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Managing Sport for Development: An Investigation of Tensions and Paradox

Abstract

The professionalization of sport for development (SFD) has resulted in the evolution of increasingly complex organizational environments. As such, these initiatives are often balancing divergent goals such as financial, sport and community outcomes. However, previous research provides minimal insight into how SFD managers handle such tensions, and frequently oversimplifies the realities of these conflicts. To address this knowledge gap, we aim to explore the experiences of SFD managers employed within Australian National Sporting Organizations engaged in SFD programming across Asia and the Pacific. Adopting a basic qualitative methodology, our findings demonstrate how managers are challenged with complexities, tensions, and resourcing. Drawing upon paradox theory, our results also highlight how managers navigate these challenges, including scaling back programs, collaboration, promoting work, fostering local autonomy, and seeking synergies. Through this study, we build upon theoretical understandings of SFD management roles and paradoxes. Further, we offer practical insight into the challenges and strategies of managing SFD hybrids.

Keywords: sport for development; paradox; organizational tensions; institutional logics; management theory

1. Introduction

The 21st century has shown more economic and social disadvantage than any other, with income inequality increasing, and the gap widening between the wealthy and those of low socio-economic status (Fletcher & Guttman, 2013). This is particularly evident in low- and middle-income settings, as communities are constantly struggling with unemployment, lack of access to education and health services, and poverty (Jarman & Lambert, 2018). Addressing socio-economic inequalities is a challenging task that requires collaborative effort from stakeholders across a range of sectors, including government, business, and non-profit (Sharma & Bansal, 2017). Consequently, there has been an increase in diverse and, at times, unconventional institutional forms (e.g., organizational hybrids or social enterprises) emerging as a means of addressing difficult social issues (Svensson & Seifried, 2017).

In recent years, examples of such unconventional organizational arrangements have been evident in Australia's sporting sector. One prominent example, which also serves as the focus of this paper, is known as the 'Australian Sports Partnerships Program' (ASPP). Funded by the Australian Government, the ASPP provides AUD\$6 million in funding per annum via the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to National Sporting Organizations (NSOs) to implement sport for development (SFD) programming across the Pacific and Asia (Australian Government, 2019). Originally launched in 2009 under the Australian Sports Commission, the funding from ASPP has helped to establish multiple organizational hybrids, which combine resources and capabilities from across multiple sectors (e.g., government, sport, and non-profit) as a means of promoting social development and diplomacy outcomes.

Such hybrid entities are thought to have the ability to employ the efficiency, viability, and creativity of a variety of institutional logics (e.g., commercial, business, social) as a means of servicing community outcomes such as health, wellbeing, and community capacity building (Smith, Besharov, Wessels, & Chertok, 2012). Hybrid arrangements can be defined as “...organizations that combine institutional logics in unprecedented ways” (Battilana & Dorado, 2010, p. 1419). Thornton and Ocasio (1999) conceptualized institutional logics as the “...socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules” (p. 804). These institutional logics often vary between societal sectors and can be associated with different institutional orders, such as: religion, family, community, bureaucratic, market, profession, and commercial (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012). Consequently, institutional logics can be examined at many different levels, including “...organizations, markets, industries, interorganizational networks, geographic communities, and organizational fields” (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008, p. 106).

However, targeting social missions alongside other ventures can be challenging when balancing divergent priorities such as financial or community development outcomes (Smith, Gonin, & Besharov, 2013). If mismanaged, this can lead to internal conflict and tensions, which in turn, could limit positive development outcomes (Sharma & Bansal, 2017). Hence, if hybrid organizations are to be successful, managers are required to simultaneously address a range of different, and at times, conflicting demands (Smith et al., 2013).

While current research offers some understanding into how managers address this conflict, it often oversimplifies the realities of these apparent managerial and organizational paradoxes (Schad, Lewis, Raisch, & Smith, 2016). This critical knowledge gap is also pertinent to the field of SFD, a space where organizational hybrids have been described as complex (Dixon & Svensson, 2019) and with significant potential to lead to internal tensions and dysfunction (Raw, Sherry, & Rowe, 2019). Although recent scholarly efforts in SFD

have provided some understanding regarding organizational adaptations and how managers respond to paradoxical demands (e.g., Dixon & Svensson, 2019; Raw et al., 2019; Svensson, 2017), the majority of SFD research remains focused upon program design and outcomes (Schulenkorf, 2017; Schulenkorf, Sherry, & Rowe, 2016). In addition, despite recent efforts to examine SFD in relation to the development of sport (e.g., Sherry, Schulenkorf, & Phillips, 2016), investigations in this area are relatively scarce (Svensson, 2017). As such, scholars have called for more research in order to better understand these complex management processes within SFD initiatives (Dixon & Svensson, 2019; Sherry, Schulenkorf, & Chalip, 2015; Thorpe & Chawansky, 2017), particularly those linked to, or associated with, professional sport settings (Raw et al., 2019; Rowe, Karg, & Sherry, 2018).

In addressing this knowledge gap, we aimed to explore the experiences of SFD managers employed within Australian NSOs engaged in SFD programming across Asia and the Pacific, via the ASPP. We developed two inter-related research questions to guide our exploration:

- RQ1- What are the challenges associated with management roles in the context of SFD hybrids engaged in the ASPP?
- RQ2- What strategies do SFD managers draw upon in order to respond to these challenges?

To provide relevant background and context, in the following sections we review current SFD literature relevant to hybrid organizing and management, before turning to paradox theory as the underpinning critical lens we employ throughout this paper.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Sport for development and interorganizational relationships

Against the background of a rapidly growing SFD movement, organizations are professionalizing, and the roles and responsibilities of SFD operators are becoming

increasingly diverse. Thus, over time, SFD initiatives have benefitted from a stronger focus on strategy, pedagogical design, and long-term planning (Schulenkorf, 2017). In recent times the professionalization of the SFD sector has been occurring to such an extent that entrepreneurship, business logics, and interorganizational relationships (IORs) are playing an increasingly important part in SFD. This is evidenced through a rising number of SFD initiatives collaborating with government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), NSOs, sport practitioners and researchers across the world (Schulenkorf, Sherry, & Rowe, 2016).

There are a variety of reasons as to why SFD organizations may develop IORs, including assistance with funding, program design, delivery, implementation, and with monitoring and evaluation (Welty Peachey & Cohen, 2016; Welty Peachey, Cohen, Shin, & Fusaro, 2018). These partnerships are thought to help to address resource deficiencies, build organizational capacity, and improve the likelihood of achieving organizational objectives (Hambrick, Svensson, & Kang, 2019). In addition, these IORs offer beneficial opportunities for organizational partners, including the promotion of a donor's brand and the positive public relations associated with this (Rowe et al., 2018). Consequently, IORs are thought to be essential for the successful delivery of SFD programs, and typically develop across three main areas, including: funding and infrastructure (for example sponsors, funders, and government), support agencies (for example government departments and NGOs), and sports organizations (for example sport participation, pathways, and high performance) (Dickson & Sherry, 2016). However, while IORs are thought to be integral to SFD success, researchers have noted that they can present their own challenges if practitioners do not have the appropriate skill set to manage them (e.g., business acumen, financial and strategic management, human resource management) (Welty Peachey et al., 2018).

2.2. Sport for development hybridity

While research into SFD hybrid organizational structures and management has only emerged over recent years (Svensson, 2017), this body of literature offers practical and theoretical insights into SFD organizational structures, IORs, and management. Of particular value in this field is Svensson's (2017) examination of different types of SFD hybrids. His investigation described four types of SFD hybrids including (a) differentiated hybrids, where there is structural separation between organizational functions associated with different approaches; (b) symbolic hybrids, where some functions of one approach are incorporated in another more prominent approach; (c) integrated hybrids, where deviating elements are merged to create novel configurations; and (d) dysfunctional hybrids, where disparate approaches are conflicting and generate dysfunction within the organization (Svensson, 2017). Within these hybrids, organizational structures and processes can shift and evolve over time. Smith and Besharov (2019) proposed that there are a number of 'guardrails' which are thought to function as the guardians of respective missions, structures, stakeholder relationships, and leadership behaviors. Monitoring these guardrails helps to signify shifts in hybridity, structures and processes over time (Smith & Besharov, 2019).

There are usually a number of institutional logics present within these hybrids, meaning that these organizations are required to navigate multiple priorities and competing demands (Raw et al., 2019). For instance, professional sport teams are often focused upon developing a fan base and enhancing revenue, hence are driven by business logics (Hills, Walker, & Barry, 2019). Conversely, corporate social responsibility efforts within these professional sport clubs often have a focus upon community development outcomes (Rowe et al., 2018). Research into SFD hybridity has begun to unpack some of the logics. For example, an examination of a SFD hybrid in Kenya highlighted how stakeholders were required to navigate a combination of social welfare and community logics alongside bureaucratic and western development logics (Dixon & Svensson, 2019).

2.3. Tensions and paradoxes

While hybrid organizational arrangements offer a variety of benefits including the ability to reach out to those typically estranged by development initiatives (Levermore, 2010), they also have the capacity to cause tensions when trying to balance various institutional logics (Dixon & Svensson, 2019). Svensson's (2017) examination of SFD hybridity, uncovered a number of areas in which tensions may occur within organizations, including:

“...(a) the types of goals and performance criteria used to evaluate organizational success; (b) the structure of an organization and its internal processes; (c) how individuals and the organization identify themselves (single, dual, or multiple identities); and (d) how organizational learning and growth is viewed and pursued” (p. 444).

Non-SFD literature into organizational complexity also offers insight into potential internal tensions. For instance, Smith and Lewis' (2011) examination of contradictory organizational demands and paradox theory proposed four key tensions. Firstly, *learning tensions* can emerge in relation to how different stakeholders believe an organization should change, adapt, renew and innovate itself. Secondly, *belonging tensions* may surface in relation to variances in individual and or group identities, particularly when there are competing roles, values and memberships. Thirdly, *organizing tensions* may occur when stakeholders hold different views with regard to how an entity should be structured, operate, and collaborate. Finally, *performing tensions* can develop when there are multiple, competing goals and stakeholders aim for different versions of success (Smith & Lewis, 2011).

The way in which these tensions manifest over time varies greatly. A review of research into organizational paradox by Schad and colleagues (2016) uncovered a number of studies that highlighted both positive and negative organizational outcomes associated with

different organizational structures. For instance, when effectively managed, paradoxical arrangements can benefit organizations through innovation (Gebert, Boerner, & Kearney, 2010), and long-term sustainability (Schad et al., 2016; Schmitt & Raisch, 2013). In addition, if individuals manage to integrate contradictions, creativity can be enhanced, and team efficiency can be improved (Drach-Zahavy & Freund, 2007; Miron-Spektor, Gino, & Argote, 2011; Schad et al., 2016).

Conversely, if managed improperly, paradoxes can also have adverse impacts, such as counteracting the benefits of the opposing side (see Gebert et al., 2010), and causing conflict (Chung & Beamish, 2010; Schad et al., 2016). Hence, if complexity is not reconciled, these arrangements can lead to divisions in mission and intergroup conflicts (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014). Raw and colleagues' (2019) investigation of an SFD hybrid demonstrated how business logics began to outweigh social development logics, causing both internal and external tensions, and eventually leading to organizational dysfunction. Thus, in short, the overall engagement with – and management of – tensions and paradoxes is most critical in determining organizational outcomes.

2.4. Managing paradoxes and tensions

These complexities and tensions can be managed in several ways. Including, rejecting or disregarding new or alternate logics and instead prioritize their preferred logic; or alternatively, rearranging and combining logics via hybridization as a means of balancing priorities within this organizational complexity (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Dixon & Svensson, 2019). In addition, research has suggested that in order for initiatives to achieve desired social development outcomes, SFD managers must actively manage the delivery of self-aware and sophisticated development programming alongside successful sporting activities (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011), whilst also being mindful of attending to business logics and priorities of various stakeholders (Dixon & Svensson, 2019). Welty Peachey and

colleagues' (2018) research into SFD partnerships offers insight into strategies that can be employed to help build and sustain these structures. In particular, the authors suggested that SFD organizations should a) focus on building relationships and networks; b) demonstrate benefits to partner organizations; c) begin with quality programming before diversifying; d) keep focused on goals and missions; e) involve partners in planning; and f) treat partnerships as a business relationship. Further, in order to effectively navigate hybridity, research into SFD entrepreneurship has suggested that leaders must “view seemingly contradictory practices as complementary” and “acknowledge organizational limitations and stay focused on their purpose” (Svensson & Seifried, 2017, p. 182).

In addition to SFD literature, management research has examined approaches to handling paradoxical arrangements (Schad et al., 2016). For instance, Smith and colleagues (2012) explored a paradoxical leadership model and theorized three skills that might enable managers to attend to divergent demands. Firstly, *accepting*, which recognises that business ventures and social missions are simultaneously possible. Secondly, *differentiating*, which views the distinct contributions of each pursuit. Thirdly, *integrating*, which involves bringing conflicting social and business goals together in a way that maximises productivity and minimises afflictions (Smith et al., 2012). Therefore, organizations must commit to respective missions, whilst managing the conflict and challenges amongst them.

In addition to navigating and balancing organizational missions, leadership has been noted as a key aspect in the management of tensions and paradoxes (Schad et al., 2016). Hence, divergent demands not only have the potential to generate strain at the organizational level but can also create challenges for the respective managers and leaders of these organizations (Smith et al., 2013). SFD research into leadership has suggested that managers must adapt their management style relative to their organizational mission. That is, the leadership style required in the context of an SFD organization is different to that of other

types of sport organizations (Welty Peachey & Burton, 2017). For instance, research into SFD and social entrepreneurship has highlighted how leadership and enthusiasm must be fostered both on and off the sporting field (Cohen & Welty Peachey, 2015). Welty Peachey and Burton (2017) stated that effective SFD leadership must "...empower followers, lead to more sustainable and effective organizations and participant outcomes, facilitate psychological needs satisfaction, and diffuse issues of power and control" (p. 125).

The notion of shared leadership has been highlighted in SFD literature for its ability to decentralize power away from one particular group or individual, and in turn, provide a voice to multiple stakeholders (Jones, Wegner, Bunds, Edwards, & Bocarro, 2018). Described as the a "dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both" (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 1). Research into the impact of shared leadership on SFD organizational outcomes has indicated that shared leadership plays a significant role in enhancing organizational performance and capacity (Svensson, Kang, & Ha, 2019). Consequently, by reducing hierarchical practices, more inclusive decision-making processes can be fostered, knowledge sharing can occur; which in turn, has the potential to enhance SFD sustainability (Kang & Svensson, 2018; Schulenkorf, 2017; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016).

2.6. Conceptual Framework

Some influential but generic SFD literature has been drawn upon to inform the broader conceptual and theoretical foundations of our paper (e.g. Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Schulenkorf, Sherry, & Rowe, 2016); however, more specifically, our research also builds upon recent theoretical and empirical literature that has addressed the notion of organizational hybridity (e.g., Dixon & Svensson, 2019; Raw et al., 2019; Svensson, 2017; Svensson & Seifried, 2017) and management in SFD (e.g. MacIntosh, Couture, & Spence,

2015; Thorpe & Chawansky, 2017; Welty Peachey et al., 2018; Welty Peachey, Musser, Shin, & Cohen, 2017). Such literature has encouraged the examination of hybridity through different theoretical lenses, as this enables more comprehensive understanding of the complexities within these institutions (Svensson, 2017). Hence, to further explore potential tensions associated with hybrid organizing, we have also examined non-SFD literature focusing upon paradox theory (e.g. Schadet et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2012; Smith & Besharov, 2019; Smith & Lewis, 2011). The value of this theoretical approach lies particularly within its capacity to provide valuable insights into the management and nature of divergent demands within hybrid organizational environments (Smith et al., 2012).

Over the years, paradox theory has been well represented within the social and management sciences. It has been applied to many research contexts (e.g. philosophy, leadership, psychology) and, as such, it has enhanced theoretical debates and helped develop new understandings within well-established research domains (Schad et al., 2016). Against this background, organizational paradoxes have been defined as "...contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time" (Smith & Lewis, 2011, p. 382). In the context of this SFD-focused paper, we employ paradox theory to provide insights into the inherent competing demands of these hybrid organizational systems (Smith & Tracey, 2016). In addition, we use it as a lens through which to explore possible approaches to negotiate the obstinate nature of socio-managerial challenges in the SFD context (Smith et al., 2012; Smith & Tracey, 2016).

Despite the important role that managers play in the negotiation of paradoxes (Smith et al., 2013), there is still a critical need to improve research in this area and particularly into the individual approaches and dynamics within organizational paradoxes (Schad et al., 2016). This is also true for hybrid SFD initiatives that do not automatically result in wider managerial benefits and, in fact, have the potential to lead to interorganizational tensions

(Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010), power-imbalances, and organizational dysfunction (Raw et al., 2019). As such, in this paper we aim to contribute to SFD and paradox literature by exploring managers' experiences of tensions and paradoxes within SFD. In the following section, we turn to describe the methodological approach employed for our research.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Context and Design

As previously indicated, our research focuses upon the experiences of managers of SFD initiatives that are delivered by Australian non-profit NSOs in partnership with regional sport organizations and NGOs. These SFD initiatives are funded by the Australian Government, through DFAT via the ASPP. Specifically, the Federal Government provides funding to support SFD efforts throughout the Asia-Pacific region with the aim of developing sport capacity, building healthy and resilient communities, and delivering public diplomacy outcomes (Australian Government, 2019). While the scope of this initiative has changed since it was first piloted in 2012, the most recent iteration of its strategy spans across ten countries in the Pacific and Asia, including: Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka (Australian Government, 2019). These SFD initiatives are typically delivered via multi-sectorial partnerships, both locally and internationally, in a manner that aims to promote "...safer, more inclusive sports programs that support gender equality, disability inclusion and create leadership pathways for participants" (Australian Government, 2019, p. 18). In response, Australian NSOs employ a variety of staff to design, manage, develop and deliver these programs in partnership with their international sporting federations and development organizations.

Adopting a constructivist-interpretive paradigm and a basic qualitative methodology (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) to inform the research design, semi-structured interviews were used to help understand the perspectives and experiences of SFD managers. In 2017, the

research team engaged in discussions with ASPP SFD program managers to explore how they conceptualized, experienced, and managed their concurrent and often conflicting roles and responsibilities. Before commencing any research activities, ethical considerations had to be taken into account in order to ensure the credibility of this investigation. First, the research team sought authorization to conduct this study internally via university institutional research ethics committee approval, and externally via the representatives of the funding body (DFAT). After gaining formal approval from both organizations, recruitment occurred via an email to the cohort of ASPP program managers outlining the project details from the funding body's representative. The recruitment email was sent via the funder and detailed a thorough informed consent process, outlining that participation was voluntary, anonymous, and that non-participation would be inconsequential.

3.2. Data Collection

A total of 17 managers agreed to participate in our research, representing 13 out of the 20 NSOs which were originally invited to take part. Role titles were diverse, and sometimes multiple positions were held within the sporting organization (e.g., Development Coordinator, Development Officer, Programs Manager). The time that each program manager had been in their position varied from four weeks to eight years. Organizational sizes varied greatly, with some SFD managers working in NSOs with over 900 fellow employees, and others working with only 2-3 coworkers. The length of time which programming had been in existence ranged between one year and four years. While the focus of programs varied somewhat, all SFD efforts targeted one or more of the ASPP's key target areas, including: improving health related behaviors (e.g., physical activity, health promotion), social cohesion (e.g., disability inclusion, gender inclusion), and public diplomacy (e.g., supporting local organizational development and capacity, promoting Australia's sporting capability).

In terms of geographic location, all participants' offices were based in either Australia, New Zealand or Vanuatu. Program locations were varied, with the cohort reporting programs that were situated across a number of sites in the Pacific and Asia, including: Bangladesh, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Vietnam. Further details of this participant cohort and their program locations are provided in Table 1 below.

Insert Table 1 here

Semi-structured interview schedules were designed to create a space for managers to share their knowledge, challenges and recommendations. In line with previous qualitative research in SFD and beyond, semi-structured interviews were chosen as they allow for flexibility by including open-ended questions for capturing new and unexpected issues and information (Schulenkorf, Giannoulakis, & Blom, 2019; Welty Peachey, Cohen, Shin, & Fusaro, 2018). In other words, while the researcher is free to probe and explore within predetermined inquiry areas, a loose interview guide ensures a systematic and comprehensive interviewing of multiple subjects within a limited time frame (Patton, 2014).

The design of semi-structured interview schedules was founded upon the research literature of both paradox theory (e.g., Schad et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2012; Smith & Tracey, 2016) and SFD hybrid management (e.g., Dixon & Svensson, 2019; Svensson, 2017). Specifically, interviews were structured around a number of topics, including (a) the scope and scale of their role in their organization, (b) the concept of dual or multiple roles in their role or position in the organization, (c) challenges in their role in balancing the sport and social development outcomes, (d) strategies and various approaches to managing any challenges, and (e) an opportunity to give practical advice on working within these roles. Interviews were conducted in English by one member of the research team, one-on-one, over

the phone and lasted between 45 and 120 minutes. These discussions were recorded, transcribed and imported into a data analysis software program.

3.3. Data Analysis

Analysis of data involved coding and grouping data into common themes using a combination of both inductive and deductive coding. Drawing upon the work of Saldaña (2016), this initially involved organizing and condensing data to form a database within the NVivo12 qualitative data analysis software program. Subsequently, the data set was subjected to a rigorous thematic analysis process that followed both descriptive and pattern coding methods as described by Saldaña (2016). It is worth noting that this process involved both inductive and deductive procedures, to an extent, as a means of developing preliminary coding structures (see Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). That is, the research aim and questions were used to help inform and establish a preliminary a priori coding framework (e.g., challenges, strategies), alongside which additional emergent codes could be established in accordance with commonly occurring themes. As such, the first cycle of analysis involved an initial broad coding of information within which emergent and reoccurring topics were identified. Following this, patterns between codes could be interpreted, and new narratives identified, from which core research findings could be formed (see Saldaña, 2016).

While one researcher was predominantly responsible for data analysis, our research team adopted a number of methods to help enhance research rigour; one of which included triangulation. This process involves the examination of data and the research topic on multiple occasions, through multiple angles, by making use of multiple researchers and theories (Tracy, 2010). While triangulation does not necessarily guarantee ‘accuracy’, it is still considered valuable a practice by a host of researchers from different paradigms (Tracy, 2010). In addition, we encouraged member checking of interview transcripts, and submitted research updates and an initial report to participants and stakeholders for feedback. This

process enabled the inclusion of both complementary to contradictory information from participants, and in doing so, our understanding of the field and data could be further developed, and depth of findings strengthened (Smith & McGannon, 2018). It is also worth noting that all members of the research team engaged in critical discussion and sense-checking throughout the research and coding process which helped to ensure intercoder reliability and that data interpretation was not amiss (Saldaña, 2016).

The resulting themes and sub-themes were organized relative to the following emerging categories: (a) complexity and duplicity, (b) tensions and conflicting demands, (c) resourcing, (d) scaling back, (e) collaboration, (f) promoting and communicating SFD work, (g) local autonomy, and (h) SFD synergies.

4. Findings and Discussion

In this section, we present the findings of our empirical investigation and discuss them in the context of previous research and conceptualizations. In accordance with our research questions, we first demonstrate how the SFD managers in the ASPP were required to balance multiple organizational missions that were inherently associated with delivering and managing a SFD initiative within an NSO and in partnership with funders and NGOs. We then present findings and engage in discussions regarding the strategic responses employed by managers in dealing with a variety of conflicting demands. Below, we present Table 2 to help demonstrate the data structure and key findings from our study, which we then explore in more detail in the subsequent sections.

Insert Table 2 here

4.1. Managerial challenges

4.1.1. Complexity and duplicity. When asked to describe their roles and responsibilities, all program managers indicated that their work encompassed a combination of both SFD and more traditional development of their respective sports. As such, one of the

key challenges identified by participants was this inherent balancing act: “When we first started out in this, when we first got the Australian government funding, there were times when the two (sport and SFD), perhaps ... didn't always complement each other” (Participant 8). Another manager described how this duality was influenced by the shifting priorities of the funding body, and how these played out in programs over time: “...they originally developed a program with sport development objectives... but since then, the sport component has become less and less relevant and now there's too much focus now on social development and SFD goals...” (Participant 6).

In addition to changes in the priorities of the funding body, this complexity also appeared to be linked to the extent to which organizations were involved in fostering high performance sport compared to grassroots sport. For example, one participant explained that: “...when you're working with national federations, they're not development agencies and their priorities aren't necessarily around SFD...Most of it is high performance” (Participant 11). Conversely, other participants described how they had to encourage a greater focus upon grassroots sport and social development goals. Referring to a situation with a staff member overseas, one SFD manager stated:

“His mentality was to find people that were good at the sport, then we had to communicate that, actually no, you want to go and get people that are not playing sport, they're not good athletes, they're overweight. It's an ongoing issue between sport and sport for development” (Participant 10).

Our findings highlight the complexity of international SFD engagements, in that local priorities, organizational logics and socio-cultural factors had to be taken into account in addition to an already interwoven mix of organizational priorities. At the heart of this complexity appears to be the interplay of tensions between promoting the development of sport via talent or participation numbers and social development via SFD (Svensson, 2017).

Research has explained that while these two notions of sport development overlap and are interrelated, there are also distinct differences. For instance, while the development of sport focuses upon the creation of athlete pathways and talent, SFD aims to use sport as a means of fostering community wellbeing and social outcomes (Schulenkorf, Sherry, & Philips, 2016). The need to balance these organizational priorities becomes particularly pertinent when community-focused initiatives are situated within professional sporting contexts, in which social development activities and priorities (e.g., health, education, cohesion) must be balanced alongside those of commercial and sport priorities (e.g., fan engagement, coaching programs, facility development) (Rowe et al., 2018).

Our findings also point to the power and influence of funding bodies within these tensions, in that the Australian Government's statutory agency responsible for the ASPP portfolio has changed over time. Hence, program goals have also changed in line with this. To explain, initially funding and oversight of the ASPP was managed by Sport Australia (formerly known as the Australian Sports Commission), which is responsible for distributing funds and providing strategic guidance and leadership for national sporting activity. Following this, responsibility for the ASPP portfolio was shifted to DFAT whom are the Government department responsible for foreign policy, relations, aid, consular services, trade and investment. While the overarching goals of the ASPP has remained relatively stable overtime, the shift between Government departments has seen a reshuffle of priorities. As a result, early programs were more closely aligned with the development of sport via the establishment of sport organisational structures and participation opportunities, rather than social development. Conversely, in more recent years, managers were required shift programs to focus upon social development goals and public diplomacy or soft power initiatives. Consequently, this duality and complexity not only emerged at the organizational level as a result of changes in funding priorities, but also at the individual level in association

with SFD staff and managers, as they were the people responsible for navigating and responding to this complexity.

Management research has detailed similar findings, demonstrating how multiple organizational identities can impact upon staff (Anteby & Wrzesniewski, 2007).

Interestingly, research has also highlighted how certain members within these organizations tend to focus upon one identity or organizational priority, and as a result, potentially derail broader organizational outcomes (Anteby & Wrzesniewski, 2007; 2014). While organizations with multiple identities and logics may benefit from attracting a diverse range of staff or stakeholders, this may also be detrimental to achieving desired outcomes (Anteby & Wrzesniewski, 2014).

SFD research offers an example of such an instance, whereby managers prioritized funding and commercial missions over social missions, resulting in decreases in community engagement, declines in programming, and eventually, organizational dysfunction (Raw et al., 2019). Not surprisingly, scholars have long warned against such practices and have pointed out SFD's tendency to encourage mission drift under the guise of funding agencies with overly ambitious non-sporting agendas (Coalter, 2010).

Thus, in this instance, taking into account the external contextual factors surrounding NSOs (e.g., partnerships, funders, governing bodies, overarching associations, institutional logics, local priorities and socio-cultural factors), maintaining this balance within SFD initiatives was by no means a simple task for managers. Our findings indicate how organizational identities and missions were not only tied to SFD and social development objectives, but also to sport development and business goals, as well as international diplomatic missions in association with funding priorities. Not only does this signify the broad scope of expectations placed upon SFD, but also has the potential to engender mission drift. Further, these findings indicate that there can be shifts within these expectations placed

upon SFD, as well as changes in priorities and organizational structures. While in some ways this flexibility makes SFD hybrids an ideal vehicle when balancing multiple identities and missions, this malleability can also lead to dysfunctional tensions and challenges for SFD managers (e.g., frequently being required to realign programming or reporting in response to changes in a funder's priorities).

4.1.2. Tensions and conflicting demands. In addition to maintaining a dual focus on developing sporting capacity and SFD outcomes, participants described how they had to manage a variety of inter- and intra-organizational tensions and competing demands. In particular, participants explained that there was often "...an internal issue in getting that buy-in, getting the organization to understand that giving back is good for the organization and it's great for the reputation, however it's a constant battle to influence that" (Participant 14). For some participants, this occurred to such an extent that they felt that their colleagues did not understand their work: "The organization as a whole doesn't fully understand even what we do..." (Participant 13). In some instances, this could lead to isolation:

"...when people hear that it is about social development, it crashed with those (colleagues) that focus on developing the sport. I was quite isolated at the beginning. They were like 'you do whatever you want, and we do whatever we want'" (Participant 7).

Consequently, in this instance, there appeared to be staff whom identified their work with traditional sport priorities (e.g., participation, elite, commercial) and viewed any other community or SFD efforts as limited or irrelevant. Further, these conflicting demands were likely exacerbated among those managers whom only had fraction of their workload allocated toward SFD work, compared to those whom worked full time in positions oriented toward SFD.

Interestingly, despite SFD's rapid growth across multiple sectors, our findings indicate an ongoing lack of understanding around SFD within professional sporting organizations (see Raw et al., 2019). Previous research has demonstrated how those who associate themselves with social development objectives, might struggle to comprehend sport and NSO's priorities (see Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). This interplay between logics and identities has also been examined within management literature. For instance, research into organizational complexity and paradox have illustrated how competing institutional logics can lead to challenges around legitimacy and internal conflict (Smith & Tracey, 2016). Further, if their respective legitimacies are threatened, groups will not only double-down on their views, but also define who they are by focusing upon how they are not like the opposing group (Fiol, Pratt, & O'Connor, 2009). If unsolved, these tensions can lead to intractable conflict between groups, mistrust, polarization, and potentially splitting or choosing between organizational priorities (Lewis, 2000; Smith et al., 2012).

An example of this was highlighted in a study of institutional logics and identities across 138 organizations, where incompatibility was often found to emerge as a result of "...the dominant role of social identity in consistently suppressing external pressures from commercial logic" (Onishi, 2019). It is important to note here, however, that the notion of multiple logics or conflicting demands within hybrid organizational environments is not necessarily a unique phenomenon. In fact, research has suggested that all organizations are routinely required to navigate multiple institutional logics (Schildt & Perkmann, 2017). Further, it has been posed that these institutional complexities and tensions typically only emerge when a new logic or way of operating is introduced into existing organizational arrangements (Schildt & Perkmann, 2017).

In our study, early symptoms of these tensions were already occurring for some participants, with many of the aforementioned tensions appearing to be particularly prevalent

within the preliminary stages of establishing SFD structures and initiatives (e.g., Participant 7 stating that “...I was quite isolated at the beginning...” and Participant 14 noting that it was difficult “...getting that buy-in...”). As a result, for some participants and their SFD colleagues, they were effectively operating independently within the broader NSO, but at the same time were simultaneously dependent upon the NSO as a parent organization. Consequently, the emergence of international SFD programming in an NSO that has traditionally been focused upon domestic national sporting programming and competitions appears to have been a contributing factor to this complexity. Further, these conflicting demands appear to be tied to tensions between SFD and the development of sport, as well as the notion of local commercial priorities being weighed against social development via international programming. Rather than directly managing these challenges and trying to work through differences between internal organizational groups, tensions appeared to be growing to such an extent that differences were being highlighted and boundaries reinforced. A growth in momentum towards an ‘us versus them’ mentality is likely to do a disservice to all stakeholders involved, SFD, internal, external or otherwise.

4.1.3. Resourcing. The challenging social context was further complicated by minimal internal co-investment from NSOs. Managers described how programming was often under-funded, and how “...no one has enough resources...” (Participant 3). Typically, NSOs provided little relief: “Honestly, internal funding has been very minimal... these roles have been add-ons for us within the [NSO] because the funding has been so low” (Participant 14). Thus, resourcing issues appeared to be two-fold, with insufficient funding being provided by DFAT, and minimal funding or resource allocation from NSOs. Participants also explained how minimal external funding had impacted internal resourcing: “It's a pull on resources, it's a pull on physical and human resources and people's time.” (Participant 11). This meant that managers were often having to justify their SFD work: “...we've had to do

quite a bit of work to get it going in the first year. Probably more so than what the funding is actually worth. We have had to justify our time spent on this activity internally...”

(Participant 14). These tensions were likely intensified within Australian-based NSOs, as opposed to regional sporting bodies, as this resourcing was contributing to programs located overseas: “...we have a responsibility within the region as big brother, but the organization looks very critically at any money which is being spent outside of our national borders...”

(Participant 15).

As highlighted earlier in Section 3.2, organizational sizes and capacity varied greatly between organizations, with some participants working with only 2-3 colleagues, and others working in NSOs with over 900 fellow employees. Despite this variance, there were commonalities with regard to resources. Participants explained that SFD was typically underfunded, both internally (within NSOs) and externally (via the ASPP). Internal support was typically restricted to human resourcing and approval of workload allocation towards SFD efforts. Further, while external ASPP funding was substantial as a whole (AUD\$6 million per annum), participants perceived this as insufficient when split across a large number of stakeholders and programs. Specifically, at the time of this research, funding was distributed between multiple NSOs, IORs and staff across 64 SFD program locations (43 Pacific and 21 Asia, see Table 1).

To compound this further, the ASPP has a history of short-term funding cycles of only 1-2 years. As a result, since its establishment in 2009, SFD managers have had to regularly re-apply for the next phase of funding, whilst also generating multiple quarterly reports (e.g., participation numbers, local capacity, media outputs, finances, as well as written reports outlining socio-cultural impacts, governance processes, and diplomacy outcomes) for the current funding cycle in each of their respective SFD program locations. As a result, many managers questioned whether the ASPP funding was worth the effort required.

These difficulties not only speak to the challenges experienced by SFD managers within this study, but they also highlight the broader paradox of SFD. That is, aiming to deliver sustainable and long-term socio-cultural impacts, via SFD programs that are often reliant upon short-term and insufficient funding from external IORs or donations. In this study, this paradox appeared to be exacerbated by tensions between the development of sport and SFD in NSOs, as well as shifting priorities resulting from changes in the Federal Government caretaker of the ASPP portfolio (from Sport Australia to DFAT). Hence, if low levels of funding continue to be granted on a short-term basis, the goal posts and priorities tied to this funding keeps shifting, and there is minimal internal support; how are SFD programs ever supposed to have a sustainable and long-term impact?

SFD programs are not alone in these challenges, with many development and aid organizations also experiencing the long-term impacts of the 2007-2008 global financial crisis (Rossi & Jeanes, 2018). While Australia has seen overall economic growth since this event, income inequality has in fact increased globally (Fletcher & Guttman, 2013) as local stimuli have taken priority whereas aid budgets were tightened (Rossi & Jeanes, 2018). Further, while global funding toward aid has not ceased, and various organizations and governments continue to provide funding toward development projects, the likelihood of an increase in international aid funding is low (Rossi & Jeanes, 2018). In particular, given current global circumstances and the economic impacts of COVID-19 on sport and beyond (Parnell, Widdop, Bond, & Wilson, 2020), it could be argued that funding and resourcing are likely to continue to be a core challenge in the field of SFD. Consequently, if SFD programs are to continue in international contexts, managers will need to intensify efforts to counteract unreliable funding sources and deliver sustainable programming; particularly given the increasing vulnerability of communities in low to middle income countries (LMICs). During

research interviews, participants offered a number of suggestions and strategies to address these resourcing issues, as we discuss in the following section.

4.2. Strategies for Managing Challenges

4.2.1. Scaling back. In order to best manage the challenges identified in the interviews, participants employed a number of strategies. With regard to the aforementioned challenges around resourcing, managers regularly sought out additional funding support. While this provided some relief, it also put extra pressure and complexity on managers: “I feel like I have more than one master. I've got a couple of different funding streams for my programs which means I report to multiple people. Each time I'm reporting it's different, it's due at different times...” (Participant 9). Because of these added pressures, for some, scaling back was suggested a more viable option: “I've been shedding programs and partnerships” (Participant 1). Similarly, Participant 14 explained “The reason we're pulling out is because the government hasn't continued to fund the program”. While scaling back did solve the problems momentarily, participants noted that this strategy was precarious: “We don't want to risk our reputation that we've built up... [the NSO] will cover the existing staff and run a scaled back program until we hear more on external funding” (Participant 15).

Our investigation found that the scaling back of programs and partnerships did happen; however, this was typically done under the guise of safeguarding and sustaining programming. Against the background of unconfirmed future funding and with an increasingly uncertain global economy, this outcome is hardly surprising. In fact, it happened in the wider context of development budgets becoming constricted, and experts questioning SFD's life expectancy overall (see Rossi & Jeanes, 2018). Within this economic context, SFD's persistent need for funding is thought to drive many partnerships across multiple sectors, including government, corporate, professional sport, NGOs and the community sector, as well as schools (Welty Peachey et al., 2018).

It could be posited, however, that this could lead to a self-destructive organizational cycle if managed ineffectively. That is, if managers attain additional funding, this often leads to a greater number of stakeholders and reporting requirements. This could potentially create even greater tensions, as the effort required to keep SFD and social missions on track may begin to outweigh other priorities. Further, scaling back international programs in response to this scenario could arguably be more harmful than not providing any SFD programs in the first place. In particular, this maneuver could damage local relationships, nullify capacity building progress and reduce the chances of sustainability- a principal that is core to SFD practice (Sugden, 2010). Interestingly, despite this notion of reducing programming and IORs to streamline efforts, managers also regularly highlighted the value of increasing collaboration in SFD, as we discuss in the following section.

4.2.2 Collaboration. Managers suggested that collaborative approaches to SFD will help to address challenges around resourcing and buy-in. In particular, participants argued that genuine and strategic collaboration between NSOs could improve the quality and sustainability of programming:

“Collaboration with other sports that are working in the same region should be compulsory... what I'm seeing is a whole lot of sports doing their own thing, essentially servicing the same people, and a whole lot of people not being serviced” (Participant 5).

A collaborative approach was thought to have the potential to enhance positive outcomes: “...if they don't want to be involved with one sport and they would love to be involved with another sport, I don't mind, as long as they're being active and getting opportunities to participate in the best possible way” (Participant 12). This statement confirms that collaboration should indeed be strategic and not prescriptive or ad hoc; in other words, partnerships will have to make sense to lead to reciprocal engagement and benefit

(Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Research suggests that when managed and leveraged effectively, IORs have the potential to improve organizational capacity in numerous ways, including funding, program design, implementation (Welty Peachey et al., 2018), human resources (e.g., participants, coaches, volunteers and board members), facilities, and management (Svensson et al., 2018). In addition, partnerships also carry the potential for intangible resources, such as increased reputational capital and community presence (K. Misener & Doherty, 2013; Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2012).

One participant embraced this notion of collaboration to such a degree that they had shared their program curriculum with other sports:

“I gave them the curriculum for sport for development, and people say, ‘Oh you're crazy. Why did you give them the program? They're going to copy it’. But if it means that they will have good results while working with children. I don't mind if they play our sport, this sport, that sport, whatever.” (Participant 7).

Here, the superordinate goal of social development was placed above individual protectionism – an approach to SFD that is most likely to realize if positive collaboration, engagement and trust are prevailing (Schulenkorf et al., 2019; Schulenkorf & Sugden, 2011). While collaborating in SFD is not a novel concept, and has in fact been highlighted as essential to sustainable practice (Svensson & Hambrick, 2016), the notion of working with another sport (as opposed to an NGO or funding partner) was indeed a new and at times challenging approach for participants. That is, participants typically discussed inter-sport collaboration under the auspice of suggestion, and that the only true cross-sport collaboration related to the previously mentioned sharing of a program handbook with other sports. One of the reasons for this scarcity in interorganizational sporting partnerships is related to ingrained business viewpoints which position NSOs as competitors for both funding and participants –

particularly in an SFD environment where political and institutional power games have been documented in the past (Hoekman, Schlenker, & Welty Peachey, 2019).

In line with this notion, other managers cautioned that collaboration should only occur with appropriate and capable organizations: "...all these sports want to help, and they want to be involved, but if they don't have the capacity to do it and are extremely unreliable..." (Participant 2). Previous studies have offered similar warnings, suggesting that SFD practitioners should be careful when considering IORs, as their overarching priorities can divert resources away from the specific needs of SFD (Raw et al., 2019). Interestingly, Svensson, Andersson and Faulk (2018) examined collaboration and capacity in SFD. The authors found that partnerships typically had no significant impact on the broader capacity of these organizations to achieve their goals. This was thought to be largely as a result of ongoing, low partnership capacity across all organizational life stages. As a result, any potential benefits from these IORs were mitigated (Svensson et al., 2018). Therefore, it could be argued that bringing together interorganizational partners with imbalances in resourcing and capacity could be considered more of a paradox than a partnership (L. Misener & Misener, 2016).

Regardless of these tensions and challenges, research continues to point towards IORs and collaboration as central to SFD management and practice (Dickson & Sherry, 2016). Further, it is worth highlighting that when innovative organizational collaborations come into play – and collaboration is indeed genuine and reciprocal – they have the potential to provide novel solutions to old problems (Svensson & Seifried, 2017). In order to navigate these collaborative IORs, paradox research has highlighted that individuals must first view conflicting demands and priorities as simultaneously achievable (Smith & Besharov, 2019). In doing so, leaders are encouraged to foster growth by discussing concerns as they emerge with stakeholders, thereby “bumping against guardrails” and gaining feedback on all aspects

of organizational missions (Smith & Besharov, 2019, p. 10). In addition, individuals and internal groups must also commit to an ‘abundance mentality’, whereby groups shift away from zero-sum perspectives, and instead work towards a more collaborative, and positive-sum approach (Smith et al., 2012).

Cooperating via multisport programming, as suggested by participants earlier, would align with this perspective by promoting collaboration with external stakeholders and challenging zero-sum approaches to development. By focusing on the overarching common goal of community and sport development, managers have the opportunity to overcome tensions between SFD initiatives, strengthen organizational resources and structures, and thereby potentially safeguard sustainability. In this sense, a shared leadership approach could be used help to enhance these collaborations through fostering the “..acceptance and inclusivity necessary to effectively involve local stakeholders and create programmes that are culturally-sensitive and sustainable” (Wells & Welty Peachey, 2016). Further, by facilitating multifaceted programming via multiple sports, SFD initiatives have the potential to appeal to communities on multiple levels (Jeanes, 2013). Therefore, these collaborative approaches not only have the potential to help participants identify and participate in their preferred activity; but in doing so, could also improve the chances of long-term, meaningful engagement, and thus, positive and sustainable impacts.

4.2.3. Promoting and communicating SFD work. Participants also described how they talked about the benefits of their work and in doing so, explained how it related to – and benefited – the broader NSO and beyond:

“I think linking the benefits of the social impact not just on the people that we're working with but within our organization and the reputation of the sport, as well as the government relations that we build by doing what

we're doing and how that benefits us, not just internationally but domestically too” (Participant 13).

However, despite promoting the interconnection between SFD and sport development throughout NSOs, non-SFD colleagues still struggled to comprehend why social development might be priority: “I try to promote what we do...We do get them engaged, but it is difficult. There's this perception sometimes of what we do in the Pacific is seen as just a good nice thing to do, rather than finding the cost to do this, and we've been struggling financially and there are always competing priorities and I can sometimes get asked: ‘Why are you wasting time on certain things?’ But, in saying that, it's still broadly supported by senior management” (Participant 1).

Given the lack of understanding around the value of SFD in NSOs described by participants, it is of little surprise that managers often felt the need to promote the benefits of SFD to their colleagues. However, gaining support for SFD appears to be an ongoing battle that is often intensified when SFD activities are based overseas in LMICs while those overseeing programs are based in high income countries (HICs) (Rossi & Jeanes, 2018). Professional sport organizations likely amplify this dynamic, where institutional objectives are predominantly focused upon consumer-focused efforts (e.g., fans and revenue) (Hills et al., 2019). Thus, in many ways, these organizational activities are conflicting as they are competing for the same resources (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). This complexity appears to predominantly center around two core tensions, SFD versus the development of sport, and local priorities and programming being pitted against international efforts. In the context of the ASPP, these tensions were particularly apparent when managers moved to scale back programs as a means of safeguarding other programs or organizational objectives.

Despite these challenges, research has demonstrated that SFD managers can effectively promote positive community outcomes even when an overarching professional

sport organization is simultaneously looking to deliver business value (Hills et al., 2019). Similarly, from a paradoxical perspective, theorists have highlighted that while differentiating between opposing values can emphasize divisions, it can also help to facilitate understanding around respective missions and approaches (Lewis, 2000; Smith & Lewis, 2011). By identifying, (re)interpreting and discussing the meaning of dual or multiple organizational missions, business and socially oriented goals can be clarified (Smith & Besharov, 2019). Further, researchers have suggested that leaders should “communicate both interdependence and distinctions of dual missions to stakeholders who emphasize only distinctions” (Smith & Besharov, 2019, p. 10). In doing so, the value of both social and commercial components can be recognized, the risk of losing a dual focus is reduced, and the challenge of sustaining commitment to both social and business objectives can be addressed (Smith et al., 2012).

Consequently, the value and relevance of SFD agendas should be (re)interpreted and communicated to sporting organizations and their more powerful interorganizational partners. In a complex socio-economic and political environment like ASPP, this would require SFD managers to recognize and manage the distinct value of both commercial viability (e.g., local sport development) and socially driven agendas (e.g., international SFD), as well as the underlying goals of government funding (e.g., inclusion, diplomacy) to maximize opportunities for community benefit and all stakeholders. However, given the broad range of organizational missions involved, this would require an element of structural flexibility, in that missions and resources would need to be juggled in response to cultural and organizational evolutions over time.

4.2.4. Local autonomy. When discussing collaborative partnerships, SFD managers emphasized the notion that power relations should not be top-down. That is, all partner organizations – across the Australian and Pacific Island spectrum – should be viewed as

equals, and programming should be managed accordingly: “Sitting down and consulting over any decision that we make has been really important, giving them [Pacific partners] ownership of the program” (Participant 17). Likewise, it was suggested that local organizations should have autonomy in making their own decisions as to whether or not to be involved in the ASPP: “Fiji initially didn't want to sign on to the program...now they're our flagship programs. That was up to them, making that decision. I didn't keep trying to force [collaboration] on them, it was them that came to us” (Participant 11).

Given that the field of SFD is often fraught with power-relation and control issues, shared leadership and bottom up approaches to development are critical to building trust and successful programming (Welty Peachey & Burton, 2017). These considerations are particularly critical in the context of SFD partnerships that span partnerships across organizations in HICs, and communities in LMICs (Svensson & Hambrick, 2016). Research has highlighted that power sharing must be considered and managed in order to ensure success within these international partnerships and their associated programming (Schulenkorf, 2017). In this sense, shared leadership can work to help counteract hierarchical SFD practices by fostering interactions between organizations rather than relying on a single leader or organization (Svensson, Kang, & Ha, 2019). In addition, scholars have pointed to the need to challenge socio-cultural divides, whilst also confronting neo-colonial approaches to development (Darnell & Hayhurst, 2011). As such, SFD managers are encouraged to foster environments in which power and responsibility is shared, and eventually shifted towards local organizations and stakeholders to further advance local autonomy and sustainable practice (Edwards, 2015; Schulenkorf, 2010).

As part of this process, fostering cultural awareness and meaningful managerial engagement was thought to be critical: “[I had to] adjust my management style towards the experience of local staff. Culturally as well, you can't apply the Australian work lens to work

in Tonga. They just have different ways of working.” (Participant 4). Here, further insight into underlying collaborative approaches can be drawn from paradox theory. In particular, scholars have emphasized the importance of integrative management which embraces interpersonal skills and trust as well as “openness, and cultural sensitivity, and decision-making skills that enable leaders to seek synergies rather than either/or solutions” (Smith et al., 2012, p. 472). In doing so, individuals are able to facilitate a multidimensional environment, in which duplicity and contradictions can be openly navigated, discussed, and from which novel ideas and solutions can emerge (Miron-Spektor et al., 2011).

Overall there is a need to examine local cultures, people and processes when managing organizational complexity in international SFD (Dixon & Svensson, 2019). These international collaborations highlight the need for clear communications and expectations between those associated with various cultural groups (Dixon & Svensson, 2019), as this can help to reduce tensions between various HIC and LMIC groups. Likewise, it is essential that SFD managers encourage autonomy among those delivering programming, foster their input in decision making, and promote a multi-directional and collaborative environment. This will not only help to promote local empowerment and sustainability but will also ensure that programs adhere to genuine development goals.

4.2.5. SFD Synergies. In encompassing all of the aforementioned ideas and recommended strategies, managers suggested that the notion SFD does not have to be mutually exclusive from the development of sport. Specifically, managers posed that if programming was designed and implemented in way that accounted for both sport and SFD priorities, it would benefit multiple stakeholders:

“That's one of the big learnings for us throughout this whole process: SFD programs and funding can add a lot to what we're already doing, so all the planning and programming needs to keep that in mind. [However], it needs

to align with existing priorities in order to ensure success and full buy-in from the NSO...” (Participant 8).

This statement speaks to the organizational aspects of creating synergies where in the past, researchers have taken opposing stands towards the integration of SFD and sport development (Schulenkorf, Sherry, & Phillips, 2016). In regards sport programming, managers explained that if SFD programs were designed with a focus upon community development outcomes, they would still inherently contribute to the development of sports:

“I think if they focus on making the genuine community programs with development outcomes then the rest will flow. I think if the sport can just concentrate on that then perhaps in fifteen to twenty years that's when the benefits will flow from having consumers of the game that will want to consume our product” (Participant 9).

Here, the managers follow the arguments of grassroots development experts who have long advocated for a ‘bubble up’ approach to sport development (e.g., Shilbury, Sotiriadou, & Green, 2008). Put simply, a larger participation base is likely to lead to an increase in talent at the top of the sporting pyramid – despite the actual and intended programmatic focus on SFD. Participant 4 provided a fitting example of how amalgamating sport and SFD priorities could benefit local programming:

“They wouldn't have gotten the sport development outcomes in Tonga if it wasn't for the SFD program. I mean, the sport for development stuff that we were running just fed into the greatest sport development outcomes, without really that being a direct objective of it. Because the sport is going crazy in Tonga right now” (Participant 4).

Overall, while SFD managers are often challenged by the tensions between social and sport development, if managed strategically, there can be benefits for both the development of sports and SFD. For instance, community focused activities, like SFD, can be enhanced through NSOs via organizational structures, in-kind support, and legitimacy via branding (Rowe et al., 2018). Likewise, sport development can benefit from SFD programming via additional community engagement, often among cohorts that would otherwise not engage, thereby potentially increasing outreach (K. Misener & Doherty, 2013), and in some cases identification with professional sport teams (Hills et al., 2019).

In order to foster such successes, paradoxical perspectives suggest that opposing missions and elements should be viewed as both interdependent and contradictory (Smith & Besharov, 2019). As such – and within this paradox – managers should look to find creative solutions or workarounds to emergent issues and encourage ongoing adaptation to respective meanings and practices (Sharma & Bansal, 2017; Smith & Besharov, 2019). Further, to do so, the ‘guardrails’ of the various hybrid organizational structures and strategies must first be identified, and then realigned so that complimentary elements can be adapted to mutually benefit respective missions (Smith & Besharov, 2019). Smith and Besharov’s (2019) examination of structured flexibility offers insight into how such a process can occur. Specifically, the authors suggested that this process can be enacted through confronting strategic tensions, reinterpreting organizational identity, experimenting with practices, and testing or bumping against organizational guardrails (e.g., leadership roles, goals, metrics, missions, and stakeholders). To enable this process, leaders should value both missions and embrace the notion of paradox (Smith & Besharov, 2019).

In other words, such an integrative approach requires the perhaps unconventional identification of synergies between contradictory elements (e.g., business and social, or in this case sport development and SFD), the development of associated strategies, and

implementation and decision making that upholds all conflicting demands (Smith et al., 2012). Consequently, in order to successfully navigate the duplicity and tensions around SFD, managers must be adaptable and foster synergies between many of its competing elements, including the social, economic, political and sporting aspects of development. Perhaps most critically, SFD does not have to be, and should not be, mutually exclusive from the development of sport and vice versa.

5. Conclusion and Implications

In this paper, we have aimed to contribute to a better understanding of internationally managed and delivered SFD initiatives between a variety of program partners. Specifically, we have provided insight into both the challenges and managerial strategies associated with the delivery of the Australian-funded ASPP initiative – an integrative partnership arrangement between Australian NSOs, their regional Pacific counterparts, and supporting NGOs. There a number of practical insights that can be drawn from our findings. Firstly, at the most rudimentary level, we suggest that SFD managers continue to identify and communicate the benefits of community-focused initiatives (e.g., social impact, organizational reputation) to those that are less aware of SFD. In addition, we encourage SFD managers to continue to work towards sustainable programming and partnerships, particularly through regular assessment of program focus and strategic alignment. Likewise, long-term viability should be ensured through nurturing power-sharing dynamics, challenging socio-cultural divides and neocolonialism in development work, and increase program capacity. This approach encourages an environment in which open communication can occur, and tensions and duplicity can be more easily managed.

Overall, we propose that SFD managers should look to understand the value in their work, identify and accept the paradoxical and complex nature of their role, and in turn, maintain a balance by carefully attending to distinctions between the respective domains

(Smith et al., 2012). As such, SFD managers are required to approach conflicting demands as both interdependent and contradictory (Smith & Besharov, 2019) and in doing so, look to foster synergies and integration between these elements (Smith et al., 2012). This is likely to require a change of attitude and perspective in sport managers – and perhaps a wider paradigm shift from operational sport management to a more innovative and strategic engagement in rather complex interpersonal and interorganizational contexts. Regardless, we propose that there is considerable value in rejecting zero-sum perspectives and fostering synergies between paradoxical organizational elements. Through embracing this perspective of abundance, the chances of promoting positive social outcomes could be enhanced.

From a theoretical perspective, there are a number of contributions that can be drawn from our research. In particular, our study extends current examinations of SFD hybridity (Dixon & Svensson, 2019; Raw et al., 2019; Svensson, 2017) and SFD interorganizational partnerships (Welty Peachey et al., 2018); moreover, it addressed calls for empirical insight into how community focused initiatives are managed and implemented within broader professional sport contexts (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Raw et al., 2019; Rowe et al., 2018). As such, our findings offer empirical insight into the socio-managerial aspects of SFD programming and illustrates the complex nature of these initiatives. Specifically, SFD managers were required to navigate multiple organizational identities (e.g., NSOs, NGOs, government) and missions (e.g., sport development, social development, diplomacy) associated with the various stakeholders involved in ASPP. This complexity evolved over time and created further challenges as funding priorities shifted from focusing on sport participation, to social development, and eventually diplomacy. Overall, our findings call into question the power dynamics and broad scope of expectations that continue to be placed upon SFD by funders, particularly when programming is occurring in overseas locations (typically LMICs) away from funders or managers (whom are often situated in HICs).

In addition, our findings extend upon the relatively scarce amount of research into managing SFD in relation to sport development (Rowe et al., 2018; Svensson, 2017). In particular, our study demonstrates how SFD hybrid organizations that are located within, or in association with, professional sport organizations are typically plagued with tensions and paradoxical institutional logics. One of the most prevalent tensions in our study was between that of SFD and sport development. This tension was compounded by the notion that SFD programming was occurring overseas, and hence, indicated tensions between local and overseas priorities and resourcing. Underpinning these tensions was the paradox of minimal and short-term funding cycles that were supposed to contribute to long-term and sustainable community outcomes. For some managers, these tensions were associated with experiences of low internal support within NSOs, resulting in internal conflict, isolation and scaling back programs and or IORs. Consequently, our findings raise concerns about the sustainability of SFD, particularly during the current global economic climate.

Under consideration of existing SFD and sport management literature, we examined and employed paradox theory (e.g.,Schad et al., 2016; Smith & Besharov, 2019; Smith et al., 2012; Smith & Lewis, 2011) to underpin our SFD-specific investigation. In doing so, we addressed calls for further research into the management of paradoxical tensions associated with social-oriented missions in diverse organizational settings (Siegner, Pinkse, & Panwar, 2018; Smith et al., 2013). In addition, we have provided a conceptual lens which has helped to cut through many of SFD's complexities, to clarify and deepen scholarly understanding of the various factors and elements that influence the management processes within SFD. In short, it has allowed us to provide further insight into the types of paradoxes, tensions, and conflicting demands associated with SFD management roles. Overall, our findings highlight the critical role that managers play in negotiating paradoxes, and how SFD managers navigate the challenges associated with role duplicity and organizational tensions.

5.1. Limitations and future research

Our study must also be interpreted in light of research limitations. Specifically, we note that the generalizability of our findings may have been impacted by the scope and timing of this study. While the cohort of 17 participants represented the majority of sporting organizations that were engaged in the ASPP, there were a small number of managers (three) who chose to not take part in this research. Further, the positionality of this cohort was weighted towards those who were employed in Australian NSOs, and not those engaged in programming via IORs within the Asia-Pacific region. Finally, this research was conducted during a time of transition, in that continued funding from DFAT had not been confirmed. As such, this may have exacerbated perspectives regarding resource constraints. Although none of these research limitations were discussed by SFD managers, we looked to manage this via member checking with the participant cohort. In doing so, participants were able to clarify interpretations of interview transcripts and research report findings.

Given the specific context and focus of our study, there are numerous opportunities for future research in this area of study. First, increasing the scope of future SFD and paradox-oriented research would be particularly valuable, especially if participant perspectives encompassed those that worked in a wider range of organizational and geographic settings. That is, the depth and quality of future investigations into SFD paradoxes would be enhanced through investigating and comparing the perspectives of those managing SFD initiative across different sectors (e.g., NSOs, NGOs, funding and program partners, philanthropic, and intergovernmental organizations) and locations (e.g., HICs and LMICs).

In addition, a longitudinal approach would provide further insight into how various SFD paradoxes, priorities, tensions, and potential synergies are managed and played out over time. Further, given the importance of finding synergies between paradoxical organizational

missions, there is value in exploring how partners in an SFD network with their respective organizational identities identify, develop and manage synergies in SFD over time. Finally, we suggest researchers look to further unpack the paradox of short-term funding and support when aiming to deliver long-term and sustainable development outcomes via SFD. We hope that our groundwork on the challenges and managerial strategies – as well as the paradoxical perspective on SFD management processes within hybrid and professional sport organizational settings – can be a springboard for further research that leads to critical sport (for) development research with significant social and managerial impact.

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