

**An Institutional Work Perspective to Performance Management: The case of Botswana
National Sport Organizations**

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Abstract

Performance management practices are used by organizations to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational processes. However, how National Sport Organizations adopt and implement these practices is still unknown. To fill this gap, this research investigates how and why performance management practices are adopted and implemented by National Sport Organizations. Data was collected from documents, 31 semi-structured interviews and five focus group meetings held with 14 Botswana National Sport Organizations and 10 of their stakeholders. The results indicate that stakeholders and individuals within National Sport Organizations play different roles in the creation and maintenance of performance management practices. This information can help sport managers to improve how they implement performance management practices, ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of their organizational processes and the satisfaction of their stakeholders.

Key words: Performance management practices, National Sport Organizations, institutional pressures, institutional work, organizational values

1. Introduction

Research on organizational performance conducted over the last three decades indicates that performance management (PM) practices are prevalent in National Sport Organizations (NSOs) (Frisby, 1986; O'Boyle & Hassan, 2015; Solntsev & Osokin, 2018; Winand, Zintz, Bayle, & Robinson, 2010). Much of the research shows that NSOs use PM systems to build their capacity to meet organizational and social expectations (O'Boyle & Hassan, 2014; Winand, Vos, Claessens, Thibaut, & Scheerder, 2014). As a result, over time PM practices have proliferated among NSOs (Bayle & Robinson, 2007; O'Boyle & Hassan, 2015). However, details of how these practices are adopted and implemented by these organizations remain unclear.

NSOs are non-profit organizations that facilitate mass participation and elite sport programs in their communities (Shilbury & Moore, 2006). Their receipt of public funds and stakeholder resources makes them susceptible to scrutiny as their ability to achieve organizational, social and sport objectives is questioned (Papadimitriou, 1998; Winand et al., 2010). While this has led NSOs to use PM practices (O'Boyle & Hassan, 2015; Winand et al., 2014), little is known of how these management control practices are adopted and implemented by these organizations. To fill this gap, the aim of this study is to establish how PM practices are adopted and implemented by NSOs. The objectives that guide this study are: to identify institutional pressures that act on NSOs; and to establish how individuals within NSOs respond to these pressures and whether their responses lead to the creation, maintenance and disruption of PM practices.

This study was conducted in Botswana, a sparsely populated Southern African country whose national teams have experienced disappointing performance in international competitions

since the country gained its independence in 1966. In 1997, the Botswana government instituted a commission of inquiry investigating the poor performance of its national teams (Kasale, Burnett & Hollander, 2003). The recommendations of the commission led to legislative reforms, infrastructural developments and financing initiatives designed to improve the country's international sporting performance (Bohutsana & Akpata, 2013). However, to date no research has investigated whether there were concomitant developments in the PM of Botswana NSOs.

While numerous prior studies have been conducted on the organizational performance of NSOs in developed countries (Bayle & Robinson, 2007; Madella, Bayle & Tome, 2005; O'Boyle & Hassan, 2015; Solntsev & Osokin, 2018; Winand et al., 2010), such countries have markedly different social, economic and cultural backgrounds than Botswana. For instance, developed countries economies allows for bigger NSOs that have access to more lucrative resource streams. While Botswana is a middle-income country with an economic performance that enables provisions for education, health care, food and social security (Chappell, 2007), NSOs in the country are relatively smaller with fewer available resource streams. Its small population and hence small markets make it more difficult to attract big multinational corporations, in contrast, for example, to its neighbor South Africa whose larger markets allow for big sponsorship deals for NSOs. Therefore, the particular context of Botswana presents an opportunity to study how small NSOs that exist in sparsely populated countries with fewer lucrative resource streams implement PM, thus providing a distinct perspective of how these NSOs operate.

This study contributes to the body of knowledge around PM as it is the first to establish the roles played by stakeholders, board members and operational staff in the adoption and

implementation of PM practices among NSOs. This information can help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of sport organizations by encouraging managers to reflect on their internal PM practices. Knowing how they influence PM practices in NSOs can help stakeholders to improve the quality of the feedback they receive by encouraging NSOs to use effective reporting mechanisms. Additionally, policy makers can use this information to develop policies that are easily embraced by NSOs. The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. The next section is the literature review that elaborates on PM practices in NSOs and on organizational values and collective responses. Next, the theoretical framework that underpins the study is presented. This is followed by the methods, results and discussion sections. The paper concludes with theoretical and practical implications, limitations and suggestions for further research.

2. Performance management practices in National Sport Organizations

PM is a process that provides a proactive closed loop control system, where strategies are deployed to all business processes and feedback is obtained through a performance measurement system to enable appropriate management decisions (Bititci, Carrie, & McDevitt, 1997). It is a cyclical process made up of PM practices, described as formal mechanisms that organizations use to manage performance in line with their corporate and functional strategies (Bititci et al., 1997; Ferreira & Otley, 2009; Pavlov, Mura, Franco-Santos, & Bourne, 2017). According to Pavlov et al. (2017), PM practices are used to communicate direction, and to provide feedback on current performance to influence behavior and stimulate improvement action. PM practices include goals and objectives setting, processes and activities, performance measurement, feedback and feedforward (Bititci, Cocca, & Ates, 2016; Ferreira & Otley, 2009; Pavlov et al., 2017).

In goal and objective setting, performance objectives, key performance indicators and targets are formulated from the organization's vision, mission and values (Ferreira & Otley, 2009). Performance objectives and targets indicate what the organization wants to achieve while key performance indicators measure how effectively an organization meets its objectives (Bititci et al., 1997; Ferreira & Otley, 2009). The organization seeks to achieve its goals and objectives through organizational processes such as leadership, communication and facilitating an organizational culture that supports performance (Arnold, Fletcher & Molyneux, 2012; Bayle & Robinson, 2007). These processes are used to implement activities that include NSOs' mass participation and elite sport programs (Winand et al., 2010). How NSOs use organizational processes to implement their activities determines how they perform (Winand et al., 2014).

Performance measurement entails establishing the efficiency and effectiveness of attaining organizational goals by comparing actual performance against performance targets (Bititci et al., 1997; Bititci, Cocca, & Ates, 2016). The information obtained from the performance measurement process can be used either as feedback to establish the extent to which goals and objectives were achieved, or feedforward to facilitate improvements to future performance cycles (Ferreira & Otley, 2009; Pavlov et al., 2017).

Sport management research on organizational performance of NSOs conducted over the last three decades focused on performance measurement rather than PM (O'Boyle & Hassan, 2014). However, recently there has been research interest in the PM of NSOs (Bayle & Robinson, 2007; Kasale, Winand & Morrow, 2019; Kasale, Winand & Robinson, 2018; O'Boyle & Hassan, 2014; 2015). While these studies provide insights into how NSOs manage their organizational performance, they do less to describe how PM practices are

adopted and implemented by NSOs. Furthermore, these studies do not explain the roles that actors within and outside NSOs play to create, maintain and disrupt these practices.

With regards to Botswana, the lack of research on the PM of NSOs makes it challenging to establish how PM practices are adopted and implemented by these organisations. However, it is important to note that in 1999 the government of Botswana introduced PM systems to its public services, with the objective of improving and sustaining productivity and service delivery (Bulawa, 2011; Mosware, 2011). PM research conducted in Botswana to date details challenges faced in implementing the practice in the public service and in some government ministries (Bulawa, 2011; Marobela, 2008; Mosware, 2011). For example, Bulawa (2011) describes a top down approach to the implementation of PM systems by the Ministry of Education and Skills Development in Botswana schools. This approach led to challenges as teachers did not feel that the PM systems implemented were suitable to their work (Bulawa, 2011). While this study provides insights into how PM practices are adopted by Botswana schools, there remains a need to establish how NSOs adopt and implement them.

3. Collective responses and organizational values

Organizational values define basic shared beliefs that guide, justify and explain the behavior and action of individuals within organizations (Miller & Yu, 2003; Tuulik, Õunapuu, Kuimet & Titov, 2016). These values determine how organizations respond to institutional pressures (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). It is important to note that individuals also have their own belief systems and values that influence their responses and actions (Amis, Slack & Hinings, 2002; Miller & Yu, 2003). For instance, the response of a Chief Executive Officer or a sport manager may be explained by the interplay between their personal and organizational values. However, when they respond as part of a department or as the NSO, their individual values

may be less influential than organizational values particularly when individual values are not consistent with the organizational values (Miller & Yu, 2003). In this study, individuals within NSOs refers to board members and operational staff who collectively respond to pressures acting on their organizations. Of interest is how their responses are explained, guided or justified by organizational rather than individual values.

Prior studies indicate how individuals within organizations collectively respond to pressures acting on their organizations, with responses varying from passive conformity to active resistance (Oliver 1991; Pache & Santos, 2010). Oliver (1991) developed a typology of responses that include acquiescence, dismissal, compromise, avoidance, defiance and manipulation. According to Oliver's (1991) typology, acquiescence is when an organization agrees to institutional pressures as a result of habit, imitation and compliance (Oliver, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2010). At the far end of the typology is manipulation which involves co-opting, influence and control (Oliver, 1991).

According to Amis, Slack and Hinings (2002), how individuals within NSOs respond to pressures acting on their organizations depends on how close organizational values are to the proposed response. For instance, if organizational values are consistent with proposed responses, then compliance responses are possible. However, if the values do not coincide with proposed responses, then there could be defiance or manipulative responses that attempt to change pressures acting on the organization (Amis, Slack & Hinings, 2002). Nevertheless, to the best of our knowledge, no studies have investigated whether organizational values explain the responses of individuals within NSOs that lead them to adopt and implement PM practices. To provide a comprehensive theoretical framework to underpin this study,

institutional theory and the institutional work perspective have been employed. These are presented next.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Institutional theory

Institutions are “shared rules and typifications that identify categories of social actors and their appropriate activities or relationships” (Barley & Tolbert, 1997, p.96). They are created through institutionalization, a process by which “social processes, obligations or actualities come to take on rule-like status in social thought and action” (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p.341). Organizations institutionalize practices because they want to increase their legitimacy - described as the degree of cultural support for an organization, or the extent to which the established cultural accounts provide explanations for its existence, functioning and jurisdiction (Washington & Patterson, 2011).

Institutionalization is driven by isomorphism, a process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same environmental conditions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). When organizations are subjected to external pressure, they react by adopting practices and processes that over time make them similar (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). There are two types of isomorphism: competitive isomorphism - pressure from the markets; and institutional isomorphism - pressure that develops from competition for political and organizational legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The primary focus of this study is institutional isomorphism, encompassing coercive, mimetic and normative pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Coercive pressures are pressures exerted on one organization by other organizations because of dependence on resources, or cultural and societal expectations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Mimetic pressures relate to how organizations reduce uncertainty by imitating successful peer organizations, while normative pressures are a response to professionalization, where certain types of structure and process are viewed as more legitimate than others (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Several studies have explored how coercive, mimetic and normative pressures impact sport organizations (Leopkey & Parent, 2012; Perck et al., 2016; Trendafilova, Babiak & Heinze, 2013). However, the analytic capacity of institutional theory has been questioned. For example, Suddaby (2010) questions why its central aspect - understanding how and why organizations attend to and attach meaning to some elements in their institutional environment and not others - has not been addressed. Suddaby (2010) suggests that this could be due to researchers' overreliance on positivist as opposed to interpretivist approaches which leads institutional theory research to focus on the outcomes of institutional processes rather than the processes themselves.

According to Suddaby (2010), if institutions are powerful instruments of cognition, then research should focus on how they are understood and influenced at the individual level of analysis. Additionally, researchers have called for the use of the institutional work perspective to understand how institutions operate through the influence and agency of individuals (Hampel, Lawrence, & Tracey, 2017; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2011). The institutional work perspective is an emerging field in sport management and an overview is presented in the next section.

3.2 Institutional work in sport organisations

Institutional work has been described by Lawrence & Suddaby (2006, p.215) as the “purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions”. It describes how and why actors work to shape institutional arrangements, the factors that affect their ability to do so and the experience of these efforts for those concerned (Hampel, Lawrence, & Tracey, 2017). To catalogue forms of institutional work, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) developed a framework that describes how institutions and practices are created, maintained and disrupted.

According to their framework, creation work involves: (1) reconstructing rules and boundaries that define access to material resources; (2) reconfiguring the belief systems of actors; (3) and altering abstract categorizations to change meaning systems. Forms of creating work include defining, theorizing, advocacy, construction of identities and educating.

Defining refers to the construction of a rule system that confers status or identity and sets out boundaries of membership or creates status hierarchies within a field (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Sport governing bodies use a system of rules and regulations to confer membership and affiliation for NSOs. For example, Nite, Ige and Washington (2018) found that the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) constructed a rule system that described rules for game play, membership and organizational structure to expand its membership base. Theorizing involves developing and specifying abstract categories that elaborate chains of cause and effect (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Dowling and Smith (2016) found that the development of a tier/classification system that categorized Canadian NSOs into priority or non-priority sports based on their performance was a form of theorizing. According to Dowling and Smith (2016) specifying these categories and using them to vary funding allocations to NSOs helped to create ‘Own the Podium’ as an institution.

Constructing identities involves defining the relationship between the actor and the field in which they operate (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). For instance, Heinze and Lu (2017) reported that the National Football League constructed its identity as a leader in concussion prevention and treatment by changing practices, structures, the nature of the game and knowledge in the field of concussions. Other forms of creation work are educating and advocacy. In educating, actors are provided with skills and knowledge necessary to support new institutions, while advocacy involves work that includes lobbying for resources, promoting agendas or proposing new or attacking existing legislation (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). An example of advocacy was reported by Nite et al. (2018) who found that the NCAA had historically lobbied for support from its powerful allies to oppose Title IX compliance, thereby attacking existing legislation.

In maintenance work, institutions are regarded as self-reproducing phenomena either because of their association with regulative mechanisms that ensure their survival or because of their taken for granted status (Lawrence, Leca, & Zilber, 2013). Individuals perform maintenance work by ensuring adherence to existing rules and by reproducing existing standards and systems of thinking (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Forms of institutional work associated with maintenance includes policing, valorizing and demonizing and embedding and routinizing.

Policing ensures the compliance of NSOs through enforcement, auditing and monitoring (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). An example of policing work was reported by Dowling and Smith (2016) who found that the Own the Podium programme ensured the compliance of NSOs through a reporting process that required them to submit quadrennial and annual reports for auditing and monitoring. Valorizing and demonizing involves providing for public

consumption the positive and negative examples that illustrate the normative foundations of an institution (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). For instance, Agyemang et al. (2018) reported that the media and Olympians demonized Smith and Carlos' protest at the 1968 Olympic Games to maintain the Olympic Games as institution. On the other hand, the promotion of nationalistic ideals such as waving the flag after winning a medal was seen by Agyemang et al. (2018) as an act of valorizing.

Disrupting institutions involves deinstitutionalization where individuals attempt to upset institutionalized arrangements (Lawrence et al., 2013). Describing the motivation of actors to disrupt institutions, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) noted that when the interests of actors are not served by existing institutional arrangements, they will work to upset them. Additionally, if actors benefit from prevailing institutional arrangements, they will work to maintain them rather than disrupt them (Agyemang et al., 2018).

While the institutional work perspective has been used in sport management research, prior studies have tended to focus on maintenance (Nite, 2017; Nite, Ige & Washington, 2018) and disruption work (Agyemang, et al., 2018) rather than all categories of institutional work (Dowling & Smith, 2016). Furthermore, no studies have used Lawrence and Suddaby's (2016) framework to study the adoption and implementation of PM practices. This research addresses both issues. The methods used in the study are presented in the next section.

4. Method

4.1 Research design

This exploratory research employed qualitative approaches in which data was collected from documents and through semi-structured interviews and focus groups. The use of qualitative

approaches supported Suddaby's (2010) views that interpretivist approaches are better suited to institutional theory research than positivist approaches because they provide a comprehensive account of how actors experience institutions. Interviews facilitated a face to face interaction between the researchers and participants, while focus groups provided opportunities for group dynamics and discussions (Cooper & Schindler, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The questions asked during interviews and focus groups were developed from literature to explore the objectives of the study and the semi-structured format allowed for additional questions to be asked to pursue interesting tangents in discussions (Cooper & Schindler, 2013). In addition, NSO documents were analyzed to corroborate the data collected from interviews and focus groups thereby fostering the credibility of the results and enhancing the richness of the data collected (Bowen, 2009).

4.2 Participants

All NSOs selected for this study were affiliated to the Botswana National Sport Commission (BNSC), a sport agency that provides a link between government and NSOs. The selection process was based on the tiers/ of the Affiliates' Empowerment Policy, a policy used by the BNSC to disburse resources to NSOs. Following periodic assessment and categorization NSOs are placed into four tiers based on geographical spread, national appeal, popularity, activity, equity, social responsibility, grassroot sport development, elite sports performance, numerical strength and quality leadership. According to this policy, there were no NSOs in tier one, two in tier two, seven in tier three and 23 in tier four. Four NSOs were unclassified either because they were newly affiliated to the BNSC or were inactive (i.e. they did not perform any activities or respond to correspondence from the BNSC). Further selection was based on whether NSOs were an Olympic, non-Olympic, individual, team, or mixed sport.

Both tier two NSOs, five in tier three, five in tier four and two of the unclassified NSOs were selected for this study. Ultimately 14 out of 37 NSOs were selected. The selected NSOs shared some similarities as they were all affiliated to the BNSC and their respective international, continental and regional federations. They also differed from one another as some were older having been established as early as 1966 while others were formed in the mid-2010s. Their size according to members differed, ranging from 13 to 754 members with some memberships including school clubs, other community clubs or a mix of both. The administrative structures of selected NSOs also differed with some having regional and national structures to manage their large memberships, while others relied on their executive boards to manage their small member numbers. Additionally, the grants they received from government ranged between USD 14,000 to USD 830,000 in 2017 and USD 15,000 to USD 561,000 in 2018. These differences illustrate the diversity of NSOs participating in this study and consequently their varying ability to tackle institutional pressures. However, this study was focused on how individuals within NSOs responded to pressures acting on their organisations. Therefore, how different NSOs with varying capacities dealt with institutional pressure acting on them was not addressed in this study.

From the 14 selected NSOs, 9 board members and 12 operational staff were interviewed. Additionally, 16 participants including ten board members and six operational staff participated in three focus groups with one group comprising of 6 members and two groups comprising of five members each. The board members that participated in the study comprised presidents, vice president, secretary general and additional members. Whereas the operational staff participating in this study comprised of chief executive officers, an administration manager, a youth team development officer and sports development officers. Four operational staff members participated in both interviews and focus groups.

NSO stakeholders also participated in this study. The selection of participating stakeholders was based on Bayle and Madella's (2002) stakeholder map. They identified different NSO stakeholders that affected the performance measurement of NSOs. Based on this stakeholder map, ten stakeholders including an international federation, a continental federation, Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Culture Development, BNSC, Botswana National Olympic Committee, three media (radio, newspaper: private and government), a sponsor and a community were selected for this study. The rationale for using Bayle and Madella's (2002) stakeholder map was to ensure the inclusion of a wide range of NSO stakeholders. Additionally, as their study focused on organizational performance, their stakeholder map was considered appropriate for this study.

Stakeholders including representatives from clubs, teams, individual members, elite athletes, coaches, umpires and technical officials from the 14 selected NSOs participated in focus groups meetings. The decision to use focus groups for these stakeholders was based on that the anticipated number of participants. Two representatives of each of these NSO stakeholder groups were invited to participate in this study (n=28). The decision to use focus groups to collect data from this group of stakeholders was based on the ability to collect data from many participants over a short period of time (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). However, only 14 individuals representing this group of stakeholders participated in this study and were divided into two focus groups comprising of 7 members each. None of the stakeholders participated in both interviews and focus groups.

4.3 Data collection

Data was collected in Gaborone, Botswana from January to May 2017 and between June and July 2018. The data collection exercise was conducted in four phases. In the first phase, focus groups for NSO board members and operational staff were conducted in which discussions sought to uncover the nature and type of pressures that acted on NSOs and how board members and operational staff responded to such pressures. The second phase of the data collection exercise focused on interviews and focus groups with NSO stakeholders. The interview schedules and focus group guides shared common questions that encouraged discussions about stakeholder demands and expectations and whether stakeholders pressured NSOs.

The third phase entailed interviews with board members and operational staff. The interviews sought to establish the nature and type of pressures that acted on NSOs and how the board members and operational staff, responded to these pressures. The fourth and final stage of the data collection exercise was conducted between June and July 2018. In this phase, transcripts from interviews and focus groups were confirmed with the study participants. This phase also allowed for the collection of additional data to fill the gaps identified during the data analysis process. This resulted in additional interviews conducted with an operational staff member, a board member and a stakeholder (n=3), all of whom had previously been interviewed.

Combining interviews and focus groups and the use of phases in the data collection process, ensured that the information collected in previous phases informed future phases of the data collection exercise. This provided opportunities for deeper exploration thereby contributing to a more comprehensive probe (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). Additionally, organizational documents – specifically, the Affiliates Empowerment Policy, strategic plans of some NSOs (n=5) and the BNSC annual reports for 2017 and 2018 - were collected, reviewed and

evaluated. These documents were reviewed to enhance the knowledge base on the NSOs studied, thereby providing information on the context within which individuals in these NSOs operate (Bowen, 2009).

4.4 Data analysis

The documents collected for this study were analyzed through a multi-stage process that began with preliminary skim reading of the documents. This was followed by more thorough reading and then detailed interpretation of the content thereof (Bowen, 2009). This document analysis exercise ensured that objective evidence was obtained on NSOs including in areas such as when they were formed, membership numbers, their administrative structures and their budgets in terms of the annual government grants. Moreover, as appropriate, organizational values of NSOs were also identified from the strategic plans and NSO websites. Subsequently these organizational values were matched against how individuals within NSOs responded to institutional pressures to determine whether the values were coincident with the responses made (Amis, Slack & Hinings, 2002).

The data collected from interviews and focus groups was digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim and managed using the NVivo 11 qualitative data analysis software. The data was analyzed through a thematic analysis process. A thematic analysis process was used in this study because of its ability to summarize key features of a large data set (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). The responses of the participants were interpreted in relation to the key concepts uncovered from the literature. Quotes from the data were identified, assessed for commonalities and differences and used to address the objectives of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Themes that emerged from the data included institutional pressures acting on NSOs comprising of coercive, mimetic and normative pressures. Furthermore, thematic areas on the responses of individuals within NSOs to institutional pressures, creation and maintenance work emerged from the data. These described how individuals played a role in the adoption and implementation of PM practices and included goal and objective setting, processes and activities, performance measurement, feedback and feedforward. The results obtained from this analysis process are presented in the next section.

5. Results

5.1 Pressures acting on NSOs

The results indicate that NSOs faced coercive, mimetic and normative pressures. With regards to coercive pressures, the BNSC, international federations and continental federations exerted coercive pressures on NSOs by enforcing rules, regulations and policies on affiliation/membership and funding. Pressure was exerted by stipulating that NSOs would lose their affiliation/membership and funding if they did not comply with the rules and regulations. NSOs perceived this as pressure, as a board member illustrated:

“[...] if we do not comply with the rules and regulations, we lose our affiliation status and our funding” Interviewee board members 1.

Another form of coercive pressure was exerted by sponsors through terms of reference for sponsorship agreements. Sponsors use these agreements to stipulate their demands and expectations in return for sponsorship provided. An operational staff member described this as follows:

“[...]NSOs] come under pressure to meet the expectations of sponsors so that they may continue getting the sponsorship” Interviewee operational staff 6.

On normative pressures, it was reported that the BNSC expected NSOs to act like professional entities, capable of achieving the BNSC 2028 strategic plan. To ensure that NSOs become professional entities, the BNSC employs consultants to share skills and information on strategic planning and reporting. Furthermore, the BNSC publishes annual reports, categorizes NSOs into tiers according to the Affiliates Empowerment Policy, and conducts annual BNSC awards to recognize excelling NSOs. Commenting on consultants employed by the BNSC, a focus group participant observed that:

“The consultants [...] provide information on how to align our strategies and how to work to achieve the BNSC 2028” NSO focus group 1 participant 3.

The BNSC also employed personnel to serve NSOs. NSOs categorized in higher tiers of the Affiliates’ Empowerment Policy had an officer hired to serve them, while those in lower tiers shared an officer between 4 to 5 NSOs. These employees report to the BNSC and implement processes and activities as sanctioned by the BNSC. A board member pointed out that:

“The officers employed in our [NSOs] help us a great deal. But they also serve to ensure that [NSOs] do what the BNSC wants” Interviewee board member 7.

Additionally, board members and operational staff of NSOs reported that they worked to meet the requirements of the Affiliates Empowerment Policy, seeking to be placed in a higher tier as this would ensure that they receive more resources.

With regards to mimetic pressures, board members and operational staff reported that they copied activities of successful NSOs to improve their own activities. NSOs categorized in the lower tiers of the Affiliates Empowerment Policy copied and adopted practices of NSOs in higher tiers. Describing this, a participant in the NSO focus group observed that:

“[...] by learning from [NSOs] in higher tiers, we can [...], move up to higher tiers”

NSO focus group 2 participant 1.

While these results detail coercive, normative and mimetic pressures, it is essential to highlight how individuals within NSOs responded to these pressures. As the responses of individuals in organizations can be guided by organizational values, the next section presents organizational values of Botswana NSOs.

5.2 Organizational values of Botswana NSOs

Some NSOs that had their strategies aligned to the BNSC 2028 strategic plan shared similar values with those of the BNSC. These include: *botho* – a Setswana cultural concept that means to maintain social harmony by acknowledging and respecting the humanity and human needs of all individuals within a community (Khama, 2017), integrity, effective communication, inclusiveness, excellence and discipline. In most cases, however, NSOs had additional organizational values. These were identified from NSO strategic plans and websites and included transparency, accountability, enjoyment, voluntarism, fair-play, teamwork, competitiveness, professionalism, quality service delivery, effective management, effective leadership, participation, safety, quality, vision, and respect. Complementing this result, a board member added that:

“[...] we have to show that our [NSOs] are transparent and accountable so that our partners can have confidence in us” Interviewee board member 7.

5.3 Responses to institutional pressures

5.3.1 Responses to coercive pressures

The rules and regulations for affiliation/membership and funding and terms of reference for sponsorships enforced by stakeholders, place expectations that demand the compliance of NSOs. Individuals within NSOs reported that the BNSC expected their organizations to align their strategic plans with the BNSC 2028 strategic plan, and to submit budgets, plans, and regular audited financial reports. In addition, sponsors expected NSOs to submit sponsorship reports. Individuals within NSOs reported that they responded by complying with stakeholder demands and expectations. A board member pointed out that:

“[NSOs] have to comply with expectations of the BNSC [by...] aligning our strategy with theirs and submitting all reports that are required” Interviewee board member 3.

By aligning their strategies with the BNSC strategic plan, individuals within NSOs reported that they adopted goals and objective setting and by preparing budgets, plans and reports, they improved their organizational processes and activities. To provide details for their reports, individuals within NSOs reported that they had to measure the success of their activities against their plans, thereby measuring their performance. A member of the operational staff elaborated on this as follows:

“[...] the only way we can know if we meet what our stakeholders want is to compare what we achieved against what they expected” Interviewee operational staff 9.

Additionally, individuals within NSOs pointed out that while reports provided feedback to their stakeholders, they learned ways to improve their future performance from these reports.

It was further reported that NSOs and the BNSC collaborated to lobby the government to repeal the Botswana National Sports Council Act and replace it with the Botswana National Sports Commission Act. Thus, individuals within NSOs responded to the pressure to repeal

and replace the BNSC Act by manipulation/influence in which they shaped the rules and regulations to suit them. Detailing these events, a board member remarked that:

“the BNSC Act was old, it was enacted in 1983 [...NSOs] needed this law changed. [...NSOs] agreed at a BNSC general meeting to lobby the government for the law to be revised. Eventually we won, and the law was changed” Interviewee board member 8.

5.2.2 Responses to normative pressures

Individuals responded to the need for their NSOs to act like professional entities by complying with the demands and expectations of the BNSC. This entailed meeting deadlines for reports, facilitating regular board meetings and working to meet the assessment criteria for the Affiliates Empowerment Policy and BNSC awards. An operational staff member observed:

“[...] when we meet deadlines, [...] call regular board meetings [...] and make submissions for BNSC Awards and Affiliates Empowerment, we will be seen as professional organizations by all our stakeholder” Interviewee operational staff 4.

Individuals within NSOs reported that regular meetings improved their communication and leadership processes and these in turn improved the implementation of their mass participation and elite sport programs. Furthermore, they stated that preparing reports for submission required them to measure the success or failure of their activities against their plans, thereby facilitating performance measurement practices.

Responding to the need for NSOs to act like professional entities, individuals within NSOs complied with the demands of the BNSC and worked to ensure that their organizations fitted required profiles. Additionally, the BNSC employed consultants and Sport Development Officers to serve NSOs. Consultants facilitated seminars and workshops for NSOs to share

skills and knowledge on strategic planning and reporting while Sport Development Officers implemented the adopted PM practices as part of their normal work routine.

5.2.3 Responses to mimetic pressures

Individuals within NSOs reported that they copied development plans, budgets and annual reports from the BNSC annual report and used them to develop their own practices.

Furthermore, they reported that they learned about the frequency of board meetings, strategic planning and reporting from seminars and workshops that were facilitated by consultants.

Elaborating on this, a participant in one of the focus group meetings observed that:

“[...] most of the information we need to improve is in the BNSC annual report [...] we learn from other NSOs through meetings, seminars and workshops with consultants” NSO focus group 2 participant 3.

Individuals within NSOs pointed out that copying practices from successful NSOs, improved their organizational processes and how they implemented their activities. Furthermore, the BNSC stipulates chains of cause and effect by stating that when NSOs meet requirements, they either receive awards or move up the tiers of the Affiliates Empowerment Policy.

Additionally, the BNSC published awards, annual reports and tiers of the Affiliates Empowerment Policy. Commenting on the publishing of awards and annual reports, a board member elaborated that:

“[...] the awards are televised for all to see. [...] the annual reports are public record” Interviewee board member 2.

6. Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to investigate how and why PM practices are adopted and implemented by Botswana NSOs. The study established that the demands and expectations of stakeholders created pressures that acted on NSOs. Individuals within NSOs responded to these pressures by complying with stakeholder demands and expectations leading to the adoption and implementation of PM practices. It was further established that the compliance or manipulation responses made by individuals within NSOs could be explained by how these responses were coincident with organizational values. The sections that follow describe the processes by which actors create, maintain and disrupt PM practices in NSOs.

6.1 Creation work and performance management practices

Actors engaged in creation work including defining, advocacy, theorizing, construction of identities, mimicry and educating (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) to adopt PM practices. In terms of defining work, stakeholders enforced rules and regulations that defined membership and funding for NSOs, resulting in coercive pressure. Government grants and sponsorship funding form a large part of Botswana NSOs' budgets and provide the means to facilitate their recreational and elite sport activities. Therefore, the response of individuals within NSOs to comply with membership and funding rules and regulations ensure continued membership and funding by these stakeholders. Furthermore, securing memberships and funding that facilitates the implementation of their recreational and elite sport programs, individuals within NSOs could believe that they were pursuing their organizational values such as effective management, leadership, professionalism and quality service delivery. Therefore, their responses in this case can be explained by these values as they are coincident.

Individuals within NSOs performed advocacy by lobbying for a change of laws that govern sport in Botswana as they called for the repeal and replacement of the BNSC Act. This response is manipulation because individuals within NSOs used the influence of their NSOs and the BNSC to alter the nature of pressures they faced. Because these changes facilitated the adoption and implementation of PM practices, individuals within NSOs performed creation work. A similar result was reported by Nite et al (2018) who found that the NCAA lobbied powerful allies to resist implementing Title IX. This result indicates that when they pursue their purpose and interests, NSOs can respond to pressures in any way they choose, particularly if their responses serve their interest. For instance, individuals in Botswana NSOs believed that the BNSC act was old and did not serve their interest and hence had it changed.

Another form of creation work performed by the BNSC was theorizing. The BNSC's use of the tiers of the Affiliates Empowerment Policy to determine the amount and type of resources to award to NSOs, creates status hierarchies among these organizations. A similar finding was reported by Dowling and Smith, (2016) who concluded that implementing a tiering system in the Own the Podium programme created priority or non-priority status hierarchies among Canadian NSOs. While the tier system may be beneficial to the BNSC as it helps them to allocate resources to NSOs, the status hierarchies created may demotivate NSOs in lower tiers as more public resources are made available to those in higher tiers. For instance, there cannot be uniform development of NSOs in Botswana if one is granted USD 830000 and another USD 14000 in the same financial year. Therefore, these status hierarchies may negatively impact the performance of athletes and teams in Botswana.

Further institutional work undertaken by the BNSC was focused on constructing the identities of NSOs. In simple terms, the BNSC expected NSOs to act like professional entities capable

of delivering on the BNSC 2028 strategic plan. While Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) describe the construction of identities in the context of individuals rather than organizations, this form of creation work has been applied to Botswana NSOs because the expectation to act like professional entities is placed on the organizations themselves. NSO values that include competitiveness, effective management, effective leadership, professionalism and quality service delivery coincide closely with professionalism, hence they could be instrumental in the compliance of NSOs towards construction of their identities.

The BNSC's expectation for NSOs to act like professional entities further led to forms of creation work including mimicry and educating. NSOs in lower tiers of the Affiliates Empowerment Policy imitated the practices of those in higher tiers because they aspired to move up the rankings set out in the Affiliates Empowerment Policy and hence receive more benefits from the BNSC. This aspiration was driven by the resource constrained context within which Botswana NSOs exist. With regards to educating, the BNSC employed consultants to impart knowledge and skills to NSOs. Individuals within NSOs used the skills and knowledge they learnt to improve their reporting mechanism to the BNSC, thus enhancing the adoption and implementation of PM practices. A form of educating was described by Bulawa (2011) in which Botswana secondary school management personnel were trained to implement PM in their schools. However, the top down implementation approach impeded progress on PM in secondary schools. Therefore, while it is beneficial to impart skills on PM, it is important to ensure that the skills developed yield desired results.

6.2 Maintaining work and performance management practices

Actors within and outside NSOs engaged in maintenance work including policing, valorizing and demonizing and embedding and routinizing, leading to the adoption and implementation

of PM practices. Regarding policing, the BNSC expected NSOs to submit reports that are used to audit, monitor and evaluate the activities of NSOs. Individuals within NSOs comply and submit the reports required by the BNSC. Dowling and Smith (2016) considered this form of reporting as policing particularly because of the auditing, monitoring and evaluation that these reports were used for. Notwithstanding this, developing and submitting the reports to the BNSC led NSOs to continue implementing PM practices that include goal and objective setting, performance measurement, feedback and feedforward. Furthermore, the submission of reports can be coincident with organizational values that include professionalism, effective leadership, management, fair play and respect, thus explaining the compliance of individuals within NSOs to this demand and expectation by the BNSC.

Another form of maintenance work performed by the BNSC and individuals within NSOs is valorizing and demonizing. The BNSC publishes awards, annual reports and tiers of the Affiliates Empowerment Policy for public consumption. The effect is to valorize or create heroes out of NSOs that meet the criteria for awards, are included in higher tiers of the Affiliates Empowerment Policy and which submit their reports, while demonizing or creating antiheroes of those that do not. In a developing country like Botswana where resources are scarce and the government is required to deal with issues such as the HIV/Aids pandemic, Malaria outbreaks and infrastructural developments, fewer resources are available for sport (Chappell, 2004). Therefore, making awards and reports available for public consumption makes NSOs open for public scrutiny and serves to encourage them to behave in ways which are considered to justify their receipt of government grants.

On embedding and routinizing, individuals repeated the implementation of adopted PM practices with each funding cycle. As the stakeholders presented demands and expectations,

individuals within NSOs continued to implement adopted PM practices to satisfy them. The repeat of these practices within each funding cycle can also be seen as a habit as individuals within NSOs follow practices that have already been adopted and accepted (Oliver, 1991).

6.3 Disrupting performance management practices

Botswana's resource constrained environment, where few lucrative financial opportunities are open to NSOs (Chappell, 2004), explains why they comply with stakeholder demands and expectations. The dependence of NSOs on stakeholder resources makes board members and operational staff do what is necessary to ensure continued receipt of funding and hence the survival of their organizations. As there are benefits to be derived from maintaining current institutional arrangements, individuals within the NSOs are not motivated to perform any disruption work (Agyemang et al., 2018).

7. Conclusions

7.1 Theoretical contributions

This study contributes to sport management literature around PM as it is the first study to explain how and why PM practices are adopted and the roles that actors within and outside these organizations play in the process. Furthermore, the study provides insights on how NSOs in a small developing African country implement PM practices, thereby enriching our understanding of the pressures they face and how individuals within these organizations respond to them.

This study also provides insights on the issue of heterogeneity among institutional actors (Hampel, Lawrence & Tracey, 2017). We find that heterogeneous actors with differing objectives but a general interest in NSO activities, together performed creation and

maintenance work leading to the adoption and implementation of PM practices. These actors did not have to collaborate with one another or share common goals and objectives. However, because their different objectives could be served through NSOs' recreational and elite sport activities, they facilitated the adoption and implementation of PM practices and differently created and maintained these practices. Additionally, the study also established that in cases where organizational values were coincident with proposed responses, individuals within NSOs complied with the demands and expectations of their stakeholders, thereby adopting and implementing PM practices.

7.2 Practical implications

This study informs sport managers, their stakeholders and policy makers on how NSOs adopt and implement PM practices. Knowing how individuals within NSOs interpret and respond to the policies can help policy makers to develop more efficient and effective policies that are easily embraced by NSOs. Additionally, this study informs stakeholders on how their demands and expectations lead to the adoption and implementation of PM practices among NSOs. This can help them to improve the quality of feedback they receive from NSOs by using reporting mechanisms that inform them on whether their investment has met expectations. Sport managers can use this information to leverage for more support from their stakeholders by demonstrating how the adoption and implementation of PM practices helps them to meet stakeholder demands and expectations. Furthermore, sport managers can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their organizational processes by implementing informed PM practices that ensure the attainment of their objectives and satisfaction of their stakeholders.

7.3 Limitations and further research

While this study furthers our understanding on PM of NSOs, there are a few limitations.

Firstly, this study only used NSOs that were affiliated to BNSC, and hence those that received government grants. The receipt of, and dependence on, government grants played a significant role in how individuals within NSOs complied with the demands and expectations of the BNSC and consequently the adoption and implementation of PM practices. Therefore, further research could investigate NSOs that do not depend on government grants for survival, to establish whether and how they adopt and implement PM practices and whether individuals in these NSOs respond differently to stakeholder demands and expectations.

Secondly, while the study focused on how individuals within NSOs responded to pressures acting on their organisations, the varying capabilities of NSOs to deal with institutional pressures were not investigated. Therefore, further research could consider this avenue as it may help to illuminate whether different NSOs with varying abilities to deal with institutional pressures differently adopt and implement practices.

Thirdly, the approach used in this research does not detail the decision-making processes used by individuals within NSOs. Further research could investigate formal decision-making processes involved and how individuals within NSOs arrive at the decision to comply or otherwise with stakeholder demands and expectations. It would also provide an opportunity to investigate what happens when individuals within NSOs arrive at conflicting decisions or when stakeholders present conflicting demands and expectations. Additionally, further study could focus on how individuals within NSOs treat different stakeholder demands and expectations and related compliance issues. These various dimensions to decision making processes may improve our understanding on how PM practices are adopted and implemented.

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