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## AN INTEGRATED CHANGE MODEL FOR SPORT MANAGEMENT

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Synopsis:

The Integrated Change Model was developed to assist researchers investigate organisational change in response to an environmental jolt. The model was informed by four case studies exploring the Olympic inclusion of rugby Sevens.

Abstract:

Aim of paper

This paper introduces a new model, the Integrated Change Model (ICM), which collaborates and extends sport management research in organisational design, organisational change, and institutional theory as a contribution to the theoretical base of sport management. To further develop and evolve the ICM beyond a conceptual framework, the present research examined organisational change in response to an environmental jolt. The context chosen was the inclusion of Sevens Rugby into the Olympic Games, beginning at Rio 2016. The need for the ICM created three aims for the present study: 1) what, 2) how, and, 3) why changes occur in organisations (in this case, rugby national governing bodies) due to an environmental jolt (i.e. Olympic inclusion). It was of particular interest to understand the different responses among organisations in the same sector (i.e. international rugby competition). The research question was developed to satisfy the above three aims: To what extent do organisations within the same sector vary in their response to the same environmental jolt?

Theoretical background

The review of literature provided three major underpinnings for the study's conceptual framework, examining the 'what,' 'how,' and 'why' of changes within sporting organisations. First, design archetype mapping of Canadian national sport organisations, as developed by the research of Greenwood, Hinings, Slack, Kikulis, Thibault, and Amis from 1992-2004 added to understanding 'what' may have changed in the rugby NGBs. Second, Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational responses to environmental disturbances was employed to

show 'how' the changes occurred, including rebuttal, reorientation, colonisation, or evolution. Skinner, Stewart, and Edwards (1999) demonstrated that Laughlin's model can assist in exploring 'how' sport organisations change; however, this approach needs to be extended to explore 'why' those organisations change in the differential manner that they do. Therefore, third, O'Brien and Slack's (2003) work on field-level characteristics informed the examination of 'why' changes in sport organisations may occur based on changes in four field-level characteristics: 1) number and nature of actors; 2) exchange processes; 3) regulatory structures; and, 4) legitimate capital.

#### Methodology, research design and data analysis

This research followed Pettigrew's (1990) case study method. Planned opportunism, or the level of access available, funding, and ability to answer research questions, resulted in the selection of four case studies: Australia, United States, South Africa, and Kenya. Significant similarities and differences in the broad and task environments of each case were critical in case selection in order to create a platform to compare and contrast field-level pressures for change. Data were collected remotely and onsite from online archive records (302 items), organisational documents (88), survey responses (53), public addresses (12), and semi-structured interviews (45). Data were coded and analysed with the assistance of NVivo software.

#### Results, discussion and implications

Rugby's inclusion in the Olympic Games, and the ensuing dynamic change environment this caused, provided an interesting and colourful context to develop the ICM from its theoretical underpinnings. It was discovered that organisations in the same sector do vary in their responses to an environmental jolt. A substantial change evident in rugby NGBs was to the Sevens high performance system. Four high performance systems, or design archetypes for high performance, emerged from the data: 1) Airport Meet and Greet Model; 2) Training Camps Model; 3) Central Residency Model; and, 4) Hub and Spoke Model. Despite significant variations in the 'why' (i.e. field-level pressures and individual NGB inertia), each case study progressed to relatively the same 'what'- Central Residency, which centres on professionalisation and relocation of the national team to a full-time training site.. However, variations in field-level characteristics caused dissimilarities in the 'how,' or the process of change identified through thematic analysis with the assistance of both Laughlin's model and organisational design concepts.. Moreover, as the process of change and field-level pressures showed variation, isomorphic mechanisms institutionalised the NGBs, resulting in quite similar design archetypes at the macro level. It was the deeper investigation of intra-design archetypes at the micro level that identified distinctions and enabled comparison within and across cases. The ICM evolved as the empirical data highlighted and clarified the inter-connectedness of several established models and concepts that underpinned the conceptual framework. Additional empirical research is required to further evolve and strengthen the ICM's value as a research tool.

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