

Mimetic, Coercive and Normative Influences and the Decision of National Sport
Organisations to Bid for World Championship Events.

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A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Business (MBus)

2013

School of Business

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Abstract

This research investigates the coercive, mimetic and normative pressure on a National Sport Organisation's (NSO) decision to bid for a world championship event. New Zealand is progressively establishing itself as a leader in hosting international sport events. Whilst government and their sport agencies contribute much to the process, the entire process is reliant upon a NSO submitting a bid to host the event.

DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) three forms of institutional pressures that cause organisations to conform; coercive, mimetic and normative, were employed to understand the NSO decision to bid.

An interpretive approach was taken for the research, and involved a multiple-case study approach. The research participants were comprised of six key decision makers from three New Zealand NSOs that had bid for world championship event, but the event was yet to have taken place. Thematic analysis was employed to provide inductive analysis of the data collected from the participant's responses.

The key finding of the research is that direct and explicit institutional pressures were not seen to significantly influence a NSOs decision whether to bid for a world championship event. However, indirect and implicit coercive, mimetic and normative pressures were evident within this context, and provided a subtle influence on a NSOs decision to bid.

The results of this research contribute to the theoretical knowledge of institutional pressures within the sport context, as well as providing New Zealand NSOs, and their stakeholders, with a clearer understanding of the dynamics underpinning the NSO decision to bid for a world championship event.

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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.

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Dated: 29th August 2013

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank my academic supervisors, Sean Phelps and Geoff Dickson, for their assistance, guidance, and support throughout this research project. Your enthusiasm towards sports management research, and its use in the real-world, is truly inspiring.

Many thanks to those board members and managers who freely gave their time and thoughts to make this research happen. Also, thank you to Sport New Zealand for their assistance in accessing the initial details on previous world championship bids required to embark on this task. I hope the findings and conclusions from this research will provide some interesting reading.

Finally, I would like to thank my amazing husband Chris. Without your support and tolerance for the many days I spent all day at home in my pyjamas while writing this project, I would never have completed this research. I promise to spend my newly acquired spare time cooking and cleaning...

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Background to Research

Sport has long been associated with providing society with a breadth of benefits associated with physical activity and healthy living (Khan, 2012; Warburton, Nicol, & Bredin, 2006). However, sport is now increasingly viewed as having the potential to provide significant impact on the social, economic, and cultural landscape of regional and national communities. Over the past decade there has been an increasing commercialisation of the sport industry, which has been particularly apparent in the context of sport events. The substantial amount of spectator, commercial, and media interest generated from major sport events has led to sports events becoming a key component of the sport industry (Edwards, Mason, & Washington, 2009). In turn, this has increased the importance of hosting such major sport events for those stakeholders involved. City councils and national governments increasingly regard the hosting of high profile sport events as a means to achieve strategic objectives (Renton, Daellenbach, & Davenport, 2011). This popularity has seen the bidding to win the rights to host a major sport event, such as a world championship event, becoming increasingly competitive, on a global scale.

New Zealand is progressively establishing itself on the international sport events stage by hosting multiple events in multiple sports. New Zealand is geographically distant from the continents which hold the majority of international sport activity. New Zealand also operates on different time zones from these key markets. Its seasons are effectively “back to front” from the northern hemisphere. All of these factors, and others, work against the hosting for major sports events within New Zealand. However, the growth of the small nation’s sport industry indicates that the impact of New Zealand’s increase in hosting world championship events is evident. Dalziel’s (2011) report into the value of sport within New Zealand

identifies that the nations sport economy has more than doubled between the period of 1995 to 2008, with sport and leisure now accounting for an estimated 2.8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In 2006, 2.6% of those employed in New Zealand were working within the sport and recreation sector (Slack & Hinings, 1994). With the increasing number of sport events, facilities and organisations since this report was published, it can be expected that these numbers have continued to rise.

The benefits of hosting world championship events have been heralded by the media, national sport organisations, government, and other invested stakeholders. In support of this, academic research has contributed to the outlining of the benefits of hosting such an event, such as tourism (Teed, 2006), economic impacts (Barget & Gouguet, 2010), social capital (Smith, 2009), and enhanced national identity (Xu, 2006). These benefits are not just seen as short term, but also as having a long term impact on a country. A report produced on the expected benefits of New Zealand hosting the Rugby World Cup in 2011 indicated that the “longer-term economic impact incorporates a legacy for the country, through increased tourism, civic sponsorship and business development which will result from the event, which is estimated to be US\$1.21 billion (NZ\$1.44 billion)” (Chadwick, Semens, & Arthur, 2011, p. 8). However, a vital component that has been overlooked by both stakeholders and academics is the reasons why a National Sport Organisation (NSO) desires to host a world championship event.

1.2 Research Context

In recent years, New Zealand is increasingly acting host to major sport events, such as the 2010 World Rowing Championships, 2011 Rugby World Cup and 2012 Triathlon World Grand Final. As a result of hosting these events, there has been an increasing level of visibility and interest on the benefits and outcomes of hosting such events within New

Zealand. Subsequently, a growing number of New Zealand NSOs are bidding to host world championship events for their sport. The following table outlines international sport events, with the inclusion of world championship events, which New Zealand NSOs have bid to host since 2006 to 2017.

Table 1

Bids to host World Championship Events in New Zealand. 2006-2017.

Year	Sport	Event	Bid Success
2006	BMX	BMX World Championships	No
2007	Yachting	International 420 Class World Championship	Yes
	Badminton	Badminton World Championships	Yes
	Netball	World Netball Championships	Yes
	Waterskiing	World Water Ski Racing Championships	Yes
	Waveski	World Waveski Championships	Yes
2008	Soccer	Under 17 Women's World Cup	Yes
	Table Tennis	World Junior Table Tennis Championships	Yes
	Bowls	World Bowls Championship	Yes
	Squash	World Masters Squash Championship	Yes
2009	Snowboarding	Adaptive Snowboard World Championship	Yes
	Barefoot Waterskiing	World Barefoot Championships	Yes
	Basketball	Basketball Under 19 World Championship	Yes
	Surfing	World Kneeboard Championship	Yes
2010	Paralympic Athletics	International Paralympic Committee Athletics World Championships	Yes
	Surfing	World Junior Championship	Yes
	Snowboarding	Snowboard Junior World Championship	Yes
	Sailing	Splash Class World Championship	Yes
	Cricket	Under 19 Cricket World Cup	Yes
	Rowing	World Rowing Championship	Yes
	Squash	World Women's Teams Squash Championship	Yes
2011	BMX	BMX World Championships	No
	Cricket	Cricket World Cup	No
	Yachting	Optimist World Championship	Yes
	Rugby	Rugby World Cup	Yes
	Taekwon-Do	Taekwon-Do World Championship	Yes
2012	Yachting	470 Junior World Championship	Yes
	BMX	BMX World Championships	No
	Croquet	Croquet World Championship	Yes
	Soccer	Under 20 Women's World Cup	No
	Triathlon	World Triathlon Championship Grand Final	Yes
	Cycling	Junior Track Cycling World Championship	Yes

Table 1 continued.

Year	Sport	Event	Bid Success
	Netball	Fast5 Netball World Championship	Yes
2012	Figure Skating	World Roller Figure Skating Championship	Yes
2013	BMX	BMX World Championships	Yes
	Softball	Men's World Softball Championship	Yes
	Rafting	World Rafting Championship	Yes
2014	Table Tennis	World Veterans Table Tennis Championship	Yes
2015	Cricket	Cricket World Cup	Yes
	Soccer	Under 20 Men's World Cup	Yes
2017	Masters	World Masters Games	Yes

It can be argued that this increase in NSO bids to host world championship events is a consequence of New Zealand NSOs progressively becoming more isomorphic, or similar, to one another. Isomorphism is based on the concept that organisations within the same environment face similar challenges and pressures, and as a result conform to institutional norms by adopting similar characteristics and behaviours to other organisations within their environment (Washington & Patterson, 2011). The institutional pressures which are evident within a particular environment can significantly impact the behaviours and decisions made by organisations within its environment, and subsequently drive them to conform to institutional norms set by the environment. Therefore, it can be argued that an increasing number of NSOs within New Zealand are deciding to bid to host a world championship event, and in turn acting isomorphic to other NSOs within the environment, as a result of facing the same institutional pressures. This research employs DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) three forms of institutional pressures; coercive, mimetic, and normative, to explore this phenomenon. These three forms of pressures provide a foundation to explore the ways in which NSOs interact and depend on other organisations within their environment, and as a consequence whether this impacts on their conformance to institutional norms, and their decision to bid.

1.3 Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research is to investigate the institutional pressures affecting a NSO's decision to bid for a world championship event. There are three forms of institutional pressures that cause organisations to conform; coercive, mimetic and normative. The two questions are:

Question 1: What are the coercive, mimetic and normative pressures that affect the decision of a NSO to bid for a world championship event?

Question 2: What are the impacts of these mimetic, coercive and normative pressures on a NSO?

The overall outcome of this research is to provide NSOs, researchers and NSO stakeholders with a better understanding of the factors affecting the NSO decision to bid for a world championship event.

1.4 Overview of Research Design

Integrating an interpretive paradigm, the research involved a multiple-case study approach which included six semi-structured interviews. The research participants comprised of key decision makers from three New Zealand NSOs who were involved in the decision to bid for a world championship event. All of the bids were successful, but none of the event had occurred at the time of the interview. Of the six interviews, four participants were currently involved with a NSO, and two had previously been involved. The six participants comprised of three board members, one chairman, one president and one chief executive officer.

The inductive analysis of data involved the thematic analysis of the research participants' responses. Themes were created after analysing the transcribed semi-structured interviews and categorised into three differing research perspective; mimetic, coercive and normative

institutional pressures. Conclusions were drawn from the findings for each of these perspectives.

1.5 Outline of Thesis

An outline of the structure of the thesis is provided in this Chapter. Chapter 2 reviews the current academic literature, with a discussion of the different concepts involved in organisational legitimacy and legitimacy needs, organisational theory and isomorphism. The methods, research philosophy and approach to the type of data analysis utilised is outlined in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 outlines the findings from the interviews conducted, with Chapter 5 discussing these findings based on mimetic, coercive and normative institutional perspectives. Finally, overall conclusions regarding the identification of institutional pressures on NSOs in relation to hosting a world championship event are presented in Chapter 6.

1.6 Delimitations

Certain organisations were included in sample size, based on their location and recent activities (refer to section 3.4.3). Only New Zealand-based NSOs that had bid to host a world championship event were included. The sampling process also excluded those events that had occurred prior to data collection. This was intentionally undertaken to ensure that post-event perceptions of event success or failure did not impact on participant responses.

Individuals that were recruited from within these NSOs held a certain level of responsibility, and decision making capability, during the time the decision was made to bid to host a world championship event. The experiences of these particular individuals are investigated, as opposed to a broader spectrum of NSO employees, in an additional effort to acquire information rich data.

The third delimitation is that this research focused only on the bid decision. Institutional pressures on the NSO *after* the decision to bid for the world championship event were not investigated.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The decision making process for National Sport Organisations (NSOs) is complex and dynamic. In particular, the planning and operational decisions that need to be made in the path to hosting a world championship event are often made under conditions of high uncertainty and political pressures (Jennings & Lodge, 2011). The following literature review will analyse past and recent research that has been undertaken to provide a foundation of theory from which the evaluation of data taken from New Zealand NSOs in regards to hosting a world championship event can be analysed by.

The pressures placed on an organisation can influence the way in which they are structured, behave, and make decisions. Organisational theory is based on the concept that the various dynamics evident in the organisational environment is not a result of technological or material requirement, but rather stem from cultural norms, beliefs and rituals (Suchman, 1995). Current theory views organisational environments as a cultural and social system (Barley & Stern, 1996). To effectively analyse the decision making process of an organisation, not only the actions of organisations should be evaluated, but also the reasons for those actions. In addition, the environment in which an organisation is located has a significant impact on how an organisation makes decisions, why it is structured a certain way, and behaviours in a certain manner. Organisational theory determines that every environment has cultural and social pressures evident within it, as well as organisations within those environments have various levels of status, power and legitimacy. The degree to which an organisation is impacted, or has the ability to make decisions, is depicted by two organisational theory perspectives; institutional theory and strategic choice.

Institutional theory is based on the belief that an organisations actions are largely influenced by the institutional context in which they operate (Shonk & Bravo, 2010). Institutional pressures result in organisations conforming to certain practises and rules evident within an environment, with the subsequent outcome being that organisations increasingly appear similar to one another. The basic notion of institutional theory is that an organisations structure and behaviours are based on the cultural and social components of their environment (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). It is these components which determine what is appropriate and right. In opposition to the concept of institutional theory, Child (1972) founded the notion of strategic choice. Strategic choice is founded on the belief that an organisation's activities are derived and purposeful (Child, 1972). Based on this perspective, homogeneity is seen not necessarily as a result of external pressures, but rather, as a result of an organisation's key decision makers making a choice as to what actions and behaviours are required or necessary (Child, 1972; Cunningham & Ashley, 2001). Key individuals have the ability to override institutional environmental constraints and influence the environment in which they are located.

To understand the reasons why organisations within a specific field take on similar traits, it is crucial to first determine the type and degree at which pressures are placed on an organisation. The process towards organisations within a certain environment appearing homogenous is called isomorphism. Isomorphism is a key concept of organisational theory, and refers to the degree in which organisations conform to certain norms and practices that are established within an environment (Vos, Breesch, Kesenne, Van Hoeck, Vanreuselr & Scheerder, 2011). Organisational theory literature illustrates two competing schools of thought in the formation of isomorphic conformity: competitive isomorphism and institutional isomorphism. Competitive isomorphism is based on the argument that not unlike Darwin's concept of natural selection, less successful and competitive organisations fail to

adopt isomorphic norms, and as a result eventually are excluded from the environment, or become extinct (Cunningham & Ashley, 2001). In contrast, institutional isomorphism reasons that organisational isomorphism occurs through the social expectations and institutional pressures of a particular environment, as opposed to competition (Cunningham & Ashley, 2001; Dacin, Oliver, & Roy, 2007).

Based on institutional isomorphism theory, the dynamic nature of organisational environments has a significant role in how an organisation makes its decisions. To provide an in-depth analysis of the decision-making processes of an organisation, one must first identify the types of institutional pressures which are evident within an environment, and the degree at which they have an impact on organisations. DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) seminal work into institutional isomorphism identified three mechanisms which lead organisations to become isomorphic; coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism. These three institutional pressures attribute to the varying ways in which organisations may interact and depend on other organisations within their environment, and in turn affect the direction of their decision-making direction (Vos et al., 2011).

This chapter will review the fundamental components of organisational theory literature. Firstly, the theoretical foundation of organisation theory will be analysed, followed by its two key constructs; institutional theory and strategic choice. From there, a founding notion of organisational theory, isomorphism, will be defined, with further review of the types of isomorphic pressures evident within an organisational environment. Finally, throughout this chapter, literature based on the theoretical concepts reviewed will be analysed in relation to sport management research.

2.2 Sport New Zealand and International Federations

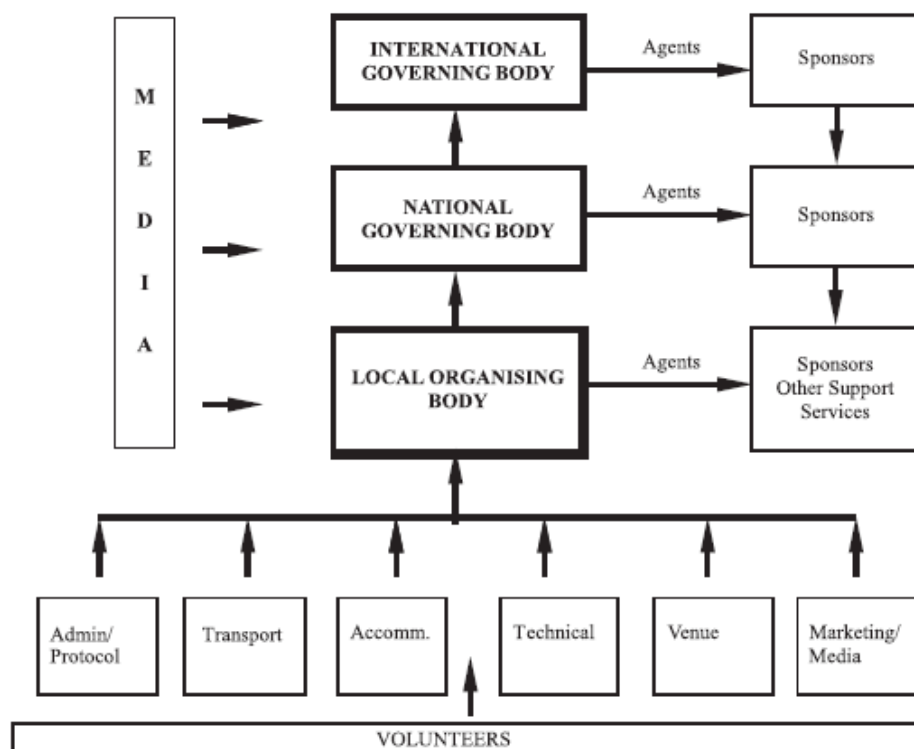
The setting for this research is New Zealand, a small nation located in the South Pacific with a population of approximately 4.5 million people. In New Zealand, the participation and observation of sports events is an essential part of the lifestyle. Nearly 80% of New Zealand adults participate regularly in sport, with almost 40% of the population taking part in at least one organised sport event each year (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2008). Such is the long and strong history New Zealand has with sport, it is commonly argued that citizen and national identity is closely intertwined with sport (Watson, 2007). “Sport is integral to New Zealand’s culture and way of life. It helps define who we are as a nation and how we are viewed to the rest of the world” (Sport New Zealand, 2012, p. 6).

There are 93 National Sport Organisations (NSOs) within New Zealand. Each NSO is responsible for the nation-wide delivery of their particular sporting code. This responsibility includes the maintenance of rules, as well as working with local, national and international stakeholders to deliver services to its members. A key service is providing its members with the opportunity to participate and observe both minor to major scale. Over the past 20 years, the majority of NSOs in New Zealand have progressed from small, volunteer-based organisations to larger organisations with formal organisational systems and structures. “NSOs in New Zealand have evolved, like their Australian and Canadian counterparts, from small and independent member-based associations with volunteer executives to organisation with paid staff and administrative offices” (Sam, 2009, p. 236). This modern NSO structure now involves multiple separate legal entities, on a club, local, regional and national scale, which all have their own governing committee and constitution (Sam, 2009). With the increasing awareness and interest in hosting major international sporting events, a key service NSOs are now confronted with is playing the integral role of event deliverer for such events.

The quantity and complexity of stakeholders involved in world championship events is significant. These stakeholders can be broken down into three different levels; local, national and international. Emery (2012) illustrates a summary of the relationships involved in hosting a major sports event in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Basic summary of major sports event organisation relationships and structures (Emery, 2002, p. 319).



At a local level, club members and participants of sports are a largely fragmented, yet highly influential stakeholder. NSOs are responsible for providing services and events to their members, as well as allocating resources; including the re-allocation of government funding. The number of NSO participants and the performance of these athletes, impacts the level of funding the NSO receives from the government, sponsors and from membership subscriptions. Therefore, it is critical for an NSO to ensure its members are content.

Still on the local level, regional city councils, and their associated economic development agencies, are another important stakeholder within the New Zealand sporting environment. To cater for the logistics and promotion surrounding events, many councils within New Zealand have established specialised event units that work in close collaboration with NSOs and event organisers. For example, the Wellington City Council's event unit provides amenities, funding, facilitation, advocacy and partnerships (Wellington City Council, 2012). In addition to providing financial support, city councils are also major provider of public infrastructure, and are gate-keepers to important relationships. Given the benefits to a region that are associated with hosting a world championship event, there is competition between cities to host such events. Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) (n.d.), Auckland City Council's event unit, highlight this competition and desire:

Auckland's reputation as a major event city was tarnished in the early 2000s due to a relatively thin major events calendar and the loss of some high profile events to other cities. However, since 2007 there has been a resurgence in major event activity, with Auckland more aggressively bidding for and securing one-off major events and also increasing capability, co-ordination and resource preparation. (p. 5)

Nationally, there are a number of key organisations who are involved in the decision making process for an NSO to host a world championship event. A major player within the New Zealand sporting context is Sport New Zealand. Sport New Zealand is a government entity, with a role to lead, invest and enable the sport sector to achieve their outcomes and priorities (Sport New Zealand, 2012, n.d.). One of their primary roles is to build the capacity and capabilities of NSOs within New Zealand. Included in this responsibility, is Sport New Zealand's role as distributors of government funds to NSOs based on specific requirements and outcomes that NSOs must meet to receive these benefits. Currently, Sport New Zealand invests more than \$70 million per year into sport programmes and NSOs within NZ (Sport

New Zealand, 2012). The distribution of funds from Sport New Zealand to NSOs is divided into three categories; the general operations of NSOs to deliver sport and recreation to the general population, high performance sport and sport events (Sport New Zealand, 2012). Sport New Zealand currently invests more than \$70 million per year into sport programmes and NSOs within New Zealand (Sport New Zealand, 2012). Part of this role is identified as building the capacity and capability of their partners in areas such as event management. With the growing inception of New Zealand acting as host to major events, the establishment of the government unit, New Zealand Major Events, was created in 2004 to provide structure to a fractured events industry. This unit's responsibility includes assessing events, as well as their event management staff, for their suitability and capabilities, as well as administering the Major Events Development Fund, a source established to support major events (New Zealand Major Events, n.d.). Not only do they provide financial assistance, but also non-financial support in the means of advocacy and lines of communication with national government decision makers (Phelps & Dickson, 2009). Since this unit's inception, major sporting events held with New Zealand have often sought to come under the Major Events Development Fund umbrella, in an effort to receive these valuable resources. The criteria to receive such support an investment from this unit, as well as Sport New Zealand, is wide ranging and complex. Compliance is onerous for not-for-profit NSOs. However, non-compliance to these requirements can result in the inability to source enough financial resources and government support to be able to host a world championship event.

On an international level, International Federations (IF) are non-governmental organisations who are responsible for administering their sporting code worldwide (Li, MacIntosh, & Bravo, 2012). They are responsible for their sports promotion and development, the creation and monitoring of regulations and policies, and the organisation of international championships and competitions (Theodoraki, 2007). NSOs are affiliated with their

associated international governing body, operating their sport in line with the rules and regulations set out by their IF. NSOs that wish to host an upcoming world championship event provide their IF with a bid document outlining their capabilities to host the event. Following this, it is the IF's role to grant the hosting rights to a particular NSO, and work in partnership with them to manage the world championship event.

Although the main stakeholders within the New Zealand sport events context have been identified here, there are numerous others. These include sponsors and other sport organisations. The impact of stakeholders on a NSO varies considerably depending on the situation and the NSO concerned. The evidence and depth of the various stakeholder's influence directed on a NSOs desire to host a world championship was addressed within this research.

2.3 Organisational Theory

Research into organisation theory portrays organisations as agentic actors who respond to situational circumstances (Greenwood, Suddaby, Oliver, & Sahlin, 2008). Organisations are no longer viewed solely as a production system, but also as cultural and social systems. To effectively analyse the decision making processes of an organisation, and why they act the way they do, not only should the behaviours of the organisations be analysed, but also the reasons for their behaviour.

Theorists have sought to ascertain reasons and methods to determine whether an organisation's actions and behaviours are based on environmental or managerial origins (Dawley, Hoffman, & Lamont, 2002; Hrebiniak & Joyce, 1985; Marlin, Lamont, & Hoffman, 1994). The attainment of organisational legitimacy is a common component identified as having a significant impact on why an organisation acts in a certain way. Organisational legitimacy is defined as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms,

values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995, p. 574). Based on the concept of organisational theory, legitimacy and its impact on organisational beliefs and behaviours is focused on whether the attainment of legitimacy is due to active conformity or passive conformity. These two ranges of receiving legitimacy through organisational conformity are identified as a consequence of two organisational theory perspectives; institutional theory and strategic choice.

Institutional theory studies depict organisational legitimacy as a by-product of an organisation adopting particular structures, beliefs and behaviours due to cultural and social pressure enacted from their external environment (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Suchman, 1995). Institutional theory is based on the passive conformity to norms and beliefs that have become institutionalised within their environment. Barley and Tolbert (1997) identify that “actors create institutions through a history of negotiations that lead to shared typifications or generalized expectation and interpretations of behaviour” (p. 95). In contrast, strategic choice depicts legitimacy as an operational resource that organisations can extract, often competitively, from their environment in an attempt to meet their strategic aspirations (Suchman, 1995). Based on this perspective, decision makers in organisations are able to evaluate their position within their environment and decide which institutional norms and appropriate actions to deliberately and actively conform to, or not. “Strategic choice suggests that an organisation’s decision makers are able to override the physical environment in which they operate; isomorphism is not inevitable for organisations within an industry sector” (Phelps & Dickson, 2009, p. 94). Although these two approaches are viewed as distinct, the contrast between institutional theory and strategic choice is a matter of perspective. In reality, organisations are faced with both strategic operational challenges as well as institutional pressures (Suchman, 1995). Therefore, to effectively analyse the actions and behaviours of an

organisation, one must look at the larger picture and incorporate the potential for duality of both these two concepts demonstrated by an organisation.

2.4 Institutional Theory

To provide an in depth review of institutional theory, it is important to first analyse what an institution is. Barley and Tolbert (1997) define an institution as shared rules and typifications that identify categories of social actors and their appropriate activities or relationships. Institutions are based on the relationship between historically embedded processes and action. “Institutions are historical accretions of past practices and understandings that set conditions on actions” (Barley & Tolbert, 1997, p. 98). Although shared rules and typifications are identified as the foundation of an institution, the concept of an institution also incorporates the behaviours associated with these rules. For rules, norms, and cultural beliefs to become an institution, the activities that produce and reproduce them must be attended to, modified and preserved (Scott, 2001). To be effective, these rules and norms must also be endorsed by a sanctioning authority. For an institution to exist, those possessing power in the form of resources and endorsement must seek authorisation and legitimacy for its use (Scott, 2001). Institutions also exhibit specific properties, such as having high levels of resilience, and thus are difficult to change and modify, in addition to having a tendency to be passed across generations to be preserved and repeated (Scott, 2001). They also operate across multiple levels, from a global scale to localised systems of interpersonal relationships (Scott, 2001). The multiple meanings and usages associated with the concept of an institution provide a challenge to institutional theory researchers. The norms and cultural beliefs connected with an institution can be passed on through a variety of means, such as symbolic or relational systems and routines (Scott, 2001). The organisational environment is not exclusively impacted by institutions, but institutional theory incorporates institutions as ideas, practices

and processes. Washington and Patterson (2011) provide an example of this approach to institutions, in which they identify a handshake as a widely shared institution which has a social and shared understanding of what this action means and represents. Institutions can also be evidenced in theologies, states of social order, or patterns that emerge through chronological repetition despite the presence of definite structures; such as marriage and racism (Washington & Patterson, 2011).

The actions and behaviours of an organisation are significantly influenced by the institutional context in which they are located. The cultural components of the institutional environment outline to organisations what is deemed as appropriate and how the world should be (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). The research into organisational environments has raised some compelling arguments as to why organisations that are located within the same environment often appear similar. Institutional theory is based on the notion that organisations located within the same environment are susceptible to adopting similar structures, behaviours and activities (Shonk & Bravo, 2010). It has been more than three decades since institutional theory first inception into organisational theory research (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Tolbert & Zucker, 1994). Early research into the concept of institutional theory focused primarily on understanding why similar organisations demonstrated striking similarities, how organisations react to the demands and pressures of their environment, and how institutions within an environment shape an organisation's strategies and structure (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Washington & Patterson, 2011). More recent research has extended on this early literature and institutional theory research has focused increasingly on the reasons why an organisation adopts certain institutional practices and structures.

The attainment of organisational legitimacy is a key component of institutional theory. Dacin et al. (2007) argue that an organisation's behaviours and activities are greatly influenced by the need for social justification. Research into institutional theory analyses how processes and

practices become institutions. The construction of an institution, commonly referred to as the process of institutionalisation, occurs through collective social and cultural acceptance of practices driven by the attainment of legitimacy for these actions (Washington & Patterson, 2011). Organisational legitimacy refers to the extent at which cultural support for an organisation's practices are given. Based on an institutional theory perspective, practices and processes that culture defines as legitimate determines how an organisation is built, how it is run, and how it is understood and evaluated (Suchman, 1995). Organisations within a powerful and highly constraining environment, may decide that the easiest means to attain legitimacy is through conforming to pre-existing culturally derived institutional norms. "Conformance involves seeking legitimacy by achieving conformity with the demands and expectations of the existing social structure in which the organization is currently positioned" (Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002, p. 422). As a result, legitimacy is determined as a natural consequence of institutionalism, where those who digress from the institutional norms of their environment are viewed as deviating from what is deemed as appropriate and correct within their field.

Conformance to institutional norms brings about another key component of institutional theory, isomorphism. Isomorphism is referred to as the degree at which organisations conform to certain norms and practices that are established and institutionalised within a particular environment. "The central idea of institutional isomorphism is that the environment (or institutional context) pressures organizations to adopt specific practises and processes to survive" (Washington & Patterson, 2011, p. 3). The basis of institutional isomorphism is that organisations look to their environment for clues of what are appropriate actions and practices. The argument of institutional theorists is that over time organisations within a particular environment or industry will adopt the same practices and structure, which will result in them appearing isomorphic (Deephouse & Carter, 2005; Washington & Patterson,

2011). DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) seminal work into institutional isomorphism, in which they asked the question why organisations appear similar, outlined three pressures that an organisation may be impacted by which affects their degree of conformance to cultural norms. These three institutional pressures are coercive, mimetic, and normative. The research into these three forms of institutional pressures will be analysed in depth later in this review.

Incorporated into institutional theory is the ability of institutions to provide constraints and controls to organisational behaviours. In addition to influencing organisations by indicating what behaviours and actions are deemed as culturally appropriate, institutions enact constraints on practices that deviate from the norm (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). Institutions provide guidelines for behaviours that are deemed appropriate, and prohibit those which are not. Barley and Tolbert (1997) state that "institutions set bounds on rationality by restricting the opportunities and alternatives we perceive, and thereby, increase the probability of certain types of behaviour" (p. 94). Institutionalised environments hold the power to empower and promote those organisations who act within the appropriate norms, but also to enact restraints and sanctions on those who do not modify their behaviour to appear isomorphic.

For certain organisations, it is argued that factors such as uncertainty, lack of prestige and reputation, cause them to identify with what is traditional, or culturally appropriate, as opposed to seek differentiation and distinctiveness (Phelps & Dickson, 2009). Institutional theorists identify that the status of an organisation has an impact on the degree at which they appear isomorphic to the institutional practices of their environment. Phillips and Zuckerman's (2001) research into law and investment firms identified that whether an organisation modified their behaviours to appear isomorphic was closely associated with an organisation's status. They argued that organisations that held a high status within their environment were less concerned with the consequences of deviating from the institutional

norms (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). This view is shared by Deephouse (1996), who agrees that organisations that hold a high status have an “aura of inevitability”, and as a consequence are less likely to be affected by isomorphic pressures (p. 1029). Phillips and Zuckerman (2001) also argued that organisations who are of low status are accepting of their position within their environment, and thus are also less likely to be concerned with deviating from the norm. However, in contrast, Barley and Tolbert (1997) argue that those with a low status, such as newly formed organisations, are more vulnerable to challenges, and the attainment of legitimacy is important for their survival, therefore, they are more likely to be influenced by institutional pressures (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). It is those organisations who hold a medium status that Phillips and Zuckerman (2001) identify as being the most susceptible to institutional pressures. They argue that this is due to organisations who hold this medium level of reputation are more likely to be exposed to the detrimental consequences of deviating from the norm, than their low and high status counterparts (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001).

Even though institutions have the ability to provide stability and consistency, they are not immune to change. Early research into institutional theory focused on the stability and maintenance related to institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). However, more recently, theorists have focused on analysing the process of change to institutions (Washington & Patterson, 2011). Kikulis (2000) identifies three elements that impact on institutions and change; institutions emerge over time and therefore their history is important to consider, institutions control behaviour through unquestioned compliance to the rules and values they espouse, and finally, the idea that human agents play an active role in determining the level at which ideologies and actions are institutionalised and de-institutionalised. Based on this argument, particular individuals within an institutional

environment can have an impact on the process of de-legitimation of previously established behaviours, whether via incremental or revolutionary change (Kikulis, 2000; Scott, 2001).

Institutional theory is underpinned by the characteristics of an environment, and the power that it exerts over organisations within it. The boundaries of what is deemed as appropriate and correct behaviour are contextually based, and differ between different environments. Common languages, shared understanding and common ideologies are analysed to ascertain the boundaries of an organisation (Washington & Patterson, 2011). Institutionalised environments set out directives and unspoken indications of behaviours that are deemed as appropriate based on prevailing norms for that specific environment. Institutional behaviours are “observable, recurrent activities and patterns of interaction characteristic of a particular setting” (Barley & Tolbert, 1997, p. 98). Institutions based on a particular setting will manifest themselves as particular behavioural characteristics deemed appropriate for that environment (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). By modifying their behaviour to become isomorphic to institutions within their particular environment, organisations enhance legitimacy, and therefore their chance of survival. Research has been undertaken in an attempt to understand whether particular environmental settings, and industries, are more likely to demonstrate isomorphic institutional pressures, and the impact of these pressures. Some settings in which institutional theory has been examined is educational systems (Hanson, 2001), art museums (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), city reforms and state agencies (Washington & Patterson, 2011). This thesis’ research will attempt to extend the research into institutional theory within a sport management context.

The sport environment is not immune to the impacts of institutional pressures. Institutional theory has previously been researched within the sport management context (Kikulis, 2000; Phelps & Dickson, 2009). Kikulis (2000) utilised institutional theory to analyse the change in

governance and decision making within NSOs in Canada. Three aspects of institutional change were critically evaluated in this context; the institutionalisation of volunteer boards, the de-institutionalisation of volunteer control, and the semi-institutionalisation of paid executive roles (Kikulis, 2000). The findings show that in this context there were many instances where NSOs that held traditional institutionalised ideologies and practices required a process of organisational members to reject to become de-institutionalised. Within the New Zealand sport environment, Phelps and Dickson (2009) investigated the selection of team names by NSOs in relation to their conformity to institutionalised naming patterns. Their research identifies that national sport team names; such as “Ice Blacks” for the men’s hockey team, “White Fernz” for the women’s football team, and “All Blacks” for the men’s rugby team, are isomorphic with the names used by other NSO’s for their national sport teams (Phelps & Dickson, 2009). This institutionalised practise’s legitimation and acceptance within the environment, as well as the wider community, is evidenced through the frequent use of the terms by the media (Phelps & Dickson, 2009). While the uses of these terms are isomorphic to the NSO environment within New Zealand, the adoption of these terms are viewed as contrary to the majority of international team names. This research demonstrates that the institutional pressures on NSOs within their immediate environment have a greater impact than those pressures from their wider international environment.

2.5 Strategic Choice

In contrast to institutional theory, which is founded on the belief that organisations conform to prevailing norms, strategic choice is based on the concept that an organisations actions are derived and purposeful. Strategic choice is founded on the argument that an organisation’s key decision makers hold the ability to override the environment in which they operate, and temper the associated institutional pressures (Phelps & Kent, 2010). As opposed to

institutional theorists who analyse environmental pressures in an effort to explain the similarity between organisations, strategic choice theorists argue that isomorphism is not necessarily a result of external pressures, but rather, a result of key individuals within an organisation making a choice as to what actions and behaviours are required or necessary (Child, 1972; Cunningham & Ashley, 2001). “This perspective denies the influence of overriding constraints upon an organization, suggesting that key people are able to affect the environment through the choices they make” (Stevens & Slack, 1998, p. 145). Therefore, strategic choice focuses on analysing how an organisation’s structure and decision making is impacted by internal elements such as decision making processes, political power holders, and the characteristics of an organisation’s key decision makers (Stevens & Slack, 1998). In addition, Child (1972) identifies the analysis of an organisation’s actions in relation to strategic choice theory also involves the evaluation of an organisations position and status within an environment, it’s past performances, as well as the identification of the institutional norms and practices within the environment.

Strategic choice theorists hold the belief that legitimacy is an operational tool that organisations can extract from their environment in order to achieve their goals (Suchman, 1995). This concept is based on the notion that organisations have a high managerial control over their environment and, the process of acquiring legitimacy is purposeful and calculated (Suchman, 1995). However, not all organisations and their actions are considered to be of equal standing. Child (1972) argues that those organisation’s that hold higher levels of status, and subsequently greater legitimacy, have a greater ability to influence other organisations within their environment. Based on this argument, the greater an organisation’s legitimacy the greater their ability is to exercise strategic choice.

As well as being closely linked to institutional theory, isomorphism is also a concept that is analysed in relation to strategic choice theory. Isomorphism, in relation to institutional theory, is based on the increasing similarities in structure and behaviours of organisations within an environment. In contrast, the strategic theory perspective determines that purposeful organisational decisions are made in response to external environmental pressures (Phelps & Dickson, 2009). Therefore, strategic choice theorists contend the claims that isomorphism originates from environmental pressures. Instead, strategic choice argues that competition and internal relationships amongst organisations consequently have a diversifying effect on organisational decision making and structure (Sayilar, 2009).

Child's (1972) original concept of strategic choice theory highlighted the argument that an organisation's strategy is closely related to the characteristics of the environment in which it is located. The ways in which an organisation's key decision makers understand their environment affects the degree of strategic choice they believe they have the ability to execute (Child, 1997). This understanding takes into account the opportunities and threats an environment has on a specific organisation, and the subsequent boundaries of their ability to choose. Child (1972) also argued that key decision makers within an organisation have the potential ability to select the type of environment in which they are located. For example, decision makers may have the ability to select which market to situate a new product or service. However, it is argued that this degree of environmental choice is associated with the size and the degree of legitimacy of an organisation. "Some degree of environmental selection is open to most organizations, and some degree of environmental manipulation is open to most larger organizations" (Child, 1972, p. 4). Based on this argument, decision makers within large and legitimate organisations have a greater ability to make purposeful and calculated decisions as in which environment they wish to operate.

Strategic theory suggests that all types and sizes of organisations have a certain degree of strategic choice. The degree of choice is determined by both its internal context, which includes organisational structure and personnel, as well as its external context, which relates to other organisations within its environment (Stevens & Slack, 1998). As related earlier, the relationship between an environment and the organisations within it is variable. Those with higher levels of status and legitimacy have a greater degree of strategic choice. The degree of strategic choice an organisation has, and the potential to enlist it, is based on the power the organisation has over others within its environment (Marlin et al., 1994). Marlin, Lamont, and Hoffman (1994) identify two possible strategic choice situations which describe the degree to which organisations have the potential to choose: minimum choice and maximum choice. Minimum choice is evidenced in situations where environmental power is high, therefore, organisational choice is low (Marlin et al., 1994). In these situations, managerial decision makers have minimal options and say in its success within the market. On the other end of the spectrum, maximum choice refers to the situation where managers have multiple options and can influence changes within its environment (Marlin et al., 1994). Based on these findings, strategic theorists propose that organisations can generate a variation of responses in relation to their organisational standing, based on a process of evaluating their status within their particular environment. This internal evaluation has the ability to assist an organisation's decision making process and enhance their ability to make better informed decisions in relation to their goals (Child, 1972).

There have been numerous studies undertaken on the interplay between strategic choice and institutional theory perspectives within the sport context (Phelps & Kent, 2010; Stevens & Slack (1998). Stevens and Slack's (1998) research into organisational change within a Canadian amateur ice hockey organisation revealed the importance of the interaction between strategic choice and institutional theory in the examination of change. Their findings suggest

that change within the sport context is complex, which was evidenced within the institutional environment in which larger hockey organisations and the amateur sport delivery system influenced the organisation to adapt towards a greater formalised and professional structure. The types of organisational change which occurred, in this situation, was due to the environmental institutional pressures, on top of some degree of strategic managerial decision making choices (Stevens & Slack, 1998). Phelps and Kent's (2010) research into the International Triathlon Union's (ITU) acceptance into the Olympic Games schedule also highlighted the interaction between strategic choice and institutional pressure within a sporting environment. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) enacted institutional pressures on the ITU to become isomorphic with other IFs to be considered as an Olympic sport. An example of such isomorphism was evidenced by the ITU enlisting the rule of "drafting"; where a cyclist rides close behind another cyclist to take advantage of their wake to reduce an expenditure of energy, to ensure that the race was complete within the IOC's two hour broadcast window for events (Phelps & Kent, 2010). However, strategic choice was also evidenced through the demonstration of the ITU's decision to act contrary to the IOC's request to become a part of the Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne et Biathlon, but instead went on to form their own separate IF (Phelps & Kent, 2010). These two illustrations of research give evidence that strategic choice is indeed evidenced and well situated within the sport context. However, the potential for interplay between both institutional theory and strategic choice perspectives is a concept that should be considered in the evaluation of a sport organisation's decision making processes.

2.6 Isomorphism and Legitimacy

A high level of uncertainty, exposure to the strategies and behaviours of other entities within an organisation's field, in addition to environmental characteristics can lead to organisational

change through imitation (Haveman, 1993). Institutional theory can be utilised to demonstrate how organisations have a tendency to become homogenous over time. This process towards homogenisation is referred to as isomorphism. Organisations face a variety of institutional pressures, and to survive they may adopt similar processes and behaviours to other organisations (Edwards et al., 2009; Washington & Patterson, 2011). This process of organisations within a particular industry increasingly appearing similar is a characteristic of institutional isomorphism. Institutional isomorphism is centred on the process of constraint on organisations that face the same environmental and institutional pressures. “Institutional isomorphism is the process whereby organisations become similar (i.e. homogenous) to each other” (Vos et al., 2011, p. 262). This process leads organisations to modify their direction and behaviours to become compatible to their environmental characteristics (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

An alternative school of thought that is evidenced within organisation isomorphism literature is the theory of competitive isomorphism. Competitive isomorphism is based on a similar argument to institutional isomorphism, being that organisations within the same environment face the same constraints and pressures, and as a consequence are susceptible to appear isomorphic with one another (Cunningham & Ashley, 2001). However, competitive isomorphism theorists argue that in addition to environmental constraints driving organisations to appear isomorphic, the extent at which organisations adopt unique characteristics, or are successful in a niche market, in comparison to other organisations within their environment, determines whether an organisation is successful (Oliver, 1988). It is argued that an overlap of these unique characteristics and niche markets among organisations, and as a result a conflict in the requirement of the same set of resources and customers, leads to intense competition (Oliver, 1988). As a result, organisations with less competitiveness are excluded from the field, and those remaining organisations appear to

become isomorphic with one another. “The competitive exclusion of erring maladaptors extinguishes individual opportunities for latitude or choice in the design of organizational structures and ensures homogeneity among those remaining occupants who had been differentially selected for survival within the environmental niche” (Oliver, 1988, p. 545). However, a shortfall of this argument is identified by theorists as being that the concept of competitive isomorphism does not recognise the influential impact of all external parties within an organisations environment, such as an organisation’s consumers and provider groups (Fennell, 1980). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) add support to this, by arguing that while competitive isomorphism may apply to the early adoption of innovation, it does not provide a complete picture of the interconnected nature of an organisational environment, which derives from institutional rather than competitive pressures.

As DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identify, the dynamic and interconnected nature of an organisational environment must be explored to understand the extent and degree at which institutional isomorphism occurs. The central idea behind institutional isomorphism is that organisations look to their environment for indications on what the appropriate actions and behaviours are (Washington & Patterson, 2011). The argument is that those organisations who are within a similar environment will ultimately adopt similar activities and characteristics, which in turn will eventually result in organisations appearing similar (Washington & Patterson, 2011). Vos, Breesch, Kesenne, Van Hoecke, Vanreusel, and Scheerder (2011) identify that “organisational environments are characterised by requirements to which organisations must conform to receive support and/or resources” (p. 262). Based on the magnitude of an organisation’s requirements, the extent and rate at which organisations modify themselves to become more like their peers is variable. Some organisations may respond quickly to environmental pressures, whereas others will modify their behaviours only after a long period of resistance (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

The complex nature of an environment is evident when examining the interaction of pressures enacted on organisations from an environment where there is multiple institutional actors. Within an organisational environment there is an interaction between equal and unequal entities. The creation of organisational environments is through networks in which the a small number of powerful entities have authority, and control resources (Slack & Hinings, 1994). The institutionalisation of an environment is dependent on the legitimacy of these powerful entities. Once a change is deemed legitimate by these entities, whether through formal or informal means, the other organisations within this environment generally respond quickly to adopt and incorporate this change into their structure (Slack & Hinings, 1994). Therefore, through the demonstration of conformity, and consequently isomorphism, an organisation reveals that it is acting as a collective, and in an appropriate manner, and therefore increases its chances of being viewed as legitimate and worthy of receiving beneficial resources.

Uncertainty has been identified as a significant reason why organisations may take on isomorphic properties. In situations where organisations are needed to make strategic decisions, where they have incomplete information on changes in their environment, and how the effect of their response to these changes, they often look at other organisations for direction. Theorists argue that organisations that make strategic decisions based on uncertainty may find themselves following a direction that may not align with their overall goals (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). In addition to this, there are many studies that identify isomorphic processes evident in environments where organisations are all acting on uncertainty, and there is a sense of “the blind leading the blind” (O'Brien & Slack, 2004; Skille, 2011). Galaskiewicz and Wasserman (1989) argue that the organisational environment consists of less than fully informed organisations that make

decisions based on the strategic choices made by other uninformed organisations. Skille's (2011) research into a Norwegian football club also ascertained that the club showed isomorphic characteristics by making strategic decisions based on uncertainty and without analysing its context. In turn, it followed other uninformed football clubs, in a process that was employed in fear that other clubs would be successful. The uncertainty that usually accompanies newly established companies, or a new organisational field, is also identified as a reason organisations tend towards isomorphism. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) discovered that at the start of an organisational field's conception, they are considerably diverse in approach and form, however as the field becomes established there is an increasing trend towards isomorphism.

Sport organisations are not immune to institutional isomorphism pressures from their environment. Sport organisations commonly resemble each other closely to be deemed as legitimate within their environment. Sport is unique in that it is subject to the often diverse and contradictory pressures from its numerous stakeholders. While most organisations are concerned with a small number of stakeholders, sports organisations are "embedded in organizational fields, and are subject to pressures from key suppliers, resource and product consumers, competitors and regulatory agencies" (O'Brien & Slack, 2004, p. 419). As sport organisations are increasingly becoming embedded in institutionalised organisational fields, there is a trend for these entities to resemble a more homogenous structure and direction (Slack & Hinings, 1994).

Isomorphism has been well researched within sport management literature (Phelps & Dickson, 2009; Slack & Hinings, 1994; Washington & Patterson, 2011). Slack and Hinings (1994) analysed the impact that institutional pressure from a government sport agency, Sport Canada, had onto 36 NSOs. They ascertained that as a result of this pressure the NSOs

adopted a more bureaucratic structure, and consequently there was an increase in the degree of isomorphism between the NSOs (Slack & Hinings, 1994). As the organisations were situated within the same environment, they were subjected to the same institutional pressures, and accordingly acted in a homogenous manner. Washington and Patterson (2011) argue that sport management literature would not benefit from further research into showing that institutional pressure is evident within the sports context. However, they identify that future research should move beyond the evidence of isomorphism, but rather examine the impact of these institutional isomorphic pressures within the sports management environment (Washington & Patterson, 2011). This paper's research will attempt to draw upon this guidance and extend sport management literature by examining how isomorphic pressures are at work, the pace and degree at which change occurs, and their consequent impact on New Zealand NSOs in relation to their decision to host a world championship event.

When identifying and examining institutional isomorphism within an organisational environment, the seminal literature by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) is commonly applied. These authors reason that domination, dependency, uncertainty, and professionalism increase the likelihood of isomorphism (Leiter, 2005). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identify three mechanisms which lead organisations to become homogenous; coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism. These three isomorphic pressures attribute to the varying ways in which organisations may interact and depend on other organisations within their environment, and as a consequence become increasingly homogenous (Vos et al., 2011). However, these institutional pressures are not three distinct mechanisms, they are often interactional. This is particularly evident in environments where multiple stakeholders are evidenced, such as shown to be relevant to the NSO context. Therefore, this research will utilise DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) three forms of institutional pressures to examine the various institutional pressures enacted on an NSO, how they interact, and how this may affect

their decision to host a world championship event. This literature review will further examine the current research into these three isomorphic pressures, to provide a theoretical foundation to apply to this research's data.

2.7 Coercive Pressures

Coercive isomorphism is a consequence of an organisation experiencing institutionalised pressure from another organisation or entity to which they are dependent on, to act in a certain manner (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). These coercive pressures are evident when powerful organisations force organisations with less power to act in compliance to certain actions and behaviours to receive legitimacy, and its subsequent benefits (Edwards et al., 2009). Oliver (1991) defines compliance to coercive pressures as a conscious obedience to the incorporation of values, norms, or institutional requirements. Benefits for organisations who act in compliance with these regulations can include increased resources, legitimacy and the attainment of accreditation and sanctioning. Coercive pressure is often found in institutionalised environments where governments, professional bodies and credential associations set specific rules and standards that organisations must act in accordance with to receive benefits. Occasionally, coercive pressures may be present as a result of a government mandate that organisations are required to employ (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). While coercive pressures are often associated with government and regulatory requirements, this force can also be enacted onto organisations from any other organisation that has the authority to put in place sanctions on an organisation if they do not act in compliance to their requests (Washington & Patterson, 2011). Therefore, coercive pressures result from power relations that come in various forms, formally or informally, direct or indirect, and from a variation of entities. In addition to government mandates, less formal and direct forms of coercive pressures can include cultural expectations and ethical considerations (Edwards et

al., 2009). Matheson (1987) also identifies that a common component for coercive pressure to occur is that the organisations enacting the pressure must apply constant observation and supervision to ensure that organisations are acting in compliance to their rules and requirements.

Non-profit organisations are identified as exhibiting greater susceptibility to coercive pressures than other forms of organisational structures. Due to non-profit organisations high dependency on stakeholders for resources, they are often subject to coercive pressures (Edwards et al., 2009; Leiter, 2005). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identify that non-profit organisations are often characterised by being dependent on government support, and as a consequence are operating within a politically controlled environment. Therefore, to receive the required resources to survive, they are more likely to be obligated to conform to coercive pressures from government agencies, in addition to their other various stakeholders.

Sport organisations are no different to their other non-profit organisation counterparts. They are highly dependent on government support and funding for their survival. Theorists have identified that the relationship between sport organisations and the government is considered one of the major challenges facing the understanding of sport governance (Vos et al., 2011). Vos et al.(2011) argue that not only are NSOs impacted by governmental coercive pressures, but so are provincial and grass-roots organisations. However, it is not solely financial support that sport organisations may receive by conforming to coercive pressures from the government, but also indirect support such as free or discounted use of government or council owned facilities, as well as tax advantages (Edwards et al., 2009). Major sport events are also not immune to coercive pressures. Additional to governmental pressures, coercive isomorphism in relation to major sport events is often the result of the jurisdiction and regulations exerted onto an organising committee by their IF (Jennings & Lodge, 2011).

Contradictory to the notion that organisation's may go against what their desires are in their requirement to conform to coercive pressures, Oliver (1990) argues that the compliance to coercive pressures can be viewed as a "self-serving benefit" for an organisation (p. 153). This use of coercive pressures used strategically by a sport organisation is demonstrated in Phelps' (2006) research into the process of triathlon being included in the Olympic Games. Phelps (2006) identifies that the ITU utilise coercive pressures strategically through their decisions being primarily driven by the pressures and mandates enacted by the IOC to achieve their goal of being included in the Olympic programme. In making a conscious decision to base their strategic direction and actions in relation to the IOC's regulatory mandates, the ITU were able to increase the rate at which they were viewed as legitimate and subsequently sanctioned. In the span of five years, the ITU went from being the self-proclaimed world governing body of triathlon, to receiving IOC recognition, to receiving full medal status on the Olympic programme (Phelps, 2006).

Resource dependency theory is commonly associated with research into the non-profit sector, in relation to coercive pressures. Resource dependency theory is based on the assumption that organisations that are unable to internally generate the resources they require to operate need to interact with other organisations within their environment to receive these resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). By receiving resources from external organisations, these non-profit organisations are less financially vulnerable, however, their autonomy and ability to act independently is greatly reduced (Thibault & Harvey, 1997). This is greater evidenced when there is more than one funding entity, and as a result the organisation may be faced with having to comply with a larger number of regulations and requirements. As local and national governments set rules and regulations for sport organisations to receive the financial assistance they require to operate, resource dependency theory, in addition to institutional theory, can be utilised to explain the compliance of sport organisations in relation to subsidy

situations (Vos et al., 2011). “Because voluntary sports clubs depend on the environment for their resources, they have to meet the demands of the resource providers and need to comply with institutional pressures” (Vos et al., 2011, p. 262).

Coercive pressure is evidenced within the sport industry in New Zealand, with the national funding agency Sport New Zealand setting specific rules and standards required for NSOs to receive resources. Sport New Zealand has identified one of their major aims in their regulatory requirements enacted on sport organisations is to modernize the organisational structure of their partner organisations, taking them from a traditional “kitchen table” based administration to more formalised and established management practises (Sam, 2009). The assumption is that better managed and professional sport organisations will have a greater ability to attract corporate sponsorship, in turn decreasing their reliance on government support. As Matheson (1987) identified, for coercive pressures to be present, there is a need for continual supervision and accountability from the organisation enacting the pressure. This required accountability is enforced by Sport New Zealand provoking societal pressure on a sport organisation, by publically announcing performance expectations. Sport New Zealand go so far as to include performance management techniques such as “naming and shaming” those NSOs and major sport event organisations that do not conform to their requirements or meet their expectations (Sam, 2009). Additional performance management techniques demonstrated by Sport New Zealand include withholding resources as well as direct interventions, such as requiring a presence on an organisation’s board.

2.8 Mimetic Pressures

Organisations have an inclination to model themselves on other organisations within their environment in which they deem to be successful and legitimate. This isomorphic inclination is identified as a result of mimetic pressures. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) determine that

mimetic isomorphism is a result of uncertain environments and unclear organisational objectives. When organisations are faced with situations where the perceived correct course of action is unclear, they may mimic the action of an organisation they deem as being legitimate (Mizruchi & Fein, 1999). The organisation that is being mimicked may be unaware that it is being modelled against, but may just serve merely as a suitable source of appropriate actions that a copying organisation may utilise (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The advantage for an organisation to mimic another is that there is a low expense on human capital. Decisions derived from mimetic pressures are based on providing a viable solution, with little expense, to a problem that is a result of an unclear action in an ambiguous environment (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Uncertainty is identified as a powerful force which encourages organisations to mimic other similar organisations within their environment. In situations where goals are ambiguous, when new technologies and advancements are poorly understood, and when the environment creates uncertainty, organisations may mimic other organisations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Organisations are more likely to model themselves on other organisations in which they perceive to be more successful and legitimate than themselves (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). Leiter's (2005) argument is consistent with this theory that organisations faced with uncertainty are more likely to copy the actions, structure and behaviours of successful organisations that are within the same organisational field. Due to the uncertainty that non-profit organisations have earlier been identified to having been susceptible to, non-profits are more likely to be vulnerable to mimetic pressures. "Nonprofits' missions are often unclear and in flux, and the methods for effective pursuit of those missions are often unsettled; hence, they are susceptible to mimetic isomorphism" (Leiter, 2005, p. 5). It is not uncommon for the actions that organisations adopt from other organisations to be for solutions that the organisation may not actually be exposed to (Washington & Patterson,

2011). Galaskiewicz and Wasserman (1989) argue that goal attainment and efficiency are sometimes of minimal importance when mimicking another organisation's actions, but a sense of simply 'doing something' or being identified with other successful organisations is of greater importance. Based on this argument, mimicking another organisation is performed as a means to enhance prestige and reputation (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989).

As identified, organisations tend to model themselves on organisations that they perceive to be more legitimate than themselves. By mimicking the actions and structure of these successful entities, organisations are doing so as a means to enhance their legitimacy accordingly. Mimetic pressures are present when an organisation voluntarily and consciously adopts the same actions, structure and behaviours as similar organisations within their environment as a means of gaining legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Edwards et al., 2009). By enhancing their legitimacy, organisations may consequently enhance their access to resources, which is particularly important for non-profit NSOs (Edwards et al., 2009).

Organisations often look to other organisations that are of similar size, in relation to structure and strategy, in the adoption of comparable behaviours. This is due to organisations of similar sizes being reliant on the same environment resources and affected by similar constraints (Haveman, 1993). "Interactions between organizations tend to be localized along a size gradient, because substantial changes in organizational size are accompanied by structural change, shifts in organizational form, and because organizations with different forms require different resources" (Haveman, 1993, p. 597).

The diversification of an organisation's core domain into a new strategic direction has also been highlighted as a reason organisations may look to other organisations to mimic. The degree of diversification within an organisation may take place within one business division, or it may encompass the entire organisation. Diversification into new business areas is often

motivated by a desire to grow the company. The ways in which an organisation may look to diversify is through increasing or changing the range of customers they serve, products and services they produce, and the technology they employ (Haveman, 1993). As organisations venture into this new direction, they are often susceptible to the same uncertainty that comes with being a new organisation. Consequently, they may then look upon other organisations they perceive as successful and legitimate within the new area they are focusing their new strategic direction on, and use these organisation's behaviours and policies to model their actions on.

Theorists have also argued that the presence of mimetic pressures is also connected to organisations that have a close association with those situated in the same organisational field (Edwards et al., 2009; Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989; Ivanova & Castellano, 2011). It is suggested that the presence of mimetic pressures can accompany social networks that result from formal, or informal, interactions between organisations that are within the same industry (Edwards et al., 2009). Therefore, organisations that have a direct and close association with another are more likely to increasingly appear isomorphic overtime. "The assumption is that actors will first exchange information and then one will persuade the other to 'give it (an idea, style, or behaviour) a try'" (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989, p. 456). Furthermore, organisations are more likely to mimic organisations that they are familiar with and trust. Organisations that have a close relationship with another within their field have a greater exposure to new innovations, organisational structures and activities, as well as learning what is deemed as appropriate and acceptable by their shared stakeholders (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). Sport management research has extended on this theory, arguing that sport organisations within close geographical proximity to one another have a greater likelihood to be exposed to mimetic pressures. Edwards et al.'s (2009) research into the interaction between provincial sport organisations (PSO) in Canada ascertains that those

PSOs offices that are located in close proximity with each other are more likely to interact through both formal and informal ties, and as a consequence were more likely to apply similar approaches to situations that they faced. However, Slack and Hinings' (1994) research into the institutional relationship between the 36 NSOs in Canada encountered opposing findings, ascertaining that NSOs that have their offices located in one central location were not more susceptible to mimetic pressures.

2.9 Normative Pressures

The final pressure identified by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) as causing isomorphism is normative pressure. Normative pressures are present as a consequence of professionalism within certain organisational fields. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) define professionalism as being interpreted by members within a particular occupation collectively defining the appropriate ways in which to act. This is based on the theory that individuals within a certain profession exhibit norms and cultural behaviours that are associated with their occupation. As a consequence, those within a particular vocation are more likely to exhibit homogenous traits and characteristics, in an effort to appear legitimate. Normative pressure is passed through the appropriate norms that educational institutions enact on students through formal education, as well as through an individual's association with professional networks (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Mizuchi & Fein, 1999). These standards of appropriate behaviours are communicated to those within a particular profession through their involvement with professional training institutions and universities, workshops, seminars, and through professional and trade magazines (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). These two sources of normative pressures are important in the development of organisational norms among professional managers and their employees (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Within sociology theory the research into professional groups as a social network is vast. This setting for analysis is compelling due to the fact that professionals typically work autonomously, and are often insulated from coercive controls (Galaskiewicz, 1985). However, it is widely argued by theorists that professional networks provide the means in which information is filtered throughout a professional community (Galaskiewicz, 1985). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) extend upon this theory by arguing that in addition to the filtering of information, professional networks are an important vehicle to disseminate institutional norms and behaviours amongst a professional community. Professional communities collectively determine a set of practices and cognitive frameworks in which organisational routines are shaped (Norus, 1997). Galaskiewicz (1985) suggests that individuals within ambiguous or uncertain situations have a greater inclination to look to their professional network, and create closer networks amongst its members, to gain clues about the best course of action to take. Based on these arguments, although particular professionals within an organisation may exhibit individual personality characteristics, they generally appear to behave and appear in a similar manner to those within their professional network.

The operational impact of normative pressures to an organisation has the potential to be great. The credentials and past experiences of those within the organisation have a substantial impact on whether an organisation is perceived as legitimate or not. The qualifications and characteristics of individuals within an organisation can impact on moving an organisation closer to conformity with those organisations within their field. For example, an accountancy firm would not be perceived as legitimate unless it employed qualified accountants. "Through employees' past experiences in other organisations or training and education structures, operations of organisations can be influenced" (Vos et al., 2011, p. 262). Normative pressures can also have a substantial impact on an organisation's structure and operations. Conformity to this form of institutional pressure can result in organisations changing their structural

arrangements to become in line with institutionally appropriate expectations (Slack & Hinings, 1994).

While individual personality traits of professionals within a specific vocation may differ between organisations, they tend to exhibit a considerable amount of similarity with their professional counterparts in other entities (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In turn, this creates a pool of similar professionals who interchange and occupy similar professional roles within a range of organisations within the same field. As these individuals interchange between organisations they take with them norms and problem solving strategies that they transfer to their new organisation (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). This transfer of knowledge and norms has the potential to override any variations of tradition and control, and bring an organisation closer to becoming isomorphic with those within its field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). “Professional experience can be transferred from one organisation to another through an individual’s experience in other organisations” (Edwards et al., 2009, p. 133). Normative pressures can be exhibited when organisations draw upon a similar professional resource pool, in terms of consultants, university graduates and conferences (Washington & Patterson, 2011). Jennings and Lodge (2011) identify that in relation to hosting a major sports event, normative mechanisms contribute to the transfer of skills and knowledge by sports event specific professionals who share common norms and practices. However, theorists argue that there is a potential risk in utilising similar professional resource pools and the interchange of similar professionals within companies. This form of incestuous recycling of similar individuals between organisations has the possibility to impede the chance of someone from outside the pool to have an opportunity, and thus potentially can hinder an organisation’s growth and evolution (Phelps, 2006).

Chapter 3 Research Methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical and philosophical concepts that provide a foundation for the research methodology and analysis of data for this research. Initially, the context and setting in which the research takes place is discussed to provide an understanding of the characteristics of the environment in which the research takes place. The overall purpose of the research is then outlined, with the three key objectives the research aims to address. Following this, the researcher's philosophical standpoint, and what they deem to be true and valid knowledge is discussed. In addition, the reasons for taking an interpretivist approach to the research, and the subsequent use of qualitative research methodology, are outlined. The research design will then be presented, as well as an in depth explanation of the methods used in the identification and recruitment of research participants. The use of purposive sampling in the identification of the criteria in which potential participants, and the challenges associated with the recruitment of these participants, is then discussed. Furthermore, the nature of data collection through semi-structured interviews, and the process in which thematic analysis is employed to analyse this data to produce the final findings report is outlined. Finally, this chapter discusses the ethical considerations and possible biases associated with this research, as well as the potential limitations to the research findings that were identified throughout the collection and analysis of data.

3.2 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research was to investigate the institutional pressures affecting a NSOs decision to bid for a world championship event within a New Zealand context. This research will draw upon institutional theory to identify evidence of institutional pressures, and their

consequent impact on the decision of New Zealand NSOs to bid for a world championship event. DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) concept of the three institutional pressures; coercive, mimetic and normative pressure, that they argue to cause organisations to conform and appear similar, are used as a foundation for this research's objectives. Therefore, this research project is constructed on the following questions:

Question 1: What are the coercive, mimetic and normative pressures that affect the decision of a NSO to bid for a world championship event?

Question 2: What are the impacts of these mimetic, coercive and normative pressures on a NSO?

3.3 Methodology

Prior to undertaking a research project, it is important to first identify and understand the researcher's ideological position. A researcher's ideological position outlines how they view the world, what they believe to be reality, and what they believe to be true and valid knowledge. Meyers (2010) states that all research is "based on some underlying assumptions about what constitutes 'valid' research and which research methods are appropriate" (p. 35). A researcher's world views and basic beliefs determine the orientation of how they perform their research. A paradigm represents an individual's world view that defines the nature of the individuals reality, their place and the range of relationships within it (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The various ideological orientations are assembled into two main paradigms: positivism and interpretivism.

Positivism is based on the key principle that only assertions that are absolute through observation and expert knowledge can be conveyed as factual information (Gregor, 2006). In the positivist paradigm, importance is placed on objectivity, systemised and detail

observations, in addition to the testing of hypotheses through experimentation and verification (Grant & Giddings, 2002). In contrast, interpretivism is concerned with the empathic understanding of human behaviour, and social action, based on their perception of what reality is (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

This research project is undertaken based on an interpretivist ideological position.

Interpretivism is an ideological orientation towards research which is based on the concept that the world is not objective, but rather is constructed of multiple realities that are based on the perception of social actors within a particular context and setting (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Diaz Andrade, 2009; Glesne, 1999). Diaz Andrade (2009) identifies that the interpretivist approach to research provides a deep insight into the complex world of personal experience from the view point of those who live it. To an interpretivist researcher, the social world differs from the natural, physical world. They do not recognise the existence of an objective world, but rather see the world as closely linked to a specific time and context. Therefore, socially constructed realities are derived from the shared values, beliefs and meanings of social actors within a particular context (Glesne, 1999).

As opposed to positivist researchers who maintain an objective stance from their research subjects, in interpretivist studies, the researcher becomes a vehicle by which the contextual reality is revealed (Diaz Andrade, 2009; Grant & Giddings, 2002). In positivist research, the researcher and the studied subjects are assumed to be independent entities, with the belief that neither influence each other (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In comparison, the interpretivist approach is characterised by the interaction between the researcher and the research participants, with the researcher's interpretations playing a significant role in providing observations and conclusions based on subjectiveness supported by quality arguments (Diaz Andrade, 2009).

The primary objective of interpretivism is to create theory that is not testable in a narrow sense, or statistical facts. Rather, the aim is to understand the complex and multifaceted reality and perceptions of those associated with a particular phenomenon. For this research, the phenomenon of interest is the institutional pressures affecting the decision of a NSO to bid for a world championship event.

3.4 Qualitative Methods

Consistent with an interpretivist approach, qualitative research methods was the obvious choice. In line with the interpretivist ideological viewpoint, qualitative research attempts to capture the beliefs and perceptions of social actors that are located within a particular context and setting. Through this approach, the collection of data provides a fuller, more holistic view of the social setting (Bryman & Bell, 2011). According to Bryman and Bell (2011), quantitative research typically emphasises words and meanings, as opposed to quantification through the collection of data and analysis. A key element for a qualitative researcher is not to explore and derive at statistical generalisations or numerical commonalities, but rather attempt to immerse themselves in common themes and meaningful data to define conclusions (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative research typically focuses on an in depth investigation of typically small sample sizes, whereas, quantitative research is associated with larger, randomly-selected sample sizes (Patton, 2002).

3.5 Case Selection and Comparative Case Studies

The sampling process commenced with the selection of cases to be included in the research. A list of NSOs that had previously bid to host an international sport event in New Zealand was supplied by Sport New Zealand (refer to Table 1), and was utilised as a foundation for case study selection. The first criterion that was set for case selection was to only include New Zealand NSOs that had previously bid to host a world championship event. This

criterion was determined due to the difficult nature of identifying NSOs that had considered bidding on a world championship event, but decided against it. Secondly, those NSOs who had bid for an international sport event which was not a world championship event were excluded from the research. Additionally, NSOs who had bid but were yet to host their event were included in the research. Those NSOs who had previously bid and had hosted their event were excluded from the research sample in an attempt to leave out any post-event opinions based whether their event was a success, or not, which may influence their observations and thoughts on why they decided to put forward a bid. Whether a NSO was successful in their bid, or not, was deemed to be insignificant in the case selection, due to the focus of the research being on the period of decision making to put forward a bid, and not whether they were successful in their bid.

From the list of NSOs provided by Sport New Zealand, and the sample criteria determined for case study selection, five NSOs were identified as qualifying for inclusion in the research. Following the case selection, the sampling process involved the selection of participants from the five identified NSOs to be interviewed.

3.6 Participant Selection

In line with a qualitative research approach, participants for this study were recruited due to their first-hand experience and knowledge of the concept being investigated. Purposive sampling is based on the strategic selection of participants. The focus of purposive sampling is on the selection of information rich participants and cases in which the investigation of which will illuminate the questions being analysed (Patton, 2002). As a consequence of this non-probability approach to identifying participants, this form of sampling constrains the ability of a researcher to generalise their conclusions to other populations or setting. Through the analysis of information rich samples, insights and an in depth understanding are achieved,

as opposed to empirical generalisations (Patton, 2002). Therefore, purposive sampling was employed for this research project in an attempt to ensure that all participants provided useful, in depth and reliable information, as a result of their first-hand experiences and knowledge in the decision making processes of hosting a world championship event. The initial identification of potential research participants was made via the relevant NSO's website. Each website listed the names, and contact details, of those individuals who held positions within their board, as well as the chief executive officer.

Patton (2002) identifies 16 different purposive sampling strategies suitable for qualitative research. The two forms of purposive sampling utilised in this research were criterion sampling and chain sampling. According to Patton (2002), the purpose of criterion sampling is to review and investigate all cases that meet a pre-determined set of criteria. The idea being that only those cases which are information rich are analysed. Based on this form of purposive sampling, the participants were invited to participate if they participated in the decision to bid for the world championship event as either chief executive officer, or on the NSO's board.

Chain sampling was utilised to identify the second participant from each NSO to recruit for inclusion in the study. Patton (2002) identifies chain sampling as another approach for locating information rich key informants. New information rich participants, which match the sample criteria, are identified through the process of asking other information rich participants, or well-situated people, whom best to speak to (Patton, 2002). By asking the original research participants from each NSO to identify another person within their organisation who would also fit the sample criteria, the second potential participant from each NSO were identified, along with their contact information. The net outcome is that data for each case was supplied by two participants.

3.7 Participant Recruitment and Challenges

Once suitable NSOs and potential participants were identified, initial contact was made via email. The contents of this initial email included an introduction to the research topic, an outline of the reasons why they were selected, and an invitation for them to take part in the research. For those participants who accepted the invitation to participate in the research, a more detailed 'Participation Information Sheet' (Appendix 1) and consent form (Appendix 2) were supplied. Upon signing of the consent form, interviews were then scheduled at an appropriate time and location with each of the participants. Interviews took place over a four month period, from November 2012 to February 2013.

Face-to-face interviews were the most suitable way to conduct the interviews. According to Opdenakker (2006), face-to-face interviews in qualitative research is the best method to take advantage of social cues, such as voice, intonation and body language, which often get missed in alternative methods of interviewing. However, in face-to-face interviews, the establishment of rapport is indicated as a challenge. The building of rapport is an important requirement to take advantage of these social cues, and act upon them (Opdenakker, 2006). This challenge of establishing rapport was addressed through the researcher sharing of past experiences and first-hand knowledge through their professional employment within the sport event industry within New Zealand. Therefore, the researcher's ability to relate and act empathetically was greater. The interviews took place in locations selected by the participant. The participants selection of interview location was given in an attempt to give them an opportunity to select a setting in which they were comfortable, and therefore able to express their opinions and feelings more freely and honestly.

A challenge related to the recruitment of potential participants was found in the attempt to establish contact and enlist engagement from smaller NSOs that were primarily volunteer-

based as well as those which were facing negative media attention at the time of participant recruitment. Due to the small nature of one particular NSO, and subsequently a limited number of potential participants who fit the research criteria to recruit from, it proved to be a challenge to engage this NSO within the study when the initial potential participants approached declined to be involved in the research. Their inability to accept the invitation to be involved in the research was due to a limited availability of time due to work responsibilities not involved with their volunteer work with the NSO. Additionally, at the time participation recruitment was taking place; one particular NSO was facing intense negative media attention, and due to this declined to be involved in the research.

Of the five NSOs approached to participate in this research, the participants from three NSOs accepted the invitation to participate. Through the employment of criterion and chain sampling, two participants from each of the three NSOs were recruited for the research. Pseudonyms were given to each participant to maintain anonymity and privacy. An overview of participants involved in the research is outlined in Table 2

Table 2

Overview of Participants

Category	Type	Status
NSO-1	Chairman	Former
NSO-2	Board Member	Current
NSO-3	CEO	Current
NSO-4	Board Member	Current
NSO-5	Board Member	Current
NSO-6	President	Former

3.8 Semi-Structured Interviews

The interviews for this research project were semi-structured, audio-taped by two electronic devices, and sequentially transcribed. Semi-structured interviews are beneficial for allowing for further discussion to be undertaken regarding topics of interest that arise during the interview (Dickson, Arnold, & Chalip, 2005). As a result, semi-structured interviews were employed due to the researchers existing tacit knowledge and experience in the sport events sector, as well as the additional knowledge that will be obtained through the preliminary analysis of secondary data (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Six semi-structured interviews were conducted, based on several open-ended questions (Appendix 3). The questions utilised in the interviews derived from the researcher's identification of key themes originating from the literature. The duration of each interview was between 40 minutes to one hour. The participants were made aware of the topics addressed and the potential duration of the interviews prior to commencement. Permission to digitally record the interviews was sought prior to the interviews taking place. All participants were assured anonymity, as outlined in the 'Participation Information Sheet' (Appendix 1), and were made aware that they were able to discontinue the interview at any stage without detriment to themselves or their organisation.

3.9 Data Analysis

For this research, the initial interviews were personally transcribed by the researcher. However, due to the significant time required to transcribe these interviews, and the subsequent impact on the researcher's external professional work requirements, a professional transcribing service was employed to transcribe the majority of the interviews. In an attempt to eliminate any overlooked indirect meaning or information from those interviews that were professional transcribed, the researcher replayed the interview

recordings numerous times, which checking the transcription for accuracy, to capture any indirect meanings and intonations relayed in the interviews.

The process of determining common social themes from textual data and illustrating these themes in some form of representation tool is a well-established method of qualitative research (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns, or themes, within data (Kellett, Hedge, & Chalip, 2008). A significant challenge associated with qualitative research is the vast amount of data that is generated and requires analysis. Bryman and Bell (2011) identify that one of the most common ways in which researchers can analyse such a cumbersome amount of data created by qualitative research is through thematic analysis. A benefit of employing thematic analysis, as opposed to alternative qualitative research data analysis methods such as grounded theory, is its ability to provide flexibility. Although both grounded theory and thematic analysis seek patterns and themes within the data, grounded theory is theoretically bound and its purpose is to generate a plausible and useful theory that is based on data, whereas those researchers who employ thematic analysis are not required to subscribe to an implicit theoretical framework to produce theory (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In line with this argument, Braun and Clarke (2006) describe thematic analysis as “a method that works both to reflect reality and to unpick or unravel the surface of ‘reality’” (p. 81).

In thematic analysis, the first step of analysing the data is by identifying patterns within the data through the action of coding. Bryman and Bell (2011) identify coding as entailing “reviewing transcripts and/or field notes and giving labels (names) to component parts that seem to be of potential theoretical significance and/or that appear to be particularly salient within the social worlds of those being studied” (p. 578). Prior to embarking on the coding of data, it is important to establish what the researcher determines as a theme. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) a theme “captures something important about the data in relation to

the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (p. 82). As is the nature of qualitative research, there is no exact answer on the prevalence of patterns in the data that determine a theme, but rather it must be determined by the researcher prior to coding taking place. For the initial coding of this research’s data, all data that was identified in a similar stream of pattern with at least one other participant’s transcript was recognised as a potential theme.

Prior to the coding of the data it is also important to determine the type of information that the researcher wishes to extract from the data, in relation to the conclusions they wish to make. For those researchers who wish to provide a thematic analysis on all themes across the information retrieved, then their coding and analysis must accurately represent the entire data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In contrast, those researchers who wish to provide a detailed account of one, or a group of particular themes within the information retrieved, then their coding and analysis must be more specific (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Depending on a researcher’s objectives, the coding framework may be based, for example, on pre-established criteria (e.g. specific topics or words), on recurrent issues in the text, or on a set of theoretical constructs that are to be explored systematically (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 390).

In this research, a detailed account of the group of particular themes relating to the isomorphic pressures related to the research questions outlined is used to provide direction to the coding of the data. This format was utilised in an attempt to provide focus and in depth analysis related to the research objectives.

Due to the flexibility related to thematic analysis, research themes are usually unclear and hard to identify. As a consequence, an inductive approach to the analysis of data is often employed to systematically transform the distinct and differing personal perceptions of the

research participants (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Taking an inductive approach to data analysis means that the data guides the formulation of concepts and themes, as opposed to restricting the data by fitting it into predetermined categories (Myers, 2010). As indicated previously, the formulation of themes was influenced by the particular themes relating to the theoretical concepts of the research objectives. Therefore, an inductive approach was employed in this research as a measure to inform the development of themes and theory. Another key aspect of the inductive approach is that it usually involves the researcher continually tracking between theory and the collected data as themes emerge (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This regular comparison between theory and data was utilised by the researcher in an attempt to encourage greater meaning to emerge from the themes.

3.9.1 Data Analysis Process

Qualitative research theorists have outlined steps in which to perform in the process of carrying out thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) outline a step-by-step guide of six phases associated with thematic analysis that were utilised as a guide in the process of data analysis for this research. The six phases are; 1) familiarising yourself with the data; 2) generating initial codes; 3) searching for themes; 4) reviewing themes; 5) defining the naming of themes; 6) producing the report.

The first phase in this research's data analysis started with the initial taking of notes of key phrases and potential themes while conducting each interview. Following each interview, the transcription of the interviews also involved further note-taking on key findings and potential themes. For those interviews transcribed by a professional transcription service, a significant amount of time was spent by the researcher familiarising themselves with the data, making notes, as well as checking the transcriptions against the original audio for accuracy.

Once the familiarisation with the data had been performed, and an initial list of themes and key findings had been produced, the creation of codes was implemented by the researcher. Each interview transcript was coded through the use of different coloured highlighters representing each code. Statements and phrases related to these codes were then grouped together.

Upon the initial codes being generated, an in depth investigation by the researcher of each of the interview transcripts and emergent codes took place. Themes were grouped together under the three different isomorphic pressures, as well as any significant additional outlier themes were identified and grouped together. An in depth review of themes, and the collected extracts from the transcripts related to these themes was performed. Those that formed a coherent pattern were kept, while those that did not were re-labelled under other themes, had their themes re-worked, or were discarded. This resulted in themes evolving, with further analysis and comparison taking place. Relationships between themes, and primary and sub-themes were also identified by the researcher at this stage.

Once the themes and sub-themes that were evidenced in the data were identified, further refinement of the patterns that had emerged through the data was performed. The definition of what the themes 'mean' in relation to the overall research objectives and concepts, why the themes are significant, and the relationship between the themes was established. Finally, the refined analysis is compiled and a report was produced. This final analysis and findings of the themes presented in the data is outlined in Chapter 4.

To ensure rigour and trustworthiness, specific strategies were utilised. All interviews were located in settings that were selected by each participant in an attempt to increase the comfort of the participants. In addition, the researcher was the only individual to review the transcripts, other than the overseas based professional transcription service.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

To ensure the ethical considerations of conducting research involving human participants were met, ethical approval was sought and granted through the Auckland University of Technology Ethic Committee (AUTEK) (Appendix 4) prior to commencing interviews. Although the nature of information sought, and the process in which it was retrieved throughout the collection of data, was of low ethical risk, it was still crucial to recognise that there was a potential for some degree of risk to occur. To address potential ethical concerns, a number of important procedures were employed throughout the research process.

Prior to the commencement of the interviews, potential participants were provided with a Participation Information Sheet (Appendix 1). The information sheet outlined the purpose of the research project, the reasons why they were asked to participate, their right to withdraw at any time if they feel uncomfortable, or any other reason. The provision of the information sheet ensured that the key objectives of the research project were clear and highlighted that their participation in the research was of a strictly voluntary nature. In addition, the participant's privacy was assured, and outlined in the consent forms (Appendix 2) they were required to agree to and sign prior to the interview taking place. Withdrawal from the research project at any stage without negative implications to themselves personally, or their organisation, was also assured.

The management of the collection and storage of data collected throughout the research was performed in compliance to AUTEK guidelines. The researcher and academic supervisor were the only individuals with access to this data. The data was stored on the researcher's computer for the duration of the research, and upon completion of the research project, also stored on the supervisor's computer. All stored data is accessed by password.

In an effort to ensure the anonymity of participants and their organisation, each participant was allocated a specific code to act as a pseudonym. These codes were utilised from the time the interviews were transcribed, right through to the writing of the final report. The use of codes was utilised to ensure that the anonymity and privacy of participants was protected throughout the entire data analysis and reporting stages of the research project. A summary of the codes used is outlined in Chapter 4.

3.11 Limitations

Throughout the collection and analysis of data there were several potential limitations that were identified. The majority of limitations that was identified were in relation to the lack of variation of NSOs, and their associated experiences with their decision to host a world championship event. The initial limitation identified was that based on the criteria that was set through the use of purposive sampling, this resulted in only a small sample of NSOs in which to include in the analysis. Out of the 93 NSOs that are located in New Zealand, only five met the research criteria.

A potential limiting factors that was identified due to the narrow criteria outlined for this research, was that all NSOs who met the criteria for this research had been successful in their bid to host a world championship event. Although a number of the NSOs included in the research had experienced previous bid failure, at the time of the data collection taking place, those NSOs who had been unsuccessful had proven to be successful in their most recent bid. As a consequence, the research project did not include the experiences of any key decision makers of NSOs who had been unsuccessful in their most recent bid, and therefore include the results of that rejection. The experiences of these particular participants had potential to provide the research project with differing perceptions than those participants who's NSO's had ultimately been successful in their bid.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

This research investigates the institutional pressures affecting a National Sport Organisation's (NSO) decision to bid for a world championship event. Data were collected from three New Zealand NSOs who had previously bid to host a world championship event, but the event was yet to take place. Two participants from each of the three NSOs were interviewed for this research. These participants were recruited due to their experiences as key decision makers within their NSO at the time the decision to bid occurred. Thematic analysis was utilised to identify key themes and patterns in the analysis of data collected.

The findings for each of these themes in relation to the research objectives are presented in this chapter, in association with the three isomorphic pressures outlined in the literature review. The illustration of findings employs the same approach utilised by Farrelly (2010) in his research into the termination of sponsorship relationships with major sport organisations that was published in the *Journal of Sport Management*. Once key themes are identified, this approach relies upon the provision of one key quote from a single research participant that demonstrates a broader perspective, with the addition of secondary, or supplementary, quotes in support. Farrelly (2010) states "although only one informant is quoted as an example, related themes are representative of the broader sample" (p. 324). Subsequently, the findings discussed provide the basis for further discussion and conclusions presented in Chapter 5.

4.2 Coercive Pressures

Participants were asked whether they experienced pressure from powerful organisations or entities that held authority within their environment, and whether this pressure impacted on their decision to bid for a world championship event. Two types of organisations were

referred to in the responses. These were Sport New Zealand and the International Federation (IF) to whom the NSO was affiliated. The following findings address their responses on the impact of pressures from these sources in relation to their decision to bid.

4.2.1 Coercive Pressure from Sport New Zealand

None of the participants were able to identify an explicit directive or mandate from Sport New Zealand directing them to bid to host for a world championship event. The following quote illustrates the absence of coercive pressures from Sport New Zealand.

There is no pressure from them to us to hold a world championship. If we travel overseas and play, what they're interested in is that we're successful, and that we are improving. So that means more to them than actually having a world championship.
(NSO-3)

Although no explicit directives to bid were received by the participating NSOs, the findings suggest that there were implicit and indirect coercive pressures placed on NSOs by Sport New Zealand. This was experienced through Sport New Zealand responding positively to informal discussions with the NSO about their interest in bidding for the world championship event. This potential implicit pressure, as opposed to directive from powerful organisations is highlighted by NSO-5: "I think there may have been an interest from Sport New Zealand, but I don't think it was a kind of, 'Get out there and do that.'"

Although the support offered by Sport New Zealand during these discussions may have impacted on a NSOs decision to bid, there was no formal commitment from Sport New Zealand. This is stressed by NSO-3: "There were conversations with Sport New Zealand in regards to our event, whether they would support it, and they were pretty positive looking at it saying that they will support it. Although nothing was guaranteed at the time."

4.2.2 Coercive Pressure from the International Federation

Similarly, the participants identified no directives or explicit pressures placed on their NSO to bid for a world championship event from their IF. The findings suggest that although there is the general belief that IF's do approach certain countries pressuring them to put forward a bid, this occurrence is rare. "The decision to bid was all driven by here. It is quite rare for the international body to be the one who identifies. However, they will definitely be making approaches to counties to host. Definitely" (NSO-1).

A possible reason why New Zealand NSOs do not receive direct coercive pressures from their IFs to host is identified by two research participants. Both spoke of the logistics and seasonal issues surrounding hosting a world championship event in a seemingly remote location such as New Zealand. This belief is identified by NSO-1:

"We do a good job of organising them, but the cost to the federation of coming here, the poor timing from a television perspective, being out of season....I think it comes down the fact that New Zealand might be one of these places where you've got to work a little harder to get attention."

Although no explicit pressures were placed on the NSOs by their IF, there was again evidence of subtle and implicit pressures from the IF. "They would let you know if you were completely wasting your time. NSO-5 states; "They obviously can't stop anyone bidding. They sort of give their signals of what's realistic and what's unrealistic." In addition, NSO-4 identifies that the nature of the response from their IF impacted not only their decision on whether to bid, but also on what event to bid for. "Basically we engaged with them and expressed an interest in running the event, and all they said to us was they saw us being a stronger candidate for the men's than the women's."

4.3 Mimetic Pressures

Research participants were asked whether there were any NSOs that they looked to that impacted on their decision to bid. The following outlines the key themes relating to mimetic pressures that were identified by the research participants.

4.3.1 Previous Experience with Hosting World Championship Events

The decision to bid for a world championship event was not impacted by looking at, or taking cues from any other NSOs. Participants explained this in the same way. Each of the NSOs had previously hosted a world championship event. Therefore, they looked internally for indications of appropriate actions, as opposed to the behaviours of other NSO's influencing their decision to bid. "I guess we were a little insular as we focussed purely on our sport, because we've hosted a world championship before" (NSO-3).

For two of the NSOs, the previously-hosted world championship events were in different divisions (e.g. Under 20). The participants recognised that although they were different events, they preferred to look internally at the benefits the sport achieved from these events, and what was required to host them, to base their decision to bid from. This is highlighted by NSO-2; "You can't compare apples with oranges, but in terms of the feel of the thing and the public presentation of it, I'd like to think we can match that." It was also identified that previous world championship hosting experience provided the NSO with confidence. NSO-5 states; "It gave us a good indication of the scale, and of what we needed to do in terms of engagement to the community. I guess it gave us confidence that people were interested."

4.4.2 "Keeping up with the Joneses"

A key theme was that the final decision to bid was not entirely a strategic based decision. To "Keep up with the Joneses" is an often utilised English-language idiom describing the

mimicking of another's actions to be seen in a prestigious and reputable light. This may occur without any detailed consideration of the benefits or relevance to personal goals, other than demonstrating equivalence.

This perspective was reflected in a number of interviews. Although participants identified that they did not imitate other NSOs, further questions revealed some connection. It was subtly suggested that bid decisions were made in the knowledge that more and more NSOs were hosting world championship events. "It's like someone breaking the four minute mile, once someone has done it, a lot more people think they can too" (NSO-1).

Furthermore, NSOs can make their decision with little thought to their overall strategic objectives. NSO-1 states;

"In terms of world events, I don't believe that they plan it very well. It doesn't sit in their strategic plans at all, usually. There are more esoteric reasons and objective reasons for doing it, and they don't really see how it would sit in their strategy and how it's going to benefit the sport."

NSO-2 also highlighted that it was the personal ambition of key decision makers within the NSO, as opposed to a strategic decision, that played a role in their decision to bid;

"I think part of it, I suppose, is personal ambition, and the three of us who thought we'd done quite well in running the sport. We were central to the successful running of the sport for that five years, and I thought intuitively that we know that it would be good for the sport."

4.4 Normative Pressures

The interviews included the participants being asked whether the past experience or education of particular professionals or individuals within their NSO, or externally, impacted on their decision to bid.

4.4.1 Education and Training

The findings suggest that the education and training of key decision makers did not impact their decision to bid. Although most participants held tertiary qualification, these were not related to sports or events management, for example law, maths and economics. “I’m unsure if anyone has been trained within the sport or events sector, definitely not on the board. I think it came down to the on-the-job sport experience from those within the organisation, not their professional background” (NSO-3).

Whilst these qualification no doubt influence the behaviour of the research participants, no participant considered it a relevant influence on their bid decision.

4.5.2 Professional Networks

Although the majority of the research participants are involved in professional networks associated with their paid employment, they are not involved in any event management or sports-specific professional networks or professional development activities. Normative pressures transferred through other possible means, such as attending conferences, hiring practices, professional accreditation, and professional and trade magazines, were not seen as evident in their decision to bid for a world championship event. However, the use of the same pool of event specific consultants is identified as providing the NSOs with a foundation of expert knowledge that impacted their decision to bid.

A level of professionals and expertise is required to make that decision; it goes beyond what we have. By the end of that year we contracted (name withheld) to look at the feasibility and whether we were ready for the world champs. (NSO-5)

Three of the participating NSOs relied upon advice of the same consultant. In addition, two NSOs used another consultant who was the same. The use of such a limited number of consultants creates opportunity for isomorphism, which in this case is deciding to bid for an event. The majority of participants indicated that expertise of particular external event professionals were called upon to discuss the potential of their NSO putting forward a bid, and what their thoughts were on the feasibility and benefits they should expect. It was identified that the response and information gathered from these key professionals impacted on their decision whether to host.

Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This research project was undertaken to investigate the institutional pressures that impact on a New Zealand National Sport Organisation's (NSO) decision to bid for a world championship event. The findings identify whether coercive, mimetic and normative pressures influence a NSOs decision to bid. An interpretive approach formed the foundation of the research methodology. Data was collected from three NSOs that had previously bid for a world championship event that had yet to take place. From each NSO, two key decision makers were interviewed. Semi-structured interviews conducted via qualitative data collection methods provided the data for analysis.

Through the employment of thematic analysis, key themes were identified. Together with a foundation of theory outlined in the literature review, this chapter provides discussion on the impact of institutional pressures on NSOs in their decision to bid. Recommendations for further research to aid in the development of the research findings are also outlined in this chapter. Finally, conclusions based on these perspectives are offered in hopes of contributing to the current theoretical and practical knowledge on institutional pressures in relation to bidding for a world championship event.

5.2 Coercive Pressures

As theorists have identified, to effectively examine the presence of institutional pressures, and its degree of influence on an organisation's decision making, the environment in which an organisation is located must be analysed (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Scott, 2001). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argued that coercive pressures are more likely to be evident in environments in which governments, professional bodies and credential associations set

specific rules and standards that organisations must follow to receive benefits. Sport New Zealand and the NSOs associated International Federation (IF) are identified as two key entities that set these specific rules and standards within the New Zealand NSO environment.

Sport New Zealand is perceived by the research participants as a critical stakeholder within the New Zealand sport environment. As a non-profit organisation, NSOs are recognised as having a high dependency on government support for resources to survive, and therefore are often subject to greater degrees of coercive pressures (Edwards et al., 2009; Leiter, 2005). However, the findings suggest that no explicit or direct coercive pressures were evidenced from Sport New Zealand towards the NSOs that impacted on their decision to bid for a world championship event. Although coercive pressures from Sport New Zealand may influence a NSO's day-to-day operations, all participants failed to identify a Sport New Zealand directive to bid. One participant indicated that their perception and understanding of Sport New Zealand's objective was that they were more concerned with whether an NSO is improving operationally, and participant numbers were increasing, as opposed to whether or not a national body hosted a world championship event. Sport New Zealand has greater focus on whether a NSO was fulfilling its basic requirements. Sam (2009) agrees with this perception, by arguing that one of Sport New Zealand's chief objectives is to modernize the organisational structure and management of NSOs, by taking them from a traditional 'kitchen table' based administration to more formalised and established management practices. In doing so, their aim is to decrease NSOs reliance on the government for resources by increasing their visibility and attractiveness to corporate sponsors (Sam, 2009). This argument suggests that Sport New Zealand have greater interest in ensuring the basic operational aspects of NSOs are running effectively, and are less focused on enacting coercive pressures on NSOs to host world championship events.

Although participants identified that no explicit coercive pressures from Sport New Zealand were evidenced in their decision to bid, there was evidence of subtle implicit and indirect coercive pressures that influenced the NSOs decision. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argue that coercive pressures not only are transferred through the direct and explicit imposition directives and mandates from powerful organisations onto those less powerful, but coercive pressure may also be subtle and less explicit. These implicit, coercive pressures were evidenced through informal discussions between the NSO and Sport New Zealand, when outlining their potential desire to bid for a world championship event, and seeking Sport New Zealand's thoughts on this. The positive response from Sport New Zealand to the NSOs interest to bid is identified influencing their decision to bid.

The evidence of implicit and indirect coercive pressures to bid was also identified as taking place towards the NSOs and their associated IF. Participants identified that although their IF did enact direct coercive pressures on other countries to bid, it would be unlikely that they would experience this directive to bid from their IF. This was identified due to the challenges associated with hosting a world championship in New Zealand, such as adverse seasonality and logistical issues surrounding the location. However, as evidenced with Sport New Zealand, participants identified subtle implicit coercive pressures from their IF which influenced their decision to bid. These pressures were transferred through the same practice of informal conversations between the NSO and their IF in relation to their interest in bidding. The positive response of the IF, and in some cases IF's providing direction of which world championship event they would have greater chance of success of winning the bid, influenced their decision on whether to bid.

To summarise, no direct coercive pressures from the two powerful entities with the New Zealand NSO environment were evidenced as impacting on a NSOs decision to bid for a

world championship. However, implicit and indirect coercive pressures from Sport New Zealand and IFs subtly influenced their decision.

5.3 Mimetic Pressures

Organisations tend to mimic the actions of successful or legitimate organisations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). The research participants identified that they did not look at other NSOs in their decision to bid to host a world championship event. As the NSOs involved in the research had all previously hosted a world championship event, they were able to look internally for indications of appropriate actions based on their previous experience in hosting. This ‘knowledge from previous experience’ was more influential on their bid decision when compared to the extent to which they imitated the bidding behaviours of other NSOs.

Although participants identified directly that the observation of the actions of other NSOs did not influence their decision to bid, there was a subtle theme throughout the interviews that suggested otherwise. This theme was identified to be in line with the idiom, “to keep up with the Joneses”. There was some evidence that NSOs were aware of the increasing number of NSOs hosting world championship events. Galaskiewicz and Wasserman (1989) argue that strategic goal attainment and efficiency are sometimes of little importance when mimicking another organisation’s actions, but rather a sense of being identified with other organisations of great prestige and reputation is of greater importance. While participants did not directly associate the observation of other NSOs behaviours as influencing their decision to bid, this notion of mimicking the actions of other NSOs that had previously hosted in order to “keep up” with the advancement of NSOs actions, was seen as exposing NSOs to subtle mimetic pressures that influenced their decision to bid.

5.4 Normative Pressures

The creation of normative isomorphism is identified by theorists as deriving from formal education institutions and professional networks (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). It is through these two sources that institutionalised norms and behaviours are transferred onto individuals within a particular profession. As indicated within this research, the increasing prevalence of NSOs hosting world championship events is a relatively new phenomenon within New Zealand. As a result, the presence of professional networks, in addition to related sports event specific formal education, is minimal, if not absent. The research participants identified that although their NSO's key decision makers held tertiary qualifications, they were not related to events management, sport, or a related field. Due to this, no participant considered the education or training of key decision makers influenced their decision to bid for a world championship event. In addition, none of the participants identified being associated with professional networks relating to sport. Subsequently, the association with professional networks was not identified as influencing their decision to bid.

Although the education and association with professional networks or other professional development activities was not evidenced as providing normative pressures on the NSOs decision to bid, the findings suggested that the knowledge and experience of employed consultants influenced their decision. Washington and Patterson (2011) ascertain that normative pressures can be exhibited when organisations draw upon a similar pool of professionals, such as external consultants. All three participating NSOs identified their reliance on the same consultant, in addition to two of the NSOs employed a secondary consultant who was the same individual. Galaskiewicz and Wasserman (1989) ascertain that as professionals interchange between organisations they take with them norms and beliefs that they then transfer to their new organisation. It can be argued that use of such a limited

number of consultants creates the opportunity for isomorphism to be transferred through normative pressures between those NSOs who work with them in their decision to bid. The findings show that the response and advice of these consultants influenced the NSOs decision whether to bid, however, it must be noted that these consultants are more likely to give a positive response, than negative. This is due to the advantages, such as further employment, associated with the continuation of a bid being put forward.

Chapter 6 Recommendations for Future Research and Conclusion

6.1 Recommendations for Future Research

Throughout the development of this research project, a number of potential avenues for future research have been discovered. Due to the nature of this research being set in a relatively small country, and where the hosting of a world championship event is a recent and still fairly rare phenomenon, the recommendations for further research are focused on expanding the scope of this research.

Firstly, this research investigated those NSOs who had bid for a world championship event, but at the time of the data collection their event was yet to take place. The exclusion of NSOs who had previously hosted was enlisted in an attempt to minimise any influence the execution of the event, and post analysis, had on the participant's perceptions on pressures they may have felt. However, at the time the data collection took place, only five NSOs fit the case study criteria set out. As a result, the expanse of data to derive findings was small. Therefore, to expand on this research, additional research that includes those NSOs who had previously hosted events is recommended.

As recognised in the limitations of this study, within the New Zealand context all NSOs that have proceeded in a bid for a world championship had been successful. Although it is identified that a number of NSOs had been unsuccessful in previous bids, they were ultimately successful in their bid at the time of research commencing. To extend on this research, a wider spread investigation could be performed to include a longer period of data collection, in the hopes of encapsulating those NSOs who desired to host a world championship event, but were unsuccessful in their bid at the time of data collection.

In addition, further research into the institutional pressures which affect the NSO community within New Zealand is recommended. This research focuses on the evidence and impact of institutional pressures in relation to one aspect of a NSO's activities. Further research on a NSOs level of isomorphism in aspects other than its efforts to host a world championship event would provide a broader understanding of the impact of institutional pressures on NSOs.

This research concentrated primarily on the period prior to a NSO putting forward a bid for a world championship event. This was employed in an attempt to focus on the degree at which institutional pressures influenced their decision to bid. To provide a greater analysis of the impact of institutional pressures on a NSO in relation to their hosting of a world championship event, the evidence of institutional pressures and their influence on a NSO could be extended to include the periods prior to the inception of the idea to bid, once they had decided to bid, during the planning phase of the event, throughout the event, and post event. This further analysis will provide greater awareness as to how, and whether, isomorphic pressures can change and adapt throughout the activity of hosting a world championship event.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, a weakness of this research was that Sport New Zealand was the primary government agency that was analysed in relation to the coercive pressures that they enacted on a NSOs decision to bid. Therefore, it is recommended that further research into a broader range of government agencies and their influence on a NSOs decision to bid, would provide more comprehensive degree analysis into coercive pressures impacting on this decision making process.

6.2 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to determine the influence that institutional pressures have on a New Zealand NSOs decision to bid for a world championship event. DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) seminal theory on institutional pressures provided an outline in which the potential organisational pressures which influence a NSO decision to bid was investigated.

The first objective of this research was to investigate the evidence of coercive, mimetic and normative pressures on a NSO decision to bid for a world championship event. The second objective was to analyse the impact of these pressures on their decision to bid. Three New Zealand NSOs that had put forward a bid, but their event was yet to take place, were recruited for this study. An interpretive approach was utilised to collect data, which involved six semi-structured interviews with two key decision makers for each of the three NSOs.

Through the investigation into the presence of institutional pressures enacted on NSOs during the period in which their decision whether to bid was made, it was found that explicit and direct coercive, mimetic and normative pressures were not evidenced to strongly influence a NSOs decision to bid for a world championship event. However, it was the evidence of subtle implicit and indirect institutional pressures which provided the most influence on a NSOs decision.

The positive responses from Sport New Zealand and the associated IF about a NSOs potential desire to put forward a bid was evidenced as enacting subtle coercive pressures onto a NSO that influenced their decision to bid, and in some cases what world championship event to bid for. In addition, although mimetic pressures enacted through the NSOs observation of other NSOs that had previously hosted a world championship were directly identified by participants as having no influence on their decision to bid, based on their responses to further questioning it was evidenced that implicit mimetic pressures were in fact

demonstrated through the need to “Keep up with the Joneses.” Results from the research demonstrated an inclination for NSOs to base their decision to bid not on strategic objectives, but rather to “keep up” with the increasing phenomenon of NSOs hosting world championship events. This subtle evidence of mimetic pressures is based on the notion that the NSOs decision is influenced by looking at the behaviours of other NSOs hosting world championship event, and thinking “if they can, why can’t we too.” Finally, the findings ascertained that no direct normative pressures transferred through typical means such as formal education and professional network were identified as impacting a NSOs decision to bid. However, an indirect influence of normative pressures was evidenced to have been transferred through the reliance on a common pool of consultants, where the NSOs reliance on the expert knowledge and experience of the same set of consultants was seen to have a subtle influence on their decision on whether to bid.

To conclude, the explicit and direct pressures are not strong and nor do they significantly impact on a NSOs decision to bid. However, it can be ascertained that implicit and indirect coercive, mimetic and normative pressures are evident and therefore retain a small influence on the NSOs decision to bid for a world championship event.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participation Information Sheet

Participation Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

22 September 2012

Project Title:

Mimetic, coercive and normative influences in the institutionalisation of organisational practices: The case of national sport organisations bid to host world championship events.

An Invitation

My name is Mel Johnston, and I am a Masters student at AUT University. I have also been involved as part of the local organising committee for the Triathlon World Champs, held in Auckland in October 2012. You are invited to participate in my research into the pressures that may affect a national sport organisations decision to bid to host a world championship event. This research will contribute to the completion of a Master of Business (Sport management) qualification. Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of data collection.

What is the purpose of this research?

The benefits of hosting a world championship event are heralded by the media, national sports organisations (NSOs), government and other invested stakeholders. A vital component that has been overlooked by both stakeholders and academics is the reasons why a NSO desires to host a world championship. This research project will embark on analysing the reasons why a national sport organisation is driven to bid to host a world championship event. The research will be presented in a thesis, which will be the completion of the Masters qualification.

How was I chosen for this research?

All Chief Executive Officers and board members of National Sport Organisations that were involved in the decision making to host a world championship event, that has yet to be held, are being offered the opportunity to participate in this research. It is a logical selection process given the level of experience and involvement in matters relating to the research question by these individuals. Some former CEO's and board members may also be interviewed.

What will happen in this research?

This research will involve one interview with each CEO/board member, and will take approximately one hour. Interviews will be face to face with the CEO/board member at the head office of each National Sport Organisation when possible. The second option will be to interview the South Island CEOs/board members at an agreed location, when and if they travel north on business at an agreed time and location that is suitable for the relevant CEO(s)/board member(s). Telephone interviews will be utilised as the last preferred option. Each interview will be taped allowing for a full and accurate record of the interview. Two tape recorders will be used at each interview in case of malfunction. Notes will also be taken by the researcher. All interviews will be fully transcribed and these will be made available to each CEO/board member to check the accuracy of the transcriptions with the opportunity to withdraw any information provided.

The final stage of the process is the writing up of the results and the production of a Masters thesis which will be submitted to AUT for examination. All participating CEOs/board members will receive a summary of key information within the thesis.

What are the benefits?

It is common knowledge that New Zealand is increasingly acting as host to world championship sport events. As highlighted above, this research seeks to gauge a greater understanding of the reasons why National Sport Organisations bid to host world championship events, and what benefits they hope to receive from hosting such an event. This knowledge may highlight critical information or pressures that National Sport Organisations are party to and this knowledge may provide a more transparent assessment to those organisations who wished to be involved in future bids.

How will my privacy be protected?

Significant consideration has been made to this area in this research project to protect the privacy of participants. It is acknowledged that the sport industry is a closely knit one and that the research project is dealing with interorganisational relationships and pressures, and may involve the discussion of issues such as power relationships and pressures to conform to name a few. With this in mind, the exact identity of all participants and their related National Sport Organisation will not be used in any aspect of the research. All interviewee data will remain confidential and stored safely by the researcher and supervisors.

As discussed, each interviewee will be given the opportunity to view a written copy of their interviews (transcription) to ensure it is a true and accurate reflection of what they said in the interview and will also be given the opportunity to withdraw any statements. The information itself will only be used for the purpose of this research project and not utilised for any other purpose. The data will be held for a period of no longer than 6 years and destroyed after this.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The major cost for each participant in this research is the provision of time that will include an estimated one hour for the interview as well as the reading of the documentation associated with the project.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Unless organised prior, each participant will have one calendar month to consider their participation following the receipt of this invitation. This will allow time to digest all information provided as well as the opportunity for the further explanation and/or clarification of any issues, concerns or questions the participant may have (see details below). The process regarding transcript sign off will simply involve the participant sending written communication to the project supervisor within two weeks of receiving the transcript confirming they agree that it is a true and accurate account of what they said and highlighting any material they would like to have withdrawn. Further to this, the process for withdrawing completely from the study is again via written communication to the project supervisor indicating your desire to do so.

A copy of the information and consent forms will be sent your manager or director providing them with information regarding the study. In instances where your organisations leader was not directly involved in the decision making, and this was delegated to another, the supervisor will be notified as a matter of professional courtesy

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Acceptance to participate in this research project will be confirmed with the completion of the AUT consent form which is attached to this information sheet prior to the interview.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes, a summary of the thesis will be sent to every participant following the examination of the thesis.

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 Sean Phelps, Senior Lecturer – Faculty of Sport and Recreation, AUT University, sean.phelps@aut.ac.nz (09) 921 9999 ext 7094.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Dr Rosemary Godbold, rosemary.godbold@aut.co.nz , 921 999 ext 6092

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Mel Johnston, 021 247 0484, PO Box 108170, Symonds St, Auckland,
mel@mjsportfitness.co.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Sean Phelps, Senior Lecturer – Faculty of Sport and Recreation, AUT University,
sean.phelps@aut.ac.nz (09) 921 9999 ext 7094. Private Bag 92006, Auckland.

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 13th
November 2012, AUTEK Reference number 12/272.**

Appendix 2: Consent to Participate in Research



Consent Form

Project title: Mimetic, coercive and normative influences in the institutionalisation of organisational practices: The case of national sport organisations bid to host world championship events.

Project Supervisors: Dr Sean Phelps, Dr Geoff Dickson

Researcher: Mel Johnston

- I have read and understand the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I would like to receive a copy of the transcribed interviews to ensure it is a true and fair reflection of what I have said in the interview (please tick one).
Yes No
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I understand and agree with the provisions taken to protect privacy and that my anonymity whilst protected cannot be guaranteed.
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one).
Yes No
- I agree to take part in this research.

Participants signature:

Participants name:

Participants contact details:

.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 13th November 2012.

AUTEC Reference number 12/272

Appendix 3: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Start out Questions

1. When is your world championship event taking place?
2. Tell me about the inception of the idea to put forward a bid to host a world championship event.
3. How was the idea first introduced?

Research Question

Coercive

1. Which groups of stakeholders were the biggest drivers with the decision to bid?
2. Did any pressures/expectations from Sport NZ or any government agencies to bid exist and impact on your decision?
3. How were these pressures/expectations communicated?

Mimetic

1. Did you look to any other NSO's who have previously hosted a world championship when deciding whether bid?
2. What benefits that they had received that you wished to also receive by similarly hosting a world championship?
3. Would you say this is a new industry norm for an NZ NSOs to want to host a world championship event, or has this expectation been around for a while?

Normative

1. What credentials or education do you feel are required to bid to host a world championship event?
2. Did the credentials or education of key decision makers or individuals within your NSO impact on your decision to bid?

Appendix 4: AUTECH Ethics Approval



13 November 2012

Sean Phelps
Health and Environmental Sciences

Dear Sean

Re: 12/272 Mimetic, coercive and normative influences in the institutionalisation of organisational practises: The case of national sport organisations bid to host world championship events

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the AUT University Ethics Committee (AUTECH). Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 12 November 2015.

As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTECH:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics/ethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 12 November 2015;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics/ethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 12 November 2015 or on completion of the project.

It is a condition of approval that AUTECH is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTECH 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.

AUTECH grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this. If your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply there.

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.

All the very best with your research,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rosemary Godbold', written in a cursive style.

Dr Rosemary Godbold
Executive Secretary
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc. mel@mjsportfitness.co.nz