 1990), I was able to enrich the study by broadening the horizon with my experiences of growing up as a sportswoman in NZ and as an insider within the sport management tertiary environment.

Throughout the study, I continually questioned my use of a hermeneutic methodology. I pondered over narrative inquiry and a Foucauldian approach as alternatives. On one hand, narrative inquiry would have placed too much emphasis on the way participants told their stories, and the way they lived their lives. Hermeneutics allowed women to tell how they felt about their experiences and the meanings they made from their everyday experiences. Foucault, on the other hand, would have made claims about power before the women had even shared their stories. Every time I reconsidered my alternatives, my choice of hermeneutics to give voice to the women's experiences and their meanings was reaffirmed.

The feminist hermeneutic framework which broadens our horizons and understanding has scarcely been used in sport management research. By directing my feminist hermeneutic research towards understanding the meanings the women made from their experiences, insights into factors which influenced their careers and work choices came to the fore. For example, the women shared how their family's involvement in sport or having a family sports code, and the meanings made from those experiences, added to their sense of belonging and confidence. This study demonstrates that using this framework presents original and valuable insights.

Further, the feminist underpinning of this research provided the opportunity for women across generations to share their experiences and reflect on sport's values, delivery, structures and practices from the standpoint of women. Each participant's identity is unique and shaped by her experiences, interpretation and understanding.

Without these women's collective representation, individual women are likely to remain vulnerable. Constructing women's knowledge creates the opportunity to disrupt the taken-for-granted patriarchal knowledge, structures and practices in sport. Brooks (2007) claims members of the dominant group, in this study men, may be satisfied with the status quo and have no cause to question their privilege or the status of oppressed people. "Sometimes the dominant (ruling-class-authored) ideology succeeds in temporarily convincing oppressed groups to accept their pain, to self-blame, or to deny it altogether" (Brooks, 2007, p. 67).

Two important outputs from this research are the liberation of women (participants and other women in the sector) from the sole burden of responsibility for their underrepresentation, and in putting an end to their self-blame (Ryan & Dickson, 2016).

#### 9.4.2 Research methods

##### Focus groups

The focus group format enabled the younger women to discuss their experiences and broaden their understanding in a collaborative and supportive context (Leavy, 2007). Sharing their experiences within the focus group forum helped the women realise they were not alone nor were they the problem. The focus groups allowed the women to merge their horizons and recognise parts of their lives in others (Belenky et al., 1997). The use of focus groups in this feminist hermeneutic study provided a unique shared insight into the experiences of these groups of women.

##### One-on-one interviews

The use of interviews was a means of engaging with time-deficient practitioners in a convenient and readily accessible manner. The interview format was less threatening for these seasoned practitioners than it might have been for the younger students and graduates. The interviews facilitated a depth and insight which the focus groups of younger women were unable to provide.

#### 9.5 Significance and contributions of findings

This section explores the theoretical, practical, and policy contributions of this research for the sport management industry, teachers, researchers, policymakers and, most importantly, students.

### 9.5.1 Contribution to scholarship

In Chapter Three, the Literature Review outlined the work of academics who have explored issues for women studying and working in the male-dominated sports management sector ([Burton, 2015](#); [Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007](#); [Cunningham & Sagas, 2007](#); [Hancock, Darvin, et al., 2018](#); [Sauder et al., 2018](#); [Shaw & Hoeber, 2003](#)). In this review, I highlighted several areas where gaps existed within this body of knowledge, with the intention that this research would address some of these gaps in the context of NZ.

#### Multi-generational voices

The significance of this research for the sports industry is the capturing of voices from underrepresented women, from multi-generational participant groups: students, recent graduates and seasoned practitioners. In this study, the voices spanning these women's university studies and work in sport management have provided a narrative of their career progression (or not) in NZ which has not been captured before.

There was a difference in the responses of the younger women students and graduates compared to the older practitioners. The younger women expected men of their generation to behave differently, which to them, meant enabling substantive equality in the workplace. This had not been the experience of the older women in respect of their older male counterparts. The older, more experienced practitioners were also less inclined to identify as feminists, with four practitioners stipulating they were not feminists. The younger women did not deny being feminists and believed their experiences were going to be less gendered than those of the older women ([Longino, 1993](#)). However, as this research has shown, these expectations will not be met without men and women reconfiguring stereotypical and gendered values and roles, such as parenting responsibilities. In a sector where long and erratic work hours are expected, women find themselves forced to choose between family and work, a choice most women did not anticipate their male colleagues having to make. Several practitioners understood their careers would not have been as successful had they had children. This study has revealed that providing more flexible policies, structures and practices may deliver more substantive equality for women but does little to undo the

patriarchal construction of meanings of gender entrenched within wider societal norms in NZ.

#### Addressing gaps in the literature – students

Very few studies have emerged thus far which identify and provide insights into the motivations for women to study sport management in a tertiary environment ([Olsson & Martiny, 2018](#); [Schwab et al., 2013](#)); the experiences of studying sport management at university ([Hancock, Darvin, et al., 2018](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2015](#); [Sauder et al., 2018](#)); or the thinking behind women's choices of WIL placements as part of their formal university programmes ([Odio et al., 2014](#)). This research has shed light on some of the students' experiences and the meanings they made of these experiences. In particular the advice from several high school career counsellors was different for boys compared to girls. However, further research is needed to understand more about how women can commit to a course of tertiary study with little knowledge of what sport management programmes entail or their possible career paths after graduating.

Sauder et al. ([2018](#)) investigated perceived career barriers for American women studying sport management using the CBI index, but the study did not include the women's perception of career enablers. The women students in Sauder et al.'s ([2018](#)) study perceived sexism in the lectures, were outnumbered by male students, experienced a lack of female lecturers and expected to encounter gender discrimination in their future sport management jobs. The findings from my research diverged significantly from Sauder et al.'s ([2018](#)) study. The student participants never mentioned sexism within their classes or from their lecturers at any of the NZ universities. In fact, the students spoke more about their female than their male lecturers and most did not anticipate that, once working in the sector, their positions would be compromised because of their gender, with the one exception being, parenting.

#### Addressing gaps in the literature – graduates

In this research, the inexperienced voices of the students contrast strongly with seven of the graduates' experiences of sexism in the sector. Nearly all of the women in this study described their perceptions of their childhood, and family and schooling in mostly gender neutral terms. The findings from this study revealed that NZ female

sport management graduates first encountered sexist barriers and felt unsupported because of their gender once they started working in sport management.

The majority of students and graduates in this study preferred to work in community sport whereas Schwab et al.'s (2013) American and predominantly male students were fixated on elite sport.

[Leberman and Shaw \(2012\)](#), noted the lack of research around recent sport management graduates' once they start work in the field (p. 9).

The graduate women identified older white men in senior management as career limiters whereas visible female role models who broke 'glass ceilings' and younger male colleagues, were their enablers.

This research has contributed to new understandings of the various barriers and enablers which have shaped the graduate women's early careers.

#### Addressing gaps in the literature – practitioners

Attention from the IOC and the focus provided by the Brighton Declaration has driven research centred on the numbers and experiences of women in sport governance and leadership ([Whelan & Wood, 2012](#)). A minimal number of studies investigate the representation and experiences of women in lower- and middle-level sport management roles. Leberman and Shaw (2015) called for more studies to explore how patriarchal factors affect women in sport management at the various stages of their careers. Responding to this call, this research has shown how women at all levels working in sport management have had to develop strategies to navigate the systemic inequities that stubbornly persist.

Some research has focused on women in senior level sport management and the barriers they encounter in the workplace ([Taylor & Wells, 2017](#)). This research has balanced these approaches by including women at various levels in the sport management hierarchy and the enabling factors which had helped them to be successful.

Most practitioners in this study backed themselves and never questioned their ability to be self-driven, a mind-set which benefitted their careers. They also named people

who gave support, such as senior management and male and female mentors, as their career enablers. Interestingly, over half of these practitioners acted as career enablers for other women by hiring women for new sport management appointments.

However, most of this group were aware of their preference to hire people similar to themselves.

### Addressing gaps in the literature – multilevel framework

I concur with the claims made by O'Shea (2017) and Taylor and Wells (2017) that many of the studies investigating the issues affecting women in sport management have considered the issues in isolation and analysed them in the context of a single level, namely the micro or meso-level. Examples include factors such as WIL (Odio, 2017; Odio et al., 2014), managers' interpretations of gender policies and practices (O'Shea, 2017), and quotas (Leszczynska, 2017). The strength of focusing the research on one issue is that it provides depth, but it does not incorporate the complexity of the broader context surrounding the chosen issue. A series of publications is starting to emerge which explore women's issues in sport management across the complex macro-, meso-, and micro-levels (Burton & Leberman, 2017b; Dixon & Cunningham, 2006; Ryan & Dickson, 2016; Taylor & Wells, 2017). This study revealed various factors at the macro-societal, meso-organisational and micro-individual levels which influenced women's sport management experiences across multi-generational vantage points.

## 9.6 Recommendations

### 9.6.1 For the sector

My study revealed many women experienced inequality on a daily basis working in sport management in NZ. I recommend increasing the number of women, not just in board roles, but in senior and middle management decision-making roles. As Burton and Leberman (2017b) claimed, movement towards gender equality by providing voluntary targets has been 'glacially slow'. Furthermore, focusing on numbers alone does little to change cultural paradigms and achieve substantive equality.

The economic business case has been the rationale for inclusion, pushed in the wider NZ business environment for 20 years with limited success. To change systematic

underrepresentation and discriminatory practices requires a shift in thinking to social justice particularly if a genuine, sustainable cultural shift is to happen. This requires committed leadership from the top, Sport NZ holds the delegated power to implement gender equity strategies and provide the appropriate resourcing. As Belenky et al. (1997) claimed, “authorities have the power to construct knowledge and are [perceived as] the sources of truth” (p. 39).

To expedite the cultural shift, I propose gender-related quotas, as opposed to the gender targets of 40%. In 2018, Sport NZ informed the NSO’s who receive NZ\$50,000 that they must achieve a minimum 40% gender target of both genders by December 2021 or their funding will be removed ([Beehive.govt.nz, 2018](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/news/sport-nz-sets-40-percent-gender-target)). I believe this should be a quota, rather than a target and written within the organisation’s constitution. Furthermore, the range of organisations needs to be broader, including Councils, and all NSOs, NROs, RSTs, RSOs and RROs. In addition, gender quotas of 40% should include board and senior management with gender pay comparisons of staff at each level of the organisational hierarchy, a requirement in their annual reports. Sports organisations would also have to include in their annual reports their diversity strategy for the next three years. I support the Sport NZ’s position that failure to comply with all these requirements would result in public funding cuts. Women and men need to frame quotas positively and reject the meritocracy argument that women appointed under a mandatory quota may not have been appointed on their skill; they have been appointed because, at last, there is less match-fixing. At the same time, women need to be aware that historical appointment panels and job criteria were formed based on privileged masculine ideals under patriarchal hegemony.

The women graduates were vocal about wanting more information around a structured career path. The graduates also wanted formalised opportunities to network with other people at the same hierarchical level in sport so they could share ideas and strategies, and improve their effectiveness. The practitioners implored the young graduates to build relationships, develop networks and connect with mentors, all of which could be woven into the middle- and lower-level management structured networking meetings. I see opportunities for more structured networking and mentoring for the lower- and middle-level women sport managers supported by practitioners and Sport NZ. Networks and mentors however, should not be seen as the

'solution' as is often the case, with women expected to 'fix themselves' to 'fit in' (Sinclair, 2014).

An opportunity exists for sport organisations to stimulate the volunteer workforce by formalising how specific volunteering roles develop identifiable skills. Most participants in the study did not identify the skills they had developed through childhood volunteering. Structuring and showcasing that employability skills are learnt through volunteering could help women identify, value and own the skills they have developed. Sports clubs could easily do this by putting posters in club rooms, on sport organisations' websites or mentoring with coaches, managers and administrators.

The majority of graduates and students considered too much money and too many resources were invested in high performance sport as opposed to community sport. They deemed there were too few privileged high performance athletes benefitting from the Sport NZ Group funding at the expense of community sport where the majority of NZers participated in sport. This funding model needs to be reconsidered in light of the majority groups' sporting interests and the employees charged with delivering better life outcomes.

The historical and present-day underrepresentation of women in traditional sport media shows a blatant disregard for equality and devalues women minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour. The minimal number of women role models in the media means girls and women are not subjected to counter-stereotypical role models and the notion that sport is the domain of men is continuously reinforced, the 2019 media space given to the Men's Rugby World Cup being one recent example. The media further disadvantages women because sponsorship deals are directly related to media coverage. Without media coverage, such as television coverage aired at the right time, women's sports codes cannot attract investment in their game. To fast track equal representation of women's sport through the media, sports organisations should have to negotiate media rights to provide equal coverage and pay for both men's and women's events. More women journalists and commentators also need to be sought, and not only those who fit the profile based on their physical appearance. Perhaps now is the time to review broadcasting policy in terms of gender equality.

### 9.6.2 For educators

Sport management educators must incorporate into the curriculum ways in which the students can challenge the many forms of exclusion and stereotyping ([Fink, 2016](#); [Leberman & Shaw, 2012](#)). Since starting this doctoral journey, I have successfully woven aspects of diversity, substantive equality and inclusion into my teaching to place the spotlight on exclusionary structures and practices. With my final-year double-degree WIL students, I have incorporated a reflective component where students need to reflect on their workplace's diversity policies and practices. In my second-year paper, Sport Finance, I ask my students to plan and fund a diversity initiative within a selected sport organisation. My first-year Business of Sport paper requires the students to write their first academic essay on the topic of inclusion. Insightful and provocative discussions have taken place because of this development in my teaching, which have challenged my and others' perceptions of the sport management sector. As Hancock and Hums ([2015](#)) suggest, I am encouraging my students to consider sport from minority perspectives, to stand in 'other people's shoes' and view the world from their vantage point, in a way which challenges the taken-for-granted everyday expectations of sport in NZ. This approach places the responsibility for diversity on the shoulders of all students, not just women and marginalised groups.

I encourage other sport management educators to equip their women students with tools to navigate the inherently patriarchal and masculine sport management sector. Useful content to equip women with these tools could include: pay and promotion negotiation skills; networking and relationship building strategies; exposure to counter-stereotypical women role models as guest speakers; volunteering opportunities and contacts; confidence-building content such as positive affirmations and learning on the job; and the discussion of issues such as imposter syndrome and self-confidence.

Through my study, it became glaringly obvious the women were choosing to study sport management with very limited knowledge about roles and organisations they could work for after graduating. I see a perfect opportunity for educators (including career counsellors) and sports organisations to showcase sport management jobs,

organisations and career paths depicted by women role models. However, in conjunction with selling women a dream career opportunity in sport management, it needs to be balanced with an accurate account of the sectors working conditions, including, low pay, insecure funding for salaries, travel and erratic and long hours at work.

### 9.6.3 For women

The critical factor for women to understand from this study is that women's lack of representation is not women's problem. NZ's political, economic and cultural frameworks have match-fixed each woman's career choices and expectations from the moment she was born. For a woman, understanding how society has been matched-fixed against her frees her from self-blame, and allows her to recognise the gendered barriers she faces. Removing the barriers, structures and practices which currently shape women's substantive inequality is the responsibility of both men and women, although, initially, men have significant power and the authority to help lead the change ([J. Pringle & Strachon, 2015](#)).

According to Bandura ([1986](#)), self-efficacy and confidence grow with the mastery of tasks. Women need courage to take on new challenges and be encouraged to do so in the workplace. Working and volunteering provide opportunities for women to grow their self-efficacy and confidence in their skills, but women need to reflect on and see the value in the skills they are acquiring. Whether nurture or nature has shaped women's self-perception, women understanding their own negative thought patterns (such as perfectionism, the imposter syndrome, and fear of failure), and acquiring skills on the job, can halt confidence-diminishing cycles. The naming of issues allows women to reflect on and understand their own experiences as different from men, become united knowing they are not alone and, therefore, let go of the self-blame. Women need to learn to trust their self-knowledge beyond the constraints of patriarchy and break the sex-role stereotypes and constraints imposed on woman as man's other ([Belenky et al., 1997](#)). Women "trusting their own subjective knowledge develop[s] courage" ([Belenky et al., 1997, p. 68](#)) and they own their personal power.

#### 9.6.4 For further research

Arising from this study are original multilevel insights which cast light on women's experiences of studying and working in the NZ sport management context. Throughout the inquiry, specific topics emerged which invited further attention and may provide the impetus for future research.

- Further research is needed to establish what are the expected career barriers and, importantly, the career enablers for women sport management students, to inform both the sport sector and sport educators. Supplementing this would be a study on sport graduates' perceptions and experiences of career barriers and enablers.
- In-depth research on women's decisions and motivations to study sport management would benefit the sector. Complementing this would be some research to shed light on the expectations of what the sector wants from their women sport management graduates.
- Central to understanding women's decisions to study sport management at the tertiary level would be an examination of school career counsellors' position on the gendered nature of sport management in NZ and on sport management as a career option for girls. This would help tertiary institutions develop material to support school career counsellors.
- Research which examined how and why the women chose their WIL placements would enable educators and workplaces to maximise the women students' learning opportunities. This research could explore what organisations, roles and responsibilities the women consider in their WIL selection process and map these choices back on to their perceptions of self-efficacy, confidence and expectations. Understanding women's WIL selection criteria and anticipated skill development would provide ideas for educators to enhance women students' WIL placement choices and transition to the workplace.
- My study purposefully chose to include participants who were graduates of sport management and who were working in the sector. Understanding the experiences of women who had graduated in sport management but were not working in the sector may be insightful for university enrolments and alumni.

This information may be useful for educators to help women successfully move from university and into sport management positions.

- International research indicates soft measures to meet gender targets have had minimal traction and increases have been achingly slow whereas quotas have been effective and rapidly accepted. Despite Shaw's (2007) claim that the costs substantiating quota compliance were exorbitant, the costs of women's exclusion are significantly greater (Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014; Ahmadi et al., 2018). As Seierstad (2016) noted, within five years of the quotas being implemented in Norway, the new gender-equal 'business has usual' had been normalised. When quotas are introduced, researchers need to track their implementation.
- Very little research exists on the experiences, numbers, roles and pay of seasoned practitioners in lower and middle sport management (Whelan & Wood, 2012). Collecting data on gender representation, roles and pay at all level of the sport management hierarchy, from clubs through to NSOs, is vital to create a baseline from which to track progress on gender equality.
- Also useful would be an understanding of how women's careers in sport management develop and progress. Leberman and Shaw (2012) claimed there is little research about "women's career paths in sport management" (p. 8).
- This study did not set out to compare the experiences of men studying and working in NZ sport management with their female counterparts. Nevertheless, four graduates and six practitioners mentioned the supportive behaviour of male colleagues and mentors which had helped various participants' work prospects. Understanding the men's motivations and perspectives might provide valuable insights into how to enrol other men into this form of behaviour.
- There is an opportunity to include more diverse women in the study, including different ethnicities, those not born in NZ, LGBTIQ and those who identify as a non-binary gender. Understanding their experiences, barriers and enablers would provide the insights needed to understand how to bring more diverse people into sport management.
- For future studies on women's experiences of studying or working in NZ sport management, I would recommend expanding the participant numbers,

increasing the number of focus groups but not the size of the focus group. I would increase the number of sport management practitioners in middle- and lower-level sport management roles where there is an absence of both quantitative and qualitative information.

- A future study would be the re-interrogation of this data using discourse analysis to tease out the more nuanced understandings of working in sport management.
- Another area of research would include uncovering how men see their role in providing opportunities for women access roles at every level in sport management and delivering on substantive equality initiatives.
- This study could be applied to women in other roles within the sports sector such as the significantly underrepresented women coaches and the emerging minority of women officials and referees. Three women in my study decided in their early teens that they wanted to officiate in sport.
- Future research could include a synthesis of the data from a career pathway perspective. Informing sport management tertiary educators and career counsellors on women's career pathway in NZ sport management. Kaleidoscope or patchwork career-models may inform a new analysis.
- Given that change for women is afoot in sport with the cricket report and the rugby review, the instigation of WISPA, the hosting of the IWG, and the mandate of NZ's government to improve sport accessibility for women and girls, case studies capturing women's experiences before and after these initiatives may prove insightful.

What my participants and I have achieved together could definitely inform policy writers and sport providers in NZ. The women in this inquiry were passionate about sport. They saw sport as a vehicle to help unite communities and improve people's confidence, health and well-being. The women also considered sport management as a viable career opportunity for women, but they were well aware of the gendered structures and practices which match-fixed women's sport management careers while advantaging men.

## 9.7 Concluding thoughts

My doctoral journey has challenged, excited, frustrated and extended me. Throughout the process I have reflected profoundly on my life experiences as a woman born and raised in NZ. I had drawn meanings from those experiences and the knowledge acquired through this process provided me with much greater insights and understanding, not only from my own standpoint but that of others too. I have invested a significant amount of time and energy understanding my perception of being a feminist. For that I am extremely grateful, knowing I have become a better person. This doctoral study provided me with greater job security and therefore financial security for my two daughters. I frequently resented the time my doctoral study was costing me, time I would have rather spent with my daughters, aging parents, extended family and friends. However, during the journey, my learning became my daughters', my mother's, my colleagues', my student's and my friends' learning, and each of us grew in our own way. My study has unequivocally informed my teaching practice and my research direction.

Initially I doubted my academic ability to undertake and complete a doctoral thesis, I was the walking and talking imposter syndrome in action. I doubted my ability to master a qualitative study, since my science background had always led me to quantitative approaches which, for me, had never really answered why people reacted the way they did in certain contexts. My trepidation about a possible feminist label for my research nearly caused me to abandon my doctoral study altogether. However, all of the topics I considered were centred on women's issues and women's ways of being, and I could not escape confronting my resistance to feminism.

I have been changed by the research process and so too have the lives of those closest to me. I did not box the research and put it aside to deal with away from my everyday life. Instead, I merged the research with my life experiences in a true hermeneutic and feminist fashion and was open, as van Manen (2014) proposed, to deepening and changing myself "in ways we cannot predict" (p. 20). Through my research, I have become more reflexive and aware of the structures, policies and practices which marginalise minorities. I have become more confident to comment when I see oppressive situations. I continue to be silenced in some situations through fear and the

Chapter Nine - Limitations, significance, contributions, recommendations and concluding thoughts  
power imbalance which exists when one is speaking out in the workplace. I recognise I need to learn more diplomatic ways of advocating for equality.

I began this journey, understanding that most NZers considered sport to be central to our way of life. I conclude my study, knowing that if sport willingly values, respects, and equally includes women, our society in NZ will be immeasurably improved.

### **Me aro ki te hā o Hineahuone.**

(This whakataukī calls for people to “ensure the breath of Hineahuone. Hineahuone was the first human female; shaped from the sacred earth of Papatūānuku. Her presence provided both companionship and balance to Tāne. The whakataukī reminds us of the status and roles of women within Aotearoa. It asks us to ensure that her breath, her essence is present in all we do. The breath of Hineahuone lives on in all women. Her breath is made manifest through the thoughts, ideas, roles and contribution that women make. Let us empower women to acknowledge te hā o Hineahuone and take up roles where leadership, guidance and balance is required” ([Sport New Zealand & New Zealand Government, 2018, p. 7](#)).

## References

- Abdel-Shehid, G., & Kalman-Lamb, N. (2011). *Out of left field: Social inequality and sports*. Halifax, Canada: Fernwood Publishing.
- Acker, J. (2006). Inequality regimes: Gender, class, and race in organizations. *Gender and Society*, 20(4), 441-464. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243206289499>
- Ackerly, B., & True, J. (2010). *Doing feminist research in political and social science*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Acosta, R. V., & Carpenter, L. J. (2014). *Woman in intercollegiate sport: A longitudinal, national study. Thirty-seven year update, 1977-2014*. Retrieved from [www.acostacarpenter.org/2014%20Status%20of%20Women%20in%20Intercollegiate%20Sport%20-37%20Year%20Update%20-%201977-2014%20.pdf](http://www.acostacarpenter.org/2014%20Status%20of%20Women%20in%20Intercollegiate%20Sport%20-37%20Year%20Update%20-%201977-2014%20.pdf)
- Adams, G. (2017, May). What has rugby ever done for me? *North & South*, 120-121.
- Adriaanse, J. (2016). Gender diversity in the governance of sport associations: The Sydney Scoreboard Global Index of Participation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 137(1), 149-160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2550-3>
- Adriaanse, J. (2017). Quotas to accelerate gender equity in sport leadership: Do they work? In L. J. Burton & S. Leberman (Eds.), *Women in sport leadership: Research and practice for change* (pp. 83-97). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Adriaanse, J., & Crosswhite, J. (2008). David or Mia? The influence of gender on adolescent girls' choice of sport role models. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 31(5), 383-389.
- Adriaanse, J., & Schofield, T. (2014). The impact of gender quotas on gender equality in sport governance. *Journal of Sport Management*, 28, 485-497. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2013-0108>
- Ahmadi, A., Nakaa, N., & Bouri, A. (2018). Chief executive officers attribute, board structures, gender diversity and firm performance among French CAC 40 listed firms. *Research in International Business and Finance*, 44, 218-226. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jinf.2017.07.083>
- Aicher, T., & Sagas, M. (2009). An examination of homologous reproduction and the effects of sexism. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 3(9), 375-386. <https://doi.org/10.1179/ssa.2009.3.3.375>
- Aitchison, C. C. (2005). Feminist and gender research in sport and leisure management: Understanding the social-cultural nexus of gender-power relations. *Journal of Sport Management*, 19(4), 422-441. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.19.4.422>
- Aitchison, C. C., Jordan, F., & Brackenridge, C. (1999). Women in leisure management: A survey of gender equity. *Women in Management Review*, 14(4), 121-127. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649429910274789>
- Allan, Q. (2017). *Gay men coming out later in life: A phenomenological inquiry into disclosing sexual orientation in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Allen-Collinson, J. (2011). Feminist phenomenology and the woman in the running body. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 5(3), 297-313. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17511321.2011.602584>
- Anderson, E. D. (2009). The maintenance of masculinity among stakeholders of sport. *Sport Management Review*, 12(1), 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2008.09.003>

- Ardern, J., & Robertson, G. (2018). *Government launches strategy for women and girls in sport and active recreation*. Retrieved November 18, 2018, from <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-launches-strategy-women-and-girls-sport-and-active-recreation>
- Atkinson, N., & McIntyre, R. (n.d.). *Women and the vote*. Retrieved September 17, 2018, from <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/womens-suffrage/further-information>
- Ayudhya, U. C. N., Smithson, J., & Lewis, S. (2014). Focus group methodology in a life course approach - Individual accounts within a peer cohort group. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 17(2), 157-171. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2014.892657>
- Bacon, W. (1991). *Women's experiences in leisure management*. Reading, United Kingdom: Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management.
- Banaji, M. R., & Hardin, C. D. (1996). Automatic stereotyping. *Psychological Science*, 7(3), 136-141. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.1996.tb00346.x>
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. *Psychological Review*, 84, 191-215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Barbour, R. S. (1998). Mixing qualitative methods: Quality assurance or quagmire? *Qualitative Health Research*, 8, 352-361. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973239800800306>
- Barnett, R. (2000). *Realizing the university in an age of supercomplexity*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
- Bazeley, P. (2009). Analysing qualitative data: More than 'identifying themes'. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/a9a4/dad74ebb3057475482b3382c3e2b5640286f.pdf>
- Bazeley, P., & Jackson, K. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Beehive.govt.nz. (2018). *Government launches strategy for women and girls in sport and active recreation*. Retrieved 18th November, 2018, from <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-launches-strategy-women-and-girls-sport-and-active-recreation>
- Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1997). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind* (Reissued ed.). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Bennett, G., Henson, R. K., & Drane, D. (2003). Student experiences with service-learning in sport management. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 26(2), 61-69. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105382590302600203>
- Bennett, L. (2018, October 11). Government launches \$10m strategy to get more women and girls in sport. *New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from [www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=12140715](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12140715)

- Billing, D. Y., & Alvesson, M. (2000). Questioning the notion of feminine leadership: A critical perspective on the gender labelling of leadership. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 7(3), 144-157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0432.00103>
- Blickle, G., Witzki, A., & Schneider, P. (2009). Self-initiated mentoring and career success: A predictive field study. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74(1), 94-101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2008.10.008>
- Bloomberg, L. D., & Volpe, M. (2016). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bower, G. G. (2009). Group mentoring as an alternative model for women. *Women in Sport & Physical Activity Journal*, 18(2), 80-84. <https://doi.org/10.1123/wspaj.18.2.80>
- Bower, G. G. (2013). Utilizing Kolb's experiential learning theory to implement a golf scramble. *International Journal of Sport Management, Recreation, & Tourism*, 12, 29-56. <https://doi.org/10.5199/ijsmart-1791-874X-12c>.
- Bower, G. G. (2014). Theory and practice: Utilizing Dewey's experiential theory to implement a 5K road race. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 15, 61-67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2014.06.001>
- Bower, G. G., & Hums, M. A. (2014). Examining the mentoring relationships of women working in intercollegiate athletic administration. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 22(1), 4-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2014.882585>
- Boyle, R., & Haynes, R. (2000). *Power play: Sport, the media and popular culture*. Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education.
- Brassie, S. P. (1989). Guidelines for programs preparing undergraduate and graduate students for careers in sport management. *Journal of Sport Management*, 3, 158-164. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.3.2.158>
- Breeze, M. (2018). Imposter syndrome as a public feeling. In Y. Taylor & K. Lahad (Eds.), *Feeling academic in the Neoliberal University: Palgrave studies in gender and education* (pp. 191-219). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64224-6\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64224-6_9)
- Britton, D. M., & Logan, L. (2008). Gendered organizations: Progress and prospects. *Sociology Compass*, 2(1), 107-121. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2007.00071.x>
- Brookes, B. L. (2016). *A history of New Zealand women*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books. <https://doi.org/10.7810/9780908321483>
- Brooks, A. (2007). Feminist standpoint epistemology: Building knowledge and empowerment through women's lived experience. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Feminist research practice: A primer* (pp. 53-82). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Brooks, A., & Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2007). An invitation to feminist research. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Feminist research practice: A primer* (pp. 1-24). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Brown, C., Willett, J., Goldfine, R., & Goldfine, B. (2018). Sport management internships: Recommendations for improving upon experiential learning. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 22, 75-81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2018.02.001>
- Bruce, T. (2008). Women, sport and the media: A complex terrain. In C. Obel, T. Bruce, & S. Thompson (Eds.), *Outstanding: Research about women and sport in New*

- Zealand* (pp. 51-71). Hamilton, NZ: Wilf Malcolm Institute for Educational Research.
- Bruce, T. (2016). New rules for new times: Sportswomen and media representation in the third wave. *Sex Roles, 74*(7-8), 361-376. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-015-0497-6>
- Bruce, T., & Saunders, R. (2005). Young people, media sport and the physical education curriculum. Retrieved from <https://web.a.ebscohost.com>
- Bryman, A. (2004). *Social research methods* (2nd ed.). Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Brzovic, S., & Matz, I. (2009). Students advise Fortune 500 company: Designing a problem-based learning community. *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly, 72*(1), 21-34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1080569908321439>
- Buker, E. A. (1990). Feminist social theory and hermeneutics: An empowering dialectic? *Social Epistemology, 4*(1), 23-39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02691729008578554>
- Bunkle, P., & Hughes, B. (1980). *Women in New Zealand society*. Auckland, New Zealand: Allen & Unwin.
- Burton, L. J. (2015). Underrepresentation of women in sport leadership: A review of research. *Sport Management Review, 18*(2), 155-165. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2014.02.004>
- Burton, L. J., Barr, C. A., Fink, J. S., & Bruening, J. E. (2009). Think athletic director, think masculine?: Examination of the gender typing of managerial subroles within athletic administration positions. *Sex Roles, 61*(5-6), 416-426. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-009-9632-6>
- Burton, L. J., Grappendorf, H., & Henderson, A. (2011). Perceptions of gender in athletic administration: Utilizing role congruity to examine (potential) prejudice against women. *Journal of Sport Management, 25*(1), 36-45. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.25.1.36>
- Burton, L. J., & Leberman, S. (2017a). An evaluation of current scholarship in sport leadership: Multilevel perspective. In L. J. Burton & S. Leberman (Eds.), *Women in sport leadership: Research and practice for change* (pp. 16-32). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Burton, L. J., & Leberman, S. (Eds.). (2017b). *Women in sport leadership: Research and practice for change*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bussey, K., & Bandura, A. (1999). Social cognitive theory of gender development and differentiation. *Psychological Review, 106*(4), 676-713. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.106.4.676>
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Buzzanell, P. M. (2003). A feminist standpoint analysis of maternity and maternity leave for women with disabilities. *Women and Language, 26*(2), 53-65. Retrieved from <https://web.a.ebscohost.com>
- Caelli, K. (2001). Engaging with phenomenology: Is it more of a challenge than it needs to be? *Qualitative Health Research, 11*(2), 273-281. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973201129118993>
- Cameron, J. (1996). *Trail blazers: Women who manage New Zealand sport*. Christchurch, New Zealand: Sports Inclined.

- Cameron, J. (2000). The issue of gender in sport: 'No bloody room for sheilas'. In C. W. Collins (Ed.), *Sport in New Zealand society* (pp. 171-186). Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.
- Campbell, D. E., & Wolbrecht, C. (2006). See Jane run: Women politicians as role models for adolescents. *The Journal of Politics*, *68*(2), 233-247.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2508.2006.00402.x>
- Carbado, D. W., Crenshaw, K. W., Mays, V. M., & Tomlinson, B. (2013). Intersectionality: Mapping the movements of a theory. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, *10*(2), 303-312.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X13000349>
- Carpenter, V. M., & McMurchy-Pilkington, C. (2008). Cross-cultural researching: Māori and Pākehā in Te Whakapakari. *Qualitative Research*, *8*(2), 179-196.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794107087480>
- Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. J. (2014). The use of triangulation in qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, *41*(5), 545-547.  
<https://doi.org/10.1188/14.ONF.545-547>
- Champions for Change. (2018). *Champions for Change: 2017-18 Diversity report summary*. Retrieved from  
<https://www.championsforchange.nz/assets/Uploads//CFC-Diversity-Report-Summary.pdf>
- Charles, N., & Wadia, K. (2018). New British feminisms, UK feminista and young women's activism. *Feminist Theory*, *19*(2), 165-181.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700117723592>
- Christopher, K. (2012). Extensive mothering: Employed mothers' constructions of the good mother. *Gender & Society*, *26*(1), 73-96.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243211427700>
- Claringbould, I., & Knoppers, A. (2007). Finding a 'normal' woman: Selection processes for board membership. *Sex Roles*, *56*(7-8), 495-507.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9188-2>
- Claringbould, I., & Knoppers, A. (2008). Doing and undoing gender in sport governance. *Sex Roles*, *58*(1), 81-92. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9351-9>
- Claringbould, I., & Knoppers, A. (2012). Paradoxical practices of gender in sport-related organizations. *Journal of Sport Management*, *26*(6), 404-416.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.26.5.404>
- Cleaver, D. (2018, August 8). Why New Zealand sport is fundamentally broken. *New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from  
[https://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=4&objectid=12103270](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c_id=4&objectid=12103270)
- Coakley, J. (2009). *Sports in society: Issues and controversies* (10th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Cockburn, R., & Atkinson, L. (2017). *Respect and responsibility review: Full report (Prepared for New Zealand Rugby)*. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Rugby.
- Collins, P. H. (1990). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Collins, P. H. (2002). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203900055>

- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. (2012). *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women*. Retrieved from [https://women.govt.nz/sites/public\\_files/CEDAW%20concluding%20observations%202012.pdf](https://women.govt.nz/sites/public_files/CEDAW%20concluding%20observations%202012.pdf)
- Connell, R. (2009). *Gender*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press.
- Cook, M. (2011). *Story: Women's movement*. Retrieved November 27, 2018, from [teara.govt.nz/en/womens-movement](http://teara.govt.nz/en/womens-movement)
- Cooky, C., Messner, M., & Hextrum, R. (2013). Women play sport, but not on TV: A longitudinal study of televised news media. *Communication & Sport*, 1(3), 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167479513476947>
- Coomes, M. D., & DeBard, R. (2004). A generational approach to understanding students. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2004(106), 5-16. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.121>
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity, politics, and violence against women of colour. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory Into Practice*, 39(3), 124. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903_2)
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cunningham, G. B. (2008). Creating and sustaining gender diversity in sport organizations. *Sex Roles*, 58(1-2), 136-145. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9312-3>
- Cunningham, G. B. (2010). Understanding the under-representation of African American coaches: A multilevel perspective. *Sport Management Review*, 13(4), 395-406. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2009.07.006>
- Cunningham, G. B. (2019). *Diversity and inclusion in sport organizations: A multilevel perspective* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cunningham, G. B., & Sagas, M. (2007). Examining potential differences between men and women in the impact of treatment discrimination. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 37(12), 3010-3024. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2007.00291.x>
- Cunningham, G. B., Sagas, M., Dixon, M. A., & Turner, B. A. (2005). Anticipated career satisfaction, affective occupational commitment, and intentions to enter the sport management profession. *Journal of Sport Management*, 19(1), 43-57. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jism.19.1.43>
- Dalziel, P. (2015). *The economic value of sport and outdoor recreation to New Zealand: Revised estimates with improved and updated data (AERU Research Report, prepared for Sport New Zealand)*. Lincoln, New Zealand: Lincoln University Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit.
- Dann, L. (2018). Largest workplace gender survey shows huge gap at the top. *New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from December 12, 2018, [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=3&objectid=12151411](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=12151411)

- de Beauvoir, S. (2011). *The second sex* (C. Borde & S. Malovany-Chevallier, Trans.). London, United Kingdom: Vintage Books.
- DeLuca, J., & Braunstein-Minkove, J. (2016). An evaluation of sport management student preparedness: Recommendations for adapting curriculum to meet industry needs. *Sport Management Education Journal*, *10*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1123/SMEJ.2014-0027>
- Denzin, N. K. (1989). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dew, M. (2017). *The Equal Pay Act - Where is it at?* Retrieved June 22, 2019, from <https://www.lawsociety.org.nz/practice-resources/practice-areas/employment-law/the-equal-pay-act-where-is-it-at>
- Dewar, A. M. (1991). Incorporation of resistance?: Towards an analysis of women's responses to sexual oppression in sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport Journal*, *26*(15), 15-22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/101269029102600103>
- Dill, B. T., & Kohlman, M. H. (2012). Intersectionality: A transformative paradigm in feminist theory and social justice In S. N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.), *Handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (2nd ed., pp. 154-175). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483384740>
- Disch, L., & Hawkesworth, M. (2016). *The Oxford handbook of feminist theory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Dixon, M. A., & Bruening, J. E. (2005). Perspectives on work-family conflict in sport: An integrated approach. *Sport Management Review*, *8*(3), 227-253. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523\(05\)70040-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(05)70040-1)
- Dixon, M. A., & Bruening, J. E. (2007). Work-family conflict in coaching I: A top-down perspective. *Journal of Sport Management*, *21*(3), 377-406. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.21.3.377>
- Dixon, M. A., & Cunningham, G. B. (2006). Data aggregation in multi-level analysis: A review of conceptual and statistical issues. *Measurement in Physical Education and Exercise Science*, *10*(2), 85-107. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327841mpee1002\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327841mpee1002_2)
- Dowling, M. (2007). From Husserl to van Manen: A review of different phenomenological approaches. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, *44*(1), 131-142.
- Du Plessis, R., & Alice, L. (Eds.). (1998). *Feminist thought in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Connections and differences*. Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford University Press.
- Eagly, A. H., & Johannessen-Schmidt, M. C. (2001). The leadership styles of women. *Journal of Social Issues*, *57*(4), 781-797. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00241>
- Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, *109*(3), 573-598. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0033-295X.109.3.573>
- Eagly, A. H., & Wood, W. (2011). Social role theory. In P. van Lange, A. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of theories in social psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 458-476). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Eagly, A. H., Wood, W., & Diekmann, A. B. (2000). Social role theory of sex differences and similarities: A current appraisal. In T. Eckes & M. H. Trautner (Eds.), *The*

- developmental social psychology of gender* (pp. 123-174). New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- Eccles, J. S. (1994). Understanding women's educational and occupational choices. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 18, 585-609. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1994.tb01049.x>
- Eccles, J. S., & Harold, R. D. (1991). Gender differences in sport involvement: Applying the Eccles' expectancy value model. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 31, 674-685. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413209108406432>
- Eccles, J. S., Wigfield, A., & Schiefele, U. (1998). Motivation to succeed. In N. Eisenberg (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Social, emotional, and personality development* (5th ed., Vol. 3, pp. 1017-1095). New York, NY: Wiley.
- EEO Trust. (2012). *Transforming cultures to grow women leaders: Case studies of six New Zealand companies work on gender diversity*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Women's Affairs.
- Ehlers, N. (2016). Identities. In L. Disch & M. Hawkesworth (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of feminist theory* (pp. 346-366). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199328581.013.18>
- Errasti-Ibarrondo, B., Jordán, J. A., Díez-Del-Corral, M. P., & Arantzamendi, M. (2018). van Manen's phenomenology of practice: How can it contribute to nursing? *Nursing Inquiry*, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nin.12259>
- Ferkins, L. (2002). Sporting best practice: An industry view of work placements. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 3(3), 29-34. Retrieved from <https://www.ijwil.org/>
- Fielding, H. (2012). Feminism. In S. Luft & S. Overgaard (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to phenomenology*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Fielding, N., & Lee, R. (1998). *Computer analysis and qualitative research*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Figal, G., & Espinet, D. (2012). Hermeneutics. In S. Luft & S. Overgaard (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to phenomenology* (pp. 496-507). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Fink, J. S. (2008). Gender and sex diversity in sport organizations: Concluding comments. *Sex Roles*, 58(1-2), 146-147. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9364-4>
- Fink, J. S. (2015). Female athletes, women's sport, and the sport media commercial complex: Have we really "come a long way, baby"? *Sport Management Review*, 18(3), 331-342. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2014.05.001>
- Fink, J. S. (2016). Hiding in plain sight: The embedded nature of sexism in sport. *Journal of Sport Management*, 30(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2015-0278>
- Fleming, J., & Ferkins, L. (2005). Cooperative education in sport: Building our knowledge base. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 4(1), 41-47. <https://doi.org/10.3794/johlste.41.82>
- French, S. (2013). Still not there: The continued invisibility of female athletes and sports in the New Zealand print media. *Media International Australia*, 148(1), 39-50. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1329878X1314800105>
- Friedan, B. (1963). *The feminine mystique*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.
- Fursman, L., & Callister, P. (2009). *Men's participation in unpaid care: A review of the literature*. Wellington, New Zealand: Department of Labour and Ministry of Women's Affairs.
- Gadamer, H. G. (1975). *Truth and method*. New York, NY: Seabury Press.

- Galloway, B. J. (2012). The glass ceiling: Examining the advancement of women in the domain of athletic administration. *McNair Scholars Research Journal*, 5(1). [https://doi.org/10.18843/ijms/v5i3\(5\)/13](https://doi.org/10.18843/ijms/v5i3(5)/13)
- Gault, J., Redington, J., & Schlager, T. (2000). Undergraduate business internships and career success: Are they related? *Journal of Marketing Education*, 22(1), 45-53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0273475300221006>
- Gherardi, S. (1994). The gender we think, the gender we do in our everyday organizational lives. *Human Relations*, 47(6), 591-610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679404700602>
- Gibbs, G. R. (2007). *Analyzing qualitative data*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Gibbs, G. R. (2017). *Analyzing qualitative data* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Glynn, T. (1998). Bicultural challenges for educational professionals in Aotearoa. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 4, 3-16. <https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v4i1.467>
- Glynn, T. (2015). Bicultural challenges for educational professionals in Aotearoa. *Waikato Journal of Education, 20th Anniversary Collection*, 103-113. <https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v20i3.227>
- Goodchild, M., Harris, F., Nina, G., & Russell, S. (2000). *The growing business of sport and leisure: The impact of the physical leisure industry in New Zealand – An update to the 1998 report*. Wellington, New Zealand: The Hillary Commission.
- Gottfredson, L. S. (1981). Circumscription and compromise: A developmental theory of occupational aspirations. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 28(6), 545-579. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2012.07.002>
- Governor-General. (2012). *Jane Huria, Christchurch, CNZM, for services to corporate governance*. Retrieved August 3, 2018, from [www.gg.govt.nz/images/jane-huria-christchurch-cnzm-services-corporate-governance](http://www.gg.govt.nz/images/jane-huria-christchurch-cnzm-services-corporate-governance)
- Grappendorf, H., & Henderson, A. C. (2008). Hegemonic masculinity, homosociality and collaboration within the field of sport management: Exploring the issues. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 26. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com>
- Grbich, C. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gundersen, A. B., & Kunst, J. R. (2018). Feminist ≠ feminine? Feminist women are visually masculinized whereas feminist men are feminized. *Sex Roles*, 80(5-6), 291-309. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-18-0931-7>
- Hancock, M. G., Cintron, A., & Darwin, L. (2018). Socialization to careers in intercollegiate athletics: A comparison of men and women. *Women in Sport & Physical Activity Journal*, 26, 12-22. <https://doi.org/10.1123/wspaj.2017-0002>
- Hancock, M. G., Darwin, L., & Walker, N. A. (2018). Beyond the glass ceiling: Sport management students' perceptions of the leadership labyrinth. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12(2), 100-110. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2017-0039>
- Hancock, M. G., Grappendorf, H., Wells, J. E., & Burton, L. J. (2017). Career breakthroughs of women in intercollegiate athletic administration: What is the

- role of mentoring? *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 10, 184-206.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jis.2017-0012>
- Hancock, M. G., & Greenwell, C. T. (2013). The selection of a sport management major: Factors influencing student choice from a consumer-oriented perspective. *Sport Management Education Journal (Human Kinetics)*, 7(1), 13-24.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.7.1.13>
- Hancock, M. G., & Hums, M. (2015). Career goals and expectations of female intercollegiate athletic administrators. *Global Sport Business Journal*, 3(1), 21-42. Retrieved from <http://www.gsbassn.com/Journal.html>
- Hancock, M. G., & Hums, M. A. (2016). A “leaky pipeline”? Factors affecting the career development of senior-level female administrators in NCAA Division I athletic departments. *Sport Management Review*, 19(2), 198-210.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2015.04.004>
- Hapeta, J., Palmer, F., & Kuroda, Y. (2018). Ka Mate: A commodity to trade or taonga to treasure? *Mai Journal*, 7(2), 170-185.  
<https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2018.7.2.5>
- Haraway, D. J. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature*. London, United Kingdom: Free Association Books.
- Hardin, M., & Whiteside, E. (2012). On being a “good sport” in the workplace: Women, the glass ceiling, and negotiated resignation in sports information. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 5(1), 51-68.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/ijsc.5.1.51>
- Harding, S. (1987). *Feminism and methodology: Social science issues*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Harding, S. (1990). Feminism and theories of scientific knowledge. *Women: A Cultural Review*, 1(1), 87-98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09574049008578026>
- Harding, S. (1991). *Whose science? Whose knowledge?* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Harding, S. (2007). Feminist standpoints. In S. N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.), *The handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (2nd ed., pp. 45-69). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Harris, K. F., Grappendorf, H., Aicher, T., & Veraldo, C. (2015). Discrimination? Low pay? Long hours? I am still excited: Female sport management students' perceptions of barriers toward a future career in sport. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 35, 12-21. <https://doi.org/10.18738/awl.v35i0.128>
- Hartsock, N. C. M. (1987). The feminist standpoint: Developing the ground for a specifically feminist historical materialism. In S. Harding (Ed.), *Feminism and methodology* (pp. 157-180). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Hawsworth, M. E. (1989). Knowers, knowing, known: Feminist theory and claims of truth. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 14(3), 533-557.  
<https://doi.org/10.1086/494523>
- Heidegger, M. (1996). *Being and time* (J. Stambaugh, Trans.). New York, NY: State University New York Press. (Original work published 1953)
- Hekman, S. (1997). Truth and method: Feminist standpoint revisited. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 22(2), 341-365. <https://doi.org/10.1086/495159>
- Hekman, S. (2000). Beyond identity: Feminism, identity and identity politics. *Feminist Theory*, 1(3), 289-308. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14647000022229245>
- Henderson, K. A., & Bialeschki, D. (1993). Professional women and equity issues in the 1990s. *Parks and Recreation*, 28(3), 54-59.

- Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2007). The practice of feminist in-depth interviewing. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Feminist research practice: A primer* (pp. 111-148). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2012). *The handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2013). *Feminist research practice: A primer* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2016). *The practice of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Leavy, P. (2007a). *Feminist research practice: A primer*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Leavy, P. (2007b). *The practice of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hillary Commission for Sport Fitness and Leisure. (1998). *Winning Women Charter*. Wellington, New Zealand.
- Hoffman, J. (2011). The old boys' network. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 5(1), 9-28. <https://doi.org/10.1179/ssa.2011.5.1.9>
- hooks, b. (1990). *Yearning: Race, gender, and cultural politics*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (2004). *We real cool: Black men and masculinity*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (2015). *Feminism is for everybody: Passionate politics*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hovden, J. (2012). Discourses and strategies for the inclusion of women in sport - The case of Norway. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, 15(3), 287-301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2012.653201>
- Hovden, J., & von der Lippe, G. (2019). The gendering of media sport in the Nordic countries. *Sport in Society*, 22(4), 625-638. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2017.1389046>
- Hoye, R., & Cuskelly, G. (2007). *Sport governance*. Sydney, Australia: Routledge.
- Huff, A. S. (2009). *Designing research for publication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Husserl, E. (2001). *Logical investigations*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge. (Original work published 1900)
- Iannotta, M., Gatti, M., & Huse, M. (2016). Institutional complementarities and gender diversity on boards: A configurational approach. *Corporate Governance*, 24(4), 406-427. <https://doi.org/10.1111/corg.12140>
- Jackson, B., & Parry, K. (2011). *A very short, fairly interesting and reasonably cheap book about studying leadership* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Jaggar, A. (2004). Feminist politics and epistemology: The standpoint of women. In S. Harding (Ed.), *The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies* (pp. 55-60). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Jick, T. D. (1979). Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24(4), 602-611. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2392366>
- Johnston, D., & Swanson, D. (2007). Cognitive acrobatics in the construction of worker-mother identity. *Sex Roles*, 57, 447-459. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9267-4>
- Johnston, P. (1998). Māori women and the politics of theorising difference. In R. Du Plessis & L. Alice (Eds.), *Feminist thought in Aotearoa New Zealand: Connections and differences* (pp. 29-36). Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford University Press.

- Jones, F., Brooks, D., & Mak, J. (2008). Examining sport management programs in the United States. *Sport Management Review*, 11, 77-91.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523\(08\)70104-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(08)70104-9)
- Kafle, N. P. (2011). Hermeneutic phenomenological research method simplified. *Bodhi: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 5(1), 181-200.
- Kane, M. J. (1995). Resistance/transformation of the oppositional binary: Exposing sport as a continuum. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 19(2), 191-218.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/019372395019002006>
- Kanter, R. M. (1977). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Katila, S., & Meriläinen, S. (1999). A serious researcher or just another nice girl?: Doing gender in a male-dominated scientific community. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 6(3), 163-173. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0432.00079>
- King, B. (2009). New lessons to learn: Sport management programs evolve to meet demand, economic realities. *Street & Smith's Sports Business Journal*, 40, 23-30.
- King, N., & Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kissack, H. (2010). Muted voices: A critical look at e-male in organizations. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 34(6), 539-551.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/03090591011061211>
- Kitzinger, J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interaction between research participants *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 16(1), 103-121.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.ep11347023>
- Klenke, K. (2011). *Women in leadership: Contextual dynamics and boundaries*. Bingley, United Kingdom: Emerald.
- Knappe, H., & Lang, S. (2014). Between whisper and voice: Online women's movement outreach in the UK and Germany. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 21(4), 361-381. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506814541643>
- Knoppers, A. (1987). Gender and the coaching profession. *New Quest*, 39(1), 9-22.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.1987.10483853>
- Knoppers, A., & Anthonissen, A. (2008). Gendered managerial discourses in sport organizations: Multiplicity and complexity. *Sex Roles*, 58(1-2), 93-103.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9324-z>
- Koch, T. (1995). Interpretive approaches in nursing research: The influence of Husserl and Heidegger. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 21(5), 827-836.  
<https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1995.21050827.x>
- Koch, T. (1996). Implementation of a hermeneutic inquiry in nursing: Philosophy, rigour and representation. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 24, 174-184.  
<https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1996.17224.x>
- Koenig, A. M., Eagly, A. H., Mitchell, A., & Ristikari, T. (2011). Are leader stereotypes masculine? A meta-analysis of three research paradigms. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137(4), 616-642. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023557>
- Kögler, H. H. (1996). The self-empowered subject: Habermas, Foucault and hermeneutic reflexivity. *Philosophy & social criticism*, 22(4), 13-44.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/019145379602200402>
- Kozlowski, S. W. J., & Klein, K. J. (2000). A multilevel approach to theory and research in organizations: Contextual, temporal, and emergent processes. In K. J. Klein & S. W. J. Kozlowski (Eds.), *Multilevel theory, research, and methods in organizations: Foundations, extensions, and new directions* (pp. 3-90). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

- Krueger, R. (1994). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kumra, S., & Vinnicombe, S. (2010). Impressing for success: A gendered analysis of a key social capital accumulation strategy. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 17(5), 521-546. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2010.00521.x>
- LaDonna, K. A., Ginsburg, S., & Watling, C. (2018). Rising to the level of your incompetence: What physician's self-assessment of their performance reveals about the Imposter Syndrome in medicine. *Academic Medicine*, 93(5), 763-768. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000002046>.
- Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(3), 21-35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690300200303>
- Leavy, P. (2007). The practice of feminist oral history and focus group interviews. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Feminist research practice: A primer* (pp. 149-186). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Leberman, S., & Burton, L. J. (2017). Why this book? Framing the conversation about women in sport leadership. In L. J. Burton & S. Leberman (Eds.), *Women in sport leadership: Research and practice for change* (pp. 1-15). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Leberman, S., Collins, C., & Trenberth, L. (2012). *Sport business management in New Zealand and Australia* (3rd ed.). Melbourne, Australia: Cengage Learning.
- Leberman, S., & Palmer, F. (2009). Motherhood, sport leadership, and domain theory: Experiences from New Zealand. *Journal of Sport Management*, 23(3), 305-334. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.23.3.305>
- Leberman, S., & Shaw, S. (2012). *Preparing female sport management students for leadership roles in sport*. Retrieved from [ako.ac.nz/assets/Knowledge-centre/RHPF-c46-Preparing-female-students-for-leadership-roles-in-sport/ba32fb102d/RESEARCH-REPORT-Preparing-Female-Sport-Management-Students-for-Leadership-Roles-in-Sport.pdf](http://ako.ac.nz/assets/Knowledge-centre/RHPF-c46-Preparing-female-students-for-leadership-roles-in-sport/ba32fb102d/RESEARCH-REPORT-Preparing-Female-Sport-Management-Students-for-Leadership-Roles-in-Sport.pdf)
- Leberman, S., & Shaw, S. (2015). 'Let's be honest most people in the sporting industry are still males': The importance of socio-cultural context for female graduates. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 67(3), 349-366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2015.1057212>
- Leckenby, D. (2007). Feminist empiricism: Challenging gender bias and setting the record straight. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Feminist research practice: A primer* (pp. 27-52). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Leszczynska, M. (2017). Mandatory quotas for women on boards of directors in the European Union: Harmful to or good for company performance? *European Business Organisation and Law Review*(19), 35-61. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40804-017-0095-x>
- Liamputtong, P. (2007). *Researching the vulnerable: A guide to sensitive research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lirgg, C. D. (1991). Gender differences in self-confidence in physical activity: A meta-analysis of recent studies. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 13(3), 294-310. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.13.3.294>
- Lirgg, C. D. (1992). Girls and women, sport, and self-confidence. *New Quest*, 44, 158-178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.1992.10484049>

- Long, J. (2012). *Anti-porn: The resurgence of anti-pornography feminism*. London, United Kingdom: Zed Books Ltd.
- Longino, H. E. (1993). Feminist standpoint theory and the problems of knowledge. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 19(1), 201-212. <https://doi.org/10.1086/494867>
- Longino, H. E. (1999). Feminist epistemology. In J. Grecco & E. Sosa (Eds.), *The Blackwell guide to epistemology* (pp. 327-353). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Lough, N., & Grappendorf, H. (2007). Senior woman administrator's perspectives on professional advancement. *International Journal of Sport Management*, 8(2), 193-209.
- Lovett, D. J., & Lowry, C. D. (1994). "Good old boys" and "good old girls" clubs: Myth or reality? *Journal of Sport Management*, 8(1), 27-35. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.8.1.27>
- Maier, M. (1999). On the gendered substructure of organization: Dimensions and dilemmas of corporate masculinity. In N. P. Gary (Ed.), *Handbook of gender and work* (pp. 69-94). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Malterud, K. (2001). Qualitative research: Standards challenges and guidelines. *The Lancet*, 358(9280), 483-488. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(01\)05627-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(01)05627-6)
- Mann, S. A., & Huffman, D. J. (2005). The decentering of second wave feminism and the rise of the third wave. *Science & Society*, 69(1), 56-91. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40404229>
- Martin, P. Y. (2006). Practising gender at work: Further thoughts on reflexivity. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 13(3), 254-276. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2006.00307.x>
- Marvin, S., & Grandy, G. (2013). Doing gender well and differently in dirty work: The case of exotic dancing. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 20(3), 232-251. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2011.00567.x>
- Masteralexis, L., Barr, C. A., & Hums, M. (2011). *Principles and practice of sport management*. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Publishers.
- Mauthner, N. S., & Doucet, A. (1998). Reflections on a voice-centred relational method: Analysing maternal domestic voices. In J. Ribbens & R. Edwards (Eds.), *Feminist dilemmas in qualitative research: Public knowledge and private lives* (pp. 119-146). London, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative research design* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maynard, M., & Purvis, J. (2002). *Researching women's lives from a feminist perspective*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- McBride, A., Hebson, G., & Holgate, J. (2014). Intersectionality: Are we taking enough notice in the field of work and employment relations? *Industrial Relations Journal*, 29(2), 331-341. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017014538337>
- McCurdy, D. W., Spradley, J. P., & Shandy, D. J. (2005). *The cultural experience: Ethnography in complex society* (2nd ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.
- McGregor, D. (2019). *Women in paid work*. Wellington, New Zealand: Statistics New Zealand.
- McGregor, J. (2010). *New Zealand census of women's participation*. Wellington, New Zealand: Human Rights Commission.
- McGregor, J. (2012a). *New Zealand census of women's participation*. Wellington, New Zealand.
- McGregor, J. (2012b). *New Zealand census of women's participation*. Wellington, New Zealand: Human Rights Commission.

- McGregor, J., & Fountaine, S. (1997). Gender equity in retreat: The declining representation of women's sport in the New Zealand print media. *Metro Magazine*, 112, 38-44. Retrieved June 5, 2019 Retrieved from informit-com
- McKay, J. (1991). *No pain, no gain? : Sport and Australian culture*. Sydney: Prentice Hall.
- McKay, J. (1997). *Managing gender: Affirmative action and organizational power in Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand sport*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- McKay, J., Lawrence, G., Miller, T., & Rowe, D. (2001). Gender equity, hegemonic masculinity and the governmentalisation of Australian amateur sport. In T. Bennett & D. Carter (Eds.), *Culture in Australia: Policies, publics and programs* (pp. 233-251). Port Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press.
- McKendry, P. (2016). New Zealand Rugby's newest board member: Breaking through rugby's glass ceiling. *The New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=4&objectid=11768340](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c_id=4&objectid=11768340)
- Melton, E. N., & Bryant, M. J. (2017). Intersectionality: The impact of negotiating multiple identities for women in sport leadership. In L. J. Burton & S. Leberman (Eds.), *Women in sport leadership: Research and practice for change* (pp. 62-82). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Messerschmidt, J. W. (2009). "Doing gender": The impact and future of a salient sociological concept. *Gender & Society*, 23(1), 85-88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243208326253>
- Messner, M. (2007). *Out of play: Critical essays on gender and sport*. New York, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Messner, M., Hunt, D., Dunbar, M., Chen, P., Lapp, J., & Miller, P. (1999). *Sports media: Boys to men. Messages about masculinity*. Los Angeles, CA: The Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles. Retrieved from [la84.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/boystomen.pdf](http://la84.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/boystomen.pdf)
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miller, T. (1998). Scouting for boys: Sport looks at men. In D. Rowe & G. Lawrence (Eds.), *Tourism, leisure, sport: Critical perspectives* (pp. 194-203). Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press.
- Miller, W., Kerr, B., & Reid, M. (1999). A national study of gender-based occupational segregation in municipal bureaucracies: Persistence of glass walls? *Public Administration Review*, 59(3), 218-230. Retrieved from <https://eds.b.ebscohost.com>
- Ministry for Women. (2018a). *Ministry for Women: 2018 annual report*. Retrieved from [http://women.govt.nz/sites/public\\_files/Ministry%20for%20Women%20Annual%20Report%202018.pdf](http://women.govt.nz/sites/public_files/Ministry%20for%20Women%20Annual%20Report%202018.pdf)
- Ministry for Women. (2018b). *Research of the gender pay gap in New Zealand*. Retrieved from <https://women.govt.nz/work-skills/income/gender-pay-gap/research-evidence-gap-new-zealand>
- Moore, M. E., Parkhouse, B. L., & Konrad, A. M. (2004). Diversity programs: Influencing female students to sport management? *Women in Management Review*, 19(5/6), 304-316. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420410555079>
- Moules, N. J., McCaffrey, G., Field, J. C., & Laing, C. M. (2015). *Conducting hermeneutic research: From philosophy to practice*. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang.

- NASSM. (2010). *Sport management programs: United States*. Vermillion, SD.
- NASSM. (2017). *Sport management program*. Vermillion, SD.
- National Council of Women of New Zealand. (2015). *Enabling women's potential: And the social, economic and ethical imperative*. Wellington, New Zealand.
- National Council of Women of New Zealand. (2018). *Gender attitudes survey: Full results 2017*. Retrieved from <https://women.govt.nz/work-skills/income/gender-pay-gap/research-evidence-gap-new-zealand>
- Nedegaard, R. (2016). Overcoming imposter syndrome: How my students trained me to teach them. *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping*, 22(4), 52-59. Retrieved from <https://reflections narratives of professional helping.org/index.php/Reflections>
- Netball New Zealand. (2019). *Board of directors*. Retrieved June 2, 2019, from <http://www.netballnz.co.nz/about/board-of-directors>
- New Zealand Cricket. (2016). *A game for all New Zealanders: A game for life*. Retrieved from [https://www.nzc.nz/media/7756/nzcr\\_i000080\\_women-and-cricket-document\\_digital\\_d1.pdf](https://www.nzc.nz/media/7756/nzcr_i000080_women-and-cricket-document_digital_d1.pdf)
- New Zealand Olympic Committee. (2018). *NZers honoured with Order of Merit at Commonwealth Games 2018*. Retrieved June 23, 2019, from <http://www.olympic.org.nz/news/susie-simcock-onzm-and-kerry-clark-cnzm-and-obe-honoured-with-order-of-merit-awards-at-the-commonwealth-games-federation-general-assembly/>
- New Zealand Rugby Union. (2017). *Annual report: 2017 inspiring and unifying*. Retrieved from <http://files.allblacks.com/2017-NZR-Annual-Report.pdf>
- New Zealand Rugby Union. (2018). *New Zealand Rugby Annual Report 2018*. Wellington, NZ. Retrieved from <http://files.allblacks.com/publications/2018-NZR-Annual-Report.pdf>
- Nicholson, L. (2013). *Feminism/postmodernism*. New York, NY: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203699386>
- Nielsen, J. (1990). *Feminist research methods: Exemplary readings in the social sciences*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Nielsen, S., & Huse, M. (2010a). The contribution of women on boards of directors: Going beyond the surface. *Corporate Governance*, 18(2), 136-148. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8683.2010.00784.x>
- Nielsen, S., & Huse, M. (2010b). Women directors' contribution to board decision-making and strategic involvement: The role of equality perception. *European Management Review*, 7(1), 16-29. <https://doi.org/10.1057/emr.2009.27>
- Nolan, M. (2007). The reality and myth of New Zealand's egalitarianism: Explaining the pattern of a labour historiography at the edge of empires. *Labour History Review*, 72(2), 113-134. <https://doi.org/10.1179/174581807X224560>
- O'Leary, C. M. (1998). Counteridentification or counterhegemony? Transforming feminist standpoint theory. *Women & Politics*, 18(3), 45-72. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J014v18n03\\_04](https://doi.org/10.1300/J014v18n03_04)
- O'Shea, M. (2017). *Career experiences in Australian sport organisations: Formal and informal effects of gender* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.
- Odio, M. (2017). Students' search behaviors and career alignment for internships. *Journal of Applied Sport Management*, 9(4), 22-38. <https://doi.org/10.18666/JASM-2017-V9-14-8140>

- Odio, M., & Kerwin, S. (2016). Internship characteristics, critical events, and intent to enter the vocation. *Sport Management Education Journal*, *10*(2), 103-114. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2015-0028>
- Odio, M., Sagas, M., & Kerwin, S. (2014). The influence of internship on students' career decision making. *Sport Management Education Journal*, *8*, 46-57. <https://doi.org/10.1123/SMEJ.2013-0011>
- Olesen, V. (2005). Early millennial feminist qualitative research: Challenges and contours. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research: Third edition* (3rd ed., pp. 235 - 279). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Olesen, V. (2008). Early Millennial feminist qualitative research: Challenges and contours. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 311-370). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Olesen, V. (2011). Feminist qualitative research in the millennium's first decade. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 129-146). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Olsson, M., & Martiny, S. E. (2018). Does exposure to counterstereotypical role models influence girls' and women's gender stereotypes and career choices? A review of social psychological research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *9*(2264). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02264>
- Palmer, F. R., & Masters, T. M. (2010). Māori feminism and sport leadership: Exploring Māori women's experiences. *Sport Management Review*, *13*(4), 331-344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2010.06.001>
- Park, J., Choi, C., & Yoon, J. (2019). How should sports match fixing be classified? *Cogent Social Sciences*, *5*, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2019.1573595>
- Parkhouse, B. L. (1987). Sport management curricula: Current status and design implications for future development. *Journal of Sport Management*, *1*, 93-115. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.1.2.93>
- Parkhouse, B. L., & Pitts, B. G. (2001). Definition, evolution, and curriculum. The management of sport: Its foundation and application. In B. L. Parkhouse (Ed.), *The management of sport: Its foundation and application*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Parks, J. B., Quaterman, J., & Thibault, L. (2011). Managing sport in the 21st century. In P. M. Pedersen & L. Thibault (Eds.), *Contemporary sport management* (4th ed., pp. 5-27). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Patterson, N., Mavin, S., & Turner, J. (2012). Unsettling the gender binary: Experiences of gender in entrepreneurial leadership and implications for HRD. *European Journal of Training and Development*, *36*(7), 687-711. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090591211255548>
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, NY: Sage.
- Peachey, J. W., & Burton, L. J. (2011). Male or female athletic director? Exploring perceptions of leader effectiveness and a (potential) female leadership advantage with intercollegiate athletic directors. *Sex Roles*, *64*(5-6), 416-425. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-010-9915-y>

- Petersen, J., & Pierce, D. (2009). Professional sport league assessment of sport management curriculum. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 3(1), 110-124. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.3.1.110>
- Phillips, R., & Cree, V. E. (2014). What does the 'fourth wave' mean for teaching feminism in twenty-first century social work? *Social Work Education*, 33(7), 930-943. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2014.885007>
- Pierce, J. (1995). *The suffrage trail: A guide to places, memorials and the arts commemorating New Zealand women*. Wellington, New Zealand: NCWNZ.
- Pini, B. (2002). Focus groups, feminist research and farm women: Opportunities for empowerment in rural social research. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 18(3), 339-351. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0743-0167\(02\)00007-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0743-0167(02)00007-4)
- Polito, T., Kros, T., & Watson, J. (2004). Improving operations management concept recollection via the Zarco experiential learning activity. *Journal of Education for Business*, 79(5), 283-286.
- Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (1979). The "good manager": Masculine or androgynous? *Academy of Management Journal*, 22(2), 395-403. <https://doi.org/10.5465/255597>
- Prasad, P. (2005). *Crafting qualitative research: Working in the positivist traditions*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharp.
- Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern named as one of the most powerful women in the world. (2018, December 5). Retrieved from <https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/political/377533/prime-minister-jacinda-ardern-named-as-one-of-most-powerful-women-in-world>
- Pringle, J., & Strachon, G. (2015). Duelling dualisms: A history of diversity management. In R. Bendl, I. Bleijenbergh, A. Henttonen, & A. Mills (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of diversity in organizations* (pp. 39-61). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Pringle, R. (2001). Competing discourses: Narratives of a fragmented self, manliness and rugby union. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 36(4), 425-439. <https://doi.org/10.1177/101269001036004004>
- Ramirez, S. (2004). Games CEOs play and interest convergence theory: Why diversity lags in America's boardrooms and what to do about it. *Washington and Lee Law Review*, 61(4), 1583-1613. Retrieved from <https://heinonline-org>
- Ramsey, J., & Spencer, A. (2019). Interns and imposter syndrome: Proactively addressing resilience. *Medical Education Online*, 53(5), 504-505. <https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.13852>
- Rei, T. (1998). Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Māori women, and the state. In R. Du Plessis & L. Alice (Eds.), *Feminist thought in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 198-207). Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford University Press.
- Reinharz, S. (1990). *Feminist methods in social research*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Reinharz, S., & Davidman, L. (1992). *Feminist methods in social research*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ropers-Huilman, R., & Winters, K. T. (2011). Feminist research in higher education. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 82(6), 667-690. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2011.11777223>
- Royal, T. A. C. (n.d.). *Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Retrieved from <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/papatuanuku-the-land/page-8>

- Ryan, I. (2010). Masculinities in practice: The invisible dynamics in sport leadership. In P. Lewis & R. Simpson (Eds.), *Revealing and concealing gender. Issues of visibility in organizations* (pp. 139–157). London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ryan, I., & Dickson, G. (2016). The invisible norm: An exploration of the intersections of sport, leadership and gender. *Leadership*, 14(3), 329-346. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715016674864>
- Ryan, I., Ravenswood, S., & Pringle, J. K. (2014). Equality and diversity in Aotearoa (New Zealand). In A. Klarsfeld, L. A. Booyesen, E. Ng, I. Roper, & A. Talti (Eds.), *International handbook on diversity management at work: Country perspectives on diversity and equal treatment* (pp. 175-194). Cheltenham, United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Rydell, R. J., Rydell, M. T., & Boucher, K. L. (2010). The effect of negative performance stereotypes on learning. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(6), 883-896. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021139>
- Sagas, M., & Cunningham, G. B. (2004). Does having "the right stuff" matter? Gender differences in the determinants of career success among intercollegiate athletic administrators. *Sex Roles*, 50(5-6), 411-421. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:SERS.0000018895.68011.fa>
- Sagas, M., & Cunningham, G. B. (2005). Work-family conflict among college assistant coaches. *International Journal of Sport Management*, 6, 183-197.
- Sakulku, J., & Alexander, J. (2011). The imposter phenomenon. *International Journal of Behavioral Science*, 6(1), 75-97. <https://doi.org/10.14456/ijbs.2011.6>
- Saldana, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). London, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Sandelowski, M. (1993). Rigor or rigor mortis: The problem of rigor in qualitative research revisited. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 16, 1-8. Retrieved from <https://ovidsp.dc2.ovid.com>
- Sarantakos, S. (2013). *Social research*. Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sartore, M., & Cunningham, G. B. (2007). Explaining the under-representation of women in leadership positions of sport organizations: A symbolic interactionist perspective. *New Quest*, 59(2), 244-265. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2007.10483551>
- Sattler, L. A. (2018). From classroom to courtside: An examination of the experiential learning practices of sport management faculty. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 22, 52-62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2018.02.002>
- Sauder, M. H., & Mudrick, M. (2018). Student satisfaction and perceived learning in sport management internships. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12, 26-38. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2016-0032>
- Sauder, M. H., Mudrick, M., & DeLuca, J. R. (2018). Perceived barriers and sources of support for undergraduate female students' persistence in the sport management major. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12, 69-79. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2017-0025>
- Savin-Baden, M., & Major, H. (2013). *Qualitative research: The essential guide to theory and practice*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Schull, V., Shaw, S., & Kihl, L. A. (2013). "If a women came in ... she would have been eaten up alive": Analyzing gendered political processes in the search for an

- athletic director. *Gender & Society*, 27(1), 56-81.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243212466289>
- Schwab, K. A., Dustin, D., Legg, E., Timmerman, D., Wells, M. S., & Arthur-Banning, S. G. (2013). Choosing sport management as a college major. *A Journal of Leisure Studies & Recreation Education*, 28(2), 16-27.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1937156X.2013.11949703>
- Schwab, K. A., Legg, E., Tanner, P., Timmerman, D., Dustin, D., & Arthur-Banning, S. G. (2015). Career paths in sport management. *A Journal of Leisure Studies and Recreation Education*, 30(2), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.18666/schole-2015-v30-i2-6633>
- Schwandt, T. A. (1994). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 118-137). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Scraton, S. (2018). Feminism(s) and PE: 25 years of shaping up to womanhood. *Sport, Education and Society*, 23(7), 638-651.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2018.1448263>
- Scraton, S., & Flintoff, A. (2013). Gender, feminist theory, and sport. In D. L. Andrews & B. Carrington (Eds.), *A companion to sport* (pp. 96-111). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118325261>
- Seierstad, C. (2016). Beyond the business case: The need for both utility and justice rationales for increasing the share of women on boards. *Corporate Governance*, 24(4), 390-405. <https://doi.org/10.1111/corg.12117>
- Shaw, S. (2006). Gender suppression in New Zealand regional sports trusts. *Women in Management Review*, 21(7), 554-566.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420610692507>
- Shaw, S. (2007). Touching the intangible? An analysis of The Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport. *Equal Opportunities International*, 26(5), 420-434.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/02610150710756630>
- Shaw, S. (2018). Gender, leisure, and constraint: Towards a framework for the analysis of women's leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 26(1), 8-22.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1994.11969941>
- Shaw, S., & Amis, J. (2001). Image and investment: Sponsorship and women's sport. *Journal of Sport Management*, 15(3), 219-246.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.15.3.219>
- Shaw, S., & Frisby, W. (2006). Can gender equity be more equitable? Promoting an alternative frame for sport management research, education, and practice. *Journal of Sport Management*, 20(4), 483-509.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.20.4.483>
- Shaw, S., & Hoerber, L. (2003). "A strong man is direct and a direct woman is a bitch": Gendered discourses and their influence on employment roles in sport organizations. *Journal of Sport Management*, 17(4), 347-375.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.17.4.347>
- Shaw, S., & Leberman, S. (2015). Using the kaleidoscope career model to analyze female CEOs' experiences in sport organizations. *Gender in Management*, 30(6), 500-515. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-12-2014-0108>
- Sibson, R., & Russell, D. (2011). *Sport, recreation and event management practicum placements: What do stakeholders expect?* presented at the meeting of the 20th Annual Teaching and Learning Forum, Perth, Australia.

- Sikh, B. S., & Spence, D. (2016). Methodology, meditation, and mindfulness: Toward a mindfulness hermeneutic. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 15(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406916641251>
- Silverman, H. J. (1991). *Gadamer and hermeneutics*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Simon-Kumar, R. (2011). Differences that matter: From 'gender' to 'ethnicity' in contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand. *Women's Studies Journal*, 25(2), 74-90. Retrieved from [www.wsanz.org.nz](http://www.wsanz.org.nz)
- Simpson, R., & Lewis, P. (2005). An investigation of silence and a scrutiny of transparency: Re-examining gender in organization literature through the concepts of voice and visibility. *Human Relations*, 58(10), 1253-1275. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726705058940>
- Sinclair, A. (2007). *Leadership for the disillusioned: Moving beyond myths and heroes to leading that liberates*. Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Sinclair, A. (2013). Not just adding women in: Women re-making leadership. In R. Francis, P. Grimshaw, & A. Standish (Eds.), *Seizing the initiative: Australian women leaders in politics, workplaces and communities* (pp. 15-34). Melbourne, Australia: The University of Melbourne.
- Sinclair, A. (2019). Five movements in an embodied feminism: A memoir. *Human Relations*, 72(1), 144-158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726718765625>
- Skirstad, B. (2009). Gender policy and organizational change: A contextual approach. *Sport Management Review*, 12(4), 202-216. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2009.03.003>
- Slaby, R. G., & Frey, K. S. (1975). Development of gender constancy and selective attention to same-sex models. *Child Development*, 46(4), 849-856. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1128389>
- Smith, A., Taylor, E. A., & Hardin, R. (2017). Career entry and experiences of female graduate assistants in collegiate athletics. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 10, 234-260. Retrieved from <http://csri-ijia.org/>
- Smith, D. (1987). *The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.
- Smith, D. (1990). *The conceptual practices of power: A feminist sociology of knowledge*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.
- Smythe, E., & Giddings, L. S. (2007). From experience to definition: Addressing the question 'what is qualitative research?'. *Nursing Praxis in New Zealand*, 23(1), 37-58. Retrieved from <http://web.a.ebscohost.com>
- Smythe, E., Ironside, P. M., Sims, S. L., Swenson, M. M., & Spence, D. G. (2007). Doing Heideggerian hermeneutic research: A discussion paper. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 45(9), 1389-1397. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2007.09.005>
- Smythe, E., & Spence, D. (2012). Re-viewing literature in hermeneutic research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 11(1), 12-25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691201100102>
- Spence, D. (2001). *Prejudice, paradox, and possibility: Nursing people from cultures other than one's own (Unpublished doctoral thesis)*. Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104365960101200203>
- Sport New Zealand. (2013). *Sport New Zealand Group Annual Report 2013*. Wellington, New Zealand.

- Sport New Zealand. (2018a). *Active NZ 2017 Participation Report*. Wellington, New Zealand.
- Sport New Zealand. (2018b). *Sport New Zealand Group Annual Report: 1 July 2017-30 June 2018*. Wellington, New Zealand.
- Sport New Zealand & New Zealand Government. (2018). *Women and girls: In sport and active recreation - Government strategy October 2018*. Retrieved from <https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Women-and-Girls-Govt-Strategy.pdf>
- Sprague, J. (2005). *Feminist methodologies for critical researchers*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Sprague, J., & Zimmerman, M. K. (1993). Overcoming dualisms: A feminist agenda for sociological methodology. In P. England (Ed.), *Theory on gender: Feminism on theory* (pp. 255-280). Hawthorne, NY: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Stanley, L. (2013). Feminist praxis and the academic mode of production: An editorial introduction. In L. Stanley (Ed.), *Feminist praxis: Research, theory and epistemology in feminist sociology* (pp. 1-19). New York, NY: Routledge. (Original work published 1990)
- Stanley, L., & Wise, S. (2013). Method, methodology and epistemology in feminist research processes. In L. Stanley (Ed.), *Feminist praxis: Research, theory and epistemology in feminist sociology* (Vol. 13, pp. 20-60). New York, NY: Routledge. (Original work published 1990)
- Statistics New Zealand. (1990). *New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990*. Retrieved from [www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/1990/NZOYB 1990](http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/1990/NZOYB 1990)
- Statistics New Zealand. (1991). *New Zealand Official Yearbook 1991*. Retrieved February 3, 2019, from [www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/1991/NZOYB 1991](http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/1991/NZOYB 1991)
- Statistics New Zealand. (1992). *New Zealand Official Yearbook 1992*. Retrieved from [www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/1992/NZOYB 1992](http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/1992/NZOYB 1992)
- Statistics New Zealand. (2000). *New Zealand Official Yearbook 2000*. Retrieved from <https://www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/2000/NZOYB 2000>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2010). *New Zealand Official Yearbook 2010*. Retrieved from [https://www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/nz\\_official\\_yrbk\\_2010.pdf](https://www3.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand Official Yearbooks/nz_official_yrbk_2010.pdf).
- Statistics New Zealand. (2011). *Time use survey: 2009/2010*. Retrieved from [http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/people\\_and\\_communities/time\\_use/TimeUseSurvey\\_HOTP2009-10.aspx](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/time_use/TimeUseSurvey_HOTP2009-10.aspx)
- Statistics New Zealand. (2013). Celebrating 120 years of women's suffrage.
- Statistics New Zealand. (2018, December). *Population demographics: Employment*. Retrieved February 3, 2019 from [www.stats.govt.nz/](http://www.stats.govt.nz/)
- Stewart, B. (2007). *Sport funding and finance*. Cambridge, MA: Elsevier.
- Stroebe, K., Barreto, M., & Ellemers, N. (2010). When searching hurts: The role of information search in reactions to gender discrimination. *Sex Roles*, 62, 60-76. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-009-9700-y>
- Swanson, J. L., Damniels, K. K., & Tokar, D. M. (1996). Assessing perceptions of career-related barriers: The career barriers inventory. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 4, 219-244. <https://doi.org/10.1177/106907279600400207>
- Syed, J., & Ozbilgin, M. (2009). A relational framework for international transfer of diversity management practices. *International Journal of Human Resource*

- Management*, 20(12), 2435-2453.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190903363755>
- Taylor, E. A., & Hardin, R. (2016). Female NCAA Division I athletic directors: Experiences and challenges. *Women in Sport & Physical Activity Journal*, 24(1), 14-25.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/wspaj.2014-0038>
- Taylor, E. A., & Wells, J. E. (2017). Institutionalized barriers and supports of female athletic directors: A multilevel perspective. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 10, 157-183. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jis.2016-0041>
- Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa. (n.d.). *Kia ita: Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori*. Retrieved February 17, 2019, 2019, from <https://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/maori-language/tikanga-maori>
- Terjesen, S., Aguilera, R. V., & Lorenz, R. (2015). Legislating a woman's seat on the board: Institutional factors driving gender quotas for boards of directors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 128(2), 233-251. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2083-1>
- Terjesen, S., Sealy, R., & Singh, V. (2009). Women directors on corporate boards: A review and research agenda. *Corporate Governance*, 17(3), 320-327.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8683.2009.00742.x>
- Tessier, S. (2012). From field notes, to transcripts, to tape recordings: Evolution or combination? *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 11(4), 446-460.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691201100410>
- Tester, L. (2014). *Women councillors' stories of effectiveness in New Zealand local government: A feminist hermeneutic inquiry* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Timmerman, D., Schwab, K. A., Wells, M. S., & Dustin, D. (2012). *Career paths in sport management*. presented at the meeting of the California Parks and Recreation Society Leisure Research Symposium, Long Beach, CA.
- Toffoletti, K. (2016). Rethinking media representations of sportswomen. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 33(3), 199-207. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2015-0136>
- Torchia, M., Calabro, A., & Huse, M. (2011). Women directors on corporate boards: From tokenism to critical mass. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 102, 299-317.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0815-z>
- Trailblazers: Raelene Castle. (2018). *The New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from [www.nzherald.co.nz/trailblazers/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1504553&objectid=12118507](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/trailblazers/news/article.cfm?c_id=1504553&objectid=12118507)
- United Nations. (1979). *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. Retrieved from [www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cedaw.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cedaw.pdf)
- United Nations. (1996). *The Beijing Declaration and The Platform for Action: Fourth World Conference on Women*. Retrieved from [www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing\\_Declaration\\_and\\_Platform\\_for\\_Action.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing_Declaration_and_Platform_for_Action.pdf)
- van der Walt, N., & Ingley, C. (2003). Board dynamics and the influence of professional background, gender and ethnic diversity of directors. *Corporate Governance*, 11, 218-234. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8683.00320>
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Ontario, Canada: The Althouse Press.
- van Manen, M. (2014). *Phenomenology of practice: Meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research and writing*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

- Vekas, E., & Wade, T. D. (2017). The impact of a universal intervention targeting perfectionism in children: An exploratory controlled trial. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 56*(4), 458-473. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjc.12152>
- Verheijen, V. W. (2018). *The lived experience of social and cultural capital for immigrant women's entrepreneurship in New Zealand*. Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Walby, S. (1989). Theorising patriarchy. *Sociology, 23*(2), 213-234. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038589023002004>
- Walby, S. (1990). *Theorizing patriarchy*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Basil Blackwell.
- Walker, N. A., & Melton, E. N. (2015). The tipping point: The intersection of race, gender, and sexual orientation in intercollegiate sports. *Journal of Sport Management, 29*(3), 257-271. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2013-0079>
- Walker, N. A., & Sartore-Baldwin, M. L. (2013). Hegemonic masculinity and the institutionalized bias toward women in men's collegiate basketball: What do men think? *Journal of Sport Management, 27*(4), 303-315. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.27.4.303>
- Walker, N. A., Schaeperkoetter, C., & Darvin, L. (2017). Institutionalized practices in sport leadership. In L. J. Burton & S. Leberman (Eds.), *Women in sport leadership: Research and practice for change* (pp. 33-46). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Waring, M. (1988). *Counting for nothing: What men value and what women are worth*. Sydney, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Waring, M. (1996). *Three masquerades: Essays on equality, work and hu(man) rights*. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press.
- Weatherford, G. M., Wagner, F. A., & Block, B. A. (2018). The complexity of sport: Universal challenges and their impact on women in sport. *Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal, 26*, 89-98. <https://doi.org/10.1123/wspaj.2018-0001>
- Whelan, J., & Wood, R. (2012). *Targets and quotas for women in leadership: A global review of policy, practice and psychological research*. Melbourne, Australia: Gender Equality Project, Centre for Ethical Leadership, Melbourne Business School.
- Whisenant, W. A. (2003). How women have fared as interscholastic athletic administrators since the passage of Title IX. *Sex Roles, 49*(3-4), 179-184. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:102441711>
- Whisenant, W. A., Miller, J., & Pedersen, P. M. (2005). Systematic barriers in athletic administration: An analysis of job descriptions for interscholastic athletic directors. *Sex Roles, 49*(9-10), 485-491. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-005-8309-z>
- Whitmarsh, L., Brown, D., Cooper, J., Hawkins-Rodgers, Y., & Wentworth, D. (2007). Choices and challenges: A qualitative exploration of professional women's career paths. *The Career Development Quarterly, 56*, 157-170. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-0045.2007.tb00079.x>
- Wigfield, A., & Eccles, J. S. (2000). Expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*, 68-81. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1015>
- Wilkinson, S. (1998). Focus group methodology: A review. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 1*(3), 181-203. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.1998.10846874>

- Wilkinson, S. (1999a). Focus groups: A feminist method. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 23, 221-244. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1999.tb00355.x>
- Wilkinson, S. (1999b). How useful are focus groups in feminist research? In R. S. Barbour & J. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Developing focus group research: Politics, theory and practice* (pp. 64-79). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Wilson, H., & Hutchinson, S. (1991). Triangulation of qualitative methods: Heideggerian hermeneutics and grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research*, 1, 263-276. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973239100100206>
- Wilson, M. (1998). Paid work, policy, and the concept of equality. In R. Du Plessis & L. Alice (Eds.), *Feminist thought in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 223-228). Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford University Press.
- Wolfe, R. A., Weick, K. E., Usher, J. M., Terborg, J. R., Poppo, L., & Murnell, A. J. (2005). Sport and organizational studies: Exploring synergy. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 14(2), 182-210. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492605275245>
- Yoh, T., & Choi, Y. S. (2011). An investigation of students' satisfaction with internship experiences in sport management programs. *International Journal of Sport Management*, 12(1), 1-13.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Ethics Approval



### AUTEC Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology  
 D-88, WU406 Level 4 WU Building City Campus  
 T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316  
 E: [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz)  
[www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics](http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics)

13 May 2016

Marilyn Waring  
 Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Marilyn

Re Ethics Application: **16/79 What are the experiences of women studying, and working in, "New Zealand sport management"?**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 13 May 2019.

As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 13 May 2019;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 13 May 2019 or on completion of the project.

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, please use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz).

All the very best with your research,

Kate O'Connor  
 Executive Secretary  
 Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Sally Rae, Irene Ryan





## Consent Form

**Project title:** What are the experiences of women, studying and working in New Zealand sport management?

**Project Supervisor:** Dr Marilyn Waring

**Primary Researcher:** Sally Rae

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 2017 August 17th.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I have the choice whether I will be named in the final report or my identity concealed and that I can change this choice at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- Participation is voluntary and I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time up until the completion of data collection, expected to be December 2017 without being disadvantaged in any way. In the event that I withdraw, my data would be eliminated from the study.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I would like to be named in the final report (please tick one): Yes  No
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes  No

Participant's signature: .....

Participant's name: .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

Date:

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016 AUTEK Reference number 16/79**

*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form*

## b) Participant information sheets



## Participant Information Sheet

**Date Information Sheet Produced:**

17<sup>th</sup> September 2017

**Project Title**

What are the experiences of women studying, and working in, New Zealand sport management?

**An Invitation**

Kia ora and greetings,

I am Sally Rae, a student and Senior Lecturer at AUT University completing a PhD thesis on the Women and Sport Management in New Zealand. I and my children participate in sport and I lecture at AUT University in Sport Management, Sport Marketing and Sport Finance.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the experiences and understandings of people like yourself who are studying sport management or who have studied sport management and who are pursuing a career in sport management. The process being taken is to conduct focus groups with a selection of women who are either studying or have studied sport management and interview women who are working in sport management in New Zealand.

The selection of participants has been undertaken to try to include as wide a range of personal views as possible, to include those who are culturally, socially and economically diverse.

The number of interviews are limited to 8-10 women participants in sport management positions. The number of participants is limited due to the practical purposes of transcribing and collating data.

I am asking you to become an interviewee for the purpose of this study.

The personal 1 hour one-to-one interviews of women who have been working in the New Zealand sport management sector for more than five years will explore the circumstances which led you to become involved in the sector and the expectations and perceptions around your working within this sport management in New Zealand. The questions will be open-ended so that you will be able to express your views freely. The interviews will be recorded and then transcribed.

Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time up until the completion of data collection, expected to be December 2017. In the event that you did decide to withdraw, your data would be eliminated from the study.

You do not have to reply to any questions asked during the interview if you do not want to, and you are free to ask the recording to be stopped at any time during either the focus group or the interview.

You will have the option of having your identity concealed in the final thesis if you wish, or being identified.

**What is the purpose of this research?**

The study will result in a thesis which will become publicly available through the AUT library.

## Participant Information Sheet – Focus Groups (1)

### Date Information Sheet Produced:

11<sup>th</sup> January 2016

### Project Title

What are the experiences of women studying, and working in, “New Zealand sport management”?

### An Invitation

Kia ora and greetings,

I am Sally Rae, a student and Senior Lecturer at AUT University completing a PhD thesis on the Women and Sport Management in New Zealand. I and my children participate in sport and I lecture at AUT University in Sport Management, Sport Marketing and Sport Finance.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the experiences and understandings of women like yourself who are studying sport management or who have studied sport management and who intend to but haven't started yet their career in sport management. The process being taken is to conduct 3 focus groups with a diverse selection of six such women; 1 focus group from each of the following universities; AUT, Waikato and Massey. The selection of participants has been undertaken to try to include as wide a range of personal views as possible, to include those who are culturally, socially and economically diverse. The number of participants is limited due to the practical purposes of transcribing and collating data.

I am asking you to become a focus group participant for the purpose of this study.

The focus groups will involve a 2 ½ hour experience sharing session, investigating the circumstances that led you to study sport management and your expectations around the sport management sector in New Zealand. The topics will be open-ended allowing the group to delve into them as they arise. The focus groups will be recorded and then transcribed.

Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time up until the completion of data collection, expected to be December 2016. In the event that you did decide to withdraw, your data would be eliminated from the study.

You do not have to reply to any questions asked during the focus group if you do not want to, and you are free to ask the recording to be stopped at any time during the focus group.

You will have the option of having your identity concealed in the final thesis if you wish, or being identified.

### What is the purpose of this research?

The study will result in a thesis which will become publicly available through the AUT library.

It may later become the subject of presentations and/or journals or other academic papers.

**How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?**

The selection of participants has been made to try gain a balance of perspectives. Therefore they have been selected on the basis of two criteria:

1. Women who are studying sport management at Waikato, Massey or AUT Universities.
2. Diversity of social, cultural, economic and industry characteristics (e.g. not-for-profit, international, participation numbers).

I have acquired your contact details through social media, publicly available sources or where a third party has recommended the suitability of your involvement.

**What will happen in this research?**

If you agree to participate in the focus group, this will involve a meeting with myself and the other focus group participants at a venue suitable to you. You will be provided with a few broad questions prior to the focus group. Subsequent questions will arise during the interview around these themes.

**What are the discomforts and risks?**

There is a possibility that some focus group participants may feel that their identification within the research output or as a member of the focus group may cause them problems within the industry.

It is possible some focus group participants may feel embarrassed or uncomfortable about their views or participation.

**How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?**

You have the right have your identity concealed in any published material from the study. In this case, data from your focus group will be used in a way that you cannot be identified. If you would like to be named, this will be done.

If you feel uncomfortable during the focus group, or afterwards, you will have the right to withdraw from the study and have your data removed.

**What are the benefits?**

The research will collect and collate information regarding women's expectations and perceptions of studying and working in New Zealand sport management which have until now not been recorded in any great detail. This information may be used to help increase the opportunities for women's employment in this sector.

The additional benefit for myself will be fulfilling the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy degree at AUT.

**How will my privacy be protected?**

Your name and contact details will not be given to other participants. However in the focus groups you may know the other participants. A non-disclosure agreement will be implemented with the other members of the focus group (Appendix: Confidentiality – Focus Group). If you chose not to be identified in the study you will be asked to nominate a pseudonym by which you will be referred throughout and every effort will be made to protect your identity

However you do need to be aware that, owing to the size and nature of the New Zealand sport industry, there is a possibility that other people may be able to figure out who you are.

**What are the costs of participating in this research?**

It is expected that the focus group will not last longer than 3 hours. You will later be given a transcript of that focus group to read and comment on. There may be a need for me to contact you later to clarify points from the focus group.

**What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?**

You will have a period of one month to consider whether you wish to participate in this research.

**How do I agree to participate in this research?**

If you agree to participate please communicate your agreement to me. You will then be provided with an outline of the questions which will be asked and a participant consent form for you to sign. I will contact you after a month to confirm your decision.

**Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?**

Yes you will receive feedback as described above and advised when the thesis is completed and how to access a copy. Feedback will be via e-mail where possible, otherwise by mail.

**What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Marilyn Waring, [marilyn.waring@aut.ac.nz](mailto:marilyn.waring@aut.ac.nz). Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Kate O'Connor, [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz), TELEPHONE: 921 9999 Ext 6038.

**Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

***Researcher Contact Details:***

Sally Rae, [sarae@aut.ac.nz](mailto:sarae@aut.ac.nz), Senior Lecturer, Sport Management, AUT University, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142. TELEPHONE: 09 921 9999 Ext 7611.

***Project Supervisor Contact Details:***

Dr Marilyn Waring, [marilyn.waring@aut.ac.nz](mailto:marilyn.waring@aut.ac.nz). Professor: Institute of Public Policy  
Auckland University of Technology, Mailbox A 8, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142.  
Second supervisor, Dr Irene Ryan, [iryan@aut.ac.nz](mailto:iryan@aut.ac.nz).

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *type the date final ethics approval was granted*, AUTEK Reference number *type the reference number*.

## c) Job Description

# WMG 2017 Volunteer and Tournament Manager



New Zealand Football - [More jobs by this advertiser](#)

## WMG 2017 Volunteer and Tournament Manager

New Zealand Football are currently looking for a dual role position of Volunteer and Tournament Manager to join the Football Tournament team for the, World Masters Games delivery.

The key responsibility of this dual role is to design, implement and oversee the volunteer management and the tournament management of the World Master Games 2017, football tournament. Reporting to the Tournament Director, working together to ensure an excellent participation experience and spectacular standard of competition for all involved.

Ideally with a relevant degree or relevant sporting experience, the successful candidate will display excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and have exceptional skills with managing relationships across a range of key stakeholders. The ability to display strong attention to detail and a work ethic that matches the fast paced environment of major events is equally important. The successful candidate will need to be Auckland based, with the ability to supply contract for services.

### 20 Sep 2016

**Location:** Auckland ▶ Rodney & North Shore

**Salary:** \$84,000 on a pro-rata basis

**Work type:** Contract/Temp

**Classification:** Sport & Recreation ▶ Management

Appendix C: Sample of coding framework

Feminist PhD Analysis

Nodes

Name	Description
01 Upbringing	Factors in their life prior to starting their first sports management role
Family	
Circumstances	socioeconomic opportunities location number / type siblings parents employment
Relationship with sport	level of involvement ???what sport meant to me level played who?? volunteering time it occupied
Values	attitudes / philosophy / expectations / support
Role models	School / sport / jobs / family / media / coaches / team mates / sport management professionals / mum / dad / siblings / extended family
School OR University	
School philosophy	
Teachers, career advisors, lecturers	influencers / guest speakers
Self	
First job expectations or career expectation	Includes career, avoiding sexist environment
Mindset	head talk / personal expectations / aspirations / self-worth / confidence / perfectionism / motivation / passion / naivety / skills / development / reason for sport management
Sport passion	driver

17/07/2018

Page 1 of 4

Name	Description
Why study SM and ROLES	How I got to be studying SM AND roles I am aware of
Skill acquisition	
Co-op	
Jobs	part time / jobs before SM / decisions made / impact
Sport	What I learnt watching or playing sport
Volunteering	types / roles / codes / skills acquired / value or no value perception / why??
Sport	
Male vs female sport	male vs female / differences / media / code stereotype
02 Career	
Advice	
Influences	
Champions	Male or female / roole / age?? / motivation?
Networking	golf / opportunities / old boys network / + and -
Role Models	Individuals OR Groups / Boards / Colleageus / Management
Self	
Aspirations	For life - self / work / family / society
Career development Career	Value skills / identify skills acquired / strategic vs accidental default

17/07/2018

Page 2 of 4

Name	Description
Confidence and perfectionism	elf backing / risk taking
Expectation	roles / what I thought it would be like / no idea sexism / agism
First Job	lucky / didn't expect to get it / ease of finding / stategic / thankful / knew nothing of code / how I got my first job /
Advertisement	
Motivation and passion	do good for society / give back / SS / lifestyle
Naivety	sexism / career progression
Personality	
Skills	where are they acquired / do they see the value of them / men versus women
Full-time employment	Jobs / roles / sport vs bsuiness
Volunteering	
Undervalue self	
Sport industry	
Barriers Enablers	
Evolution	
Gendered OR Stereotypes	

17/07/2018

Page 8 of 11

Name	Description
Opportunities, pathway and choice	Career progression
03 Societal (macro and change)	
Context	Global, FP, other sector e.g. business
Governmentality	
NZ culture and structure	
NZ sport characteristics OR structure	hours travel overtime people employed
Other	
Stereotypes	Feminism loaded, career and roles
04 Other	
Confused	
Great quotes	
Suprised me then	
Surrprised me on reflection or now	

17/07/2018

Page 9 of 11

Appendix D: Sample of chronological, analytic framework

a) Chronological, analytic framework

**PLAN WRITING UP 2018 08 10**

UPBRINGING

THE FAMILY

Girls are different to boys

Female role model

Male role model

Urban vs rural

Can do attitude

Socio economic

Can do attitude

Gender

Maori

FAMILY AND SPORT

General

Privilege & access

Representative / success / efficacy

Family sport code

EDUCATION

School Philosophy

PE Teachers

Coaches

Guest Speakers

Career Advisors

b) Early conceptual framework

PROPOSED LAYOUT FOR FINDINGS Chapters as at 10/8/2018

01 INADVERTANT APPRENTICE

Micro

Self  
Skills  
Sport

Meso

Influences  
Family Circumstances - Financial / Location / Incomes /values/access to sport  
Family Members – Male / Female / Siblings  
School – Teachers / Career Advisors  
Social  
Sport - gendered

Macro

Media  
Role models

The meanings the women made growing up.

02 Team Selection or Trails

Micro

Self  
First Job

Meso

Macro

03 High Performance or game time

Micro

Self

Meso

Role models

Macro

Industry

c) 23 August 2018

**Plan writing up 2018 08 23**

- I. DEFENSIVE PLAY      II. TRANSITIONAL PLAY      III. AFFIRMATIVE PLAY
- A. MICRO
1. UPBRINGING
- a) *SELF – about me*
- (1) PART TIME WORK
- (2) SPORT RELATIONSHIP
- (3) VOLUNTEERING
- (4) ASPIRATIONS
- b) *FAMILY – about my family*
- (1) ROLE MODELS
- (2) LOCATION
- c) *SPORT – about sport*
- (1) BELONGING
- (2) VALUED
- (3) ACCESS & VALUES
2. CAREER
- (1) SPORT MANAGEMENT AS CAREER OPTION
- (2) ASPIRATIONS
- (3) FIRST JOB
- (4) CAREER
- (5) EXPERIENCES
- B. MESO
1. EDUCATION
- a) *TEACHERS*
- b) *PHILOSOPHY*
- c) *CAREER COUNCILLORS*
- d) *GUEST SPEAKERS*
- e) *UNVIERSITY*
- (1) Internships
- (2) Volunteering
2. SPORT INDUSTRY
- a) *BARRIERS & ENABLERS*
- (1) ROLES
- (2) CAREER
- (3) ROLE MODELS
- (4) CHAMPIONS
- C. MACRO
1. SOCIETY
- a) *NETWORKS*
2. SPORT GOVERNANCE & STRUCTURE