Social Capital Production: Sport Event Volunteer Perceptions and Impacts

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attestation of Authorship..... i

Acknowledgements..... ii

AUTEC Approval..... iii

ABSTRACT..... iv

1. INTRODUCTION..... 1

1.1 Research intent and approach..... 3

1.2 Structure of the study..... 5

2. LITERATURE REVIEW..... 6

2.1 Introduction..... 6

2.2 Defining social capital..... 7

2.3 The creation of social capital..... 9

2.4 Social capital and exclusion..... 11

2.5 Public sector policies..... 13

2.6 Organisational impacts and linkages..... 17

2.7 Role of sport..... 18

2.8 Sport events and social capital..... 20

2.9 Volunteering at recreational sport events..... 22

2.10 Sport event volunteers and the generation of social capital..... 24

2.11 Measuring social capital..... 26

2.12 Conclusion and research intent..... 29

3. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND METHODS..... 31

3.1 Research paradigm..... 31

3.2 Case study approach..... 33

3.3 Selection of study site participants..... 34

3.3.1 Selection of location..... 35

3.3.2 Selection of events..... 35

3.3.3 Selection of volunteers..... 36

3.4 Specifying the phenomena..... 38

3.5 Selecting qualitative tools..... 39

3.5.1 Document analysis…… 40
3.5.2 Semi-structured interviews…….. 41
3.5.3 Focus group discussion…… 42
3.5.4 Ethical considerations…….. 44
3.5.5 Limitations of the study…….. 45
3.6 Next steps in the process…….. 46
4. CONTEXT OF CASE STUDY..... 47
4.1 Introduction…….. 47
4.2 Public policies and social capital in New Zealand…… 47
4.3 Taupo – 'the events capital of New Zealand'…….. 48
4.4 Destination Lake Taupo …… 49
4.5 Commercial events policy…… 49
4.6 Ironman New Zealand…… 51
4.7 The Mizuno Half Marathon event…… 52
4.8 Volunteer crews and sustaining the volunteer workforce…… 53
4.9 Clubs that volunteer…… 54
4.10 Conclusion…….. 56
5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION..... 57
5.1 Introduction…….. 57
5.2 Models of social capital…….. 58
5.3 Social cohesion, community participation and commitment…….. 59
5.4 Sense of place and common purpose…….. 63
5.5 Norms of trust and reciprocity…….. 67
5.6 Bonds and bridges that connect, or exclude, people and groups…….. 69
5.7 Who is excluded? …….. 72
5.8 Conclusion…….. 74
6. SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS..... 75
6.1 Introduction…….. 75
6.2 Bureaucratic social capital…….. 78
6.3 Market social capital…….. 80
6.4 Communal social capital…….. 84
6.5 Associative-based social capital…….. 86

6.6 Conclusion…….. 90
6.7 Limitations of the study…… 94
6.8 Theoretical implications…… 95
6.9 Practical implications…… 97
6.10 Future research…… 98
6.11 Concluding summary…… 99
REFERENCES..... 100
APPENDICES..... 108
Appendix 1: Document analysis and social capital indicators…….. 108
Appendix 2: Indicative questions for semi-structured interviews…….. 110
Appendix 3: Indicative questions for focus group…….. 111
Appendix 4: Participant information sheet …….. 112

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: The (re)production of social capital…….. 28

Figure 3.1: Research design…… 32

Figure 6.1: The (re)production of social capital..... 77

Figure 6.2: The (re)production of bureaucratic social capital……. 80

Figure 6.3: The (re)production of market social capital……. 83

Figure 6.4: The (re)production of communal social capital……. 86

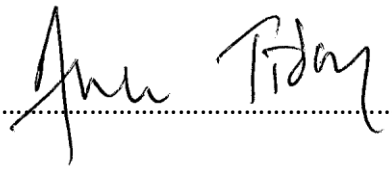
Figure 6.5: The (re)production of associative-based social capital……. 90

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Participation of community groups & sports clubs in event volunteering..... 55

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.

Signature of the candidate ……  ……..

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As an international student far abroad, the distant cheerleading of family and long-lived friends encouraged me to strive to do my best. I thank them for their faith in me.

I also acknowledge the AUT University Ethics Committee, application number 09/112, approved 11 June, 2009.

MEMORANDUM

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

To: Lesley Ferkins
From: **Madeline Banda** Executive Secretary, AUTEC
Date: 11 June 2009
Subject: Ethics Application Number 09/112 **A survey of sports event volunteers' perceptions of social capital in Taupo.**

Dear Lesley

Thank you for providing written evidence as requested. I am pleased to advise that it satisfies the points raised by a subcommittee of the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) at their meeting on 21 May 2009 and that I have approved your ethics application. This delegated approval is made in accordance with section 5.3.2.3 of AUTEC's *Applying for Ethics Approval: Guidelines and Procedures* and is subject to endorsement at AUTEC's meeting on 13 July 2009

Your ethics application is approved for a period of three years until 11 June 2012.

I advise that as part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through *http://www.aut.ac.nz/about/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 11 June 2012;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through *http://www.aut.ac.nz/about/ethics*. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 11 June 2012 or on completion of the project, whichever comes sooner;

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are reminded that, as applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

Please note that AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to make the arrangements necessary to obtain this.

When communicating with us about this application, we ask that you use the application number and study title to enable us to provide you with prompt service. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact Charles Grinter, Ethics Coordinator, by email at charles.grinter@aut.ac.nz or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 8860.

On behalf of the AUTEC and myself, I wish you success with your research and look forward to reading about it in your reports.

Yours sincerely

Madeline Banda
Executive Secretary, Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

ABSTRACT

Social capital production: Sport event volunteer perceptions and impacts

National governments promote event volunteerism and sport participation as a means to improve the social capital stock of communities (Coalter, 2007; Houlihan, 2005; Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2008). Many studies have focused on the motivations of volunteers (Allen & Shaw, 2009; Harvey, Levesque & Donnelly, 2005; Reid, 2007), and on how sports clubs can promote unity within a community (Atherley, 2006; Brown, 2006). However, there has been little exploration of the perceptions of sport event volunteers on the presence of social capital in their social interactions and its impact on the production of social capital in their locality.

Volunteers are key stakeholders in events and are known to contribute to social capital of the community (Putnam, 1995; Putnam, Feldstein & Cohen, 2004). Without volunteers, events might not be staged (Costa, Chalip, Green, & Simes, 2006; Cuskelly, 2008; Elstad, 2003; Gaskin, 2008; Ralston, Lumsdon, & Downward, 2005; Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2007; Wilson, 2000). The challenge for event managers is to understand social capital generation so that organisational needs might be better balanced with the needs of volunteers (Chalip, 2006; Harvey, Levesque & Donnelly, 2007; Sharpe, 2006). Taupo (the location of the study) claims to be "the events capital of New Zealand"(Destination Lake Taupo, 2009a), and with a full calendar of events and large pool of long-term volunteers, it was considered the ideal place within which to conduct this study. Access to volunteers who support two long-established events, specifically Ironman New Zealand and the Mizuno Half Marathon was facilitated by Destination Lake Taupo.

Research on the social capital concept relies on qualitative analysis techniques, reflecting that social capital is borne out of relationships which constantly change. It is the location, quality and quantity of interactions which determine whether social capital is produced and used, and can impact the success of sport event strategies (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006; Doherty & Misener, 2008; Misener & Mason, 2006; Reimer, Lyons, Ferguson & Polanco, 2008).). Understanding the driver in the process of production of social capital (Doherty & Misener, 2008) was key to assessing which level of social relations dominates the normative structures of a community (Reimer et al., 2008).

Using a case study approach, data collection was undertaken in two stages. Document analysis and semi-structured interviews with event managers provided the organisational context of the Taupo events industry. The second stage generated volunteers' perceptions of social capital through semi-structured interviews and a focus group. Subsequent thematic analysis examined the process and location of social capital production, using the model created by Doherty and Misener (2008), within the framework of normative structural relations promoted by Reimer et al. (2008). The presence of social capital was confirmed by the study's participants.

Of particular note is that the influence of the vertical links of market relations on the production of durable social capital appeared stronger than do the horizontal bridging ties of associative relations. While community groups share a common incentive for supporting events with the payment of crew, the incentive is not a catalyst for forging bridging ties. Additionally, the bridging ties of volunteer event directors to community groups are fragile. As intermediaries they put in the most effort for least social and economic reward. This fragility, combined with the expectations placed upon these intermediaries by event organisations could place the event industry in Taupo in jeopardy and warrants review.

INTRODUCTION

Volunteers are considered by many to be the social glue that links people and groups together in common cause. It has also been suggested that they are 'repositories' of social capital (Putnam, Feldstein & Cohen, 2004). Volunteers are considered a valuable resource by national governments which seek solutions to problems of social exclusion; by territorial authorities which rely on active citizenship to improve the wellbeing of their communities; and by sport event organisations intent on accessing labour for the successful delivery of events (Coalter, 2007; Houlihan, 2005; Skinner, Zakus, & Cowell, 2008). In New Zealand, tourism is a major economic driver with a strong emphasis on utilising sport events which is reflected in a number of economic development plans, such as Taupo District Council (Taupo District Council, 2006a). Without sport events, some communities would deteriorate. Without motivated and committed volunteers, many sport events could not occur (Costa, Chalip, Green, & Simes, 2006; Cuskelly, 2008; Elstad, 2003; Gaskin, 2008; Ralston, Lumsdon, & Downward, 2005; Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006; Wilson, 2000). Thus there are significant vested interests in sustaining the volunteer pool.

Volunteers are at the very centre of these institutional dilemmas, yet there appears little evidence that governmental bodies or event organisations have tested the perceptions (as opposed to motivations) of event volunteers against the policy rhetoric contained within the community development discourse. By better understanding how volunteers' perceive their alleged contribution to the social capital of their community and the process through which social capital is generated, territorial authorities and their partner event organisers may be better placed to maintain and leverage this valuable resource to successfully implement economic and social development strategies (Chalip, 2006). The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the context of the current study, guide the reader through the considerations behind the research aims, thus establishing research significance, and overview the structure of the thesis.

Social capital is a multi-layered elusive concept replete with contradictions. This is confounded by a lack of agreement on the definition of social capital (Blackshaw & Long, 2005), as well as a lack of understanding of how it is produced and its use as a

resource (Doherty & Misener, 2008). Three seminal works, Bourdieu (1997), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1995), dominate the literature and while there are differences in their interpretation of how social capital is manifested the authors' definitions are not mutually exclusive (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). Within the context of current political and sport policies, Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) expanded the definition of social capital as "… the product of interactions which contribute to the social, civic or economic wellbeing of a community-of-common purpose" (p.103). While there may not yet be a common definition of the concept there appears to be, within the literature, a common terminology used to describe indicators of the presence of social capital that guides discussion and analysis. For the purposes of this study, the researcher has drawn upon the synthesis of Blackshaw and Long (2005), which includes the following indicators: –

- social cohesion, community participation and commitment;
- a sense of place and common purpose;
- norms of trust and reciprocity; and
- bonds and bridges that connect, or exclude, people and groups.

What is evident within the body of knowledge is that strong communities are more resilient at times of economic or social change (Gratton, Shibili & Coleman, 2005). Within the sport arena, following the economic success of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, there was strong governmental interest in the use of mega-events to provide a legacy for the host community (Coalter, 2007; Collins, 2004; Houlihan, 2005). Governments have applied the indicators of social capital in addressing the social needs of displaced communities (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Coalter, 2007; Houlihan, 2005; Vail, 2007). This led to political investment in developing sport as a means of reinforcing positive social behaviours (Gratton et al., 2005; Houlihan, 2005).

The political spotlight on sport as a catalyst of social capital building brings to the fore differences between participation in sport as a generator of social capital and community development fostered through sport (Coalter, 2007; Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2008) at a time when there is a move away from participation in team sports to more individual oriented activities (Collins, 2004; Perks, 2007; Stempel, 2005). While this trend may be bad news for sports clubs, it is good news for sport event organisers

with increasing participation levels and increasing numbers of events occurring (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2007). More recently the trend has been to develop communities through strategies that invest in tourism, in events, and in volunteerism reflecting a more holistic approach to achieve community development (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Collins, 2004; Wilson, 2000). Much is known about sports club and mega-event volunteers, their motivations and their commitment (Doherty, 2009; Ralston, Downward & Lumsdon, 2004; Shaw, 2009), and in New Zealand the government agency Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) has sought to place a high priority on sustaining the volunteer base in sports clubs in its funding allocations and research strategy (New Zealand Tourism Research Institute, 2009).

There has also been significant investigation into social capital and the role of sports clubs, as well as the motivations of their members, in both rural settings (Andranovich, Burbank & Heying, 2001; Burnett, 2006; Onyx & Bullen, 2004; Sharpe, 2006; Tonts, 2005), and urban settings (Eckstein & Delaney, 2002; Gratton et al., 2005). However, as mentioned in the opening statements, there is little evidence that governmental bodies or event organisations have tested the perceptions of event volunteers against the policy rhetoric to learn if volunteers believe their actions and interactions have any impact on the generation of social capital in their community. To do so would better position territorial authorities and partnering event organisations to leverage this valuable resource and successfully sustain economic strategies in pursuit of social gains.

1.1 Research Intent and approach

In light of the above, the aim of this research was to explore perceptions of sport event volunteers about the presence of social capital in their social interactions and its impact on the production of social capital in Taupo (the location of the study). Using the social capital construct, the research design was embedded in the interpretive paradigm which underpinned the use of qualitative methods. In translating this aim, the following question was used to guide the research process:-"What are the perceptions of sport event volunteers regarding the presence of social capital in their social interactions and its impact on the production of social capital in Taupo?"

A case study approach was used to investigate the social capital phenomenon and its presence in the lives of the study participants, to allow distinctions to be drawn between process and outcome (Putnam et al., 2004), between availability and use of social capital (Doherty & Misener, 2008), and to identify its location within normative structures (Reimer, Lyons, Ferguson, & Polanco, 2008). Purposive sampling led to the selection of Taupo as the study site because of its long established sport event calendar and its reliance on a large pool of community volunteers. Taupo is considered a small town in New Zealand with a population of 21,500 and is situated in the centre of the North Island. Two events were selected for the study, the iconic, privately owned Ironman New Zealand event performs under a global spotlight, whereas the not-for-profit Mizuno Half Marathon is dedicated to benefiting the local community. This enabled the researcher to compare social interactions within the networks of each of them. Given the importance of understanding the organisational context in which individuals operate (Bryman & Bell, 2007), document analysis was performed ahead of contact with participants, as were semi-structured interviews with two event managers. The case study also included one-on-one semi-structured interviews with two volunteer organising committee members. Members of a sports club participated in a focus group discussion.

A key output desired from the study was to obtain participants' perceptions of social capital. As Bryman and Bell (2007) indicated, sustaining a sharp focus is critical to achieving clear outcomes. By defining the indicators of the presence of social capital (the phenomenon) discussions centred on these indicators, yielding data about both the production of social capital and its location in normative structures. The semi-structured interviews provided insights into the mechanisms of social capital production. The group dynamic of the focus group generated rich data (Edwards & Skinner, 2009) on the manifestations of social capital.

The secondary data emerging from the document analysis combined with the primary source of rich verbal stories of participants were triangulated to confirm accuracy and validity of comments (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Edwards & Skinner, 2009). Document analysis provided context that was later tested during the semi-structured interviews and focus group.

The subsequent thematic analysis of the data facilitated the application of Doherty and Misener's (2008) model of the (re)production of social capital, framed within Reimer et al.'s (2008) concept of normative structural relations, and provided greater insights into the process of production of social capital.

1.2 Structure of the Study

This chapter has provided an overview of the thesis and its content. Chapter Two explores the discourses regarding social capital, volunteers and community development and locates the study within a defined body of knowledge. Chapter Three sets out the research method used to gather, analyse and interpret the data. As noted above, qualitative research was employed through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, complemented by secondary data obtained through document analysis. The rationale for choice of method is also provided in Chapter Three.

Findings from thematic analysis are presented in Chapter Four (organisational context) and Chapter Five (volunteers' perceptions). Relevance is also drawn to the literature. It is within these chapters that the voices and stories of the participants and their perceptions are expressed and discussed.

In Chapter Six, Synthesis and Conclusions, the process of production of social capital, and its presence within normative structural relations within Taupo is illuminated. Outcomes from the previous chapters are drawn together to present the final conclusions. Implications for both theory and practice are drawn, and suggestions are made for potential future research. It is believed that the key findings provided in Chapter Six contribute new insight to the body of knowledge on events, on volunteerism, and on the production of social capital.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In order to investigate the perceptions of sport event volunteers about the presence and impact of their social interactions on the production of social capital in Taupo, it was important to acquire an evidence-based understanding of how this topic had previously been addressed. Thus this chapter draws on the body of knowledge contained in separate, but inter-related discourses on social capital, community development, and volunteerism, to provide credibility to the case study. As will become apparent through this review of the literature, there appears to be little evidence that governmental bodies or event organisations have tested the perceptions of event volunteers against the policy rhetoric contained within the community development discourse. By better understanding how volunteers' perceive their alleged contribution to the social capital of their community, territorial authorities and their partner event organisers may be better placed to maintain and leverage this valuable resource to successfully implement economic and social development strategies.

While the burgeoning literature on the social capital construct emphasises the importance of the discussion around the definition of social capital, many authors have noted that it is an elusive concept (Coalter, 2008; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008; Skinner et al., 2008). Unlike other capitals or benefits, social capital is intangible because it is borne out of relationships. It is both a process and an outcome, and speaks to the benefits that accrue from social cohesion, a sense of place and purpose, and meaningful social interactions underscored by trust, which in turn result in collaborative partnerships and effective networks. Social capital is not simply about ideals; it also embraces fun and fellowship (Putnam et al., 2004). Its creation is incremental and cumulative to be used for the benefit of the whole. First introduced as a concept in the 1960s, scholars have endeavoured to define and measure it (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Coleman, 1988; Doherty & Misener, 2008; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008; Putnam, 1995). The lack of agreement within the literature on a singular definition of social capital serves to cloud the discussion and development of the theory (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). The concept has been applied to socio-cultural issues, to tourism, to sport

in a wide range of settings, and to volunteerism (Coalter, 2008; Cuskelly, 2008; Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000; Misener & Mason, 2006; Skinner et al., 2008).

More recently, the emergence of government social inclusion policies has expanded the discourse into the sport arena, whereby sport events, facilities and participation in sports have been considered essential to regeneration strategies because each is capable of generating social cohesion through new networks and thus reinvigorating communities (Coalter, 2007; Houlihan, 2005; Newman, 2007; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). The thesis that sport is a vehicle for creating social capital may be intuitively correct, but Nicholson & Hoye (2008) suggested there is insufficient evidence to support such governmental strategies. Additionally, the philosophical divide that exists in public policy settings, with differing expectations about the role of sport in community development, precludes easy comparisons (Coalter, 2007). Despite the lack of strong evidence, the widespread adoption of the discourse does mean that researchers in the field have a conceptual framework within which to explore the role of sport in the formation of social capital and thus better inform those policy directions (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008).

2.2 Defining social capital

Arriving at a commonly agreed definition of social capital is difficult because the term is used inconsistently to describe a vast range of phenomena across a wide range of applications (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008; Oxoby, 2009; Reimer et al., 2008; Skinner et al., 2008). The seminal works of Bourdieu (1997), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1995; 2000), dominate the literature and while there are significant differences in their interpretations which are discussed below, they are not mutually exclusive, sharing as a common foundation stone the concept of social networks (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). According to Blackshaw and Long (2005), Bourdieu's model which holds that social capital is related to the extent and quantity of quality networks in people's lives, as well as their ability to mobilise them, is more rounded than the model proposed by Coleman, which they believed is confusing about whether social capital resides at the individual or community level. They suggested that Putnam's model did not reflect the lack of control poor communities have over their destiny because of dominance by elites. Blackshaw

and Long's (2005) commentary on the key literature emphasises the lack of agreement on definition, and has the potential to limit progress in developing social capital theory.

While Bourdieu's (1997) theory focused on the dominance of elites which purposefully exclude others from their networks (Blackshaw & Long, 2005), Coleman (1988) suggested that social capital is a variety of entities, with social structures facilitating the actions of individuals or corporate actors who stand to benefit as common elements. While social capital is productive like economic benefits (financial rewards) and human capital (knowledge and skills), it is intangible because it exists in the relations among people and groups. Individuals and groups can draw on this resource in order to achieve common purpose, so long as there is extensive trust within and between them. Through these interactions, social capital is generated (Coleman, 1988).

Putnam (1995) defined social capital as "the features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (p.66). Thus as a resource it can be considered to be the property of collectives, in which networks connect individuals and groups through bonding and bridging ties. Multi-stranded networks serve to unite disparate and diverse groups (Putnam et al., 2004) and to provide the structure and norms of identity guiding interactions within the complexities of social capital (Reimer et al., 2008). Putnam et al. (2004) elaborated on those interactions, emphasising that "networks that intersect and circles that overlap reinforce a sense of reciprocal obligation and extend beyond the boundaries of empathy" (p.291). Social capital is about more than a group of people coming together; it relies on members defining the group's norms and agreeing on aims and a common purpose (Putnam et al., 2004). Regular participation by acquaintances in, for example, a team sport, is more likely to sustain social capital than a trip to the gym (Coalter, 2007).

Within the context of current political and sport policies, Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) have further expanded the definition of social capital to demonstrate that "social capital is the product of interactions which contribute to the social, civic or economic wellbeing of a community-of-common purpose" (p.103). The interactions draw on the resources of knowledge (community networks, group values and attitudes, rules, and human capital) and identity (values and attitudes, vision, trust and commitment). Such

resources are built and drawn upon simultaneously to benefit actions within the community (Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000). People build a variety of social networks over time through a variety of activities and, while membership of a sports team or volunteering at a sport event might serve to extend the scope of their networks, individuals bring pre-existing levels of social capital with them to the new endeavour (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008).

There appears to be within the literature a common terminology used to describe indicators of the presence of social capital that guide discussion and analysis. For the purposes of this study, the researcher has drawn upon the summaries of the critique of Blackshaw and Long (2005), which include the following indicators –

- social cohesion, community participation and commitment;
- a sense of place and common purpose;
- norms of trust and reciprocity; and
- bonds and bridges that connect, or exclude, people and groups.

2.3 The creation of social capital

Reimer et al. (2008) made distinctions between the societal levels in which social capital is generated and used. These distinctions were divided into four aspects -– market (free exchange), bureaucratic (formal, impersonal resource distribution, governed by principles and procedures), associative (common interests and shared goals), and communal (shared sense of identity, place and culture, emphasised by reciprocal exchange of favours). They emphasised that by better understanding the normative societal levels within which a community functions, and how connections and linkages are organised and maintained, there can be greater clarity about how social capital is manifested (Reimer et al., 2008).

Putnam et al. (2004) suggested that the successful creation of social capital emerges from the woven relationships of individuals in small groups who identify with the larger whole and where the power of effective leadership maximises the benefits for the greater good. The challenge for leaders and organisations is to facilitate effective bridges between these small groups, and capture the breadth and depth of relationships within each of them. Understanding which activities are effective in building social networks and how they facilitate access to new resources is essential

(Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). Developing bridging ties between groups takes time and is more difficult to forge than the bonds that exist between like-minded people. Comprehending the differences between how trust emerges as a consequence of individuals' informal relationships on the one hand and of expectations of behaviour placed on organisations on the other is also critical (Reimer et al., 2008). If leaders in sport organisations can maximise and mobilise resources, such as event volunteers, there can be collective benefits for all parties.

However, in citing Fukayama's "radius of trust", Coalter (2008) suggested it is inevitable that those whose norms of trust and cooperation are strongest will benefit most from the generated social capital. For example, organising committee volunteers stand to benefit more than general volunteers (Cuskelly, 2008). Doherty and Misener (2008) purported that even though the primary purpose of a relationship may be economically based, social effects will result. Conversely, and perhaps a reflection of the circularity of the production process of social capital, Reimer et al. (2008) argued that stocks of social capital are drawn upon predominantly for economic purpose.

By identifying a sense of common-purpose the distance between disparate people and groups can be reduced and a contribution made to the stock of social capital (Putnam et al., 2004). Bridging facilitates ties between diverse groups rather than reinforcing their differences (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). Not all bridges bring disparate people together; sometimes geographical distance inhibits interactions between like-minded people, or there is a need to access resources beyond the reach of a group or network (Onyx, Leonard & Hayward-Brown, 2004). Such bridge-building, though, is dependent on the bonds that exist with intermediaries who are known and trusted. As Coalter (2008) commented, bonding is "an essential first step in building the collective confidence, cohesion and cooperation" to bridge connections across groups (p.56). By contrast, where communities demonstrate strong bonding social capital, there is potential for intolerance of outsiders, inhibiting creativity and the long-term wellbeing of the community (Onyx et al., 2004).

With the political shifts towards measuring outcomes, rather than process, and without a clear understanding of the dynamics of social capital, the public sector could overlook the need to create meaningful strategic opportunities for its generation (Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000). In exploring what it is about social networks that make communities

happier and healthier, Nicholson & Hoye (2008) propounded a more inclusive, broader definition of resources, encompassing social interactions based on trust and reciprocity, not simple economic mechanisms or uni-dimensional participation measurements. Capturing the extent of supply and use of resources that occur within the context of economic and event strategies is critical to understanding what processes or mechanisms can engender social interactions between players, an important aspect of the overall intent of the current study. Later in this chapter there is further consideration of the literature that addresses the measurement of social capital and the processes through which social capital may accrue.

2.4 Social capital and exclusion

Social capital can enhance developments in one sphere. An example of this is the improved availability of volunteers. It can also serve to exclude. An example of this is where volunteers who are without the necessary skills to meet the demands of bureaucratic processes, or who are unwilling to be involved in committees, may become excluded (Reimer et al., 2008).

There is concern that policymakers are choosing to ignore the 'dark side' of social capital, in that it can also lead to exclusion based on socio-economic characteristics (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Sharpe, 2006; Stempel, 2005; Tonts, 2005). For instance, in addressing the need to regenerate a poverty-stricken community, a key question overlooked by policymakers is the extent to which the targeted community contains individuals with the relevant skills, interest, commitment, attributes and opportunities to foster social capital that will re-invigorate the community (Sharpe, 2006). Similarly, in rural communities, where populations are decreasing, there is insufficient remaining social capital available to help communities adapt and withstand the challenges brought about by demographic change (Owen, 2002). Another dimension of the opposite face of social capital is the potential of close-knit organisations to become corrupt or monopolise (Eckstein & Delaney, 2002; Putnam, 1995) which leads to distrust within communities.

Oxoby (2009) suggested that individual perceptions about access to institutions and resources in the decision-making environment impact their choice about whether or not to participate and reciprocate. The greater the degree of perceived inclusion, the

greater social cohesion is generated and the greater the degree of trustworthiness is confirmed (Oxoby, 2009). However, even where communities demonstrate high levels of bonding between like-minded groups, such as sports teams, their intolerance of outsiders serves to deny them access to new skills or ideas that guarantee the ongoing wellbeing of the community (Onyx, Leonard & Hayward-Brown, 2004). Policy makers at all levels of government and sport organisations need to understand that access to social capital facilitates greater understanding and resource exchange between groups, but that different cultural interpretations of 'social capital' can manifest in distinct processes and forms of engagement not recognised by others (Spellerberg, 2001).

As Collins (2004) indicates, social exclusion is a process through which someone or something excludes. Sport, like any commodity is not accessible by all. Clubs deny access because of class divides (Stempel, 2005). Events deny access because of cost (Collins, 2004). Collins (2004) also discovered that sports clubs are not always involved in collaborative ventures to create programmes which promote physical activities within deprived communities. Even so, isolated sport organisations, which focus solely on their sport code will still provide for social interactions between their members, who perceive the club as their community hub and who share a common identity. Unlike connected organisations, their members may have no interest in, or lack the social networks and resources to actively engage in bridging activities that might benefit the wider community (Coalter, 2008). Reimer et al. (2008) explained that the exclusion arises because of the nature of the norms and structures that exist within a community.

Public policy also has the potential to destroy existing social networks when implementing projects, such as slum clearance to provide new physical facilities (Putnam, 1995). In endeavouring to create homogeneity through its interventions, the State may well shift the structure of social capital within the targeted community towards more socially desirable interactions, but if this new mode of operation cannot be sustained there is every likelihood that individuals will withdraw back to their tightly knit communities (Carilli, Coyne, & Leeson, 2008). However, some analysts would suggest that the stock of capital may not have diminished, but merely shifted to a new normative structure away from, for example, the associative nature of volunteerism to a market based structure as demand outstrips supply (Reimer et al., 2008). What the analysts do agree on is that reconstructing social capital by government interventions

will fail if policies do not facilitate the free interactions of individuals based on activities, relationships and norms from which they might benefit (Coalter, 2007; Oxoby, 2009). Therefore, understanding the long-term motives and commitment of grassroots volunteers in support of local policies is crucial to sustaining the mechanisms through which social capital is generated.

2.5 Public sector policies

In an effort to encourage active citizenship and social inclusion agendas, public sector social inclusion policies are driving the debate on social capital (Collins, 2005; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008; Skinner et al., 2008). There has been a shift from developing sport in communities, to developing communities through sport (Coalter, 2007). Contemporary investment strategies in tourism, events, sport and volunteerism illustrate the shift away from relying solely on economic benefits to local communities as a means of achieving community development (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Collins, 2004; Wilson, 2000). And while historically political interference in sport was to be avoided (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Houlihan, 2005), Coalter now suggests that "social capital is not just a public good, but is for the public good" (as cited in Skinner et al., 2008, p. 542).

As Coalter (2007) pointed out, government policy documents are "consistently vague in articulating the meaning of social capital and its relevance of sport to its development" (p.529). In a later article, Coalter (2008) states "it is not sport which achieves many of these outcomes, but *sporting organizations;* it is not sport which produces and sustains social capital, enters into partnerships and mobilizes resources, but certain types of social organization" (p.62). The long-term aim of the policy discourse appears to suggest that communities may become more resilient and better able to withstand future negative economic, social or cultural changes (Gratton, Shibili & Coleman, 2005). However, the commercialisation of sport events and the elitism that can exist in sport organisations excludes those without the means, capacity or social networks to participate (Blackshaw & Long, 2005). Ironically, while governments are endeavouring to secure the social inclusion of particular segments of the population by implementing strategies to develop communities through sport, other segments are

being excluded. Most recently, government-driven social inclusion policies have expanded to press for greater volunteerism in sport (Coalter, 2007).

Such centrally directed policies create challenges for local authorities when they use sport and recreational sport events in particular, as a vehicle through which to develop or enhance the wellbeing of their communities. Whilst maintaining the balance between commercial interests and social expectations, developing strategies for long-term benefit can be foiled by shifts in societal values such as the recent move towards more materialistic and individualistic lifestyles away from team and group endeavours (Collins, 2004). A better understanding of how volunteers perceive their alleged contribution to the social capital stock of their community will mean territorial authorities and their partner event organisations are better placed to maintain and leverage a valuable resource to achieve their strategies.

The impact of socio-economic policies upon communities is particularly evident in strategies that address the consequences of rural restructuring (Andranovich et al., 2001; Burnett, 2006) or the need for urban regeneration (Diamond, 2001; Houlihan, 2005; Newman, 2007; Owen, 2002). Contemporary public policies offer social-capital-related strategies in tourism, events, volunteerism and sport as the new solution to effect social change. Previous socio-economic investments failed to deliver results, and so attention turned to better understanding the implementation, as well as a more rigorous evaluation, of publicly funded programmes (Newman, 2007). Although there has been a marked increase in the number of nations and cities bidding for mega-events, such as the Olympics or world championships following the enormous financial success of the Los Angeles Summer Olympics in 1984, there is a recognition that economic policies, in isolation, do not bring about desired social changes (Coalter, 2007; Collins, 2004; Houlihan, 2005).

In pursuing social inclusion policies, a key issue for policymakers has been how best to address the absence of social capital in marginalised groups, that are often riddled with visible social problems, such as juvenile offending rates and obesity (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Coalter, 2007; Houlihan, 2005; Vail, 2007). Policy responses have included centrally funded programmes that aim to increase participation in sport either as a participant or a volunteer (Coalter, 2007), or the aspiration to host a major sport event to deliver a wide range of beneficial legacies to the nation (Gratton et al.,

2005). Desired social and cultural benefits are derived from urban regeneration, sport participation and increased facilities, increased tourism and positive images (Gratton et al., 2005). As Houlihan (2005) comments, the State has exploited and manipulated international sport and has a prominent role as a promoter, regulator and resource provider, as well as a significant investor. Whether such massive government investments can contribute to sustainable social developments is a question that challenges academics and policymakers alike (Andranovich et al., 2001; Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Coalter, 2007; Diamond, 2001; Downward & Ralston, 2006; Gratton, et al., 2005; Lawson, 2005; Sam & Jackson, 2004).

At the same time as governments have been socially re-engineering through sport, they have been restructuring local government responsibilities. Direct service provision is no longer the domain of local authorities, and demands for improved resource allocation, evaluation, accountability and reporting of public funds have resulted in local authorities adopting a more entrepreneurial management style in administration and in the alliances they forge (Cousens, Barnes, Stevens, Mallen, & Bradish, 2006; Thibault, Frisby, & Kikulis, 1999). Local governments must now actively listen to the community voice to identify community needs and satisfy stakeholders' interests, while also maintaining transparency at every step (Andranovich et al., 2001). The impact of globalisation has led to more competition, so there is greater risk-taking and reliance on public-private partnerships to combine resources to deliver agreed outcomes within tight fiscal constraints (Andranovich et al., 2001).

A new language is emerging in the public sector with privatisation, contracting-out and decentralized services demanding outputs and outcomes, and empowered local communities being more fully engaged in strategic planning (Sam & Jackson, 2004). Similarly, with the process of globalisation, there is new jargon within sport as a vehicle for promoting health and wellbeing for the national good (Lawson, 2005). These new tongues have been adopted by governments in policy setting, by local politicians in their rhetoric, and in bureaucratic procedures and rules. Over time society may or may not accept them (Sam & Jackson, 2004). Newman (2007) noted that for the London Olympics 2012, political leaders have used the opportunity to represent the aspirations and motivations of the population through creating opportunities for public rituals and celebrations, which bind people together in support (albeit medium term) for the major

investments made in hosting the event. He also noted that there has been a coming together of key leaders (for example, the British Prime Minister and Mayor of Greater London) in promoting this celebratory language.

Even as local authorities are reacting or responding to the demands of central government, they are dependent on the norms and networks of civic engagement to guarantee their effective performance. Successful community development results in strengthened social connections and resources that residents have identified as key to making their locality a better place (Thomas, as cited in Skinner et al., 2008). Networks of organised reciprocity with traditions of long-term civic engagement are preconditions and hallmarks to a successful region (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Putnam, 1995). Blackshaw and Long (2005) in critiquing Delanty, noted "civic tradition holds social capital and participation in public life at its centre" (p.244). Of concern for the present study is that sports clubs are one example of civic engagement through which sport participants follow rules, take on responsibility and seek consensus (Blackshaw & Long, 2005).

One of the challenges for local authorities when national policies are being imposed from above is to demonstrate that they are able to fulfil their responsibilities and proceed in the best interests of the community in a trustworthy manner (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Sam & Jackson, 2004). The policies are selected and implemented by local authorities will impact institutional arrangements and affect the lives and social interactions of individuals and organisations (Sam & Jackson, 2004). Owen (2002) expressed concern that the new entrepreneurial style of government lends itself to tokenistic consultation practices, especially in relation to the delivery of mega-events in a tight timeframe and economic imperatives prioritised over social and democratic concerns. He posited that if there is a lack of transparency in decision-making, social capital will be diminished because trust in civic engagement is lost.

The other fear is that sport development, *per se*, will be undermined because it will be subsumed within social inclusion policies rather than as an important means to sustain active participation in sport codes (Skinner et al., 2008). Nicholson and Hoye (2008) offered that governments are not justified in using sport as a basis for wider political agendas. However, if sport policymakers develop a broader understanding of

how participation impacts the creation and consumption of social capital, this might lead to greater insights into how to improve the wellbeing of disadvantaged communities.

2.6 Organisational impacts and linkages

Communities and public sector authorities are significantly impacted by major sport events, such as the Olympics or world championships. The over-riding imperative of delivering spotlighted global events on time places enormous pressures on communities and their elected representatives to balance organisational demands and community needs (Houlihan, 2005; Newman, 2007). Where sufficient social capital exists in a community, adaptive win-win strategies have resulted (Kavanaugh, Reese, Carroll, & Rosson, 2005; Sharpe, 2006). However, without substantial social capital other communities have floundered (Diamond, 2001; Cousens et al., 2006; Owen, 2002). Where communities have created and sustained high levels of social capital, they are more resilient to the negative impacts of economic or social change (Cairnduff, as cited by Skinner et al., 2008). This has been particularly evident in studies of rural communities in Australia, where it has been shown they have a strong sense of identity and place (Onyx & Bullen, 2000).

Organisational and network theories describe the factors and consequent adaptive strategies which allow organisations to develop effective, efficient and collaborative relationships with other bodies for mutual benefit (Friedman & Mason, 2004; Palmer, 1996; Reed, 1997; Saxton & Benson, 2005). As local governments change to a more strategic way of working they engage, through horizontal networks, with other public, non-profit and commercial organisations (Spellerberg, 2001; Thibault et al., 1999). In forging these new alliances and partnerships, public authorities are better able to join with like-minded organisations to achieve civic goals (Friedman & Mason, 2004; Saxton & Benson, 2005). Network or bridging ties provide access to resources (Burnett, 2006; Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, & Dowell, 2006; Lawson, 2005). Resources are pooled and public authorities are better able to meet their obligations of efficient and effective delivery, improved consultation mechanisms and information sharing, therefore developing the appropriate conditions to engender social capital as described by Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1995). As a consequence community groups are more

likely to be engaged in civic process (Diamond, 2001; Galaskiewicz et al, 2006; Palmer, 1996).

Public authorities are generally required to identify a range of stakeholders within their communities who should be involved in the planning and decision-making processes (Dredge, 2006; Friedman & Mason, 2004; Reed, 1997). Stakeholders have a role in promoting and protecting public interests, and must ensure that the inclusionary and exclusionary effects of policymaking are addressed (Dredge, 2006). Even with common goals, historical grievances, inexperience or personality clashes may result in power struggles (Reed, 1997). Cousens et al. (2006), Dredge (2006), Friedman and Mason (2004) and Hede (2007) each agreed that it is important to balance out power differentials and the effects of exclusion by identifying the legitimate roles and contributions of all stakeholders. These relationship-building processes appear to penetrate boundaries within local authorities too (Lawson, 2005). Public sector staff are better able to distinguish between differing collaborative working arrangements -- alliances, joint ventures, partnership -- and their contribution to delivery of service outcomes (Cousens et al., 2006).

In the same way that like-minded organisations, such as autonomous sports clubs, provide bonding capital (Collins, 2005) civically active individuals provide bridges to other networks (Harvey et al., 2007; Putnam et al., 2004). If these networks are not sustained they can become dysfunctional and fractured which can impact unfavourably on, for example, the delivery of regeneration projects or events (Diamond, 2001). Skinner et al. (2008) suggested that the influence of social capital is most profound when bridges are built between heterogeneous groups from within and outside a community who come together for the benefit of that community. As is the intent of this study, these networks between individual volunteers and between groups can provide the context within which to assess the factors at play that influence stocks of social capital.

2.7 Role of sport

The political spotlight on sport as a catalyst for social capital building brings to the fore differences between participation in sport as a generator of social capital and community development fostered through sport. Most policy documents do not

explicitly refer to the social capital concept, nor do they articulate the relevance of sport in its development (Coalter, 2007; Skinner et al., 2008). Nevertheless much research points to all the positive attributes that sport brings to society, that is, social cohesion, trust and reciprocity, bonding and bridging between and within networks, sense of identity and place, and long-term civic engagement beyond sport (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). Such studies however, point out that sport organisations alone cannot secure the wellbeing of the nation or of a community (Brown, 2006; Burnett, 2006; Coalter, 2007; Jarvie, 2003; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008, Seippel, 2006).

Sport occurs at different levels of interaction, as a result of different motivations and with different outcomes, ranging from individual athletes, coaches and volunteers, clubs and teams, to commercial and non-profit organisations. The nature of sport participation is changing from formalised team sports and club membership to more individual oriented activities, affecting sport organisations and membership figures (Collins, 2004; Perks, 2007; Stempel, 2005). Arcodia and Whitford (2006) suggested that if the new trend of self-interested, competitive individuals continued to grow, then the norms of societal connections may be damaged and further impact the stocks of social capital generated within sport.

While sport organisations may be considered strong in civic virtues (reciprocity, trust and recognition), they tend to be weak on political skills (Seippel, 2006). Inter-organisational linkages are critical to how sport providers leverage, manage and evaluate strategic relationships is critical for their success (Cousens et al., 2006). In some circumstances, sport has been found to be capable of building a sense of community (Atherley, 2006; Brown, 2006; Perks, 2007). However, it is well documented that sport can also be inward looking and serve to exclude along such lines as race, class and gender (Atherley, 2006; Brown, 2006; Coalter, 2007; Perks, 2007; Putnam, 1995; Spellerberg, 2001). Convivial play is a key ingredient in the social fabric of a vibrant community, bringing together diverse people in strong, dense networks (Lawson, 2005) but for those who do not enjoy sport, it is exclusionary. Sport is not always a vehicle for common benefit (Atherley, 2006).

Even though government strategy may be aimed at investing in mega-events, gold medals, or reducing numbers of obese children, if sports clubs and/or formalised sport participation shrinks so too will social capital benefits diminish within a community

(Atherley, 2006; Lawson, 2005). Where rural restructuring has occurred, the reliance is on existing levels of social capital generated through participation in formalised sport, to sustain diminished communities as they adapt to new norms (Tonts, 2005). Urban regeneration strategies, on the other hand, tend to rely on sport events and facilities to generate social cohesion through new networks and invigorate communities to generate social capital (Eckstein & Delaney, 2002; Gratton et al., 2005). Understanding the role of community organisations in delivering local authorities' economic strategies may better assist in describing the process of social capital generation in a community. The aim of this study goes some way to gaining insights into relationships in Taupo and the process of social capital production.

2.8 Sport events and social capital

Sport events occur in a variety of settings, ranging from local community activities to global mega-events such as the Olympics and world championships. No matter at which level these events occur and the actors involved, they are each capable of building and using social capital, as demonstrated by the literature in this review. Mega-events provide the opportunity for national governments to present a global image to maximise macro-economic gains, while local authorities will be more concerned with site-specific impacts of venues (Owen, 2002). The significant investment by central government is intended to improve the wellbeing of the nation, and/or the revitalised host community, but as Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) indicated, social capital cannot be built unless opportunities are provided for it to occur. Nor can social capital be imposed, as it is generated through the norms, relationships and activities in which individuals freely engage, no matter their motivations or perceived benefits (Coalter, 2007; Reimer et al., 2008). However, Chalip (2006) perceived that events offer the opportunity for event organisers to strategise to leverage liminality and communitas, which in turn foster social capital and enhance the social fabric of the community.

One of the most significant criticisms made of Olympic events is the lack of transparency and inclusive debate in planning and implementation processes, as well as a lack of accountability for public expenditure (Jones, 2001; Owen, 2002). With the move to entrepreneurial governance at the local level, the increased involvement of the private sector in implementation activities has further reduced opportunities for public

debate (Jones, 2001) leading to exclusion and the diminution of trust. While exclusionary practices have a negative effect on social capital generation (Blackshaw & Long, 2005), the bidding and implementation arrangements do create horizontal and vertical linkages that might not otherwise exist between organisations, to achieve a common purpose (Putnam, 1995).

Events can act as catalysts for revitalising or forging new relationships between community organisations and individuals, leading to social connectivity and cohesion (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006). Such linkages allow the partners to access and use resources not normally available to them (Coleman, 1988). Whether the links are formal or informal, they reflect the trust and reciprocity that exist between organisations (Misener & Mason, 2006). Even in countries where Olympic bids were unsuccessful, the bidding process united stakeholders for a common purpose, if even for a short time (Andranovich et al., 2001). Newman (2007) described how the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Mayor of Greater London forged a common leadership style, when fronting the public celebrations that redefined the image of the East End of London. These celebrations fostered a sense of multicultural unity and wellbeing for Londoners and a sense of place within which locals can identify. Their positive feelings further enhance the experiences of tourists, and such positive images are attractive to potential new businesses for longer-term economic development of the area (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006; Eckstein & Delaney, 2002; Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Misener & Mason, 2006; Moscardo, 2007).

While urban elites may dominate the bidding process and hosting arrangements for mega-events, at the cost of creating inequalities and marginalizing others, it can also be argued that elites use events to develop economic capital that would subsequently be beneficial to the community with new jobs and improved environment (Misener & Mason, 2006).

Civic rebuilding serves to reinforce the social divide of underprivileged and under-represented citizens. Communities that object to any aspect of event plans are able to forge horizontal links, through bonding and bridging, to shift the balance of power and ensure that the needs of their community are heard and, possibly, addressed (Misener & Mason, 2006; Owen, 2002). Newman (2007) commented that as the International Olympic Committee dominates arrangements, only through local activism can

communities hope to gain local benefits. Misener and Mason (2006) suggested that because activist groups bring together like-minded individuals with common purpose, they have developed social capital. However, the literature also highlights that the most disadvantaged are most unlikely to engage in activism because they are not sufficiently educated or connected (Owen, 2002).

If public governance is to foster a balance that builds social trust and inclusiveness in their communities, then Misener and Mason (2006) argued that local authorities should acknowledge these groups as legitimate stakeholders. To ensure that communities and groups are not marginalized by the power of elite groups, their involvement in planning and implementation through bidding, implementation and post-closing ceremony activities is essential to ensure that community needs are addressed (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Misener & Mason, 2006; Moscardo, 2007; Owen, 2002). Meaningful inclusion and consultation leads to local residents interacting in positive ways through new relationships thus contributing to social capital (Misener & Mason, 2006; Moscardo, 2007). So long as planning and communication and reporting mechanisms are seen to be transparent, the potential for greed or corruption is minimised, and the consequent loss of trust by the community avoided (Reid, 2007). There is always the potential for the media to undermine social capital in its reporting of any inadvertent or inappropriate activities at events (Jones, 2001). Of particular interest in this study will be the degree to which there is a commonly held sense of identity and place in Taupo.

2.9 Volunteering at recreational sport events

The nature of sport participation varies between playing, spectating, and volunteering all of which result in differing social outcomes (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). As the concept of social capital generation through sport has evolved so too has the study of volunteerism as a rich source of social capital (Wilson, 2000). Reflecting a commonly agreed viewpoint, Doherty and Misener (2008) stated “volunteerism is an expression of social trust and reciprocity. It is a form of social citizenship that involves active participation in the life of a community” (p.120). Skinner et al. (2008), citing Coalter, suggested that Putnam’s emphasis on volunteers and the nature of their associations within communities proved attractive to central government policy-makers

because of the potential of voluntary organisations to act effectively for the common good, and minimising reliance on formal relationships. Sport professionals have traditionally focused more on short-term outputs that benefit sport rather than engaging in sustainable long-term community ventures based on common goals (Lawson, 2005; Vail, 2007). The latter have, and continue to be the domain of central government (Owen, 2002).

Sport professionals work in partnership with volunteers from local communities and bridge relationships to other "experts" (Onyx et al., 2004). The challenges of delivering events on time and within budget, in an age of increased individualism and materialism, demand creative solutions. Volunteers have become a scarce, valuable resource. Without them events could not occur (Costa, Chalip, Green, & Simes, 2006; Cuskelly, 2008; Elstad, 2003; Gaskin, 2008; Ralston et al., 2005; Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2007; Wilson, 2000).

With the age of professional sport management and the bureaucratisation of sport events, the generation of social capital has been stymied by volunteers' inability or unwillingness to either support events or become members of organising committees (Harvey, Levesque & Donnelly, 2007; Wilson, 2000). Paradoxically, volunteering for events adds to the social capital stock of a community and individuals, as they develop skills and knowledge, fostering community development opportunities as well as enhancing social cohesion and connectivity (Putnam et al., 2004; Reid, 2007). Those additional skills, and the experience of volunteering, are more likely to generate future volunteerism at other non-sporting activities over the long-term, and build a sustainable additional social capital resource in the community (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006; Downward & Ralston, 2006). Capturing relevant and valid data that accurately depicts the volunteer effort provides a context for future policy developments and event strategies. It is important that organisations that are intent on using recreational sport events for economic development must first ascertain whether grassroots volunteers believe the strategy will impact favourably on the community.

2.10 Sport event volunteers and the generation of social capital

Volunteers are shown to have a pivotal role in community development, variously acting as catalysts for new services, forging new bonds within communities, and enabling bridging links to those organisations which share a common purpose (Doherty & Misener, 2008; Harvey et al., 2007; Onyx et al., 2004). As a social capital resource they are valued because they demonstrate commitment to contributing to the wellbeing of their community, which goes beyond informal caring and neighbourly support, without reward (Onyx et al., 2004; Wilson, 2000). Volunteers support sport and sport events for a variety of reasons, including personal motivations and characteristics (Doherty, 2009; Shaw, 2009). Individually and as a group they contribute and benefit from the development and maintenance of social capital to varying degrees (Cuskelly, 2008; Doherty & Misener, 2008).

The Olympic Games attract large numbers of volunteers – 41,000 in Sydney in 2000 rising to 70,000 at Beijing in 2008 (Costa, Chalip, Green, & Simes, 2006). In France, Germany and Finland respectively, there are 26, 40 and 60 volunteers per 1,000 population involved in sport. In the UK, a citizenship survey reported that one-third of the adult population participate in sport (Coalter, 2007), with the economic value of volunteering estimated at £13 million per year (Haezewindt, 2003). Mega-events draw individual volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds and include people who would not normally step forward to assist within their neighbourhood or community (Ralston et al., 2005). While national surveys suggest that men and women volunteer equally, community-based studies report that the gender balance reflects the demographic profile of event participants (Downward & Ralston, 2006).

Once again reflecting the 'shifting sands' of society, the demographics of volunteering have changed. As people age, their social roles are reshaped, and with an ageing population a growing pool of healthy retired volunteers is able to contribute more hours to sport volunteering (Downward & Ralston, 2006). Cuskelly (2008) observed that a small proportion of volunteers invest longer hours than the majority. This small pool develops rich social networks that have a more concentrated impact on the creation of social capital than do general volunteers. While there is some conflict about whether young males or females are more likely to volunteer, the evidence

suggests that the allocated roles for males and females across all age groups reflect gender assumptions. For women, volunteering is closely tied to friendships; for males it is more closely aligned to complementing their work life (Downward & Ralston, 2006; Onyx et al., 2004; Ralston et al., 2005; Wilson, 2000). However, as Cuskelly (2008) indicated, those most involved in sport volunteering struggle to maintain a balance between their family, work and volunteer commitments, making the development of social capital "erratic and ephemeral rather than ordered and enduring" (p.201). He questioned how trust and reciprocity is sufficiently generated by time-stressed individuals when its impact on social capital is so dependent upon the quality of their social interactions.

Sport volunteers are more civically active than non-sport volunteers and are much more likely to remain civically active across a wide range of activities into their older years (Downward & Ralston, 2006; Harvey et al., 2007). Those already engaged in networks are more likely to be known by other community members and therefore more likely to be invited to volunteer in other activities than less networked people (Cuskelly, 2008). Long-term volunteers are motivated to act on behalf of their sport, while short-term volunteers do so for personal benefit (Harvey et al., 2007). Longer-established events are most likely to develop a pool of people with the core competencies to sustain the event, so long as the appropriate environment and incentives are in place to attract and retain volunteers (Allen & Shaw, 2009; Downward & Ralston, 2006; Ralston et al., 2005; Wilson, 2000).

As the volunteerism literature explains, there are a wide range of motivational factors at play as to why people begin volunteering and why they continue to do so, or not, into their older years (Allen & Shaw, 2009; Elstad, 2003; Isham, Kolodinsky & Kimberley, 2006; Wardell, Lishman, Whalley, 2000; Wilson, 2000). Volunteers' motivations are found within relationships of trust, where reciprocity and the cohesion of common purpose and sense of identity underpin their interactions (Putnam, 2000; Putnam et al., 2004).

Coalter (2008) highlighted that not all volunteers aspire to Putnam's organic perspective of social capital. A number among them will likely only volunteer if incentives are provided, which Coalter (2008) relates to Coleman's model of instrumental self-interest. While children may learn the value of civic activity or sport

volunteering from their parents (Wilson, 2000), in later years motives are more closely aligned with a sense of satisfaction from using their skills, or acknowledged as a valued resource by event managers and by association with an event that is valued by, and creates value for, the community and friends and family (Allen & Shaw, 2009; Costa et al., 2006; Elstad, 2003; Isham et al., 2006; Wardell et al., 2000; Wilson, 2000). Taking a different perspective, Gaskin (2008) suggested that when club organisers promote their club as a resource for the community they sustain the life of the club. This is the (re)production of social capital in action (Putnam et al., 2004).

2.11 Measuring social capital

Measuring social capital consistently is difficult because there are so many characteristics and variables within its definition. Making sufficiently clear distinctions between sources of social capital (relationships), the possible benefits (resources), as well as the cause and effect dimension challenges the construction of comparative measures. As Nicholson and Hoye (2008) posited, logic would suggest that the more connections an individual has forged within their social environment, the better the community's environment. However, they caution that even where individuals can access resources it does not always result in the same outcomes for individuals within a group.

As might be expected, given the multi-dimensional interpretations and understanding of social capital, a wide range of questions and perspectives have been addressed in the literature. The majority were qualitative studies, in pursuit of perceptions and voices. There were very few efforts to measure social capital in relation to volunteers within community sport event settings, though a number do evaluate volunteers' perceptions at mega-events like the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. As noted by Taylor, Williams, Dal Grande, and Herriott (2006), many surveys do not produce overly valuable results. This point is further reinforced by the lack of conclusive evidence on how best to measure social capital.

While Putnam's model lends itself to quantitative measurement of participation levels (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008), both Doherty and Misener (2008) and Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) noted that social capital is often measured by the number of participants rather than the outcomes inherent in the nature of relationships, which

shift over time. While they have structure, relationships occur at different levels with different expectations on the parts of actors (Reimer et al., 2008), and are more akin to Bourdieu's qualitative approach to allow individual voices to be heard (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008). Cuskelly (2008) reiterates the difficulty of measuring the relational aspects, namely norms of trust and reciprocity, which impact the structural factors (network size, density and links between a variety of disparate organisations) which in turn generate social capital.

Doherty and Misener (2008) created the model in Figure 2.1 below to illuminate the process by which social capital is produced or reproduced. By way of explanation, the model denotes that actively involved people within a group accrue social capital (or 'social energy') as a consequence of meaningful communications, collaborations or cooperation with others. Over time they come to trust one another and to rely on the norms of reciprocity and cooperation, leading to the evolution of durable meaningful connections with others in the group. Such connections within the group reflect the strong bonds experienced between like-minded people, but can also serve to exclude. Over time, as those connections strengthen, so the 'social energy' of the original group extends into new groups and networks as its members forge new connections to others dissimilar to themselves. The impetus of engagement leads to the formation of bridging connections, which according to Doherty and Misener (2008) are common to vertical alliances intended to leverage resources from formal institutions for the benefit of the original group. Social capital is an unintended by-product of such economically driven alliances.

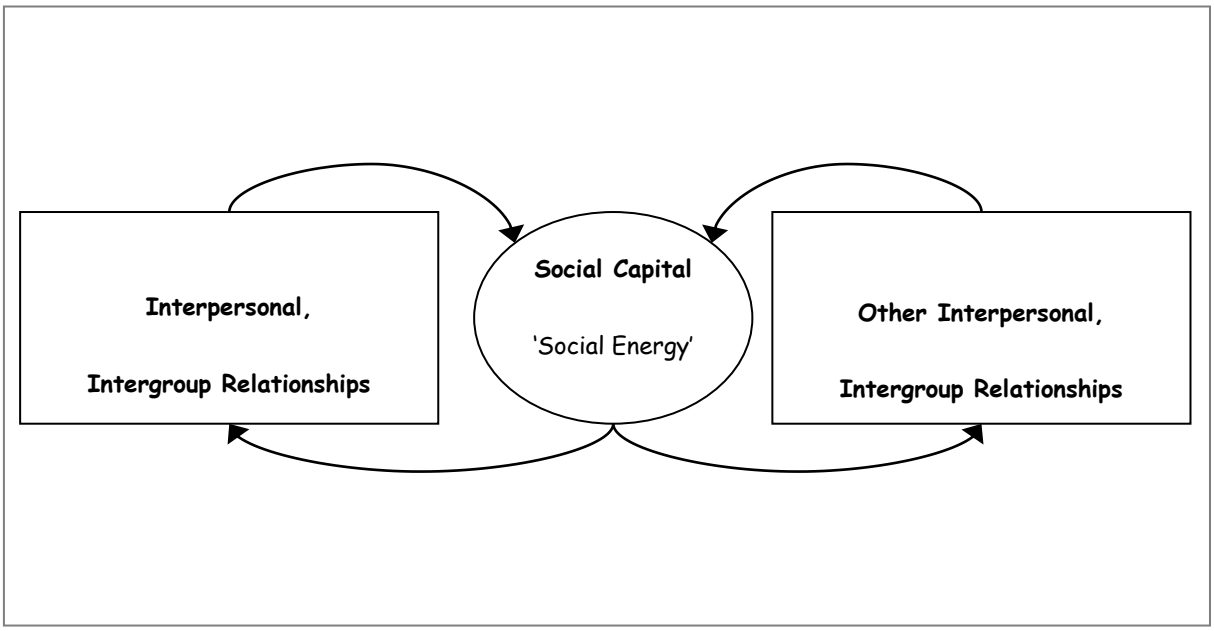


Figure 2.1- The (re)production of social capital Doherty & Misener (2008, p.119)

In applying the model, Doherty and Misener (2008) suggested that the researcher must be clear about the driving perspective of the social capital being measured -- economic incentives, social energy that impacts the wider community, or the collective endeavour -- in order to assess if the interactions do indeed impact the creation and maintenance of social capital for individuals, the group or the community. Is it possible, for instance, to ascertain if a collective of volunteers, drawn from diverse community groups and sports clubs in support of an economically driven events programme, can enable their town to "get ahead", rather than simply "get by" (Putnam et al., 2004)?

As mentioned, social capital is a complex, constantly shifting concept that defies easy measurement. Many studies have shown that there are indicators that might inform the availability of social capital as a resource, but as yet there is no quantifiable way to determine if it has grown or has been depleted (Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000). Efforts to minimise the apparent contradictions of the concept to simplify measurements have led to lengthy surveys and questionnaires that would defy even the most willing of volunteers to complete (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006; Friedman & Mason, 2004; Statistics New Zealand, 2008; Spellerberg, 2001). Where questionnaires have been short, insufficient data has been gathered, hindering the ongoing development of theory. Additionally, the fact that stakeholders in communities that are impacted by sport events will invariably hold different perspectives from the event stakeholders

further compounds the issue (Friedman & Mason, 2004, Moscardo, 2007, Reid, 2007). It is these kinds of complexities that have restrained investigators in the development of holistic methods of measuring social capital generation. Even though the actions of actors in utilising social capital may be quantifiable, the intangibility of its creation hinders the definition of what might usefully be measured.

Qualitative studies provide a sense of whether individuals or groups believe that their communities have a stock of social capital, but the answers rely on perceptions not facts (Ralston, Downward & Lumsdon, 2004). While the present qualitative study is constrained to a particular point in time, its location in a small community that has a vested interest in sustaining its economic fortune means there is the potential for it to be used as a baseline for assessing the presence of social capital indicators and the process through which social capital is produced and reproduced.

2.12 Conclusion and research intent

The overt promotion of sport and sport events and the premature adoption of the social capital concept by central government in pursuit of social policies have led to increased discussion and research. As the burgeoning literature demonstrates, social capital is an elusive concept, replete with contradictions and paradoxes. A common theme that has emerged from the literature is that social capital is neither static nor uni-dimensional and the means and methods for measuring it are not easy to define. It may in fact defy simple measurement.

Furthermore, the literature on social capital continues to re-iterate the dichotomy in measuring cause and effect, when in fact they are both present throughout the circle of events. Therefore, in its simplest form, if socio-economic policies influence the behaviour of organisations, which in turn influence the ability of individuals to create bonds in groups and bridges across networks, social capital is generated. Following on from that, the presence of social capital inherent in the relationships in a community facilitates its further accrual as individuals influence organisations, which in turn influence socio-economic policies. The stock of social capital is drawn upon, like tangible resources, as and when it serves the needs of an individual or a group.

Depending on the actors or organisations involved, and the degree of inclusion or exclusion afforded them, social capital is created and used for common purpose over an

agreed period of time. While it may be stored, there is no guarantee that it will be used because people, organisations, policies and circumstances change, and normative structures shift as a consequence. The transitory nature of most sport events adds a temporal impact in communities. Even if social capital is acquired through events, the community has to agree the next common purpose on which it might expend the resource. What might be a useful resource for one project may not actually serve any benefit to the next. The skills and knowledge acquired and resources exchanged through the event may not be relevant. Or, the new project may require the involvement of a different group of people with connections in new networks. There is also every possibility that central government may revise its policy ambitions, and local authorities will have to respond to those new demands.

By endeavouring to understand the myriad of complexities and the limitations of measurement in relation to social capital, sport event professionals and organisations will be better placed to contribute towards the growth of social capital in those communities that partner with them to deliver successful events. As stated previously, government policies and territorial authorities' strategies set the framework within which events occur. Lacking, however, is consultation with the volunteers, without whom events could not be delivered.

Volunteers are key stakeholders both within events and within their local communities. They are considered, within the literature, to be repositories of social capital which according to Putnam et al. (2004) should bode well for the cohesiveness and collective identity of their community. Depending on their personal motivations, their perspectives may or may not acknowledge that there is a stock of social capital on which to draw for the benefit of the wider community. This study used the social capital construct to address the research aim: "To investigate the perceptions of sport event volunteers about the presence of social capital in their social interactions and its impact on the production of social capital in Taupo (the location of the study)". Insights that emerge may better inform the sustainability of the volunteer force in support of Taupo's economic and events strategies. The outcomes will contribute to the ongoing discourse of social capital and may also prove transferable to other contexts where a greater understanding of social capital is relevant.

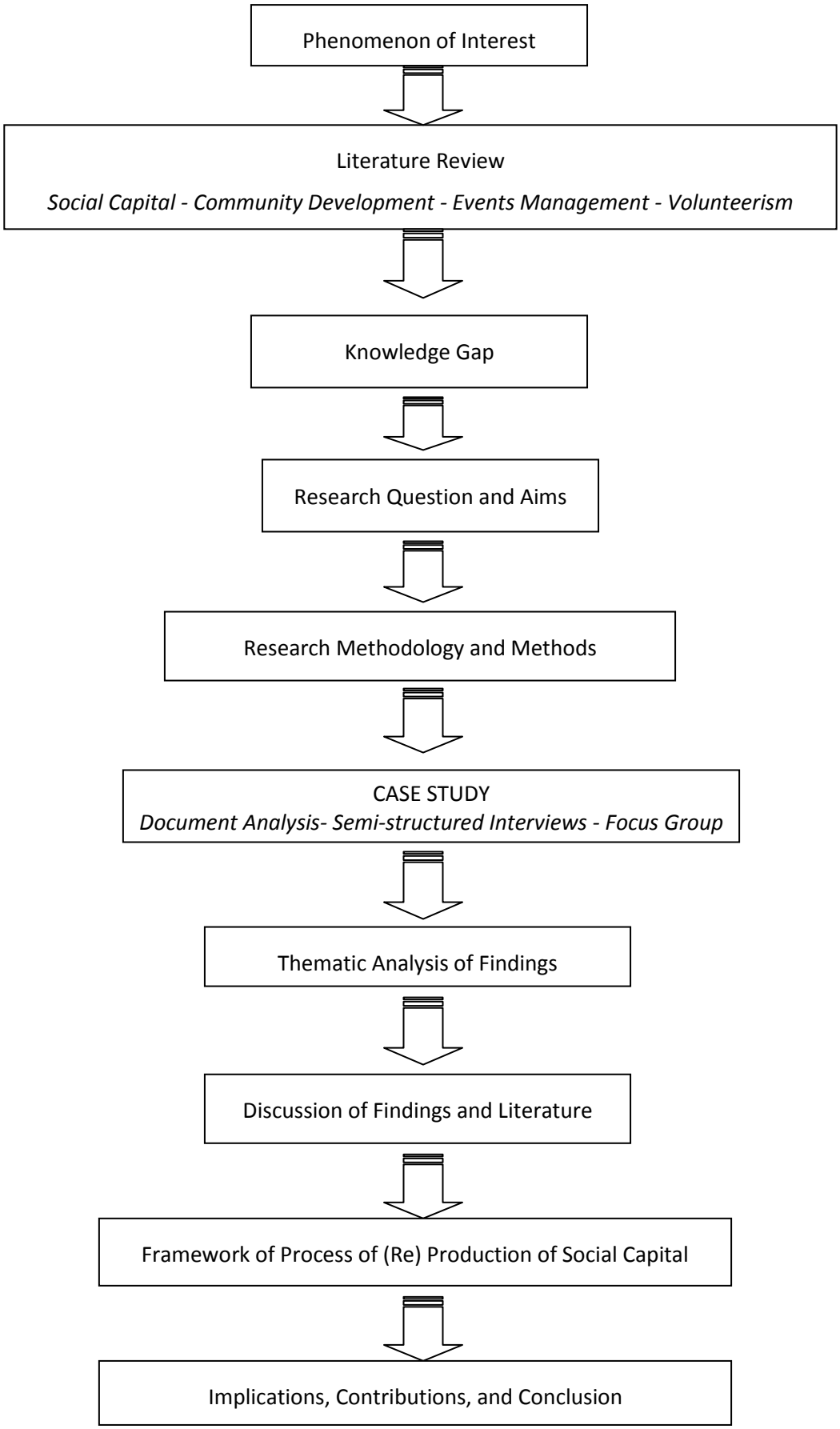
3. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND METHODS

Chapter Two involved a synthesis of the literature on the social capital construct, community development policies, and on the volunteerism framework. The review also highlighted gaps in knowledge that informed the research question. This chapter outlines the research framework and assumptions made about the research aim that guided the emergence of the research question and consequent selection of qualitative research methods. A diagrammatic explanation of the research design is provided at Figure 3.1.

3.1 Research paradigm

The interpretive research paradigm guiding this study is predicated upon ontological and epistemological considerations of the researcher. Edwards and Skinner (2009) suggested that paradigms "encompass the sharing of a belief system" (p.18). Grant and Giddings (2002) indicated paradigms provide a framework through which the researcher can "bring order out of the chaos of social life" (p.11). This is reinforced by Edwards and Skinner (2009) in their description of qualitative research as a means "to find out what happens, how it happens, and why it happens" (p.49). Grant and Giddings (2002) further assert that in determining which paradigm might best be employed in the investigation in question, it is important for the researcher to confirm their ontological position as reflected by their basic beliefs and the nature of reality (Grant & Giddings, 2002). The confirmed ontological position then provides the basis on which an epistemology can be developed to allow the researcher to define "…the nature of the relationship between enquirer and known, what counts as knowledge, and on what basis we can make knowledge claims" (Grant & Giddings, 2002, p.12). As Edwards and Skinner (2009) stated, a framework is then created within which the emergent data can be interpreted. The researcher has a strong interest in the topic under investigation (social capital) borne out of roles as both a sport event organiser and a sport event volunteer. The researcher's view of the world is informed by a natural curiosity about the interactions that guide people's actions. As social capital (the topic under investigation) is produced through relationships (Bourdieu, 1997; Coleman, 1998; Putnam, 1995), there is a synchronicity between the researcher's 'reality' and the topic.

Figure 3.1: Research Design



Ontologically, it is important to explore the organisational and personal networks within which event volunteers interact. Epistemologically, the stories of participants are paramount (Grant & Giddings, 2002). Coincidentally, Bourdieu (1997) asserted that the voices of individuals are paramount to better understand the manifestations of social capital. Grant and Giddings (2002) outlined the researcher's role as that of listener and interpreter of experiences and the meanings ascribed to them, requiring reflexivity.

Of equal importance to framing the research question and deciding the methods to be employed is the methodology, or modes of inquiry, that guides how valid knowledge, or 'truth', is acquired through legitimate inquiry of human experiences (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Edwards & Skinner, 2009; Grant & Giddings, 2002). As was evidenced in Chapter Two, the majority of research on the social capital construct has relied on qualitative research techniques to bring clarity to understanding how social capital is manifested and its outcomes. Phenomenology, according to Grant and Giddings (2002), provides the theoretical basis through which a researcher might unearth stories and capture the essence of the experiences of participants. As this study sought to understand perceptions of event volunteers, the selection of phenomenological methodology led to the choice of a case study approach, using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion as the methods by which to acquire and mine the rich data contained in their stories and experiences. To provide the ontological environmental context from which their experiences emanated, document analysis was used to complement the data. More is written on these choices in the ensuing paragraphs.

3.2 Case study approach

In their synthesis of research designs, Edwards and Skinner (2009) explain the variety of ways in which case studies have been used strategically to present and analyse data "…about single or multiple subjects, in relation to an event, culture or individual life"(p.202). Case studies are not one-dimensional. Rather, Yin (1994) asserted that the case study provides an holistic approach to investigate phenomena within their real life context. This is especially important when there are no clear boundaries between context and phenomena (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). Such is the

blurred nature of social capital, which has been described in the literature as both a process and an outcome (Putnam et al., 2004). Only more recently have contemporary studies in the social capital discourse sought to distinguish between the generation of social capital (process) and the use of social capital (outcome) (Doherty & Misener, 2008; Putnam et al., 2004; Reimer et al., 2008). Such studies have examined the strength and intensity of relationships to better understand the impact they might have on the quality and ongoing production of social capital. As highlighted in Chapter Two, social capital is an elusive, complex, intangible concept because it is borne out of relationships (Coalter, 2008; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008; Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2008).

DePoy and Gitlin (2005) believed that a case study approach is especially useful in explicating deeper understandings of a phenomenon and generating new insights. Its use, therefore, fits with the research aim of this study which is to provide greater understanding and new insights of the production of social capital and its location within normative structures through the detailed descriptions provided by the perceptions of volunteers. The study was initially designed as a single holistic case study in Taupo. A naturalistic approach provided the flexibility necessary to adapt the research design as new data and new insights emerged through the study (DePoy & Gitlin, 2005). These new data led to the metamorphosis of an embedded case study with four sub-parts. As DePoy and Gitlin (2005) have noted, embedded case studies allow the researcher to determine the dynamics between individuals and groups. The sub-parts of the study reflect the normative structural relationship dimensions within Taupo's sport events industry. The sub-parts reflect the four dimensions, or spheres of structural relations, namely, bureaucratic, associative, communal, and market relations. Subsequent descriptive analysis revealed the depth and breadth of interactions in those spheres and how they impacted the generation of social capital.

3.3 Selection of study site participants

To select the study site and arrive at the boundaries of the unit of analysis, Edwards and Skinner (2009) recommended that criteria are applied that reflect the context of the study. Purposive sampling, as suggested by DePoy and Gitlin (2005) led to the selection of an appropriate location, with appropriate sport events, a sufficient number of participants and where the organisational arrangements appeared to

adequately reflect the nature of the commercial event industry within New Zealand. These criteria are described in the following paragraphs. Purposive sampling allows for increased understanding (DePoy & Gitlin, 2005) and while some may argue that a single case study limits the ability to generalise results across study sites, Yin (1994) emphasised that case studies generalise to theoretical propositions not to populations.

3.3.1 Selection of location

As a small country, New Zealand promotes itself internationally as an accomplished sporting nation, and a number of territorial authorities have invested in event strategies to compete for sport tourists. This is evident in the hosting of the Rugby World Cup 2011 by a number of cities and small towns throughout New Zealand. Moreover, rural towns have a stronger sense of community and identity which produces more durable social capital (Onyx & Bullen, 2000).

For the purpose of this study, it was essential to identify a town that experienced a wide range of events which were reliant on volunteers for their success. Central Taupo has a population of circa 21,000 people year-round and is a popular destination for tourists. Its local economy is dependent on both farming and on the outdoor tourist industry. It proclaims itself to be the events capital of New Zealand, boasting a calendar filled with sport events throughout the year that regularly attract thousands of competitors and spectators, supported by a strong base of volunteers. As a consequence of hosting the internationally-franchised Ironman New Zealand event for the past 11 years it has branded itself as an iconic events destination. It appeared to provide access to a long-term committed volunteer pool. It was also important to select a town with a successful reputation within New Zealand so that other towns might learn from proven experience. Taupo appeared to fulfil that criterion.

3.3.2 Selection of events

In framing the case study, both Bryman and Bell (2007) and Edwards and Skinner (2009) alert the researcher to be mindful of time constraints. The timetable for completion of this master's thesis necessarily limited the scale of the research and the selection of events that occurred within the available timeframe. The two events, which were illustrative of the range of events appearing on the calendar, posed some interesting comparisons. Such comparisons of what might be considered to be a

'research hunch' could provide alternative perspectives (Bryman & Bell, 2007). For instance, would volunteers at a for-profit commercial event be found to be in it for themselves, with no thought of the contributions they might make to the social capital of their community? And, in a community organised event, with a clear mission to support the local community, would volunteers possess a stronger personal commitment to contributing to the social benefit of the community?

Selection of the events was primarily based on the potential to learn about phenomena (DePoy & Gitlin, 2005). Selection of Ironman New Zealand as the commercial event was considered imperative, not only because of its iconic international reputation but also because it requires a massive volunteer crew – nearly 2,000 volunteers (Ironman New Zealand, 2009). In its 11th year in Taupo in 2009 it provided a rare opportunity to investigate long-term commitment by and within a community and its subsequent impact on the social capital stock.

The second event selected, following a trawl of event websites, was the Mizuno Half Marathon held annually in August. Relocated from Hamilton to Taupo in 1993, Taupo Harriers Club (Taupo Harriers) initially organised the half marathon event that has a stated mission of being organised 'by the community, for the community', a clear espousal of social capital in operation. While no longer 'owned' by Taupo Harriers, a local event management company assisted by a volunteer organising committee drawn from the community continues to organise the event, now in its 16th year. It draws competitors from the local region and further afield in New Zealand. Funds raised provide scholarships for local youth to participate in national and international sport competitions, another demonstration of social capital in action. The event relies on a pool of nearly 200 volunteers (Taupo Half Marathon Society, 2009).

3.3.3 Selection of volunteers

Apart from setting the volunteer pools within the context of Taupo's demographics it is as important to understand the organisational context within which the study is based (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Thus it was important to enquire about the process used by the event organisations to recruit volunteers. As the study evolved it was discovered that the overwhelming majority of general volunteers recruited by both events were drawn from community organisations and sports clubs which stood to

benefit financially. With the exception of organising committee volunteers, there were very few individuals truly volunteering their time for these events. This discovery added a further unforeseen, but welcome, dimension to the social capital study as it provided the opportunity to witness groups in action and the extent to which bonding ties led to bridging between group networks to facilitate the supply of volunteers. The financial incentives suggested that there were more than individual motives at work for the volunteers. The offering of incentives also implied that event organisers were leveraging network resources for their own ends. This additional knowledge provided a platform for questions within semi-structured interviews and the focus group (Bryman & Bell, 2007; DePoy & Gitlin, 2005) of which more is written later. As noted earlier, it also led to purposive sampling of participants for the case study.

With support from Destination Lake Taupo, the Council-controlled marketing organisation responsible for tourism and sport events, the researcher was able to access a manager in their organisation and a commercial event owner/manager who fortuitously had long-term involvement in both Ironman New Zealand and the Mizuno Half Marathon. Both managers also facilitated links to volunteer event organisation committee members, a number of whom offered to meet with the researcher.

Obtaining participants for the focus group discussions was more problematic. As recounted earlier, accessing individual volunteers proved to be an erroneous step as in fact community groups were the source of crew for events. In the first draft of the research design, the aim was to seek focus group participants from amongst respondents to a proposed survey. Six people volunteered to participate in a focus group discussion. However, arranging a common date for all to attend proved impossible because they were each busy with their lives. It was also discovered subsequently that at least four of them were dedicated, strongly committed volunteers and members of organising committees of different events. While their participation in a focus group would have provided another perspective of social capital, there would have been insufficient representation of "general" volunteers in the discussion. As Bryman and Bell, (2007) and Edwards and Skinner, (2009) warn, greater validity and credibility result from a wider, more diverse representation of viewpoints.

The realisation part way through the study that volunteers were recruited via community groups and sports clubs, together with the practical problem of gathering a

sufficient spread of people for a focus group, necessitated finding an alternative means of gaining individual perceptions about social capital in the making. The original six focus group volunteers were each asked if they would be prepared to facilitate a one-off meeting of their community group or sports club with the researcher. One of the six arranged a focus group of nine members of Taupo Harriers, each of whom described differing levels of commitment to volunteering both within their club and for sport events in the town. While all focus group members were from one club, their age range and backgrounds provided sufficient diversity of perspectives that contributed to the data. More is written below about the structure of these interviews and focus group discussions and the indicative questions posed.

3.4 Specifying the phenomena

As essential as it was to narrow numbers to contain the study within the timeframe, it was also necessary to sustain a sharp focus on which aspects of the social capital construct were to be explored if the case study was to yield sufficient data for cross-validation during triangulation. Bryman and Bell (2005) indicated that clarity of outcomes is key when specifying the phenomena under investigation. The concern of this study, unlike government initiatives, was not about social inclusion outcomes. Rather, its aim was to release the voices of individuals whose volunteer actions and interactions are constrained by the framework of local government policies and event operations. Acquiring their perceptions of social capital within their community was one of the desired outcomes. Thus, within the social capital construct, the following indicators of the presence of social capital were explored to better understand the context and process within which volunteers perceived social capital is generated:-

- social cohesion, community participation and commitment;
- a sense of place and common purpose;
- norms of trust and reciprocity; and
- bonds and bridges that connect, or exclude, people and groups.

The second desired outcome was to improve the understanding of normative structures and mechanisms at play in the production of social capital through the experiences of the volunteers. As Bryman and Bell (2007) highlighted it is through the

careful selection and construction of appropriate qualitative tools that the data is elucidated and the aims of the research achieved.

3.5 Selecting qualitative tools

There were two purposes of gathering data through qualitative techniques. Firstly, for context setting it was necessary to understand the extent of organisational commitment (Bryman & Bell, 2007) to sustaining a stock of social capital in the Taupo community. The researcher was keen to learn if the language of policy documents and their operational interpretation reflect a desire to preserve or enhance the social fabric of the town. Document analysis was used for this purpose. It provided a non-intrusive, non-reactive means of acquiring knowledge (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). From documents and websites it was possible to acquire knowledge about the historical policy and operational context of the emergence of the commercial sport event strategy. This knowledge informed the construction of indicative questions for the semi-structured interviews, and paved the way to accessing new materials not generally available. More is written about the process of document analysis in this study in later paragraphs in this chapter.

Secondly, more specifically, if the perceptions of volunteers were to contribute to a greater understanding of how social capital was personified through individual and group actions and interactions, then it was essential to provide opportunities for volunteers' perceptions to be shared and their voices heard. Therefore, to secure a reflection of the differing levels of commitment to events, a further two techniques to gathering personal stories of experiences and perceptions were employed. Firstly, as Bryman and Bell (2007) suggested, semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity to gather essential data as well as allow flexibility to pursue strands of discussion that emerge to add richness to the data. Through indicative questions there is room to guide discussion while exploring new ideas (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). Thus semi-structured interviews were arranged with two paid event managers and with two long-term dedicated volunteer event directors (VEDs). They provided opportunity to gather factual evidence, supplemented by an organisational perspective of social capital generation. The interviews with the paid event staff provided access to documents not generally available that further informed the organisational context. The interviews with the VEDs

followed a different path, as they recounted their critical role and experiences in bringing events and volunteers together. Attaining insights into their perspective of the social capital mechanisms was crucial to the study. More is written in later paragraphs about these interviews and the indicative questions posed, as well as the potential limitations of the technique.

The second technique used was that of focus group discussion. Edwards and Skinner (2009) described focus groups as semi-structured interviews with a number of participants that capitalise upon the group dynamic to generate data. By posing a series of open-ended questions, participants are encouraged to discuss important issues amongst themselves, triggering new ideas and debate. This offers the researcher much more data than might be generated through a one-on-one interview. Thus in using this technique, both individualised and group perceptions on the manifestation of social capital came to light through the focus group discussion. Later commentary describes the interactions, as well as the limitations, that occurred within the focus group discussion.

3.5.1 Document Analysis

In order to set the policy and operational context of volunteer activity, information was sourced from Taupo District Council, Destination Lake Taupo, and event managers for Ironman New Zealand and Mizuno Half Marathon events. Much of the material was sourced from websites thus avoiding the potential for influence by study participants to pursue particular threads, which might have distracted from the aims of the study. As Edwards and Skinner (2009) pointed out, to substantiate the validity of the documents used the researcher should seek confirmation about assumptions drawn from the materials. In the semi-structured interviews with the paid managers clarification was sought wherever necessary to confirm the researcher's assumptions or to add knowledge. The managers provided access to additional materials of value to the study.

The acquired materials were scanned for content that confirmed there was an awareness of or demonstrated civic or organisational commitment to enhancing the social fabric of Taupo. For instance, the researcher wanted to understand if the language of the documents reflected terminology or concepts used in the social capital

discourse, which talks of cohesion, trust and reciprocity, and providing meaningful forms of engagement for interaction between disparate segments of the community. Examining the historical evolution of the events calendar, and how volunteers came to be recruited also contributed to knowledge about the process by which social capital was generated within the events community in Taupo. This secondary source of material served as a useful complement to the data generated through the discussions (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

Materials were sourced that provided data about the range and types of activities that are available to the general population of Taupo as well as the number and types of events appearing on the publicised calendar of Destination Lake Taupo. Knowing the number and types of community groups and sports clubs that exist in Taupo, and which of those volunteer for which events added to the integrity of the subsequent analysis. As Putnam et al., (2004) commented, the more groups and clubs that serve communal needs across a wide range of activities the greater the available capital on which to draw (Putnam et al., 2004).

Similarly, at the event organisational level, quantifying numbers and types of events, their resource requirements, incentives and returns to the community is critical. The greater the number of regular, recurring sport events in the town the more opportunities are available for social interactions by volunteers, leading to a greater accrual and the expenditure of social capital (Doherty & Misener, 2008).

3.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with both paid staff and volunteer event directors. They provided an opportunity for semi-guided discussion through a series of indicative questions that confirmed factual details, but also allowed for free-flowing conversation on key themes. As previously explained the objectives of these one-on-one discussions were different between paid managers and VEDs so the flow of the questioning was different (refer Appendix 2). For discussions with the paid managers the prime objective was to gain data about their organisations as well as a sense of how organisational objectives were achieved within the context of social capital generation. Securing appointments with paid staff and volunteer event directors was relatively simple (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). Perhaps this was indicative of their

vested interest in promoting their events in the best light. The researcher was mindful of this potential bias in subsequent analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Semi-structured interviews were held on two occasions with each manager, one at the outset of data collection and a second to explore particular strands of evidence later in the process. Each interview lasted for between one and a half and two hours. The single occasion interviews with VEDs were more focused on their coordinating roles and interactions with event organisations and with community groups. Each of these interviews took two hours.

For the purposes of trustworthiness, credibility, and triangulation the interviews were digitally recorded for later analysis, and written notes were made to allow the researcher to return to points of specific interest if the respondent wandered too far away from the central point. Subsequent transcription of the recording also provided an opportunity for the researcher to listen more carefully to responses to better inform understanding. Respondents were also provided the opportunity to amend and approve a typed record of the discussion for triangulation purposes.

3.5.3 Focus group discussion

In the original draft of the research design, the goal was to seek focus group participants from amongst the 2,000 Ironman New Zealand volunteers and the 200 volunteers involved in the Mizuno Half Marathon event. It emerged part way through the study that volunteers were in fact recruited via community groups and sports clubs. To protect the privacy of the volunteers, the event manager issued an invitation to participate in the study. The communication passed from the event manager to several volunteer event directors, who in turn relayed it to their contacts in over 50 community groups for dissemination to their members. In hindsight, that was not the most efficient way to secure participation in the study. However, given the privacy concerns, valuable information about the structural arrangements was learned and contributed to a better understanding of the connections between networks. As Edwards and Skinner (2009) noted, case studies can be subject to logistical problems, but such issues are not insurmountable.

From that original invitation, six people volunteered to participate in a focus group discussion. However, arranging a common date for all to attend proved

impossible because each was busy with their lives. It was also discovered subsequently that at least four of the six were dedicated, strongly committed volunteers and members of organising committees of different events. While their participation in a focus group would have provided another perspective of social capital, there would have been insufficient representation of "general" volunteers in the discussion.

As explained earlier, it was decided that an alternative means of gaining individual perceptions of social capital in the making would be to arrange a meeting with one community group. A focus group meeting was arranged with nine members of Taupo Harriers, each of whom described differing levels of commitment to volunteering both within their club and for sport events in the town. The researcher was aware of the potential for bias in using Taupo Harriers volunteers in the focus group discussion. Earlier investigations revealed that Taupo Harriers had been instrumental in launching the Mizuno Half Marathon event which might bias some of the discussion. Given the sport codes of both events, and the sport code of the club, there was another element of bias of which to be aware. However, both links were considered useful as they might provide a thread for exploring social interactions and network connections emanating from the specific sport interest and from the historical association between the club and the event to better inform the process of social capital generation.

The two hour discussion in the group was informed by indicative questions (refer Appendix 3) that had emerged from earlier stages of the study, including picking up on themes that had arisen during semi-structured interviews with event directors and paid staff. As all present knew one another, the spontaneity of the group enabled a free-flowing exploration of individual and group connections as well as sense of identity and place. The degree of comfort between the group members also ensured that no one view would prevail without group accord. Another unintended output from the group discussion was some further factual evidence of event organisation within Taupo that does not appear on the Destination Lake Taupo calendar, such as the North Island Cross-Country Championships, yet it attracts people from around the country annually, and relies on a supply of volunteers to make it happen. It provided yet further insights into the motivations and commitment levels of individuals as they described interactions at several levels.

As with the semi-structured interviews, for the purposes of trustworthiness, credibility, and triangulation the discussion was digitally recorded for later analysis, and written notes were made to allow the researcher to return to points of specific interest if the respondents wandered too far away from the central point. Subsequent transcription of the recording also provided an opportunity for the researcher to listen more carefully to responses to better inform understanding. This was especially important as the spontaneous dynamic of the group led to rapid exchanges of ideas and comments which needed to be captured. Respondents were later provided with the opportunity to amend and approve a typed record of the discussion for triangulation purposes.

As the research process evolves, DePoy and Gitlin (2002) emphasised how important it is for the researcher to reflect on their biases. Given the researcher continues to volunteer for organised major and minor sport events and has previously managed events designed to benefit local communities, special care was taken to hold to the indicative questions during discussions to avoid bias, and to ensure that the voices of the respondents were held paramount when reflecting upon the theoretical contributions.

3.5.4 Ethical considerations

By providing study participants with clear information about the nature and purpose of a study provides a useful segue into discussions (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Requiring the informed consent of participants confirms they have entered the study freely. This study represented a low risk research project. Participant volunteers received plain language statements explaining the purpose of the study, the methods to be employed with explanations of how information would be recorded, transcribed and reported to preserve their anonymity. An example is attached at Appendix 4.

As Edwards and Skinner (2009) stressed, research protocol is designed with the well-being and dignity of the participants in mind. That takes precedence over any benefits of knowledge that may be acquired from the study. While the study aimed to release the voices of participants, names have not been used in reporting the study to ensure anonymity of all participants. Instead, coded initials indicate the source of comments, and to distinguish between organisational settings, as follows: -

- event managers = EM;
- organising committee members (also known as volunteer event directors) = VED; and
- focus group participants = FG;

Preserving the anonymity of individual focus group participants was relatively straightforward to achieve by coding their comments to the group. For the two VEDs, any personal information that could identify them was excluded from reporting to preserve their anonymity as far as possible. However, for the two event managers the task was less straightforward given the events, their location, and given the fact that both managers were well known within the sport event industry in Taupo. Each knew the risk of being identified prior to securing their agreement to participate. Nonetheless their names are not used in reporting. Furthermore, all participants were provided with opportunities to validate the accuracy and tone of their comments once transcriptions were available. They were able to withdraw any statements with which they were unhappy. All were aware that they were able to withdraw at any stage from the research up until the time the thesis is submitted.

Data generated by the research is to be securely stored in line with the requirements of Auckland University of Technology Ethical Committee (Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee, 2009) to further protect the privacy of participants. A copy of the approval letter to undertake the research is attached at Appendix 5.

3.5.5 Limitations of the study

Earlier sections have mentioned the time, scale and logistical limitations that impacted the selection of the events and volunteers, as well as the phenomena under investigation. While some researchers may argue that a single case study limits the ability to generalise results across study sites, Yin (1994) emphasised that case studies generalise to theoretical propositions not to populations. Though the number of participants in this case study was low, it is considered that sufficient insight was gained into the process of the production of social capital and its impact on the normative structures of the study site for the findings to make a contribution to the social capital discourse.

It is also considered that other small event-centred towns in New Zealand may gain greater understanding of the issues that impact their arrangements, whether or not their events are driven by economic or social gains. So, too, may the insights have relevance to other contexts where social capital production is of interest.

3.6 Next steps in the process

This chapter has described how the research design was arrived at and adapted as new knowledge was acquired by the researcher. It is important to note that Destination Lake Taupo, the Council-controlled organisation responsible for marketing tourism and events in the region, is keen to sustain the long-term viability of its volunteer pool in support of the town's economic strategy (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009). There was strong support of the research by the personnel involved in the hope that it will provide insights to better inform future leveraging of resources. Throughout the study, Destination Lake Taupo facilitated access to relevant information, event organisations and volunteers. While the researcher will share the findings with Destination Lake Taupo, an important objective of the research is to add to the body of knowledge of social capital and the volunteer discourse.

In the next chapters, the results and outcomes of the techniques will be explained. The narrative will show the thematic coding and analysis of the findings relevant to the indicators of social capital, as well as the relevance of the findings to the body of literature. Finally, the interpretations of the process of production of social capital, using established frameworks, are reflected in the contribution this body of work might make to improved practices and theory.

4. CONTEXT OF CASE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter an explanation has been given of why and how the location and events were selected in this case study. This chapter elaborates upon the organisational and environmental influences that provide a framework for better understanding the social interactions of volunteers. The data for this chapter has been drawn from analysis of documents and interviews with event managers. Not only are facts and figures enumerated but also the researcher has aimed to provide insights into the ways in which a commitment to sustaining the social capital and cohesive wellbeing of the community is reflected in Taupo District Council's policy framework which drives the economic development strategy of the area.

4.2 Public policies and social capital in New Zealand

Within New Zealand in early 2000, a major restructuring process moved territorial governance towards a more accountable and entrepreneurial model and local authorities' revised functions are embedded within the Local Government Act 2002 (Department of Internal Affairs, 2008). Significantly, national government departments operate within the central vision of social sustainability, with the Ministry of Social Development carrying the lead portfolio to strategically promote a 'whole of life' approach to social development and the improvement of social wellbeing (Ministry of Social Development, 2008). The government agency Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) invested $2.1 million in local authorities in 2006/07 appointing staff to manage relationships with key territorial authorities to ensure the inclusion of sport and recreation in local planning arrangements (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2007). SPARC also indicated that it would develop an events strategy because of the perceived numerous economic benefits that follow investment (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2007). Separately, central government has also established a major events development fund that will "support events in line with strategic goals, in particular, the delivery of long-term sustainable growth necessary to improve the quality of life of all New Zealanders" (Ministry of Finance and Economics, 2008a).

It is within this centrally driven framework that territorial authorities strategically operate to uphold their legal responsibilities to balance the needs of the community

and sustain their social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing in the present and for the future (Ministry of Finance and Economics, 2008b).

4.3 Taupo – *"the events capital of New Zealand"*

According to Destination Lake Taupo (2009b) Taupo's central location on North Island and mountain and lake setting provide ideal conditions for events such as Ironman New Zealand. The town was founded in 1869 as a European settlement, and has grown to a central district population of nearly 21,000. It is described as offering a "rural New Zealand lifestyle in a country town with the added excitement of the tourist population who help bring wealth and opportunity to the town" (Destination Lake Taupo, 2009b).

Taupo District Council's strategies are published in a 10-year strategic Long-Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) describing desired community outcomes and priorities. Typically, LTCCPs comprise a number of policies and strategies addressing economic and community development, tourism, physical activity and recreation activities, and event strategies or facilities developments (Taupo District Council, 2006b). Thus, unsurprisingly, the content of Taupo's plan and policy documents reflects a broad social capital orientated agenda as is required by central government legislation. At Appendix 1 is an analysis of the language of the District Council's LCCTP 2006 which draws upon keywords and phrases from the academic discourse of social capital. One potential conclusion that might be drawn from the analysis is that towns, such as Taupo, which regularly bid to host international or major events, have become well-practised in the use of social capital language as a means of sustaining a competitive edge in bidding processes. Reports to Council require statements indicating the relevance of proposals to the District's community outcomes, such as "Healthy people, healthy communities" and to the fulfilment of its civic responsibilities (Taupo District Council, 2006b). The district's 334 active community groups and sports clubs (EM4, personal communication, November 1, 2009) are indicative of a thriving participative population engaged in meaningful social activities.

Other examples of purposeful community development include the construction, now underway, of an arterial route to take traffic away from the town centre, so that a civic heart that is safe, inviting and fun for the community to use can be created (Taupo

District Council, 2009), and "A Sustainable Tourism Charter" defines how current destination marketing strategies will be adapted to ensure ongoing economic wellbeing for the town (Taupo District Council, 2009). Thus, through both its policies and its implementation arrangements, Taupo District Council appears to be a good example of an organisation that Putnam et al. (2004) might describe as providing effective leadership through its power and influence for the benefit of its whole population.

4.4 Destination Lake Taupo

Destination Lake Taupo (DLT) is a Council-controlled organisation that is the operational arm of event marketing and management (Taupo District 2009). Its calendar of events lists major and iconic events year-round that serve different sporting interests and attract thousands of competitors (Destination Lake Taupo, 2009a). Annually recurring events, such as Ironman New Zealand and Mizuno Half Marathon, are secured by contracts with event organisers to ensure sustainability (Taupo District Council, 2006a).

In 2005 DLT secured the domain name www.eventscapital.co.nz "to capitalise upon a groundswell of collective pride in what the region had and continues to build" (Hall, 2009). The tag line "the events capital of New Zealand" has been the central tenet of a focused media promotional campaign for nearly six years (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009). According to Putnam et al. (2004) such statements can create a sense of place and identity, as appears to be the case in Taupo.

4.5 Commercial events policy

With one event reportedly valued at $8 million to the wider community, and with $70,000 income to the organising body (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009) there clearly are major financial incentives to operating events in Taupo. In 2006, Taupo District Council adopted a commercial events policy designed to protect the economic benefits drawn from the event industry by enhancing the sustainability of key events (Taupo District Council, 2006a). According to the report, by building on the success of Ironman New Zealand, the Council has worked towards creating a joint vision for event organisers and the local community underpinned by partnerships between organisers and key stakeholders (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009; Taupo District Council, 2006b). What started out as a local effort to improve the economic viability of

the town has led to much wider networks both nationally and internationally (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009). The Council has used its position of influence for the greater good of the community.

To protect the District's reputation as a national leader in events tourism an endorsement policy was created to which Trade and Enterprise New Zealand, SPARC and four National Sports Organisations have given their support. Events may only operate in Taupo if they have gained the endorsement from the relevant sport code (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009). Without that stamp of approval, event organisers are unable to obtain necessary Council permits or use Council assets. This applies irrespective of the size or commercial nature of the event (EM1, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

By bridging across a variety of professional networks the Council has effectively excluded external event organisations from operating in Taupo. As Blackshaw and Long (2005) indicated, this could be interpreted as elites using their power to exclude, or, alternatively, it could be argued that this action fits within Putnam's model, whereby groups have come together for a common purpose to benefit the community (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Putnam et al., 2004).

The District Council's LCCTP states that $306,000 will be allocated in 2009/10, increasing to $334,000 by 2018/19 to support and sustain the commercial events policy, and describes the measures by which achievements will be monitored (Taupo District Council, 2009). The Council has also moved to ensure a full events calendar by blending established international events, such as Ironman New Zealand, with the town's home-grown events, while at the same time maintaining a balanced portfolio between sports and arts events (Hall, 2009). The district also includes a number of arts events to cater to a wider audience. These events require fewer volunteers (EM1, personal communication, October 16, 2009). Securing that balance was essential to relieve the pressures on volunteers (Hall, 2009).

Clearly, the Council is very keen to protect its competitive advantage over other events-orientated towns. However, that is not without a cost to other community based activities, such as the Farmer's Market, which has to close on event race days. Council does cover the cost for loss of earnings on these occasions but cannot financially compensate for the inconvenience caused to residents (EM1, personal communication,

October 16, 2009). The balance between sustaining sports tourism and supporting local communities, without detriment to the stock of social capital, is not easily struck.

4.6 Ironman New Zealand

Hosting Ironman New Zealand has proven to be a major influence in improving health and safety regulations and the degree of professionalism required for managing events in Taupo (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009). At its peak in 2005, the event attracted 4,200 entrants (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). In its eleventh year in Taupo, the event attracted 3,100 entrants in 2009 (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). The improvements in safety were essential, and were used by Taupo District Council as a means to secure a competitive edge when negotiating with former event owner International Management Group. Since 2007 a partnership between the World Triathlon Corporation and Taupo District Council has been forged to retain ownership of the event in Taupo (Ironman New Zealand, 2009).

Ironman New Zealand is defined as an iconic commercial event by Taupo District Council (2005) and employs four paid staff (EM2, personal communication, October 15, 2009). It also relies on 16 dedicated individuals who volunteer their time for six months of the year as volunteer event directors (VEDs), overseeing functional areas (Ironman New Zealand, 2009). They are responsible for recruiting nearly 2,000 specialist and general crew for race day from 51 community groups and sports clubs (EM3, personal communication, November 2, 2009). The Ironman New Zealand website makes great play of the fact that its volunteer event directors include policeman, firemen, teachers and self-employed businessmen (Ironman New Zealand, 2009). Utilising the organisational skills and experience of such an array of professional and committed individuals for common purpose is social capital in action. The majority of the VEDs also have flexible working hours which allow them to take on the intensive demands of the role. The reward for their participation includes a uniform, food, reimbursement of expenses, and the ability to include their valuable association with an iconic event on a curriculum vitae (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009).

In addition to the Ironman New Zealand competition, a number of pre-event training opportunities are organised throughout the week preceding race day (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009).These pre-events are organised by local

community groups and sports clubs and again garner popular support for Ironman New Zealand as an accepted presence in the town (Focus Group, personal communication, 15 October 2009). In celebration, each year an after-party is thrown for all the volunteers as a show of appreciation for their participation with a prize draw that includes a free entry to compete in Ironman New Zealand in the following year (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). This is a working example of the Ironman New Zealand organisers leveraging the event to benefit the wider community by creating a sense of identity and place, and an opportunity for volunteers to participate in celebratory occasions, ideas also expressed by Chalip (2006) and Putnam et al. (2004).

4.7 The Mizuno Half Marathon event

The long-established half marathon has been hosted in Taupo for 16 years. In 2009 it changed major sponsors and it is now branded as the Mizuno Half Marathon (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). It is defined as a major commercial event by Taupo District Council (2005). The event's mission statement indicates that it is committed to raising funds to provide scholarships for local young athletes and groups to travel abroad for competitions in their sports code (Taupo Half Marathon Society, 2009). The Taupo Harriers Club originally organised the event when it transferred from Hamilton (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). With its continued growth and the greater demands for professionalism it is now organised by the not-for-profit Taupo Half Marathon Society Inc., and supported under contract by a professional event management company (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009).

The demands for greater professionalism are felt by the volunteer organising committee members (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009), all of whom are drawn from local community and sports clubs (Taupo Half Marathon Society, 2009). The organising committee members receive a uniform and expenses (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). The event draws upon a crew of some 200 general volunteers from 25 local community groups and sports clubs for race day operations (EM2, personal communication, October 12, 2009). Profits are dispersed to successful scholarship applicants by the Taupo Half Marathon Society, Inc. The organisational arrangements show social networks in action in support of a common cause from which the local community stands to benefit.

4.8 Volunteer crews and sustaining the volunteer workforce

The community groups and sports clubs that provide the human resource as volunteer crew for both Ironman New Zealand and Mizuno Half Marathon are financially compensated (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). This compensation is in response to a shift in volunteering behaviours and grew organically following its adoption by another event in Taupo (EM1, personal communication, October 16, 2009). Within its 2006 LTCCP, the Council acknowledged that changing social trends, including an ageing population, decreasing household size, and both parents in the workforce, were creating difficulties for sourcing volunteers in support of events (Taupo DC, 2006). Interestingly, a solution emerged from a local event director who capitalised upon his networks in the community and instituted a payments system to community organisations in return for supply of volunteers to staff his event (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). Its success quickly caught on, and now there is an established culture within the Taupo events industry of sourcing paid crew, as opposed to individual volunteers (Focus Group personal communication, October 15, 2009). Clearly, the bonds and bridges of social capital generation (Putnam et al., 2004) were employed in leveraging a win-win solution to a commonly identified problem (Chalip, 2006).

As is recounted in the volunteer and event literature (Cuskelly, 2008; Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye, & Darcey, 2006; Downward & Ralston, 2006; Harvey et al, 2007), the ability to sustain a volunteer workforce continues to cause event managers concern. One concern in Taupo is the ageing volunteer workforce, for example the members of the Lions Club (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). Those volunteers are less able to perform the duties they carried out in the past, raising concerns for the safety of competitors (VED2, personal communication, October 12, 2009). Switching the Lions' crew to other duties may prove an acceptable solution for the Lions, but the organisers have to fill their resource void from another source (EM2, personal communication, October 15, 2009). The transient nature of school groups and sports teams is also problematic. The children in these groups and their parents invariably move on, which means there is constant transition of volunteers (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009; VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

New members require to be trained each year (EM2, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

Rewards for volunteering go beyond payment. The Council provides fully-funded first aid training courses and free traffic management courses (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009). Ironman New Zealand also provides an incentive of a volunteers' draw for a free entry to the event, and wraps up the week long activities with a celebration party for all volunteers and their families (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009; Ironman New Zealand, 2009). There is discussion around increases in the rate to be paid for 2010 (EM2, personal communication, October 15, 2009) as a further means of sustaining volunteer commitment, as well as maintaining parity with rates paid in other towns in New Zealand (EM1, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

4.9 Clubs that volunteer

Table 4.1 shows the numbers of community groups and sports clubs registered in Taupo, and the numbers used by Ironman New Zealand and Mizuno Half Marathon in support of their events. Event organisations and VEDs maintain separate databases comprising community groups and sports clubs that supply volunteers. These databases are the result of networking (EM1, personal communication, October 15, 2009). There is no way to know if the list of registered groups in Table 4.1 coincides with the databases of event organisations. A central database would increase the number of groups upon which the event organisations and the VEDs could call for volunteer support, relieving the often experienced pressure of fulfilling resource requirements. Arguably, a central database would negate the strong relationships that individual VEDs have built with community groups. By opening access to all community groups and sports clubs, the flood of approaches might overwhelm the groups (EM1, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that all groups are able to offer their services to events of their choosing (EM1, personal communication, October 15, 2009; EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009), but as can be seen from Table 4.1 less than a quarter of community groups and sports clubs actually supported the largest event in Taupo, Ironman New Zealand in 2009. While the Cycle Challenge reportedly has a

waiting list of groups wishing to support it (EM1, personal communication, October 15, 2009), it is difficult to accurately assess how many groups might take on volunteering roles through connections with the VEDs or other event volunteers, or indeed how many groups an event can afford to compensate. For a group sitting outside the favoured organisations, or without the necessary social networks to actively engage in bridging activities, as propounded by Coalter (2007) such exclusion might be difficult to understand. Potentially, this situation speaks to exclusion by default and the current recruitment arrangements appear to reject some groups and teams in favour of others.

Table 4.1 – Participation of Community Groups & Sports Clubs in Event Volunteering

	Pop/Groups in Taupo District	Pop/Groups in Taupo Central	Paid Crew at Ironman New Zealand	% of total of Taupo Central	Paid Crew at Mizuno Half Marathon	% of total of Taupo Central
Population Volunteers	32,000 pop	21, 000 pop	2,000 vols required	10%	200 vols required	1%
Number of Groups	334 groups	213 groups	51 groups	24%	25 groups	12%
Health & Welfare	102	74	4	5%	5	7%
Service, schools & Political	74	39	30	77%	7	18%
Sport & Recreation	159	150	17	11%	13	9%

Sources: *Destination Lake Taupo Ltd., 2009; Ironman New Zealand, 2009; Taupo Half-Marathon Society Inc., 2009*

4.10 Conclusion

In summary, the above describes the organisational and environmental influences, including the policy context, that surround the actions and interactions of event volunteers within the two selected events in Taupo. The language of documents and websites does suggest that there is an awareness of, and a commitment to, sustaining the social capital stock and well being of the Taupo community. The operational arrangements do appear to reinforce this notion. The ideas noted by Putnam et al. (2004), and by Nicholson and Hoye (2009), regarding the use of widespread community resources to improve the social fabric through participation and interactions across disparate groups are clearly evident within the research setting.

Significantly, the volunteer event directors play a pivotal intermediary role in the forging of bridging ties, as they are known and trusted by the event organisations and by the community groups they call upon (Coalter, 2008). Notwithstanding this, there is also evidence that indicates that there are entry barriers which exclude some community groups and sports clubs. As Coalter (2007) suggested if the operational arrangements do not facilitate the free interactions of individuals or interested groups based on activities, relationships and norms from which they might benefit, then it will be to the detriment of the stock of social capital.

In the following pages, the focus of the study shifts to providing insight into the thoughts and perceptions of volunteers engaged in event support. It is through their voices that it may be possible to assess whether the organisational arrangements do indeed support an economic strategy that propagates and sustains the production and accrual of social capital that the local community values and desires.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter set the policy and organisational context of the case study location and events. Within this chapter, the data gathered from semi-structured interviews, and from the focus group discussion are analysed within the context of the social capital construct. As recounted earlier, semi- structured interviews were undertaken with two long-term volunteer event directors (VEDs) (one a small business owner; the other a police detective) from the Ironman New Zealand event. A focus group (FG) discussion was held with nine members of the Taupo Harriers Club (Taupo Harriers), which annually provides volunteer resources for both the Ironman New Zealand and Mizuno Half Marathon events, as well as organising various competitive events that do not appear on the Destination Lake Taupo events calendar.

Participants ranged from school students to retirees, all of whom had moved to Taupo to live and work. None of the participants had been born in Taupo. The two VEDs were both drawn into volunteering for events by friends. Focus group participants were drawn into volunteering by their running club, Taupo Harriers. Throughout this chapter the researcher endeavours to share the perceptions and voices of these volunteers. As explained in Chapter Three, the following phenomena contained within the social capital construct are explored to better understand the context and process within which volunteers perceive social capital to be generated and utilised. For the purposes of interpretation and commentary, these phenomena are grouped as follows:-

- social cohesion, community participation and commitment;
- sense of place and common purpose;
- norms of trust and reciprocity; and
- bonds and bridges that connect, or exclude, people and groups.

The findings are discussed in relation to the literature. Later analysis focuses on the process of production and reproduction of social capital within the research setting.

5.2 Models of social capital

As previously described in Chapter Two, social capital is both a process and an outcome, and speaks to the benefits that accrue from social cohesion, a sense of place and purpose, and meaningful social interactions underscored by trust, which result in collaborative partnerships and effective networks (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Coleman, 1998; Doherty & Misener, 2008; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008; Putnam, 1995). It is not simply about ideals; it also embraces fun and fellowship (Putnam, Feldstein & Cohen, 2004). Its creation is incremental and cumulative to be used for the benefit of the whole (Putnam, 1995).

During the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion, participants were asked to relate the following statements drawn from the work of Blackshaw and Long (2005) in which the authors, citing the various works of Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam, reflected on the differences in social capital models:-

a) Social capital is related to both economic and cultural capital, and exclusively benefits elites, who build relationships for their personal gain.
Example: Golf club memberships serve to exclude others from networking and exchange.

b) Social capital is a means of explaining how people manage to cooperate through information channels, with obligations and expectations based on trust, and established norms and sanctions.
Example: Individuals invest in sports clubs, in expectation of personal reward rather than for community good.

c) Social capital as a resource is the property of collectives (communities, cities, regions) in which social networks have value in enabling connections between individuals. Thus, where there is an agreed common purpose, networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness bind communities together, through bridging and bonding ties.

Example: Towns and neighbourhood groups come together in support of, or in opposition to, Olympic developments.

Overwhelmingly, the respondents held the view that there is not an elite class dominating decision-making in town or in the events industry. However, while there was general belief that there are a minority who expect to get something back in return for volunteering, the consensus was that the vast majority of volunteers understood that their efforts contributed to the greater good of the community. This can be likened

to the Putnam's (1995) construct. These sentiments were evident in the following statements:

> "People use their connections to make the town go round" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).
>
> "People go out of their way to support one another" (FG, personal communication, October 12, 2009).

In referring to a local businessman involved in charitable giving, another respondent stated, "He keeps his philanthropy quiet. He does it because he cares" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009). Talking about the challenges of staffing events, a respondent commented, "We're worried about the older volunteers. They can't carry on marshalling but we need to find them other jobs because we value what their group does for the town" (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009). This sentiment about contributing to the greater good is also reflected in the comment of a focus group participant, "Some groups and people would volunteer anyway. The income is icing on the cake" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). What is it about their community that has created these perceptions for the participating volunteers? Who are the participating volunteers, and with whom do they socialise or network? The ensuing paragraphs attempt to set these individuals and their comments about the tenets of the social capital discourse in the context of Taupo and its events industry.

5.3 Social cohesion, community participation and commitment

Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) defined social capital as "the product of interactions which contribute to the social, civic or economic wellbeing of a community of common purpose" (p.103). Also, Doherty and Misener (2008) commented that volunteerism is "a form of social citizenship that involves active participation in the life of a community" (p.120). It is within this context that the researcher sought to explore the extent and degree of participation and commitment of participants in their community.

As became apparent during the exploratory research, the people of Taupo have more than 330 community groups and sports clubs in which to participate, if they so choose (EM4, personal communication, November 1, 2009). Such a large number of social organisations is suggestive of a vibrant community, with many people's

immediate networks extending beyond their families. In describing reasons why they considered Taupo a good place to live, participants spoke of their interests and listed a number of groups of which they were regular members. Such groups included:- Botanical Gardens, Monday Walkers, Tramping Club, Literacy Volunteers, Forest and Bird Club, Tri Sport Club, Taupo Swimming Club , playgroup, Iron Virgins, Taupo Field Hockey Club, sailing, Rotary, mountain biking, Golf Club, and soccer team (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009; VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009; VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009). They described the richness of social opportunities with the following examples. "There's something to do here every day, if you want. There are so many clubs, you can't be bored" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Another commented, "Our choice to live here has been vindicated by the clubs we've joined and the range of things to do" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). One respondent spoke of "good schools and active churches which provide opportunities for people to become involved [in the community]" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). A fourth person added, "We've got a great selection and standard of musical activities – bands, orchestras, choral societies" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

When asked about networks with the outlying areas around central Taupo, FG participants suggested that there is very little interaction [with those communities]. As one person explained "this is because places like Turangi and Mangakino have their own clubs. The farming community do their own thing and only come to town now and then" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Their perception was that such communities would be unlikely to volunteer for events "unless the event passed by their front door" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

When talking about civic participation, focus group participants commented that locals were very likely to sign petitions. This was mostly to object to Council decisions. Recent contentious issues had included the Council's intended use of the Domain for new Council offices. The Domain is considered precious by most of the population, but particularly important to those involved in sport events because the Domain is a central location used by several events. Another recent issue was the plan to build a fence restricting access to Lake Taupo because of a recent fatality. Locals saw it as an over-reaction by the Council to a drunken exploit. As one participant commented, "If we feel

strongly about it we'll either stand up and be counted or go behind the scenes and moan" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Another participant added, "I enjoy reading the letters in the local paper – it's the same people who write the complaining letters" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

Of particular note within the discussions was the strong commitment by individuals to their chosen sports clubs. Describing Taupo Field Hockey Club's fundraising and building of a new pavilion and turf playing field VED1 recounted the entirely volunteer effort by the club, which has 400 young members plus men's and women's senior teams. It took four years and $30,000 to complete the new facilities. While the bulk of physical activity was carried out by those with the essential skills, others were able to assist by giving their time and energy to the overall project. This respondent personally continues in a voluntary capacity as Club Captain and he coaches younger club members (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).

Focus group participants (personal communication, October 15, 2009) recounted how alumni members of Taupo Harriers could be counted on to return annually in support of the North Island Cross Country Championship (NIXCC) event, now in its 20th year, because of the benefits it brought to the club, such as raising funds and the kudos the club receives for organising a quality event. They also believed that the wider community benefited economically from the influx of the many teams competing at the event. Club members could also be counted upon to support a five kilometre race and quarter marathon event that preceded the Ironman New Zealand competition. While these two events were designed as fundraisers, the profits were donated to local community groups.

Such commitment to their sports club also extended to supporting other clubs. For instance, when talking about the use of the Council allocated hut close to AC Baths (a thermal aquatics complex that is home to Taupo Harriers), one participant stated, "The craft group, the playgroup, TriSports, Athletics club, the band – all use this space. We have crossover memberships with some, or we know individuals in the clubs who needed new spaces" (FG, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

In relation to commercial events, a focus group participant suggested, "Taupo is a good place for volunteering to benefit events. New events keep coming along, like the Oxfam Trailwalker, the Mizuno Off Road Half, [and] the Brookes event"(FG, personal

communication, October 15, 2009). Those within the focus group confirmed that they had been drawn into volunteering for commercial events by club members to benefit the club's finances. As explained by one participant, "We choose to support a couple of [commercial] events each year [to raise funds]. We don't need to do all of them" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). The club provides Ironman New Zealand with 10 volunteers for each of three shifts of marshalling, and up to 12 volunteers for registration duties for the Mizuno Half Marathon each year (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Clearly, while supporting commercial events is important to them, it is not as high a priority for their club as is their contribution to the non-commercial events organised by them. As previously reported, a participant commented that "the income is icing on the cake" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

During their interviews, the two VEDs described their extensive time commitments devoted to their organising roles for Ironman New Zealand. This involved significant commitment for more than six months a year. Both had been recruited by friends initially, one "because I had a Ute" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009). While they both received tangible rewards of a uniform, food supplies on the day, and reimbursement of expenses, they each listed the intangible personal rewards they experienced as a result of their efforts. For instance, one stated that, "Being a part of something big in town; the team effort; the respect accorded to the event and its volunteers" (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009) as one of the main benefits of involvement. The second explained the sense of reward as follows. "I have a small business and I value the fact that the Council wants to keep benefits in town. My presence [at the event] is important. It demonstrates my commitment to the local community" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).

Neither of the volunteer event directors suggested that their efforts were designed to benefit their respective sports clubs, or the wider community, though they believed that the events were of value to the wider community and of financial value to volunteer groups. However, VED1 went on to comment that he had learned a lot about event management and had applied that knowledge to organising an event for the field hockey club (personal communication, October 12, 2009).

As is evidenced in the volunteer literature there are different commitment levels between those who voluntarily organise events and those who volunteer on the day an event is held (Cuskelly, 2008; Downward & Ralston, 2006; Harvey et al, 2007). It was also found within this study that there are different levels of commitment between volunteer organisers and on-the-day volunteers for the Ironman New Zealand and Mizuno Half Marathon events. However, as noted by the focus group participants, they would be equally as likely to devote considerable time to non-commercial events run by Taupo Harriers for the benefit not only of their club but also for those organisations to which they donated their event-engendered profits. There was no suggestion in their discussion that they volunteered for the benefit of the commercial events, nor did they volunteer for personal reward.

Returning to the definitions of Doherty and Misener (2008) and of Falk and Kilpatrick (2007), clearly the participants in this study are actively engaged in the life of the central Taupo community, laying a strong foundation stone on which social capital might be produced and reproduced as a consequence of their actions and interactions. That interactivity did not extend to the surrounding villages. Additionally, participants' involvement in commercial events came about as a consequence of their active engagement in the community and through their relationships. They all considered Taupo to be a good place to live because of their ability to be involved in a wide range of activities. What was less evident was a shared sense of "community of common purpose" when focussing on commercial events. In the next section, participants' perceptions of a sense of place and of common purpose are examined further.

5.4 Sense of place and common purpose

Taupo District Council's Long Term Community Care Plans and its stated intent to sustain its economic development policies serve to provide a sense of place and common purpose within which the community interacts (Taupo District Council, 2006b). This is further reinforced by the promotional literature of DLT which emphasises the attractions of Taupo to tourists and potential new residents alike (Destination Lake Taupo, 2009). Commercial events, such as Ironman New Zealand and the Mizuno Half Marathon also emphasise the physical attractions of the area (Ironman New Zealand, 2009; Taupo Half Marathon Society, 2009). As Sam and Jackson (2004) and Lawson

(2005) suggest, centrally driven policies serve to unite communities as they become increasingly familiar with the rhetoric which provides them a sense of place and purpose. What then are the perceptions of the study participants of this aspect of social capital? Below is a selection of quotes relating to how the participants described central Taupo:-

- “The view of the mountains is striking as you enter Taupo from Wairakei” (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- “Its central location is good for our visitors from abroad” (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- “You’re still in touch with what New Zealand used to be like” (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).
- “With the influx of newcomers, Taupo has a permanent population of about 21,000 now, but it was a lot smaller 40 years ago”(VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009).
- “It’s a small place. Everything is available” (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- “It’s a friendly place. You can walk down the street and people talk to you. Outsiders are welcomed very quickly” (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- “We migrated here. There’s a nice atmosphere” (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- “Living in Taupo is very different to other places I’ve lived, like Greymouth another small community” (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).
- “We liked to visit before we lived here. Everyone made us feel welcome” (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- "Everyone knows everyone else. It's what makes it a friendly place to live" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

Clearly, as residents of the town the participants share a common sense of place, describing a small friendly town in which to live. However, both a VED and focus group participant spoke of the ‘missing generation’, the 18-30 year olds, as evidenced by the following statement, “Job opportunities are limited and when kids leave high school they move away either for jobs or to attend university” (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009). Similarly a focus group participant offered, “They might come back later with their young families” (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Perceived negative aspects of living in Taupo were the low average wage as a

consequence of the large number of retirees living in the area, and the huge influx of visitors from Christmas through to February which impacts the way residents go about their lives (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

If successful community development relies on establishing a sense of common purpose, as suggested by Sam and Jackson (2004), then it is a challenge for the District Council to meet the needs of the whole community and win over all groups to support its decisions. Focus group participants (personal communication, October 15, 2009) for example, commented that the construction of a bypass around Taupo has had local traders up in arms, arguing that they will lose trade from passing vehicles. On the other hand, those involved in events eagerly anticipated the peace and safety that removing heavy trucks from the midst of town will bring. The construction of the bypass was necessary to relieve the heavy volumes of traffic passing through town throughout the year (Taupo District Council, 2009). In the view of focus group participants (personal communication, October 15, 2009), the new road would be of benefit to events as, "Tourists are the economic lifeblood of the town. With safer events, more sports tourists may come" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Another added, "With quieter roads on non-event days, those wishing for a return to 'how it used to be' might be happier" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

Given the commercial events policy is a mainstay of the District Council's economic strategy (Taupo District Council, 2006b), it is also important to understand if the volunteers in this study shared a sense of common purpose in support of events. There is no doubt that economic benefits are a common factor for all those engaged in the events industry in Taupo. The District Council in partnership with event owners has leveraged the community group network to mutual benefit, as well as provided select groups with access to new funding sources. It has understood the motives of club members and facilitated the development of relationships through existing stocks of social capital. Coalter (2007) and Sharpe (2006) described such actions as a win-win strategy. The District Council realises its investment through the income generated across local businesses, providing jobs through the year rather than relying on seasonal tourism opportunities (Taupo District Council, 2006a). The event owners have a reliable pool of volunteers, their long term success is attractive to major sponsors, and they also make a profit (EM1, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

With the advent of resourcing events with paid crew from local community groups, as the Rotary Club did for its annual Cycle Challenge event in 2003 (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009; VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009), a new culture of expectation of payment, as reward for resourcing events, has emerged within community groups. As Reimer et al. (2008) commented the stock of social capital appears to have shifted to a new normative structure. Where once individuals had volunteered willingly in support of events as a consequence of their associations with others, the norms of interaction have shifted to marketplace resource exchange where clubs provide the human resource in return for funding donations. This new cultural norm is evident within the reflections of the research participants. One commented, "As events have grown bigger, so has the need for volunteers and payment is a way of securing enough people" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). A VED explained, "One benefit of the status of Ironman is that groups call the organisers asking to help" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).

Such donations for crew financially benefit those community groups which are on the contact lists of the event organisers. It is seen by some as an easier means of raising funds to support clubs than "the endless sausage sizzles and bake sales" (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009). While Taupo Harriers members may consider this income source as "the icing on the cake", they also commented that "It's a reflection of economic times. Clubs need the income to sustain them" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). This latter comment is more akin to Gaskin's (2008) model where it is recommended that clubs should proactively seek opportunities to sustain the life of their organisation. While the motives or perceived benefits of the events strategy differ for each of the organisational actors, the common factor is economic gain.

Beyond the economic benefits, focus group participants value the social impacts the events bring their members. For instance, once marshalling duties are over, Taupo Harriers volunteers "enjoy the trip to the pub by the finish line of Ironman to watch the competitors come home" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009), which is reflective of the fun and fellowship of group relationships propounded by Putnam et al. (2004). They also were delighted that two of the younger Harriers members had been recipients of scholarship awards from the Taupo Half Marathon Society, which allowed

them to compete abroad. They clearly placed value on such philanthropy (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

As Doherty and Misener (2008) pointed out, economic benefits can result in social outcomes. So too appears to be the case in Taupo. The economic rewards generated by events result in the sustainability of community groups and clubs, of commercial events, and of the tourism and hospitality industries in central Taupo. In so doing, the social capital stock may well be enriched.

5.5 Norms of trust and reciprocity

In discussing the notion of volunteering a focus group participant (personal communication, October 15, 2009) questioned which came first in Taupo, the norm of volunteering as a characteristic of the townspeople or the commercial event industry's need for volunteers? No matter what answer is given, the established networks are reflective of the trust and reciprocity that exists. As the following comments show, volunteerism and trusting relationships are established norms in this community:-

- "Two weeks out there's always a gap to be filled – but somehow the clubs find the people we need (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009).
- "One of the benefits of teens [teenagers] is that if they enjoy the day, they return year on year until they move away from Taupo for work or to go to university" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).
- "Taupo people volunteer at the Tussock Traverse, outside of town. It's characteristic of them" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- "With 1,000 past and present members on our database, and with everyone knowing everyone in a small town, we're easily able to cover the volunteer requirement of the cross country event without paying" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

Both event owners and volunteer event directors have worked at sustaining effective relationships with community groups and provided them with a sense of being a valued resource. As discussed earlier, event owners are reviewing the rate of pay for 2010 for the supplied crews (EM1, personal communication, October 16, 2009). The event owners of Ironman New Zealand throw a celebratory party on the Monday following the event for all volunteers, with major prizes to be won (EM2, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Some sports clubs contribute to the overall atmosphere of the Ironman week by staging events for training and enjoyment, which result in profits for their clubs and donations to local charities. The event owners also

contribute spot prizes for those pre-events (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Thus an atmosphere of reciprocity prevails. Similarly, at club level Taupo Harriers organise a thank you dinner for all members who volunteer for both commercial events and for the North Island Cross Country Championship. It is purposely set to coincide with a rugby game to add enjoyment to the evening (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

As described earlier, the Taupo Half Marathon Society distributes its profits by way of scholarships for local youth to experience competition abroad (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009; FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). The Society's philanthropic endeavours were further expanded to facilitate the development of community bike trails, through the launch of a new event, the Mizuno Off-Road Half Marathon in October 2009, for which community groups provided volunteers. The event was so successful it raised the entire cost of the first bike trail (EM2, personal communication, October 2009). While there is no guarantee that the second event will be as successful, the townspeople know they can trust the Society to deliver on its philanthropic goals to support the community through scholarships and community development funds (Taupo Half Marathon Society, 2009).

Volunteer event directors spoke of their trust in community groups and sports clubs in helping to stage the event. They know they can rely on the contacts at each club to organise their members to turn up for their shifts. As one of them commented, "Five Mile Bay group have been doing a water station for 11 years now. I don't have to worry about briefing them as much" (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009). Another added that, "Returning groups are becoming more confident and more assertive" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009). In return, the clubs know that they can rely on the event to generate funds that would be difficult to earn in other settings. Discussing the reward of working with reliable groups, a participant stated, "At the end of the day, I feel satisfied that we've overcome the challenges and the jobs been done by the team" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).

One of the most striking examples given of the mutuality in the community related to the Lions Club, which has supported the Mizuno Half-Marathon for all of the 16 years since it was launched in Taupo. Through the funds they earn from the event, the Lions are able to go some way towards fulfilling their charitable mission. However,

as their crew is ageing and becoming less nimble to undertake course marshalling duties, the race director is considering an alternative role for them so that the Lions might continue to use the event as an income source (EM2, personal communication, October 16, 2009). There is no doubt that the Lions Club is valued both for its role in the event and also for the charitable work it does for the town.

Through these examples the bonds that exist in Taupo are evident. It would appear from participants' perceptions that the bonds have led to the development of sufficient collective confidence, the confidence Coalter (2008) would suggest is necessary to bridge connections across groups. In the next section, participants' views about bonded relationships and the process through which bridges between groups may have emerged are analysed.

5.6 Bonds and bridges that connect, or exclude, people and groups

As explained earlier, each of the participants in this study is a member of more than one club. Interwoven relationships have come about because of members' personal involvement in different clubs and interests. For instance, the focus group participants recounted (personal communication, October 15, 2009) the following examples of collaboration between groups:-

- The Forest & Bird Club worked closely with the Botanical Gardens group on fundraising.
- Taupo Harriers members join in a Tramping Club family tramp, but Trampers do not volunteer for sports events as the club is too well off.
- When the Iron Virgins were in danger of falling apart, a Taupo Harriers member provided free running coaching to Iron Virgins, who now rent the Taupo Harriers clubhouse at a cheap rent for their meetings.
- Other groups with cheap rental of the Taupo Harriers clubhouse have included the Spinners, Tri-Sport for committee meetings, a band for rehearsals, and a playgroup – all of whom had a personal connection with Taupo Harriers members.

Each of the participants interacts regularly with like-minded people in those clubs and, as the focus group outcomes indicated, Taupo Harriers has forged relationships with other like-minded clubs (crossover membership) for a common purpose (use of the clubhouse). It is these overlapping circles and intersecting networks that Putnam et al, (2004) suggested "reinforce a sense of reciprocal obligation that

extend beyond the boundaries of empathy"(p.291) creating strong bonded relationships that produce social capital.

But is it possible that the volunteer event directors have established sufficient bonding capital with community groups to guarantee the ongoing success of the two events? As Nicholson and Hoye (2008) posited in their work, individuals come to relationships with pre-existing levels of social capital. Can the same be said to be true of the VEDs? What was the extent of their pre-existing levels of social capital when they took on their functional roles? As is already known, both VEDs came to volunteer for Ironman New Zealand through friends and each of them manages about 400 volunteers (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009; VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009). VED1 explained that he relied on his personal networks to build links to clubs, which led to forging connections to parent-teacher associations and various school groups across the town. While he gets to know these core people quite well, he is "unlikely to mix with them outside of the event unless they are part of my network". However, he talked with pride of an employee who had previously volunteered and who competed in the event in 2009; and another volunteer friend will compete in 2010. For him, "knowing there are 'savvy' people who have participated as competitors and as volunteers" added to his sense of fulfilment (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009). Thus his bonded relationships relate to those in his close networks; not the acquaintances he makes during his six months' preparation for the event.

VED2 spoke of the difficulties of gathering volunteers from disparate groups for an oral briefing session because of the large number recruited, their geographical spread and diversity. He relied on the lead contact person in each club to convey important information to their respective groups (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009). Both VEDs provided briefing information through e-mail communications, and finalised details when the contacts collected their supplies and T-shirts during safety training before the event. As each recounted, problems occur because VEDs cannot control who from the community groups volunteers and the extent to which the safety briefing has been conveyed accurately by the club's contact person. This is exemplified by the following statement, "Teens [teenagers] don't understand that texting while marshalling is unsafe", and "Crowds don't listen to mild-mannered people" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009). The second VED

stated, “Kids don’t always understand how to hand out the water properly and it’s frustrating for the athletes” (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

Despite their lack of close bonds and somewhat tenuous bridges with the clubs, the VEDs know that most groups can be counted on to come through with their volunteer numbers, though one sports club did have to withdraw a week before the event in 2009 which caused a major headache for securing sufficient marshals. So unlike Taupo Harriers, which can count on its alumni to volunteer for the NIXCCC event for no payment (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009), the VEDs rely on the payment incentive to sustain the commitment of community groups to provide the volunteer resource. As one commented, “Sports clubs return every year to fundraise for their teams” (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

While recruiting sufficient volunteers to manage the event safely is of great importance for the VEDs, they also have to work with paid medical and safety personnel who are on duty throughout the event. Bridges to the emergency services organisations have been developed by the event owners out of necessity. It is for the VEDs to work within those organisational arrangements. So once again, they find they have no control over which personnel are rostered by, for example, St John’s Ambulance or the local police force for traffic management. Some ambulance drivers may not be locals. Additionally, the Emergency Services Coordination Centre is based in Auckland and staff there are unfamiliar with the layout of Taupo and the course (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009). Non-local drivers and distant dispatch staff resulted in traumatising delays for one competitor who suffered an accident last year. With the added pressure of knowing that Transit New Zealand is able to close down a race for safety reasons, the VEDs do rely on the initiative of local course marshals to troubleshoot incidents (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009). Such organisational rostering arrangements do not facilitate the building of meaningful relationships with key personnel for volunteer event directors.

As Nicholson and Hoye (2008) indicated, mobilising resources can be achieved effectively if there is sufficient knowledge of the mechanisms that exist within relationships. Despite the pressures, the volunteer event directors have managed to mobilise volunteer resources based on their knowledge of the local community and the social networks that exist in central Taupo. The VEDs are ‘the intermediaries’ identified

by Coalter (2008); they are the lynchpins that bring disparate groups together for a common economic purpose (Onyx et al, 2004). One of the VEDs will not be participating in organisational arrangements for Ironman New Zealand in 2010 due to other personal commitments (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009). While the incoming replacement VED will inherit lists of contacts and a job description, that person will have to build new relationships with core leaders of the community groups and with the emergency services personnel, assuming their existing social networks and level of social capital are not similar to that of the departing VED. As Diamond (2001) commented, there is potential for networks to fracture when such network changes occur. If the established network of the departing VED should fracture, there could be a negative impact on the delivery of sufficient volunteers in 2010. The one known factor in a VED's favour is that community groups want to earn income for their clubs through commercial events.

5.7 Who is excluded?

The above paragraphs outline the bonds and bridges that tie some of the people of Taupo together in the creation of social capital. As was shown in Table 4.1, not all community groups and sports clubs have the ability to volunteer for these two events either because they are not part of the social networks of the volunteer event directors, or because the clubs choose not to participate. That is discussed later. Additionally, the District Council's policy has been designed to preserve the economic benefit to the town and requires that commercial event organisations are located in Taupo, thus excluding non-local event companies from benefiting from the profits (Taupo District Council, 2006a). Staff members of local event organisations are known in town and have evolved their own social networks. These are two of the environmental constraints that impact the formation of networks in support of the events strategy.

In discussions with participants it was clear that they were aware of other groups and individuals who are excluded either by default or by choice from the social interactions of central Taupo and events. Examples include:

- *When talking about the local population:*
  - As incomers to the town – "We don't know many originals of Taupo. Perhaps they're all up in the cemetery" (FG, personal communication, October 12, 2009).

- "Some people resent so many events. They want it to return to the way it used to be when the town was smaller and quieter" (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009).
- "We don't interact with people in Turangi and Mangakino because they have their own clubs" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- "When someone has a job opportunity, their partner might find it difficult to also get a job unless they're a teacher or a nurse" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

o *When talking about other groups:*
- "We don't have links with the league. They couldn't field a senior team this year, but I don't know why" (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009)
- "Trampers don't volunteer for sports events – the club is too well off" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

o *When talking about perceptions of events:*
- "As a business owner, I value the fact that the Council wants to keep the benefits in town" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).
- "During the Cycle Challenge week, you need a pass to get back home to Raporoa if you live there" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- "The Bowling Club is disrupted because they can't access their clubhouse during Ironman" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).
- "Some events happen away from the town centre, like the Day & Night Thriller and the 4-wheel drive track in the forest. But lots of people don't know about them because they're out there" (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

o *When talking about perceptions of volunteers:*
- "Where a group has done a bad job they're not invited back the following year" (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009).
- "You can't count on the same people coming back every year with a group" (VED2, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

Such exclusions or limitations hardly reflect a dysfunctional community, or intolerance of outsiders as noted by Onyx et al (2004). Nor do they suggest that the commercial events strategy, the glue that binds many groups in central Taupo, is about to fall apart. However, returning to the issue around the number of groups and the volunteers required for events, there does appear to be a degree of favouritism that exists which precludes some groups from benefiting financially.

As shown in Table 4.1, only one quarter of community groups in central Taupo are used by Ironman New Zealand in support of its event, and only 12% of organisations are utilised for the Mizuno Half-Marathon. As also stated in Chapter Four, for a group sitting outside the favoured organisations, or without the necessary social networks to actively engage in bridging activities the exclusion might be difficult to understand. Such a sentiment was also propounded by Blackshaw and Long (2005), Coalter (2007) and Collins (2004), when they explained that strong bonds in one sphere can serve to exclude others without the wherewithal to forge the appropriate networks and links to access resources.

The account of the men's rugby league team disbanding through lack of funds (VED2, personal communication, October 12, 2009) raises questions about the ease with which clubs can earn additional income via the events networks. Was the league team insufficiently connected to the commercial event networks so that it was unable to choose to volunteer? Additionally, as both Coalter (2007) and Collins (2004) pointed out, not everyone wants to be part of a group or network; some in fact exclude themselves. Perhaps the league team members did not perceive event volunteering as a valued activity? Or this situation might indicate exclusion by default as the current recruitment arrangements appear to reject some groups and clubs in favour of others. The fact that the Cycle Challenge apparently has a waiting list of clubs wishing to volunteer (EM2, personal communication, August 1, 2009), and clubs regularly call the VEDs of Ironman New Zealand proffering their services (VED1, personal communication, October 12, 2009), indicates that more groups do want to benefit from participation.

5.8 Conclusion

As Doherty and Misener (2008) and Nicholson and Hoye (2008) indicated it is important to understand the mechanisms and processes that engender the (re)production of social capital. Reimer et al. (2008) added that it is also important to distinguish between the societal levels through which social capital is generated and used for greater clarity of the process. In the concluding chapter, the researcher uses these two constructs to analyse the rich data garnered from the research setting to ascertain how social capital appears to be generated and reproduced in central Taupo and its implications for the sense of community of its population.

6. SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study sought to investigate the perceptions of sport event volunteers about the presence of social capital in their social interactions and its impact on the production of social capital in Taupo (the location of the study). In order to address the research aim and to triangulate the data, findings presented in previous chapters will be integrated. An analysis will be given of how the policies of Taupo District Council appear to have influenced the behaviour of commercial events organisations, which in turn have influenced the actions and interactions of community groups and sports clubs in central Taupo. Further, the analysis will also address how those actions and interactions may have impacted the cycle of social capital production and reproduction in the Taupo community. Within this commentary the degree of exclusion of community groups from the social capital production process will also be addressed.

Given the limitations of the scale of the study, the stories of the participants may not reveal a widespread community picture but the insights gained may nonetheless assist community leaders and event organisers to better understand how they might sustain, or maximise and mobilise volunteer resources for the economic and social benefit of the greater community.

To recap, the social capital construct is complex, multi-dimensional and is intangible in that it is borne out of relationships (Coalter, 2007; Doherty & Misener, 2008; Putnam, 2000; Putnam et al., 2004). As delineated in Chapter Two, the indicators of the presence of social capital include the following:-

- social cohesion, community participation and commitment;
- sense of place and common purpose;
- norms of trust and reciprocity; and
- bonds and bridges that connect, or exclude, people and groups.

When considering the findings of the study within the context of the other empirical evidence, it appears that the indicators of social capital are present in central Taupo. As presented in Chapter Five, not only do the organisational arrangements around events appear to create the opportunities for social capital to be generated, but so too do the perceptions of the event volunteers participating in this study reflect a

sense of place; of meaningful interactions underscored by trust and common purpose; and a desire to make use of their clubs and friendship networks as a resource to benefit their clubs and the wider community.

These relationships occur vertically and horizontally between individuals, groups and organisations. The collaboration between Taupo District Council and event organisations set the organisational and environmental context within which VEDs and community groups operate. The roles of the District Council, of event owners, of VEDs and of the community groups are different, and the manner in which social capital is generated through their relationships with others may also be different. Reimer et al. (2008) suggested that social capital generation is manifested at four societal levels – market, bureaucratic, associative and communal. As Reimer et al. (2008) indicated, "…normatively structured relationships do not often operate independently. All four usually occur concurrently in a given situation, although only one or two may be dominant" (p. 262). The four levels are ascribed within this analysis as follows:-

- Bureaucratic, as in rules and procedures (Reimer et al., 2005): focusing on the relationships between Taupo District Council, Destination Lake Taupo, commercial event organisations, and other government bodies involved in events.
- Market, as in supply and demand of volunteers (Reimer et al., 2005): focusing on those groups which are not currently included in event networks and organisational arrangements.
- Communal, as in a shared sense of identity and culture, and a reciprocal exchange of favours (Reimer et al., 2005): focusing on the relationships of Taupo Harriers members who participated in the focus group in this study.
- Associative, as in shared interests and a commitment to achieving shared goals (Reimer et al., 2005): focusing on the relationships between VEDs (as part of this study) both with event organisations and with community groups and sports clubs.

Through such analysis of the complex dynamics of social relations, Reimer et al. (2008) suggested insights may emerge through better understanding the distinction between the availability and use of social capital. Within this analysis, therefore, the availability of social capital will be described through the organisational associations that exist, while its use will be reflected in the actions and interactions of individuals.

In order to better understand the influences at work between these ascribed levels, the model of the reproduction of social capital created by Doherty and Misener

(2008) has been applied to portray how the study participants' perceptions of social capital are reflected in the mechanisms of bonding and bridging which facilitate the production of social capital at each societal level.

In their reproduction model, as portrayed in Figure 2.1 and replicated below in Figure 6.1, Doherty and Misener (2008) described how interpersonal and intergroup relationship dynamics occur through communication, collaboration and cooperation leading to the creation of social capital or 'social energy' within a group of like-minded people. They suggested that same social energy is capable of impacting the interpersonal and intergroup relationships that group members may have with others outside of the group. As levels of trust and reciprocity grow between group members and others, so too does the level of social capital that becomes available to the wider community to use as a resource when needed for a commonly agreed purpose (Doherty & Misener, 2008).

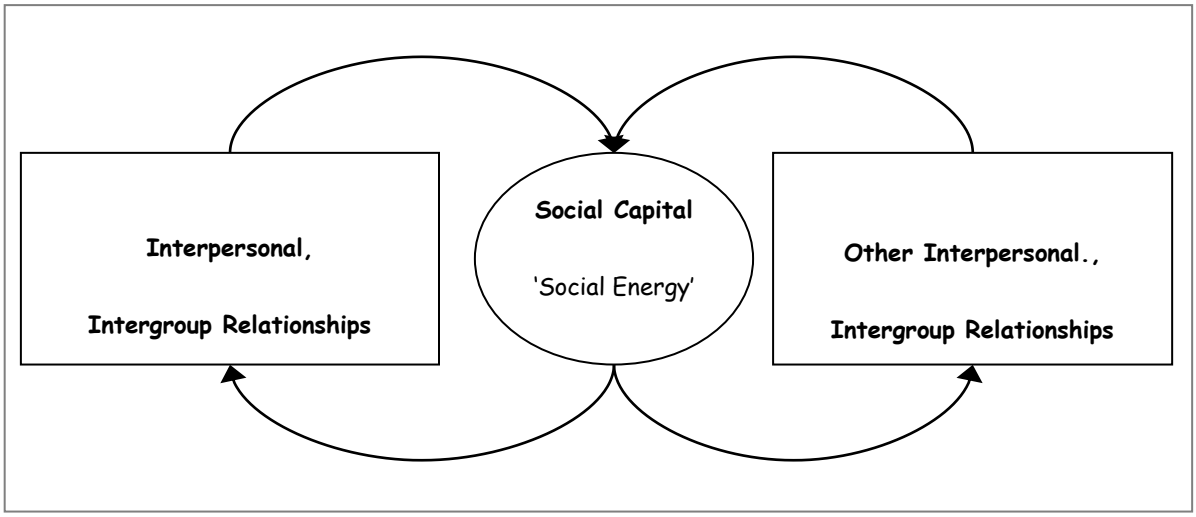


Figure 6.1: The (re)production of social capital Source: Doherty and Misener (2008, p.119)

Taking this process model, together with the categories of structural relationships defined by Reimer et al. (2008), the extent of social capital generation at each of those levels is described and is then collated as an integrated whole to demonstrate the predominant features affecting the process of production within Taupo.

6.2 Bureaucratic social capital

Reimer et al. (2008) defined the normative structure of behavioural relations as: -

> "…impersonal and formal, with the distribution of resources based on generally applied principles and status positions, rather than productivity…. Bureaucratic-based social capital is built through the formulation of these [government and corporate organizations] charters along with the maintenance of legitimacy, either formally or informally" (p. 261).

Such legitimacy and principles of resource distribution can be found in the governance of Taupo. As explained in Chapter Four, Taupo District Council has responded to central government requirements, through the Local Government Act 2002, to develop long term plans and implement policies that put the community's economic and social wellbeing at the heart of its operations. Its policy documents reflect the language of the social capital discourse and its actions reinforce that and, through effective leadership, it has implemented an economic strategy that has led to social gains for its citizens. Overall, there appears to be a commitment to sustaining the social capital of its community.

Taupo District Council set itself up as a leading events town and has taken steps to protect its competitive edge. First, within its designated revised powers afforded by the Local Government Act 2002, the Council established a Council-controlled organisation, Destination Lake Taupo (DLT) through which it markets tourism and commercial events. As Cousens et al. (2006) remarked, the new entrepreneurial arrangements required of local government authorities, enable public sector staff to better employ differing collaborative working arrangements that contribute to the delivery of service outcomes. Thus, DLT staff members have been able to act strategically to develop alliances and partnerships that achieve Council's desired outcomes, and have future proofed these commercial events through contracts and the exclusion of event organisations not based in Taupo. As a consequence, the longevity of events in Taupo combined with the economic benefits derived by the local hospitality and tourism industries from a constant supply of sport tourists, means commercial events are valued in the organisational sphere.

At the operational level, event owners are also influenced by external stakeholders, such as DLT, the Department of Conservation, national sports organisations and others, and have, out of necessity, forged strong bridges with those agencies. As discussed in Chapter Four, in order to guarantee the ongoing safe operation and quality of their events, the endorsement of these external stakeholders is critical. Therefore, bureaucratic social capital is available through the policy context and the organisational linkages that have been created between Taupo District Council and event owners and associated external stakeholders.

To further ensure the sustainability of events, event owners have used their bonded relationships with volunteer event directors and organising committee members to leverage community group resources to deliver events and to further their own ends, to the exclusion of outside event organisations, but not at the expense of the local community. Whilst maintaining the balance between commercial interests and social expectations, Collins (2005) noted that developing strategies for long-term benefit can be foiled by shifts in societal values such as recent inclinations towards more materialistic and individualistic lifestyles away from team and group endeavours. Taupo District Council and event organisers responded to such a shift in values in the local community by adapting the commercial events strategy. As a consequence, a new structural norm, similar to that described in the work of Reimer et al. (2008), payment for crew members, has been established. While this is economically driven, the social outcome is that community groups and sports clubs potentially remain financially viable and can continue to provide social interaction opportunities for their members on a continuing basis. Thus it can be concluded that bureaucratic social capital has been created and used for the economic and social benefit of events, of community groups and of the town's hospitality and tourism industries.

Described pictorially, using the (re)production model formulated by Doherty and Misener (2008), the bureaucratic relations of the Taupo events industry might be portrayed as in Figure 6.2. Taupo District Council, through staff members of its operative marketing arm, DLT, developed bridging connections with local event owners to establish a successful events industry. The impetus of engagement leads to the formation of bridging connections, which according to Doherty and Misener (2008) are common to vertical alliances intended to leverage resources from formal institutions for

the benefit of the original group. Out of the generated social capital, and as those vertical relationships have become more durable over the years, stronger bonds have evolved between staff members of the Council, DLT and event organisations. Bridging relationships have also been forged and maintained by both DLT and event organisations with influential external agencies to ensure the safe operation of commercial events. According to Doherty and Misener (2008) social capital is an unintended by-product of such economically driven alliances. Further, bureaucratic social capital has continued to accrue as event owners have made use of their personal relationships with others in town to forge connections with organising committee members and volunteer event directors in order to leverage the supply of paid crew from community groups and sports clubs.

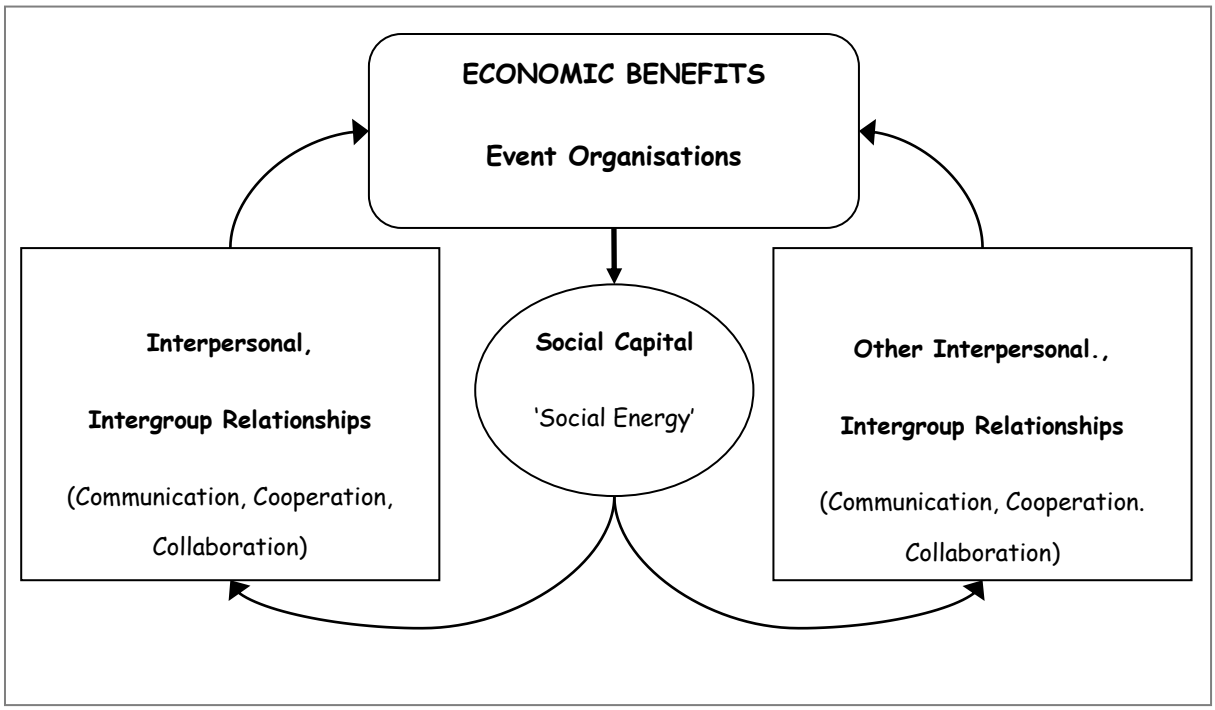


Figure 6.2: The (re)production of bureaucratic social capital. Adapted from Doherty and Misener, 2008

6.3 Market social capital

Reimer et al.(2008) defined social capital that arises from market relations as "…created, built and maintained through fair trade of goods and services, sharing of information about markets and prices, and the demonstration of appropriate negotiation skills in the process" (p. 261).

As was reported in Chapter Four, event owners provide incentives and rewards to leverage access to resource their crews, which in turn fosters social capital. In return,

community groups and sports clubs benefit economically. The event owners and staff members of Destination Lake Taupo monitor rates of pay across events occurring elsewhere in New Zealand (EM1, personal communication, October 15, 2009) and are considering an increase to the hourly rate in 2010 to maintain parity (EM2, personal communication, October 16, 2009), another indication of market forces at work. Such leveraging of resources according to Chalip (2006) can lead to the production of social capital. As evidenced within the focus group, some community groups choose which of the commercial events they will support (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009), and this indicates their negotiating strength in this marketplace. As is portrayed in Coleman's (1988) construct of social capital, the self-interested among them will likely only volunteer if incentives are provided.

Indeed, there now exists in Taupo a new norm, or expectation, amongst clubs that commercial events reward participation with financial incentives. It would be difficult for commercial events to withdraw those benefits without diminishing their volunteer pool. The shift towards the norm of paying for crew for commercial events in Taupo suggests that market exchange occurs between event organisations and community groups and sports clubs. Supply and demand are critical factors in this exchange. The data provided in Table 4.1 demonstrates that only a portion of the community groups and sports clubs are afforded the opportunity to provide crew for these two events in return for payment. While the use of 22 clubs may be appropriate for the Mizuno Half-Marathon which requires 200 volunteers, the same may not be true for the Ironman New Zealand event which uses some 2,000 volunteers, drawn from only 51 clubs, out of 334 active community organisations in Taupo. For this small proportion of groups there exists the opportunity to accrue additional social capital as a consequence of choosing to support events.

As Coalter (2007) commented, social capital is generated through the norms and activities in which individuals freely engage. However, setting aside supply and demand factors, not all community groups and sports clubs are given the opportunity to participate because they are not part of the appropriate social networks that connect with Ironman New Zealand or with the Mizuno Half Marathon. This may suggest that an elite or favoured group of organisations benefits at the expense of others. However, as a note of caution, it is highly possible that a number of those 'excluded groups' have in

fact forged links with other event organisations to generate funds as paid crew and may not be able, or willing, to support either of these particular events. Such exclusionary behaviour, though, hardly describes a dysfunctional community, intolerant of outsiders as noted by Onyx et al. (2004). However, at a time when event owners are concerned about sustaining the long-term supply of crew (EM1, personal communication, August 2, 2009) they may well be advised to review the mechanisms by which VEDs recruit crew.

Without a sustained pool of willing community groups on which to draw, neither event would happen. At the same time, events are not at the critical point of experiencing a lack of willing groups. If events do fail, the favoured groups' stock of market social capital might be diminished as there would be fewer opportunities for them to generate income to sustain their clubs. However, just like the majority of community organisations which do not participate in these two events, the favoured clubs could return to alternative means of fundraising activities, such as bake sales and sausage sizzles (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Indeed, such fundraising activities may give greater opportunities to interact socially with the wider population of central Taupo, indicating a shift in normative structure whereby social capital might be generated through communal relations.

Aligning these interactions with the production model of Doherty and Misener (2008), the process of generating market social capital is portrayed in Figure 6.3 below.

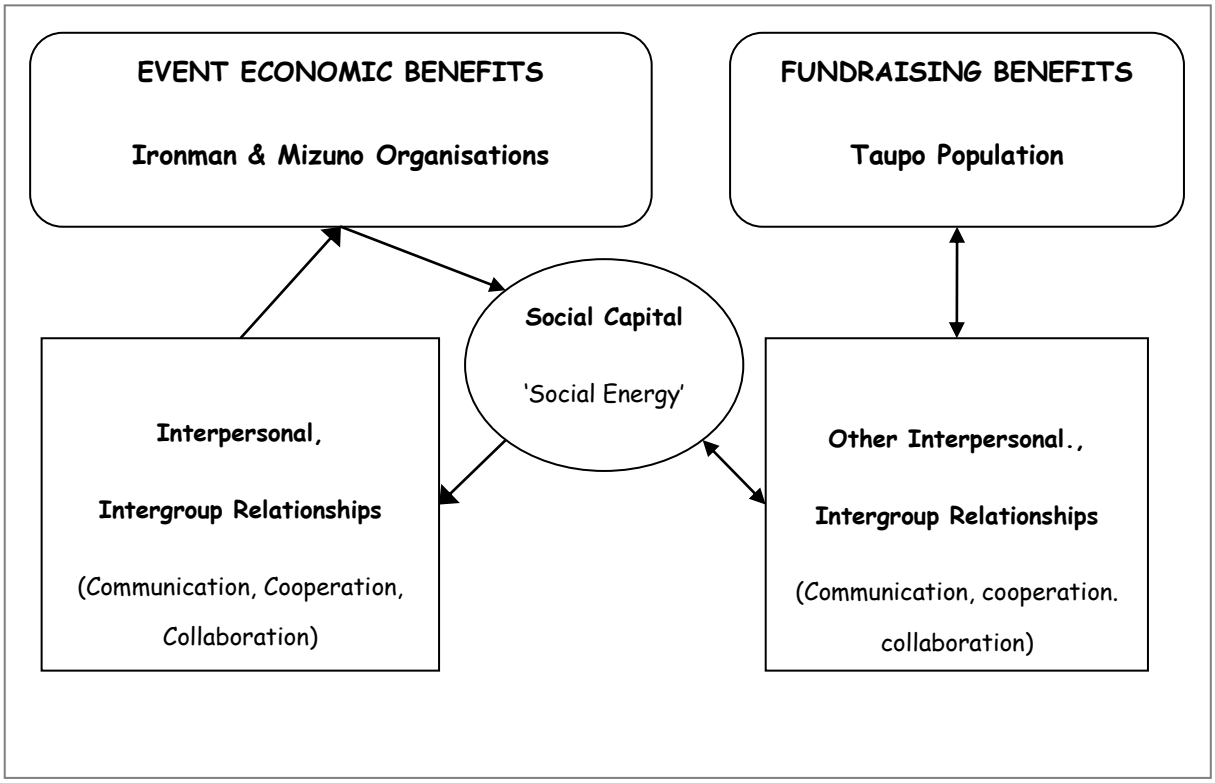


Figure 6.3: The (re)production of market social capital. Adapted from Doherty and Misener (2008)

Both favoured and excluded community groups and sports clubs have the ability to benefit economically from their chosen fundraising activities. For the favoured groups, their social interactions have become entwined with the event industry and their networks are extended through bridging relationships leading to the potential for greater market social capital to be accrued by them. As Doherty and Misener (2008) commented, it is through vertical alliances that the original group is able to leverage additional institutional resources for economic benefit by design and increased social capital by default. However, excluded groups must rely on their existing bonded social networks to pursue other fundraising activities. Therefore, their market social capital stock will not diminish nor will it grow. Similarly, even though VEDs have some control over the source of funding for community groups, their market social capital stock will not diminish or grow so long as their interactions remain limited to a select number of community groups.

6.4 Communal social capital

In offering family and friendship as examples of communal relations, Reimer et al. (2008) submitted that communal social capital "is built and maintained through the exchange of favours and the reinforcement of identity either directly or indirectly" (p. 262). A significant feature is generalised reciprocity, whereby favours are exchanged informally (Reimer et al., 2008). Of the four societal levels of relations examined in this analysis, as described by Reimer et al. (2008), communal relations was the one discussed least during the interviews and the focus group. That is not to say that it does not exist, rather the nature of the storytelling that emerged through the focus group and semi-structured interviews placed greater emphasis on the bridging relationships and common purpose, which are more normally contained within associative relations.

As reported in Chapter Five, participants shared their views on Taupo as a place to live, which served to reinforce a shared sense of identity despite the fact that all participants were incomers to the area having been born, or having lived elsewhere previously. Among the reasons participants gave for rating Taupo favourably, included a culture of a warm, welcoming community which offered a wealth of activities to share with like-minded people, and in which volunteering and reciprocity are valued norms. Such perceptions are suggestive of a strong foundation on which social capital can be generated. As a phenomenon, Putnam et al. (2004) emphasised that volunteers are repositories of social capital which should bode well for the cohesiveness and collective identity of their community. As Doherty and Misener (2008) commented, volunteerism is "a form of social citizenship that involves active participation in the life of a community" (p. 120). The wealth of civically active community groups and sports clubs in the town also points to an engaged, vibrant community.

At the communal level, the focus group participants talked about their actions and interactions with family, friends, work colleagues and club mates (their bonded networks), using links with people they know around town and in other clubs to exchange favours, such as the shared use of their clubhouse, and the trust that the Harriers Club has in alumni members returning annually to support the NIXCCC event. Crossover memberships with other like-minded clubs, such as TriSports, the swim club and the Iron Virgins, served to reinforce a culture of sharing and reciprocity. One example of the sense of reciprocity and trust in their relationships was the provision of

coaching by a Harriers Club member to the Iron Virgins club to avoid its disbanding. The reward was a commitment from the Iron Virgins to make a contribution to the rent of the Harriers clubhouse; it was not payment for the coaching.

Through these examples it can be seen that bonds exist between like-minded people in this sports club in Taupo. Applying Doherty and Misener's model (2008) to these informal but meaningful connections, as in Figure 6.4, shows that communal social capital is created within the Harriers Club by and for the use of its members. Through members' individual and collective actions, they have created an organisation that works together cooperatively, within a trusting environment. As Putnam et al. (2003) commented, overlapping circles and intersecting networks "…reinforce a sense of reciprocal obligation that extend beyond the boundaries of empathy" (p. 291) creating strong bonded relationships that create social capital.

While these interactions benefit individual levels of social energy or social capital stock (Doherty & Misener, 2008), it would be inappropriate to suggest that the club's strong bonds serve to exclude as has been noted within the literature by such authors as Coalter (2007) and Seippel (2006). Rather, it would appear from participants' perceptions that their bonds have led to the development of sufficient collective confidence, as Coalter (2008) suggested is necessary to bridge connections across groups. Doherty and Misener (2008) pointed out, too, that such durable connections can manifest beyond the original relationships between individual members and the group, and this is clearly evidenced in the later discussion of associative relations.

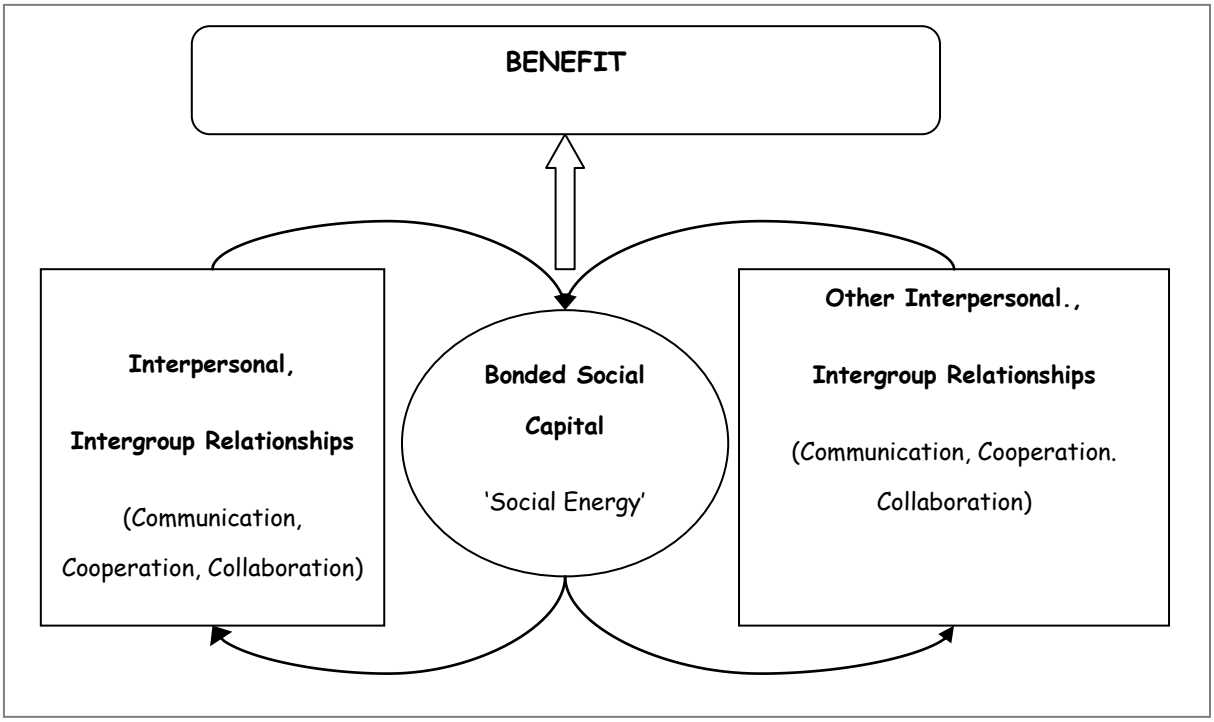


Figure 6.4: The (re)production of communal social capital. Adapted from Doherty and Misener (2008)

6.5 Associative social capital

According to Reimer et al. (2008) associative relations are based on shared interests, such as those found commonly within clubs and other groups. They assert that:-

> "Associative-based social capital emerges when interests coincide and where there is a common contribution to the goals on the part of members. It is built through the successful accomplishment of those goals, the achievement of objectives *en route* to them, or the reinforcement of promises to achieve goals"(p. 261).

This is not dissimilar to the definition of social capital stated by Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) as being "the product of interactions which contribute to the social, civic or economic wellbeing of a community of common purpose" (p. 103). In the earlier paragraphs on communal social capital the Taupo Harriers bonded relationships were described. The commentary about the contribution of those relationships to the production of social capital will not be repeated here, but will be used as a baseline of understanding for further analysis of the way those relationships create a sense of common purpose in the context of commercial events. The opportunity is also taken to

analyse in more depth the social actions and interactions of the two VEDs to accomplish the goals of events, and to assess their role in the production of social capital.

The Mizuno Half Marathon event was launched in Taupo by Harriers Club members 16 years ago. The original three race organisers continue as alumni members of the club, and each of them now has vested interests in commercial events as contracted race directors. Focus group participants spoke of these alumni with pride, and clearly hold them in high regard for their achievements (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Out of the bonds of the club members, trusting and reciprocal relationships emerged with the key individuals involved with Ironman New Zealand and Mizuno Half Marathon events in their early days. However, while those events have grown in scale, so there has been a commensurate dilution of the original bonds. So, too, the reason for getting involved as a volunteer in these events has shifted for current club members. They once volunteered out of personal commitment and to help people they know and trust, but they now generally use the event as a source of income. The club's links to the events are predicated on pragmatic connections between a club representative and VEDs who negotiate the supply and demand for crew in return for payment.

As has been described elsewhere, the VEDs are responsible for sourcing crew from a range of disparate community groups and sports clubs. For all these groups, the common purpose is economic reward and most appear committed to returning annually in support of their chosen events. As Doherty and Misener (2008) posited, social outcomes can emerge from economic benefits. However, unlike the assertions of Putnam et al. (2004) and Nicholson and Hoye (2008), that bridges can reduce the distance between disparate groups and add to the stock of social capital, there was little evidence to confirm this narrowing in this study. Rather, the bridges built between the VEDs and the range of groups did not result in bridging connections being forged between the groups. Groups appeared to operate in isolation of one another vis a vis events. Even where focus group participants were members of a number of clubs, the issue for them was more about deciding which club to represent when crewing for events (FG, personal communication, October 15, 2009).

However, notwithstanding their separateness, the common purpose of economic reward for clubs does contribute, albeit in an unanticipated manner, to the

ongoing production of associative-based social capital. The valuable additional income earned from events ensures that community groups and sports clubs have the ability to sustain the ongoing viability of their organisations than other fundraising activities might allow. Fewer members are required to undertake crew duties compared to the number of people required to organise alternative activities, such as a bake sale or a sausage sizzle, and for far greater return. With less pressure on members to volunteer for fundraising duties, they are better able to enjoy the participative nature of their club with like-minded people doing the things they like best, thus making their stock of social capital more durable.

There was less clarity around a sense of common purpose for the two VEDs in this study. While both talked of the personal rewards they gained from their involvement, their sense of commitment to the event meant that bridging mechanisms were established to help realise the economic aims of the event organisations. As members of the 16-strong organising committee, they make a common contribution to achieving the successful operation of the event. Given their length of service as volunteers, initially on behalf of their sports clubs, and then recruited by friends to become organising committee members for four and six years respectively, they have forged bonded relationships with event owners and other committee members. Reflecting what Doherty and Misener (2008) described as the hallmarks of social energy, the organising committee's internal relationships incorporate communication, collaboration and cooperation, underscored by a sense of social trust and reciprocity between its members. Thus, their stock of social capital within this setting is manifested in their endeavours to network with community groups to sustain the pool from which crew are drawn to staff the event.

Organising committee members are drawn from across the Taupo community and have different occupational backgrounds and interest. There is, therefore, the potential for each of them to draw on their pre-existing personal networks to resource the event. As Nicholson and Hoye (2008) commented, pre-existing knowledge of a local community and its social networks provides the mechanism through which resources might be mobilised. VEDs are the intermediaries identified by Coalter (2008); they are the lynchpins that bring disparate groups together for a common economic purpose (Onyx et al., 2004).

Theoretically, at least, these bridges to disparate groups should extend the scope of VEDs' networks and result in further accrual of social capital, based on the arguments of Doherty and Misener (2008), Nicholson and Hoye (2008), and Putnam et al. (2004). But as has been explained, the scale of the task for one VED to secure 400 trained crew members drawn from a number of community groups during a six-month period of part-time volunteering is enormous. In such circumstances, VEDs find it difficult to develop meaningful relationships with the community group representatives beyond those required for the event. Instead, such relationships remain untapped. Coalter (2008) and Cuskelly (2008) asserted that intermediaries stand to gain the most from the generated social capital of new relationships with people and groups outside of their normal networks. Conversely, however, within the present study the bridging connections of the VEDs were most unlikely to evolve from mere acquaintance into bonds of friendship, given the pressures of their role.

As Diamond (2001) and Doherty and Misener (2008) comment, while bridging capital may be more inclusive than bonded relationships, it is more fragile and prone to fracture. It is the payment for crew that sustains the commitment of community groups and sports clubs. The VEDs rely heavily on this incentive in their contacts with community groups. As a consequence, and despite their lack of close bonds and somewhat tenuous bridges with the clubs, the VEDs know that most groups can be counted on to come through with their volunteer numbers. They know too that there is a pool of other community groups currently not networked into the paid crew arrangements upon whom they might call should existing community groups withdraw. The irony is that the VEDs undertake the most work, under the most pressure, for the least financial and social reward.

In this study, the associative-based social capital of both community groups and VEDs is present. And while the bridging mechanisms facilitate interactions for economic benefit of event organisations and community groups, there is little evidence that either set of actors has extended their social networks with disparate groups as a consequence of their involvement in events.

Figure 6.5 portrays the production of associative-based social capital as experienced in this study, based on the model of Doherty and Misener (2008). As is highlighted in the commentary, while the bridging mechanisms are in place between

the two spheres, practical working arrangements inhibit the ongoing reproduction of associative-based social capital.

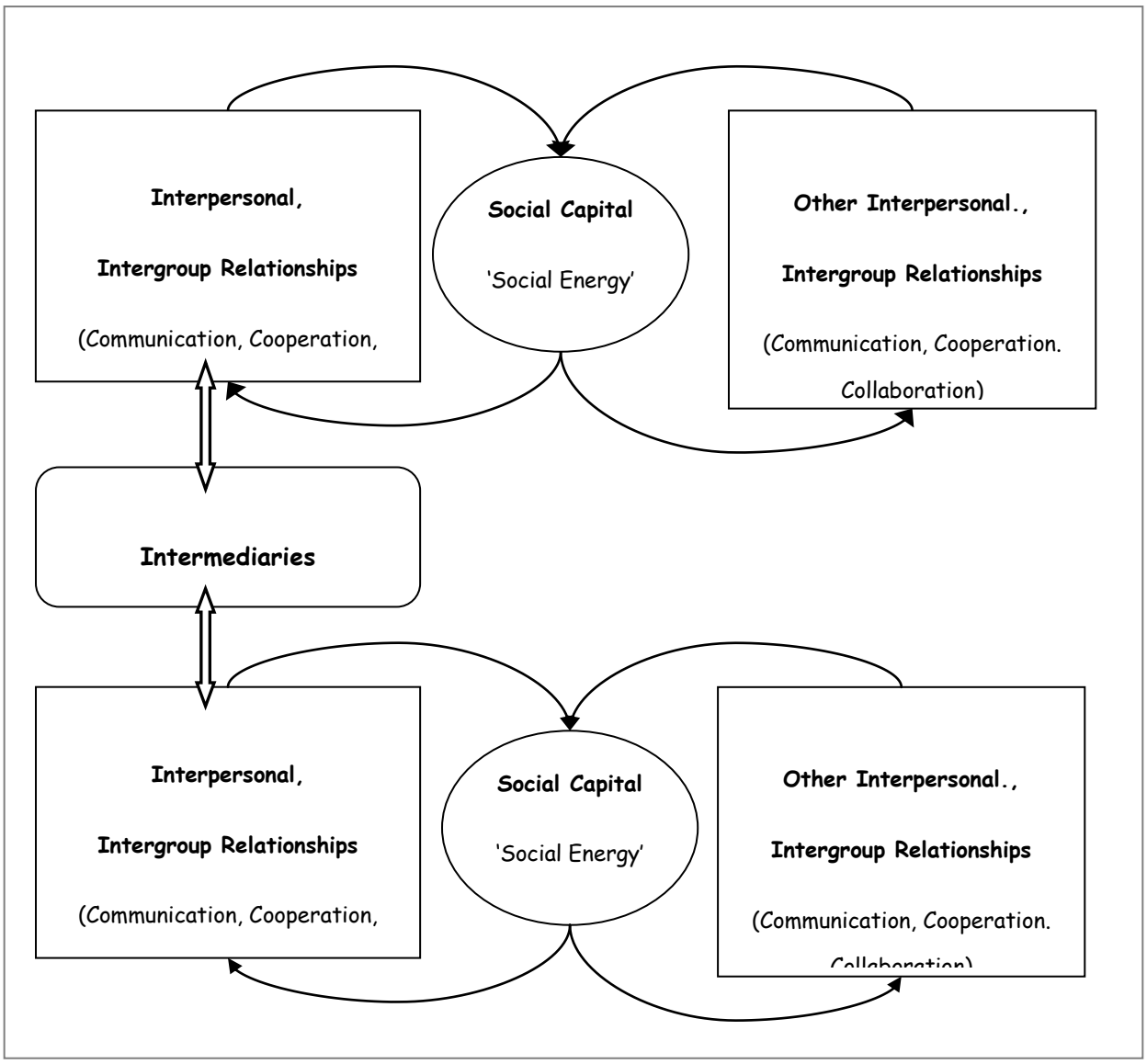


Figure 6.5: The (re)production of associative-based social capital. Adapted from Doherty and Misener (2008)

6.6 Conclusion

In this study, the social relationships that exist between two event organisations, two volunteer event directors and members of one sports club have been examined in the context of the bureaucratic framework that drives Taupo District Council's economic development strategy through its commercial events policy. The subsequent analysis has provided a glimpse into the perceptions of study participants about the presence of social capital in their relationships and networks. It has also provided an insight into the

processes that produce and reproduce social capital across different societal levels as a means of assessing how the stock of social capital in Taupo is impacted.

Additionally, the study has generated data that reinforces the concepts contained within the literature. According to Putnam (1995), hallmarks of a successful region are networks of organised reciprocity with traditions of long-term civic engagement. Putnam et al. (2004) extended that proposition to suggest it also enabled communities to 'get ahead' rather than simply 'get by'. Nicholson and Hoye (2008) clarified that sentiment in a more expansive way, as "…the more connections individuals make within their communities the better off they will be emotionally, socially, physically and economically" (p. 3). The availability of over 300 community groups and sports clubs in Taupo provides a platform for positive interactions among its citizens. Furthermore, when applied to the commercial events industry in Taupo those networks and traditions are apparent. The presence of indicators of social capital was confirmed by the perceptions of study participants. They spoke of a sense of place and common purpose, of cohesion, active participation and commitment. They described the degree of trust and reciprocity that underpin the bonds and bridges of their relationships and networks.

The networks and traditions of Taupo are based within a successful economically-driven events strategy, placing Taupo at the cutting edge of sport event tourism by its own accounts. Doherty and Misener (2008) reflected that even though the primary purpose of a relationship may be economically based, social effects will result. As has been shown in this study, the successful implementation of a commercial events strategy in Taupo is dependent on community groups and sports clubs supplying sufficient human resources to deliver and sustain the future of events. In return, those same community groups and sports clubs are dependent on the profitability of sport events to earn significant income to sustain their organisations. Thus there is a common purpose -- economic gain which incidentally leads to sustainability -- served by the vertical links between events and groups.

Through the voices of the study participants it was learned that social capital is both available and used within and across networks. As Reimer et al. (2008) suggested, social capital generation is manifested at four societal levels, though one or two may dominate. The subsequent analysis of the process of the production of social capital in

Taupo drew out the fact that available social capital is located predominantly in two spheres, bureaucratic and associative. In the bureaucratic relations that exist at the formal institutional level, pragmatic bridging relationships have been forged and strengthened between Taupo District Council, Destination Lake Taupo, event organisations and external government organisations concerned with the safety and quality of event operations. The ongoing success over many years of so many events occurring in Taupo suggests that those bridges have become more durable. While some commentators' perspectives of social capital might suggest that this demonstrates an elite group holding power over the majority to leverage resources for their own benefit (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Coleman, 1998), others such as Putnam et al. (2004) and Coalter (2008) share the view that this provides effective leadership in mobilising resources for the benefit of the greater good.

Putnam et al. (2004) described groups, such as sports clubs, as 'repositories' of social capital because of the dense ties between members. Concurrently, in the second sphere of associative-based relations of community groups and sports clubs, durable, strong bonds have grown in the Harriers Club, spawned by crossover memberships between like-minded individuals. Those bonds are underpinned by the long-established trust and reciprocity in alumni and other members to work together to access financial resources for the sustenance of the club and in pursuit of its philanthropic goals to support local charities. Favours are a norm of the group. Reiterating the assertion of Doherty and Misener (2008), economic benefits can result in social outcomes. So too is the case in Taupo. The presence of these indicators of social capital enables the club to remain financially viable, with the consequent beneficial impact on its stock of social capital. The longer the club exists, the more durable becomes its social capital.

According to Chalip (2006), institutions need to be efficient at adapting their strategies to leverage resources for ongoing beneficial effect. The introduction of pay for crew by event organisers is a reflection of such adaptation with its economic benefits felt by event owners and community groups alike. Doherty and Misener (2008) claimed that it is the vertical links of market relations that draw formal institutional organisations and informal social groups together in common purpose, to access to resources. Such is the case in this study. Event organisations require crew to staff events, leading to their longevity. Community groups require funding to sustain their viability.

The District Council aims to sustain the economic wellbeing of the tourism and hospitality industries for the benefit of the town. For the Ironman New Zealand event, the mechanism for the exchange of resources between event organisations and community groups is provided by the interactions of a few key VEDs.

The VEDs are the intermediaries described by Coalter (2008); they are the lynchpins who foster and sustain links between disparate groups for a common purpose. Based on the evidence presented in this study, without the incentive of financial reward the bridges between event organisations and community groups would not be sustainable in the long term. The expectations and pressures placed on VEDs are enormous. The Ironman New Zealand organising committee relies on VEDs' use of their personal networks to resource events, but the scale of their task allows little time for nurturing and strengthening relationships. For example, one VED is responsible for sourcing and training 400 crew members, which are drawn from a large number of community groups, on a part-time basis over a six-month preparation period. Cuskelly (2008) wondered how those most involved in volunteering, and who are struggling to maintain a balance between family, work and volunteering, can generate sufficient social capital when they have so little time to nurture any of their relationships. The same is true of the VEDs. The time and scale constraints do not allow for bridging connections to convert to more durable relationships, even assuming that the contact person in each community group remains a constant. The growth of market social capital of VEDs is limited by these constraints.

As Cuskelly (2008) has reported, the levels of commitment of volunteers can differ significantly based on motivations and rewards. The irony of the recruitment arrangements in this case study is that the lynchpin of the mechanism, the VED, undertakes the most work, with enormous pressure for the least financial and social reward of all the actors. If one club fails to deliver its resources, there are others on whom VEDs can call to plug the gap. The 'failed' club may lose access to economic benefits, but it can turn to other fundraising ventures. But if one VED failed to secure sufficient resources, the entire event and its stakeholders are placed in jeopardy. It should be noted that this comment relates specifically to the context of the Ironman New Zealand event. The organisational arrangements around the Mizuno Half Marathon are on a lesser scale, and there was some evidence that durable bridging relationships

borne out of historical bonds exist between its organising committee and some sports clubs.

Returning to the comment about clubs failing to deliver resources, the clubs lose the economic benefits of involvement in events and also their market social capital diminishes. It is most unlikely they would be invited to return by VEDs, as was the case in 2009 for one club. Assuming its associative social capital is not compromised, the club would be able to turn to other fundraising opportunities, such as bake sales and sausage sizzles, which could lead to the acquisition of communal social capital as a result of interacting socially with the local populace. The normative structure of their relations will have shifted (Reimer et al., 2008). Also derived from this analysis is an understanding that the distance between disparate community groups is not narrowed by their involvement in supporting commercial events. There was no evidence that indicated disparate groups have any reason to come together in pursuit of their economic goals.

As has been widely discussed in the literature, there are a number of reasons why individuals and groups are excluded from activities (Coalter, 2008; Collins, 2004; Onyx et al, 2006; Oxoby, 2009). From the data supplied, it is evident that the majority of community groups and sports clubs are not invited to, or choose not to, provide crew in return for pay. For those community groups, which are not recruited by VEDs to crew the event, there are many reasons why they may have been excluded. They may lack the necessary skills and resources to access the networks of the VEDs; or they may choose not to support this event in favour of another; or the event is fully staffed by the contracted clubs. Anecdotal evidence was provided by study participants that one club, that was not a recognised provider of event crew, had recently collapsed due to financial straits. If it had been a part of the event resourcing arrangements, would the income from such events have made a difference?

6.7 Limitations of the study

The perceptions recorded here are of a small number of volunteers, drawn from two sport events. It is likely that had the study extended to other sport events in Taupo, more would have been learned about the crew recruitment mechanisms and usage of payment arrangements. With more participants drawn from a wider base, so more

would have been uncovered about the relationships and interactions between individuals, groups and sport event organisations and the presence of social capital. However, the findings drawn from this research lay a methodical foundation stone on which more extensive studies might draw.

One of the critical findings related to the fragile relationships and the significant expectations and pressures placed on volunteer organising committee members. Specific recommendations were made in regard to the volunteer event directors of Ironman New Zealand as the intermediaries between community organisations and the event. Interviews with the volunteer committee members of the Mizuno Half Marathon were not undertaken due to time constraints, so it was not possible to assess the expectations and pressures made on them. To do so would have added to the insights drawn from the Ironman New Zealand intermediaries and this important finding.

As the study was located in one town, the normative relations structure as described reflects the situation in Taupo only. Other towns may appear different in the eyes and words of volunteers in those towns. Arrangements to secure sport events may well differ. Unlike Taupo, there may not be an events policy located within the heart of an economic development strategy. Thus care should be taken when investigating other settings to understand the organisational and environmental context in which volunteers interact.

6.8 Theoretical implications

When reflecting on the discussion within the literature on the concepts and frameworks that have been employed in this case study, there appear to be some emerging themes which may have implications for the theoretical body of knowledge about events, about volunteers, and most importantly about the prevalence of normative structures which both influence, and are influenced by, the production of social capital. The themes and implications are discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

There appears to be an absence of literature investigating the motivations and commitment of sports event owners to benefit communities socially. Event professionals are reliant on working in partnership with volunteers from local communities (Ralston et al., 2004). The challenges they face in delivering events on time and within budget, in an age of increased individualism and materialism, demand

creative solutions. Linkages with other organisations are critical to event organisations. Therefore, how these organisations leverage, manage and evaluate strategic relationships is critical for their success (Cousens et al., 2006). Such linkages allow the partners to access and use resources not normally available to them (Coleman, 1998). There is a marked absence in the literature of discussion of these linkages and their influence on the process of production of social capital.

Leveraging of the resources by providing the incentive of payment for crew is more prevalent than previously reflected in the literature. This gap in the literature may be explained by the temporal nature of the lag between establishment of a new practice and subsequent research into its impact. However, the payment incentive is a reflection of a paradigm shift that appears to have occurred away from the notion of volunteerism as a reciprocal exchange of favours between institutions and willing individuals. This practice has now become embedded within the culture of the commercial events industry within Taupo.

Reflective of this shift in normative structures, market relations appear to have become more significant in achieving the common goal of economic benefit. The new strategy provides a more reliable source of crew in return for a more stable source of income, and thus leads to more durable production of social capital.

The vertical links that underpin the leveraging of resources are common in market relations. What has been learned from this study is that vertical links have far greater impact on network interactions and the location of the production of durable social capital than social capital created through bridging ties. It is possible that the vertical links inhibit the formation of bridging ties because of the competitive nature of accessing resources. While that remains to be discovered, it was clear that in the absence of a common cause to act as a catalyst to forge bridging ties between groups, the distance between disparate groups does not narrow.

Again, within a market relations setting, the burnout of crew is no longer as significant an issue as the portrayals of 'lost' volunteers contained in earlier volunteer literature (Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye & Darcey, 2006; Harvey et al., 2007; Wilson, 2000). Within Taupo specifically, there are untapped resources of unused community groups wishing to secure new income in return for services. However, within the new relational structure, the burnout of organising committee volunteers, the intermediaries of social

capital generation, is a much more critical issue. As discovered in this study, they are under the most intense pressure to secure large scale resources on the back of fragile bridging connections. They contribute the most effort for the least economic and social rewards. Event organisers ignore this threat to long-term sustainability at their peril.

6.9 Practical implications

Putnam et al. (2004) suggested the successful creation of social capital is dependent on woven relationships between individuals in small groups that identify with the larger whole as well as on the power of effective leadership that will maximise the benefits for the greater good. As Nicholson and Hoye (2008) emphasised, if leaders in organisations can maximise and mobilise resources, such as event volunteers, there can be collective benefits for all parties. The challenge for leaders and organisations is to facilitate effective bridges between small groups, which capture the breadth and depth of relationships within each of them. Based on this study, while the researcher believes that event organisations have mobilised resources for mutual benefit, they have not maximised those resources to their full potential.

The payment for crew incentive is clearly a major success, and it is worth noting that there is a commitment to sustain and improve payment incentives in line with practice around New Zealand (EM1, personal communication, October 16, 2009). However, in order to maximise their competitive edge in the event industry event organisers should endeavour to better appreciate the social relations mechanisms that facilitate their success. The findings in this study go some way to explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the mechanisms and relationships.

For example, there are a large number of community groups and sports clubs which are not called upon to resource the Ironman New Zealand event. The same may be true of other major events in Taupo. It is known that in some community groups, there is an ageing population who may be unable to continue to provide sufficient resources in support of events, with a loss of an established skill-base. Where school-based groups are used to resource events the concern is about the constant turnover of school children and their parents, and consequent retraining requirements. So long as clubs exist, there will always be volunteers to work for rewards. VEDs will find the solutions and leverage resources. Event organisers should familiarise themselves with

data about available resources outside the personal networks of their organising committee members. The establishment of a centrally-managed database might prove fruitful. Additionally, if event organisers can gain detailed insights into the reasons why clubs are not involved, it may lead to a new, more inclusive sourcing and recruitment strategy.

A more important lesson that can be learned from this study is that the expectations placed on VEDs create enormous pressures. The potential for them to burnout is far more likely a risk than a crew member, with less interest in the success of the event, meeting the same fate. All other actors benefit economically from their actions. As can be gleaned from the literature, very few people are sufficiently altruistically motivated to become dedicated volunteers (Cuskelly, 2008). The current organising committee is growing older. Their willingness to continue to provide so much of their personal time at the expense of other interests and their families may diminish. Event organisers should review expectations of VEDs and the recruitment mechanisms to ease the pressures on them.

However, in adopting solutions, event organisers should be mindful of the social effects. As has been demonstrated in this study, vertical links work in favour of supply and demand of resources, but there appear to be very few bridging links across community groups as a consequence of involvement in events. If groups were provided a common purpose through additional incentives to use their networks to facilitate recruitment mechanisms, not only would the pressures ease on VEDs, but the bridging social capital gains achieved would strengthen the currently fragile bridging ties that pose a threat to the viability of events.

The above comments are the theoretical and practical responses of the researcher to the perceived gaps in the literature and in event management practices as a result of the findings of this case study. It is acknowledged that while the study was necessarily limited to a small number of actors the findings do provide pointers for future research.

6.10 Future research

While the lessons learned offer up practical solutions that may be of interest to event organisers and other towns which use events as an economic driver, there is

more that can be learned generally about the production of social capital that might better inform the understanding of interactions and mechanisms that result in the continued well being of a community. By extending the case study to include a wider selection of disparate community groups and sports clubs a greater understanding will emerge of the bonds and bridges, the networks and mechanisms that exist for the population of Taupo. From that, it may be possible to discover more about the social impact of several events on the town, and also learn more about what other activities, besides events, that are influential in contributing to the social capital of Taupo.

6.11 Concluding summary

In summary, without VEDs acting as intermediaries to bring together event organisations and community groups these events may not happen. If Ironman New Zealand failed, Taupo would lose an iconic event and its sports tourism advantage, with consequent impact on its hospitality industry. If Mizuno Half Marathon failed, it would no longer be able to benefit the local community with scholarships and bike trails. The community groups and sports clubs would return to fundraising through alternative initiatives (i.e. bake sales and sausage sizzles). The town would return to its former low-key, pleasant tourist destination, because the lake and mountains remain. The social energy derived from events would change and impact the accrual of social capital of the community. The economic benefit earned by a proportion of community groups from the Ironman New Zealand and Mizuno Half Marathon events does ensure that the Taupo community continues to benefit from the availability of a healthy, viable, socially active range of organisations. Healthy, viable clubs lead to sustained, successful events bringing in sports tourists who benefit the hospitality and tourism industries year round. Through this cycle of mutual support, the wellbeing of Taupo is maintained. The social capital stock of its active citizens is enriched and it continues to be available and used for the benefit of the wider community.

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APPENDIX 1 - DOCUMENT ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL INDICATORS

SOURCE DOCUMENT	Social Cohesion, Community Participation & Commitment	Sense of Place & ID	Norms of Trust & Reciprocity	Bonds & Bridges, and Exclusions
Taupo LTCCP 2006-2016	We see our role as providing places and spaces where cultural and sporting activities can occur – local libraries, the Great Lake Centre, the Events Centre, the Lake Taupo Museum and Art Gallery, community halls to name a few. We see this district as being a leader for sport and cultural events and we will play our part. This means providing excellent spaces, being a point of contact and encouraging top quality events. (p.45)	**VIBRANT & DIVERSE:** It's the people who give Taupo District its special flavour and culture. Culture in its widest sense is about arts, creative and cultural activities, languages, history and heritage, sport and recreation and a **sense of place/identity.** All of this helps define who we are. (p.45)	After a Forum in May 2005 and extensive consultation with key stakeholders, a Ten Year Visitor Industry Strategy has been prepared by the Lake Taupo Tourism Advisory Board (p.150).	Destination Lake Taupo, the Board and Council will also be working to enhance our reputation as the events capital of New Zealand and we will put more emphasis on the Australian conventions market once Rotorua Airport becomes Trans Tasman. (p.150)
Recreation Strategy 2006-2016	**Participation:** We will seek to increase participation in recreation through active promotion of its benefits and removal of barriers. (p.11) A 2004 survey of Taupo District recreation users revealed significant gaps in Council's knowledge of the activities and needs of the community and its visitors. (p.14)	We will measure our involvement in recreation provision against the imperatives of **social, economic and environmental sustainability.** (p.11)	Taupo District Council's involvement in recreation provision has, to date, been ad hoc….. The increasing importance of recreation to **community well-being** means that more is required of local government.(p.14) Introduce the Sportsville concept (shared facilities and administration) to clubs and organisations and seek input and expressions of interest.	We will seek and foster partnerships with other recreation providers and related agencies to increase opportunities and ensure co-ordinated provision of recreation. (p.11) Council's goal during the next three years is to encourage pooling and rationalisation of strengths (of key recreation providers). (p.16)

Source Document	Social Cohesion, Community Participation & Commitment	Sense of Place & ID	Norms of Trust & Reciprocity	Bonds & Bridges, and Exclusions
Commercial Events Policy 2006	*It is the intention of Council through this policy to:* ensure the local community are aware of the value of these events and their importance as hosts to national and international visitors.	*It is the intention of Council through this policy to:* create a positive and encouraging environment for the district's event industry.	*It is the intention of Council through this policy to:* Work in partnership with national and international bodies to protect and enhance the reputation of specific events.	*It is the intention of Council through this policy to*: ensure that event organisers work effectively with emergency services such as the Police and St John's.
Taupo LTCCP 2009 – Towards 2019	**Turning dreams into reality:** Our initial vision as fleshed out by feedback provided from over 2,200 locals who talked to us out on the street and during Our Neighbourhood-Our Future Expo.(p.1) Voter turnout declined between the 1995 and 2004 local body elections…. However, voter turnout in Taupo is consistently above the national average (p.269) **VENUES:** We encourage participation and continually strive to develop a wide range of choices, either through requests from the community or partnering with Government based initiatives to engage the community in healthy activities. (p.125)	We will work with our communities and partners to establish a real sense of identity for Taupo District which will enhance and preserve our reputation as the premier events and lifestyle destination.(p.1) **Growth & Economic Development:** We are looking at establishing a civic centre in Taupo town……to meet the diverse needs of the community and nurture a sense of belonging and identity. (p. 61) **GOAL: Healthy People, Healthy Communities –** ***Community Outcome:*** *Acknowledging community diversity.* ***Indicator:*** *Social equity* ***Measure*****:** *Representation of women on Council. (p.283)*	Let's protect our natural treasures and retain our provincial character and family values, but let's not use these things to prevent progress.(p.1) **Strong, Safe & Healthy Communities:** We all want to live in a place that makes us feel safe and where we can be happy and healthy. … A sense of belonging and community is an important aspect of keeping ourselves safe and secure.(p. 63) **GOAL: Safe and Secure-** ***Community Outcome:*** *Respect for people and property.* ***Indicator:*** *Community safety.* ***Measure:*** *Perceived levels of community and personal safety.(p. 285)*	**Working Together:** We want to understand our communities' needs and make decisions which benefit them. This means building relationships and networks in the community and providing opportunities for the community to engage with us. We are also committed to building stronger links with others who can provide benefits to the wellbeing of our communities, including Central Government ministers and agencies. Connecting with youth is a challenge for councils, but it is vital to involve young people and enable them to have a greater say on youth issues and the future of their district. (p.60)

APPENDIX 2

INDICATIVE QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS WITH EVENT ORGANISERS FOR IRONMAN NZ & MIZUNO HALF-MARATHON EVENTS & WITH MARKETING EVENT MANAGER OF DESTINATION LAKE TAUPO

These questions will be used to elaborate upon secondary data gathered from published documents and website materials, in order to set the context within which volunteers at Ironman NZ & Mizuno Half-Marathon operate.

1. Event information documents include the mission and goals of the event.
   To what extent do these goals reflect the goals or ambitions of the townspeople?
   Phrases in District Council planning & strategy documents suggest that "social capital" exists within Taupo.
   Are those words a true reflection of the realities for all Taupo residents?
   What would happen to Taupo if either or both events ceased to operate?

2. What are the benefits of hosting the events in Taupo?
   What are the disadvantages of hosting the events in Taupo?
   What impacts do the events have on the residents of Taupo and the surrounding area & villages?

3. What profit did the event make in 2008?
   What profit did Taupo make from hosting these 2 events in 2008?

4. With which other organisations is your organisation strongly affiliated?
   To what extent does the smooth operation of the event rely on the support of the following organisations or groups? Why?

   - local businesses
   - local sports clubs
   - civic and community groups
   - local iwi or marae
   - schools and churches
   - the district council

   What would happen if one segment withdrew its support?

5. Numbers of volunteers & their recruitment.
   From which areas/villages/suburbs/neighbourhoods, do most volunteers come?
   Are there any neighbourhoods or communities that are not included in these numbers? Why?

6. What incentives are offered to volunteers?
   Are there any types of people that you would exclude from volunteering & why?

7. Ironman NZ & Mizuno Half-Marathon events are reported to have a very large percentage of return volunteers over a very long time? Why do you think this is?

8. Do you arrange regular gatherings through the year that bring volunteers together socially, when they are not required to work at an event? Do the volunteers organise social gatherings of their own, do you know?

9. My research has been concerned with the "generation of social capital" in Taupo, what do you think I mean by that phrase? Do you feel sports event volunteering has an impact on the stock of social capital in the Taupo community? *(A printed card with a definition of social capital will be used for consistency).*

11 May 2009

APPENDIX 3

INDICATIVE QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUPS

One or two Focus Groups are to be arranged once the survey questionnaires have been returned and initial analysis of responses has been undertaken. The questions below are indicative of the key indicators of social capital, as defined in the literature, so it is important that as many of these areas are covered in the 2-hour sessions as possible, though the nature of the question may change as discussion flows. Additionally, the questions will be adapted to reflect any central themes which emerge from the questionnaire analysis, which will better inform the research question.

1. Social Connections

1.1 Tell me about Taupo as a place to live, work and play. Can you describe for me some of the neighbourhoods, some of the sport s and other clubs, some of the local policies that make it what it is today?

1.2 Within this group, how many people do you know casually (to pass the time of day), or well (socialise outside the event on regular basis)? Tell me how you came to know each other.

1.3 How easy is it to forge new connections with others that live or work in the area?

1.4 Are there any people that you feel may be excluded from or prevented from volunteering at these events? Why?

1.5 Are there people who you know who have no interest in volunteering for these events?

2. **Trust & Reciprocity**

2.1 Have you returned a favour, or performed a random act of kindness for a person with whom you don't normally associate in your circle of friends & colleagues? Why?

2.2 Do you trust everyone who volunteers at the event to do a good job? What would prevent them from delivering their best effort?

2.3 Over the years, paid staff and volunteers at these 2 events have changed. Can you recall such a time? What was the impact of the

2.4 Who would you trust to help you out in a time of need?

2.5 Do you believe that Taupo is a safe place to live and work? Why?

2.6 Are there any neighbourhoods/areas you would avoid at night? Why?

3. **Motivations, Benefits & Rewards**

3.1 What do you consider to be the rewards or benefits for volunteering for these events? What makes it worthwhile for you?

3.2 What would stop you from volunteering at these events?

3.3 If these events ceased, what would you choose to do as an alternative?

4. **Impacts on Taupo**

4.1 If these events ceased, what do you think would happen to Taupo?

4.2 What do you believe are the goals of Ironman NZ/Mizuno Half-Marathon? Do you feel those goals are in the best interests of the Taupo community? Do they benefit only certain segments of the community?

4.3 Tell me some of the catch phrases or advertising by-lines of Ironman NZ & Mizuno Half-Marathon? Do they reflect the perceptions of locals about the events?

4.4 What kinds of positive/negative impacts do you think these 2 events have on Taupo?

5. Social Capital

5.1 If I told you that my research has been concerned with the "generation of social capital" in Taupo, what do you think I mean by that phrase? *(There will be a printed card defining social capital to ensure consistency between focus groups and interviews).*

5.2 Now I have explained to you the concept of "social capital", can you now tell me about Taupo and the place it is today in those terms?

5.3 And can you now tell me about the impacts you think volunteering has on the Taupo community?

11 May 2009

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced: 11 May 2009
Project Title: A SURVEY OF SPORTS EVENT VOLUNTEERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN TAUPO

An Invitation

As a senior manager involved in the operation of sports events in Taupo, and in particular in relation to Ironman NZ and/or the Mizuno Half-Marathon, you are invited to participate in the second stage of a research project that is investigating the perceptions of long-term sports event volunteers of the stock of social capital in Taupo. Volunteers at these events have been invited to complete a questionnaire in stage one of this project, and those who indicate a willingness to participate in Focus Group discussions will be invited to meet with the researcher later this year. The purpose of your involvement is to assist in setting the context of the environment in which volunteers operate at these events.

The project is being undertaken by Ann Tidey, an MBus candidate from the School of Sport & Recreation. Participation in the project will involve a 30-60 minute interview. It is possible that you will be asked to provide copies of relevant published materials in subsequent communications. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any stage before, during or after it has taken place.

What is the purpose of this research?

It is known that governments around the world promote event volunteerism and sport participation as means to improve the social capital stock of cities, towns and communities. While many studies have focused on the motivations of volunteers, or on how sports clubs can promote unity within a community, there has been little exploration of how sports event volunteers might contribute to the social well-being of their towns and communities. Taupo claims to be the "sports event capital" of New Zealand, and with a full calendar of sports events, it was considered the ideal place within which to conduct this survey.

This project is being conducted for Auckland University of Technology, with support from Destination Lake Taupo. It forms part of a graduate thesis being undertaken by Ann Tidey. She hopes to publish the findings at conferences and in academic and professional journals.

What will happen in this research?

You will be asked to sign a participant consent form and take part in an interview at a time and place that is convenient to you. The interview will focus on your experience of the event environment in Taupo, with a particular focus on the interactions of volunteers involved in Ironman NZ and Mizuno Half-Marathon. The interview will be recorded via audiotape and note-taking. This will be analysed by common themes.

What are the discomforts and risks?

No discomfort or risk is expected. However, if you experience any discomfort in discussing some aspects of your experience, you don't need to take part and should feel free to withdraw at any time. You will also have the opportunity to review the transcript of discussions and amend or withdraw your comments.

What are the benefits?

The information collected during this project will be used to highlight the extent to which volunteers' perceptions of social capital match up to government rhetoric. Any findings that emerge may prove useful to Destination Lake Taupo and associated events' organisations as part of ongoing events strategies.

How will my privacy be protected?

Every effort will be made to protect your privacy in the write-up of the results. However, as your role in the selected events in Taupo is well-known within the sports event industry in New Zealand, especial care will be taken in recounting any comments that might identify you specifically. It is anticipated that much of your contribution to the project will focus on setting the context of sports event volunteering within Taupo. The final published proceedings will identify participants only by a two-letter code.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

It is expected that participation in the interview will require between 90 minutes to two hours of your time. It is not anticipated that you will incur any monetary costs, as the interview will be held at a place of your choosing.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You are asked to consider and respond to this invitation within the next two weeks **(date)**

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to participate in the interview, please sign and return the attached Consent Form. Please also advise the times and place that you are available.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

It is anticipated that a summary of the findings will be produced by December 2009 and will be subject to standard approval procedures of AUT of the researcher's thesis. Subsequently, copies of the thesis will be sent to the Race Director of Ironman NZ and Mizuno Half-Marathon and to the Manager, Event Marketing at Destination Lake Taupo.
Interested volunteer participants will be able to access a copy in early 2010, via the internet at http://www.aut.ac.nz/library/library_resources/scholarlycommons/.

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. Lesley Ferkins, Lesley.Ferkins@aut.ac.nz, (09) 921 9999 ext 7644.
Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEC, Madeline Banda, *madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz,* (09) 921 9999 ext 8044.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:
The researcher's contact details are: Ann Tidey, Ann.Tidey@aut.ac.nz,. Phone (09)921-9999, ext. 7848.

Project Supervisor Contact Details:
The co-supervisor of the project is Dr. Geoff Dickson, Geoff.Dickson@aut.ac.nz, phone (09) 921-9999, ext. 7851.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 11 June 2009, AUTEC Reference number 09/112.