Governance Strategies Towards Organising for Action Sports

A National Structure for New Zealand Skateboarding

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Abstract

This study examines the processes and politics involved in the sportisation and institutionalisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa, New Zealand. In 2016, the IOC announced that skateboarding would debut at the Tokyo 2020 Games, and its governance was given to the ISF World Skate (i.e. a partnership between the Fédération Internationale de Roller Sports and International Skateboarding Federation). However, in many countries, including New Zealand (NZ), skateboarding was largely an informal activity, ungoverned and lacking structure, and with some resistance to Olympic inclusion. This research explores and documents the views of various skateboarding-related stakeholder groups, and governmental and national sport bodies regarding establishing a governing structure for NZ skateboarding between 2016-2022.

Employing a social constructionist approach, I draw on qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews, participant observations, document analysis, and secondary data exploration, to document the perceptions of key individuals involved in the organisational development and/or institutionalisation of NZ skateboarding. Twenty-five interviews were conducted across sport and skateboarding-related organisations involved in this process, including Skateboarding New Zealand (i.e. SBNZ, a new skater-led organisation), New Zealand Federation of Roller Sports (Skate NZ), New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC), Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ), regional skateboarding associations, skate schools, and skateboarding event owners/organisers. The project includes an organisational ethnography focused on the evolution of the skater-led association SBNZ between late-2018 and mid-2022.

Drawing on sport sociology, sport management and organisational studies, this project maps the development of skateboarding culture, industry, its organisation and those

stakeholder groups that provide for NZ skateboarding. It reveals the unique structures and social dynamics evident in the community-led events, media and venues (i.e. skateparks). The research also reveals the processes and politics involved in developing "legitimate" forms of governance in the NZ skateboarding context. There are competing external factors as SBNZ seeks to manage its "regulative legitimacy" with the Mainstream Sport Governing Bodies (MSGBs): Skate NZ, Sport NZ, NZOC, and World Skate Oceania. Simultaneously, SBNZ experiences cultural challenges to its "cultural legitimacy" or "authenticity" with the NZ sport-skateboarding community. The traditional (and familiar) "umbrella" and federated sport models provide the MSGBs with the comprehension and predictability they need to govern SBNZ. In contrast, for SBNZ, adopting the traditional sport model is challenging and development-inhibiting as the organisation lacks the pre-existing infrastructure, necessary funding, expert knowledge/support, and the desire to institutionalise in such a manner. However, there are some mutual benefits in the SBNZ/Skate NZ relationship, mainly where there is room for flexibility regarding the umbrella governance's processes and responsibilities.

The research suggests a need for MSGBs to be more open to recognising alternative forms of governance and structure for action sports. However, this will require a philosophical shift in how MSGBs view governance, structure and sport, and funding models. As well as contributing to the international literature on the institutionalisation of action sports, this study will also usefully inform future developments in the national and international sports context to facilitate inclusion, recognition and support for current and future forms of sport engagement for both action and mainstream sports.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter One

Introduction

Skateboarding, Surfing, Freestyle-BMX, and Sport Climbing debuted at the Tokyo

2020 Olympic Games after they were postponed to 2021 due to the global Covid-19

pandemic. The International Olympic Committee's (IOC's) decision to include these non-

traditional "alternative" or "action sports" has received interest and debate from mainstream

media, action sport communities and academia alike (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018,

2019a; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2017, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2018b, 2021). Since the

1980s, the IOC has explored new and popular sports, including action sports, that could be

added to the Olympics (Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a, 2011b; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). The

IOC has been trying to keep the Olympics relevant in response to a declining and ageing

viewership by including popular "cooler" and "alternative" sports to appeal to a younger

audience (Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016).

Many action sports, including skateboarding, originated during the 1960s and 1970s

(Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2018b) and are typically individualistic, informal, free-spirited,

artistic activities that maintain a level of thrill or risk (Thorpe & Wheaton, 2013; Tomlinson

et al., 2005; Wheaton, 2004). They have also been described as subcultures, where

participants share a common philosophy, attitude, and practices that transcend the

sport/activity itself to constitute one's identity, and cultural and community membership

(Puddle et al., 2019; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2013; Tomlinson et al.,

2005; Wheaton, 2004, 2007a). In contrast to many mainstream or traditional sports, action

sports tend to be casual, informal, anti-establishment and unstructured (Batuev & Robinson,

2019a; Dupont, 2014; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Tomlinson et al., 2005; Wheaton, 2004).

However, various factors have led to the increased institutionalisation of some action sports.

These factors have included the desire to acquire public funding (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Turner, 2017) to provide the formality required for international action sport competitions and mega-events such as the X-Games (Thorpe & Dumont, 2019; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2017; Tomlinson et al., 2005), and the need for governance and structure resulting from Olympic inclusion (Batuev et al., 2020; Batuev & Robinson, 2019a; Ojala, 2014; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

Institutionalising action sports is often challenging, resulting in a range of tensions. The establishment of national and international governing bodies for action sports can be problematic as institutionalisation has been seen as contrary to the subcultural and anti-establishment ideology of the sports proponents (Kellett & Russell, 2009; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016) including skateboarding (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019a; Beal, 1995, 2013; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Turner, 2017; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). In Australia, for example, the inability or unwillingness of skateboarders to institutionalise has hindered the efforts of organisations concerned with the provision of skateboarding to gain access to public funding (Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; H. Walker et al., 2005). Similar tensions have been experienced in the NZ context but have yet to be documented.

The IOC first started to include action sports in the Summer and Winter Olympic Games during the 1980s (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). For example, the IOC added windsurfing to the Los Angeles 1984 Games, mountain biking for the Atlanta 1996 Games, snowboarding in the Nagano 1998 Winter Games, and bicycle motocross (BMX) at the Beijing 2008 Games (Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a, 2011b; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). A common strategy by the IOC has been to place a "new" Olympic sport under the umbrella of another sport with whom the governing body already has an existing relationship (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). This has occurred with Windsurfing being placed under the International

Sailing Federation (ISAF), Snowboarding under the International Ski Federation (FIS), and skateboarding under the Fédération Internationale de Roller Sports. The resulting "umbrella" form of governance provides the IOC with coordination and operational efficiency, minimising the number of International Sport Federation's governing bodies that it has to deal with, as well as fast tracking action sports into the Olympic system (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019a; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Nonetheless, the IOC umbrella strategy has also created tensions between some action sports and their parent federation or governing bodies.

Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) identified the impractical timeframes provided by the IOC to allow new action sports to institutionalise leading up to Tokyo 2020, which placed considerable pressure on these unstructured sports. Additionally, there has been resistance by some action sports to institutionalise to be included in the Olympics, such as sport climbing, snowboarding, and skateboarding (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019a; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a, 2011b; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). There are also concerns in action sport communities that those governing traditional sport and the IOC are exploiting (i.e. "cashing in") their culture and popularity and impacting who has "ownership" of the sport (Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Renfree et al., 2021; Sterchele et al., 2017; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016). Batuev (2019a) noted how the global skateboarding community has been more vocal and resistant towards governance than other action sports. Much of the discord and resistance to the institutionalisation of skateboarding and its Olympic status has been highly publicised in niche skateboarding media (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Although some action sports have fought for opportunities to develop their own governing structures, such as surfing and sport climbing (Batuev & Robinson, 2019a; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), the umbrella style of governance which dominates global sport organisations has remained the IOC's "go-to" strategy.

The traditional form of organisational governance for sport, the "federation" (Dickson et al., 2010; Noll, 2003; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016), has been subject to increased criticism regarding its appropriateness for modern sport environments over the last two decades (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury, 2000; Shilbury et al., 2013, 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). The inclusion of some action sports into the highly institutionalised mainstream sport sector and forms of umbrella governance has created further questions about the federated system's appropriateness (Kellett & Russell, 2009; H. Walker et al., 2005). However, what remains salient is that to be effective, federations need to be perceived as legitimate by their affiliates and other stakeholder groups (Deephouse et al., 2018; Human & Provan, 2000; Provan et al., 2008; Provan & Kenis, 2008). For action sport governing bodies and their federations, legitimacy is not so simple as they are double tasked to provide "regulative legitimacy" by conforming to traditional institutional sport structures while remaining "culturally legitimate" (or "authentic") for their action sport stakeholders (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2019a; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2018b, 2018a).

Consequently, there is a need to explore "legitimate" and "authentic" forms of organising for action sports, including skateboarding to inform and support future developments in sport (also see: Gagnon et al., 2018; Turner, 2017; H. Walker et al., 2005). As the IOC continues to add new sports to the Olympic Charter, it is essential to document the ensuing political, administrative, and cultural tensions that are placed on action sports (including skateboarding) when trying to institutionalise at the national level. There has been some academic research on the institutionalisation of surfing and parkour in the NZ context (e.g. Puddle et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). However, the governance of NZ sport-skateboarding is generally unknown as academic work has yet to be conducted. Therefore, this research explores and documents the views of various skateboarding-related stakeholder

4

groups and governmental and national sport bodies regarding the development of a new governing structure for NZ skateboarding between 2016-2022.

Therefore, this research addresses gaps in the literature in five key ways. First, previous research on the sportisation and institutionalisation of action sports has focused more on the global or international level based on Olympic inclusion or providing international professional competition including skateboarding. Instead, my research contributes to the limited work that has focused on the institutionalisation of action sports at national and regional levels. It is also the first to date to explore national level governance of skateboarding. Second, socio-cultural or management focused academic research on action sports in the NZ context is minimal, with none focused on NZ skateboarding. Therefore, this research addresses these gaps focusing on the sportisation and institutionalisation of action sports in the NZ context and, importantly, NZ skateboarding. Third, my research addresses the calls to investigate the legitimacy of the federation as a traditional governing structure for future sport coordination. Similarly, it addresses calls for alternative forms of governance and structure for action sports as they struggle to fit the formalised structures typically associated with mainstream sports organisations and policy.

Fourth, this research bridges the gap between Sport Sociology and Sport Management literature regarding the social and institutional implications of formalising action sports. Previous research on the institutionalisation of action sports has primarily stemmed from the Sociology of Sport 'discipline', addressing cultural tensions and power relationships. Respectively, to a lesser extent, Sport Management academia has focused on the governance and policy aspects involved in formalising action sports. By bring these two literatures into conversation, my research identifies how the culture of an activity/sport is reflected in its governance structures and processes. Finally, this research further bridges the gap between the Sport Sociology and Sport Management/Organisational Studies literature regarding the

concept of organisational legitimacy. More specifically, my research explores the relationship, distinctions, and similarities between the sociological and theoretical concepts of cultural legitimacy and "authenticity" concerning creating new sport structures or organisations.

Research Questions

The primary research question guiding this project was: *What are the processes and politics involved in developing "legitimate" forms of governance in the NZ skateboarding context, and the implications for action sport more widely?*
Inclusive of the main research question are several secondary questions:

- Who are the skateboarding-related and non-skateboarding-related organisations and other stakeholder groups involved in the NZ skateboarding scene, and what are their roles?

- What are the perceived struggles and strategies used by NZ skateboarding-related organisations and stakeholder groups towards developing skateboarding-related governing bodies in NZ?

- How do NZ skateboarding-related organisations and stakeholder groups perceive the legitimacy of institutionalisation and affiliation with a national skateboarding federation?

The research was conducted to explore the perceptions of key individuals involved in the organisational development and/or institutionalisation of skateboarding in NZ. This qualitative research employed the ontological position of social constructivism and was epistemologically interpretative. Data collection included participant interviews, observations, document analysis, field note-taking, and secondary data exploration. An

organisational ethnography of the establishment and development of the NZ skateboarding governing body Skateboarding NZ (SBNZ) was constructed.

In total, 25 individuals participated in this research, with most interviews taking place between November 2018 and March 2020. However, follow-up meetings with key participants were conducted up until November 2022. Also, as I had an existing relationship with a key SBNZ interviewee, I could draw on my observations and our discussions regarding the establishment and early efforts of the organisation's founding committee. Other research participants are from NZ skateboarding-related organisations such as regional skateboarding associations, skate schools, skateboarding event owners-organisers, and skateboarding philanthropic organisations/groups. Further, representatives from other stakeholders, such as the NZ Federation of Roller Sports (Skate NZ), NZ Olympic Committee (NZOC), and Sport NZ (Sport NZ), also participated in this research. Ethics approval to conduct the study was received from the University of Waikato, Human Research Ethics Committee on 3rd September 2018 (see Appendix A).

My Interest in the Topic

As a lecturer of sport management, I first became interested in this topic in August 2016 following news reports that skateboarding had become an Olympic sport (International Olympic Committee, 2016). Although initially surprised, I did recognise that skateboarding is highly professional, competitive and popular among action/extreme sports audiences. However, many of my sport academic colleagues, students and other acquaintances struggled to accept how what may be seen as a child's toy and/or pastime was now considered at the pinnacle of sporting excellence, the Olympics. I became fascinated by this phenomenon, especially as competitive or sport skateboarding appeared to be unstructured. Consequently, I started to ponder several questions: Is there an existing governing body coordinating

skateboarding in NZ? What roles will the NZOC, Sport NZ and High Performance Sport NZ (HPSNZ) play in supporting or establishing skateboarding governance? How does one coordinate an informal and unstructured sport?

My initial internet searches failed to identify any existing NZ skateboarding governing bodies. Consequently, I began to ask around some of my personal contacts at HPSNZ, Sport NZ and the Auckland sports trust "Aktive" to see if they had taken any steps to support or organise competitive skateboarding. Similar to the responses from my colleagues, these contacts were also wondering how skateboarding had become an Olympic sport and what this would mean for their respective organisations. Most did not know of any organised attempts or existing skateboarding organisations that provide governance for skateboarding in Aotearoa, NZ. They also expressed that they did not know how they would or could manage skateboarding if it did become part of their portfolios.

One of my Sport NZ contacts had heard about the newly established association called SBNZ. They gave me the contact details for one of the organisation's committee members called Sam (pseudonym). After my initial interaction with Sam, we began to meet monthly for a while. I also volunteered to help make initial contact, and organise meetings with sport governing bodies, such as the NZOC, Sport NZ and Drug Free Sport NZ. During our meetings, we would discuss what progress and challenges were experienced by SBNZ at that time, such as dealing with Skate NZ, Sport NZ and NZOC and the cultural tensions and uncertainty of possibly having to sit under the umbrella of Skate NZ. As time progressed, I could see the difficulties experienced by SBNZ's committee members and the political and cultural tensions present, and I felt that their story needed to be documented.

Skateboarding and International Governance

To understand the institutionalisation of sport-skateboarding in the NZ national context, it is essential to position this research within the broader changes skateboarding is experiencing internationally from Olympic inclusion. Leading up to skateboarding's Olympic inclusion in 2016, three organisations were petitioning the IOC to have governance rights of the sport; Namely, the Fédération Internationale de Roller Sports (FIRS), International Skateboarding Federation (ISF), and World Skating Federation (WSF; Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019). However, after encouragement from the IOC to collaborate, FIRS and ISF combined their efforts to form the Tokyo 2020 Skateboarding Commission (TSC). This gained recognition from the IOC in 2016 to govern and coordinate skateboarding jointly, leaving the WSF out of contention (Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019). FIRS, which had an existing relationship with the IOC, was given governing rights by the IOC to handle the sport's institutional matters. In contrast, the ISF became responsible for organising and coordinating skateboarding competitions (Batuev & Robinson, 2017).

In September 2017, FIRS rebranded as World Skate, absorbing ISF as a "subdivision" to oversee skateboarding globally (Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019). Consequently, a new international skateboarding federation was formed; World Skate as the Global Sport Governing Body/Organisation (GSO), with five affiliated confederations, World Skate Africa, World Skate America, World Skate Asia, World Skate Europe, and World Skate Oceania, each a federation in their own right. Representative of multi-level governance models of global sport, GSOs are the central governing body for the National Governing Bodies/Organisations (NSOs) for each country in its confederation (Dickson et al., 2010).

Shortly after establishing TSC, the ISF emailed existing skateboarding NSOs (or similar) regarding its relationship with the FIRS, the Olympic structure, responsibilities, and funding pathways for skateboarding. The document shared with me by a SBNZ committee

member (November, 2016) states that skateboarding NSOs need to recognise their country's roller sport NSO as their national governing body. However, if there is no respective roller sport NSO for their country or if their National Olympic Committees (NOCs) see fit otherwise, skateboarding NSOs are allowed to self-govern. A few skateboarding NSOs have been able to remain separate from roller sports, such as Canada Skateboard, Finnish Skateboarding Association, and USA Skateboarding. These had existing, proven federations, and others such as the Skateboard Association of Barbados, Turkish Skateboarding Federation, and Skateboard Federatie Nederland, where a roller sport NSO did not exist, have also remained separate. However, in most cases, governance was given to the country's roller sport NSO, including NZ.

When skateboarding was shortlisted for inclusion in the Tokyo Olympics Games in 2016, NZ did not have a national skateboarding federation. Consequently, the governance of NZ skateboarding was awarded to Skate NZ by the confederation governing body for roller sports in the South Pacific, World Skate Oceania. Skate NZ was established in 1937 and has organised roller sport competitions (NZ Federation of Roller Sports, n.d.-a). While Skate NZ had four roller sport codes under its umbrella, the organisation had no previous involvement with NZ skateboarding. Only a few months before the IOC decided to include skateboarding in the Olympic Charter (mid-2016), a small group of NZ skateboarders established SBNZ as NZ's National Sport Organisation (NSO). SBNZ was nascent and not recognised by the NZOC, so the governance of NZ skateboarding went to Skate NZ. The formation of SBNZ, the politics and struggles it has experienced towards attempting to be the governing body for Skateboarding in Aotearoa, NZ is the key focus of my research. It is important to note that I use the indigenous Māori and English names Aotearoa and NZ synonymously throughout this thesis.

Thesis Outline

This thesis consists of seven chapters. In Chapter Two, I provide a literature review that draws on the Sociology of Sport, Sport Management, and Organisational Studies literatures to provide the conceptual lens underpinning this project. The key focus areas are the sociocultural understanding of action sports, organisational network theory, organisational legitimacy, and sport governance. Chapter Three outlines and explains the qualitative methodological approach, interpretative epistemology, and research design. In this chapter, I discuss the research philosophy of social constructionism and the interpretative ethnographic perspectives. I explain the qualitative research design, data collection and modes of analysis. Finally, I discuss potential limitations, issues of validity and reliability, and ethical considerations. Four empirical chapters follow.

Chapter Four sets the scene by providing a brief historical account of the evolution of Skateboarding in Aotearoa from its early inception in the mid-1960s to its Olympic inclusion in 2016. It shows that the development of NZ skateboarding through various stages of popularity has mimicked those globally. Then the chapter draws on research findings to illustrate and discuss the NZ community, how it interacts, and some of the social dynamics involved. In Chapter Five, I discuss the current provision for skateboarding in Aotearoa. Various organisations that provide for NZ skateboarding, including governmental organisations, commercial skateboarding brands, and formal/informal philanthropic and skateboarding community organisations/groups, are identified and explained.

Chapter Six explores the processes of establishing a national governing body for NZ sport-skateboarding. First, I describe the roller sport global federated structure that stems from its centralised sport governing body World Skate, including the hierarchical pathway that led to NZ sport-skateboarding. Then, based on my organisational ethnography, I present the case study of SBNZ that documents and describes the evolution of SBNZ. It identifies

some of the political issues, struggles, and tensions experienced by SBNZ committee members towards providing skater-led governance for sport-skateboarding in Aotearoa. In Chapter Seven, I discuss the IOC's mandated roller sport federation as a form of control and corporate board strategies by Skate NZ to consolidate control over its affiliated sports, including SBNZ. It shows that while SBNZ has developed some innovative strategies for negotiating the NZ sport environment, the organisation still experiences ongoing challenges to meet its regulatory requirements from World Skate Oceania, NZOC, and Sport NZ while maintaining its cultural authenticity with the NZ skateboarding community. Finally, in Chapter Eight, I summarise the key findings from my thesis, make conclusions based on the research questions and reflect on the research methodology. Lastly, I discuss the limitations of this research and provide insights into potential future research agendas.

<center>**Chapter Two**</center>

<center>**Literature Review**</center>

In this literature review, I examine three fields of study: Sport Management, Organisational Studies, and the Sociology of Sport. I draw on key concepts from these fields, including sport governance, organisational network theory, organisational legitimacy, and the sociology of action sports. First, I present a brief overview of the New Zealand (NZ) sport sector to provide context for the following sections. Then, the concept of the federation as a form of governance for multiple sport organisations is discussed. The action sport environment is then presented to illustrate the commonalities and nuances between traditional and action sport organising. Finally, theoretical concepts relating to organisational and network legitimacy, and notions of authenticity are introduced, which will provide a critical lens for thematic analysis and interpretation of findings. A brief conclusion completes this literature review.

Overview of the Aotearoa, New Zealand Sport Sector

The NZ sport sector is comprised of four distinct but inter-dependent sub-sectors: (a) Public, (b) Non-Profit, (c) For-Profit, and (d) Informal (Hoye et al., 2015; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). The public sector houses those state, governmental, regional, and council organisations responsible for providing funding, developing sport policy, and specialist roles, including high-performance sport development and drug control. The non-profit sector is where voluntary sport organisations reside, such as the international, national, regional, and local organisations that govern and coordinate sporting codes. The private, commercial or for-profit sector includes those organisations with for-profit objectives, such as professional sports teams; stadium and event owners and organisers; sport equipment and apparel

manufacturers and retailers; media companies; and, other service providers (Hoye et al., 2015; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). Finally, the informal sector encompasses sport participation that is casual, often spontaneous, and unstructured (S. Walker & Leberman, 2012).

While many action sports belong to the informal sector, they also reflect the historical origins of most sports, which over time become structured and institutional (Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2013; Turner, 2017). Although distinct, there is an inter-dependence between sectors as each is heavily reliant on the other for resources such as funding, coordination, administration, venues, and revenue for a given sport (Hoye et al., 2015; Kellett & Russell, 2009; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). In NZ, there are a few professional league sport teams: the five Super Rugby franchise teams, five ANZ Premiership netball teams, the Wellington Phoenix FC (A-League), and NZ Warriors (AFL). In contrast, the majority of sports in Australia and NZ are non-profit and highly reliant on public funding and volunteerism (Hoye et al., 2015; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006; Shilbury et al., 2016; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012).

The Governance and Provision of Sport in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Sport is overseen by the crown entity Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) in Aotearoa. Formally established in 2002 as SPARC (i.e. Sport and Recreation New Zealand), it is the NZ Government's designated authority responsible for building capability and allocation of funding to increase participation levels in sport, as well as supporting national health and wellbeing policy through physical activity initiatives (Piggin et al., 2009; Sam & Ronglan, 2016; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). Additionally, Sport NZ seeks to assist with international sporting success via its subsidiary organisation High Performance Sport New Zealand (HPSNZ; Dickson et al., 2010; Sam & Ronglan, 2016; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019).

14

Sport NZ sets the criteria for NZ sport organisations that govern, provide and deliver various sport codes and recreation at the national, regional and local levels (Dickson et al., 2010; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). In 2019, Sport NZ (2019) announced a strategy change away from sport to focus more on "Active Recreation" and "Play" in an effort to address low participation levels among NZ "young people" (i.e. children and youths). Sport NZ (2020a) had identified that there has been a steady decrease in sport and physical activity participation levels by eight to 14-year-olds in Aotearoa. Similarly, play initiatives were introduced in Australia by the Australian Sports Commission, *Play. Sport. Australia* in 2016 also addressed the declining participation levels in organised sport by children and young people (Jeanes et al., 2019, 2022).

Another major provider for regional and local level sport are the 17 Regional Sport Trusts (RSTs) located throughout NZ (Dickson & Naylor, 2013; Sam & Jackson, 2004; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019). RSTs are independent, non-profit organisations that are contracted by Sport NZ to organise and distribute funding to Regional Sport Organisations (RSOs), schools, clubs, individuals, and sport development and wellbeing community groups in their regions. Consequently, RSTs are the "hub" that facilitates a greater organisational network to include local councils, health agencies, and local businesses, they provide a regional voice for the communities in their regions (Dickson & Naylor, 2013; Sam & Jackson, 2004; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019). However, there are 67 Territorial Authorities located throughout NZ that are the regional governmental authority for each region (Statistics New Zealand, 2015), that contribute significantly to NZ sport. Territorial Authorities are more commonly referred to as District or City Councils (i.e. "Councils") in NZ. Councils invest considerably in the sport and recreation sector to provide facilities and support community-based development programmes (Dickson & Naylor, 2013). Therefore, councils play an important role in regional and local sport provision in Aotearoa.

The Shifting Landscape of Sport in Aotearoa, New Zealand

A large proportion of the funding that flows through Sport NZ and the RSTs is sourced from the 34 Gaming Trusts (i.e. gambling) located around Aotearoa (Department of Internal Affairs, 2019). NZ Gaming Trusts are also a significant financial contributor to Sport NZ providing 35% of its total income (Dickson & Naylor, 2013). Gaming Trusts currently give more than $300 million in grants annually to local sport, educational, health, and arts organisations and groups (Sport New Zealand, n.d.-b), with approximately $150 million of that total being directed towards sport organisations and community sport (George, 2020). However, sport funding obtained from "gaming[1]" has associated social tensions due to the role these machines play in gambling addiction and the respective social impacts on families and communities. Calls have been made for gaming machines to be banned (Kilgallon, 2020; New Zealand Herald, 2013; PGF Group, 2021). For instance, Parkour New Zealand decided not to pursue governmental sport funding as it felt that accepting gaming-sourced funding did not align with the organisation's core values (Puddle et al., 2019). Unfortunately, alternative sources for sport funding in Aotearoa are limited, therefore, the loss of gaming-sourced funding could have a significant impact on the provision and capability of most NZ sports.

Membership fees are a major source of income for most sports clubs. Over the last 20 years, NZ and Australian sport clubs have experienced a steady decline in membership levels (Jeanes et al., 2019, 2022; Jeanes & Lucas, 2019; Shilbury, 2000; Trenberth et al., 2012; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). For instance, Jeanes et al. (2022) noted declining participation in club-based sport in Australia, with a predicted further decline of 15% by 2036. In NZ, Sport NZ claimed that club memberships had decreased by 11% from 1998 to 2014 (Martin, 2017).

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[1] Electronic gambling machines are commonly referred to as "Pokies".

A later Sport NZ (2020a) report identified that between 2017 and 2019, club and team membership was continuing to decline, mirroring the decline in physical activity levels. This was especially evident among those aged between eight and 14 years. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic further impacted memberships with 30% of clubs experiencing a membership decline and 11% losing twice as much money as the previous year (Radio New Zealand, 2020). As membership fees is a major source of revenue for sport clubs, the decline is having a significant impact on income (Jeanes et al., 2019, 2022; Jeanes & Lucas, 2019; Sam & Ronglan, 2016; Trenberth et al., 2012; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). Previous research has shown that declining club memberships can be attributed to modern-day busy work patterns, lifestyle choices, and the shift towards individual (as opposed to team) sports and activities (Jeanes et al., 2019, 2022; Trenberth et al., 2012). Consequently, the increasing popularity of pay-and-play sports as an attractive alternative to formalised sport has had a significant impact on club memberships.

Pay-and-Play and Casual Sport

Over the last two decades, there has been a societal trend towards participation in casual sporting activities and informal sports, and an increase in pay-and-play sports such as Touch Rugby and Indoor Netball (Jeanes et al., 2019, 2022; Jeanes & Lucas, 2019; Trenberth et al., 2012; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). A Sport NZ (2015) survey noted that pay-and-play was the most common way for adults to participate in sport in NZ. For example, the consumer pays and then participates either individually or as part of a team, whether it is an organised social league or just for facility usage (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2015b; Jeanes & Lucas, 2019; Trenberth et al., 2012). Participation in pay-and-play sports can avoid the responsibilities commonly associated with club membership such as regular practices, match attendance, social events, fundraising and other associated activities (Jeanes et al., 2019, 2022; Trenberth et al., 2012).

Hindley's (2022) book *parkrun* (spelt with a small "p") documents an excellent example of the growing popularity of casual sport participation, and changing forms of sport provision. Since its establishment in the UK in 2004, parkrun has become a global phenomenon with more than 7 million registered members across 23 countries, and by the end of 2019 had provided more than 50 million events globally. Organised and delivered by a network of local volunteers, parkrun provides a free series of weekly 5km run/walk community events. Contrary to most other mass participation community events, parkrun events are exclusively organised and facilitated by volunteers who are often "parkrunners" also. parkrun therefore also challenges the pay-and-play provision model.

The venues for parkrun events are public/council owned parks and other outdoor green spaces. Registration and event entry is free and open to all physical abilities for those four years of age and over. There is no formal membership, instead after registering parkrunners are provided with a unique printed barcode which allows them to participate in any parkrun event worldwide. Although experienced/advanced runners do participate in events, parkrun is not promoted as or considered a "race". Instead, parkrun seeks to minimise barriers to participation. Due to its high level of participation in the UK, parkrun has attracted the attention of Sport England, city councils and numerous public health intervention organisations resulting in governmental funding and support as well as from commercial brands such as Adidas (Hindley, 2022).

Pay-and-play sports are an interesting phenomenon, although they require some coordination, their business model appears to negate the need for formal governance, such as characteristic of traditional institutionalised sports. The challenge for traditionally structured and governed sports is how they can remain relevant in the modern environment by appealing to the casual and informal sport consumer.

Traditional Sport Governance: Corporate and Federated

The Sport Management literature defines the national governance and distribution of power of sport in Australia and NZ as a hierarchal pyramid. This hierarchal structure locates the national governing body (i.e. National Sport Organisation [NSO]) at the pyramid's tip. The associated regional governing bodies (i.e. Regional Sport Organisations [RSOs]) at the medium level, and, local sport organisations (i.e. "clubs") representing local sport clubs and schools at the pyramid's base (Dickson & Naylor, 2013; Hoye et al., 2015; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). NSOs are typically non-profit organisations that are usually answerable to a Global Sport Organisation (GSO) or Confederation Sport Organisation (CSO) responsible for the international coordination of a given sport (Forster, 2006; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006). NSOs are also the point of contact with external bodies such as state funders and high-performance sport organisations (e.g. Sport NZ, Regional Sports Trusts [RSTs], HPSNZ). Therefore, the governance of sport is a hierarchical distribution of authority from the international to the local level (Dickson et al., 2010; Forster, 2006) which allows a reasonable degree of autonomy for governance to be effective at each level (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006). Dickson et al. (2010) defined the governance among international, national, regional, and, local sport organisations, as "multi-level governance" (p. 113). In sport, governance and distribution of power at each level typically take the form of a "Federation". Concepts of sport governance at the organisational and multi-organisational levels are discussed next.

Ferkins and Shilbury (2010) defined sport governance as the "responsibility for the functioning and overall direction of the organisation and is a necessary and institutionalised component of all sport codes from the club level to national bodies, government agencies, sport service organisations and professional teams around the world" (p. 235). The sport management literature identifies "corporate governance" as the role of the board of directors to signify the influence of a sport organisation at the organisational level, whereas the

governance of multiple organisations is often termed as "systemic" or network or federated

governance (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Lee & Henry, 2004; Shilbury et al., 2013). Both

corporate and federated governance are discussed next.

Corporate Governance

In sport, an organisation's board of directors is often called a "commission",

"council" or "committee (Dickson et al., 2005; Ferkins et al., 2009; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006).

Taking a "whole-of-sport" (i.e. from grassroots to high performance) perspective, the role of

the sport organisation's committee is: (a) to protect the legal entity, (b) to provide strategic

planning to secure its future, (c) to take stakeholder input into the affairs of the sport, and, (d)

to provide accountability to ensure that the CEO/president is handling operational matters

appropriately (Ferkins & Kilmister, 2012; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins,

2015). Usually, sport committees are voluntary and comprised of representatives from their

respective constituents (e.g. RSOs, clubs, club members) to form a "delegate" style

committee (Dickson et al., 2005; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006).

Delegate-style committees are considered the most cooperative as delegates can lobby the

concerns of their respective organisations (Human & Provan, 2000; Provan, 1983; Provan &

Kenis, 2008). For similar reasons, delegate sport committees can cause trust issues as

constituents (or "stakeholders") may question the true intentions of their committee members

(Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; N. King, 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). In such cases, often an

independent committee is observed as preferable.

Independent sport committees are considered more impartial and focus on what is best

for the organisation rather than any individual stakeholder concerns (Ferkins & Shilbury,

2010; N. King, 2016; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). Some larger

sport organisations may facilitate an "independent" board whose members have no affiliation

with any of their stakeholders other than the focal organisation itself (Ferkins & Shilbury,

2010; N. King, 2016; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016). However, independent sport committees are often observed by their stakeholders as being uncooperative and authoritarian as they remain focused on what they think is best for the sport as a whole (Noll, 2003; Shilbury et al., 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). To address the stakeholder concerns regarding delegate and independent committees, Ferkins and Shilbury (2010) suggested a third corporate governance model which is a delegate/independent cross, which they called a "hybrid" style committee. Documenting the major restructure of Tennis New Zealand (TNZ) in the mid-2000s, the NSO had established a hybrid committee of delegate and independent directors which allowed affiliated RSOs to maintain a voice on the committee while also allowing for it to focus and act on the best interests for the whole sport rather than individual RSOs (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010).

Ferkins and Kilmister (2012) identified three key capabilities that sport boards need to be able to perform: (a) "oversight", the ability to monitor and provide accountability; (b) "foresight", the ability to look forward, strategically plan, and provide direction for the future; and, (c) "insight", knowledge of their stakeholder's needs, the sport sector, best business practices, and, the ability to create external relationships that are beneficial for the organisation. Because of their voluntary roles, committee members are often limited in time and may lack the necessary management skills and knowledge to run an organisation effectively and strategically (Ferkins et al., 2009; Hoye et al., 2015; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006).

The modern sport environment has also challenged the capability of non-profit sport organisations and their boards. With a societal move towards casual sport participation, declining club memberships, and, a gradual increase in "new sports" (including action sports), available funding for non-profit sport is becoming increasingly stretched (Hoye et al., 2015; Kellett & Russell, 2009; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). Consequently, non-profit sport organisations have been experiencing pressure from governmental sport funders to employ

professional staff to be more commercially focused, provide more accountability and operational credibility, and be less reliant on sport funders (Babiak, 2007; Frisby et al., 2004; Leberman & Collins, 2006). The sport management literature describes this phenomenon as the "professionalisation" of the field (Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Hoye et al., 2015; N. King, 2016; Thibault et al., 1993). Consequently, any new sport such as skateboarding attempting to establish governance and structure in Aotearoa needs to develop transparent, capable and credible (i.e. "legitimate") governing bodies for their organisational stakeholders and potential funders.

However, stakeholders determine organisational credibility based on their perceived motivations of committee members, any organisational actions and outputs, and the ability of the organisation to meet these desired outcomes; this is commonly termed "trustworthiness" (Jahn et al., 2020; Kumar & Das, 2007; T. Williams, 2005). Consequently, there is a strong link between organisational "credibility" and how that impacts the organisation's legitimacy (Jahn et al., 2020; C. Jones et al., 1997). For nascent organisations, credibility is often based on the personal characteristics of the individuals involved (Das & Teng, 1998; Tornikoski & Newbert, 2007; Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002). The capabilities of those appointed to their boards will play a significant role in credibility determination (Ferkins & Kilmister, 2012; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015).

Federated Governance

Globally, the federation is the traditional form of organising in sport (Dickson et al., 2010; Noll, 2003; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury et al., 2013). The federated governance model is also often referred to in the sport management literature as systemic governance (Forster, 2006; Lee & Henry, 2004; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019; Shilbury et al., 2013; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). However, here I prefer to use the term "federation" as it is commonly used by sports to identify geographically aligned sporting leagues or codes.

Federations are fundamentally organisational "networks" that have established a formalised structure and centralised governing body (D'Aunno & Zuckerman, 1987; Provan, 1983; Provan et al., 2007, 2008; T. Williams, 2005). Drawing from the Organisational and Sport Management literature, I briefly explain organisational network theory and how networks can provide effective coordination and governance of multiple organisations

Trevor Williams (2005) defined organisational networks as "Groups of legally separate organizations connected through exchange relationships, common or complementary goals, and/or common bonds or social relationships that are sustained over time" (p. 223). Networks represent the collaborative action of three or more organisations to pool their resources, knowledge and expertise to improve their combined efficiency and capability to provide operational efficiency, predictability and certainty (D'Aunno & Zuckerman, 1987; C. Jones et al., 1997; Oliver, 1990; Provan & Kenis, 2008). Network structures are flexible as they can allow numerous organisational types to partner such as private, public, and non-profit organisations including those that are competitors (Dickson et al., 2005; C. Jones et al., 1997; Provan et al., 2008). Network structures are prevalent to how sport is organised (Babiak, 2007; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Gerke et al., 2018; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006; Shaw & Allen, 2006; Thibault & Harvey, 1997). Network formation is usually voluntary, but is some instances compulsory driven by a higher power such as a governmental or industry agency (Oliver, 1990; Provan, 1983; Provan & Kenis, 2008; T. Williams, 2005).

Research suggests that as networks increase in size they generally become less efficient due to increased coordination complexity, inter-member tensions, and operational costs (D'Aunno & Zuckerman, 1987; Erickson & Roland, 1999; Provan & Milward, 2001). Some scholars, however, have suggested that network complexities, tensions and other limitations can be minimised when there is some form of network governance in place, such as a federation (Child et al., 2019; C. Jones et al., 1997; Provan & Kenis, 2008). The

23

organisational literature observes federations as imparting governance of network members through the establishment of an independent governing body referred to as the Network Administrative Organisation (Human & Provan, 2000; Provan et al., 2008; Provan & Kenis, 2008). Federated structures facilitate two distinct organisational types: (a) federation members (i.e. "affiliates"), and, (b) the Network Administrative Organisation (NAO) whose role is to govern affiliates (D'Aunno & Zuckerman, 1987; Dickson et al., 2005). In sport, NAOs are the centralised governing bodies that oversee their sports in their regions such as GSOs, CSOs, NSOs, and RSOs.

Barringer and Harrison (2000) metaphorically identified the arrangement of federated organisations as a "Hub-and-Wheel" where affiliates form a circular non-hierarchical arrangement (the "Wheel") linked directly with a centrally located NAO (the "Hub"), rather than each other (see Figure 1). The NAO's centrality is important as it illustrates how highly centralised federations are in the NAO's favour compared to affiliates who are all on equal footing (Barringer & Harrison, 2000; Provan, 1983; T. Williams, 2005). As affiliates are often competitors, the federated structure allows them to interact indirectly through the centralised NAO rather than directly with each other (D'Aunno & Zuckerman, 1987; Dickson et al., 2005; Provan et al., 2008).

Provan's (1983) seminal work on federations identified three distinct variants based on the rationale for their formation, the nature of their participation, and their board/committee structures. Firstly, the "participatory federation", where its formation and participation are voluntary. Participatory federation NAOs maintain a delegate-style board/committee that provides a collaborative form of "internal governance" that acts in the best interests of their affiliate organisations. Next, "independent federations" are also voluntary, but their boards/committees are independent. Consequently, independent federations provide a form of "external governance" over their affiliates making decisions

based on what is best for the federation as a whole. Finally, "mandated federations" represent the strictest from of network governance as their formation is mandatory and participation is compulsory. They exist to serve the interests of a higher authority and NAO board members are independent and often appointed rather than elected (Provan, 1983).

Figure 1

Federated network structure (i.e. the "hub-and-wheel")
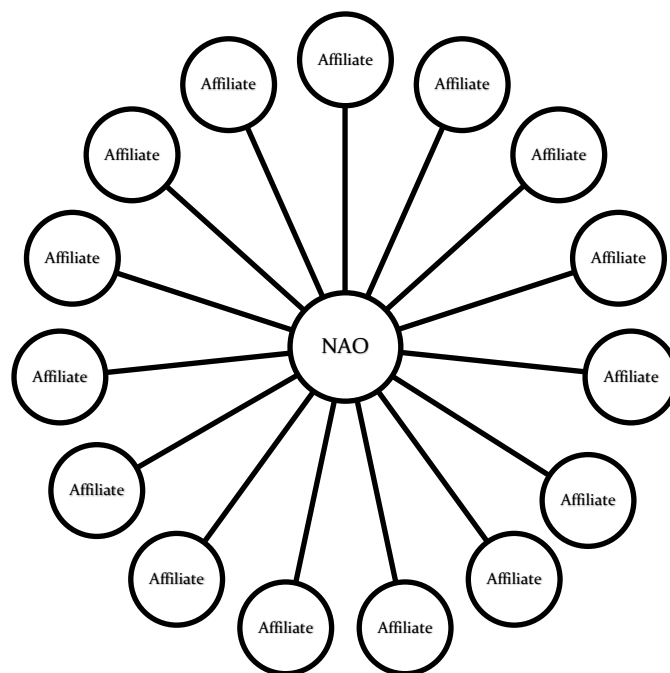
Some have questioned the appropriateness of the federation for the modern sport environment. For instance, Shilbury (2000) argued that the traditional sport federation struggles to meet modern consumer expectations and behaviour patterns such as informal participation and pay-and-play sports that do not need a governing body for their provision. Additionally, there is an increased reliance on non-sport related businesses for funding and provision by some sports that are not recognised in the federated sport model. Shilbury (2000) warns that not allowing input and direction from commercial partners regarding the federation could jeopardise their buy-in and support. Consequently, some scholars have

suggested a "collaborative governance" approach could be more beneficial where sport NAOs include representatives from their commercial partners such as funders, sponsors, event providers, and, retailers (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Shilbury, 2000; Shilbury et al., 2013).

Meanwhile, others have argued that federated governance creates NSO/RSO tensions such as distrust, fragmentation and duplication of efforts and resources to attain similar objectives (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). To address NSO/RSO tensions, some have suggested a "unity model" sport structure that negates the need for RSOs or at least keeps them to a minimum (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016, 2019; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019). Sport NZ (2020b) describe the unitary model as the simplest form of sport structure. Instead of the typical RSO to Club relationship, a sport's participants/athletes and other related organisations can affiliate directly with the NSO (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016, 2019; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019). Some sports in Australia such as Australian Motorsport, Equestrian Australia, and Touch Football Australia have had some success with a unitary structure (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016). In NZ, Tennis NZ (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010), Cycling NZ and Judo NZ have partly adopted a unitary structure also (Sport NZ, personal communication, March, 2019). Sport NZ (2020b) identifies just one NZ event-based sport that has had to embrace the unitary structure, Triathlon New Zealand (Tri NZ). Comparisons between triathlon and skateboarding in Aotearoa can be made regarding their event-based delivery and casual participation by their proponents/athletes.

Research exploring the current structure and governance of action sports in Aotearoa within either Sport Management or the sport sociology literature is very limited. However, Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) discuss Surfing New Zealand's (SNZ's) governance and Puddle et al. (2019) explored the development of Parkour New Zealand (Parkour NZ). SNZ receives

some limited funding from Sport NZ and from the NZOC's Olympic Solidarity Fund which is used to pay staff and provide development training camps (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). There are 27 "Boardrider" clubs that either affiliate directly with SNZ in the North Island or with the surfing RSO, South Island Surfing Association in the South Island (South Island Surfing Association, n.d.; Surfing New Zealand, 2022; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). International, surfing has been institutional to some degree for quite some time providing competitions since the 1950s and establishing its first GSO in the 1960s (Booth, 1995; Hough-Snee, 2020; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). The familiarity with international surfing competitions and an established club structure may explain how SNZ has readily embraced the institutionalisation of the sport in NZ.

In contrast, Parkour NZ was only established in 2011 as a national body to grow and develop the sport in Aotearoa by providing service provision, especially coaching (Puddle, 2019; Puddle et al., 2019). Although established as a national governing body (i.e. NSO) to fit the traditional sport expectations to be seen as legitimate, Parkour NZ does not maintain an RSO or club structure or membership coaching (Puddle, 2019; Puddle et al., 2019). However, Parkour NZ recognises 13 parkour "community groups" throughout Aotearoa (Parkour New Zealand, n.d.) providing a voluntary and participatory network of organisations rather than a formalised federation. Parkour NZ's lack of formalised structure and membership has limited its ability to be recognised as an NSO by Sport NZ (Puddle et al., 2019)

While internationally many action sports have been made to sit under the umbrella of an existing sport federation by the IOC (discussed later), nationally, some action sports such as snowboarding have had to adopt the traditional sports structures of the parent governing body. For instance, snowboarding in NZ sits under Snow Sports New Zealand's (Snow Sports NZ's) umbrella along with Freeski (i.e. freestyle skiing), cross country, adaptive, and alpine (Snow Sports New Zealand, n.d.-a). Snowboarders need to affiliate with Snow Sports

NZ to be able to compete at its sanctioned competition (Snow Sports New Zealand, n.d.-b). Therefore, Snow Sports NZ maintains a federated structure with its affiliated sports and nine clubs, and a unitary model with its athletes. However, similar to SNZ, Climbing New Zealand is a self-governing body (i.e. does not sit under an umbrella governing body) and has adopted the federation model having seven affiliated regional clubs (Climbing New Zealand, n.d.). At the start of my research, NZ skateboarding was unstructured except for the newly established SBNZ, four Regional Skateboarding Associations, and a collection of ad hoc for-profit and non-profit skateboarding organisations such as skate schools, philanthropic organisations/groups, event providers, and retail stores. These organisations were all established and operated independently. Subsequently, there was minimal to no formal coordination or structure present for skateboarding in Aotearoa.

Consequently, there is a need for the legitimacy of future federated sport structures to be investigated (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Parent et al., 2018; Shilbury, 2000) for not only conventional/mainstream sports, but for action sports as well. Additionally, little study has been conducted on federation formation and development, and network governance at the national level for action sports as most have focused on the international governance level. There are a few exceptions such as snowboarding in Norway (Steen-Johnsen, 2008) and Finland (Ojala, 2014), Parkour in Italy (Sterchele et al., 2017), and skateboarding in Australia (Ellmer & Rynne, 2019). In the NZ context, there has been less, with Puddle's (2019) and Puddle et al.'s (2019) work on Parkour New Zealand and Wheaton and Thorpe's (2021) work on Surf New Zealand being among the few. Respectively, the action sport environment, and the pressures for these informal activities and skateboarding to become more formally organised are discussed next.

The Action Sport Environment

Thorpe and Wheaton (2017) describe action sports as "…a wide range of mostly individualized activities such as BMX, kite-surfing, skateboarding, surfing, and snowboarding that differed, at least in their early phases of development, from traditional rule-bound, competitive, regulated Western 'achievement' sport cultures" (p. 247). Initially attracting thrill-seeking youth with carefree and anti-establishment philosophies during the 1960s and 1970s, action sports have become highly visible in popular culture over the last five decades (Thorpe & Wheaton, 2013). The primary consumers (i.e. participants and spectators) of action sports were generally identified as Generation Y males (Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011b). However, as Wheaton and Thorpe's (2018a) study on spectator attitudes towards the Olympic inclusion of action sports found, the age demographic is broadening. Specifically, they found that Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) and Z (between 1995 and 2012) are also high consumers of some action sports. Additionally, participation trends show that many middle-aged and older individuals are continuing to or starting to participate in action sports such as surfing (Wheaton, 2017) and skateboarding (O'Connor, 2021; Willing et al., 2019). Their continued participation allows individuals to maintain (or develop) their personal identities, social connection and sense of belonging with their respective action sport communities (O'Connor, 2018a; Wheaton, 2017; Willing et al., 2019). Middle-aged skateboarders who continue to skate now often do so accompanied by their children (Borden, 2019b; Dupont, 2020; O'Connor, 2018a, 2021; Willing et al., 2019).

There are numerous "labels" that have been used in the sociology of sport (and more broadly) to identify action sport including: "whiz", postmodern", "extreme", "alternative", "lifestyle", "new sports", and of course, "action sports" (e.g. Rinehart, 2000; Tomlinson et al., 2005; Wheaton, 2004). Wheaton (2004) however, chose to use the term "lifestyle sports",

as it encompasses the aspects of personal identity of proponents and their identification with a sport and its lifestyle:

> I use the term *lifestyle sport* as it is an expression adopted by members of the cultures themselves, and one that encapsulates these cultures and their identities, signalling the importance of the socio-historical context in which these activities emerged, took shape and exist. (p. 4)

The lifestyle sport term has subsequently been adopted by various academic scholars exploring the sociocultural elements of informal sports (e.g. B. Edwards & Corte, 2010; Gagnon et al., 2018; Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011; Sterchele et al., 2017; Wheaton, 2010). Thorpe and Wheaton (2013) choose to use the term "action sports" as they rationalised it as the most commonly used term in the North American industry, and it has also become widespread throughout Australasia. Furthermore, the use of "action sport" in the sociology of sport literature has also become more widespread (Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Rinehart, 2000, 2008a; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Thorpe, 2015; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018a). Although I agree with Wheaton's (2004) label and definition of "lifestyle sport", for the two latter reasons stated above, I also choose to use the term, action sport.

During their research to determine the significance action sport culture has on national sport policies, Tomlinson et al. (2005) identified three central interrelated concepts that characterise or describe action sports. They labelled these as "alternative", "lifestyle" and "extreme". First, the authors labelled action sports as being "alternative" as they are often practised differently from traditional sports. The institutional structure, formalised processes, and regulation typically needed for traditional sport coordination and participation, is usually absent in action sports. Although there has been a move towards institutionalisation by some

action sports more recently (discussed in more detail below), there is often resistance by the sports' proponents to do so (Beal, 1995; Booth, 1995; Kellett & Russell, 2009).

Next, following Wheaton (2004), Tomlinson et al. (2005) described action sports as a "lifestyle" to recognise the personal factors that underpin their participation, not limited to, nor excluding competition. Respectively, the authors further divided the lifestyle component into three core areas: general activities, events, and adventure tourism. Although competitiveness may be a key motivator for some to practice action sports, there is a tendency for others to reject competition as it contradicts subcultural non-competitive logic (Batuev & Robinson, 2019b; Beal, 1995). Finally, Tomlinson et al. (2005) described action sports as "extreme" to identify the perceived elements related to risk, skill and thrill often associated with and experienced during participation such as extreme locations, emotions, skills and perceived transgression. The extreme concept has often been associated with commercial branding which has to some extent "normalised" this form of action sport practice through the promotion of mega action sport events. However, Tomlinson et al. (2005) noted that not all action sports are extreme by nature, nor need to be practised to this level.

Some sociocultural scholars have identified action sport participation as being central to individual identity and subcultural community membership (Beal, 1995; Coates et al., 2010; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013; Wheaton, 2007a). Research during the 1980s and 1990s showed that action sports such as skateboarding were characterised as subcultures whose institutional logics were alternative, free-spirited, unstructured, casual, informal, and anti-establishment (Beal, 1999; Beal & Weidman, 2003; Rinehart, 2000). Some authors have also suggested that those that participate in action sport aim to be observed but not understood by non-community members or "outsiders" (Borden, 2019a; Turner, 2017). Therefore, association with an action sport is a cultural affiliation which transcends sport

participation to include the consumption of associated products such as clothing, footwear, music and codes of behaviour that represent one's lifestyle choices (Tomlinson et al., 2005; Wheaton, 2010). As Tomlinson et al. (2005) claimed, "Lifestyle or action sports are surely about…how you look, what your subcultural choices and affiliations are, what forms of control you can take over your own life (and against formal bureaucracies or sport organisations)" (p. 11). Notions of action sport identification and sub-cultural membership (i.e. "authenticity") are discussed later in this chapter.

Over the past 20 years, there has been a continued rise in the popularity of many action sports such as snowboarding, surfing, freestyle BMX, sport climbing, and, skateboarding, which has also resulted in them becoming more readily incorporated into the mainstream sport sector, and for some, even to the Olympic level (Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011b, 2011a; Tomlinson et al., 2005; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018a, 2021). Commercial and media brand involvement in the sector has been identified as contributing to the popularity of action sports and the development of organised competitions (Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017). Social media has also played a major role by providing a multiplicity of ways that action sports can be consumed. Commercial brands have been highly effective in taking advantage of these platforms to promote their products (Ojala, 2014; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019). Consequently, action sports are brand dominated and, product extension heavy (e.g. video games, clothing, shoes, music, DVDs.) that reflect an action sport's associated culture (Kellett & Russell, 2009; Ojala, 2014; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019). As Rinehart (2008b) claimed, "Nowhere has the use of sport as a vehicle for consumerism been more obvious than in extreme, or action, sports" (p. 72). Driven by their popularity, many action sports have become increasingly competitive and institutional (Ojala, 2014; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017). The Olympic inclusion of

some action sports such as surfing, snowboarding, parkour, Freestyle-BMX and skateboarding further contributes to the pressure experienced by these sports to institutionalise.

Sportisation: The Institutionalisation of Action Sports

"Sportisation" (or "sportification") is a concept that identifies modern society's tendency and processes to ritualising, organising, and formalising (i.e. institutionalising) our "pastimes" or leisure activities as a sport (Elias & Dunning, 1986; Maguire, 2000, 2015; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017). This is often achieved through developing formally standardised sets of rules and governing bodies to oversee the new sport (Maguire, 2000, 2015; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017). Pressures for action sports to institutionalise come from three somewhat interrelated sources; Namely, commercial operators, governmental funding agencies and Olympic inclusion (Beal & Ebeling, 2019; Dupont & Nichols, 2021; O'Connor, 2021; Wheaton, 2013, 2017; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). The distinct but interrelated roles that commercial brands, governmental funding agencies, and Olympic sport play in the sportisation and institutionalisation of skateboarding and action sport more broadly are discussed next.

The Role of Action Sports Industry on Sportisation

Many action sports have been established and grown by action sport companies as a means to generate and increase revenue through consumer purchases of sporting equipment, apparel and other related merchandise (Rinehart, 2008b, 2008a; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Turner, 2017; H. Walker et al., 2005; Wheaton, 2013). The establishment and facilitation of professional action sport competitions and leagues have also been driven predominantly by industry brands (Rinehart, 2008b, 2008a; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Turner, 2017; H. Walker et

al., 2005; Wheaton, 2013). Consequently, action sport is highly reliant on commercial brands for their provision (Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Turner, 2017; H. Walker et al., 2005).

Thorpe (2014) identified how early action sport competitions were typically celebrated as self-expression with athletes representing themselves and/or their sponsors. For skateboarding in the US, Beal (2005) identified similarly. However, the establishment of large commercial action sport events has resulted in the need for coordination, structure and standardised rules (Thorpe, 2014) such as the X-Games, Vans Park Series, and Street League Skateboarding. Often the sub-cultural aspects of these sports are used to promote commercial events (Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Booth, 1995; Kellett & Russell, 2009). For example, initially called the eXtreme Games, the X-Games is the creation of the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) and has been hugely popular (Kellett & Russell, 2009; Rinehart, 2008a; Rinehart & Sydnor, 2003). Thorpe and Wheaton (2017) identified that integral relationships between the X-Games, its athletes and their commercial sponsors, have been crucial for the development of the mega-event which has influenced the creation of similar mega-events worldwide. However, to be able to facilitate action sport competitive events, a degree of institutionalisation had to take place (Ojala, 2014; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019; Tomlinson et al., 2005) or more broadly speaking, "governance" was needed.

The Governance of Skateboarding. Similar to most action sports, coordination and facilitation of competitive or sport skateboarding have historically been driven by the commercial sector. The first international governing body for sport skateboarding was the National Skateboard Association (NSA) established in the USA in 1981 (Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Beal, 1995). Beal (1995) identified, the NSA's commitment to commercialising skateboarding through athlete sponsorship and commercial events. The NSA's board members were a collection of commercial actors from skateboard, clothing and shoe manufacturers, magazine editors, and skatepark designers (Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Beal,

1995, 2013). While originally established to coordinate sport skateboarding in the USA, it later became the first global governing body organising international competitions in Vancouver, Canada in 1986 and Muenster, Germany in 1987 and 1998 (Batuev et al., 2020; Beal, 2013). The NSA later folded in 1993 with the global decline in skateboarding's popularity during that time (Batuev et al., 2020; Beal, 2013).

Among rising concerns that skateboarding could become an Olympic sport, the International Skateboarding Federation (ISF) was established in an attempt to retain control over the sport rather than its governance being awarded to an external ("outsider") body (Batuev et al., 2020; Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Beal, 2013). Similar to the NSA, the founders of the ISF were also from the skateboarding industry and held other positions in commercial skateboarding organisations (Batuev et al., 2020; Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Beal, 2013). The ISF held the first world skateboarding championships by sanctioning the 2009 Dew Tour, in Boston, USA (Beal, 2013). Batuev (2020) argued that as the ISF represented skateboarding on bigger political matters such as the Olympic Games, the organisation can be considered the first international governing body of skateboarding. The proactive strategy to organise and self-govern by some action sports has allowed them to protect the cultural legitimacy of their sports (Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Booth, 1995; Kellett & Russell, 2009), and has also been the case for skateboarding in some countries such as the USA and Finland.

Regarding professional skateboarding leagues, there are private global competitions such as the World Cup Skateboarding (WCS, est. 1993), X-Games (est. 1995), and Street League Skateboarding (SLS, est. 2010; Batuev & Robinson, 2017). There were/are also a few commercial global federations such as the ISF (now part of World Skate) and World Skateboarding Federation (WSF; Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019). Compared to traditional sport federations, these competitions (i.e. WCS, X-Games, SLS) and

skateboarding federations (i.e. ISF and WSF) are participatory networks that comprise a complex number of organisational relationships of a diverse collection of commercial entities, such as the media, sponsors, event organisers, and equipment manufacturers (Batuev & Robinson, 2019a). Therefore, commercial entrepreneurism has also unwittingly played a role in the professionalisation and institutionalisation of international sport-skateboarding.

   The Role of Professionalisation in Sportisation and Institutionalisation. In addition to competition provision, funding acquisition, and Olympic inclusion, there has also been a subtler move towards institutionalisation for some action sports driven by professionalisation and the creation of organisations. Booth (2017) for instance, explained how in the mid-1970s a group of professional surfers established the International Professional Surfers (later to become the Association of Surfing Professionals, and then the World Surf League in the mid-2010s) as an income stream to supplement their lifestyle. Wheaton and Thorpe (2016) identified how non-skateboarder Tim McFerran founded the WSF in 2014 as an entrepreneurial venture. Additionally, Olympic inclusion has created further opportunities not only for their industries and athletes, but also for others wishing to pursue careers in action sports not only through broadcasting and media, but also through the development of governing bodies, coaching pathways, talent identification, and training facilities (Renfree et al., 2021; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

   Thorpe and Dumont (2019) identified a variety of possible entrepreneurial action sport roles including journalism, photography, competition and event organisation, coaching, athlete agency, and company ownership and employment. Such entrepreneurial opportunities allow people to make a living and remain connected to the sport that they love (Thorpe & Dumont, 2019). Snyder's (2012) research on professional skaters in the USA also identified potential career opportunities to make a living from skateboarding through photography, video filming making, and media publishing. Only a few studies have focused on

skateboarders who wish to pursue a professional career through sponsorship, competition prize money, and commercialisation (e.g. Beal et al., 2017; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Borden, 2019; Dupont & Nichols, 2021; Maitland, 2021; Snyder, 2012, 2017; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2018, 2021; Yochim, 2010). Renfree et al. (2021) noted how the establishment of NSOs for skateboarding, BMX-freestyle, and sport climbing has been viewed as an attractive employment opportunity in these organisations by some of their community members. However, little research has focused on those individuals who wish to forge personal careers in other ways from skateboarding, like being involved in organisations that contribute to the sportisation and institutionalisation of sport, such as governing bodies.

The Role of Governmental Sport Funding in Institutionalisation

As identified earlier, acquiring governmental funding for some action sports has been and continues to be difficult. However, increasing participation levels in action sports and recent Olympic inclusion have resulted in governmental bodies beginning to consider funding to support physical activity and high-performance initiatives. Firstly, the increased popularity and participation of some action sports especially among children and young people has attracted the attention of government funding bodies intent on meeting community physical activity policy initiatives (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011; Green, 2009; Turner, 2017). Regardless of community wellbeing concerns, access to sport funding is usually coercive, requiring specific structural and operational requirements to be met (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Piggin et al., 2009). Governmental funders take a "whole-of-sport" view that requires formalised processes regarding athlete accessibility and development. However, coaching accreditation is often lacking in most action sports (Thorpe & Dumont, 2019; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017), and concepts of "club" and "membership" typically associated with mainstream sports do not exist (Jeanes et al., 2019, 2022; Tomlinson et al., 2005; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017).

Secondly, the IOC's recognition of several action sports has subsequently drawn the attention of national high performance sport funders regarding international sporting achievement and funding (Thorpe & Dumont, 2019). For instance, Ellmer and Rynne's (2019) study on funding allocation for action sports in Australia found that regardless of Olympic inclusion (i.e. the epitome of sport recognition for more traditional sports), due to its lack of institutional structure, Skateboarding Australia was unable to acquire funding. This was in contrast to BMX and surfing which were more visibly institutionalised, maintaining formalised processes and structures such as athlete and coaching pathways and accreditation and could, therefore access funding (Ellmer & Rynne, 2019).

Regarding governmental funding of high performance action sport athletes, Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) identified how difficult it has been in NZ and Australia, where criteria rely on the probability of medalling or being placed in the top six, and a proven record of sporting success. For instance, HPSNZ funding focuses on a handful of priority sports based on performance and public popularity such as cricket, rowing, equestrian and sailing (Piggin et al., 2009; Sam, 2012, 2015; Sam & Jackson, 2004). Until recently, HPSNZ had not previously considered and was reluctant to allocate funding to support elite climbers and skaters towards Tokyo 2020 (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

The Role of Olympic Inclusions in Sportisation and Institutionalisation

Finally, the Olympic inclusion of some action sports has provided increased pressures for institutionalisation through the adoption of traditional sport governance structures and operations (Batuev & Robinson, 2019a, 2019b; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Thorpe and Wheaton (2011a) suggested that the IOC has tried to draw on the success and popularity of action sport events such as the X-Games in an effort to appeal to a younger audience. Although some action sports such as surfing and sports climbing have been allowed to develop their own governing structures, there has been a tendency by the IOC to grant

governance to existing Olympic recognised GSOs to provide an "umbrella" style governance (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019a; Sterchele et al., 2017; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). The IOC's strategy has allowed for the speedy institutionalisation of action sports through the sharing of resources, reduction of administration costs, and utilisation of pre-existing traditional sport organisational structures (Batuev & Robinson, 2019b; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a). Nonetheless, it has also placed considerable pressure on some action sports to meet the short and impractical timeframes set by the IOC (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

Batuev and Robinson (2017) for instance, illustrated how the IOC had recognised the Fédération Internationale de Roller Sports (FIRS) as the official governing body for international skateboarding to help the sport to institutionalise quickly. The authors argued that the IOC's decision to have ISF sit under the FIRS umbrella was strategic to gain favour with the international skateboarding community (Batuev & Robinson, 2017). This approach has created considered tensions between roller sport NSOs and skateboarding NSOs in many countries as there is a preference for self-governance by most skateboarding communities. There are also concerns regarding IOC and World Skate "cashing in" on skateboarding's popularity and who actually "owns" the sport (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). Additionally, notions of sport governance, structure and competition (i.e. "sport") are contradictory to the sub-cultural logic of skateboarding raising further concerns regarding the mainstreaming of the sport among some of the community (Batuev & Robinson, 2019a). Consequently, skateboarding's Olympic status inclusion has not only created administrative and operational difficulties and struggles for would-be action sport governing bodies, but it has also caused considerable political sub-cultural tensions among skateboarding communities around the world (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

Taking Sport-Skateboarding into the Mainstream

The sportisation of skateboarding globally has resulted in some mainstreaming of the sport, such as being included in school physical education curriculums, parents enrolling their children in skate schools and camps, and increased amateur and professional skateboarding competitions (Atencio et al., 2020; Beal et al., 2017; Beal & Ebeling, 2019; Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). For instance, the development of skate schools and camps, is opposed to the "do-it-yourself" values of skateboarding, instead encouraging "sport-style" coaching, competition and event provision (Beal et al., 2017; Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Turner, 2017). Furthermore, the development of international and national sport-skateboarding governing bodies and potential access to sport-related funding (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), provides an inviting potential employment option for some (Renfree et al., 2021). Additionally, it is not uncommon for skatepark communities to establish skateboarding community groups or formal associations to lobby city councils regarding community social development and skatepark development (Atencio et al., 2020; Atencio & Beal, 2015; Beal et al., 2017; Borden, 2019b; Howell, 2008; Németh, 2006; Smith, 2019). Establishing more formalised and coordinated efforts (i.e. governance) that align with mainstream business and sporting practice to meet the expectations of governmental bodies, is most certainly (and possibly unwittingly) furthering moves towards institutionalisation.

Organisational Legitimacy and its Determination

Here I discuss the theoretical concepts relating to the importance of organisations and networks to be observed as legitimate entities by their stakeholders. The organisational management literature readily advocates that legitimacy is crucial for organisational success and sustainability. For instance, Suchman's (1995) highly cited definition of organisational "legitimacy", identifies it as "A generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an

entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, beliefs, and definitions" (p. 574).

Deephouse et al. (2018) later refined this definition, suggesting: "Organizational legitimacy is the perceived appropriateness of an organization to a social system in terms of rules, values, norms, and definitions" (p. 9). The key difference is the addition of the word "appropriateness" to encompass Suchman's (1995) three adjectives "desirable", "proper", and, "appropriate" rather than identify them individually. Additionally, Deephouse et al. (2018) choose to alter the measures for legitimacy evaluation to "rules", "values", "norms", and, "definitions" to more specifically identify the four dynamics (or criteria) for legitimacy evaluations (i.e. regulatory, pragmatic, moral, and, cultural-cognitive legitimacies), which illustrate how stakeholders make their legitimacy decisions (discussed below in more detail).

Organisations that are perceived to be legitimate by their stakeholders such as customers, resource suppliers, state entities, and other interested parties, are able to acquire operational predictability and sustainability (Suchman, 1995; Tornikoski & Newbert, 2007; Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002). Long and Driscoll (2008) asserted, "Legitimacy is the natural by-product of institutionalism, because to deviate from institutional norms is perceived as synonymous with deviating from the reality of the social world" (p. 176). Institutional theory is the central construct that underpins organisational legitimacy (Deephouse et al., 2018; Karlsson & Middleton, 2015; Oliver, 1990; Suchman, 1995). Therefore, the operational environment that organisations do business in has a significant impact on how the organisation will look and behave, so to be seen by their stakeholders as legitimate (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Harrison & John, 2008; O'Brien & Slack, 2004; Suchman, 1995).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) coined the term organisational field (or "field") to identify all the organisations and individuals that belong to or contribute to a given

industry/sector. Organisational fields are social, highly institutional structures that both constrain and enable the behaviour of their actors (Child, 1997; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Hodgson, 2006; Kraatz, 1998). Institutions are the by-product of commonly shared sets of beliefs, values and behaviours (i.e. "logics") that are "normative", and over time have become "taken-for-granted" further providing the foundation for institutional "rules" or constraints (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Deephouse & Suchman, 2008; Suchman, 1995). Any organisational behaviour outside of these constraints can negatively impact the credibility and legitimacy of an organisation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Kumar & Das, 2007; Long & Driscoll, 2008). Consequently, the desire to be legitimate influences how organisations behave, and can be a key determinant for organisational change or status quo to avoid being perceived as illegitimate (Oliver, 1990; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Suchman, 1995; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). Therefore, institutions are observed as not only constraining but also as "enabling" as they work to maintain order, predictability and comprehension of organisational behaviour (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Hodgson, 2006).

This is not to say that organisational institutions are necessarily dormant, inflexible structures whose members are constrained by a singular common logic (O'Brien & Slack, 2004; Scott, 1995, 2014). Rather, institutions represent the multiple logics of their members and are in a continual state of adoption, amendment, and reproduction of institutional norms as these actors modify the institutional boundaries where necessary (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2006; Oliver, 1991). Some organisational managers will even observe legitimacy as being a resource that can be incurred through reactive or proactive strategic initiatives (Child, 1997; Suchman, 1995; Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002). For example, adopting existing institutional structures can be an effective way of being perceived as legitimate (Deephouse et al., 2018; Kikulis, 2000; Suchman, 1995). However, organisations that are attempting to be innovative can also gain legitimacy if their initiatives are observed

favourably by other institutional members, who will also adopt or replicate similar strategies (Deephouse & Carter, 2005; O'Brien & Slack, 2004; Suchman, 1995). Legitimacy is important as it is linked to organisational performance and survival, as stakeholders are more likely to engage with an organisation that they perceive to be legitimate (Deephouse et al., 2018).

Network Legitimacy

The organisational management literature identifies that legitimacy is just as important for organisational networks as it is for individual organisations (Provan et al., 2007, 2008; Richardson, 1985; Waugh et al., 2014). To encapsulate the concept of network legitimacy, Human and Provan (2000) explained: "Legitimacy refers to the status and credibility of the network and network activities as perceived both by member firms and outside stakeholders like funders and customers" (p. 328). As with single organisations, without being perceived as legitimate, networks are unable to gain the support that they need from their members, non-members and the greater industry (D'Aunno & Zuckerman, 1987; Human & Provan, 2000; Provan et al., 2008).

Human and Provan (2000) and Provan et al. (2008) have argued that network legitimacy is perceived and built on three distinct but interrelated dimensions: (a) network-as-form, (b) network-as-entity, and, (c) network-as-interaction. They claim that failure to build legitimacy across all three dimensions will ultimately result in network collapse. Firstly, network-as-form is the legitimacy for the rationale that underpins the network's formation, purpose and reason to exist. Secondly, Human and Provan (2000) identified network-as-entity as legitimacy for the collective representation of all network members as a single entity, or more specifically, the network's identity. Finally, network-as-interaction represents the legitimacy for network members to interact with each other via the connections created by the network. Both Human and Provan (2000) and Provan et al. (2008) claimed that each

dimension is equally important in having a reciprocal effect on the others, whereas legitimation strategies for each form, entity, and, interaction, are equally important.

Within the research on the institutionalisation of some action sports, a few studies have used institutional theory to help explain the cultural nuances and considerations associated with the formation of legitimate governing bodies and federations (e.g. Batuev et al., 2020; Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019b, 2019a; Ojala, 2014; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019). Consequently, knowing how stakeholders determine organisational and network legitimacy is critical for new and existing sport federations and their centralised governing bodies.

Legitimacy Determination

Legitimacy is not naturally possessed but rather a social construction attributed to an organisation's constituents or stakeholders (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Suchman, 1995). However, organisations (and networks) are subject to a multiplicity of diverse and complex stakeholder groups, each with unique interests and agendas (Clarkson, 1995; Fassin, 2012; Freeman, 1984; Mitchell et al., 1997). Legitimacy determinations are not made just by those stakeholder groups that belong to an organisation (or network or sport) but also by external observers or other interested parties such as governmental agencies, funding bodies, media, and others that might be affected by the organisation's operations (Fassin, 2012; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2015b; Naraine & Parent, 2019; Parent & Deephouse, 2007). Organisations are therefore subject to the determination by a broad group of stakeholder categories: (a) "internal stakeholders" – those whom an organisation is responsible for, who infer "internal legitimacy", and, (b) "external stakeholders" – those interested parties outside of the organisation, who infer "external legitimacy" (Child, 1997; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Suchman, 1995). Trying to meet the needs of all of the stakeholder groups is impossible and organisational directors and

managers must therefore attempt to meet or appease their concerns where possible (Clarkson, 1995; Fassin, 2012; Freeman, 1984; Mitchell et al., 1997).

Observing action sports and their communities as an organisational field (or social reality), internal stakeholders can be identified as those that are part of the subcultural community (i.e. "insiders") and external stakeholders being those that are not (i.e. "outsiders"). Although distinct, both internal and external legitimacies are mutually reinforcing as one usually leads to the other via either "inside-out" or "outside-in" diffusion (Drori & Honig, 2013; Karlsson & Middleton, 2015; Kumar & Das, 2007; Provan et al., 2008). Steen-Johnsen (2008) noted the Norwegian Snowboarding Federation's approach of using both inside-out and outside-in approaches to legitimise the cultural identity of the sport's internal and external stakeholders, in turn, legitimised the federation.

Four distinct dynamics provide the criteria for stakeholders to evaluate organisational legitimacy: (a) regulatory, (b) pragmatic, (c) moral, and (d) cultural-cognitive (Deephouse et al., 2018; Scott, 2014; Suchman, 1995). Regulatory legitimacy identifies legitimacy that is attained via adherence to regulation that is usually set by a governmental or larger more legitimate (or powerful) organisation (Deephouse et al., 2018; Provan & Milward, 2001; Scott, 1995). Pragmatic legitimacy refers to self-interested evaluations of stakeholders based on the benefits of the direct interactions between the organisation and the stakeholder (Long & Driscoll, 2008; Suchman, 1995). Moral legitimacy refers to the favourable perceptions of organisational activities within the larger social context and perceivably ethical behaviour (Deephouse & Carter, 2005; Kumar & Das, 2007; Long & Driscoll, 2008; Suchman, 1995). Finally, cultural-cognitive legitimacy (or "cultural legitimacy") is derived from stakeholder perceptions of an organisation's purpose to exist. Formally identified as "cognitive legitimacy" (Scott, 1995; Suchman, 1995), it was later refined by Scott (2014) to better reflect the shared thinking and understandings of stakeholders (Deephouse et al., 2018).

Therefore, organisational legitimacy is also dependent on the ability of stakeholders to understand how an organisation's purpose relates to its cultural and institutional environments (Deephouse et al., 2018; Scott, 2014; Suchman, 1995). Stakeholder evaluations of legitimacy are not individual, nor based on any singular organisational occurrence. Rather, they are collective perceptions of all stakeholders, based on a series of historical organisational activities and events (Kumar & Das, 2007; Suchman, 1995; Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002).

The Interplay Between Regulatory and Cultural Legitimacy for Action Sports

Previous research on action sports has shown the tensions created by notions of regulatory and cultural legitimacy during NSO development for sport climbing, parkour, snowboarding, and, skateboarding (e.g. Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019b; Ojala, 2014; Puddle et al., 2019; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019). While these studies identify that cultural legitimacy plays an important role in achieving action sport community buy-in for action sport governing bodies, adhering to the regulatory requirements (i.e. its regulative legitimacy) of the MSGBs is just as important. Action sports that adopt institutional (i.e. traditional) sport structures and governance forms can acquire the legitimacy needed to appeal to the expectations of international and national regulatory bodies, and governmental and other public authorities. However, the institutionalisation of action sports in this manner can create political tensions and resistance from their communities as such actions can conflict with sub-cultural values and what is considered culturally legitimate (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019b; Ojala, 2014; Puddle et al., 2019; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019). As Batuev and Robinson (2019a) explained, "When the cultural legitimacy of an organisation is significantly lower than its regulatory legitimacy, the resistance of the sport's participants towards this

organisation is likely to occur" (p. 178). From a sociocultural perspective, previous studies on the institutionalisation of action sports have focused more on the conflicts and tensions created within action sport communities. In contrast, the studies mentioned above have explored the organisational perspective, differing forms of governing, and the interplay between regulative and cultural legitimacy.

Previous research on umbrella governance has shown that when flexibility is allowed in the relationships and processes between the parent mainstream sport and affiliated action sport, some common ground can be found. For instance, when public authorities and traditional sport governing bodies allow are more flexibility with the institutional requirements for their affiliated action sports, there is more willingness to adopt a degree of formalisation as the cultural aspects and identity of athletes may be retained (Coates et al., 2010; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019). Somewhat paradoxically, the adoption of institutional processes by some action sports has allowed them to gain the regulative legitimacy that they need to develop and grow which cannot be achieved on cultural legitimacy alone (Batuev & Robinson, 2019a; Coates et al., 2010). Regarding skateboarding, Batuev and Robinson (2017, 2018, 2019a, 2020), argued that the IOC's strategy to partner the ISF with World Skate provided the GSO with the cultural legitimacy it needed to appeal to ISF's network of commercial brands, sponsors, event organisers, and, potentially some of the skateboarding community. However, Batuev and Robinson (2019b) also pointed out that there is still debate among the skateboarding community regarding whether skateboarding should be governed at all.

While recounting their work on skateboarding communities, Beal and Weidman (2003) identified legitimacy as "authenticity", which is derived from the values and norms that constitute the subculture. The authors claimed that "authenticity is arguably the single most important factor determining admittance into the subculture" (p. 351). Wheaton and

Beal (2003) also argued that authenticity is a representation of subcultural "'true' or genuine membership" (p. 159). At the organisational level, cultural legitimacy has also been used by action sport governance scholars to discuss notions of legitimacy and authenticity. Ojala (2014) used the term cultural-cognitive legitimacy to discuss tensions regarding retaining authenticity for Finnish professional snowboarders under pressure to institutionalise (i.e. regulative legitimacy). Batuev and Robinson (2017) used the term cultural-cognitive legitimacy to describe how the ISF provided authenticity for the Olympic inclusion of skateboarding, as the FIRS was not perceived favourably by the international skateboarding community. Meanwhile, Wheaton and Thorpe (2016) and Thorpe and Wheaton (2018a) discussed similar issues to Batuev and Robinson (2017), instead using the term authenticity. Notions of authenticity, and, the discourses that convey authentic action sport membership are discussed next.

Authenticity and Sport Subcultures

Rinehart (2000) explained that authenticity is socially derived, as it is about "Attitude, style, world-view and the meanings given to the participant's involvement are all used to determine membership in the subculture associated with the sport" (p. 512). The term "authenticity" signifies how one identifies themselves with a subculture (such as an action sport) and their notions of remaining "true" or "authentic" to its philosophical views, cultural interaction and participation (Gagnon et al., 2018; Giannoulakis, 2016; Wheaton, 2004). Research on subcultural membership has identified that authenticity is achieved through numerous social comparisons which serve to provide prototypical symbolic markers such as commitment, attitude, style, gender, class and ethnicity. For instance, Widdicombe and Wooffitt's (1990) seminal research on alternative music fans found that participants made determinations regarding their subculture's prototypical features such as music tastes, appearance and behaviour that constitute a "core" member and the greater subcultural

community. The researchers found that two prevalent arguments underpinned their participants' notions of authentic membership. They termed these "doing" and "being". Those that were perceived as "doing" (e.g. new members, dressing up like a punk, not living the lifestyle, having the wrong attitude) were pretenders, and "inauthentic". In contrast, core members were identified as "being" (e.g. longer serving members, not needing to wear prototypical clothing, living the lifestyle daily, and having the right attitude) and were considered authentic members.

Another study by Thornton (1995) on dance club culture in the UK, suggested that discourses among members, often based on perceptions of age, gender, sexuality and race, create notions of authenticity. They identified that these same discourses provided the basis for what they termed as "cultural capital", or rather, "subcultural capital" (i.e. subcultural social status) which is used to negotiate the social status of others, as well as themselves. As Thornton (1995) explained, "Interestingly, the social logic of subcultural capital reveals itself most clearly by what it dislikes and by what it emphatically isn't" (p. 164).

Regarding sport, Peter Donnelly and Kevin Young (1988) on the personal construction and confirmation of sport subcultures identified that authenticity can only be identified by insiders as they possess the necessary knowledge to make such distinctions. "Core members" or "insiders" (i.e. "authentic" members) can easily spot new or non-members by their tendency to adopt stereotypical behaviour to conform, subsequently being labelled as "pretenders", "outsiders", "kooks", "rats", or "posers" (Beal & Weidman, 2003; Beal & Wilson, 2004; P. Donnelly & Young, 1988; Rinehart, 2000; Wheaton, 2000). Wheaton's (2000) research on perceived authentic membership by windsurfers, found that prototypical subcultural features (i.e. style and fashion, self-identification, insider jargon and knowledge) provided the grounds for evaluation. For instance, explaining how lifestyle/action sport participation contributes to one's identity, Renfree et al. (2021) stated:

Thus, a person may self-identify as a skateboarder but will only be considered as part of the skateboard community if they skateboard (the central attribute), if they recognise or embody the traditions of skateboarding (the enduring attribute) and if they see themselves as different to people who do not skateboard (the distinctive attribute). (p. 2)

Peter Donnelly and Kevin Young (1988) identified that subcultural identification with a sport involves two movements. First, an individual seeks to distinguish themselves from the wider society by seeking confirmation from the members of a sport subculture. Second, having their identity confirmed by core members transcends the need for confirmation by outsiders (P. Donnelly & Young, 1988). Gwinner and Bennett (2008) also noted that achieving social identity and authenticity in a sport culture is a process of identifying and aligning oneself with a subculture, accentuating the positives of its core values while dismissing any negative values, and discrediting those values of other social cultures. Over time, newcomers to individual sports (i.e. in contrast to group or team sports) become less interested in seeking subcultural connections, but rather more interested in participation in the sport (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008).

Authenticity in Action Sports

Several influential articles that take a sociocultural perspective of action sport have identified the significance of participant authenticity. Wheaton's (2000) research identified that windsurfers perceive authentic membership as the commitment to the sport as a lifestyle by: organising their lives around it, being dedicated to improving their sport ability and skill, and the improving the performance of their boards. Wheaton concluded that the central notion of authenticity among windsurfers was "just doing it" (i.e. participating in the sport). Beal and Weidman (2003) found that skaters identified skateboarding as being participant controlled, having no rules or authority, being non-competitive, and being a form of self-

expression. Skateboarders view themselves as being non-conformist and rebellious, but creative. However, underpinning the aforementioned skateboarding values are notions of masculinity (specifically, young white males) and the marginalisation of female skaters (Abulhawa, 2020; Atencio et al., 2009; Beal & Weidman, 2003; Dupont, 2014; Willing et al., 2020).

Another study by Beal and Wilson (2004) further identified rejection by male skateboarders of the hyper-masculine identities typical to male sport athletes (i.e. "Jocks") claiming that skateboarders are more "intellectual, creative, and independent" (p. 32) compared to the athlete archetype. Notions of masculinity, heterosexuality and gender inequality were reinforced with perceivably authentic values such as risk, pain and rugged individualism. Female skaters were observed by male skaters as being risk-averse and afraid of getting hurt. Nonetheless, female skateboarders also identified with the ruggedness of skateboarding describing themselves as "tomboys" and not being drawn to "feminine" or "girlie" things. Meanwhile, the older "veteran skaters" observed themselves as being more authentic, while they were practising the subcultural philosophy and objecting that younger skateboarders had the wrong attitude (Beal & Wilson, 2004).

Dupont's (2014) study on the hierarchical status of skatepark communities recognised three underpinning variables that constitute a skateboarder's authenticity: (a) "commitment" to culture, the activity and their embeddedness in the community; (b) an individual's "subcultural capital", their cultural knowledge, "authentic" performance of the skateboard ideology, possession of "authentic" branded skateboarding equipment, clothing, and other associated items; and (c) an individual's "social capital" - what skateboarding-related resources they can draw on or share with other community members. Regardless, Dupont (2014) identified young adult, elite or "rad" male skateboarders are viewed as being the most authentic or "core". In sum, white, middle-class, heterosexual, rad male skaters are

considered more "authentic" and "core" members, subsequently have more influence over other community members (Atencio et al., 2009; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Dupont, 2014; Wheaton & Beal, 2003; Willing et al., 2020), and skateboarding is predominantly a masculine dominion (Atencio et al., 2009; Thorpe, 2014; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018b).

More recent studies on skateboarding culture has shown, that there has been a shift towards the development of youth and more diverse communities that are inclusive of ethnicities, sexualities, females and other genders (Abulhawa, 2020; Beal et al., 2017; Geckle & Shaw, 2021; Pomerantz et al., 2004; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021; Willing & Shearer, 2015). Nonetheless, Beal and Ebeling (2019) identified that within the skateboarding hierarchy, authenticity and power still lay with men and masculinity and gender privilege to cisgender heteronormativity. Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) identified that the IOC's expectations for gender equality at the Olympics have also contributed towards elite women (and girls) skaters being seen more positively by their male counterparts. However, the researchers still question the lack of visible leadership roles that appear to be available for women in skateboarding (and other action sports) with the majority of positions of power being retained by older core men and access to core resources (e.g. sponsorship, prize money, events) more readily available for male athletes (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Regarding matters of race, Neftalie Williams (2021b) explored the marginalisation of "skaters-of-colour" in the US and argued that racism is more likely derived from the racial politics of their local communities rather than skateboarding community culture. He further claimed that skateboarding is more ethnically diverse than researchers have claimed, and provides the platform to create friendships that break down racial boundaries (N. S. Williams, 2020, 2021b).

Conveyors of Authenticity: Niche Media

Subcultural or "niche media" has played a significant role in conveying these notions of authenticity. Thornton (1995) argued that for subcultures to be explored and possibly "understood", requires the investigation of their media consumption. Wheaton (2000) illustrated the significance that specialist magazines played in creating authentic windsurfing identities in the 1990s by providing "insider knowledge" through the dissemination of information, and the creation of subcultural symbols and meanings. Wheaton and Beal's (2003) research that explored the discourses of authentic identity and status among skateboarders (in the USA) and windsurfers (in the UK) noted that participants identified with magazine images of participants "just doing it" regardless of how realistic these images were. However, Wheaton and Beal (2003) argued these same images subtly implied that along with style and attitude, masculinity was also central to authenticity. Beal and Wilson (2004) also recognised that the predominately male-dominated skateboarding media reinforced gender inequality, by providing images, symbols, and other discourses of skateboarding masculinity.

Over the years, print skateboarding media has provided the discourse that defines skateboarding culture style, gender, ethnicity, age and sexuality (Atencio et al., 2009; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013; N. S. Williams, 2020). USA publications *Skateboarder Magazine, Thrasher Magazine* and *Transworld Skateboarding* all play a significant role in portraying and conveying authenticity to the global skateboarding community (N. S. Williams, 2020; Yochim, 2010). From 1980 to the 1990s VHS and later DVDs have also played a substantial role in providing the discourse for the skateboarding communities around the world (O'Connor, 2021; Snyder, 2012, 2017; N. S. Williams, 2020). Beal and Wilson (2004) claimed that at the time commercial videos were the primary source for conveying "authentic identity" to skateboarders, even more than print magazines.

More recently social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat and Instagram have further contributed to portraying authenticity for many action sport enthusiasts who can download the latest news, watch and upload their sport participation videos, and livestream action sport events (Thorpe, 2014, 2017; Wheaton, 2013). Similarly, skateboarders have embraced social media not only as markers of authenticity but also for the consumption of skateboarding media and interaction with other community members (Dupont, 2020; Jeffries et al., 2015; O'Connor, 2021; Smith, 2019; Snyder, 2017). The ability for skateboarders to create and upload their own verbal and visual content online via social media provides the most "authentic" type of media (Rinehart, 2008b; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019).

Usually driven by commercial sponsorship responsibilities, some top or popular action sport athletes, have created strong online profiles that have a large following (Thorpe, 2017; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019). Thorpe (2017) identified that the more popular social media profiles of female action sport athletes involved the hyper-sexualisation of themselves. For example, female Brazilian street skater Leticia Bufoni has embodied the "heterosexy" bad-girl identity that has been typically associated with and reinforced by action sport cultures (Thorpe, 2017; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). In mid-2022, Bufoni had 4.3 million followers on Instagram.

However, there has been a relatively rapid shift in the portrayal of female skateboarders as younger elite female skaters have become more prominent in the public eye due to their skateboarding ability rather than a sexualised persona (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Leading up to Tokyo 2020, 10 of the top World Skate ranked female skaters were under 16 years of age including pre-teens Rayssa Leal (Brazil) and Sky Brown (UK) who were 12 years old at the time. Both skaters have secured lucrative sponsorship deals with assorted surf and skate companies including the non-core skate brand Nike SB. Proficient in the use of social media, Leal and Brown have sizable TikTok and Instagram audiences

(Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Being both 14-year-olds at the time of writing (i.e. late 2022),

Leal had over 6.4 million Instagram followers and Brown had over 1.3 million. Their

sponsors recognise the value of marketing to similar-aged girls (and perhaps age

appropriateness) both Leal and Brown have acquired their following by wearing "cute" skirts

and dresses while skating, further reinforcing heteronormativity (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

Action Sport Industry Brands and Authenticity

The action sport industry and its commercial brands have also been identified as

playing a significant role in portraying discourses of "authentic" lifestyles to action sport

consumers. The social identity of individuals is partially created through the consumption of

specifically branded products that reflect the symbolic makers of subcultural membership

(Beal & Wilson, 2004; Rinehart, 2008b; Wheaton & Beal, 2003; Widdicombe & Wooffitt,

1990). Commercialism and corporate branding have traditionally been frowned upon by

action sport members as inauthentic (Beverland et al., 2010; Gagnon et al., 2018; Rinehart,

2008b; Tomlinson et al., 2005). For example, Wheaton (2000) observed that although core

members expressed disdain for the commercialisation of surf wear as mainstream fashion,

they still wore branded surf wear rejecting that they did so intentionally. Similar accounts

have been identified in skateboarding where those seen wearing branded clothing were

considered "posers" (Beal & Weidman, 2003; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Rinehart, 2008b).

However, by the 1990s there had been a shift in the anti-commercial attitude. Rinehart

(2008b) suggested that skateboarders took the lead in providing social capital through brand

association by creating niche-market products during the 1980s.

By the 1990s the larger corporate brands had taken over, leaving younger

skateboarders only knowing skateboarding as being "branded" (Rinehart, 2008b). Earlier,

Beal and Wilson (2004) had noticed this shift during the 1990s claiming that increased appeal

and high consumption of branded skateboarding products had resulted in them becoming

legitimate symbolic markers of one's authenticity. Beal and Wilson concluded that skateboarders are ambivalent to commercialism, as it contradicts the authentic values of skateboarding, yet they are reliant on commercial processes to portray authenticity, at least to some extent. Snyder's (2012, 2017) studies on professional skateboarders in Los Angeles, USA also identified how some top skaters seek sponsorship deals to support their skating careers. While attempting to gain sponsorship to create careers was seen as counter-culture and selling out, it was deemed acceptable as long as the skater is doing so for the love of skateboarding (Snyder, 2017; Yochim, 2010).

Skateboarding's relationship with commercial culture is complex as skaters are not completely against it but at the same time, it forms one of the prominent cultural skateboarding discourses (Lombard, 2010; Yochim, 2010). Recognising this, some inauthentic commercial businesses have attempted to position their organisations, brands and products as being authentic to appeal to youth and subcultural consumers (Alexander, 2009; Beverland, 2005b, 2005a; Gundlach & Neville, 2012; Hornskov, 2007; Kates, 2004). However, corporate strategies to authenticate (or legitimate) such commodities can prove challenging (B. Edwards & Corte, 2010; L. Edwards, 2010; Gundlach & Neville, 2012; Wheaton, 2007a). Suchman (1995) for instance, warned that often legitimation strategies by organisations can be met with scepticism by their stakeholders subsequently having the opposite effect. An issue for "authentic" or "niche" action sport brands is that as the sport starts to become more profitable and less niche or behave more commercially, they run the risk of becoming illegitimate, or rather, losing authenticity (B. Edwards & Corte, 2010; Giannoulakis, 2016; Howell, 2005). The Olympic inclusion of some action sports including skateboarding has raised concerns regarding the loss of authenticity and "mainstreaming" of their sport as the Games are observed as being inauthentic (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2019a; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

Rinehart (2000) noted that corporate authentication strategies often take the form of sponsorship and endorsement of action sport events and athletes. Nonetheless, attempts to authenticate a brand or product that does not match the action sport's cultural values can be seen as exploitation or selling out (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Howell, 2008; Merkelsen, 2011; Rinehart, 2000). Similarly, Bennett and Lachowetz (2004) when examining the sponsorship of action sport events to younger audiences noted two important considerations: (a) marketers need to be sure that their brand and product is perceived as "cool" and "authentic" by the intended audience, and, (b) event organisers need to ensure that potential sponsors are perceived as authentic by the intended audience.

The advent of mega-sports events and media channels such as the X-Games and Red Bull channels have had a major impact on how the commercialisation of action sport is perceived. Howell (2001) illustrated how skateboarders originally rejected the authenticity of the X-Games because skateboarding magazines and professional skaters were averse to the events. Howell, however, argued that even though X-Games professional skaters played down their participation by claiming they were only interested in the prize purse, they in effect unwittingly authenticated the event and its participation. Similarly, Beal and Wilson (2004) argued that top skateboarders gained their legitimacy from professionalism and mega-events, subsequently authenticating professional skateboarding and competing for prize money. After the advent of the X-Games, Beal and Wilson found that commercial interests were among the core values of the younger skateboarders in their research.

Rinehart (2008b) argued that ESPN had ultimately brought action sports into the mainstream, but still managed to retain their authenticity. ESPN renamed action sports as "extreme sports" and strategy marketed the X-Games to appeal to youth. According to Rinehart (2008b), "The meta-message for youthful consumers of extreme or action sports is that they are aligned with mainstream sporting practices, while simultaneously rejecting

mainstream sporting values. They still see themselves as rebellious while consuming brands

cum lifestyle" (p. 78). Lombard (2010) also identified that due to the X-Games, a whole

generation of skateboarders has grown up with highly commercialised mega-events,

contributing to their indifference to skateboarding's commercialisation.

Kunz et al. (2016) identified how Red Bull which was founded in 1984, had grown

successfully by aligning itself with numerous action sports that they claimed exhibited the

"best practice for sport-related branded entertainment" (p. 534) to meet consumer's needs.

Thorpe (2017) explained how Red Bull has successfully become closely associated with

youth culture through creating and organising over 90 different extreme sport events globally.

The energy drink manufacturer has further successfully contributed to its authenticity by

successfully sponsoring top action sport athletes via social media and print platforms, and the

development and selling of extreme sport videos, while also maintaining a highly popular

YouTube channel. In doing so, Thorpe (2017) claims that Red Bull has changed the

traditional model of brand advertising by proactively taking control of some action sports

through the establishment and promotion of specialist events. Clearly, authenticity (i.e.

cultural legitimacy) is a key consideration for any action sport organisation at any level.

Conclusions

This literature review suggests that there is a need to investigate the legitimacy of

existing and future federated structures for sport (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006; N. King, 2016;

Shilbury, 2000; Shilbury et al., 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). Research is therefore

required to identify and understand legitimate institutional forms that may be beneficial for

action sports (e.g. Gagnon et al., 2018; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Tomlinson et al., 2005;

Turner, 2017; H. Walker et al., 2005). However, existing work on the "legitimacy" of sport

federations is limited with only a few studies focused on traditional sports (e.g. Phelps &

Kent, 2010; Stewart et al., 2005; Waugh et al., 2014). While critical sport scholars are increasingly interested in the processes and politics regarding the Olympic inclusion of action sports including skateboarding (e.g. Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019b, 2019a; Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018a, 2018b, 2021), less focus has been placed on the roles of sport federations, or the processes and politics towards legitimate (and "authentic") structures as perceived by their stakeholders and communities.

Apart from a few examples that have focused on the IOC's strategy for imparting governance of some action sports (e.g. Batuev & Robinson, 2019b, 2019a; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), only a few focussed-on skateboarding at the international level (e.g. Batuev et al., 2020; Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2018b, 2021). Therefore, there appears to be limited research that has focused on the umbrella governance of action sports in general. Additionally, Kellett and Russell (2009) argued that research on the action sport sector is needed to further understand the existing structure as it is largely unknown. In the NZ context, apart from the work on parkour, surfing, and skateboarding (e.g. Collins, 2021; Puddle, 2019, 2021; Puddle et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), there appears to be no work in this area. This research seeks to explore the development of a new national governing structure for the sport in Aotearoa and the perceptions of skateboarding associations and organisations.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This research sought to explore and document the views of various skateboarding-related stakeholders regarding the development of a new governing structure for skateboarding in New Zealand. In this chapter, I discuss the research philosophy of social constructionism and the interpretative and ethnographic perspectives that underpinned this project. Then I explain the qualitative research design, data collection and modes of analysis. Finally, I discuss potential limitations, issues of validity and reliability and ethical considerations.

Research Philosophy: Social Constructionism and Interpretivism

In this section, I discuss the research philosophy underpinning this project, namely, social constructionism and interpretivism, and their complementary research methods of qualitative and inductive inquiry. I approached this research from the ontological position of social constructionism. Originally termed by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman (1967) and further extended by others such as Denzin (1971) and Lincoln and Guba (1985), social constructionism suggests that social realities and their properties are not naturally occurring, but rather constructed through the social interactions of social actors (i.e. individuals and groups) that inhabit the reality. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman (1967) suggested that social interactions that take place within the social reality provide the foundation for collective knowledge to develop. Not only does this collective knowledge help define the individual's social reality, but it also contributes to the commonly shared set of values and beliefs that the social actors use to construct truths and meanings. Through continued

adherence and re-enactment by actors, a reality's values and beliefs become embedded and institutionalised (P. L. Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Denzin, 1971; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Social constructionism or "constructionism" therefore suggests that our world is not singular, simple, or externally visible, but rather multifaceted compiled of many diverse, complex social realities that are best understood by their actors (Denzin, 1971; Gray, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Any shared meanings or values specific to a given social reality may only have relevance to its inhabitants, which "outsiders" may struggle to comprehend (Glense, 2016; Holstein & Gubrium, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As a result, constructionist researchers need to purposely and proactively immerse themselves into a social reality to gain first-hand accounts from its actors in attempts to understand and appreciate their perceptions of a phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

This is not to say that there is one singular "truth" or "meaning" maintained by a social reality's actors (Denzin, 1971; Glense, 2016). As Gray (2014) identified, social actors, construct their meanings based on different criteria and understanding of the same phenomenon. Additionally, social realities by nature are in a constant state of revision and modification through interactions between actors (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). To the constructionist researcher, all actors' accounts are equally valid interpretations of their reality and its collective "truths" and "meanings" (Gray, 2014; Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). Ellmer et al.'s (2019) review of the different types of approaches and methodologies that researchers had utilised in action sport research found that social constructionism was the most predominant view used.

Organisational fields such as the sport environment are highly institutionalised social realities that maintain and exhibit normative values, expectations, and behaviours that constrain and enable individualistic organisational or actor behaviour (Child, 1997;

DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Kraatz, 1998). Organisational fields (or "fields") refer to all those organisations and individuals that contribute to or constitute an industry or sector (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Furthermore, legitimacy and authenticity are also socially constructed perceptions that provide the foundation for the development of organisational institutions (Deephouse et al., 2018; P. Donnelly & Young, 1988; Suchman, 1995; Widdicombe & Wooffitt, 1990). Coming to this project as an "outsider" with little to no experience of skateboarding globally or in Aotearoa, how it is structured or the sub-cultural environment of skateboarding communities, it was important to recognise that I may struggle to comprehend the social and cultural context that underpins the responses by participants.

Interpretivism

Although they hold differing epistemological views, interpretivism is commonly linked with constructionism as they both derive from the same ontology (Gray, 2014). That is, interpretivism also recognises the numerous cultural themes that underpin actor perceptions are diverse, complex, and, potentially (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Glense, 2016; Grant & Giddings, 2002; Miles et al., 2018). Constructionist researchers are commonly referred to as "interpretivists" (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Gray, 2014) who attempt to not only identify existing occurrences or situations (i.e. the "what"), they also seek to discover the underpinning reasons (i.e. the "why" and "how") for the phenomenon to exist (Yin, 2009). In an attempt to do so, interpretative research typically involves the collection and analysis of actors' opinions and experiences to ascertain any shared or distinct meanings that underpin their perceptions (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Glense, 2016; Grant & Giddings, 2002; Miles et al., 2018). Regarding the study of organisations, the interpretive approach recognises organisations and their culture as not pre-existing, but rather social realities constructed via the social interactions of their actors (Bryman & Bell, 2015), which in this research involved

individuals from governmental entities, nationals sport organisations, for-profit businesses, and philanthropic organisations.

Adopting an interpretive approach for this research was particularly useful for two main reasons. First, as participants were from differing organisations, mostly geographically separated, who are either directly interacting, or not, I needed to appreciate that any commonalities and nuances presented are contextualised by each participant's social reality, or rather their positioning in the institutional (i.e. skateboarding) cultural environment. Second, the interpretive approach was important given my lack of inside knowledge and experience as an outsider in this case. Taking an interpretivist position allowed participants to provide the social context or "colour" necessary for me to better understand the "truths" or "meanings" underpinning their perceptions. Thus, not only is interpretivist research usually considered subjective, it is normally qualitative, and, inductive as well (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Denzin, 1971; Glense, 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), with some similarities to ethnographic inquiry (see below).

Qualitative and Inductive Inquiry

Interpretative research usually presents itself as qualitative, where researchers attempt to immerse themselves in their cases to record in-depth and meaningful data from a small sample size (Gray, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative inquiry uses words and images to determine common themes and meanings that define conclusions rather than find social generalisations through numerical commonalities (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Patton, 2015). As Miles et al. (2018) affirmed, "Qualitative data are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of human processes" (p. 4). Therefore, there is a need to ensure that participants are selected based on those that have the most valuable information for the research (i.e. "purposeful" or "purposive sampling"). Patton (2015) explains that the importance of purposively selecting participants is to ensure, "information-rich cases are

those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose

of the research" (p. 230). Interpretivist research is also observed as being inductive as

hypothesises are not determined and tested; Instead, the researcher seeks to identify any

emerging patterns and relationships during data analysis (Gray, 2014; Hyde, 2000; Patton,

2015; Yin, 2009). Any generalisations or nuances identified during the qualitative inquiry of

a social phenomenon serve to provide fruitful explanations to further contribute to existing or

new theories (Hyde, 2000; Miles et al., 2018; Yin, 2009).

      The use of qualitative inquiry during my research was advantageous for documenting

and analysing participant accounts regarding the processes and politics of organising

skateboarding in Aotearoa. First, I was able to identify those potential participants that were

best suited to provide the insightful and relevant information that I needed to collect the

necessary data for this case (e.g. Patton, 2015). Second, the qualitative approach preserved

the social and historical contexts of this research's focus by capturing the "inside"

perspectives of participants (e.g. Miles et al., 2018) that are involved or have an interest in the

formal coordination of skateboarding in New Zealand (NZ). Third, the inductive approach

during data analysis allowed for any commonalities, and nuances or differences provided by

participants' accounts to be identified from which I could draw generalisations or identify

further topics to pursue (e.g. Bryman & Bell, 2015; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Questioning and

data analysis are discussed in more detail later (see Data Analysis).

Ethnographic Enquiry

      Having origins in anthropology and sociology, ethnography is a qualitative research

method in the study of social settings (Goulding, 2005; Greene, 2014; Hellawell, 2006).

Ethnography is the process of writing ("graphy") about people and cultures ("ethno"; Bryman

& Bell, 2015; Goulding, 2005). Reality is only what actors know, their experiences, meanings

and how they make sense of their world, and they will act based on the meanings that they

attribute to their acts, and the acts of others (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Goulding, 2005; Rubin, 1982). Therefore, any responses to questions by actors regarding a phenomenon are underpinned by the culture of their social reality (Patton, 2015; Rosen, 1991). Ethnographic inquiry attempts to comprehend the personal accounts of social actors through the immersion of the researcher into a social reality to experience the underlying culture (Goulding, 2005; Gray, 2014; Rosen, 1991). Regardless of claims that recording numerous actors' accounts can help present the social reality's collective or "world-view", it is still important to recognise that individual experiences and meanings are still unique to that actor (Patton, 2015). As Paul Atkinson and Martyn Hammersley (1998) explained, ethnographic enquiry is inductive as the researcher seeks to explore the various actors' accounts regarding a phenomenon and experience the collective culture and logic of the social reality. Ethnographic research often employs diverse data collections methods such as: engaging in interviews and discussions with social actors, observations and analysis of individuals and groups, document examination, field note taking; and reflecting on the researcher's participation in the social setting (P. Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Goulding, 2005; Gray, 2014).

One strand of ethnography that is an effective research method in the study of organisations is organisational ethnography. Rosen (1991) identified that organisational ethnography differs from other forms of organisational research as it considers the culture of organisations rather than organisational processes and outcomes. Additionally, organisational ethnography explores the social implications that affect organisational behaviour (Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013; Neyland, 2008; Rosen, 1991). Organisational members (e.g. owners, managers, staff, volunteers) are observed as interacting in a social reality (i.e. the organisation) that is centred around specialised activities to meet strategic and operational objectives (Rosen, 1991). Therefore, the social relations that occur inside organisations differ from those that occur in other areas of an actor's social life (Rosen, 1991). As in other areas

of ethnographic inquiry, the ethnography of organisations collects data through observations, document collection, narratives, and lived experiences (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013; Neyland, 2008). However, often the ethnographer will be, or become, an employee or volunteer to explore the insider experience of the day-to-day operation of an organisation (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013; Neyland, 2008). In so doing, a detailed information-rich account can be developed of an organisation (or group), its members, and the social, cultural and political issues at play (Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013; Neyland, 2008).

Thorpe and Wheaton (2013) identified that action sport researchers have readily adopted ethnographic inquiry to better understand and explain cultural elements of sport cultures. Regarding previous research on skateboarding communities and organisations, scholars have also used ethnographic enquiry to try to comprehend a sub-cultural environment (e.g. Atencio et al., 2009; Beal, 1995; Beal & Weidman, 2003; Dupont, 2014, 2020; Dupont & Nichols, 2021; Jeffries et al., 2015; Kelly et al., 2005; Pomerantz et al., 2004; Porter, 2003; Snyder, 2012, 2017; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018a, 2018b; Willing & Shearer, 2015; Yochim, 2010).

In addition to the interpretivist view, the ethnographic inquiry aspect of this research allowed participants to identify and discuss their perceptions of experiences regarding the NZ skateboarding scene from their own cultural and organisational perspectives. For example, a key benefit of this approach was that participants were able to provide their perceptions based on their personal experiences in the skateboarding culture and industry. New topics and issues that I was previously unaware of often came to light providing other avenues of investigation to pursue. During data collection, it was apparent that participants from different organisations and/or geographical locations tended to have different perceptions of topics which had relevance specifically to their organisation and stakeholders in their region.

Additionally, the proactive approach of purposive and snowball sampling meant that those I selected for interviews would provide the "information-rich" accounts needed for this research. I found that observing skaters during organisational meetings, skateboarding events, and, casually skating at local skate parks, allowed me to observe the culture of the NZ skateboarding scene which further contextualised my understanding of other data. Similar to interpretivism, ethnographic inquiry is also qualitative and inductive.

Research Design and Methods

I drew on several qualitative methods of inquiry within the broadly ethnographic approach: semi-structured interviews, participant observation (including maintaining a research diary), document and other secondary analysis. These are discussed below.

A Case Study of Skateboarding New Zealand

As Skateboarding New Zealand (SBNZ) was the most central organisation guiding the institutionalisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa at this time, I felt that it was necessary to focus on this organisation, providing a case study of the organisation's evolution and development. Yin (2009) defined the case study as a "…empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 18). Case studies are focused, in-depth, and use multiple accounts of the same case phenomenon" (Hyde, 2000; Yin, 2009, 2017). It allows the researcher to explore individuals or organisations, through their simple to complex interventions and interactions, relationships, communities, or programmes (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Therefore, sport researchers studying sporting organisations have often used case studies in the study of organisations, organisational networks, and, perceptions of legitimacy (e.g. Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019; Shilbury et al., 2016; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Waugh et al., 2014; Wheaton & O'Loughlin,

2017). Using the case study method, I was able to provide a narrative of SBNZ's rationale for its establishment in 2016, and the political issues, struggles, and developments that it has experienced to late-2022.

Case study data collection often draws on qualitative tools such as participant interviews, documents and other secondary data, participant observations, and physical artefacts (Yin, 2009, 2017). Although these are also the data collection methods used in ethnographic methods, there are some differences between case studies and ethnographic research. Ethnography explores cultural phenomena by documenting the relationship between people and their social environments, whereas case studies investigate a single phenomenon, event, situation, incident or individual by recording the inside knowledge of the actors involved (Cohen, 2003; Harwati, 2019). Additionally, case studies do not require the researcher to become immersed in the social reality as ethnography does, rather they can rely on the accounts provided by research participants of a specific case (Cohen, 2003; Harwati, 2019). However, organisational ethnography appears to find a common ground between ethnography and the case study. Through immersion (e.g. employment, volunteering, or similar), the researcher can observe and experience the day-to-day function and culture of an organisation as an "insider" (Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013; Neyland, 2008; Rosen, 1991).

Through becoming a volunteer in SBNZ, and adopting an organisational ethnographic approach, I was able to observe and document some of the cultural and political tensions and issues experienced by the organisation and its staff, and how these changed over time. However, this 'data' was also important in developing my understanding and interpretations of these skateboarders' views, and the social values and meanings that underpin their experiences (see: Hyde, 2000; Neyland, 2008; Rosen, 1991; Yin, 2009). In sum, the ethnographic approach allowed me to construct a focused case study of the evolution and development of NZ's national skateboarding governing body.

Research Participant Criteria and Identification

I used two strategies primarily to recruit interview participants: (a) purposive sampling, and (b) snowball (or "referral") sampling. Purposive sampling ensures that participants are suitably experienced and/or educated to provide the necessary relevant and detailed data needed for this research (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Patton, 2015; Suri, 2011). Participant selection was based on one or more of the following criteria: (a) being from an NZ-based skateboarding-related organisation with an interest or influence in the provision of NZ skateboarding or its community, (b) being from a central governmental and national sport governing bodies with an interest or influence in the provision of NZ-skateboarding or its community, and/or (c) having a direct or indirect interest or influence in the institutionalisation of the NZ skateboarding.

Initially, I drew from my personal contacts including individuals from NZ national sport governing bodies and an SBNZ committee member. My secondary data scan (discussed later) of print, online, and video content was also useful for identifying potential participants. Snowball sampling that also allows for participant identification via referrals (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Patton, 2015; Suri, 2011) proved to be extremely effective. Recommendations and referrals by my academic supervisors and past interviewees helped to identify several other potential participants. As I am a "recreational" and "non-core skater", participant referrals were particularly effective in "opening doors" and creating trust among other skateboarding participants.

The number of research participants was not predetermined. Rather, the focus was covering areas of importance and the key stakeholders involved. Additionally, I was not aware of which formal/informal organisations or individuals were involved or had an interest (or "stake") in the NZ skateboarding scene but imagined that these may include: Other

skateboarding associations; small skateboarding community groups; commercial skateboarding brands and businesses; local, national, or international sport or skateboarding governing bodies; city council representatives; or, other individuals considered relevant to the case (see Table 1 below).

Table 1

Research Participants

	No.	Approx. Age	Gender	Other Skateboarding Industry Interests[1]
Skateboarding New Zealand				
Committee Members	5	mid-20s to early-50s	All Male	1 x Event Owner & Organiser 2 x Skate School Owners 1 x Skateboarding Media
Regional Skateboarding Association/Group Committee Members				
Incl. Taranaki, Wellington, Palmerston North, Dunedin, Christchurch, Nelson Regions	7	mid-20s to early-50s	6 x Males 1 x Women	
Skateboarding-Related Businesses				
Skate School Owners	2	early-20s to mid-50s	Mixed	
Event Owner and Organiser	2	mid-30s to mid-40s	Mixed	
Wellbeing Organisation	1	mid-20s	Women	
Event and Athlete Sponsorship	1	mid-40s	Women	
Skatepark Developer	1	mid-40s	Male	
Mainstream Sport Governing Bodies				
Skate NZ	1	Committee Member		
NZ Olympic Committee	1	Operations Officer		
Sport NZ	4	2 x Young People Consultant 1 x Investment Coordinator 1 x National Events Advisor		

Note. [1]Most SBNZ Committee Members and RSA/RSGs participants had other Skateboarding Industry Interests. These businesses are not noted in the Skateboarding-Related Businesses section and remain separate from those identified there.

In total, 25 formal interviews were conducted (well beyond initial expectations), as well as numerous informal conversions and observations. Other than those organisations specifically identified in Table 1, at least one representative from the following organisation participated in this study:

- Regional Skateboarding Associations: Wellington Skateboarding Association; Taranaki Skateboarding Association; Dunedin Skateboarding Association; Palmerston North City Skateboarding Community; Christchurch Skateboarding Community Group (pseudonym)

- Skateboarding-Related Businesses: Manual Magazine; Bowlzilla, Mangawhai Bowl Jam; Girls Skate NZ, Young Guns Skate School; OnBoard Skate.

- Skateboarding-Related Philanthropic Organisations: Yeah Gnar; Wellness Riders (Manaaki Fit); Skate School Nelson.

However, it is important to note that to varying degrees, most of the organisations involved are boundary-spanning, interacting in the Public Non-Profit, For-Profit, and Informal sport sub-sectors (see: Hoye et al., 2015; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). For example, some skate schools are businesses whereas others are philanthropic, nonetheless, both often work with local city councils to achieve social and community development objectives. Additionally, while Regional Skateboarding Associations provide governance presence for skateboarding for their regions, they tend to act more philanthropically as advocates for their respective communities (see Chapter Five).

The majority of male skateboarding community participants were Pākehā (NZ white European) aged between the mid-20s to early 50s. There were 17 cis-male participants, with 14 from NZ skateboarding-related organisations, and four from MSGBs such as Sport NZ and Skate NZ. There were eight cis-female participants, six from NZ skateboarding-related organisations and two from MSGBs (i.e. Sport NZ and NZOC), predominantly Pākehā and

aged similarly to male participants. However, the participant's gender, sexuality, and ethnicity were not specified during interviews as it was not the focus of this research, nor was self-identified during the ethics application. Given how highly connected participants from the NZ skateboarding community are, I am reluctant to provide such specific participant details at the risk of breaking anonymity.

Participant Recruitment

Initial contact with potential participants was via email, phone calls, social media messaging, and, occasionally by email (including participant referrals) explaining who I was, what my research was on, and that I would like their opinions on the topic. Rather than creating possible disinterest with potential participants through such formal communication with attached documentation, I felt that establishing a connection first would be more advantageous. If I had been referred by another research participant, I would "name-drop" the referee, or in some instances, they would have already made some initial contact for me. If participants expressed interest, I then emailed them the Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form, and, if requested, the list of indicative interview questions (see Appendices B, C, and D). An option was provided for the participants on the Participant Information Sheet to contact me or the Chief Research Supervisor if they wanted any further clarification or information about the study.

If the potential participant had not responded within two weeks, I would follow up with a second email to gauge their interest. In most cases, I would not contact potential participants more than three times to avoid causing any annoyance, concluding that they were not interested in participating in this research project. Once participants had expressed interest in meeting with me, a time and date to meet either in person or via Skype or Zoom were organised. Nonetheless, securing appointments with a few individuals who had initially expressed interest proved somewhat challenging. Consequently, there were a few key gaps in

participant voices such as commercial brands from the NZ skateboarding industry and High

Performance Sport New Zealand (discussed later).

Data Collection

Data collection commenced in November 2018 with the bulk of the interviews

completed by January 2020. However, online research for online content, media reports,

observations and follow-up interviews continued until November 2022. The collection

methods I employed were secondary data scans, semi-structured interviews, participant

observations, and maintaining a research diary. These are discussed next.

Secondary Data Scan

To provide a more contextual understanding of the skateboarding industry and culture

in Aotearoa, I began by exploring publicly available information relevant to this study which

included relevant websites, online news and print articles, magazines, DVDs, online videos,

social media pages and other forms of accessible documentation. Some examples of

commonly used sources for document analysis were:

- International and national skateboarding magazines: *Thrasher* (international),
  Transworld Skateboarding (international), *Manual* (NZ), *SLAM Skateboarding*
  (Australia)

- International and national organisational websites: World Skate, Skate NZ, SBNZ,
  Skate Australia, Australian Skateboarding Federation (ASF), Skateboard GB

- International and national event and facilitator websites: Street League
  Skateboarding (SLS), Vans Park Series, Dew Tour, The Boardr, Bowlzilla,
  Mangawhai Bowl Jam

- Governmental agency websites: NZOC, Sport NZ, HPSNZ, New Zealand
  Companies Office

- Various organisational and individual skateboarder's public social media pages (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) as well as joining several NZ skateboarding Facebook groups

- Any relevant and recent news in NZ mainstream and popular media, such as Stuff, News Room, New Zealand Herald, organisational and commercial news feeds

- Visual media: DVDs, YouTube, live streaming and post-event coverage of various competitions and events, related to international and NZ skateboarding

- Frequent "general" Google Chrome searches. A few examples of search terms that I used are:

  - New Zealand skateboarding; Skateboarding Tokyo 2020

  - Various organisational names (e.g. SBNZ, Skate NZ, Wellington Skateboarding Association, Taranaki Skateboarding Association)

  - Names of NZ skateboarders

  - Often using the abbreviation "NZ" or a regional name (e.g. Auckland, Christchurch, Hamilton, Taupo) with the word "skateboarding".

Due to the lack of available primary data regarding the sportisation and institutionalisation of skateboarding, especially in the NZ context, the collection of secondary data research and analysis was extremely useful in several ways. First, mainstream media provided detail of the political, organisational and administrative issues leading up to Tokyo 2020. World Skate's website and media releases played a significant role in keeping up with new developments, such as competition rules, skateboarding events, policy changes, key people, and Olympic skateboarder rankings. NZ mainstream media also assisted in providing context related to skateboarding in Aotearoa which they felt was newsworthy. In contrast, online niche skateboarding media sources provided a "skateboarding view" of these current developments that do not feature in mainstream media news in NZ and globally. Niche media

is the voice of culture and the portrayer of authenticity for subcultural communities including skateboarding (Atencio et al., 2009; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013; N. S. Williams, 2020). Additionally, skateboarding niche media assisted me in gaining an understanding of skateboarding culture and competitive skateboarding.

Second, although limited, secondary data provided background context about the historical and current NZ skateboarding scene, the key individuals and organisations involved, and, and other recent news that might be relevant to this research. Due to the lack of published material, the historical elements of NZ skateboarding were explored via DVDs, various websites, YouTube videos, and blogs. Some key sources for the historical context included; Moore's (2006) DVD No More Heroes, and The New Zealand Government's website Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. The Sport NZ website was also useful for providing information relating to sport and physical activity and could be related to government policy and skateboarding-related themes.

Third, compared to the limited primary data that was available, the secondary data sources were more current and up-to-date. Mainstream and niche skateboarding media, sport governing body news releases related to the fast-moving developments leading up to Tokyo 2020 and other skateboarding-related matters compared to academic works and textbooks based on research often done a few years prior. Governmental websites were also particularly useful. For instance, The New Zealand Companies Office website helped identify previous and current formal skateboarding-related associations. Territorial Authority websites belonging to Regional/City Councils were useful for media reports and documents relating to skateboarding and skatepark developments in their regions.

Fourth, document analysis also included the analysis of any organisational documents that were provided to me by participants. Yin (2009) claimed that information collected from documents is complimentary for case studies for identifying research questions, verifying and

75

refining data, and, synthesising findings with the real world. Documentary analysis continued throughout the research which was used to supplement and verify data collected as well as staying relevant with organisational or governance developments (especially regarding Tokyo 2020) skateboarding internationally and in Aotearoa.

Lastly, the online research about the NZ skateboarding scene also assisted in identifying potential research participants. Online mainstream media articles and social media pages proved useful for identifying skateboarding organisations/groups, skate schools, influential individual NZ skaters, skatepark projects and developments and skateboarding competitions/events. Social media such as Facebook and Instagram were useful for identifying existing and new NZ skate schools and skateboarding-related groups and their developments.

Semi-Structured Interviews

I used semi-structured interviews for this research for two reasons. Firstly, any pre-existing knowledge or other information that I had acquired during document analysis or conversations could be introduced during the semi-structured approach for further development or clarification by participants (e.g. Bryman & Bell, 2015; Heaton, 2004). Secondly, semi-structured interviews allowed participants (and me also) the flexibility to discuss topics in further detail if needed in addition to providing the facility for new topics to be introduced if they felt they needed to be addressed (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Miles et al., 2018). A list of indicative interview questions was used when conducting the interviews (see Appendix D), however, these indicative questions only served as a guide. As I progressed through the interviews, I also identified interesting or commonly expressed topics or issues being put forward by participants which needed further exploration. I would then add this to the list of indicative questions for future interviews.

In most instances, I tried to conduct interviews in person at a mutually agreed neutral place. Geographic locations were: Auckland, Canterbury, Manawatu, Otago, Queenstown-Lakes, Taranaki, Tasman and Wellington. However, some interviews were conducted via Skype or Zoom for the convenience or preference of the participant (e.g. due to time constraints, the practicality of travel, and COVID-19 lockdowns). While COVID-19 lockdowns were a major factor in the ability to meet face-to-face with some interviewees, the majority of the interviews had been conducted prior to lockdowns. With prior interviewee consent, interviews were recorded with a combination of Android audio recording or Skype/Zoom video recording and personal note-taking.

Interviews generally involved a single participant, except for one interview where three participants from one skateboarding-related organisation were interviewed simultaneously at their request. Most participants were only interviewed once, however several who were identified as particularly important to this case (i.e. SBNZ and Skate NZ) were interviewed several times at different stages throughout the data collection period. There was no set time length for interviews, but they typically ranged from 50 to 90 minutes. I later transcribed interview recordings which were then sent to the participants for their verification and approval to preserve data validity.

Participant Observation

Participant observations are considered a central ethnographic research method (P. Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Rosen, 1991). Observation of participants in their natural setting can assist in determining the cultural meanings that underpin the community and its behaviour regardless of what they have verbally portrayed (P. Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Bryman & Bell, 2015; Yin, 2017). Patton (2015) argued that there are limitations to how much can be learnt from a participant's verbal responses whereas the full complexity of a given phenomenon requires immersion and observation by the researcher. Gray (2014) also

argued that observations made by the researcher provide "trustworthiness" of accounts provided by participants.

Participant observation of the NZ skateboarding community and organisational meetings contributed considerably to this research. My observations were "unstructured" (Bryman & Bell, 2015) in the sense that I had no predetermined criteria, except to observe and record as much detail of participant behaviour as possible to be able to create a detailed narrative later. My observations at several local skate parks were useful for examining the cultural elements of the behaviour of skateboarders on the informal or "street level". I attended several competitions and festivals around the country such as Bowlzilla, Mangawhai Bowl Jam, and the New Zealand Skateboarding Nationals. These provided the opportunity to observe the NZ skateboarding community, and the various types of individuals that contribute to it; the brands that associated themselves with the events; how the competitors interacted with each other and participated; who constituted the crowd and their behaviour.

Participant observation also plays a significant role in ethnographic investigation of organisations (Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013; Neyland, 2008; Rosen, 1991). Additionally, Yin (2017) identified that the ability to make observations is one of the most distinctive features of case study research. Garsten and Nyqvist (2013) premised that participant observation is useful for understanding the cultural considerations regarding the views and behaviours of organisational directors and managers. Through my attendance at SBNZ AGMs and SGMs, I was able to observe not only the organisational progress of the governing body but also the behaviour of SBNZ committee members and those others in attendance. For instance, attending SBNZ meetings allowed me to witness closely those attending the meetings; the gender, age and ethnicity of those in attendance, how they interacted with each other, and what issues they perceived as important. I could also identify topics that I was previously unaware of, and any possible tensions regarding organisational strategy and other

stakeholders. I observed how the formalities were undertaken or in some cases "endured" and how attendees responded to my presence (being an unknown "outsider") at the meeting. I initially recorded my observations as written field notes in my research diary during and straight after meetings. However, due to COVID-19 lockdowns, SBNZ meetings moved online via ZOOM making "visual" observations of attendees more difficult. Nonetheless, I was still able to observe the conversations and interactions that were undertaken during these meetings.

Research diaries are central to ethnographic enquiry; They are a form of data collection that provide a log of research activities and field notes, while also allowing for the researcher's observations and thoughts to be recorded (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2009). I maintained and regularly updated a research diary throughout this study. In this diary, I created a timeline of events by chronologically documenting my interactions with participants, important events, and, observations, which further supplement this collected data. Where appropriate, field notes were eventually typed into electronic format to facilitate uploading to NVivo and subsequent coding. Additionally, my reflections regarding interviews and observations, as well as my other thoughts and brainstorming of the research project were also documented in the diary which later served for providing reflexivity and to enhance data richness.

Data Analysis

I conducted a thematic analysis of the collected data. Initially, qualitative data is typically unidentifiable or unclear, requiring systematic inductive analysis to be quantified as "themes" for further exploration and categorisation (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Bryman & Bell, 2015; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2015). As suggested by Miles et al. (2018), prior to analysis I had developed a few broad predetermined categories (i.e. priory codes) based on

my review of the literature, and conversations with my supervisors. These themes were: national governance, regional governance, organising NZ skateboarding, organisational issues and challenges, skateboarding and the Olympics, governmental support, Skate NZ/SBNZ tensions, and skater/non-skater governance tensions. I allowed flexibility for the categories to be altered or dismissed if found redundant, and for additional categories to be added when identified. Through the comparison of differing participant accounts, common themes relating to the case were identified (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Miles et al., 2018; Patton, 2015; Yin, 2017). Categorisation and comparison in this manner were useful to identify any perceptual commonalities and distinctions between the participants and their organisations. This is not to say that any singular themes or cases were discounted, rather are important to further contextualise the case's social setting (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Miles et al., 2018).

The data management tool NVivo 12 helped with this inductive approach. NVivo is a useful and time-efficient tool for sorting, coding, and, analysing qualitative data (Bryman & Bell, 2015) and is used extensively by scholars of sport management and social research (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019b; Gerke et al., 2018; Jeanes et al., 2019; Kellett & Russell, 2009). NVivo 12 was particularly useful for the ability to integrate data from multiple transcripts including other sources such as observations, documentation, and, social media content. As themes were identified, they were coded in NVivo 12 by creating nodes and categorised according to the identified theme, its relevance, and, its source transcript. Two NVivo 12 features that I used a lot under the "Explore" tab/function were the "Word Frequency" and "Text Search" options which helped provide an initial point of exploration for similarities in other transcripts. For example, during data analysis, these tools helped search transcripts when I had "eureka moments", and I was unsure who and/or where these thoughts originated from. Using both these Explore tab tools, I could search to find the exact

source, its place in the transcript, or if any other interviewees made similar comments (see Appendix E for thematic mapping).

      I did find the thematic analysis challenging. Once I had started, I found numerous other themes and subthemes became apparent with many sub-themes falling into two or more theme categories. Furthermore, during the analysis of participants' accounts, new themes were identified. At times the multiplicity of themes felt a bit overwhelming. Accordingly, I only recognised some themes during the writing of the empirical chapters. Identification of these themes occasionally resulted in the restructuring and rearrangement of the material of the empirical chapter several times to present and discuss the research's findings and their implications.

Research Positionality

      Notions of positionality are derived from assumptions of the degree of inclusiveness of an individual concerning the context of a social community, organisation, or participant group (R. Berger, 2015; Merriam et al., 2001; Rich & Misener, 2017; Rowe, 2014). Those that are members of a social community (or participants per se) are considered insiders whereas those that are not, "outsiders" (P. Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Pavlidis & Olive, 2014; Rosen, 1991). This is also true for action sport research (Beal & Wilson, 2004; Howell, 2005; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Turner, 2017; Wheaton, 2002, 2013). Important positionality considerations include aspects of age, ethnicity, gender, class, education, social identity and political views, which may or may not also change over time (Denzin, 1971; Merriam, 1995; Rowe, 2014). Therefore, positionality is a social positioning (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) which Merriam (1995) simply put as, "…determined by where one stands in relation to 'the other'''" (p. 412). Considerations of positionality are considered essential for qualitative research due

to the immersion and closeness of the researcher with research participants and their social setting (R. Berger, 2015; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

The positionality of the researcher is often considered in terms of either being a "participating" member of the social reality in question (an "insider") or a "non-participating observer" (i.e. an "outsider"; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The insider/outsider binary argues that the insider-researcher is better equipped in terms of gaining access, asking more meaningful questions, and having a stronger understanding of a social setting's culture compared to the "outsider-researcher" who does not (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Hellawell, 2006; Merriam et al., 2001). Similar arguments prevail regarding the study of action sport cultures which emphasise that only those that partake in the sport (i.e. the insiders) can understand the important beliefs and meanings maintained by their community members (Pavlidis & Olive, 2014; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2013; Wheaton, 2013).

However, while insider research is common in the action sports literature, outsider research has also contributed greatly to this dominion (e.g. Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; B. Edwards & Corte, 2010; Giannoulakis, 2016). The outsider-researcher can provide a fresh perspective on a social reality that may otherwise appear normal, natural, and nondescript to an insider (R. Berger, 2015; Gioia et al., 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). What an outsider "sees" is as valid as an insider's view, it is just a different perspective (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Merriam et al., 2001; Pavlidis & Olive, 2014). Lincoln and Guba (1985) recognised "the claim that it takes an 'insider' to get to the 'real' data is not ethically compelling" (p. 274). It is increasingly argued that it does not matter where the researcher "sits" (i.e. inside or outside) as long as they reflect on "who" they are and what impact that has on the research (e.g. Fletcher, 2010; Pavlidis & Olive, 2014; Wheaton, 2002; Woodward, 2008).

As an outsider-researcher (i.e. a non-skateboarder) I found being an outsider was advantageous as it provided the possibility of observing the institutional behaviour of

participants and the organisational field. To insiders, such observations can appear to be normal, natural, or, nondescript (R. Berger, 2015; Gioia et al., 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Gaining access and recording meaningful participant accounts, however, can prove challenging for the outsider-researcher, as insiders may distrust the researcher's intentions or perceived inability to understand the cultural considerations (R. Berger, 2015; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Merriam et al., 2001). To build trust during interviews, I would start by asking if participants would like to know more about myself, my background, why I was interested in the research, and my research intentions. I also felt that the preparation that I undertook before starting interviews assisted me greatly.

Being recognised as an outsider, I found that interviewees would take the time to explain their views in detail so that I could understand the implications of their comments. Additionally, my outsider status gave some interviewees some security to vent their concerns and opinions as I was not part of the skateboarding community. For instance, several past and current SBNZ committee members I meet with regularly commented on how therapeutic our meetings were as they could safely vent their frustrations. I noticed several times, through participants' subtle reactions and their comments that they were surprised with the degree of knowledge that I had of skateboarding internationally including NZ, its cultural aspects, and its past and present history.

However, there were several meetings with skateboarding and roller sport interviewees that I felt that they were being cautious and calculated with their responses and where I experienced mistrust. For example, in one of my first interviews, I was asked to provide some identification for myself. I showed my work and student identifications to verify I was an academic and a student. On another occasion, when I attended a SBNZ meeting, I was curiously asked by one attendee who I was, even though it was an open meeting. When I briefly explained the nature of my attendance and research, they seemed

uncomfortable and commented, "Witnessing history in the making", and then quickly crossed the room to start a conversation with another attendee. During one interview with several participants, they were also quite interested in who I was, why I was doing the research, and my intentions. I felt that they were quite guarded throughout the whole interview, and it felt quite awkward. Some other interviewees seemed a little bewildered that a non-skateboarder was interested in the topic and what was in it for me. However, more widely I felt that a good degree of trust was formed, and I still have a good rapport with some interviewees. However, I recognise that there may have been reluctance by some of those that I approached to participate in this research due to distrust of my intentions or ability to understand their position.

It is also important to note that researcher positionality is not fixed or constant, often changing throughout the duration of the study as understandings and experiences are relational (Fletcher, 2010; Pavlidis & Olive, 2014; Wheaton, 2002; Woodward, 2008). Often the insider/outsider binary is crossed by the researcher (Gray, 2014; Merriam, 1995; Rich & Misener, 2017), which I found evident as the research progressed. Regardless of my outsider status, as I started to develop relationships with participants, and the more I learnt about skateboarding, including doing a bit of skating myself, and, attending the occasional social situation with participants, I started to feel more like an insider at times. This developed a reasonable degree of trust in the relationships between myself and some participants that resulted in some information-rich accounts which may have not been provided otherwise. In summary, as Dwyer and Buckle (2009) argued, "The core ingredient is not insider or outsider status but an ability to be open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of one's research participants, and committed to accurately and adequately representing their experience" (p. 59). However, also underpinning the concept of researcher positionality are

notions of power and intentions (Merriam et al., 2001; Rowe, 2014), which I was able to manage to the best of my ability with the use of reflexivity.

Reflexivity

The concept of "reflexivity' is a useful qualitative research technique to instil dependability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Reflexivity identifies a continued effort by the researcher to reconsider their thoughts and actions regarding the context of any personal assumptions and biases (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Grant & Giddings, 2002; Merriam, 1995). During this research, it was important that I recognised and reflected on who I was, my background, and how any predetermined beliefs, values, or practices might cloud my judgement and misrepresent participant accounts. For instance, I am a middle-class, white European New Zealander/Pākehā (i.e. "white"), male, in my 50's, a lecturer of sport management and governance, and its institutional values, beliefs, and practice. Although I skated in the 1970s along with many other young New Zealanders at the time, I do not consider myself a skateboarder. However, I am a musician who has been involved in punk and alternative rock bands over the years, so I felt I had an appreciation of alternative subcultures, including skateboarding.

My research diary provided the foundation for reflexivity. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested maintaining a reflexive journal is a means of trustworthiness. As well as recording my field notes, any methodical thoughts or changes, "brainstorms", feedback and advice from my supervisors, I also noted any general thoughts or feelings that I experienced during and after interviews and observations. Reflecting on these diary entries, while considering my own life experiences, traits, values, and beliefs as described above, allowed me to consider my research positionality and any potential personal influences that might be impacting my opinions and conclusions. It was important for me to recognise that during

interviews and data collection, any conclusions that I formed could be coloured by my personal views, experiences or bias, nor to consider myself or convey to participants that I was an expert or practitioner of NZ skateboarding and its culture.

Regarding the positions of power during interviews, I did notice several potential levels of power imbalance. Firstly, in favour of the participant as I was reliant on their willingness to participate and provide honest and meaningful responses for my research. During interviews, I was very aware of providing assurances, trying to be polite and respectful of the participant and skateboarding in general, to make them feel at ease and confident of my intentions. Secondly, the power was in my favour, as the participant is reliant on me to record and report their responses accurately, they might fear that I may portray themselves, their organisation, or NZ skateboarding culture negatively. Consequently, I needed to consider that some participants may withhold information, or change some details in their responses to be perceived more favourably. Finally, there was power equity due to the potential mutual benefit from the participant's involvement in this research: (a) the participant wanted to share their story, and contribute to the development of their organisation and NZ skateboarding in general, and, (b) the participants contributed to my research project and study.

Credibility Considerations

I had an existing professional relationship with one SBNZ committee member for approximately 14 months before data collection. This relationship evolved out of my role as a lecturer in sport management. I made initial contact with the committee member in 2016 (also see Chapter One), and we continued to meet for advice, and I volunteered to help regarding the institutionalisation of NZ skateboarding and dealing with the MSGBs. This relationship was also noted in the research ethics application. Rather than providing any

ethical complications, this pre-existing relationship was advantageous as I was able to acquire some knowledge of the NZ skateboarding scene, and this relationship provided me access to SBNZ and NZ skateboarding community members, which may not have been otherwise possible.

Constructionists observe knowledge as a legitimate and essential tool for inquiry, as it provides the context of social realities for the researcher for determining insights and to form further hypothesises (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). So, in essence, I come into this research with some pre-existing knowledge of SBNZ and some of the tensions and struggles the organisation have been experiencing. I ensured that my relationship with the former SBNZ president was professional and that it was declared to other research participants before interviews where necessary. There were times when I was invited by participants to attend social occurrences such as having drinks and/or a meal with them. I initially declined these invitations as I felt during this research that interaction with participants in this manner was or could be perceived as a conflict of interest and crossing the "professional boundary". However, later I become more familiar with a few participants and I occasionally met with them socially, feeling this was appropriate.

Another credibility issue of consideration is that I was reliant on the personal motivations and willingness of possible participants to participate in this study. Subsequently, it could be argued that those who participated in this research were only those who either had "something to say", or, were favourably invested in the case. In most cases, however, I found that those that I had approached, were more than willing to contribute to this research. That said, it is important to identify that I did not intentionally approach or target any individual skaters themselves for their responses.

Bryman and Bell (2015) identified that negotiating access to closed/non-public social settings can prove challenging. The authors, however, offer several strategies which I tried to

employ when negotiating access: (a) clearly and honestly explaining the intentions, purpose, and, desired outcomes, of this research; (b) being honest about how much time interviews will take and the nature of the questions to be asked; (c) with their permission, I used referrals from my personal contacts or other research participants; (d) I took a "top-down" approach by going to the CEO or similar senior manager to gain their support; (e) used endorsement from a respected insider (e.g. the CEO of SBNZ); and (f) to offer a copy of the report to participants on completion of the research. I found Bryman and Bell's (2015) guidelines particularly useful for creating trust with research participants not only when negotiating access and during interviews, but also for gaining referrals to new potential participants.

Nonetheless, I recognise some potential participants mistrusted my intentions or ability to understand their cultural setting and were reluctant to participate. For instance, in my efforts to capture the voices and experiences of those in the skateboarding industry, I approached nine differing international and NZ commercial organisations that import, manufacture, and/or supply skateboards and equipment, to the NZ market as well as provide sponsorship for NZ skateboarders and events. Unfortunately, I was unable to secure interviews with any of these organisations. A sample response via email from an international skateboarding brand was typical: "Please know we have sent your request to our Marketing Department for further review. If they seek to contact you regarding your enquiry they will reach out directly". There was never any follow up contact from these organisations.

For the smaller NZ brands that I had contacted, the typical response was also no reply. For example, one NZ "core" skateboarding business owner who was a former professional skater did agree to a phone interview, but did not commit to a date or time, and then stopped responding to my contacts. Similarly, another former professional skater and business owner, who is still highly involved with the NZ skateboarding scene initially agreed then stopped communicating. I had heard from a secondary source that he mistrusted my intentions and

was concerned about protecting his business interests. In sum, although I felt that I had gained a certain degree of trust with most participants, this was not the case for all those (including the skateboarding brands) that I had approached.

Validity and Reliability

Qualitative research is often criticised by positivistic researchers in relation to the validity and reliability of its philosophical approach and methods, while its findings are observed as being steeped in personal bias and opinions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Merriam, 1995; Noble & Smith, 2015). Patton (2015) however, identified that the validity and reliability of qualitative research involves a great deal of methodological knowledge and skill and personal integrity on behalf of the researcher. Bryman and Bell (2015) claimed that the most commonly used criteria for assessing the quality of all research are: (a) "Reliability", are the results repeatable and a reliable measure? (b) "Replication", can the research study and its methods be replicated by others? and, (c) "Validity", the integrity of the conclusions and whether they can be transferred to other social settings (i.e. "Generalisability")? However, notions of reliability, replication, and validity/generalisability are positivistic in nature. In contrast, many scholars have argued that these three measures are more suited to quantitative research rather than qualitative inquiry (e.g. Denzin, 1971; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1995; Miles et al., 2018), and that scholars working in the interpretivist position, disregard these criticisms which are typically made by positivists.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) and later Guba and Lincoln (1994) posited four alternative criteria for assessing the validity and reliability of qualitative research which they termed "trustworthiness". They identified four criteria that contribute to a research's trustworthiness: "credibility", "transferability", "dependability", and, "confirmability". I considered these four measures during my research. "Credibility" identifies that all research practices have been

followed and that the researcher's findings reflect that they have correctly understood the social reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Methods to achieve this include participant verification of transcripts and findings, and "triangulation" (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Patton, 2015), a research technique that uses multiple sources to validate findings (Denzin, 1971). Methods I employed to enhance the credibility of this research included: (a) once transcribed I forwarded interview transcripts to participants for their validation regarding the accuracy of my account of their descriptions and my interpretations of these, and, (b) I used triangulation by comparing different participants' accounts, researching their claims with available secondary data, documents, or online resources where available, reviewing my research notes taken during interviews in my research diary, looking for any conflicting or alternative views provided by participants, and, by regularly checking participant responses with the interview questions.

Qualitative research findings can be theoretical and/or case-based, that are unique and contextually relevant and specific to the focal social reality being examined (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Any notions of "transferability" of research findings are therefore dependent on the degree and depth of the description of the case's social context for others to determine if findings and conclusions are possibly transferrable to other social settings (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Merriam, 1995; Miles et al., 2018). Any generalisations (or nuances) from ethnography are often considered theoretical rather than methodological (i.e. grounded theory; see: Denzin, 1971; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Rubin, 1982). Consequently, transferability can be seen in the contribution and development of existing or new theories (Hyde, 2000; Miles et al., 2018; Yin, 2009).

Therefore, I needed to consider and provide an in-depth description of how participants' responses are influenced by their social environment. While I recognise the issues expressed by the skateboarding-related organisations are specific to those involved in

the study (and other actions sports) and may not be transferable to other social settings (e.g. mainstream sporting codes), it is still important that I recorded a variety of perceptions from those organisations inside and outside of the NZ skateboarding scene. Subsequently, I was able to present an account of the NZ skateboarding environment, those who are working within the NZ skateboarding scene, and those outsiders who have an interest in the development of a national governing body for the "sport". Thus, generalisations that are transferable may potentially be observed. That is not to say that I discounted any singular or unique nuances, but rather considered them as further contributing to the NZ skateboarding landscape.

"Dependability" identifies that the researcher has taken steps to record each phase of the research process to allow "auditing" if need be (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to provide assurances that research has been developed and conducted appropriately and is documented (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Merriam, 1995). To ensure dependability, I documented and kept track of my research processes. For instance, I developed a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to store research participant information, such as: who they were and their organisational characterisation; contact details how and why they were selected; dates of initial contact and any further communications; their decisions regarding their participation, non-participation, or non-responses; obtaining of their signed Participant Consent Form; and, dates of forwarding transcripts to research participants for validation and their responses. This Excel spreadsheet was stored along with other relevant information in a Microsoft OneNote notebook.

Another process that I developed was the establishment of individual folders for each participant to store relevant information, such as interview recordings, interview transcripts, documents provided, notes on further communications, and any other information I felt was important for data analysis. Additionally, my research supervisors provided accountability for

the research's development, documentation, and practice, which was particularly useful for assisting the dependability of this research. This involves regular supervisory meetings, monitoring my research methods, reading chapter drafts, critiquing and questioning of my findings and conclusions, and probing for further information to clarify.

Lastly, notions of "confirmability" are derived from assurances that the researcher has taken steps to ensure that all participant accounts have not been swayed by the researcher's judgement (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Although the auditing process that provides dependability can also provide assurances of confirmability (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Hellawell, 2006; Noble & Smith, 2015; Rosen, 1991), I still needed to consider the positionality and power positions (i.e. reflexivity) that might affect the researcher's judgement. Reflection in this manner provides assurances of dependability as well as managing issues of researcher positionality, and the power positions that were present during this research.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for this project was obtained from the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee on 3rd September 2018 (see Appendix A for Ethics Statement). As this research involved human participants, I needed to recognise the ethical considerations and procedures that needed to be adhered to. Before interviews, I gained informed consent by ensuring that participants were fully aware of the nature of the research and its objectives and that they were aware of their rights regarding their participation. Potential participants were provided with a Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix C) outlining the intent and purpose of the research, that participation was voluntary, and, that their confidentiality was assured on my part. Consent Forms (see Appendix B) were also provided advising participants of their right to withdraw from the research project at any stage and without any

personal consequences themselves. Finally, to assist anonymity, all participants were allocated a code to label their transcripts and provided documents which were stored in my password protected laptop and/or in a locked cabinet. Only me and my supervisors knew who had provided this information. On completion of the research, all data will be retained for a period of five years post research, whereupon request from the University of Waikato Ethics Committee, it will be destroyed.

I recognise that the NZ skateboarding community is small and that there was a chance that participants' identities could be discovered regardless of my attempts to protect their anonymity which was also noted on the Participant Information Sheet. I assured participants that I would endeavour to maintain their anonymity to the best of my ability by not linking individual participants directly with their respective organisations. Additionally, I also ensured that participants had the opportunity to review and verify their transcripts prior to thematic analysis.

As it happened, I found that almost all of the skateboarding participants that I interviewed knew each other and their participation in this research. Often, they would also ask who I had spoken to or tell me who I should be talking to as well as be curious about other participants' points of view, and about the operation and challenges of their respective organisations. Considering the ethics guidelines as discussed above, made me more mindful of how to handle these situations such as: being conscious of what information could be shared; using organisational rather than individual names; being careful not to identify any sources of information and commenting that it was too early to tell. In the following chapters, I present my empirical analysis of the historical and contemporary accounts of skateboarding in Aotearoa.

Chapter Four

Skateboarding Lifestyle and Communities in Aotearoa, New Zealand

This first empirical chapter lays the foundation and context for the following three chapters by discussing the introduction and evolution of skateboarding in Aotearoa, New Zealand and mapping the contemporary New Zealand (NZ) skateboarding community. As there appears to be little available information regarding NZ skateboarding's origins and development in the academic literature, I have drawn on material that can be found online, in print mainstream and niche media including news and magazine articles, social media and blog posts, and personal accounts provided by participants during this research. Two NZ secondary data sources played a key role in this information. The first is a written account of skateboarding in Aotearoa provided by Wellington historian and heritage adviser Kerryn Pollock (2013) on the NZ governmental website Te Ara: the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. The second is a documentary film by former 1979 NZ national junior champion Andrew Moore (2006) called *No More Heroes* based on the NZ skateboarding scene from 1975 to the early 1980s. Then, drawing on my empirical research, the contemporary NZ skateboarding scene is explored including its provision at the regional and local levels and those organisational entities and groups that are involved. This discussion of the evolution of skateboarding in Aotearoa since the 1950s shows that it has followed similar trends in popularity and advancement as the rest of the world.

In the second part of this chapter, I turn the attention towards the NZ skateboarding community. I discuss the different ways that the community interact at skateparks, through social media and skateboarding events and competitions showing that its members are highly-connected and close-knit. Some social dynamics within of the community are presented such as a subcultural hierarchy where ex-professional and veteran male skaters possess the most

influence, leading to the marginalisation of female skaters, but a perceived sense of camaraderie exists regardless of age and ethnicity. I show that over time there has been a shift in the traditional skateboarders' attitudes with some young skaters being more open to competitive/sport skateboarding, and also the Olympics. During this and the following three empirical chapters, I refer to many New Zealand-based skateboarding-related organisations and groups. Rather than provide in-text citations for these skateboarding-related organisations' Home website or Facebook pages, these can be found in Appendix F.

Skateboarding in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Beyond

The processes of globalisation are driven by and are visible in the economic, political, and social/cultural movement processes that impact society (P. Donnelly, 1996; Maguire, 2000, 2015). Economic forces such as commercialism and incorporation play a significant role in the globalisation of sports (P. Donnelly, 1996). Nonetheless, the process also involves the diffusion, adoption and consolidation of the sport's culture (P. Donnelly, 1996; Thorpe, 2014; Wheaton, 2005). As Wheaton (2005) shows, the commercialism of action sports has played a central role in the globalisation of action sport culture. Thorpe (2014) identified how even those who partake in action sports locally, have considerable access to the consumption of global sporting events, media, action sport celebrities and products from transnational companies. Consequently, many action sport communities (incl. skateboarding) feel connected and part of a broader transnational community sharing a common culture and philosophy regardless of geographical location (Thorpe, 2014; Wheaton, 2005).

Since the late 1960s, there has been a spread of some American sports and their culture through their incorporation (or rather "Americanisation") throughout many countries (P. Donnelly, 1996). Skateboarding originates in the USA, and its global popularity and culture have been driven predominantly by USA skateboard brands, such as equipment

manufacturers and niche media (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; Snyder, 2012; Yochim, 2010). Driven by commercial interests, transnational marketing and commerce in the global marketplace, many skateboarding communities in different countries including NZ have followed trends emerging from the USA skateboarding industry and culture. The following discussion briefly illustrates the evolution of skateboarding in Aotearoa and shows how it has paralleled skateboarding's development in other countries around the world.

Skateboarding's origins have been identified back to the 1930s, with box cart scooters made from an apple box, a plank of wood, and a set of roller skate wheels (Borden, 2019a). The apple box was removed and children would ride the wheeled plank by standing on it similar to modern-day skateboarding (Borden, 2019a). In the 1950s, the first commercial boards were produced and gained some brief popularity with the Californian surfing community during the 1960s (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a). However, skateboarding was considered quite dangerous, as skateboards during the era were fitted with clay or steel wheels that were prone to breaking or stopping suddenly when hitting small stones or other objects, throwing the rider (Borden, 2019a; Yochim, 2010).

According to Moore (2006), there is anecdotal evidence that skateboarding first started in NZ during the 1940s but this has not been documented. Similar to elsewhere, skateboarding experienced some popularity during the 1950s and 1960s in NZ. Aotearoa's first commercially manufactured skateboard called the Moon Skate was mass-produced for NZ and was extremely popular with children during the era (Moore, 2006). As there appears to be little information online or elsewhere about this product, I posted on the Skateboard Collectors New Zealand Facebook group asking for any information and was supplied several photos by group members (see Figure 2). The Moon Skate was manufactured by Auckland-based business Engineer and Merchants Ltd (E&M; appears to now be defunct) featuring a wooden deck, spring suspensions, clay wheels, and a geographical map of New Zealand as

part of its aesthetic on deck. Highlighting the impact that the Moon Skate had on NZ

children, one Facebook group member replied, "That Moon Skate…was my very first

skateboard at 7 years old. Got it for Christmas - that started a lifelong skateboard journey"

(personal communication, December, 2021).

Figure 2

Moon Skate (circa 1950-60)

Note. Various untitled photos to the Moon Skate, New Zealand's first commercially produced skateboard. By

Dan Brooker and Mark Winter, n.d. Printed with permission.

However, towards the late 1960s skateboarding's popularity had waned globally due to health professionals labelling it as being too dangerous consequently meeting with the disapproval of city councils and community groups (Beal, 2013). Additionally, early skateboards were limited in their manoeuvrability causing skaters to lose interest in the activity (Hawk, 2007). Yochim (2010) identified that between 1965 and 1975 youth in the USA had become more concerned and involved with political issues, such as Vietnam War protests, civil rights riots, and the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy. Consequently, skateboarding was barely mentioned in mainstream media during that era (Yochim, 2010). USA niche publication *Quarterly Skateboarder* which was launched in 1965 also discontinued publication after only four issues (Beal, 2013). Nonetheless, skateboarding still retained some limited popularity in the Californian surfing community (Borden, 2019a; Yochim, 2010). Similarly, the popularity of skateboarding in NZ also declined (Moore, 2006; Pollock, 2013).

The 1970s: The Rise of Skateboarding

During the 1970s, the invention of the polyurethane wheel resulted in a resurgence in skateboarding's popularity. The new wheel type made the skateboard more manoeuvrable and durable than the older clay or steel wheels (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a). Driven by emerging skateboarding brands, skateboarding became increasingly popular, first in the USA, then reaching its peak globally in the mid-1970s (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; Snyder, 2012). Although invented in 1970, the polyurethane wheel was not mass-marketed until 1972 gaining considerable popularity with the local surfing industry and youngsters first in the USA, and then more globally (Beal, 2013). The magazine publication *Quarterly Skateboarder* was relaunched as *Skateboarder* in 1975 further driving skateboarding's increasing global popularity (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a).

Skateboarding also resurged in Aotearoa in 1975, and was quickly adopted by young New Zealanders (Moore, 2006; Pollock, 2013). NZ's first skatepark was built in 1976 in Waihi, Coromandel by the community trust the Lions Foundation followed closely by the Marlborough Skatepark in Glenfield, Auckland. Other cities and towns around NZ also started to provide skateparks for their regions driven and funded by Territorial Authorities (i.e. regional and city councils) and local community trusts (Moore, 2006). The high point of skatepark development during the 1970s was Coca-Cola Skatopia constructed in Manukau, South Auckland in 1978 by an Auckland entrepreneur who modelled the park on Skatopia, California. Skatopia was the venue for NZ's first national skateboarding competition (1979) which Moore (2006) hailed as Aotearoa's most "iconic and pinnacle" skateboarding event. Outside of skateparks, Pool Skateboarding, Ramp Skateboarding and Downhill Skateboarding were also popular in California, USA during the 1970s (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; Snyder, 2017). While downhill skating was and still is popular in NZ, pool skateboarding was less prevalent due to a lack of backyard swimming pools. Alternatively, Ramp Skateboarding (often on fragile homemade wooden backyard ramps) was a far more popular alternative to pool skating for NZ skaters (Moore, 2006).

The global growth and popularisation of skateboarding have been largely driven by USA skateboard brands, particularly from the West Coast (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; N. S. Williams, 2020). Similarly, the skateboarding equipment available in NZ at the time was also predominantly from USA brands. However, two popular NZ skateboarding brands were established in the mid-1970s; Trax Skateboards (now defunct) and Edwards Skateboards (Moore, 2006; Pollock, 2013). Today most skateboarding equipment in NZ is still imported from the USA. Nonetheless, Edwards Skateboards are still prominent in NZ and internationally, and today there are a few small niche NZ brands that design and supply

skateboards, clothing, and other skateboarding equipment such as Strange Life Skateboards, Nelson Creek Skateboards, DEF Store, and Curb (see Chapter Five).

In efforts to boost listener ratings, local mainstream NZ radio stations often sponsored skateboarding competitions and exhibitions throughout Aotearoa during the 1970s (Moore, 2006). These skateboarding events proved to be very popular with the skate community attracting large crowds and sponsors from local businesses (Moore, 2006; Pollock, 2013). In Auckland, the Glenfield Shopping Centre became a regular event venue during the 1970s (Moore, 2006). NZ's first professional skateboarding teams were established to provide skating exhibitions at carparks and shopping malls around Aotearoa. The three major NZ skate teams of the era were the Trax Skate Team, Edwards Skate Team, and the Radio Hauraki 1480 Kroozers (Moore, 2006; Pollock, 2013). Athlete sponsorship has long been interpreted as a badge of skateboarding proficiency (i.e. "making it") by skaters, further contributing to their subcultural capital and authenticity (Atencio et al., 2009; Dupont, 2014; Eidenmueller, 2018; Snyder, 2012; Willing et al., 2020). For instance, in the NZ-based film *No More Heroes,* Radio Hauraki 1480 Kroozer's team skater Victor Viskovich commented that being a part of a skate team was the equivalent of making a national mainstream sport team. He described joining the team as a sponsored rider as, "…like pulling on an All Black's[2] jersey [laughs]. Yeah, a Radio Hauraki Jersey, 1480 [smiles]" (Moore, 2006, 25:46).

Skateboarding print media has had a significant impact on providing the elements of the discourse that defines skating culture, such as style, gender, ethnicity, age, and, sexuality (Atencio et al., 2009; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013; N. S. Williams, 2020). The USA publication *Skateboarder Magazine* was considered the most revered cultural

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[2] The All Blacks are NZ's national rugby union team whose uniforms are all black (hence their name). Being an All Backs is considered a prestigious honour as rugby is NZ's national sport and is extremely popular.

source of skateboarding during the 1970s internationally (N. S. Williams, 2020). Moore's (2006) film *No More Heroes* illustrated the importance US publications had on the development of NZ skateboarders during the 1970s to early 1980s, especially *Skateboarder Magazine*. NZ skaters would read the publications and then try to replicate what the skaters were doing in the magazine photographs (Moore, 2006). For example, during an interview, ex-professional skateboarder Leah Ralph commented, "I was living my life by the magazine. My whole life was *Skateboarder Magazine*. Everything else was like, 'I don't give a fuck'" (Moore, 2006, 20:10).

There have been and are only a few NZ print skateboarding magazines. Records suggest the first two publications were launched in 1997, *New Zealand Skateboarder* which ceased publishing in 2010 due to a lack of financial resources by losing its main sponsor (magazine publisher, personal communication, 2020, June 11), and *Manual Magazine* which is still in publication today. Another NZ print magazine *Muckmouth* (est. 1999) styled on the USA print magazine *Big Brother* later became an online magazine, forum, and blog in 2003 (Harmon, 2019) and has a large NZ and international following.

In 1978 the New Zealand Skateboard Association (NZSA) was formed by a group of skateboarding and surfing manufacturers and retailers to organise skateboarding competitions in NZ (Pollock, 2013). The NZSA appears to be the first attempt to govern and institutionalise NZ skateboarding nationally. While the organisation existed until it was formally dissolved in 1995 (see: New Zealand Companies Office, n.d.), it appears to have been largely inactive prior. Unfortunately, NZSA's establishment coincided with another decline in the popularity of skateboarding globally and in NZ, subsequently making the intended governing body redundant.

The 1980s: *"The darkest of darkest days of skateboarding"*

Towards the late 1970s, internationally skateboarding's popularity had waned considerably. While the exact reasons are not very clear, one reason regularly identified in the USA was that costly indemnity insurance premiums were unsustainable, forcing many skateparks to close (Beal, 2013; Hawk, 2007). Additionally, many youth-based brands had switched their focus to providing roller skating-related products resulting in a global fad during the early 1980s. The brands perceived that roller skating was more appealing to females and had a broader consumer base compared to skateboarding (Beal, 2013; Yochim, 2010). This shift by the mainstream youth brands further illustrates the impact that commercial organisations have had on the development (and decline) of skateboarding and how they shape popular youth culture and action sports. One research participant recalled that internationally, the early 1980s were "…the darkest of darkest days of skateboarding, it was just dead" (personal communication, February, 2019).

So too in NZ, skateboarding had rapidly lost its popularity, because of a lack of customers, Skatopia closed only four years after it opened in 1982 (Onsite Spouting, 2012). Moore (2006) documented the unexplained loss in skateboarding's popularity in the early 1980s as almost "overnight". As in the rest of the world, roller skating had become immensely popular from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s (Pollock, 2013). During that period, only a few hardcore skateboarders were continuing to pursue the activity (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a), similar to Aotearoa (Pollock, 2013). However, driven by niche print media and DVDs that promoted Street Skateboarding and its rebellious skateboarding ideology, street skating gained some popularity (Beal & Wilson, 2004; O'Connor, 2018b; Snyder, 2012, 2017; N. S. Williams, 2020).

The two key USA publications of the time were *Thrasher Magazine* and *Transworld Skateboarding* which set two distinct narratives for skateboarding during the 1980s (N. S.

Williams, 2020; Yochim, 2010). Established in 1981, *Thrasher* whose motto was "skate and destroy" promoted anti-establishment and a rebellious attitude (N. S. Williams, 2020; Yochim, 2010). *Transworld Skateboarding* was established in 1983 to be the complete opposite of *Thrasher's* philosophy, instead promoting the athleticism and creativity of skateboarding (N. S. Williams, 2020; Yochim, 2010). In the global context, skateboarding had become underground, alternative, and anti-establishment while drawing on the attitude of and becoming associated with the rising Punk Rock scene (Humphreys, 1998; Snyder, 2012, 2017; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016). Likewise, Pollock (2013) noted the rise in street skateboarding in NZ in the 1980s, but the scene remained relatively small.

The 1990s: Street, Mega-Events and Punk

Street skating's use of obstacles such as park benches, walls, rubbish bins, and other constructed terrain by street skaters to perform tricks has caused tensions with city councils and the non-skating public regarding supposed damage to public utilities and perceived undesirable behaviour. In response, during the 1990s to early 2000s many cities around the world banned skateboarding in public spaces such as parks, plazas, and city footpaths (Borden, 2019a; Howell, 2001, 2008; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Willing & Shearer, 2015), as well as NZ with many continuing today (Pollock, 2013).

Consequently, there was a trend by NZ city councils during the 1990s and early 2000s to build local skateparks to keep skaters off the streets (Pollock, 2013), similar to other countries such as the USA (Howell, 2008; Németh, 2006; Smith, 2019). However, more recently some councils around the world have started to recognise skateboarding as a form of transport and physical activity with health benefits and thus reducing or abolishing public skateboarding restrictions (Chiu, 2009; Howell, 2005; Ward et al., 2021). In NZ for example, Hamilton City Council has removed skateboarding from its list of identifiable nuisance activities and allowed skateboarders access to previously banned public areas (Mather, 2020)

Driven by media coverage of professional US skate teams such as the *Bones Brigade* and the arrival of extreme mega-events such as the X-Games during the late 1980s and 1990s, skateboarding had again gained some global appeal (Beal, 2013; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Borden, 2019a; Hawk, 2007; Rinehart, 2008a). Mainstream USA brands from the music, television and film industries, also played a significant role in skateboarding's rise in popularity by featuring skaters and other skateboarding themes in their video content (Yochim, 2010). Non-skateboarding multinational sports brands such as Nike, Adidas and New Balance have repeatedly attempted (initially unsuccessfully) to break into the skateboarding market (Beal, 2013; Gomez, 2012; Snyder, 2017; Yochim, 2010).

Skateboarding in NZ also started to slowly regain popularity during the late 1980s to 2000s (Pollock, 2013). Vert Skateboarding (i.e. Half-Pipe) was popular with NZ skaters; For example, a massive ramp was constructed at Auckland's Big Day Out alternative rock festival in 2012 for top NZ skaters to exhibit their skating skills (Waterworth, 2019). After being stored for 6-years, the owners of the ramp offered it up free for removal. The ramp was taken by the Wanaka Skate Club and relocated onto private property in Wanaka, Queenstown-Lakes (Waterworth, 2019), although the ramp's owners allow access to local skateboarders (if they ask permission). The ramp was featured in the 19-minute documentary *Fourteen Foot Journey* (The Film Crew Ltd - Video Production Otago, 2020) and was the venue for the SBNZ Wanaka Vert Champs in 2019.

The 2000s to 2022: Becoming "Rad" Again

In the early 2000s, the NZ commercial skateboarding retail chain Cheapskates established and ran a national skateboarding competition called the Cheapskates Skateboard National*s* (Cheapskates Skateboard Nationals, n.d.). Cheapskates eventually dropped the competition during the mid-2010s, as an interviewee explained, "because the industry dived and nobody had any money to do anything" (personal communication, May, 2019). Since

2008, a competition called Bowlzilla (aka Bowlarama) has become the main NZ

skateboarding event. Self-titled as "New Zealand's Skateboarding National Championships"

and more recently the "National Park Skating Championships", Bowlzilla's owner-organiser

explained, "When I started to call Bowlzilla the national championships, I could do that,

because there wasn't anyone there; there was nothing happening" (personal communication,

February, 2019).

Over the years a few NZ skateboarders have had professional careers to varying

degrees. Pollock (2013) identifies the following skaters as being the most prominent: Peter

Boronski and Grant MacGredie in the 1970s; Lee Ralph (probably NZ's most famous

skateboarder) and Andrew Morrison in the 1980s and 1990s; Bjorn Johnston, and Gareth

Stehr in the 2000s. Other NZ skateboarders with past professional careers who were regularly

identified by research participants are Chey Ataria, David Crab, Ramon Thackwell, and,

Chris Wood.

Notably, all of the above-identified NZ skateboarders are male. Internationally,

skateboarding has been largely a male dominated activity, characterised by particular

masculine identities, reinforced through the niche media (Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Beal,

2013; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Buckingham, 2009; Dupont, 2014). However, Beal (2013),

noted that during the 1960s and 1970s in the USA, even though the majority of media

coverage and advertising featured young white males, female skaters were embraced

including female competition divisions and some media coverage of these events at

skateboarding competitions. During the 1980s, the anti-establishment of street skating media

marginalised female skaters as "skate betties" (i.e. groupies for male skaters) and many

skateboarding competitions dropped the female division (Beal, 2013). Similarly, Yochim

(2010) noted that mainstream print and news media such as *Time Magazine* and the

Washington Post Magazine also portrayed skateboarding as rebellious, thrill-seeking and

masculine, whereas females were marginalised as girlfriends and spectators with little genuine interest in the sport.

My online research revealed that several group photographs and Moore's (2006) film *No More Heroes* of NZ skateboarders from the 1970s, feature both girl and boy skaters posing and interacting together. Yet, I struggled to find any mention of top female NZ skateboarders online from the 1960s to the 2000s. Even in Moore's (2006) film, only one female skateboarder, Tania Viskovich is mentioned during a video excerpt by subtitling her name, but there is no further mention of her. There also appears to be little information online regarding Viskovich's skateboarding during the mid-1970s to early 1980s apart from her personal LinkedIn profile where she claims she was "Rated the best female skateboarder of my generation in New Zealand" (Viskovich, n.d., para. 1). Commenting on the lack of historical information available on NZ female skateboarding, a Skateboarding New Zealand (SBNZ) committee member commented, "It's a crime, plain and simple" (personal communication, January, 2021).

Lacking visibility of women involved in sport is common, achieved through restricting and limiting access to vital resources, control, media coverage, competitive events, and prize money, including action sports and skateboarding (Beal, 2013; Beal & Ebeling, 2019; D'Orazio, 2020; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018b, 2021). There is only very limited information in online media articles regarding top NZ female skaters during the mid-2000s to early 2010s; Namely, Georgina Mathews and Stacey Roper who both competed internationally, and Izy Mutu who had some success in the Australian skateboarding scene and still occasionally competes today.

While research participants generally perceived that NZ participation levels in skateboarding have steadily increased over the last decade or so, there appears to be limited statistical evidence to support this point. Freely available and reliable skateboarding industry

sales statistics appear to be hard to come by. While I struggled to secure interviews with members of the NZ skateboarding industry (see Chapter Three), during casual visits that I made to board sports stores, sales staff mentioned that sales of skateboards had increased. However, they also mentioned sales of other board and roller sport equipment (especially scooters) are also high.

Regarding national sport and recreation participation data, the governmental authority Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) annual surveys appear to be the only source. In its most recent report *Active NZ: Changes in Participation*, Sport NZ (2022) identified an increase from 5% to 6% of 5- to 17-year-olds (i.e. "young people") skateboarding in 2021 compared to pre-pandemic 2019 in Aotearoa. While the one percent increase in skateboarding participation sounds minimal, Sport NZ claim that it is a significant increase. During a meeting with a SBNZ committee member in 2020, he felt that skateboarding participation was much higher, estimating that in NZ "half-million to a million people are actively involved in the sport" (personal communication, November, 2020). While national sport surveys often fall short of identifying the full extent of participation levels for informal sports (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011, 2017), the committee member's claims (potentially skewed and exaggerated) are based on his personal experiences and observations and SBNZ has not conducted any formal research to explore skateboarding participation numbers.

Reflective of and possibly a key contributor to the increase in skateboarding participation among young New Zealanders is an apparent increase in skateboarding coaching or skate schools (also see Chapter Five). While formal coaching is usually frowned upon by skateboarders as it does not fit with the "do-it-yourself" ideology (Beal & Wilson, 2004; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019), the establishment of skate schools has become more common (Beal et al., 2017; Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Turner, 2017). When I started this research in 2018, I only identified a few skate schools nationally; Namely, Young Guns Skate

School (Auckland), Girls Skate New Zealand (Girls Skate NZ; Auckland), OnBoard Skate School (Palmerston North), and Cheapskates Skate Skool (Christchurch). Over the following three to four years I have been astounded by the steady increase in skate schools around Aotearoa. Some examples of more recently established NZ Skate schools are Aroha Skate (Auckland), Sam's Skate School (Tauranga), Jedi Skateboard (Palmerston North), Skate School Nelson (Nelson), Rad Skate School (Wanaka) and Waa Hine Skate (Wellington and Hutt Valley).

More recently, there has been a shift in the visibility of elite women skateboarders on the international stage. Olympic gender equality policy has contributed to professional skateboarding leagues, such as the international Street League Skateboarding serious adding a women's division in 2015 (Beal & Ebeling, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Additionally, participation levels in skateboarding by girls and young women globally have increased over the last decade or so (Abulhawa, 2020; Atencio et al., 2009; Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Beal et al., 2017; Borden, 2019; Pomerantz et al., 2004; Wheaton, 2013). Research participants regularly noted that there has been a steady increase in participation levels by girls and women in NZ. Statistical data available online is limited, however, two online sources state that globally 23.9% of all skateboarders (including longboarders) are female (Skateboarders HQ, 2021; Skate Review, 2020). The growth in NZ girls and women skateboarding appears to have also been driven by increased visibility in mainstream and niche media, an ever-increasing number of "girls-only" skate schools, health and wellbeing groups for girls and young women, and female skaters providing leadership for developing and coordinating female skateboarding groups, "meet-ups" and "skate jams" (see Chapter Five).

Internationally, USA brands are still highly involved in the provision of skateboarding (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; Howell, 2008; Snyder, 2012; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016). Likewise, NZ skateboarding competition funding is reliant on large USA brands such as

Vans, Skull Candy, and Converse for sponsorship of talented skateboarders and competitions. NZ-based importers of USA-brand skateboard equipment, such as Step Up Industries, and Irrom Distribution also play a major role in sponsorship. Smaller local skateboarding industry businesses such as skate stores, skateboarding equipment importers, and skate schools, provide local event facilitation and sponsorship (see Chapter Five). Highlighting the significance of skateboarding brands to the NZ scene, a former SBNZ committee member said that he was careful not to offend or ignore the advice from "core" NZ skateboarding brands when making organisational decisions to retain their support, "…they have nurtured and grown skateboarding when no one else was there" (personal communication, January, 2020). However, brand "support" for NZ skaters usually takes the form of in-kind sponsorship such as free skateboarding equipment (i.e. "free stuff") rather than cash.

It is common for the more serious skaters to relocate to Melbourne or Sydney in Australia for better employment and professional skateboarding opportunities, and a similar skate culture because of the lack of competition and support for elite NZ Skateboarders. As one interviewee commented, "It's so much easier to slip into a familiar culture than trying to make it in the U.S. or further abroad" (personal communication, December, 2020). No NZ skateboarders competed at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. A SBNZ committee member explained that this was largely because of the lack of government funding for top NZ skateboarders and World Skate's Olympic qualification points system that prioritises athletes in the Northern Hemisphere (personal communication, November, 2020; also see Chapter Seven).

Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) also identified how the Olympic skateboarding qualification system has been controversial, skewed towards participation in USA-based commercial events who have had pre-existing relationships with World Skate. At its 2021 AGM, SBNZ's President also commented that the COVID-19 pandemic had further impacted

the ability of NZ skateboarders to travel, compete and earn the necessary ranking points at international skateboarding events. However, in late 2021 SBNZ did receive $33,000 to be allocated over three years towards the development of coaching and elite skaters from High Performance New Zealand's Aspirational Fund (High Performance Sport New Zealand, 2021a).

Regarding the degree of institutionalisation of the NZ sport-skateboarding scene, it is still largely unstructured and uncoordinated. Although a national sport organisation (i.e. SBNZ) was established in 2016 to provide governance and structure for NZ Skateboarding, it is still generally a work in progress (discussed in Chapters Six and Seven). There are a few skateboarding-related organisations that are formally established legal entities, established out of philanthropic interests such as Regional Skateboarding Associations (RSAs) and skateboarding development organisations to support competitive skaters and social and community development. Additionally, several informal organisations exist, which are not legal entities, but service similar purposes such as Regional/Community Skateboarding Groups (RSGs). These skateboarding-related organisations are discussed in Chapter Five.

My research suggests that there is a high level of social connection between various individuals belonging to these skateboarding organisations and groups, but there is no formal structure to bind connections (also discussed in Chapter Five). Instead, these skateboarding-related organisations form a loose network of fragmented organisations that are autonomous, but come together and support each other when needed. This form of organising is similar to skateboarding globally where the need for formal coordination tends to be only necessary around the organisation and facilitation of events (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Organising in this manner is also similar to larger mainstream sport events, where numerous and differing organisational types will form temporary and informal organisational networks to provide the event and dissolve post-event

(Erickson & Roland, 1999; Gerke, 2016; Gerke et al., 2018). However, at the national, regional and grassroots levels, mainstream sport (e.g. Rugby, Netball, Football) competitions in Aotearoa are highly institutionalised as events/competitions are more frequent, organised, and coordinated (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010, 2015a; Hoye et al., 2015; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006; Sam & Jackson, 2004). This is also the case for some action sports such as NZ surfing (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Currently, such a degree of institutionalisation is non-existent in NZ skateboarding (see Chapters Six & Seven).

Different Skateboarding Styles and Cultures in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Previous research observes that the skateboarding is a "lifestyle" that is non-competitive, unstructured, an art form, and a means of self-expression, as opposed to being a competitive, organised, and structured sport (Beal, 2013; Beal & Weidman, 2003; Borden, 2019a; Willing et al., 2019). Wheaton (2004) coined "lifestyle sport" to identify how individuals perceive their participation in alternative sports like skateboarding that transcends the activity itself to include the subcultural philosophy, elements, and cultural membership, that constitutes one's identity. However, over the years competitive skateboarding has become highly professional, and more recently that has been a shift in this attitude towards competition by some skaters (Beal & Ebeling, 2019; Borden, 2019a; Dupont & Nichols, 2021; Snyder, 2012, 2017).

Skateboarding as Lifestyle to Sport-Skateboarding

Similar discourses were identified by research participants. Often, in conversation, interviewees would refer to competitive and non-competitive skateboarding as two alternate forms, using terms such as the "sport-side" or "community-side" of skateboarding as if they were two different things. Those involved in competitive skateboarding are also often identified as being involved in "the sport" and as "athletes", whereas others are not, being

more interested in the non-competitive aspects, the subculture and the "lifestyle" of skateboarding. Several participants from skateboarding-related organisations commented on the tensions they experienced regarding the use of the term "sport" when discussing skateboarding. For example, an SBNZ committee member commented on negative feedback from other skaters when using "sport-related" terms: "I refrain from using the words 'athlete' and 'sport' as I have received complaints for using those words" (personal communication, February, 2019). These comments are reflective of similar tensions regarding the sportisation of skateboarding globally as it conflicts with the traditional subcultural anti-sport values (Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021) and rejection of stereotypical hyper-masculine male athletic archetypes "Jocks" (Beal & Weidman, 2003; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Dupont, 2014, 2020; Yochim, 2010).

While Beal and Ebeling (2019) recognised that Olympic inclusion does formally signify skateboarding becoming a "sport", they also argued that it had already been a sport for many years. Other interviewees are more welcoming of competitive skateboarding and the sportisation process, signifying a further distinction among NZ skateboarders. For example, one interviewee commented: "Competitions have been happening in skateboarding for years. Like it was massive up until the '80s. It was all about the competitions. It wasn't until the growth of 'street skating' that it all sort of died off" (personal communication, August, 2019).

Competitions have long been a part of skateboarding with the first in 1963 in the USA (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019b) and the mid-1970s in NZ (Moore, 2006; Pollock, 2013). This finding is perhaps unsurprising considering the research focus and sample used for this study; That is, those that belong to skateboarding-related organisations and have an interest in sport-skateboarding and/or institutionalisation to some degree in Aotearoa. An interview with a top NZ park skater, Bowman Hansen, regarding his upcoming participation in Bowlzilla 2021

highlights the competitiveness of some skaters. Bowman is quoted as saying, "A competition is a competition to me, get out there, skate how I skate, and accumulate as many points as I can. I'm always aiming for first place" (Wellington City Council, 2021, para. 11). Yet the contradiction stands, there are tensions between notions of competitive and non-competitive skateboarding.

While wanting to avoid broad generalisations, based on my findings I discuss two skateboarding categorisations throughout this thesis: (a) "Sport Skateboarders" who are competitive and enjoy competing in skateboarding competitions (i.e. "sport-skateboarding"), may want a professional skating career, and practice to improve to compete, and (b) "Lifestyle Skateboarders" that are non-competitive (in a sporting sense), embrace and "live" the subcultural ethos and elements of skateboarding (i.e. "lifestyle-skateboarding"), its subcultural affiliation, and generally not interested in competition. However, it is important to note that the majority of interviewees were from organisations that are involved in the institutionalisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa to some degree (discussed in the following chapters). Therefore, their accounts were most certainly swayed towards institutionalisation, sport-skateboarding and Olympic inclusion, and may not be reflective of other community members. In addition to these two categories, there are a huge number of "Recreational Skateboarders", such as children who use skating for "play" or attend skate schools, those using skateboarding for physical and mental wellbeing reasons and social connection, and others who skate for leisure and as a form of transport.

The Olympic Effect on Sportisation

Skateboarding's Olympic inclusion has been a key focus for debates and shifting attitudes about "Sport-Skateboarding". Olympic inclusion has caused considerable tension among skateboarding communities globally. These tensions are across the need for governance, anti-sport/competition, anti-Olympics, and mainstreaming of the sport (Batuev &

Robinson, 2019a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). Skateboarders have been extremely vocal in expressing their anti-Olympic views across niche skateboarding media (Batuev & Robinson, 2019a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). However, Wheaton and Thorpe's (2021) research in 2016 involving a small focus group of core skaters from Hamilton, NZ found that they were mostly apathetic towards skateboarding Olympic inclusion as it had little impact on their everyday lives, such as the building of new skateparks. During this study, participants' views on skateboarding's Olympic inclusion were mixed.

Some interviewees were opposed to skateboarding being an Olympic sport. As one commented: "Ninety-nine percent of skateboarders don't care about the Olympics. It's not why they do it. It's a lifestyle. It's what they identify with; it's who they are; "I'm a skateboarder. It's who I am. I don't care" (personal communication, July, 2019). Others felt that Olympic inclusion clashed with the anti-sport philosophy of skateboarding: "Some people are like, 'Skateboarding is not a sport, it's an art, expression, it's an art form'" (interviewee, personal communication, March, 2019). Reflecting Wheaton and Thorpe's (2021) findings, interviewees also noted that older skaters are predominately more resistant. As one interviewee commented, "[Name] is 46 years old, and other skaters ('guys') around that age aren't for it. They are like, "Skateboarding's not a sport. You can't judge it. You can't have it in the Olympics. It's just taking away from skateboarding" (personal communication, July, 2019). However, others felt that is just a matter of time, "It's like, 'Yeah, it'll happen, it makes sense, it's logical'. I mean the Olympics requires people to watch it. So, you look at the youth sports that are rising and you go, 'Well there's money there'" (personal communication, May, 2019). Encapsulating similar sentiment, several interviewees quoted skateboarding legend Tony Hawkes' well-known comment, "The Olympics needs skateboarding more than skateboarding needs the Olympics" (Awards Laureus World Sports, 2012, para. 4).

In contrast, some interviewees from the skateboarding community were more open to Olympic inclusion feeling that "sport-skateboarding" is nothing new. For instance, one commented, "We have the X-Games, we have Street League, Park Series, etcetera. We are doing it already, and we've done it since the 70s. So, it's not a big deal" (personal communication, February, 2019). Others felt that it would help grow skateboarding's popularity and participation levels. For example, "More new people getting into skating, and a bit more prestige around it…having it in the Olympics is amazing for skateboarding" (personal communication, March, 2019). Similarly, another commented, "If we put it in the Olympics, then the world is going to see that it's an incredible sport" (personal communication, July, 2019). Many action sports around the world perceived that Olympic inclusion would be a "cash cow" for their sports, which often did not happen (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Similarly, participants anticipated that skateboarding's Olympic status would result in more governmental funding being provided to develop sport and community skateboarding in Aotearoa, which has not come to pass (see Chapters Six and Seven).

Characterising the New Zealand Skateboarding Community

Involvement in an action sport is often a significant commitment, which represents a subcultural membership that transcends the sport's participation to include lifestyle elements, shared beliefs and values that represent the core community (Tomlinson et al., 2005; Wheaton, 2004). This is not to discount that many individuals partake in action sports in a less committed way for play, recreation, fun, or as a form of transport, such as skateboarding, without embracing the subculture (M. Donnelly, 2006; S. Jones & Graves, 2000; Németh, 2006; Snyder, 2017). However, action sport participation is seen by many as central to an individual's subcultural identity and community membership (Coates et al., 2010; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013; Wheaton, 2007b). This sense of social connection

and camaraderie that skateboarding evoked was commonly expressed by interviewees; "Same as every community, you've got your little shitheads on the sides [laughs], but the community still takes care of everyone. I'm sure it's the same everywhere in New Zealand. It's such a lovely community" (personal communication, August, 2019). However, regardless of such positive expressions of fondness for the NZ skateboarding community, my research suggests it is not as friendly and inclusive as some participants propose. In the remainder of this chapter, I characterise the NZ skateboarding community and then discuss some social dynamics, including inclusion and exclusion.

Skateboarding Camaraderie and Sense of Community

The desire to develop and maintain camaraderie among action sport participants is a common motivation for initial and continued participation in sport (Bennett & Lachowetz, 2004; Bradley, 2010; Puddle et al., 2019; Wheaton, 2004). Mortimer's (2008) work documenting the personal reflections of professional skateboarders in the USA noted that as novices, notions of belonging, new friendships, camaraderie, and kindred spirits, were strong motivators for the skaters to continue skating. Interviewees also felt that these characteristics are what attracts young skaters, "They are getting the same thing that we all got out of it. They've got a friendship, this camaraderie with their mates down the skatepark. It's 'them'" (personal communication, May, 2019). Adult interviewees identified skateboarding as being the foundation for developing and maintaining relationships with other community members:

> Like I can go anywhere in the country, "message" someone I've never met and ask for a place to stay and they're like, "Yep, done. Do you need a skateboard?" …Like, I don't know these people. It's a friend of a friend, or I met them at a skate comp' or whatever (Interviewee, personal communication, September, 2019).

Thorpe (2014) identified how the international consumption of action sport-related products such as sporting events, niche media and branded products allow action sport

participants to feel connected to the broader transnational community. Similarly, several interviewees explained how they had travelled to various countries and instantly formed relationships with other skaters. For instance, one interview commented on his travels through Europe: "As long as you're not a "dick" [laughs], you can instantly relate to someone or something, and skating is like that…It doesn't matter where you go, you can sort of talk to someone" (personal communication, March, 2019). Based on my research, there are three key ways that interviewees interact in the skateboarding community: (a) the development of communities at skatepark parks, (b) social media interaction, and (c) skateboarding events and competitions. These are discussed next.

Inter-Collectiveness and Dynamics

During my meetings with interviewees from the NZ skateboarding community, it was evident how close-knit the community is. Often research participants would comment on this tightness using such phrases as, "it's a small community", or "we're only a small community". I found that most interviewees knew each other either personally, by name, or by reputation. Although I recognise that interviewees did belong to skateboarding-related organisations and there was a common link, their knowledge of other skaters extended beyond these boundaries. For instance, during interviews, I heard "stories" both good and bad about various skateboarders located around NZ, as well as those who had relocated to Australia. Such stories were provided by not just locally-based interviewees, but also others I spoke with located around Aotearoa. Additionally, I witnessed many stories and updates about research participants. Often the stories (or possibly gossip) provided were debasing or criticism of other skateboarders. Several interviewees also noted they had heard stories about themselves that they claimed had been either blown out of proportion or did not happen. One interviewee commented on this negative attitude as common for skaters adding, "There's a lot of social bullying going on" (personal communication, August, 2019).

Skatepark Communities – "My closest friends now are all skaters"

Interviewees identified skateparks as playing an important role for skateboarders and their families to interact and develop a sense of community. Previous research has shown that at the local level, skateboarding communities are developed and formed by relationships created at the local skatepark (Borden, 2019b; Chiu, 2009; Dupont, 2014; Turner, 2017). While, street skaters often create their sense of community with their peers, performing tricks at "street/skate spots", they are also users of skateparks, it is just not their preferred choice (Atencio et al., 2009; Chiu, 2009). However, those park skateboarders that regularly use a local skatepark will often form a strong emotional connection with the location and its other users, just as street skaters also become attached to specific street spots they frequent (Dupont, 2014; Howell, 2001; O'Connor, 2018b; Snyder, 2012). Consequently, skateparks and street spots both provide a strong platform for "community", camaraderie and belonging among skateboarders (Borden, 2019b).

However, as some interviewees were not skateboarders themselves, but rather skate-parents identified, they were also part of the skatepark community. Young skateboarders are commonly referred to as "Groms", who are often accompanied to the skateparks under their non-skateboarding parents' supervision (Borden, 2019b; Dupont, 2014; Németh, 2006). Skate parents play an important and supportive role for Groms by providing transport to and from the park and then playing a protective role while there (Snyder, 2012). As noted by research participants, skateparks provide the platform for skate parents to also become part of the skateboarding community (also see, Beal et al., 2017; Borden, 2019b; Dupont, 2014). For example, as one research participant commented: "Parents come down and we hang out with the parents. They may be involved or maybe not involved, but they get to hang out" (personal communication, August, 2019). Another interviewee noted how weekly "get-togethers" at their local skatepark have become family social picnics: "There's dads and moms. That's the

coolest thing. All us friends, we haven't seen each other for a decade at least, and now we're skating again like we used to do, but we've got our kids 'in-tow'" (personal communication, September, 2019). In Christchurch, one "skate-dad" who has never skated explained how he covers the costs to provide BBQs for the skatepark community on Fridays "to give a good vibe", and:

> My closest friends now are all skaters. I don't skate personally, but I try to do as much as I can within my own restrictions to try to give back and do whatever I can do, to support the community. (personal communication, August, 2019)

Previous research in the USA has also identified how parents volunteer their time to rally for "safe" skateparks for the children to skate or to further contribute to the community (Beal et al., 2017; Németh, 2006) which Atencio et al. (2020) identified as a form of sport-parenting. Similar parent involvement was apparent during this research. For example, one skate parent commented how she was motivated to establish a secondary school skateboarding competition while visiting their local skatepark (personal communication, March, 2020). Another explained how he constantly petitioned his city council regarding a newly constructed skatepark that he considered "unsafe" (personal communication, August, 2019); Both cases are discussed in Chapter Five.

In contrast to the positive views of skatepark communities provided by many interviewees, some suggested that they may not be so friendly to everyone. For instance, one skateboarder commented that he had not noticed any sense of "community" while skating: "I don't see people interacting with each other at the skatepark, just individuals or several small groups keeping to themselves" (personal communication, October, 2019), I also observed similar interactions or lack of at skateparks. Another interviewee mentioned that while she felt the atmosphere at small local skateparks is generally inviting, the bigger skateparks can be more intimidating: "The big parks, like Victoria Park [Auckland], I hate the vibe at that

park. It just feels 'yucky' [laughs]. Nobody's really nice to each other. People will yell at you" (personal communication, August, 2019). Previous research in the USA has identified similar instances of isolation among skaters at the skatepark and also variations between differing skateparks (e.g. Beal, 1996; Chiu, 2009; Dupont, 2014). Consequently, notions of "skatepark community" and its "inclusiveness" are dependent on one's gender, age, and the group that they associate with, and the skatepark they regularly visit (discussed later below).

Social Media

Social media is highly utilised by NZ skateboarders as a form of interaction and communication (also see Chapter Five). Action/lifestyle sport communities have readily adopted social media as an effective platform for social interaction and profile building (Ojala, 2014; Thorpe, 2017; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019). Similarly, for skateboarders, social media provides the platform to convey and develop their authenticity while signifying membership with their respective community and as means of communication with other community members (Dupont, 2020). Regarding social media use, one interviewee commented: "They don't have a formal club structure, because they use social media as their form of community…They can step in or out of it, it's very informal" (personal communication, April, 2019). For example, Auckland Vert Skateboarding Association (association in name only) explained how their Facebook group brings skaters together:

> If anyone comes to Auckland, from anywhere in New Zealand, they post on our page
> that they are here. We'll go meet them down at the ramp and we have a session. So,
> the idea is for us to skate together, and it totally works. (interviewee, personal
> communication, August, 2019)

Based on my observations, while the social media platforms Facebook and YouTube are popular with the NZ community, Instagram is by far the most used by all demographics. As one research participant commented, "Instagram is a big skateboarding platform. Like all

the skateboarders, that's all that they use, that's what they put all their footage on. I hardly use Facebook anymore, unless my posts are going from Instagram to Facebook" (personal communication, July, 2020). Facebook Groups still play an important role to create online community collectiveness, such as Auckland Skate Spots, Shut Up and Skate NZ, and Skateboard Collectors New Zealand.

Skateboarding Events and Competitions

My research suggested that skateboarding competitions and events are a major source of social interaction for some in the NZ skateboarding community. As one interviewee commented, "They do want some sense of community, and they want to have the odd event, as that is part of being part of that community. It's an opportunity to showcase their skills within that community" (personal communication, April, 2019). Skateboarding events can be non-competitive or competitive (i.e. "sport"). At the local level, events are social opportunities for the community to come together such as "skate jams" or "get-togethers" organised and run by a local philanthropic organisation/group, skate school or local skate shop. These are usually non-competitive skateboarding events that are more casually organised, and often advertised via social media. Competitive events ("competitions" or "comps") however are more formally organised, are sport-focused, and may have prizes, such as donated skateboarding equipment from skate stores and other related businesses as well as cash for the more competitive or higher profile events. Yet, these are still considered community events, and as one event organiser explained, "Our purpose is to put on local contests, which has been really cool for the community. To really encourage people to get together and have events, as well has to have goals for people to work towards" (personal communication, March, 2019).

Bowlzilla is still (in 2023) running annually in Wellington and billing itself as NZ's national championship (noted earlier). Another privately-owned event called the Mangawhai

Bowl Jam (est. 2011; The Mangawhai Bowl Jam, n.d.) has gained considerable popularity with the NZ skateboarding community. Both Bowlzilla and the Mangawhai Bowl Jam were readily identified by interviewees from the skateboarding community as the most prestigious NZ competitions. Yet, the owner/organisers for both events argue that they are still community-based events; "Nobody makes any money off this. I'm not getting paid a salary out of this…generally I'm just doing this for free. It's a community-based event" (Bowlzilla, personal communication, February, 2019). Mangawhai Bowl Jam owner explained how his event draws the skateboarding community together: "They see it as being a good cultural thing, they don't go, 'Argh, comps [imitating disgust]', because comps are rare. And we even get the Bogan weed smoking pissed dudes" (personal communication, August, 2019). In sum, while there are some differences in opinion regarding sport vs lifestyle skating, competitions and skate jams allow the NZ skateboarding community to gather and interact. Some further subcultural differences in skateboarding in Aotearoa are discussed next.

Social Dynamics in the New Zealand Skateboarding Community

Notions of community extend to inclusiveness of gender, age, and ethnicity. Porter (2003) identified that there is a common ideology in skateboarding that suggests that the subculture is inclusive to anyone regardless of gender, race, ability, and sexuality. Yet previous research on skateboarding communities in the USA has identified that white, middle-class, heterosexual males, are observed as the most "authentic" and dominant characteristics of a "skateboarder" (Abulhawa, 2020; Atencio et al., 2009; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Dupont, 2014; Wheaton & Beal, 2003; Yochim, 2010). Using Bourdieu's (1984) concept of cultural capital, Thornton's (1995) study on dance club culture in the UK defined the social status of a subculture's members as "subcultural capital", or "authenticity". Dupont's (2014) study on the hierarchical status of skatepark communities in the USA

identified that subcultural capital played a significant role in identifying the authenticity of skateboarders. Here I discuss perceptions of societal status, gender, age, and ethnicity in the NZ skateboarding scene.

Subcultural Hierarchy: "There's a kind of mana structure"

I did not intentionally explore subcultural power hierarchies, this was not a focus of this research. However, power imbalances were evident throughout my research. Dupont's (2014) research on skatepark hierarchies in the USA found that skaters who have the most authenticity and power to influence other community members are young adult males who possess high levels of skateboarding skill, ability and subcultural knowledge (i.e. the "Rad-Skaters). While Rad-Skaters (such as Bowman Hansen, Shaun Boucher, Zedyn Fellows, and Tommy Finn) were readily identified and celebrated by participants, based on interviews and my observations, veteran skaters, or in particular ex-professional skaters appear to maintain a considerable degree of influence in Aotearoa.

Often in subcultures, veteran members are observed as being "core" or more "authentic" and having more influence over younger or newer members (Widdicombe & Wooffitt, 1990). The long-term "commitment" to skateboarding by veteran skaters, further consolidates their identity and authenticity (Dupont, 2014). Based on my observations, the older male skaters who have had some professional skateboarding experience (i.e. "pro" or "ex-pro" skaters) were observed as having the most authenticity and influence within the NZ skateboarding community. The ex-pro skaters I met during this research were quick to identify and highlight their past skateboarding careers, whom they were sponsored by, some personal achievements and other known skaters that were in the same skate team.

Previous research has also shown that it is common practice for skateboarders to verbally recount their personal skating histories and experiences to affirm their subcultural capital, identity and authenticity (Atencio et al., 2009; Dupont, 2014; Willing et al., 2020).

Being sponsored is also perceived as a "badge of proficiency" (i.e. "making it") by many action sport proponents (Dupont, 2014; Eidenmueller, 2018; Snyder, 2012). Previous research has shown that skateboarders have a keen interest in skateboarding history and honour past legendary skaters and their commitment to the sport (Beal & Weidman, 2003). Some NZ ex-pro skaters that were identified regularly by interviewees were Lee Ralph, Chey Ataria, Dave Crabb and Andrew Morrison.

This study found that some ex-pro skaters have considerable influence on the NZ skateboarding scene and have either been involved in or provided mentorship to organisations such as SBNZ (see Chapters Five). While explaining how the veteran skaters form a type of informal governance for the NZ skateboarding community, one interviewee commented "…there's a 'Mana' kind of structure in skateboarding" (personal communication, March, 2020). Mana is a Māori (i.e. NZ indigenous people) term that indicts personal qualities such as: prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, and, charisma (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, n.d.). In this quote, we see an NZ-specific interpretation of the skateboarding hierarchy as observed in international research. While the participant was not Māori but Pākehā (i.e. a European New Zealander) their use of Te Reo[3] (i.e. the Māori language) was not surprising as Te Reo words are increasingly being widely adopted and integrated by NZ society.

During the skateboarding competitions, and the SBNZ meetings I attended, it was possible to observe the level of respect for ex-pro skaters on display. At meetings, the ex-pro and veteran skateboarders were those who were the most involved in the discussion and

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[3] Te Reo was made the official language of New Zealand in 1987, followed by sign language in 2006. To date English remains the most widely spoken language in Aotearoa (The Ministry for Ethnic Communities, n.d.).

decision making whereas others were more likely to observe and listen. This also included the Rad Skaters that were present at these meetings. At larger skateboarding competitions such as Bowlzilla and Mangawhai Bowl Jam, it was common for a well-known ex-pro (or rather "celebrity") skateboarder at "bowl-side" to chat and congratulate participants, provide photo opportunities, and sometimes guest present. Additionally, the "Masters" event is one of the most popular as participants are generally ex-pro skaters or well-known veteran skateboarders. Therefore, veteran and ex-pro skaters sit on the higher level of the skateboarding hierarchy in Aotearoa.

The Marginalisation of Women and Girl Skaters

The marginalisation of female skateboarders by male skateboarders is a common theme in the literature (Abulhawa, 2020; Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Buckingham, 2009; Dupont, 2014). Previous research in the USA has shown that female skateboarders are often observed by their male counterparts as not taking skateboarding seriously, lacking skill, and only being interested in the social aspects of belonging to the community (Atencio et al., 2009; Beal, 1999; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Dupont, 2014). Beal and Wilson's (2004) research on skateboarders' identities in the USA found that notions of "being hurt" and "experiencing pain" is a masculine discourse that males use to discredit the authenticity of female skaters who are seen as afraid to take risks when they skate. Other research has suggested that some female skaters are averse to risk taking or being hurt while attempting to perform tricks (Atencio et al., 2009; Dupont, 2014; Kelly et al., 2005). However, risk-taking and taking the "slams" is the only way that female skaters can prove that they can "skate" to male skateboarders, so they persevere (Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Kelly et al., 2005). However, what is salient is that the male discourse regarding pain and toughness marginalises the authenticity and skating ability of female skaters (Abulhawa, 2020; Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Dupont, 2014).

In response, female skateboarders have redefined the traditional view of "girlhood" and femininity to create their own identity separate from skateboarding's fratriarchal masculine culture (Beal & Wilson, 2004; Kelly et al., 2005; Pomerantz et al., 2004; Porter, 2003) such as through organised "girls-only" meet-ups and coaching sessions (Abulhawa, 2020; Atencio et al., 2009; Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Beal et al., 2017; Borden, 2019). This research identifies there have been similar occurrences in NZ. The provision for girls and women skateboarding in NZ has been largely driven by female skaters themselves through initiatives, such as: social media groups to connect and organise "meet-ups" for girls and women skaters, establishing girls and women only skate schools, and formal wellbeing organisations such as Wellness Riders (aka Maanaki Fit) based in Auckland (also see Chapter Five).

Male participants during my research generally commented somewhat bewilderingly but approvingly on how more girls and women skate. For instance, "Yeah, it's crazy because I swear that in ten years of skateboarding, I haven't seen girls [skating] in Dunedin except for the last year or two, and it's randomly all of a sudden" (personal communication, August, 2019). Female skaters were commonly identified by male participants as "girl-skaters" or "chick-skaters". For example, one male interviewee explained:

> I skate with a bunch of them down here. They are really good chick skateboarders. They just come and hang out. We don't separate the girls from the boys. We don't put these limits in. You know, "You can't do this". (personal communication, August, 2019)

As seen here, men often did not recognise women's marginalisation.

However, female interviewees often felt differently, identifying bullying and intimidation. One woman skateboarder and coach, and another who is an event organiser both commented on bullying by male skaters on themselves, their Groms, and their use of the

skatepark: "I've had skateboarders trying to intimidate me and beat me up, and vandalise my event and sabotage it, and trying to intimidate the people that would compete. It's at skatepark level" (personal communication, March, 2020). Both interviewees also said they receive unwanted advice on coaching and running events, which they termed "mansplaining". Nonetheless, somewhat paradoxically both interviewees felt that some older male skaters are very supportive; "They provide a lot of moral support. Which has been incredible" (personal communication, March, 2020). However, they both felt that attitudes to girls and women skaters by male skateboarders are improving. Similarly, an NZ-based study by Collins (2021) on the Auckland-based skate school Girls Skate NZ found that male skaters at skateparks have become increasingly more accepting of the girl skaters during coaching sessions, but the girls still felt that gendered barriers are present challenging their efforts to become or be considered "skateboarders".

There has also been an increase in competitive female skateboarding in Aotearoa. For instance, Bowlzilla 2022 experienced its largest ever number of girls and women entrants, a fact that was celebrated by the MCs (fieldnotes). The majority of the entrants were tweens or young teenage girls. However, most were the daughters of veteran male skaters, which was apparent as the MCs continually referenced this fact during their runs. Nash and Moore's (2021) study on parental influences on girls' participation in surfing, mountain biking, and skateboarding in Australia found that men often shape how their daughters access action sports and their skill development. The authors argued that this practice further consolidates male dominance rather than improving gender equity, as girls' participation is based on the male experience of their father rather than a woman's experience (Nash & Moore, 2021). I observed that the male MC at Bowlzilla 2022 repeatedly, verbally celebrated the status of the competitor's father. While this may have provided a talking point for the MCs' banter, the MCs' need to reference the fathers is an indication of the "authenticity" and status that these

veteran male skaters maintain compared to their daughters. It also illustrates values associated with being perceivably "schooled" in the fratriarchal masculine culture of skateboarding via their fathers' supervision (e.g. Abulhawa, 2020; e.g. Beal & Wilson, 2004; Kelly et al., 2005; Pomerantz et al., 2004; Porter, 2003). That is, the girls' participation at the skateboarding event can be rationalised by the MCs for the other participants and spectators at the event.

During a live stream of the Mangawhai Bowl Jam 2021 that I watched, similar marginalisation was evident in the commentary provided by the two male presenters. Firstly, no women presenters were commenting on any of the skateboarding events. Rather, they were two well-known ex-pro veteran male skaters. They both continually identified the Women's Division and female competitors as "the girls". During the women's event, the two male presenters praised "how far women's skateboarding has come" in NZ and how many girls and women skaters there are today compared to when they were skating during the 1980s and 1990s. The discussion then turned to how the "girls" were taking the "slams" and "hits" just like the males, with one finishing the conversation, "I like nothing better than to see a 'chick' make a big wipe-out". Both commentators could be heard chuckling to each other quietly about the comment. While they claim to embrace the rise of women's skateboarding, the presenters' comments and actions trivialise girls and women skaters and reinforce masculine notions of risk-taking, getting hurt, and perceived skill.

Age and Generations: Agelessness and Mentoring

Skateboarding has been traditionally observed as being a young person's activity and youth culture. The age of skateboarding participants has been characterised as anywhere from 8-27 years of age (Borden, 2019a; Dupont, 2014; Willing & Shearer, 2015). More recently, the "middle-aged" skater has started to receive more attention in the literature identifying those skaters who had started skateboarding in their early years and have continued to do so,

now often accompanied by their children (Borden, 2019b; Dupont, 2020; Willing et al., 2019). A commonly expressed theme by older research participants was how the "veteran skaters", adolescent and young adult skaters, and Groms all "hang out" together at the skatepark, suggesting a shared experience and inter-generational community interaction that transcends age.

The perception of "agelessness" expressed by veteran skateboarders further identifies the notion of inclusiveness which extends to age. For instance, one veteran skater in his 30s commented:

Some of my best friends down here are 10 to 12-year-old kids. I'll hang out with them, we'll skate, I'll teach them a trick. They'll teach me a trick. We do this, we'll bond, whatever. We'll go into the house and they'll go watch cartoons. And I'm like, "Oh my god! It's a little kid". You know, it's a thing (personal communication, August, 2019).

A shared interest and participation in skateboarding provides the platform that not only transcends age but also allows veteran skaters to say connected. Continuing to skate, allows veteran skaters to maintain their sense of community belonging, personal identity, and connection to the younger generation of skaters (Borden, 2019; Maitland, 2021; Willing et al., 2019). Skateparks also provide the venue for mentoring Groms. While skateboarding is still idealistically considered as being a "DIY practice", self-taught through personal perseverance, older skateboarders see themselves as mentors nurturing Groms by providing informal coaching (Beal et al., 2017). As one research participant explained, "We are helping them just get their head around what is a skatepark, the etiquette around a skatepark, where do you stand at a skatepark, and when you 'go' at a skatepark" (personal communication, August, 2019). One skate parent explained how older skaters provided free Sunday morning coaching for Groms, highlighting the benefits of this process, "You've got older skaters that

are absolutely 100% behind you and give all of the tips…They want nothing from you, apart from to see you progress" (personal communication, August, 2019). I also heard stories of how veteran skaters enforce that Groms wear helmets and pads at the skatepark and gift their old skateboards and other equipment to younger skaters who are in need.

Ethnicity

Skateboarding is identified in the literature as being predominately a "white persons" activity, with white skateboarders, compared to other ethnicities, possessing a higher degree of "status" or "standing" in the subculture (Atencio et al., 2009; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Borden, 2019b; Németh, 2006). Neftalie Williams (2020; 2021b) however, has challenged this view arguing that skateboarders of colour in the USA have always been at the forefront of skateboarding helping to shape the culture. He argues that it is the skateboarding industry, media, and academics, that have portrayed skateboarding's whiteness (N. S. Williams, 2020). Moore (2006) who documented the early years of NZ skateboarding identified several Māori top skaters who helped grow the local scene such as Victor Viskovich, Leah Ralph, and Elroy Ainsley. Additionally, research participants often identified and celebrated two ex-pro NZ skateboarding legends who are both Māori, Lee Ralph and Chey Ataria.

It has been argued that skateboarding provides a platform to break down cultural barriers such as perceptions of ethnicity (Dupont, 2014; Wheaton, 2013; N. S. Williams, 2020; Willing et al., 2020). Several current top NZ skateboarders of colour represented in print, online skateboarding and social media such as Tommy Finn, Matt Markland, Bowman Hansen, and Cato Dobbs were discussed during interviews. While it was not a key focus of this research, I did not identify any clear evidence about how ethnicity impacted belonging in the NZ skateboarding community. Certainly, the majority of research participants from the skateboarding community do appear to be Pākehā. Additionally, those individuals that are

involved in skateboarding organisations and the institutionalisation of NZ skateboarding appear to be predominantly Pākehā.

As Wheaton (2013) identified, as many action sports are predominately "white", it is often assumed by participants that race does not matter. For example, while referring to the inclusiveness of skateboarding, one Pākehā participant commented, "We don't go to the skatepark and say 'that kid is a kid, and that's an adult, and that's a girl, and that's a Chinese person, and that's a Māori person'. We just hang out" (personal communication, August, 2019). This is not to say that racism or racial stereotyping does not exist in the NZ skateboarding scene and this may well be the case in less formal settings. For example, a news report detailing the verbal and physical harassment of a person of colour by a group of male Pākehā skaters at a Christchurch skatepark in 2021 (see: Anderson, 2021) suggests that racism is evident among some NZ skateboarders. Being a Pākehā male could potentially explain my inability and others to observe any racial inequality

Cultural Shifts and Changing Attitudes

Some older research participants mentioned there has been a culture shift by "Groms". One interviewee mentioned that today's young skaters do not seem to have the "outlaw" and rebellious back story that is typically associated with skate culture to rationalise why they started to skate, "I think that there is a new generation, that is growing up in a world that doesn't have that 'baggage' necessarily. They don't have the misrepresentation" (personal communication, February, 2019). Further supporting the shift in attitudes, one veteran skater and skate school owner noted that Groms do not have the same commitment to skateboarding today, "I notice you don't get a lot of 'lifers' in the new kids. Like, they'll skate for 10 or 15 years" (personal communication, May, 2019). Wheaton and Thorpe's (2018a) study on social media action sport consumption trends found that there has been a generational shift in the attitude towards the Olympics, with younger generations (i.e. Gen Y

and Z) being the most enthusiastic whereas older participants (i.e. Gen X) being more resistant.

The growth in skate schools for NZ children and parent involvement is playing a significant role in the new attitude of Groms (also see Chapter Five). Coaching via skate schools and parent involvement has become more common in skateboarding and resulting in a culture shift among young skaters in the USA, UK, and Australia (Atencio et al., 2020; Beal et al., 2017; Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Turner, 2017). For example, one veteran skater commented, "A lot more parents are getting on board with it. Which is great, they support their kids with whatever they doing. It's not just seen as this rebellious thing…that is starting to fade away" (personal communication, May, 2019). Other research participants felt that the increase in skateparks has also played a role in this different attitude, as one skate school owner commented, "When we grew up, there weren't so many skateparks. So, you learnt how to skate on the street or at the local school or you made your own spots. The kids today don't seem to have that" (personal communication, May, 2019).

However, interviewees did note that the alternative anti-establishment psyche is still present among some Grom and veteran skaters. For instance, one interviewee commented, "I think that you will always have the punk rock kid who is firmly against and doesn't want to share our little culture with anyone" (personal communication, March, 2019). Veteran skaters were also identified by participants as being the most resistant to cultural change and skateboarding's increasing popularity: "Like a lot of skateboarders are 'RIP skateboarding', and 'skateboarding is all mainstream now', and they're worried about its image" (Interviewee, personal communication, May, 2019). Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) also identified how it is the older veteran (in their 40s) surfers and skateboarders, that are more interested in retaining the nostalgic aspects of the activities, and more resistant to commercialisation and sportisation. However, the new change in attitude was more positively

received by those whom I spoke to during this research, "I hope that it gets more encouraged, and put in more of a positive light, away from the 'little ratbag, that is destroying public property' to something the is more recognised; especially the competitive side of it" (personal communication, March, 2019). Even though there appears to be a shift away from the traditional philosophical view of skateboarding and favour for its sportisation by some skaters, some sub-cultural differences in how one participates and engages with the skateboarding community are still present.

Conclusions

This chapter has provided an overview of the development of NZ skateboarding and outlined the contemporary skateboarding scene in Aotearoa. The discussion has shown that skateboarding trends, fluctuations in popularity, and the culture of NZ skateboarding have mirrored those of many other countries around the world. The consumption of predominantly USA-based print and online niche media has played a significant role in how NZ skaters are exposed to skateboarding culture and how they participate in both the activity and subcultural community.

There is consensus among research participants that skateboarding is experiencing ever-increasing popularity in NZ today, especially among girls and women skaters and children attending skate schools. Additionally, participants identified that the NZ skateboarding community shares a common ideology of inclusiveness which they perceive extends to gender, age, and, ethnicity. However, some girls and women skaters experience forms of marginalisation by male skaters, and evidence of dominant discourses of masculinity and toughness are present. It is important to note that research participants constitute only a small proportion of the NZ skateboarding community (i.e. being adults,

many involved with skateboarding-related organisations, and predominantly male) and their views might not be representative of the wider community in Aotearoa.

The NZ skateboarding community is highly connected and "close-knit". Community interaction is facilitated and achieved by local skatepark and street communities, competitive and non-competitive events, mentoring of Groms by veterans, word-of-mouth conversations, and social media (especially via Instagram) and travelling. Veteran skaters and especially the ex-pro skaters enjoy a high degree of authenticity, respect and "mana" that provides an informal form of governance for the NZ skateboarding community. Grom mentoring by veteran skaters allows them to retain authenticity and subcultural and social capital. Veteran skater authenticity is also based on their past skating careers (e.g. "ex-pro", skateboarding skill and ability) and personal knowledge and contacts they can share with the skateboarding community. Reciprocally, veteran skaters can retain their connection with the skateboarding community, and the younger generation of skaters, and reinforce their own skateboarding identities. While there is a cultural shift among some younger skateboarders away from the traditional anti-establishment and rebellious psyche of the younger generation of skaters, it is still prevalent among older core skaters.

Chapter Five

Skateboarding Provision in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Chapter Four contextualised the evolution of skateboarding and characterised the

skate community in Aotearoa, New Zealand (NZ) to lay the foundation for the following

empirical chapters. Here, I provide a further understanding of the NZ skateboarding

organisational field (i.e. "scene") by exploring the range of stakeholders that provide for

skateboarding in Aotearoa at the regional and local levels. Just as the NZ sport sector is

reliant on the four distinct but inter-dependent sub-sectors (Public, Non-Profit, For-Profit,

and, Informal sectors) for its provision (Hoye et al., 2015; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012), so

too, is NZ skateboarding. From these sectors, several different stakeholder groups contribute

to the NZ skateboarding scene in different ways. Some are governmental entities, such as

Territorial Authorities, whereas others are commercial organisations based inside and outside

the skateboarding industry. Others are formal or informal skateboarder-related organisations

or groups/collectives with philanthropic interests in developing skateboarding and providing

advocacy for their local communities. In this chapter, I discuss these differing stakeholder

groups and how they provide for skateboarding in Aotearoa. To do so, I draw on numerous

sources, including my interviews with research participants from skateboarding-related

organisations and my secondary data research of documents, websites, and online and print

media.

First, I discuss those that provide for grassroots skateboarding in NZ, namely:

Territorial Associations (i.e. City Councils or "Councils"), Regional Skateboarding

Associations/Groups, and skatepark communities. Then, private sector organisations are

discussed, such as the skateboarding retail industry, including skate stores and importers of

skateboarding equipment, skate schools, skatepark developers and social media. Next, the

provision of skateboarding competitions and events is discussed, including the various multi-sector stakeholders who contribute to their facilitation. I then introduce the non-profit philanthropic organisation Yeah Gnar, an outlier in its provision for the skateboarding community. Finally, the provision for girls and women recreational and sport-skateboarding is presented.

Grassroots Skateboarding Providers

In this section, I give an overview of the public and non-profit stakeholders that provide for grassroots skateboarding in Aotearoa, such as Territorial Authorities, formal and informal skateboarding-related organisations and groups that advocate for their respective communities. Some challenges and tensions between skateboarding-related organisations and councils are identified. It also highlights some successful collaborations between these organisational types and the positive outcomes they have achieved.

Territorial Authorities: Council Provision of Skateboarding

Sport in NZ is highly reliant on governmental funding and volunteerism for its provision. The 67 NZ-based Territorial Authorities (District and City Councils or "Councils") which are the regional governmental authorities, invest considerably in the sport and recreation sector to provide facilities and support community physical activity programmes for their constituents (Dickson & Naylor, 2013). While NZ Councils seldom interact with skateboarders directly, this stakeholder group are the primary public sector provider for NZ skateboarding through the construction and maintenance of skateparks.

According to the online visual reference library of recreational and play places in NZ, Places New Zealand (n.d.) claim that there are over 250 skateparks around Aotearoa. The Sievers Grove Skate Park in Porirua, Wellington is acclaimed as the oldest skatepark in the Southern Hemisphere (Porirua City Council, n.d.). Skateparks provide the NZ skateboarding community with the facility to skate, the social hub to connect and interact with other skaters

and the venue for events and coaching (see Chapter Four). Regional governmental bodies and philanthropic organisations internationally have recognised the community benefits of skateparks, and have instigated the construction of many local skateparks (Beal et al., 2017; Borden, 2019b; Howell, 2008). In NZ, councils are the key provider for the NZ skateboarding community as they are responsible for initiating and funding skatepark construction and maintenance. Consequently, councils are the "owners" of public skateparks. In addition to recreational use, skateparks provide the venue for more organised skateboarding activities, such as skate schools for providing coaching sessions, community organised skate jams and competitive skateboarding events.

Chiu (2009) identified how since the 1990s city councils in the USA have considered skateparks to be "multi-use" facilities designed to include various other roller sports. Likewise, in NZ, regional and city councils see their role as providers and "owners" of "multi-roller sport" facilities to increase physical activity and social development for their constituents. During my observations of local skateparks, there were various users such as scooter riders (i.e. "scooterers"), roller and inline skaters, "BMXers", as well as skateboarders. Based on my observations, most skatepark users appear to be children often accompanied by their parents, or unaccompanied adolescents, teenagers and young adults with the occasional older/veteran skateboarder. Interviewees identified cultural tensions and clashes between the different types of action sport users of skateparks, such as skateboarders, BMX riders, rollerbladers (inline skaters), and especially scooterers.

Formal and Informal Skater Provision: Regional Skateboarding Associations/Groups

To ensure that their needs are being met by Councils, some NZ skaters have taken steps to arrange themselves into organisations or community groups. Previous USA-based research has identified how some skateboarders have organised themselves into community groups or established legal associations to lobby regional and city councils regarding

skatepark developments and other related concerns (Atencio et al., 2020; Atencio & Beal, 2015; Beal et al., 2017; Borden, 2019b; Howell, 2008; Németh, 2006; Smith, 2019). This research found similar NZ non-profit skateboarding organisations and groups established to advocate for their skateboarding communities, promote skateboarding, and provide opportunities for community interaction. Being regionally based, I identified these non-profit stakeholders as Regional Skateboarding Associations (RSAs) and Regional Skateboarding Groups (RSGs).

My regular scans of the New Zealand Companies Office (n.d.) website for listed skateboarding-related incorporated societies during this research (conducted 2018 to late-2022) showed that there have been several attempts to formally establish regional associations and local clubs since the 1970s. Using self-titled terminology to identify their organisation, such as "association", "club", "community", or "school", most have either voluntarily dissolved, or been struck off by the Companies Office. Of those that are currently registered as Incorporated Societies, two have only been registered since 2017 and three others since 2019.

I consider RSAs as "formal organisations" as they are registered with the New Zealand Companies Office as incorporated societies. RSA interviewees explained their associations' formality provided the legitimacy needed to be taken seriously by councils, for example, "We really needed to form a legitimate [i.e. a formally registered] non-profit organisation. So that has a bit more weight behind it, when going in and dealing with them" (Interviewee, personal communication, March, 2019). Three good NZ RSA examples are: Taranaki Skateboarding Association (TSA), Wellington Skateboarding Association (WSA), and Dunedin Skateboarding Association (DSA).

In contrast, RSGs are informal (i.e. unregistered) organisations that have either been stuck off by the register as an Incorporated Society but continue to operate such as H-Town

Skate Project and the Wanaka Skate Club or have never registered such as Palmerston City Skateboarding Community (PNC). One interviewee explained why their RSG was concerned about registering: "We didn't really see the need for it. We've built good relationships with the council and we never wanted the money to sit with us…we're just there to design [skateparks], for consultation, feedback with the designers" (personal communication, May, 2019). Regardless of their informal status, RSGs have a similar rationale for their establishment and role as RSAs and are highly effective organisations. The legitimacy of RSAs/RSGs does not just stay with those that are formally registered associations. The fact that an RSAs/RSG exists, provides an important point of contact for Councils to connect with valuable insider knowledge and advice from their local skateboarding communities.

Based on my research, RSA/RSG committee members have a variety of career backgrounds ranging from lawyers and business professionals to structural engineers and oil technicians to blue-collar workers and students. However, most RSA/RSG committee members that I met were male and were older/veteran skaters, well-known in their communities. I identified two women committee members (one RSA and one RSG) but I was unable to secure interviews. The participant's rationale for establishing an RSA/RSG was to address three key concerns regarding their skateboarding communities: (a) to petition their local council regarding skatepark construction and improvements, (b) to provide community competitions and events, and (c) to remain connected with and "give back" to their skateboarding communities. For instance, one RSA committee member commented: "We had an idea (well myself and a couple of the older skateboarders), it's kind of time to put something back. You know, you get older, you can't skate as much, but you've got a lot of experience" (personal communication, May, 2019). By continuing to skate and engaging in activities that support their skateboarding communities, veteran skaters can uphold their sense of community, personal identity, kinship with younger skaters, and authenticity (Borden,

2019; Dupont, 2014; Maitland, 2021; Willing et al., 2019). Therefore, being involved in RSAs/RSGs is another way that veteran skaters attempt to retain their authenticity.

Local Level Provision: Informal Skatepark Communities or "Clubs"

In mainstream sport, clubs are the formalised organisation that offer sport and community development at the local level and are highly dependent on volunteers for their coordination and operation (Hoye et al., 2015; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006; Shilbury et al., 2016; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). Such institutional formality (i.e. the "sport club") is often considered at odds with the subcultural ideology of many action sports (Wheaton, 2013; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017). Traditional notions of "club" and "membership" often associated with mainstream sports do not exist in many action sports (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011; Jeanes et al., 2019; Wheaton, 2013; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). At the local level, formalised skateboarding clubs in this institutional sense of paid membership and spaces such as "clubhouses", are non-existent.

While some RSAs/RSGs and community groups identify as a "club" to denote the collectiveness of their respective skateboarding communities (e.g. Wanaka Skate Club or East Skate Club), they are not traditional "sport clubs". However, there are several ways in which the NZ skateboarding community do perform the same function as the traditional "club", with skateparks as key spaces and social media providing the platform for community interaction and collaboration.

As I discussed in Chapter Four, skateparks provide the grounds for some skateboarders to develop friendships and community and act as a platform for skateboarders to establish both informal and more organised interactions with local skateboarding communities. As one interviewee commented, skateboarders at a local Auckland skatepark formed a pseudo-skate club: "That's essentially a club. Like if you go to Birkenhead [skatepark, Auckland] right now, there's a crew of dudes, they've all probably got tattoos,

BSP tattooed on their legs. You know, the Birkenhead Skateboarding Park" (personal communication, August, 2019). However, what distinguishes these informal groupings from traditional sport clubs is that these are casual and voluntary, there are no membership subscriptions to be paid, no requirement to turn up for coaching sessions, competitions, or club meetings, nor to wear uniforms.

Additionally, just as volunteerism at mainstream sport clubs is important, local skateboarding community groups are similarly dependent on veteran skaters and the parents of Groms (Atencio et al., 2020; Atencio & Beal, 2015; Beal et al., 2017; Németh, 2006). Volunteerism can be seen at the skatepark in instances of older skateboarders mentoring (i.e. "coaching") younger skaters, parents of young skaters organising weekly BBQs, and groups of skateboarders and the local skate shop organising skate jams and get-togethers (also see Chapter Four). One interviewee explained: "Without even having to have any association or any club…They're doing it. They're all coming in and organising their own "mini-events" or skate trips, which again is like a training session. It's a self-governing, self-managing community" (personal communication, August, 2019). The provision for female skateboarding has also been similarly self-driven by girls and women.

Challenges and Tensions of Dealing with Councils

Research participants highlighted the challenges of working with councils, particularly concerning skatepark provision, event organisation, and establishing meaningful relationships with them. Poorly designed and constructed skateparks are a great source of frustration for skateboarding skaters and communities inhibiting the skating experience and resulting in the lack of use (S. Jones & Graves, 2000; Smith, 2019; Taylor & Khan, 2011). All RSA/RSG interviewees said that one of their associations' primary roles is petitioning their local councils regarding skatepark maintenance, future upgrades and new park developments. As one RSA committee member explained, their association was established

to address local concerns about the condition of the city's existing skateparks "[local skateboarders] got a bit vocal about it," (personal communication, August 2019). Similarly, two other RSA participants commented on how a large portion of skateparks in other NZ cities compared to theirs, and are run down or "unskateable" because of a lack of council maintenance. Concerns regarding the quality of skatepark construction, and the capability (and legitimacy) of some skatepark developers to build quality parks were commonly expressed themes by research participants (discussed in more detail later).

The lack of available council funding for skateparks is another source of frustration for interviewees. An RSA interviewee explained their frustration with their city council: "[Skatepark funding] is under the same budget to get a playground, and they don't have any more developments planned for the next 10 years" (personal communication, March, 2019). Howell (2008) noted similar practice in the USA where it is common for city councils to allocate skatepark investment with "playgrounds" as they consider them to be the same thing. Commonly, skateparks are considered by councils as providing for a broad spectrum of users aged from young children to adults (S. Jones & Graves, 2000; Smith, 2019; Taylor & Khan, 2011). As discussed earlier, in NZ skateparks are used by not just skateboarders but other users such as roller sport and BMX users. Out of frustration, some RSA/RSG participants mentioned that they do audits on the condition of local skateparks for their respective councils, even doing unpaid repairs and cleaning of some skateparks themselves. Skateboarding communities or self-appointed skatepark community members are also common globally providing "DIY" ("do-it-yourself") repair and maintenance (Smith, 2019). As the interviewee explained, "We want to make it easy for them, for making those decisions about sending people out there, or how to fix it" (personal communication, March, 2019).

Interviewees identified that gaining council permissions and permits for organising community competitions and events was challenging; Having to meet "unrealistic" health and

safety requirements, providing crowd management plans and amenities, and, for non-profit events being pressured to provide proof that they are not for financial gain. Jeanes et al. (2019, 2022) also noted that it is common for informal sports to avoid the legal requirements and constraints, and their associated costs and responsibilities to use public spaces (often illegally) with council consent in Australia. Interviewees mentioned that council permit costs are increasingly more difficult and expensive. For example, one event organiser commented about their local Auckland Council:

It's like they are trying to mock how you run your event, the way they go about it. It's like they just don't want things to happen in the city. There didn't use to be a permit cost...A lot of guys actually do competitions without getting a permit, which I can fully understand why they would do that. (personal communication, May, 2019)

Another major frustration expressed by RSA/RSG participants was the difficulty in creating and maintaining meaningful relationships with council staff. Council's tendency for high-staff turnover was identified as a significant issue. As one participant commented, "You are always dealing with someone new, and you have to start again and explain yourself and explain what you do" (personal communication, May, 2019). Some RSA/RSG participants mentioned that there had been instances where they had been approached by enthusiastic council staff members keen on skatepark development. These were short-lived as the staff member would move to a new role. For example, one interviewee explained this frustration: "So, you take somebody through that journey, and you get them up to speed, and then they go off to a new job, and you have to start the whole process with a new person" (personal communication, August, 2019).

Other interviewees felt that the skateboarding community's concerns were not taken seriously. For example, reflecting on his interaction with his local council, one interviewee commented: "They don't want to listen to you up there [at the council] …and the response

from the guy was, 'I own a skateboard. What do I need to be told about it?' It was absolutely

crazy, the feedback was off-putting, very offensive" (personal communication, August,

2019).

Improved Council Skateboarding Partnering and Effective Collaborations

Regarding the challenges present between councils and skateboarding-related

organisations, interviewees did mention their relationships had been improving. Councils are

starting to observe RSAs/RSGs as legitimate organisations and being more proactive to

engage with them. Being seen as a legitimate point of contact for any organisation taking the

"lead" in an organisational field/network is crucial otherwise it cannot receive the support it

needs from both its external and internal stakeholders (Child, 1997; Human & Provan, 2000;

Provan et al., 2008; Provan & Kenis, 2008; Suchman, 1995). RSA interviewees felt that this

improvement was largely due to being organised and providing a point of contact for councils

to connect with their constituent skateboarding communities. For instance, one RSA

interviewee, commented, "Now that they know that we are here, they have been coming to us

to say 'We've got this skatepark being built, can you have a look at the plans?'" (personal

communication, May, 2019). Similarly, an RSA interviewee explained why the association is

an attractive contact for the Wellington City Council (WCC) regarding local skateboarding,

"You generally have a hundred different people, all saying different things. So, it's really

hard for them to make informed decisions about what people want. One of our directions was

to channel that, into one voice" (personal communication, March, 2019).

Councils also recruit and provide funding to local RSAs/RSGs organisations and

skate schools to assist and meet their physical activity initiatives for young people or to help

these organisations to provide skateboarding events. For instance, one interviewee from a

girls and women only skate school commented, "We've had funding from Auckland Council.

They have funded eight public sessions. So, we went to four different locations around

Auckland over summer" (personal communication, July, 2019). Another good example of a council and skateboarding community collaboration was a focus on an active community initiative called, "We Skate Poneke[4]" to promote skateboarding in the Wellington area.

Initially, the WCC surveyed over 800 representatives from the Wellington skateboarding community to establish their demographics, behaviours and future needs. To do so, the WCC developed a partnership with the local regional skateboarding association Wellington Skateboarding Association (WSA) for advice on how to deliver this initiative. In response, the WCC announced a commitment to reduce the negative stigma towards skateboarders held by the public and to provide more opportunities for Wellingtonians to engage in skateboarding. The We Skate Pōneke initiative promotes both the health benefits of skateboarding and as an alternative form of transport has been heavily promoted by the WCC (Wellington City Council, 2022).

In some instances, RSAs/RSGs work collaboratively with councils to organise skateboarding events. One RSA interviewee reflected on how their council had contributed $5,000 to build some portable skatepark equipment for an event to celebrate Youth Week (personal communication, August, 2019). Councils calling on action sport community organisations to deliver community development and physical activity objectives have become more common (Bradley, 2010; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Wheaton, 2010). Therefore, RSAs/RSGs provide an important service for Councils to create community connection and interaction while simultaneously being able to supply events for the local skateboarding community.

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[4] Original Māori name for Wellington.

Commercial Providers for Community and Sport Skateboarding

Skateboarding's growth and provision have been mainly driven and supported by commercial brands in the skateboarding industry (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; Snyder, 2012; Yochim, 2010). Today, NZ skateboarding is still fundamentally reliant on and supported by the skateboarding industry and related businesses. Not only do the larger skateboarding brands contribute to the NZ scene, but also some smaller, local businesses, skateboarding equipment importers and broad sport or skate stores do as well. Therefore, I briefly discuss the skateboarding industry in Aotearoa, highlighting key areas and commercial brands, and how these private sector stakeholders contribute to the NZ scene.

The New Zealand Skateboarding Retail Industry

Internationally, USA-based brands for skateboards, decks, hardware and clothing are still highly involved in the provision of skateboarding (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; Howell, 2008; Snyder, 2012; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016). Some large (arguably mass produced and marketed) USA skateboarding brands prominent in NZ are World Industries, Element Skateboards, Converse, Vans Shoes, and Dickies. While also supplying many local NZ retail businesses (both skateboarding and non-skateboarding), these brands have their own import and distribution offices either based in NZ or Australia and maintain retail stores in malls and shopping centres around Aotearoa.

Skate stores can be either single stores, commercial franchises or chains. Toy shops and department stores also sell cheap, low quality skateboards as toys. Some retail skate stores are considered to be more authentic as they are specifically skateboarding focused. According to research, stores that provide only "core-branded" equipment tend to be observed by their subcultural community customers as being more authentic compared to stores that have broader product ranges that include generic or more commercial brands

(Dupont, 2014; Giannoulakis, 2016), like DEF Store (Auckland), Curb (Christchurch) and Pavement (Dunedin).

However, most NZ skate stores are "board sports stores" that provide equipment and apparel for several board sports (e.g. surfing, stand up paddle boarding, snowboarding) and/or other roller sports (e.g. roller skating, inline skating, scooters) such as Backdoor, Bordertown, and Cheapskates. Established by Frank Edwards (of Edwards Skateboards) in 1978, Cheapskates is NZ's longest running retail skateboard store chain/franchise (Cheapskates, n.d.). There are also a few NZ solely online skate stores such as Wrong Skate and SK8Factory. Alongside this are several "streetwear" or "beachwear" clothing franchises such as Amazon and North Beach that sell skateboarding equipment as part of their extended product lines, as well as mainstream sport shoe stores like Platypus and Rebel Sports that sell skateboarding brands such as Vans and Converse.

While most skate stores and board sport stores still sell imported mass-produced skateboarding equipment and apparel, some stores sell their own branded products. For example, Empire Skate Store stock and sell a large collection of imported skateboarding product, as well as there their own "Empire" branded clothing and skateboarding. DEF Store also provides a large range of its own branded clothing and skateboards that promote the store's central city location (i.e. Karangahape Road, Auckland) and its online store. "Curb" skate store in Christchurch is another niche brand that provides some mass-produced products as well as its self-branded skateboarding equipment using designs from local artists; "We exist purely to produce quality original products, and to support the skateboarders and artists who are a part of our brand" (Curb, n.d.). While still being self-branded, often the skateboarding equipment is manufactured to order overseas and imported. For instance, the online store Strangelife Skateboards solely sells their own originally designed artwork on

skateboards and clothing that have manufactured in China (Strangelife Skateboards, personal communication, March, 2020).

There appear to be only two NZ-based skateboard manufacturers, Nelson Creek Skateboards and Acid Skateboards New Zealand who are also both skatepark developers. Another crucial part of the supply chain for retail stores is importers and distributors. Two main NZ importers of skateboarding equipment are Step Up Industries, and Irrom Distribution were both identified by interviews as being key supporters of NZ skateboarding. Retail industry provision is typically in the form of sponsorship of talented skaters and competitions and events or donations of equipment to other skateboarding community groups, as discussed during the following sections.

Skate Schools

Skateboarding coaching schools are probably the most common community-based organisations in Aotearoa. There has been a steady increase in skateboarding coaching and skate schools since I started this research in late 2018 which has contributed significantly to increased participation levels of young people in NZ (also see Chapter Four). While coaching is usually frowned upon by skateboarders as it does not fit with the "do-it-yourself" ideology (Beal & Wilson, 2004; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019), the establishment of skate schools has become more common (Beal et al., 2017; Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Turner, 2017).

Explanations by interviewees regarding their rationale to establish skate schools ranged from personal business interests to more socially focused reasons. For example, one skate school owner said they had career interests in mind:

> I would work part-time in the school holidays with a local skater who ran holiday programmes. He had gathered from some of the parents, that we could do something a bit more regular than just in the school holidays. So, I just made a go of it. (personal communication, May, 2019).

Others have had a more community-based rationale for their establishment:

> We had this big hole here, it was like "Well let's get a skate school going. How are we going to do this?" I just started ringing around my old friends that have kids. "Would you be interested in helping? Bring your kid along, or bring a picnic, and, spend a couple of hours at the skatepark". They are all back on their boards now. (personal communication, November, 2019)

Coaching sessions can typically be after-school sessions, regular weekend sessions, and school holiday programmes. Venues commonly include local skateparks, school grounds, cycle/walkways, and public parks. Skate schools also organise and provide competitions or "Skate Jams" for young skaters in their areas. Both Nelson Skate School and Young Guns mentioned that getting schools to accept skateboarding coaching on school grounds had initially been challenging, but attitudes are changing. Some coaching schools provide makeshift skateparks compiled of portable skating obstacles that can be quickly erected and dismantled. All skate school interviewees mentioned that they maintain relationships with their respective councils and Regional Sport Trusts and work collaboratively to deliver physical activity and wellbeing initiatives in schools or for the broader public community.

Skatepark Design and Developers

While I did not initially consider skatepark developers as being important stakeholders and providers in this research, based on participant interviewees' responses, it became clear that they play an important role. While commercial skatepark developers tend not to provide funding or services in kind to the skateboarding community, they are the businesses that councils employ to build the facilities (i.e. skateparks) that skaters use. As identified earlier, poorly constructed skateparks are a significant concern and source of frustration for the skateboarding community. Consequently, interviewees regularly discussed

their frustration with their council's tendency to contract inexperienced developers to construct skateparks.

Previous research has shown that poorly designed skateparks presented frustrations for skateboarders including boredom, having "no flow", being dangerous, and being hard to climb out of, ultimately resulting in a lack of use (S. Jones & Graves, 2000; Smith, 2019; Taylor & Khan, 2011). During my interviews, concerns were expressed regarding the lack of attention to ensuring that new skateparks are designed appropriately and with consultation with skateboarders. This lack of consultation with skateboarders has also been noted in previous research (S. Jones & Graves, 2000; Smith, 2019; Taylor & Khan, 2011).

In the USA, Smith (2019) suggested that while consultation with skateboarders should be the natural path to follow when councils are designing a skatepark, this is seldom the case. Referring to a few local skateparks as "shocking" examples, one RSA commented, "They've clearly just gone online, seen a couple of pictures, no idea about dimensions, and built something awful. Where a little consultation with some genuine skaters, they could've avoided that" (personal communication, May, 2019). Another Council strategy in NZ to include local children in skatepark design for public relations purposes was also frowned upon by the skateboarding community participants: "It sounds like a great idea, but really, it's actually a terrible idea. A lot of the aspects that go into designing a skatepark, kids don't know these things…you've got to get experts to design these things" (personal communication, May, 2019).

The capability of "skatepark developers" contracted by Councils is another quality concern. Research participants perceived that Councils are inclined to take the cheapest "Tender for Contract" rather than knowledge, experience, or capability; "[Councils] have sort of settled for anyone who can pump concrete. They get the job if they're the cheapest" (personal communication, May, 2019). Another interviewee highlighted the importance of

some form of governance and policy/guidelines regarding skatepark construction, "To avoid having charlatans like [developers name] come in rip off cities, build horrendous concrete precast skate parks, take the money and then skip out of town (personal communication, February, 2019).

The interviewees believed that skatepark developers must be skateboarders themselves to possess the required skills and experience to build a high-quality skatepark. For instance, one interviewee identified the importance of using skilled skatepark developers for park construction: "Even if you are just doing the concreting, or following someone else's design, as a skateboarder, you know how things work. It's so important to get the transitions right and everything like that" (personal communication, May, 2019). Another interviewee commented on the lack of quality skatepark developers available in NZ: "There are about only three skatepark builders in the country that you want to deal with because you know the other ones are rubbish" (personal communication, May, 2019). Action sport businesses that are owned and operated by community members are considered as being more authentic by their respective communities compared to non-action companies (Dupont, 2014; B. Edwards & Corte, 2010; Giannoulakis, 2016; Howell, 2005). Some authentic NZ skatepark companies identified by interviewees were: Rich Landscapes, Premium Skate Designs, Nelson Creek Skateparks, and Acid New Zealand.

In contrast, non-skateboarder skatepark developers were referred to by interviewees as "concreting companies". These inauthentic brands were perceived as lacking the necessary knowledge and expertise to design and build durable skateparks. One particular company that was regularly used by various councils around Aotearoa, was frequently identified by skateboarding community participants as providing very poor-quality skateparks. For example, one interviewee commented, "He's not a skateboarder...the ones that he has built around here, they are not well designed, very cookie-cutter. Longevity-wise…they are

sagging really badly. The materials are just falling apart" (personal communication, May, 2019). Another interviewee referred to this developer's skateparks as "[developer's name] Shitters" (personal communication, May, 2019).

Whether the interviewee's views are founded or not, these findings further show the dislike, mistrust, and fear skateboarding communities have of outsiders taking advantage of or cashing in on skateboarding (e.g. Beal et al., 2017; Borden, 2019b; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016). These findings further support previous research showing that commercial businesses that are action sport community member-owned are considered more authentic than are owned by "outsiders" (e.g. Dupont, 2014; B. Edwards & Corte, 2010; Giannoulakis, 2016; Howell, 2005). In the case of NZ skatepark developers, those who are skateboarders (or "skateboarder park developers") are considered "authentic" compared to non-skateboarder developers that are not.

Social Media: Communication, Coordination and Collective Action

As discussed in Chapter Four, social media is widely used by NZ skateboarders with Instagram being by far the most popular. Similar to occurrences worldwide, social media provides a platform for skateboarders to interact, establish online communities, and develop their individual profiles and authenticity (Dupont, 2020; Thorpe, 2017; Thorpe & Dumont, 2019). Facebook is still popular as it plays a major communication role for the community and skateboarding-related organisations. For instance, skate schools, event providers and philanthropic skateboarding organisations promote, organise, and coordinate coaching sessions, skate jams, and skateboarding competitions via their Facebook pages. Facebook Groups also provide the platform to create online community collectiveness and skatepark/spot meet-ups (e.g. Auckland Skate Spots, Shut Up and Skate NZ, and Skateboard Collectors New Zealand). Further as identified earlier (Chapter Four), social media has

played a major role in allowing girls and women skaters to connect by providing a platform to arrange skate jams and meet-ups.

Social media provides the platform for the coordination of some collective actions by skateboarding communities. This is used to petition their local council for skatepark developments or improvements, and to act as informal skatepark custodians coordinated via Facebook Groups[5]. While most appear to be informal, some skateboarding groups/organisations are registered societies as legal entities, such as Waihi Beach Skate Park and Hampden Skate Park Society (New Zealand Companies Office, n.d.). One formal skatepark group I spoke with was established simply to petition and oversee the upgrade of a skate ramp in Mount Maunganui. They mentioned they were about to dissolve the society as the project was finished.

Skateboarding Competition and Event Providers

Skateboarding competitions and events, either competitive or non-competitive are a major source of social interaction for the NZ skateboarding community (see Chapter Four). However, most skateboarding competitions (or "comps") in NZ are stand-alone events that do not feed into any form of regional or national structure or sport skateboarding circuit. Although, a return to national skateboarding competition was readily identified by research participants (discussed in Chapters Six & Seven).

At the grassroots level, providing community-level events is another rationale for the establishment of RSA/RSGs. For example, one interviewee commented: "Part of our purpose is to put on local contests, which has been really cool for the community" (personal

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[5] Some examples of skatepark community groups are: Alfred Cox Skate Park, East Skate Club, Piha Skate Park, Ohakune Skatepark, and Washington Way Reserve Skate Park.

communication, March, 2019). Illustrating the social community connection typically attributed to skateboarding events, RSA/RSGs referred to their organised events as "get-togethers" or "Skate Jams" rather than "sport" or "competition". For instance, commenting on an event his RSA had organised, one interviewee recounted, "We didn't want to run a competition, but rather something that provided a bit of motivation, a bit of excitement for the younger kids in the area who are using the park. It didn't matter how good they were" (personal communication, August, 2019). Local skateboarding competitions are usually advertised via social media, with annual events Wellington Ramp Riot, Duckbrewe Skate Festival (Christchurch), and Tomson Skate Jam (Christchurch) being a few good examples.

Established in late 2020, a secondary school competition owned and organised by Drop Deep Skateboarding has been provided for the lower regions of NZ's North Island (Drop Deep Skateboarding, n.d.). Drop Deep's founder said that they wanted to address the lack of skateboarding events for other younger skateboarders in the Wellington area. Consequently, they established The Secondary School Series which by 2021 had expanded to include Wellington, Taranaki, and the Waikato regions, with the future view to becoming a national secondary school series. Other community-level competitions and skate jams are sometimes provided by skate stores who will organise and self-sponsor local competitions or skate jams for their local communities. Skate Schools also play a role in providing local and community events.

At the elite competitive level, both Bowlzilla and the Mangawhai Bowl Jam were readily identified by interviewees from the skateboarding community as the most prestigious competitions. Although both events are "open-entry", they are highly competitive attracting NZ and Australian skaters. Both events attract sponsorship from major NZ-based skateboarding brands and the ability to provide cash prizes for skaters. While Mangawhai Bowl Jam is an annual event and NZ-owned, the other is Australian-owned and is part of

several other Bowlzilla events throughout Australia. However, COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions have had a significant impact on the facilitation of skateboarding events with many being cancelled from 2020 to 2022. Since mid-2022 online promotion of skateboarding competitions is becoming more apparent, such as X AIR Games (July), The Secondary School Series (September), Bowlzilla (October), and the New Zealand Skateboarding Nationals (November).

Commercial Sponsorship of Competitions and Events

Skateboarding industry businesses play a major role in the event provision by sponsoring community-based events, larger competitions, and top NZ skateboarders. NZ-based brands Irrom Distributions, Step Up Industries, and *Manual Magazine* were identified by research participants as regular supporters (or "sponsors") of local skateboarding communities and events. Often RSA/RSG events are facilitated with the support of skateboarding brands, the local skate store, or other local businesses.

At smaller local community events, brand sponsorship is usually "in-kind" involving donated product (i.e. "free stuff") that is then used as prizes or giveaways. One interviewee explained, "It's not quite a 'sponsorship', but a 'we'll help you out'" (personal communication, May, 2019). Skate shops often support local skate schools and events provided by skateboarding community members and RSA/RSGs by providing discounted or free skateboarding equipment to improve accessibility for Groms or to be used as prizes (Interviewee, personal communication, August, 2019). However, local non-skateboarding businesses also sponsor local community skateboarding events (Interviewee, personal communication, March, 2019).

For the bigger competitions such as the Mangawhai Bowl Jam and Bowlzilla, both skate and non-skate industry sponsors contribute towards event costs via either financial or in-kind sponsorship. Mangawhai Bowl Jam explained that brand sponsorship covered just

over 50% of the event's costs, with the rest coming from donations from local businesses and individuals, and selling event merchandise (personal communication, June, 2020). USA brands Converse, Vans Shoes, and Dickies are regular sponsors of larger skateboarding competitions such as Bowlzilla and the Mangawhai Bowl Jam. Further, non-skateboarding-related brands often try to gain favour with the skateboarding market through sponsorship of events and skaters (Beal et al., 2017; Chiu, 2009; Snyder, 2012). In NZ, the headphone company Skull Candy is a good example of a large international non-skateboarding brand that has aligned itself with skateboarding and various other action sports through regular sponsorship of NZ skateboarding events including Bowlzilla and Mangawhai Bowl Jam for elite NZ skaters.

Commercial Sponsorship of Skaters

While originating in the USA during the 1963s, skate teams have been a skateboarding phenomenon globally during the 1970s and beyond (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; Yochim, 2010) including in Aotearoa. NZ skate teams such as Trax Skate Team, Edwards Skate Team, and the Radio Hauraki 1480 Kroozers were popular in the 1970s (see Chapter Four), but are a thing of the past, and only a few NZ skaters are fortunate enough to acquire "sponsorship". Some skate shops and skateboarding equipment importers sponsor a few NZ skaters. Cheapskates and Irrom Distributions were again both identified as keen sponsors of local skaters. Global brands such as Vans, Dickies and Skull Candy are also identifiable sponsors of a few of the top NZ skaters. During one interview the participant mentioned how Vans had provided NZD$5,000 to one lucky top NZ skateboarder for competition travel for the year.

Similar to events, athlete sponsorship for skaters tends to present itself as donations of free products (i.e. "free stuff") rather than financial resources. For example, one interviewee while identifying his sponsors commented: "I'm a professional skateboarder, but in NZ, that

doesn't mean a whole lot [laughs]. It doesn't mean you're getting paid [laughs], it's more of a lifestyle thing. It's more free giveaways and stuff like that I skate for" (personal communication, May, 2019). Other research participants expressed concerns about how top skaters are not financially supported by their sponsors to cover travel and living costs to compete in local and international events to earn the qualification points necessary for Olympic consideration.

Philanthropic Sponsorship of New Zealand Skateboarding: Yeah Gnar

Yeah Gnar is an outlier in the provision of NZ skateboarding as it is not based on the commercial model for sponsorship, instead being purely philanthropic. Formed in 2016 by two successful Christchurch entrepreneurs (McFadden, 2018), Yeah Gnar is a non-profit stakeholder that makes no money through its sponsorship of NZ skaters, competitions and events nor receives any community-based funding (Yeah Gnar, n.d.-a). Instead, Yeah Gnar is self-funded by its owners' business (Yeah Gnar, personal communication, August, 2019). Since its establishment, Yeah Gnar has become a significant provider of NZ skateboarding.

Initially only providing support for a woman skateboarder struggling to fund her travel to skateboarding competitions, Yeah Gnar's owners felt that other talented NZ skateboarders needed similar support (personal communication, August, 2019). Yeah Gnar claims to have assisted several NZ skaters with travel and accommodation costs to events in NZ, and Australia, and for one skater to compete in the USA (Yeah Gnar, n.d.-a). The initial intention of the organisation was to provide support for up and coming talented skaters in the early stages of their careers; "Our goal is to get people who could be competing internationally, but before they are good enough to get sponsors. So, we sponsor people up to that point, and then we hand them along" (personal communication, August, 2019). While

Yeah Gnar sponsors both male and female skaters, supporting women skaters and women's sport skateboarding is a particular focus of importance.

Further, Yeah Gnar has expanded its support for NZ skateboarding competitions and events by donating skateboarding-related products and money for prize purse, judges, timekeepers, and other staff needed to help run competitions (Yeah Gnar, n.d.-a). The organisation also runs the Thomson Park Skate Jam annual community event in Christchurch. The Yeah Gnar website provides a directory of NZ skate schools and a calendar of scheduled skateboarding events nationwide (see, Yeah Gnar, n.d.-b). In sum, Yeah Gnar is a significant contributor to community skateboarding by providing funding, administration and coordination, possibly unwittingly acting as a pseudo-governing body.

Skateboarding Provision for Girls and Women

As identified in Chapter Four, there has been a steady increase in women and girls participating in skateboarding globally over the last decade or so. Furthermore, previous research has shown that this increase has been largely due to women and parent-led initiatives such as girls and women only skate jams, competitive events, gender-restricted skateparks or scheduled times, social media groups, female skateboarding media and ZINES (Abulhawa, 2020; Atencio et al., 2009; Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Beal et al., 2017; MacKay & Dallaire, 2012, 2014; Pomerantz et al., 2004). Thus, the provision for NZ women skateboarding has been largely driven by girls and women skaters through the creation of social media groups and organised "skate jams" and "meet-ups".

In Aotearoa, there are several girls and women only skateboarding social media groups and profiles on Facebook and Instagram that have been established to organise skateboarding "meet-ups", establish camaraderie, and celebrate women skateboarding in general. Facebook and Instagram pages, Surely Skate, Grind Girls Skate Crew, Girls SKATE

Zine, and Sisters of Shred are all good examples. Girls SKATE Zine's Instagram and

Facebook pages are for, "Showcasing the women's skate scene in Aotearoa NZ and inspiring

others to try out skateboarding and join the movement" (girlskate.zine, n.d.). Similarly,

Sisters of Shred was established for women skaters to stay connected and inspire girls and

young female skaters, "It's just a social platform to keep connected, and connect new women

who come in, and women that have been skating for a while will share footage just to say,

'This is what we can do'" (personal communication, September, 2019).

Girls and Women only skate schools have also played a significant role in increasing

participation levels by providing "girl-friendly" environments for interested, new, or more

experienced "girl skaters". As the founder of one girls-only skate school explained "I used to

skate when I was younger but stopped because the boys would bully me. So, I wanted to

provide a safe environment for girls who want to try skateboarding" (personal

communication, July, 2019). An NZ-based study by Collins (2021) focused on the Auckland-

based skate school Girls Skate New Zealand (Girls Skate NZ) established in 2018. Providing

group coaching for girls and young women, Collin's (2021) found that the skate school

provides a safe environment for the young skaters to build their confidence and resilience,

and their opportunities to embrace alternative forms of femininity.

Other girls and women skateboarding organisations and groups have focused on

gender inclusiveness and mental health. Waa Hine Skate is another girls and women only

coaching school that caters for the local LGBTQ+ community. Waa Hine Skate offers free

skateboarding lessons in the Wellington and the Hutt Valley area with the catchphrase,

"Female skateboarding lessons for womxn by womxn" (Waa Hine Skate, n.d.). In Auckland,

Wellness Riders (aka Maanaki Fit) is a social enterprise that uses skateboarding to address

mental health and wellbeing issues of girls and young women together. Wellness Riders

skateboarding provides "get-togethers" that are intended to provide opportunities for girls and

young women to engage in "…social connection and wellness chats" (Wellness Riders, n.d.).

Wellness Riders owner explained, "I wanted to create a platform where I could help lead

something and create events where I could invite people and create a warm, welcome,

supportive, safe atmosphere" (personal communication, July, 2019).

Provision of Sport-Skateboarding for Girls and Women.

Regarding competitive or sport-skateboarding, previous research has shown that in

the USA women skaters are marginalised, judged as lacking skill and generally are not taken

seriously (Atencio et al., 2009; Beal, 1999; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Dupont, 2014). When it

comes to sport-skateboarding, similar gender inequities are recognised regarding the visibility

of women's events and prize monies (D'Orazio, 2020; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018b, 2021).

Women interviewees expressed their dislike for the lack of women's divisions and for the

prize purse disparity of NZ skateboarding competitions.

While the increase in girls and women's skateboarding participation at competitions

was observed positively by male interviewees, some of their comments were contradictory.

For example, one male event owner/organiser commented, "I think women are the space.

Women are going to take over the sport. I think their attitudes are better. I think they are

showing up the boys at the moment"; However, later he rationalised the prize purse disparity

between the men and women divisions because the women skaters are "underwhelming" and

lacked spectator interest: "Because the biggest thing is, those girls can barely skate" (personal

communication, August, 2019).

It remains common for there to be only one women's event at NZ skateboarding

competitions, the Women's Division, in contrast to the several divisions that exist for males.

For example, Bowlzilla and the Mangawhai Bowl Jam skateboarding competitions have

Under-16s Boys, Open Men's, and Men's Master's divisions, but there is only one women's

division regardless of age. One event owner/organiser said that a single women's division is

logistically practical because of the lack of female entrants, trying to remain time efficient, and keeping the event interesting; "I've got to balance the viewership, about the way the event is set out. It's quite fast-paced, it's not drawn out. I try to get it done in six hours and that's the atmosphere that's needed" (personal communication, August, 2019).

However, women (adult) interviewees saw having only one women's division as unfair and intimidating for younger skaters, inhibiting their participation. For instance, a veteran female skateboarder felt that lack of age grouping was impacting participation in events, including her own:

I'm 35 now, do I have to skate with the men's masters? Do I skate on my own? Do I skate with these 8-year or 10-year-old girls? What are we doing here with our age group thing? You get an eight-year-old kid and a bunch of adults, she's not going to skate. Some do because their families are supportive and we're all supportive. But we must be losing a few that aren't, because of that factor. (personal communication, September, 2019)

Another women interviewee who is a skate school owner also identified the intimidation experienced by her students due to the lack of age grouping at competitions: "My girls don't want to enter because they'll see the [older] girls in my class that are good and they are like, 'Well I don't want to do it, because she's doing it'" (personal communication, July, 2019). Additionally, she refrained from entering skateboarding competitions as she felt it was unfair for the younger skaters and she would also be competing against her students.

The women skaters that I interviewed also commented on their dislike for the prize purse disparity between men's and women's divisions. During a media interview with McFadden (2018), NZ's top women's skateboarder Krysta Ashwell described the sorts of prizes typically provided for the Women's skateboarding division such as an oversized men's t-shirt or a pair of sunglasses; "I've entered comp's where guys get money, [skateboard]

decks, clothing - a big bag of stuff. And the girls get the leftovers" (para. 3). One competition owner explained the disparity in prize money was based on available funding and spectator interest, but he did struggle with the fact:

> If we are ever going to allow these girls to make something from skateboarding, we kind of need to give them the chance. Even though I'm like, "Your skating is nowhere near as good and the crowd doesn't love it as much" (personal communication, August, 2019).

While prize disparity between the Women and Men divisions is still present at NZ skateboarding competitions and events, there has been some progress, and male attitudes appear to be changing. Yeah Gnar has also played a significant role in this area through its continued support of women sport-skaters and reducing prize purse disparity at events, including Bowlzilla (McFadden, 2018). While international research has signalled that women skaters are getting increased visibility, opportunities to compete, and improved prize money from Olympic inclusion (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), my research shows that there is some work need to be done in in this area in NZ. Clearly, more attention by event organisers to the provision of female skateboarding at competitions is needed.

Conclusions

This Chapter has explored the provision of skateboarding in Aotearoa, NZ. It has shown that the biggest providers of financial investment to regional and local skateboarding are the District and City Councils throughout NZ that provide skatepark facilities and maintain them. My research shows, that RSAs/RSGs are the proactive efforts by local skateboarders to advocate for their communities and petition their local councils regarding skatepark provision and quality. Mainly RSAs/RSGs have been established and managed by veteran male skaters with notions of "giving back", and are another way then can reinforce

their authenticity. Tensions are present between RSAs/RSGs and other skateboarding-related organisations with councils regarding skatepark quality (i.e. budgeting, design, construction, playground vs. sports facility) and event permissions. However, the fact that RSAs/RSGs exist provides them with some legitimacy, as they provide councils with a point of contact to communicate with skateboarding communities directly and draw on valuable "insider-knowledge" possessed by the RSAs/RSGs. Apart from some complexity when dealing with councils, RSAs/RSGs appear to be adding value for the local skaters.

This research also shows that the NZ skateboarding scene is still highly dependent on the skateboarding industry for its provision. However, monetary support for skateboarding from industry brands and other businesses is limited (and minimal) to a few elite NZ skaters and high-profile competitive events. At the regional and local levels, sponsorship takes the form of donated goods or services-in-kind and arguably does not provide a great degree of sustainable support for elite up-and-coming skaters. Interviewees also identified what a significant role skatepark developers play for the skateboarding community through the development of quality skateparks. However, an outlier in the provision of NZ skateboarding, Yeah Gnar provides some coordination for the sport-skateboarding scene through "athlete" and event sponsorship as well as facilitating its own events.

Similar to occurrences internationally is the growth and provision of female skateboarding in Aotearoa which has been largely driven by girls and women skaters. While the growth of female skateboarding is met enthusiastically by some male skaters, there still needs to be a stronger cultural shift here. My research findings identify how female skaters are marginalised by some male skateboarders when it comes to sport-skateboarding and competitions. Yeah Gnar is also making some headway in developing female sport-skateboarding through the sponsorship of female skaters and prizes for the Women's Division

at some competitions. However, more attention to the provision of female skateboarding at competitions by event organisers is needed.

While RSAs/RSGs, Yeah Gnar and other forms of skateboarding organising are supportive of communities and individuals, their actions to formalise and organise, contribute to the institutionalisation of the NZ skateboarding scene, even if unwittingly. Along with Chapter Four, this chapter has contextualised and characterised the skateboarding scene, showing the range of organisations (i.e. governmental, commercial, community-based, philanthropic) and other stakeholder groups responsible, or self-appointed (i.e. formal and informal) for its provision in NZ. Both chapters contribute to further discussion in Chapters Six and Seven regarding the establishment of Skateboarding New Zealand and its efforts to provide national governance and structure for skateboarding in Aotearoa, NZ.

Chapter Six

The Institutionalisation of Skateboarding in Aotearoa, New Zealand

This chapter explores the processes involved in establishing a national governing body for sport-skateboarding in Aotearoa, New Zealand. It does so by first exploring the World Skate's global federated structure that has resulted from the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) umbrella governance strategy. My research shows that there has been significant coercive pressure from World Skate for sport-skateboarding to fall under their respective national roller sport governing body. However, there are some inconsistencies in this structural model in differing countries. Then, the New Zealand (NZ) sport-skateboarding structure and where it sits in the global structure, are discussed. My investigation identifies that similar to other countries, the IOC's governance strategy placed sufficient coercive pressures on Skateboarding New Zealand (SBNZ) to fall under the umbrella of the New Zealand Federation of Roller Sport (Skate NZ), regardless of it having been established prior to skateboarding's Olympic inclusion. The source of this pressure stems from the global level trickling down from the IOC to World Skate, then to World Skate Oceania at the confederation level, and then to Skate NZ and SBNZ at the national level. The New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) also contributes to these coercive pressures by reinforcing the umbrella-style governance set by the IOC.

Then in the second part of this chapter, based on my organisational ethnographic research, I show how SBNZ, a skater-led National Sport Organisation (NSO) was established with the view to govern sport-skateboarding in Aotearoa. The case highlights the complex and time-consuming process of establishing and developing a volunteer-based NSO, especially when the individuals involved lack the necessary capability and capacity to do so. The pressures that SBNZ experienced to meet the regulatory requirements to be recognised

by the Mainstream Sport Governing Bodies (MSGBs), such as World Skate Oceania, Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) and NZOC are also described. The case study also reinforces earlier studies that have shown that action sport governing bodies also experience pressure to consider the needs of their various stakeholders to retain their cultural legitimacy/authenticity.

The Global Governing Structure for Sport-Skateboarding

The sport federation is the most common form of governing structure for mainstream sport (Dickson et al., 2010; Forster, 2006; Noll, 2003; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury et al., 2013), and it is also the most prevalent for skateboarding in most countries. The central governing body of a Global Sport Federation or "GSF" (or International Sport Federation [ISF]) is the Global Sport Organisation (GSO) which provides the "face" of the global federation. GSOs are the highest hierarchal source of governance and advocate for a given sport (Dickson et al., 2010; Forster, 2006; Stewart et al., 2005), which for roller sports (and sport-skateboarding) is World Skate.

Skateboarding's inclusion in the Olympics and the IOC's coercive pressure on Fédération Internationale de Roller Sports (FIRS) and International Skateboarding Federation to cooperate led to the creation of World Skate sport (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). FIRS later rebranded as World Skate in 2017 and absorbed ISF into the GSO to coordinate global sport-skateboarding (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). Therefore, skateboarding's Olympic inclusion is a direct determinant for the establishment of World Skate. Globally, the umbrella governance provided by World Skate has been controversial and has caused concern among the global skateboarding community (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Much of the controversy stems from concerns about the IOC and World Skate's cashing in skateboarding's popularity, mistrust of

their intentions and non-skateboarders gaining control and ownership of the sport (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019a; Renfree et., 2021; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021), discussed further below.

World Skate: The International Roller Sport Federation

World Skate is an organisation and the "title" that fulfils two clear roles: (a) the multi-organisational representation of the GSF as a whole, and, (b) the singular organisational entity that has the legitimate authority to govern and administer the greater federation. Sitting under World Skate's umbrella are five affiliated roller sport confederations: World Skate Africa, World Skate America, World Skate Asia, World Skate Europe and World Skate Oceania that align with the five recognised continents in the Olympic Charter (International Olympic Committee, 2021), also seen in Figure 3. Each World Skate confederation is a federation in its own right, with its own governing body called the Confederation Sport Organisation (CSO) that provides governance of roller sport NSOs for the countries under their jurisdiction. Multi-level governance in this manner is the most traditional and common form of governing structure for sport (Dickson et al., 2010; Parent et al., 2017), and has been historically adopted by the IOC.

However, World Skate's global structure remains dynamic and evolving. For instance, while citing its statutes and bylaws, in the February 2022 World Skate newsletter, the GSO announced that moving forward it "…recognizes one National Federation per country…" and that the GSO is reliant "… on the merger of the various existing [national roller sport] entities in a single governing body" (World Skate, 2022, para. 3). Regarding this directive, a SBNZ committee member interviewed for this study felt World Skate was attempting to consolidate its power over skateboarding NSOs and stop them from splitting away: "Because if they [skateboarding NSOs] split away, then it means that you get more votes which means [skateboarders] have more power and start to make the decisions that are

best for skateboarding, not just all of the other roller sports" (personal communication, April, 2022). Similar strategies by sport federations to retain, consolidate, or regain power and control through the reduction of their affiliated member organisations have previously proven effective (also see, Dickson et al., 2005; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Stewart et al., 2005; Waugh et al., 2014).

While World Skate's (2022) press release does not specify that any merger of roller sport and skateboarding NSOs will be mandated, it is certainly implied and will probably lead to further coercive steps by the GSO to enforce. World Skate's intention to consolidate and maintain power over skateboarding NSOs is unclear. It will be intriguing to see the ongoing politics and tensions experienced by skateboarding NSOs regarding this development globally and in Aotearoa.

Figure 3

World Skate's Hierarchical Organisational Relationships: Global to New Zealand Governance Levels
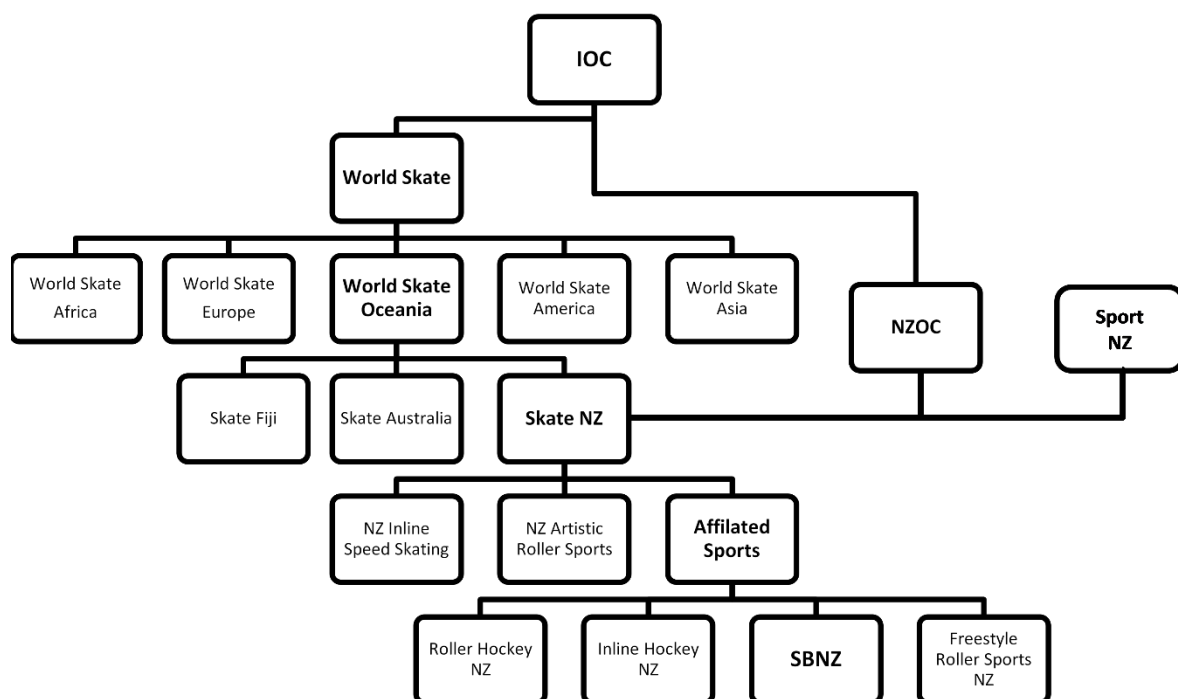
Conflicting National Sport-Skateboarding Structures

In late 2022, World Skate had 12 roller sport disciplines or codes under its umbrella, including skateboarding (World Skate, n.d.-b). The vast majority of World Skate's confederation affiliates are roller sport NSOs that have either established new or adopted existing skateboarding NSOs. For many existing skateboarding NSOs, this has meant that they have had to affiliate with their respective roller sport NSOs rather than self-govern. Again, Olympic inclusion has provided the determinant (and subsequent pressure) for skateboarding to fall under the roller sports umbrella at the national level, resulting in considerable tensions between the two in many countries (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021).

However, there are a few skateboarding NSOs that have been allowed by their National Olympic Committee (NOC) to affiliate with their confederation directly. For example, of the four top performing countries for skateboarding in Tokyo 2020 (Japan, USA, Australia, and Brazil) there are a variety of different governance structures. Japanese skateboarding has followed the IOC mandate to sit under the roller sport umbrella. Despite being established in 1982 as an independent governing body for skateboarding, the All Japan Skateboard Association (AJSA) affiliated with the Japan Roller Sports Federation shortly following the IOC's 2016 confirmation that skateboarding will feature at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games (Miyazawa, 2018).

In Brazil, regardless of several pre-existing regional skateboarding federations that formed the Brazilian Skateboarding Confederation (CBSK; established 1999), the Brazilian Olympic Committee (COB) recognised the Brazil Roller Sports and Hockey Confederation (CBHP) as the official NSO for Brazilian skateboarding (Butler, 2017). The COB's decision was not received well by the local Brazilian skateboarding community (Butler, 2017; de

Castro, 2019). After a well-supported petition by the local skateboarding community and threats by top Brazilian skaters to boycott the Tokyo 2020 Games unless the COB recognised the CBSK as the legitimate NSO instead of CBHP, the COB subsequently did in 2018 (de Castro, 2019). However, in Australia, the roller sport NSO, Skate Australia established its subsidiary organisation Skateboarding Australia in 2005. Skateboarding Australia was heavily criticised for the misconduct and mismanagement of governmental funding resulting in the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) withdrawing its funding (Drew, 2015). Despite petitioning by the rival skater-led Australian Skateboarding Federation (ASF) for Skate Australia to relinquish its interest in skateboarding to the ASF (Millar, 2015), Skate Australia retains control.

In the USA, the first governing body for sport-skateboarding the National Skateboard Association (NSA) was founded by individuals from the USA skateboarding industry in 1981 (Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Beal, 1995). The NSA's goal was to provide a commercialised form of sport-skateboarding by sponsoring amateur and professional competitions (Batuev & Robinson, 2018; Beal, 1995). On learning of the IOC's and the television broadcaster NBC's intentions to include skateboarding in the Olympics, the NSA established the ISF to retain control of the global sport-skateboarding in 2002 (Batuev & Robinson, 2018). In 2005 the USA Skateboarding (USAS) was established and became the new governing body for sport-skateboarding in the USA (Batuev & Robinson, 2017). The United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) formally recognised the USAS in 2018 as the independent USA skateboarding NSO (Batuev & Robinson, 2018; N. S. Williams, 2020) without having to affiliate with USA Roller Sports.

In sum, the IOC's approach to the global governance of action sports is inconsistent, with some sports such as surfing and sport climbing being allowed to self-govern while others like snowboarding, BMX Racing, BMX Freestyle, and skateboarding have not been

allowed (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019b; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). However, my findings suggest that for skateboarding, NOCs also play a significant role in determining whether skateboarding NSOs remain self-governing or must affiliate with a roller sport NSO, as evidenced by occurrences in countries like the USA and Brazil.

The Emerging Structure of Roller Sport Governance in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Skate NZ, the roller sport NGB, was designated as the NSO for NZ sport-skateboarding when the sport was added to the Olympic Charter in late 2016. Skateboarding in Oceania falls under the umbrella of World Skate Oceania which by early 2023 had only three affiliates; Skate NZ, Skate Australia and Skate Fiji. Skate NZ and Skate Australia have had a long-term relationship with World Skate Oceania (formerly known as Oceania Confederation of Roller Sports), however, the newly established Skate Fiji was only affiliated in June 2022 (World Skate Oceania, personal communication, January, 2023). Consequently, the hierarchical governance pathway for NZ sport-skateboarding can be mapped from World Skate, to World Skate Oceania, then the roller sport-NSO Skate NZ to SBNZ (see Figure 3).

Skate NZ has been organising NZ roller sports since 1937 (New Zealand Federation of Roller Sports, n.d.-a). There are currently six roller sports under their umbrella that it groups into two categories: (a) its "internal sports" - Artistic Skating and Inline Speed Skating, and, (b) its "affiliated sports" - Rink Roller Hockey, Inline Hockey, Freestyle Roller Sports (i.e. Scootering) and Skateboarding (New Zealand Federation of Roller Sports, n.d.-b). The two internal sports are directly governed by Skate NZ, whereas its affiliated sports, including skateboarding, are separate autonomous organisational entities (Skate NZ committee member, September, 2019). A Skate NZ interviewee explained that the relationships are formalised via a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and

affiliation fee (personal communication, September, 2019). As a Skate NZ interviewee explained: "We [Skate NZ] provide governance for making sure that the conduit to World Skate is open, that the fees and levies are paid, and the information flows backwards and forwards through the organisations properly" (personal communication, September, 2019). This includes the pathway to the Olympics for the affiliated sports.

However, the only time Skate NZ usually has any contact with their affiliated sports is when there are the World Roller Games or the annual Sport NZ funding negotiations. As a Skate NZ representative stated, "We leave the affiliated sports to be operationally responsible for themselves" (personal communication, September, 2019). As discussed later, Skate NZ had no interest or involvement with NZ skateboarding prior to skateboarding becoming an Olympic sport.

Contested Roller Sport Governance in Aotearoa, New Zealand

The same concerns and mistrust of roller sports global governance were expressed by research participants from the NZ skateboarding community. For instance, a SBNZ committee member who had attended a World Skate conference in late 2018 commented that the World Skate President, Sabatino Aracu was like "Dracula" and "World Skate and roller sports are a bunch of vampires wanting to suck the lifeblood out of skateboarding" (personal communication, August, 2019). He referred to the roller sport governance phenomenon as the "rollernisation" of skateboarding.

The dominant view among skateboarding interviewees was for NZ skateboarding to be self-governing, "No, skateboarders don't want to be governed at all. But if they're going to be governed they'd rather be governed by skateboarders" (personal communication, February, 2019). Concerns about roller sports cashing in on skateboarding's Olympic status were common among the NZ skateboarding community. Some questioned why roller sports would be interested in governing skateboarding, "[Roller sports] don't know anything about

me as a skateboarder. They have never been interested in this before, so how can we trust them to represent us well" (personal communication, February, 2019). Others felt that Skate NZ lacked the cultural and operational capability to govern skateboarding; "Skateboarding should be in the hands of skateboarding. Because of the culture around it and how passionate people are about it, because of how different it is from a lot of these other sports" (personal communication, May, 2019).

Some interviewees felt that World Skate (and Skate NZ) were leveraging skateboarding's inclusion to get more roller sport disciplines into the Olympic charter:

> Their dream is to go to the Olympics. They are very driven by the Olympics. Where our dream is to get more young people and others into skateboarding, try to get better skateparks and make sure everyone can have the most fun. (SBNZ committee member personal communication, August, 2019)

One SBNZ committee member criticised how during Skate NZ meetings, roller sport attendees would often say, "Oh my god" and "How epic" anytime skateboarding and the Olympics came up (personal communication, April, 2022). World Skate's website also celebrates skateboarding's Olympic inclusion, claiming that to get roller sports into the Games, "Has always been the dream behind the motivation, the aim to be achieved, the prize we needed to get" (World Skate, n.d.-a, para. 11).

When I asked a Skate NZ representative about the possibility of other roller sport codes being included in the Olympic charter, he answered: "Maybe, certainly within the youth Olympics there's the potential for that maybe…We'll see what happens with that" (personal communication, August, 2019). Nonetheless, I did not get the impression from the Skate NZ interviewee that there had been any previous forethought by the NSO or that they were withholding any information regarding the matter. Whether Skate NZ is attempting to cash in on and take advantage of skateboarding's Olympic status for other roller sports

benefits or not, mistrust of the roller sport NSO is prevalent among the NZ skateboarding community.

Although not observed as being favourable by some interviewees, others perceived that skateboarding affiliation with Skate NZ was the best option for the nascent stages of SBNZ's development. For instance, one SBNZ committee member commented, "Leverage off their skills and ability just to hold on, without sacrificing the integrity of what we are trying to hold to. It's the only way forward" (personal communication, February, 2019). A Sport NZ representative identified the importance of SBNZ being affiliated to Skate NZ for legitimacy and administrative reasons

> If a sport is structured and formalised, then it tends to neatly fit into that Olympic model. Because there are a whole lot of issues involved, and drug testing is one… [if] you are not structured, it makes it very difficult to be able to meet Olympic compliance (Sport NZ, personal communication, March, 2019)

Consequently, the controversial concerns regarding World Skate governance at the international level, are similar to those also being experienced by NZ skateboarding.

Drivers for Skateboarding Governance: The Olympics and for the Community

In Chapter Four, interviews with the NZ skateboarding community members revealed mixed opinions about skateboarding becoming an Olympic sport. Some were opposed, as they felt it conflicted with the anti-sport lifestyle and anti-establishment philosophy of skateboarding. For instance:

> We don't need other people's approval. We just go out and do it, and we do what we want to do. That's the attraction to skateboarding, it's the rebel nonconformist culture that attracts some kids. So, why would they want to legitimise it and think that they need others' approval to be legitimate? I just don't understand it. It doesn't make any sense to me. (personal communication, April, 2019).

However, others saw potential benefits of Olympic inclusion such as an increase in participation levels, reputation improvement of skateboarders in the eyes of the general public, and grassroots community development of skateboarding through increased governmental funding for skatepark development and competition. Such mixed sentiments have paralleled those of many skateboarding communities globally (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

Olympic inclusion was identified by research participants as being the key driver for the institutionalisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa. As one interviewee commented, "In terms of there being a national governing body for our sport, obviously it needed to happen because of the Olympics" (personal communication, August, 2019). However, it was noted that governance is only relevant for those wanting to be considered for the Olympic Games; "They are really only going to govern those that are calling themselves 'athletes', and wanting to be a part of the Olympics. They are not going govern any other skateboarders" (personal communication, May, 2019).

A range of potential benefits were identified amongst these participants. Some felt that a skateboarding NSO would help protect skateboarding from outsiders cashing in; "There needs to be some form of hierarchy involved in one form or another, or else nothing gets done. It [NZ skateboarding] needs ownership, it really does" (personal communication, March, 2019). Some felt that being institutionalised would attract more governmental investment in skateboarding; "Formal means money. Formal means legitimacy. Formal means that when funders look at you, they see a business model that is legitimate. The more money to come into skateboarding the better" (interviewee, personal communication, May, 2019). Another view was that a NZ governing body would not only advocate for skateboarders but also address the negative attitudes that are often attributed to them in the public and media; "There needs to be an advocate for [NZ] skateboarding for when

something goes wrong" (personal communication, May, 2019). Public tensions towards skateboarders regarding unsafe sport practice and the nuisance value created by their use of public spaces are common (Borden, 2019a; Howell, 2008; Yochim, 2010).

In sum, institutionalisation and governance have been a controversial topic within the NZ skateboarding community, creating many tensions. These mirror the tensions around World Skate's mandate to govern skateboarding worldwide. Despite some resistance from the NZ skateboarding community regarding the need for governance of the sport, those that are from sport-skateboarding and skateboarding-related organisations generally see some merit for a skateboarding NSO to exist. Nonetheless, there appear to be several conflicting and contradictory interpretations at play: (a) rejecting governance and structure to remain "authentic" to the skateboarding philosophy, (b) being resistant but bending to coercive pressures from the MSGBs to provide governance and sit under the roller sports umbrella, and then, (c) while being opposed to governance, also seeing that it could be beneficial for skateboarding in Aotearoa. Therefore, these findings identify that the personal challenges and concerns not only lie with one's authentic identity, rather, individuals involved in institutionalising skateboarding also experience similar cultural tensions, as they consider the impact their involvement may have on their authenticity.

Establishing a Skateboarding NSO: The Case of Skateboarding New Zealand

In this section, I draw on my organisational ethnographic research mapping the formation of SBNZ from November 2018 to November 2022. As discussed in the thesis methodology (see Chapter Three), I had a pre-existing association with one SBNZ founder and volunteered my time to help with SBNZ since September 2016. Therefore, I draw on my observations and field notes from those earlier years prior to the start of field research in 2018. Additionally, the views and accounts provided by interviewees from SBNZ committee

members, skateboarding-related organisations, Skate NZ, NZOC, and Sport NZ, also contribute to my analysis.

The self-establishment of governing bodies by an organisational field to self-govern is common, especially when there is a threat of mandated or external governance being imposed (Oliver, 1991; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Provan et al., 2011). The founders established the organisation based on fears of outsiders taking ownership of and "cashing in" on NZ skateboarding. During my interviews, SBNZ's founding committee members identified four key concerns (or motivations) for SBNZ's establishment: (a) skater-led governance protecting NZ skateboarding and its ownership, (b) to control any funding allocated to NZ skateboarding, (c) establishing a national skateboarding competition/structure, and (d) providing guidance to Councils and Regional Skateboarding Associations (RSAs) regarding skatepark development. These issues are discussed in Chapter Seven. Here I document the evolution of SBNZ from its establishment in 2016 to late 2022, and explore the processes involved in its attempts to establish a national governing body for sport-skateboarding in Aotearoa.

Based on rumours and media reports during 2015 that skateboarding could become an Olympic sport, five individuals from the NZ skateboarding community and industry (the "Founders") were concerned that there was no governing body for sport-skateboarding in Aotearoa. Additionally, a mutual acquaintance with connections to the ISF had confided to the founders that there was a strong chance the FIRS was likely to be awarded international governance of skateboarding by the IOC which further raised their concerns. The "ISF informant" explained that he was worried that the NZ skateboarding community would lose control of the sport; "There hadn't been a [skateboarding governing] body from NZ before. I wanted to make sure it was done before Roller Sports just claimed it" (personal communication, February, 2019). Likewise, one founder explained, "We had heard

something was coming, and we wanted to do something before someone else did" (personal communication, October, 2016).

The founders feared that NZ skateboarding would lose control of the sport to those outside of the skateboarding community, whether it was roller sports or someone else. Consequently, the founders felt they needed to act by establishing a self-governing NZ-based skateboarding NSO. SBNZ was formally registered by the founders as an incorporated society in July 2016 (New Zealand Companies Office, n.d.). However, the ISF informant proved to be accurate in August 2016 when the ISF and FIRS consolidated their efforts to jointly govern skateboarding (see, Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018b, 2021). SBNZ was formally established only a month before the IOC's decision that skateboarding was to be included in the Olympic Charter and that the FIRS (now World Skate) was the GSO for Olympic skateboarding. In late 2016, SBNZ received an official email from the ISF outlining the establishment of the Tokyo 2020 Skateboarding Commission to oversee skateboarding's entry into the Olympics. The email stated that skateboarding NSOs needed to recognise their national roller sport NSO as their governing body if one exists, unless their National Olympic Committee (NOC) recognised it differently (personal communication, November, 2016). However, as the founders were not keen on being associated with roller sports they did not contact Skate NZ.

Prior to the IOC's 2016 decision to place skateboarding under the roller sport umbrella, Skate NZ had no interest or involvement with NZ skateboarding. As a Skate NZ committee member explained; "We knew that the skateboarding was going to be put under our wing. But what we didn't know was, anybody in the [skateboarding] organisations within New Zealand. At all. Nobody. We had no prior contact with anybody" (personal communication, September, 2019). Consequently, Skate NZ was unsure of how it could provide governance for NZ skateboarding. The Skate NZ representative explained to me, they

were aware that skateboarding had "…hardly any clubs, and that most skateparks had been set up by councils or interested parties; and we weren't sure how all this was going [to] pan out" (personal communication, September, 2019).

In late 2016, Skate NZ started to experience pressure from both World Skate Oceania (formerly Oceania Confederation of Roller Sports) and the NZOC to establish a system of governance for NZ skateboarding. Unsure of how to proceed, Skate NZ reached out to the philanthropic skateboarding-related organisation, Yeah Gnar (see Chapter Five), who referred them to SBNZ. Subsequently, a Skate NZ and SBNZ meeting was organised at the NZOC Headquarters in Auckland. Present at the meeting were the presidents of Skate NZ, SBNZ, and an NZOC representative. Reflecting on the meeting, the NZOC representative said they could see the cultural tension immediately,

> [Skate NZ's President] was sitting in a suit and tie, and [SBNZ's President] had his cap on backwards and his pants halfway down his arse. And you're going, "Well this is interesting". You could see the dynamic straight away, that they're just two different cultures. (personal communication, December, 2018)

During this meeting, Skate NZ proposed a MOU with SBNZ that would identify Skate NZ as the legitimate/official governing body for NZ skateboarding, with SBNZ as one of its affiliated roller sports. This agreement would allow SBNZ to manage and administer NZ skateboarding while sitting under the Skate NZ umbrella (SBNZ founder, personal communication, October, 2018). Entering into this relationship would provide SBNZ with the regulative legitimacy it needed to be recognised by the MSGBs including Drug Free Sport New Zealand (DFSNZ) which could open up funding possibilities and athlete pathways to the Olympics. Organisations that meet their regulatory requirements determined by a governmental or other governing body incur a certain degree of legitimacy, specifically "regulative legitimacy" (Deephouse et al., 2018; Provan & Milward, 2001; Scott, 1995).

Without the necessary legitimacy, SBNZ would struggle to gain the support it needed to be taken seriously by the MSGBs, and for its growth. Similar regulative legitimacy was experienced by sport climbing, parkour, snowboarding, and, skateboarding around the world (e.g. Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019b, 2019a; Ojala, 2014; Puddle et al., 2019; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018a, 2018b).

For Skate NZ, the MOU would provide a particularly efficient and effective means of achieving its World Skate Oceania requirement to provide and administer governance for skateboarding in NZ. Additionally, Skate NZ would not have to engage actively and directly with the NZ skateboarding community as this would be facilitated by SBNZ. One SBNZ committee member told me that a Skate NZ committee member had confided to him, that they had no interest in governing NZ skateboarding, but were under pressure from World Skate Oceania to do so; "We were a box tick for them. They said to me, 'I've got to tick the boxes to be showing that we're doing due diligence'" (personal communication, August, 2019). Essentially, apart from being the point of contact and pathway for SBNZ regarding funding, information and competition details, it would be business as usual for Skate NZ.

Nevertheless, a SBNZ founder said that they were reluctant to sign the MOU and he gave three reasons. First, the founders wanted to provide a self-governing model for skateboarding in Aotearoa. Secondly, SBNZ's inability to acquire funding meant that it also did not have the NZ$1,500.00 affiliation fee that Skate NZ had also requested. Thirdly, feedback from the NZ skateboarding community indicated a dislike of being associated with roller sports or being governed by Skate NZ. He explained: "I was like, the common consensus was that people are going to hate that you are involved because you're rollerblading…That's why we [SBNZ] didn't straight off the bat" (personal communication, August, 2019).

The dislike of being associated with roller sports was commonly raised during my interviews with participants from the skateboarding community. Consequently, SBNZ was aware of the possible delegitimisation of its authenticity by being associated with Skate NZ. Cultural legitimacy (or authenticity) identifies the ability of an organisation's constituents to understand why it exists, its purpose, and its actions relative to its cultural and institutional environments (Deephouse et al., 2018; Scott, 2014; Suchman, 1995). Similar authenticity concerns have also been experienced in skateboarding communities internationally, especially the pairing of ISF under FIRS later to become World Skate (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019a; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

SBNZ's founders eventually recognised that where the Olympics are concerned, some form of relationship with Skate NZ (informal at least) needed to be maintained: "But we are talking about the Olympics, let's just keep that link there. The NZOC needs it" (personal communication, August, 2019). SBNZ's founders remained worried about possible negative feedback from the NZ skateboarding community regarding a relationship with Skate NZ; "I weighed that up big time…I was even considering, 'You've got to go to all the key skaters and talk to them and get them on board'" (SBNZ committee member, personal communication, August, 2019). The SBNZ committee member's concerns about raising the issue of affiliation with Skate NZ with "…all the key skaters…" in the NZ skateboarding scene is a strong indicator of the power and authenticity that these veteran skaters have in the community (also see Chapter Four).

Additionally, the founders believed that Skate NZ was keen to relent from its authority over skateboarding and recognise SBNZ as the rightful NSO. A key source of this perception was the "ISF informant" mentioned earlier. However, when I met with a Skate NZ representative, that person denied that was the case, and stated that the roller sports pathway had been set by the IOC: "It always was, and it still is" (personal communication, September,

2019). An NZOC representative also explained why they would not recognise SBNZ as an independent skateboarding NSO, clarifying that: "The issue [SBNZ] have is that they've not affiliated to an international federation that's recognized by the IOC. And the international federation that is recognized by the IOC for skateboarding is FIRS, and their member is Skate NZ" (personal communication, December, 2019). Yet, the assumption within the NZ skateboarding community that roller sports (Skate NZ) will relinquish governance to SBNZ remained and was often (and still is) identified during my discussions with skateboarding community members.

Consequently, concerned about the effect that the relationship with roller sports would have on its cultural legitimacy, and the notion that Skate NZ would relinquish its NSO responsibility, SBNZ did not sign the MOU. However, wanting to keep the possible funding and athlete pathways open, SBNZ kept a distanced relationship with Skate NZ. As one founder explained, "I kept Skate NZ at a really big distance in terms of communication with them. I was like, I don't really want to let you guys in" (personal communication, August, 2019). SBNZ decided to concentrate on the grassroots development of the sport with the intent of developing a national skateboard competition structure. For the next two years, the MOU remained unsigned and little progress was made by SBNZ. It did not take long for the SBNZ management team to realise how much work was involved in establishing and setting up a legitimate NSO.

Unforeseen Challenges and Difficulties

This section highlights some of the operational and cultural difficulties experienced by SBNZ during its first few years. The more political tensions, power imbalances, and challenges of the processes associated with creating a national governing body and structure are discussed in Chapter Seven. My research shows that among the challenges experienced by the founding SBNZ's management team, three particular issues inhibited the development

of the nascent organisation during its first two years. Namely, the founders lacked individual

capability and capacity, a lack of funding, and a lack of support and criticism from other

skateboarding community members.

Lack of Individual Capability and Capacity. Previous research has identified that

many action sports prefer to be governed by their community members to avoid outsider

individuals and organisations cashing in (discussed more in Chapter Seven; also see: Batuev

& Robinson, 2017, 2018, 2019b; Renfree et al., 2021; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Thorpe &

Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). However, Renfree et al. (2021) identified how

this strategy has its drawbacks, as it has typically resulted in inexperienced and unskilled

individuals filling governance and management roles in many action sport NSOs.

One of the biggest issues each of the founders discovered during this early period was

their limited capability and capacity as committee members. SBNZ's founding committee

were five male veteran skateboarders, four of them owning skateboarding-related businesses.

Initially enthusiastic, two founders volunteered to form SBNZ's management team by taking

the lead to administer the organisation. Essentially, SBNZ's management team fulfilled dual

roles of governance and operational matters for the NSO.

However, the management team soon discovered they lacked the knowledge and

experience to develop and run an NSO, or how to negotiate the complexity of the NZ sport

system and acquire funding:

> At first, it got going and then it just sort of went around in circles and nothing was
>
> happening. And a lot of that was because I think me and [name] didn't really
>
> understand [what we were doing]. We thought that we would be able to learn the job.
>
> (personal communication, May, 2019)
>
> The biggest barrier when I was [SBNZ role] is my [in]experience with NSOs. Really!
>
> The sport structure in New Zealand, and how to do it…Realistically, you probably

want someone who has run something like Rugby Bay of Plenty. Someone that's done

it, and taken a sport in a certain area and gone "Let's grow this", and then they've got

the knowledge and experience. (personal communication, August, 2019)

Additionally, the SBNZ's management team's lack of capacity (esp. personal time) hindered

their commitment to formalising a business model for SBNZ to assist in funding acquisition.

Personal time was a major concern for the team as one of them was trying to build a skate

school business whereas the other worked part-time (delivering pizzas) so he could commit

the majority of his time to SBNZ, which eventually became unsustainable.

The sport governance literature suggests that at the corporate governance level, the

sharing of governance and management roles is not "best practice" and should remain

separate (Ferkins et al., 2009; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Sam, 2009; Shilbury et al., 2016).

Sport NZ (2020b) is one organisation that provides such advice in their resource, *Nine Steps*

to Effective Governance, stating that sport boards and their CEOs should function separately

to enhance organisational capability. However, for most small sport organisations, this is not

practical due to capacity issues, such as financial resources to employ staff, a lack of

volunteers willing to do the role, and, available personal "time" of existing volunteers to

dedicate to the role (Crawford, 2018; Hill et al., 2016; Nichols, 2013; Sam, 2009; Schulz et

al., 2011). During my meetings, three former and current SBNZ Presidents, all commented

that it would be nice to be able to hire a General Manager to handle the operational and

administrative aspects of the organisation. However, without any financial resources coming

into SBNZ, this is unlikely to eventuate (as discussed next).

Lack of Funding. The inability to acquire sport funding was also a significant hurdle

for the nascent SBNZ. As an agreement with Skate NZ had not been formalised, SBNZ

lacked the regulative legitimacy and institutional structure to be eligible to receive any

government funding via Sport NZ or the NZOC (discussed earlier). New Zealand Parkour

also experienced similar issues when attempting to acquire Sport NZ funding, as they struggled to negotiate the regulatory requirement to acquire NSO status, and the complexity of applying for funding with Sport NZ (Puddle et al., 2019). SBNZ's inability to acquire funding or other sources of revenue is another clear distinction between how sport is funded in NZ and other countries. For example, countries such as China (Moir, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), the UK (Magowan, 2018; Skateboard GB, 2021), and Australia (Drew, 2015; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), have all provided considerable governmental sport funding to skateboarding leading up to and/or after becoming an Olympic sport in 2016. In contrast, the USAS was established in 2005 and funded by USA-based brands (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021; N. S. Williams, 2020). However, the size of the NZ-based skateboarding industry and brands is relatively tiny in comparison, and the NZ scene is heavily reliant on predominately USA brands (see Chapter Five).

SBNZ's management team had a clear vision of what was needed for the community, such as a national competition (discussed in Chapter Seven). However, they struggled to identify sources of revenue such as sponsorship, Sport NZ funding or other sources of revenue, so were limited in what they could do. For example, an early SBNZ initiative was to establish a series of small regional events that could lay the foundation for a national competition. One founding management team member explained their vision based on the 14 sport regions across the country, each holding one funded event:

> Get a sponsored event trailer - PA system, judging forms, tents, all of that. You pay a couple of judges that you know are good and they can travel around because they get paid to judge skateboarding and you'd hold 14 events across the country every year. So yeah, it would cost a little bit. (personal communication, August, 2019)

Being a regional competition, it was identified that potential sources of funding for these events could be the regional sport, gaming and charitable trusts. However, stemming back to

the founding management team's capability and capacity issues, (discussed earlier), approaching the trusts did not seem like a feasible option:

> We just weren't at the place to have everything on the table. We weren't at that spot where we could kind of go to people and be like, "Yeah, here's our plan". The plan was kind of there, but it wasn't in motion enough. (management team member personal communication, August, 2019)

Funding from sport and charitable trusts and Sport NZ has continued to be an issue for SBNZ (SBNZ committee members, 2022; also see Chapter Seven).

Lack of Support and a Dysfunctional Committee. The SBNZ management team noted that any operational support from individuals from the NZ skateboarding community, or the other founders, was not there. They mentioned that they were particularly "disheartened" by the lack of support from the other SBNZ founders who appeared to have little interest in being more hands-on. In terms of community involvement, one of the founding SBNZ management team commented on how community members are quick to offer "advice", but not keen to get involved with SBNZ; "I have heard so many different ideas from skaters about what should happen, and I was like 'Oh yeah' [sarcastically]…What I would have so appreciated is if there was someone else [to help]" (personal communication, August, 2019). A separate skateboarding-related organisation interviewee also noted the community's lack of interest and involvement with SBNZ; "Everyone's saying, 'Yeah, cool. If we can get into the Olympics, that's great'. But nobody knew that all this work had to be done behind the scenes or who was doing it" (personal communication, August, 2019).

Based on my document research and interviews, of the 15 members listed on the organisation's incorporated society registration document, only three were actively involved in developing SBNZ's strategic or operational matter; namely, the two founders that formed the management team and one other that acted in an advisory role. A SBNZ committee

member who joined the organisation at a later point also highlighted the founding committee's lack of involvement, claiming that they did not attend any meetings or provide input into operational matters (personal communication, February, 2019). He argued it may be simple to gather signatures from "committee members" in order to fulfil the documentation requirements for registering as an incorporated society; however, the level of actual physical input from these individuals being on the committee is another matter entirely.

This style of governance in SBNZ's early period is identified as managerial hegemony; that is where the board may have hierarchical power by legal right, but it is the CEO and their management staff who have the real responsibility by steering and making the decisions for the organisation (Ferkins et al., 2009; Ferkins & Kilmister, 2012; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2015a; Shilbury et al., 2013). In contrast, best practice models suggest that boards/committees should govern by providing strategic direction and making the CEO accountable for the operational and administrative matters of an organisation (Ferkins et al., 2009; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Sam, 2009; Shilbury et al., 2016). SBNZ's committee was dysfunctional and absent. These findings identify and further support the importance for new sport NSOs to find board/committee members that are motivated and that are keen to be proactively involved.

Community Criticism. Ongoing criticism and difficulty when dealing with the NZ skateboarding community have been a challenge for SBNZ. However, this is unsurprising regarding how vocal some factions of the global skateboarding community have been on social media regarding sportification and Olympic inclusion (see, Batuev & Robinson, 2019a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). One committee member commented, "There's one group out there that are, like, 'Fuck SBNZ, Rah, Rah, Rah!' [imitating angry ranting]" (personal communication, August, 2019). Another SBNZ committee member also commented on the

lack of support from the NZ skateboarding community, "So when I go out into the community, it's the lack of engagement, the sheer lack of participation, that is the key problem" (personal communication, February, 2019). During my meetings with non-SBNZ committee members, some interviewees criticised the founding SBNZ management team for not being more proactive in asking the NZ skateboarding community for help or acknowledging that the NSO needed it.

The NZ skateboarding community is close-knit and subject to gossip, social "bullying" (see Chapter Four) and is highly critical. In 2019, a member of the NZ skateboarding community started an Instagram page called *Kooks of NZ Skateboarding*, whose profile picture uses the SBNZ logo with the word "KOOKS" edited into it. The Instagram page bio reads "Watching kooks kook it first hand" (Skateboarding New Zealand Kooks, n.d.), had 41 followers (in late 2022) and two posts that criticise SBNZ media releases. However, as the NZ skateboarding community is highly connected, the Instagram page's owner became known to SBNZ who confronted him and he stopped posting. Commenting on the Instagram page, a SBNZ committee member said, "You get a lot of people just trying to bring you down" (personal communication, August, 2019). Similar criticism are still being experienced by SBNZ (SBNZ committee member, April, 2022).

At a 2019 SBNZ Special General Meeting that I attended, the now-former president (who was not present) was being ridiculed and heavily criticised for SBNZ's lack of progress for the first two years. Only one attendee defended the former president arguing that he had received little support from the others in the room. The same attendee had confided to me earlier, "Having a really good team of support really, that helps a lot. Which I think [the former president] didn't have when he was trying to do SBNZ. I really don't think he had the support" (personal communication, March 2019). However, criticism and intimidation have been ongoing. During the AGM in November 2022, the committee members identified how

some of its members had been subject to verbal and physical threats regarding their involvement in SBNZ. During my meetings with the founding SBNZ management team, it became clear that they were hesitant to implement any initiatives that might not be successful or could be viewed negatively by the skateboarding community. Unfortunately, this same culture of scepticism was hindering the implementation of SBNZ initiatives to avoid any community backlash. These findings illustrate the skateboarding communities' ongoing dislike, mistrust, and scepticism of anyone involved in the commercialisation or institutionalisation of skateboarding culture.

In sum, the above challenges experienced by the SBNZ founding management team played a significant role in the organisation's slow development for the first two years. Lack of funding was a significant hurdle for SBNZ as they did not have the institutional structure (or regulative legitimacy) to receive Sport NZ and NZOC funding. The founding management team members' individual capabilities and capacities, particularly knowledge and experience in running an NSO was a barrier. They were, therefore, unable to negotiate the complexity of the NZ sport system, including how to acquire other potential sources of sport funding. Additionally, while experiencing heavy criticism, there was a lack of support from the wider team of founders or members of the NZ skateboarding community ("volunteers" per se) to be involved in SBNZ operations or to help implement SBNZ initiatives. These findings not only show some of the operational difficulties experienced by SBNZ but also may apply to other new and emerging sporting organisations to face in securing funding and establishing a sustainable business model with their stakeholders.

Refocusing: Appointment of New Committee

By early 2017 both SBNZ management team members were stressed and worn out, and simply stopped being actively involved in SBNZ matters. As they explained:

"I just really don't have the time to do it. It was getting a bit demanding, and I just

wasn't getting anything done, and it wasn't good if it was something that needed to

get done (personal communication, May, 2019).

"I tapped out. I just dropped everything. I was like, 'I'm out, I can't even deal with

this, I'm just going to move on'… I literally was not in the mental space for it, I had

blown a fuse" (personal communication, August, 2019).

Subsequently, SBNZ ceased to operate in mid-2017 without any communication with the

wider NZ skateboarding community, Skate NZ, or NZOC. No one could contact or know

what was going on at SBNZ until late 2018, including myself.

In mid-2018, Skate NZ was under increased pressure from the NZOC and World

Skate Oceania to provide governance for NZ sport-skateboarding as World Skate deadlines

were pending, and without it, NZ skateboarders could not be considered for Tokyo 2020. A

Skate NZ committee member explained the roller sport NSOs dilemma:

We certainly at Skate NZ didn't know whether we had skateboarders in NZ or

overseas that were of a level that could compete. What we didn't want to do, was do

nothing and find that we had not allowed an NZ skateboarder athlete to attend because

we hadn't done our part. (personal communication, September, 2019)

However, despite Skate NZ's claims, it was concerned that identifying and supporting

potential NZ Olympian skateboarders was forefront, the roller sport NSO had made any effort

to establish or explore any alternative forms of governance for NZ skateboarding. Skate NZ's

lack of involvement or support for SBNZ during the early years provoked criticism. For

example: "While SBNZ was dropping the ball. Where was the governance? Where was the

structure?... That wasn't there. But they [i.e. Skate NZ] are happy to take the Olympics glory,

but they weren't there to actually help out" (2019 SBNZ committee member personal

communication, August, 2019). Regardless, of there being no contact from the SBNZ

management team for approximately two years, and of Skate NZ's efforts to reach out to them, the roller sport NSO was still relying on SBNZ to provide governance.

Both Skate NZ and NZOC had concluded that SBNZ was no longer operational and that no NZ skaters would be going to Tokyo 2020. As an NZOC representative explained;

That's when we thought it was not going to happen. [Skate NZ] had tried and tried and tried, and from [SBNZ], there was just no response. And of course, we had no other contacts, so we were both trying to find out what was happening. (personal communication, December, 2018)

In a last-ditch effort, Skate NZ again contacted Yeah Gnar. A Yeah Gnar representative recounted, "Literally I had one week. I just emailed all the people who put on events and in skateboarding that I knew and said, 'These are the deals, what are we doing?'" (personal communication, August, 2019). Eventually, in November 2018, Yeah Gnar managed to get hold of one of the founding SBNZ management team. As a result, they reached the conclusion that forming a partnership with Skate NZ was the only viable option for SBNZ going forward, and thus signed the MOU with the roller-sport NSO. Both management team members then formally stepped down from their management duties and the SBNZ committee.

Leading up to the signing of the MOU, they managed to recruit a new SBNZ president, a NZ veteran skater who agreed to take the role, at least temporarily, until SBNZ was in a stable position. The new SBNZ president recruited two further volunteers to act on the new management team. The "ISF informant" commented at the time, "There is a new board of directors and it's taken a positive path forward. We have now worked sanctioning for SBNZ and recognition [with World Skate Oceania]". Both the NZOC and Skate NZ also commented that SBNZ had been more active since the change; "We've had much more communication since [name] has become involved. He's been more visible, come to more of

our meetings and, he's starting to develop an understanding of the different structures and stakeholders that we are accountable to" (Skate NZ Committee Member, personal communication, September, 2019).

Similar to the founding committee, the incoming 2019 SBNZ committee/management team were "skaters" and lacked the knowledge and experience dealing with the NZ sport system. This was proving challenging, as one committee member commented:

I don't know where to look half the time. Then I don't know what to expect, or what I'm looking at. I'm establishing relationships from scratch…I feel like I doing a lot of work. And I don't know what I'm doing. (personal communication, February, 2019)

There was still a prevalent belief that being part of the NZ skateboarding community, regardless of their capabilities, is the legitimate premise for committee selection. "At this stage given where they need to go, I think it needs to be the community - the 'true believers'" (ISF informant, personal communication, February, 2019). This view is still prevalent today (discussed further in Chapter Seven). Ensuring that the SBNZ committee are from the skateboarding community further safeguards against community mistrust of those outside the skateboarding community and reinforces SBNZ's cultural legitimacy (or authenticity).

Next Steps: Coming to Terms with Institutional Governance

After the establishment of the new 2019 SBNZ committee, the management team's priority was to reinstate the organisation as a registered incorporated society with the New Zealand Companies Office. SBNZ had been struck off in 2017 for not paying registration subsidiaries or providing required annual financial reports but was reinstated as a "society" in early 2020 and remains so by June 2023. However, the 2019 committee were not impressed that the founding SBNZ committee had signed the MOU with Skate NZ. Similar to skateboarding NSOs rejecting notions of being affiliated with their respective roller sport NSOs in other countries (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), the SBNZ Committee were concerned

that Skate NZ had been given the authority to govern skateboarding in Aotearoa. For instance, one of the 2019 SBNZ Committee members expressed their concern regarding the MOU: "The first article states quite implicitly that Skate NZ holds the sole rights to World Skate and its discipline sub-committees…I wouldn't have signed that MOU, I just wouldn't have" (personal communication, February, 2019).

The MOU has been a regular source of heated discussion during SBNZ/Skate NZ meetings providing grounds for SBNZ to consider dissolving the agreement. Underpinning the contention were Skate NZ's demands for SBNZ to pay the outstanding affiliation fees which had still not been paid. As one 2019 SBNZ committee member recounted, "I said to them, 'Why should we pay an affiliation fee? Show me what we're getting for our NZ$1,500.00? Because up to now, it's been nothing'" (personal communication, June, 2020). The SBNZ committee also felt that the affiliation fee was priced extortionately.

In contrast, an NZOC representative commenting on the SBNZ/Skate NZ tensions argued, "[SBNZ] are not embracing the fact that Skate NZ are trying to help them, and they're getting nothing out of it" (personal communication, December, 2019). From their perspective, SBNZ dissolving the MOU was unlikely to happen. He explained; "They can, but then they won't be able to nominate athletes to us [for Olympic consideration]" (NZOC representative personal communication, December, 2019).

Eventually, SBNZ realised that to retain legitimacy as the NZ skateboarding governing body, and to keep the funding and the competitive pathways open to the Olympics, the affiliation fee needed to be paid in late-2020. Additionally, Skate NZ reduced the cost of the affiliation fee to NZ$500 to accommodate SBNZ. However, Skate NZ's move to reduce the affiliation fee further illustrates how reliant the roller sport NSO was on SBNZ to provide governance for skateboarding in Aotearoa.

Chapter Seven delves deeper into the ongoing struggles, challenges, and progress made by SBNZ sitting under the Roller Sport umbrella. Here, I provide the context of SBNZ's continuing development between 2019 and June 2023. Despite some ongoing tensions between SBNZ and Skate NZ, there is a clear shift in attitudes, and the two organisations have managed to find some common ground. While there is still a preference to be self-governing, SBNZ feels that Skate NZ needs to be more proactive and supportive of the skateboarding NSO. For instance, "To be honest, I think the relationship we have, it's fine. I just don't see any value in what they are providing right now" (SBNZ committee member personal communication, August, 2019). Another SBNZ committee member felt that there could be some long-term benefits to being affiliated with Skate NZ; "It's like, Yeah, teach us everything that we can learn. Let's not butt heads on this. Somebody has already said that you're the boss. So, let's play the game" (personal communication, February 2021). In 2020, Skate NZ assisted SBNZ in obtaining Olympic Solidarity funding from NZOC. This is a good example of the SBNZ/Skate NZ collaboration which has maintained Olympic Solidarity funding for 2021 and 2022. SBNZ has used this to provide developmental camps for up-and-coming NZ skaters in 2020 and 2022[6].

SBNZ has struggled to determine its organisational purpose, whether to continue to try to take an all-of-sport perspective or to become solely high-performance skateboarding sport-focused (SBNZ committee member, communication, April 2022). A lack of funding, capability and capacity has continued to be an issue for SBNZ and has hindered its progress towards establishing a national structure for competition in Aotearoa (see Chapter Seven). An ongoing absence of a national sport structure and difficulties in identifying and establishing a

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[6] The 2021 SBNZ development camp was cancelled due to NZ COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns.

"membership" base has also played a significant role in SBNZ's inability to acquire Sport NZ funding which has been a source of frustration for the committee/management team. Being a national organisation, SBNZ has also been unable to acquire regional-based funding from RSTs or other regional trusts. Any lower level governance for sport-skateboarding below SBNZ such as skateboarding-RSOs or clubs in the traditional sports sense is still non-existent. The relationships that SBNZ has with the existing Regional Skateboarding Associations/Groups (RSAs/RSGs) are casual and informal, and any formal affiliation is yet to eventuate, if ever. Consequently, competitive skateboarding events in NZ continue to remain unstructured local events, facilitated by either privately-owned event management organisations, or by skateboarding-related philanthropic groups, RSAs/RSGs, skate schools, or local skate shops. To avoid the difficulties of establishing a NZ national skateboarding competition, a current committee member identified a change in SBNZ's focus on sanctioning existing events.

SBNZ was also able to find an alternative course of income, it entered into a media deal with broadcaster Sky Sport Next in 2019 to livestream skateboarding events. The agreement lasted for the following two years and provided a significant source of income for SBNZ, providing the financial resource needed to keep SBNZ operational and avoided its possible dissolution. SBNZ was also able to assist with travel costs for a few NZ skaters to compete at Olympic pathway events at the World Skate Oceania Continental Championships 2020 in Melbourne, Australia (SKY Sport Next, 2020a), and the 2022 World Street Skateboarding competition in Rome (Downs, 2022).

There is still a preference by SBNZ to self-govern and they remain willing to pursue it in the future; "Hopefully, over the next few years, skateboarding will get its shit together. Where we've got an NZ skateboarding association and similar [regional] bodies, proper governance in place, and we can then take ownership of that for ourselves" (personal

communication, August, 2019). Even a Skate NZ committee member felt that it would be beneficial for SBNZ to eventually become self-governing, "Skate NZ has no interest in being involved in [SBNZ's] operational activities, I can see the merits of the sport becoming a nationally recognised sporting body on its own. This change will take time to achieve" (personal communication, February, 2021). However, more recently SBNZ has concluded that becoming a self-governing body is not going to happen soon, "We've worked really hard with World Skate [Oceania] to try to become our own body and essentially, we've got to the point where they've said it's just too hard, it can't really happen" (personal communication, April, 2022).

What progress (if any) SBNZ makes towards becoming an independent self-governing body for NZ skateboarding will be interesting to watch. However, any change will be reliant on providing assurances of meeting the expectations and requirements of the NZOC and World Skate Oceania (i.e. the regularity legitimacy) for SBNZ to be observed by the MSGBs as the legitimate self-governing skateboarding NSO for Aotearoa. Whether there will be room for more skateboarding NSOs to become (or remain) self-governing under the recent World Skate (2022) amendment to its statutes and bylaws to recognise only one roller sport NSO and federation per country is yet to be seen.

Conclusions

This chapter explored the hierarchical structure of NZ sport-skateboarding from the global to the national level and some of the challenges and struggles experienced by SBNZ to establish a national structure for sport-skateboarding in Aotearoa. Similar to other countries, the IOC's umbrella governance strategy has created coercive pressure for NZ skateboarding to sit under the roller sport NSO, Skate NZ umbrella regardless of SBNZ already existing. While these coercive pressures were initially experienced at the global level by the FIRS and

ISF later to become World Skate, the same coercive pressures also trickle down the hierarchal ladder to the World Skate Oceania, Skate NZ, NZOC, Sport NZ, and ultimately to SBNZ. Each of these governing bodies felt pressured to replicate the international governance model to meet the regularity requirements (i.e. regulative legitimacy). Nevertheless, NOCs appear to play a significant role in whether skateboarding NSOs can self-govern in some countries. In NZ, the NZOC further contributed to the coercive pressure for SBNZ and Skate NZ by reinforcing the umbrella style governance set by the IOC. Additionally, the SBNZ/Skate NZ relationship provides the NZ MSGBs predictability through the replication of the traditional sport model.

The SBNZ case study shows establishing an action sport NSO can be challenging. At the corporate governance level (i.e. committee/board level), this research identifies the importance of NSO committees to support and provide direction for the organisation and the operational management staff to follow. However, it challenges the feasibility and practicality of the board/CEO separation model for non-profit NSOs who in reality are strapped to find volunteers or the funds to pay operational managers. Lacking any funding to hire staff such as general managers, NSOs (including SBNZ) are reliant on time-strapped and inexperienced volunteers to administer their organisations, and this, in some cases, unwittingly hinder their ability to develop quickly. Consequently, the "kitchen-table" administration is still a reality for most non-profit sports whose amateur volunteers lack the capability and capacity to negotiate the complexity of the NZ sport system. Additionally, while it might be easy for new NSO founders to find other seemingly "enthusiastic" individuals to volunteer as board/committee or management team members, it is important to ensure that they are motivated and keen to be proactively involved. For instance, the lack of proactive support SBNZ received from its initial 15 volunteers at its formation, was identified by the founding management as hindering the nascent NSO's growth.

Additionally, the case study reinforces the few earlier studies regarding the governance of skateboarding and snowboarding that have shown that action sport NSOs also experience pressure to consider the needs of their local communities to retain their cultural legitimacy/authenticity. SBNZ experiences cultural legitimacy challenges from ongoing criticism from the NZ skateboarding community for attempting to provide governance. Action sport NSOs are therefore charged with finding the comfortable median between regulative and cultural legitimacies to gain and retain favour with their outsider and insider stakeholders. Even when regulative legitimacy is achieved through affiliation with a mainstream sport, it does not mean action sport NSOs will automatically receive the anticipated support and resources they need to institutionalise. Fundamentally, establishing and developing a new or existing volunteer-based NSO is complex and time-consuming for any new or action sport.

Chapter Seven

A National Skateboarding Structure: Politics, Opportunities, and Challenges

    The previous three empirical chapters show that the New Zealand (NZ) skateboarding scene is primarily unorganised and lacks formalised governance. Provision of the sport was highly reliant on Territory Authorities (i.e. regional and city councils) to provide facilities in the form of skateparks and occasionally some funding for community initiatives. Skateboarding competitions and other events were, and still are, provided by private event providers, for-profit and non-profit skate schools, and other philanthropic skateboarding-related organisations. Individuals in the NZ skateboarding scene were, and still are, highly socially connected, and any skateboarding-related organisations belong to an informal organisational network based on social connections. Consequently, any cooperative efforts by skateboarding-related organisations to coordinate or provide for NZ skateboarding are informal, casual and temporary. In this chapter, I outline and evaluate the ongoing struggles and challenges for SBNZ in creating a national skateboarding structure while having to conform to mandated sport governance under Skate NZ and operating in the NZ mainstream sport system.

    My discussion draws on the views and perspectives of the individuals from different stakeholders involved or impacted by the sportisation and institutionalisation of NZ skateboarding: (a) those involved in skateboarding-related organisations such as SBNZ, Regional Skateboarding Associations/Groups (RSAs/RSGs), and event providers; (b) participants from mainstream sport governing bodies (MSGBs) including Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ), New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC), World Skate Oceania, and the New Zealand Federation of Roller Sports (Skate NZ). I highlight some of the contested

perspectives of these different stakeholder groups, the regulatory and cultural tensions, the

power imbalances at play, and various strategies for consolidating and retaining control.

Mandated Sport Federations and Institutional Pressure

The International Olympic Committee's (IOC's) umbrella governance strategy to

place some action sports under an existing Olympic sport (e.g. skateboarding to sit under

roller sports) resembles a mandated federation. Mandated federations are the strictest form of

network governance, as their formation and participation are compulsory to serve the

interests of a higher authority (Provan, 1983) and are a typical form of sport governance

(Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Dickson et al., 2010; Noll, 2003). The IOC mandate is another

example of the coercive pressure experienced by many Skateboarding NSOs to affiliate with

their respective roller sport NSOs (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Thorpe & Wheaton,

2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

Coercive pressures are institutional, often deriving from compliance, mandates, and/or

expectations that constrain or enforce organisational behaviour to be observed as legitimate

(DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; O'Brien & Slack, 2004; Oliver, 1991). In sport, coercive

pressures are common and enforced by the mandates and regulations set by a dominant sport

governing body (Green, 2009; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006; O'Brien & Slack, 2004; Parent et al.,

2018; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019). The IOC mandate provided significant pressure on Skate

NZ to provide some form of governance for NZ skateboarding. However, Skate NZ was

reliant on SBNZ to gain the necessary regulative legitimacy to do so. This situation illustrates

how coercive pressure exerted by global institutions such as the IOC can influence national

sports governance by filtering down through the hierarchical structure, causing unforeseen

tensions and issues. I discuss the IOC's mandated roller sport federation as a form of control,

and corporate board strategies by Skate NZ to consolidate the control over its affiliated sports, including SBNZ.

The NZOC and Sport NZ positions on the SBNZ/Skate NZ relationship further illustrate the coercive pressures experienced by the skateboarding NSO to affiliate with roller sports while indicating the degree of institutional power that both MSGBs hold. NZOC and Sport NZ appear to see the SBNZ/Skate NZ relationship as legitimate and productive. The umbrella-style governance provides the MSGBs with familiarity and predictability when dealing with informal sports such as NZ skateboarding through assumed replication of traditional sport structures. For example, an NZOC representative commented, "We only deal with Skate NZ…The only way that skateboarding could come onto the [Olympic] programme was to affiliate to Skate NZ. So most of our dealings are through Skate NZ, and that's required" (personal communication, December, 2019). Similarly, a Sport NZ representative saw this relationship as positive: "SBNZ's point of contact is with Skate NZ, who has the liaison role on behalf of all the roller sport codes" (personal communication, March, 2019). Another Sport NZ representative felt that the SBNZ/Skate NZ relationship is a practical option, "[In terms of] accessing funding requires formalisation, structure, track record, and if you've got an organisation that's got that, that gives you a really good start. Otherwise, you've got to spend a couple of years building that" (personal communication, March, 2019).

Consequently, SBNZ felt pressured to affiliate with Skate NZ to be seen as legitimate by the MSGBs in late 2018. While there was a clear preference for self-governance by SBNZ, eventually, its committee concluded that if it were to be taken seriously by the MSGBs (i.e. its regulative legitimacy), the skateboarding NSO would need to be affiliated with Skate NZ (see Chapter Six). Despite this, my conversations with SBNZ members showed many were unhappy with this situation and still questioned why Skate NZ would even be given governance of NZ skateboarding. They expressed their frustration with Skate

NZ and the NZOC's inability to understand the skateboarding culture. For example, "I kept thinking to myself, 'Why are we even in the same room?' We need to protect skateboarding from the Olympics" (SBNZ committee member, personal communication, August 2019).

However, it appears that Olympic inclusion not only creates challenges for action sports added to the Charter but also for the parent mainstream sport NSO (see Chapter Six), including NOCs on how to engage with action sport governing bodies and communities. As an NZOC interviewee highlighted, engaging with NZ sport-skateboarding was difficult due to the IOC's institutional inflexibility regarding structure and governance; "So, the IOC bring in skateboarding, but they don't allow any difference in the structures that we have to provide in accordance with the Olympic Charter to allow that to happen" (personal communication, December, 2019).

Federated Control

Regarding NZ roller sport governance, Skate NZ maintains centrality in its relationship with its internal and affiliated sports, maintaining control of the roller sport federation's resources. Federation governing bodies (i.e. the Network Administrative Organisations or "NAOs") are the most "centrally-located" organisations in the network to form what Barringer and Harrison (2000) referred to as the "hub" and the federation's affiliates that form the "wheel" (see Figure 1 Chapter Two). Their centrality also signifies the highest degree of power in the federation due to the NAO's control of, and who of its affiliates has access to, the federation's crucial resources (D'Aunno & Zuckerman, 1987; Provan, 1983; T. Williams, 2005). The rarer and more vital the federation's resources are to affiliates, the more powerful (and more "centralised") NAOs are (Child et al., 2019; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Based on my research Skate NZ's power stems from its control and access to its federation's resources: Namely, (a) the regulative legitimacy needed to be taken seriously by

the MSGBs (b) the eligibility for and access to sport funding pathways with the aforementioned governing bodies, and (c) the competitive pathways and/or access to international roller sport competitions, such as Oceania and World Championships, and the Olympic Games. However, of Skate NZ's resources, regulatory legitimacy appears to be the most dominant as it underpins access to its other two resources - funding and competitive pathways. Regulatory legitimacy is attained by adherence to a mandate or regulation set by a governmental or a more legitimate organisation (Deephouse et al., 2018; Provan & Milward, 2001; Scott, 1995). Roller sport NSOs (incl. SBNZ) cannot acquire the legitimacy needed to access the federation's resources without meeting the World Skate regulative requirement to affiliate with Skate NZ.

Figure 3 in Chapter Six presented the governance hierarchy, the flow of funding and information, and the competitive pathways from national to international and global competitive skateboarding sport events (incl. the Olympics and World Skate competitions). Below in Figure 4, I show the same NZ relationships and the power distribution among these organisations presented as a federated organisational structure. Skate NZ's "internal sports" are more centrally located to roller sports NSO more preferentially (i.e. more "central") to signify their increased leverage on federation matters compared to its "affiliated sports", which are located more peripherally. The resource pathways and federation distribution from the MSGBs (i.e. NZOC, Sport NZ, and HPSNZ) constitute Skate NZ's legitimate authority and power.

Figure 4

Hierarchical Centrality in the New Zealand Federation of Roller Sports
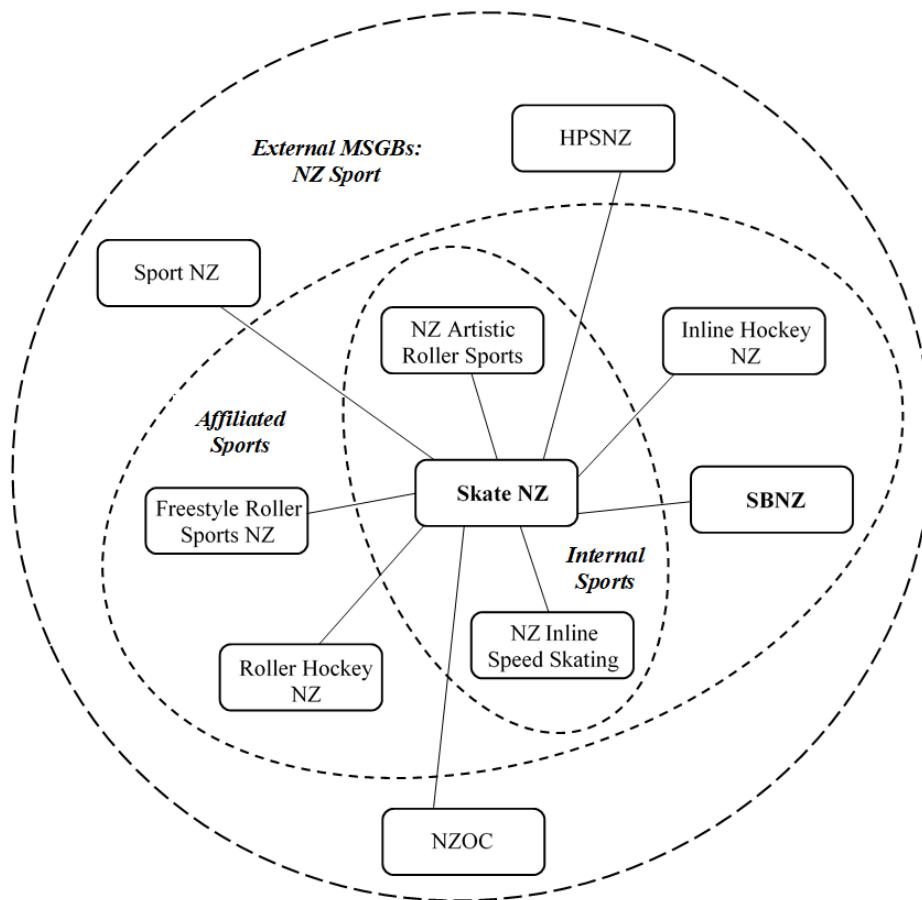
Corporate Governance Strategies to Maintain Power

Mandated federations are typically governed by an independent board or committee that sits inside the centralised governing body (Human & Provan, 2000; Provan, 1983; Provan & Kenis, 2008). Skate NZ reinforces its power over its affiliated sports (i.e. SBNZ, Inline Hockey NZ, Roller Hockey NZ, and Freestyle Roller Sports NZ) by maintaining an independent committee for the roller sport federation. However, there are no committee members from its affiliate sports including skateboarding. As a Skate NZ committee member explained, "The other [affiliated] sports have no input into our board whatsoever…but we do

invite them to our board meetings from time to time to make sure that the information is going backwards and forwards" (personal communication, September, 2019).

Mandated federations often reinforce their power in this way, by ensuring that there are no "delegates" from their affiliates on governing boards or committees (Human & Provan, 2000; Provan, 1983; Provan & Kenis, 2008), which is also common practice for sport federation governing bodies (Dickson et al., 2005; Forster, 2006; O'Brien & Slack, 2004). The absence of delegates on the NSO committee consolidates the governing body's (i.e. NAO's) power by restricting direct input from affiliates (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; N. King, 2016).

Additionally, Skate NZ's independent committee arguably reduces the complexity and expenses of directly governing the affiliated sports. For instance, when explaining the significance of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with an affiliated sport, a Skate NZ committee member commented, "They run their own organisations, they run their own business, they run their own operation" (personal communication, September, 2019). While this statement suggests favourable autonomy for the affiliated sports, it also absolves Skate NZ from a reasonable degree of responsibility. Essentially, Skate NZ can focus on its operations and internal sports, while negating the need to invest financial and organisational resources into the operational aspects of its affiliated sports. Given Skate NZ's centrality and control of the federation's resources, the roller sport NSO maintains a favourable degree of leverage regarding any organisational decisions for its affiliated sports including SBNZ and skateboarding.

However, for its internal sports (i.e. NZ Artistic Roller Sports and NZ Inline Speed Skating), Skate NZ appears to maintain a delegate-style committee. Delegate sport committees are comprised of representatives from the federation's affiliated organisations, and are usually more collaborative and participatory compared to the independent committee

(Dickson et al., 2005; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006). Skate NZ committee members are derived from its 22 roller sport clubs, including the artistic and inline speed skating presidents (Skate NZ, personal communication, September, 2019). Therefore, taking an "all-of-federation" view, Skate NZ's internal sports appear to have more centrality compared to its affiliated sports suggesting they may also have more power, leverage, and possibly (or perceivably) more favour with the roller sport NSO. Lacking affiliated sport delegate representation on the Skate NZ committee also safeguards Skate NZ's interests concerning itself and its internal sports.

The lack of "skateboarding" representation on the Skate NZ committee was a cause for concern for SBNZ as they felt they had no control over any decisions made regarding the sport and the organisation. A former SBNZ committee member also expressed concerns about fairness and representation. He had suggested sharing committee members between SBNZ and Skate NZ committees, claiming, "At this stage, they have accepted the idea" (personal communication, February, 2019). However, this did not eventuate at the following Skate NZ 2020 AGM committee elections. The same interviewee later expressed his disappointment regarding the appointment of new board members to the Skate NZ board from its internal roller sports; "They have appointed two new board members, to govern skateboarding, and they are non-skateboarders". He added, "What right do they have to tell me how to govern my sport?" (personal communication, October, 2020). At the completion of this thesis writing (June 2023), there have been no SBNZ members on the Skate NZ Committee.

Concerns and Responses to Mandated Governance: Negotiating Legitimacy

Given the long history of skateboarding culture as a DIY self-organised, anti-sport, anti-institutional activity, and being opposed to the Olympics (see Chapters Four and Five) it

is helpful to re-examine the rationale for establishing a skateboarding NSO. The motivations and/or concerns experienced by SBNZ's founders explain why they would pursue the sportisation and institutionalisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa and elsewhere. As discussed in Chapter Six, SBNZ's founders established the organisation based on fears of outsiders (i.e. IOC, roller sports, and other non-skateboarding-related organisations) taking ownership of and cashing in on NZ skateboarding. More specifically, during my interviews four key concerns (or motivations) were identified: (a) to create a skater-led governance to protect NZ skateboarding and its ownership, (b) to control any funding allocated to NZ skateboarding, (c) establishing a national skateboarding competition, and (d) to provide guidance to Councils and Regional Skateboarding Associations (RSAs) regarding skatepark development. Additionally, my research identified that some founders may also have had professional motivations to be involved with SBNZ. These concerns are discussed in more detail below.

Protection and Ownership of Skateboarding

The founders expressed their concerns regarding the ability and intentions of outsiders to make the right decisions for the NZ skateboarding community. As one SBNZ founder explained, the fear of misrepresentation was a significant concern for the wider skateboarding community:

> I have seen skateboarding misrepresented many times, whether it's in the media, popular culture, or by a [city] council body… the wrong people have come in and said, "Yeah, I can speak for skateboarding". There's no sense of accountability to those things. Everyone just tries to come in and take their bite of it (personal communication, February, 2019)

Such mistrust of "outsiders" (i.e. non-skateboarders) by the skateboarding community is shared internationally, underpinned by notions of non-skaters "cashing in" on the community's culture and the sport's popularity (Beal & Weidman, 2003; Beal & Wilson,

2004; Renfree et al., 2021; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018a, 2018b, 2021). "Selling out" is a key term in skateboarding culture, identifying those who attempt money making from skateboarding and its culture (Beal & Wilson, 2004; Borden, 2019a; McCarthy, 2021; Snyder, 2017; Yochim, 2010). Based on similar concerns of outsider mistrust in Olympic inclusion, Renfree et al.'s (2021) identified how international BMX-Freestyle, Sport Climbing, and Skateboarding communities felt that their sports need to be protected from both outsider and insider exploitation.

The Olympic inclusion of skateboarding was described as a "sell out" (SBNZ committee member, August, 2019). The founders perceived that if there needs to be governance in place for NZ skateboarding, it needs to be "skateboarder-led" (or "skater-led") to retain ownership and "to protect skateboarding in NZ" (personal communication, August, 2019). These findings show the SBNZ committee's desire to remain authentic to skateboarding's anti-commercialistic core values to retain its cultural legitimacy. Additionally, they illustrate SBNZ and the sport-skateboarding community's fears of losing "ownership" of the sport and roller sports (i.e. to Skate NZ) potentially to cash-in; similar to those situations experienced by many skateboarding (and other action sports) communities globally.

Funding with Control

Related to and underpinned by concerns regarding ownership, the SBNZ's founders were concerned about who would have access to and control any sport funding made available through Olympic inclusion. As noted, (see Chapter Six) the NZ skateboarding community, and founders believed that Olympic inclusion would encourage central and local governments to invest in the development of skateboarding. It was envisaged (from 2016 to 2019) that funding would be provided to help develop SBNZ's infrastructure, for new skatepark developments, establish a national skateboarding competition, and assist high-

performing NZ skateboarders by providing a pathway to the Olympic Games. As one founder commented, "We were aware that there was a lot of funding available towards competitions" (personal communication, May, 2019). While these appear to be optimistic speculations, concerns were expressed about who will receive and have control over any sport funding, and that potentially, any funding for NZ sport-skateboarding would pathway through Skate NZ. SBNZ founders expressed concerns about how reliable and trustworthy Skate NZ could be regarding supplying the full amount to SBNZ, and/or how the roller sport NSO would choose to use the money.

Therefore, SBNZ also plays a moral role (i.e. moral legitimacy) for the NZ sport-skateboarding and greater skateboarding community. SBNZ does so by monitoring Skate NZ handling of any funding provided for skateboarding by governmental and sport funding agencies. Organisations are considered morally legitimate when their stakeholders observe their activities as ethical within the larger social context (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008; Kumar & Das, 2007; Long & Driscoll, 2008; Suchman, 1995). The mistrust of Skate NZ to handle allocated funding for skateboarding is still a common concern within SBNZ.

The Need for a National Skateboarding Competition

As shown in previous chapters, there was a perceived need to establish a national skateboarding competition for Aotearoa. Despite the prevalent anti-sport competition ethos attributed to the skateboarding lifestyle (Beal, 2013; Beal & Weidman, 2003; Borden, 2019a; Willing et al., 2019), sport-skateboarders need competition with some status and legitimacy (Beal & Ebeling, 2019; Borden, 2019a; Dupont & Nichols, 2021; Snyder, 2012, 2017). Additionally, competitions and events provide a platform for community connection and interaction (see Chapter Four).

However, there was (and currently still is) no national competitive structure or skateboarding league in NZ. While some popular annual competitions (e.g. Bowlzilla,

Mangawhai Bowl Jam) exist, these are independently owned and organised and currently do not feed into a national competition structure. Interviewees perceived that a national sport-skateboarding competition structure could be fed by the establishment of several smaller regional and local competitions; "There could be these little local events that are funnelled into regional and national events...That's a potential benefit of SBNZ, to set up this framework" (SBNZ founder, personal communication, February, 2019). SBNZ intended to fulfil this role by providing its own events and recognising/sanctioning the existing (small to large) competitive events provided by other skateboarding-related organisations (Skateboarding New Zealand, 2016).

Ensuring Skatepark Development Quality

As also outlined in earlier chapters, skateparks are essential in providing social capital, community and development for the NZ skateboarding community. However, concerns about poorly constructed skateparks were widely expressed among all skateboarders, not just sport-skaters. While those I met with from skateboarding-related organisations had a strong affiliation with sport-skateboarding and competition, they also commented and reflected negatively on the state of several poorly constructed community skateparks (also see Chapter Five). However, their arguments were reinforced by sport-skateboarding rationalisations. For example, high-performance skateboarding and Olympic inclusion were often rationalisations for the need for high-quality skateparks as training facilities for elite skaters. For example, "If you're not creating world-class facilities, then what are we doing? ...Like, go to the North West of America, go to a Vans Park Series competition, why don't we have one of those [type of skateparks] here?" (interviewee, personal communication, February, 2019).

However, there are tensions regarding the appropriateness and facility of skateparks, with skateboarders viewing them as sport facilities and councils considering them play

facilities (i.e. playgrounds) for a multiplicity of different users. Skateboarding community interviewees perceived that skateboarding's Olympic status would encourage Territorial Authorities (Councils) to invest more in skateparks as a sport facility rather than seeing them as a playground: "The council don't really see it as a sport…but having it in the Olympics is amazing for skateboarding, and I'm hoping that it will give us a bit more leverage in getting new facilities built and support" (personal communication, March, 2019).

Providing construction guidelines, advisory and advocacy regarding the development of new skateparks would be one of SBNZ's key roles; "If someone is wanting to build a skatepark, SBNZ are there just to 'front foot it'" (personal communication, May, 2019). Nonetheless, at the time of writing (June 2023), SBNZ was still to develop a relationship with skatepark developers or construction guidelines.

Pragmatic Motivations: Individual Business and Career Opportunities

Skateboarding's roots are firmly linked to commercialism, with brands responsible for its creation and growth (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2019a; Yochim, 2010). As identified in Chapter Five, NZ sport-skateboarding still relies on skateboarding brands and other businesses to sponsor NZ skaters and to support or provide skateboarding events and competitions. In the USA, core brands instigated and developed sport-skateboarding governance (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Beal, 1995; N. S. Williams, 2020). However, it is interesting how little the NZ skateboarding industry has played in establishing and developing SBNZ. For instance, a former SBNZ committee member commented on how the NSO always seeks advice from "core" NZ skateboarding brands when making organisational decisions to retain their support. Nonetheless, he also commented that core brands were keeping a distance from SBNZ due to its associations with Skate NZ and the impact that it could have on their authenticity not wanting to be seen as "sell outs" (personal communication, March, 2020). Similarly, a SBNZ founding management team member confided that in the early days, the

skateboarding NSO was not keen on having brands involved to avoid being perceived as selling out and to avoid potential influence that may have on the organisation's direction.

My meetings with SBNZ's founders revealed they may have had some individual pragmatic motivations for their involvement with the NSO. Pragmatic legitimacy is based on stakeholder self-interests concerning an organisation (Long & Driscoll, 2008; Suchman, 1995). This is not to say that I observed any underhand or obvious personal motivations or actions by these individuals. Instead, some may have benefited from the institutionalisation of NZ skateboarding. Some of the founders owned NZ skateboarding-related businesses, such as media and retail, private competitions, skatepark development, and skate schools. Other founders felt that their voluntary involvement with SBNZ would eventually lead to their full-time employment.

Including industry representatives as committee members (i.e. "collaborative governance") has been proven as an effective way for NSOs to achieve their objectives because of the industry contacts and experience these members bring (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Shilbury, 2000; Shilbury et al., 2013; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). However, it can raise concerns regarding mistrust and the intentions of committee members from the industry (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; N. King, 2016; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). So, while the industry-based founders did perceive that they were providing a custodian service for NZ skateboarding by establishing SBNZ, there also appear to have been some personal interests at play.

Challenges and Strategies for Operating in a Mainstream Sport Federated System

In this section, I present some of the ongoing challenges experienced by SBNZ in establishing itself as a legitimate NSO and the innovative strategies adopted by the

skateboarding NSO to operate in the NZ mainstream sport system. Such strategies are potentially more appropriate forms of organising for action sports in general.

Developing a National Sport-Skateboarding Structure

Establishing a national structure based on competition for skateboarding in Aotearoa has been an ongoing issue for SBNZ. Difficulty determining SBNZ's stakeholders to create "membership", particularly in the absence of any clubs has further contributed to the issue. As one SBNZ committee member commented, their discussions regarding structure and membership have been challenging and a regular discussion point among committee members. He commented stressfully, "What is membership, who are our members, and what does that look like?" (personal communication, March, 2020). An NZOC representative also recognised the membership challenges ahead for SBNZ as a "non-traditional NSO" where, "Its members have come from being an event-based model. It's not that membership type structure" (personal communication, August, 2019).

"Event-based sports" do not have a national competition structure requiring club membership and sport affiliation, similar to institutional mainstream sports. Instead, competition participation is casual, informal and individualistic, facilitated and provided by various independent sport events (Sport New Zealand, 2020b). Wheaton (2013) documented a similar occurrence in the UK where Parkour was unable to acquire funding from Sport England as the non-club, non-competition, event-based sport was unable to provide membership numbers or event details.

Initially, SBNZ perceived they would establish or connect with the existing RSAs/RSGs to provide local or regional competitions that would contribute to a national competitive structure (SBNZ founder, personal communication, February, 2019). The RSAs/RSGs representatives that I spoke with, all saw the potential for being associated with SBNZ:

"I see the [RSA name] as being a bit of a regional chapter of SBNZ. So, we are all in this for the greater good". (personal communication, March, 2019).

"We really want to work as close as we can with them [SBNZ]. They will be the ones who will see the much bigger picture and the stuff that is available to us on a national scale rather than on our local scale". (personal communication, May, 2019)

However, when writing (June 2023), any regional-level governance for sport-skateboarding has yet to be established, and the relationships that SBNZ maintains with the RSAs/RSGs are casual and informal.

The lack of engagement with RSAs by SBNZ has also caused some tensions. When asked what they would expect by forming a relationship with SBNZ, RSA interviewees identified assistance when dealing with city councils, potential funding, and legal advice when needed. At the 2021 SBNZ AGM, one RSA attendee asked what "…inter-regional support…" could be provided for RSAs/RSGs. SBNZ's replied that the organisation would like to support RSA/RSGs and "skateboarding NZ will consider how to approach this for 2021" (personal communication, June, 2021). In 2022, SBNZ did assist the Wellington Skateboarding Association in tabling a proposal and its approval by the Wellington City Council to explore the feasibility of building a new $5.6 million skatepark in the region (Hunt, 2022). However, a SBNZ committee member said such collaboration is rare (personal communication, April, 2022).

More recently, SBNZ has recognised that there might be better options than a formal relationship (or affiliation) with RSAs/RSGs. A SBNZ committee member commented that the RSAs/RSGs are more interested in "…doing their own thing…" focusing on skatepark development in their regions (personal communication, April, 2022). Consequently, he felt that RSAs/RSGs are ignoring the large population of non-park skateboarders in their regions; "They really like park [skating] and they really like Vert Ramps…they don't represent all of

the skateboarders". Additionally, the committee member identified how SBNZ's focus needed to be broader to include other World Skate recognised styles such as downhill and adaptive (i.e. para-athlete skaters) skateboarding (personal communication, April, 2022).

Consequently, SBNZ is considering establishing its own "regional offices" to work with regional skateboarding-related organisations, one suggestion being two regional offices in NZ's North Island and one for the South Island, which could open up to the regional sport and community trust funding (personal communication, April, 2022). Being a national-based organisation, SBNZ is currently not eligible for regional funding from the community of sports trusts.

These findings illustrate key differences in organisational focus between the regional organisations and SBNZ. The RSAs/RSGs focused on facility and social capital improvement for their communities, whereas SBNZ focused on developing NZ sport-skateboarding. Perhaps, establishing formal relationships (i.e. affiliations) with the existing RSAs/RSGs may only result in tensions regarding different organisational philosophies and purpose and perceived unrequited objectives. It also illustrates a creative way to address regional issues if SBNZ establishes its own RSOs. If SBNZ does follow this initiative, it will be interesting to see if and what tension develops between the SBNZ-RSOs and community-based RSAs/RSGs. However, the successful establishment of SBNZ's own "RSOs" (and regional sport funding) will still depend on their ability to generate a "membership".

Pragmatic Approaches to Providing a National Competitive Structure

Due to a lack of funding, institutional structure and available personnel or time to organise it, SBNZ has still made little progress towards developing a national skateboarding competition. The lack of progress by SBNZ in this area has been a source of tension with the NZ sport-skateboarding community, as one interviewee commented: "I would've expected SBNZ to have set up a 'nationals', but I'm guessing the [SBNZ committee members'] skill

sets and/or enthusiasm isn't there" (personal communication, April, 2021). At the 2021

AGM, an attendee asked about SBNZ's plans for establishing a national competition. The

SBNZ committee advised that the strategy has changed from providing a competitive

structure for sport-skateboarding to working with existing skateboarding event providers and

sanctioning their events, which could lead to a national framework.

This strategy is similar to Triathlon NZ's strategy to connect with private multi-sport

event providers by providing accreditation for their multisport events at cost (see Triathlon

New Zealand, n.d.), which links to the sport's national competition structure. World Skate

uses a similar strategy by linking with existing skateboarding federations for global events

such as Vans Park Series and Street League Series (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). However,

SBNZ's strategy to sanction existing competitions was not received well by skateboarding

event organisers, who are not keen on paying the fees associated with sanctioning. As one

event organiser commented: "A major complaint was about SBNZ trying to control

everything and trying to charge sanctioning fees of some sort on events" (personal

communication, July, 2021).

During a 2022 meeting I had with a SBNZ committee member, he explained that

SBNZ is now not sure event sanctioning is the best path forward. He explained that SBNZ

did not want to be seen sanctioning and endorsing skateboarding events where drug and

alcohol usage is commonplace (personal communication, April, 2022). The committee

member's comments indicate that SBNZ has concerns about its moral legitimacy through

association with skateboarding events. Organisational behaviours and activities perceived by

stakeholders as undesirable can be detrimental to an organisation's ("moral") legitimacy

(Deephouse et al., 2018; Kumar & Das, 2007; Scott, 2014; Suchman, 1995).

Alcohol consumption and cannabis use are common at skateboarding events and

associated with skateboarding culture, including elite skaters at competitive events (Batuev &

Robinson, 2017; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). At the NZ skateboarding competitions that I attended, and also commented on by participants, alcohol consumption and cannabis was evident by both competitors and spectators. These findings suggest that SBNZ has concerns that its moral legitimacy will be compromised by sanctioning these events where such activities occur.

This finding further illustrates the tensions experienced by SBNZ to find the delicate balance to meet the expectations of the NZ skateboarding community and those of external or "outsider" stakeholders. While alcohol and drug use may be acceptable behaviour at skateboarding events, SBNZ feels that sanctioning this event with such behaviour would be detrimental to its legitimacy with external stakeholders by appearing to endorse such behaviour. However, in conjunction with Tairawhiti Adventure Trust, SBNZ sanctioned and sponsored the 2022 New Zealand Skateboard Nationals for street and park skateboarding held in Gisborne in November of the same year (Skateboarding New Zealand, n.d.-a). Plans to do the same for the 2023 New Zealand Skateboard Nationals have also been announced (Read, 2023).

The inclusion of skateboarding in the Olympics has led to competitive skaters being subject to drug testing, resulting in some resistance by some competitive skaters to notions of drug testing (Batuev & Robinson, 2017; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) identified how the 2016 X-Games in Norway refused to test its athletes due to their high usage of drugs and were widely criticised by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the IOC for not doing so. While SBNZ does not consider performance-enhancing drugs as being a problem, cannabis (or "weed") is listed by WADA as a banned substance.

During a 2018 meeting that I attended between Drug Free Sport New Zealand (DFSNZ) and SBNZ, the issue of cannabis was raised. The SBNZ representative explained

that skaters use cannabis to calm their nerves during skateboarding competitions. The DFSNZ said that they had not yet considered testing at the current time, but this will change if any skateboarders promise to be potential Olympians. Nonetheless, based on feedback from event providers, SBNZ were concerned that the threat of possible drug testing at skateboarding competitions would deter participation levels. As one event provider commented: "They're all community events and about getting the community together. So, all of a sudden, now you're going, 'You're all going to get tested', about 90% of the entrants are going to leave" (event provider, personal communication, February, 2019).

To address drug testing concerns, SBNZ proposed an opt-in/opt-out strategy that would allow skaters to indicate if they are interested in being/not being considered for Olympic and World Skate competitions. Skate NZ and World Skate Oceania rejected the idea, arguing that the NZOC and DFSNZ would not accept it. However, DFSNZ did accept the opt-in/opt-out strategy (SBNZ committee member, personal communication, August, 2019). This agreement exemplifies how some flexibility between the MSGBs and the action sport can find mutually beneficial outcomes (e.g. Coates et al., 2010; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019). Effectively, the opt-in/opt-out strategy meets the IOC and WADA regulatory requirements for Olympic hopefuls and caters to the needs of the lifestyle or recreational skaters who do not. To date (June, 2023), DFSNZ has not attended any skateboarding competitions or tested any NZ skaters for performance-enhancing drug use.

The Role of Membership in Providing Organisational Legitimacy

Membership numbers play a significant role in an NSO's legitimacy and ability to acquire sport funding for both mainstream and action sports internationally and in NZ (Jeanes et al., 2019; Puddle et al., 2019; Sterchele et al., 2017). In Aotearoa, Puddle et al. (2019) identified Parkour New Zealand's efforts to be recognised by Sport NZ as the NSO in

Aotearoa were declined partly due to their small (or lack of) formalised membership numbers. Therefore, some action sport organisations and clubs have been formally established to petition and deal with councils regarding facilities and spaces or meet funding requirements (K. King & Church, 2017; Wheaton, 2013; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). The NZ Regional Sport Associations or Groups (RSAs/RSGs) in NZ have also been established for similar reasons (See Chapter Five). However, the "core" or "lifestyle" action sports community members often choose not to engage with institutional membership (K. King & Church, 2017; Wheaton, 2013; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

Some sport governing bodies in Australia and NZ have expanded their membership types in response to the uncertainty surrounding membership (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2015a; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2019; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019; Sport New Zealand, 2020b). In 2022 SBNZ also took a similar strategy by providing several different membership options for its potential stakeholders (i.e. "skateboarder", "supporter", "coach", "skate school", "community group", and "business or organisation") and positioning these as "supporters" (Skateboarding New Zealand, n.d.-b). A SBNZ committee member mentioned that while numbers were still low, for now, it is about capturing membership numbers for funding purposes; "We've got the first step of being members, just to start to capture membership" (personal communication, April, 2022). This membership style reflects the unitary type structure, discussed next, more than a traditional federation.

Challenges of Sport Funding and Becoming Self-Funding

Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) identified how many action sports had perceived that Olympic inclusion would be a "cash cow", resulting in a steady stream of funding, but this has generally not been the case. Some countries such as China (Moir, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), Brazil (de Castro, 2019), the UK (Magowan, 2018; Skateboard GB, 2021), and Australia (Drew, 2015; Skate Australia, 2021) have provided government funding for the

development of skateboarding NSOs, structured competitions and high performing skaters. Governmental sport funding for skateboarding has not been so forthcoming in Aotearoa. The inability to acquire sport development funding from Sport NZ remains an ongoing problem and a source of frustration for SBNZ. The following discussion outlines SBNZ's various attempts to gain High-Performance Sport Funding, sport development/ community funding, and industry/media sponsorship.

The skateboarding NSO's applications for Sport NZ funding need to pathway through Skate NZ (Sport NZ representative, personal communication, March, 2019). To secure Sport NZ funding, NSOs must show that they have considered and made provisions to meet the funding agency's directives (Dickson et al., 2010; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). Skate NZ provided planning weekends for its affiliated sports to help navigate the funding process. This involved, "each group [sport] to develop their own growth strategies for their sports, their sporting people, their woman in sports, for their officials, and, the development of their volunteers" (Skate NZ committee member personal communication, September, 2019). This process and time commitment were frustrating for SBNZ. As a former committee member of SBNZ explained, the work involved was not worth the limited amount of funding available; "Our Treasurer checked out after about 30 minutes when she saw how much work needed to be done for only $5,000.00" (personal communication, November, 2019). Furthermore, they believed that skateboarding already encompassed all ages, cultures, and genders (also see Chapter Four) and did not require further validation or differentiation in such a forum.

In early 2019, SBNZ approached High Performance Sport New Zealand (HPSNZ) concerning potential funding for elite NZ skateboarders. Due to the lack of competition and support for elite NZ Skateboarders, it is common for the more serious skaters to relocate to Melbourne or Sydney in Australia to pursue skating careers (see Chapter Four). HPSNZ's

strategy is to work with NSOs, "To enable and empower world-class performances that inspire New Zealanders" (High Performance Sport New Zealand, n.d., para. 1). However, HPSNZ informed the SBNZ committee members that there was no money allocated to NZ skateboarding or skaters as skateboarding is not one of its five priority sports. HPSNZ encouraged SBNZ to pursue private sponsorship from the commercial sector. A SBNZ committee member reflected on the meeting, "You need to be basically a superstar and high profile" (personal communication, April, 2020). Wheaton & Thorpe (2021) noted a similar situation for elite NZ surfers who prior to surfing's Olympic inclusion were unable to acquire HPSNZ funding. Instead, NZ surfers would often move to Australia to take advantage of the high performance and competition opportunities (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

A SBNZ committee member told me how HPSNZ had independently entered into negotiations with a NZ professional skater residing in Australia in 2019. The skater was keen on the HPSNZ offer but became frustrated with how long it was taking for HPSNZ to produce the support contract. Australia had also flagged their interest in the skater. Consequently, the NZ skater decided to accept the Australian offer of support. He was promptly issued a contract, financial support, and an Australian passport with a commitment to skate for Australia if selected for Tokyo 2020 (personal communication, November, 2020). While the skater did not qualify, this example highlights the significant differences between NZ's and Australia's approaches to athlete identification and support for future Olympic talent in new action sports (Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

In late-2019 SBNZ decided to approach Sport NZ directly, to see if the pathway through Skate NZ could be changed. SBNZ was advised to apply to be recognised as an independent NSO. However, lacking infrastructure and, as noted, no membership, it is debatable whether SBNZ would be awarded NSO status by Sport NZ. Illustrating how hard it is for informal sports to obtain NSO status with Sport NZ, Parkour New Zealand's repeated

attempts were declined due to being unable to prove existing organisational infrastructure and membership numbers (Puddle et al., 2019). Frustrated, a SBNZ committee member said that they told the Sport NZ representative, "Why should we align ourselves with Sport NZ if there is nothing in it for skateboarding" (personal communication, December, 2019). At the date of writing (June 2023), SBNZ has still not received any Sport NZ funding for its organisational development.

Perhaps recognising some of the difficulties for these new Olympic sports, in 2020 the NZOC offered a new Olympic Solidarity fund. Skate NZ assisted SBNZ in obtaining Olympic Solidarity funding. However, as two funding applications were submitted (one for SBNZ and one by Skate NZ for Inline Speed Skating), the total bid was considered too high by NZOC. Consequently, Skate NZ withdrew their bid to make room for SBNZ to be awarded the funding. This collaboration between SBNZ and Skate NZ continued, and SBNZ was able to use the funding to hold a developmental camp for young skaters in 2020 and 2022[7]. This funding arrangement assured SBNZ that Skate NZ was not exploiting the specific funding for NZ skateboarding.

Shifts in National Sport Funding Policy

In 2020 there was a shift in Sport NZ's strategy towards focusing on "Active Recreation" and "Play" (Sport New Zealand, 2020a) instead of organised sports to engage young people in physical activity. Consequently, SBNZ thought they might be in line to get some funding finally; "I loved it when they put out the new strategy, and I looked at it and said, 'Well, you've just bought out skateboarding strategy'" (personal communication, April, 2022). Additionally, Sport NZ appeared to have an interest in skateboarding, using photos of children skateboarding to promote new play initiatives (e.g. see: Sport New Zealand, n.d.-a,

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[7] Although a 2021 camp was planned, it was cancelled due to COVID-19 lockdowns in NZ.

2021). Sport NZ also contacted SBNZ to obtain information about the participation of girls skateboarding in Aotearoa and Active Play to produce media articles for the Sport NZ website, and particularly the launch of the 2020 "#It's My Move" campaign focused on young women (see: Sport New Zealand, n.d.). Despite this reliance on SBNZ to connect with the NZ skateboarding community, funding has not been forthcoming: "We have given them contact details like for Girls Skate [NZ] for news articles, they have photos of kids skateboarding on their website, but we still don't get any funding from them" (personal communication, April, 2022).

Being a national organisation, SBNZ is also unable to access funding from regional sport and community trusts which could be distributed to skate schools or community groups. After some advice from Yachting New Zealand, SBNZ is considering opening three to four regional offices to open up funding for regional and local skateboarding-related organisations (personal communication, April, 2022). This proactive strategy has the potential to help SBNZ to develop a national governing structure for sport-skateboarding in Aotearoa. However, for SBNZ to be able to acquire funding for itself, it will need to skim some of the regional funds, which may cause some tensions with the skateboarding community. Even so, SBNZ's inability to gain Sport NZ funding for grassroots sport and infrastructure development further illustrates the struggle many action sports experience to acquire government funding globally.

A second key shift was in December 2021. HPSNZ announced a funding policy change that included an Aspirational Fund to support coaching and elite athlete and performance pathways development for a broader range of sports, including skateboarding (High Performance Sport New Zealand, 2021b). Consequently, SBNZ was awarded $33,000 to be allocated over three years ending in 2024 (High Performance Sport New Zealand, 2021a). A SBNZ committee member said that they initially applied for $500,000 but were not

disappointed in being awarded the lesser amount: "It wasn't even about the money for us it's just getting that foot in the door. Now we have access to resources, and we're [SBNZ] actually inside, we're investment partners [with HPSNZ]" (personal communication, April, 2022). How or what impacts the HPSNZ funding will have on the development of NZ sport-skateboarding over the next few years will be intriguing, especially leading up to the Paris 2024 Olympics.

Alternative Methods of Organising: The Unitary Model

The unitary model has proven effective for event-based sports that lack a club structure, such as Triathlon New Zealand (Sport New Zealand, 2020b) and could be an effective way for SBNZ to structure. Instead of a regional (i.e. RSO) to club structured model, participants and other related organisations can affiliate directly with the NSO (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016, 2019; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019). This arrangement negates the need for RSOs or at least keep them to a minimum. Some sports in Australia, such as Australian Motorsport, Equestrian Australia, and Touch Football Australia, have had some success with a unitary structure (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016). In NZ, Tennis NZ (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010), Cycling NZ and Judo NZ have partly adopted a unitary structure also (Sport NZ, personal communication, March, 2019).

SBNZ has identified two possible forms of structure and membership. First, the federated form, facilitated by two new skateboarding RSOs (North and South Island) independent of the RSAs/RSGs who affiliate with SBNZ. However, as skateboarding clubs in the "sport sense" are non-existent, sport-skaters would need to affiliate directly with one of the new SBNZ-RSOs. Second, by providing a unitary structure whose affiliates/members are a diverse collection of individuals and organisations. This will still not be without some challenges regarding being able to attract, provide, and add value to an eclectic group of "members/supporters". For instance, the needs and wants of a skatepark developer will be

quite different from those of a skate school. Similarly, the needs and wants of top NZ skaters who aspire to compete in the Olympics will differ from those who only enter the odd local "skate comp'". However, a philosophical issue underpinning both structural forms is whether NZ skateboarders and skateboarding-related organisations are willing to be labelled as "sell outs" by affiliating with an institutional governing body for skateboarding in Aotearoa. Nonetheless, SBNZ has at least made some proactive steps to deliver and provide a membership base for sport-skateboarding in Aotearoa.

Alternative Funding: First Steps Towards Self-Funding

Government funding for sport has become increasingly overstretched in some countries such as Canada, Australia, the UK, and NZ (Hoye et al., 2015; Parent et al., 2018; Sam, 2009; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). Consequently, many non-profit sport organisations are being encouraged to become more commercially focused and financially self-sufficient (Hoye et al., 2015; Parent et al., 2018; Sam, 2009; S. Walker & Leberman, 2012). The most significant income development for SBNZ was a 2019 media deal with Sky Sport Next to livestream NZ skateboarding events. Brokered by the private company New Zealand Sport Collective, the NZ$81,500.00 (Skateboarding New Zealand, 2021) media deal involved SBNZ allowing and providing coverage of two skateboarding competitions per year (personal communication, April, 2020). At the time, a SBNZ committee member commented that in the absence of governmental funding, the media deal provided SBNZ with some much-needed financial resources (personal communication, November, 2019).

Because of the Sky Sport Next deal, SBNZ have been able to provide some support for a few New Zealand skateboarders to compete at Olympic pathway events. For instance, SBNZ assisted one NZ street skater to travel to and compete at the Street League Skateboarding (SLS) in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil in late 2018 (personal communication, February, 2019). In 2020, SBNZ assisted five male New Zealand skateboarders with travel,

accommodation and other support to the World Skate Oceania Continental Championships 2020 in Melbourne, Australia (SKY Sport Next, 2020b) and the 2022 World Street Skateboarding competition in Rome (Downs, 2022). However, the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns and travel restrictions limited the ability of top NZ skaters to compete in Olympic qualifying events and gain points towards the Olympic World Skateboarding Rankings (SBNZ committee member, personal communication, November, 2020). There were no NZ skaters that qualified for Toyoko 2020.

In late November 2020, a SBNZ committee member said that SBNZ had livestreamed three competitions and considered adding more events, including advertising (personal communication). However, another SBNZ committee member expressed concerns that the media deal did not sit well with some skateboarding community members; "I'm not convinced becoming a media company is probably the best way forward" (personal communication, December, 2020). The committee member's apprehension highlights the importance of retaining SBNZ's authenticity/cultural legitimacy to keep community support. The media deal was not renewed for 2021 as Sky Sport Next focused on secondary school sport. The media company asked SBNZ to develop a skateboarding league that could be livestreamed. A SBNZ committee member said that they declined due to a lack of talent depth; "We like the idea of doing an 18-year and under skateboarding competition; That would be really cool to see. But, when our best kid [skater] is like 14 [years old] and skates in the open men's competition, it would be like just watching him just destroy all the other little kids" (personal communication, April, 2022).

The media deal sustained SBNZ for its first few years as it was its only source of income. When I spoke to a SBNZ committee member in April 2022, he said that they were unsure where to get future funding from, but did still have some financial reserve (personal communication). Commercial backing has been a proven successful strategy for USA

Skateboarding (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Perhaps SBNZ exploring further commercial partnering could provide future income opportunities for the organisation. However, the challenge for SBNZ will be treading the fine line between being authentic or being viewed by the NZ skateboarding community as "sell outs" and "cashing in".

Regulative Flexibility: Making Mandated Umbrella Governance Work

SBNZ has come to terms with the fact that a relationship with Skate NZ needs to be maintained (see Chapter Six). As discussed, some mutual benefits are also experienced from the relationship between both NSOs. However, this has also resulted from some flexibility by both parties in negotiating the NZ sport system. For example, communicating through Skate NZ to World Skate Oceania and the NZOC is frustrating and time-consuming for SBNZ, and often the information received from Skate NZ would be late or incorrect (SBNZ committee member, personal communication, February, 2019). As a committee member commented: "We do this double/triple handling...Then if there's an amendment and it comes back through all the hands" (personal communication, August, 2019).

Similar efficiencies and tensions have been identified regarding the duplication of efforts and miscommunication by federations and national sport governing body pathways in both Australia and Aotearoa (Shaw & Allen, 2006; Shilbury et al., 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). While one of the IOC's rationales for placing skateboarding under roller sports was to assist a quick move to institutionalisation and increase operational efficiencies (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019a; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011a; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021), this appears to be more for the benefit for the Olympic governing body network. Instead, at the operational level, the umbrella style governance has created inefficiencies and tensions experienced by both skateboarding and roller sport NSOs.

To address the above issues, with Skate NZ's consent, SBNZ has started to deal with the NZOC, World Skate and HPSNZ directly, which has increased efficiencies. Skate NZ provides written support for any SBNZ applications. According to a SBNZ committee member:

> The first year [2019, SBNZ] would have spent 50% of the time just dealing with [Skate NZ] and whatever they were doing. This year I've had two calls with them about the World Roller Games…honestly, we're practically autonomous. We just get the odd email forwarded to us, about four days too late (personal communication, April, 2022).

This has also extended to managing the NZ$33,000 HPSNZ funding to be received over three years from 2022. While the funds were initially going to be paid to Skate NZ, the roller sport NSO instructed HPSNZ to pay it directly to SBNZ to avoid double handling but SBNZ still needs to be affiliated to Skate NZ to be eligible to receive the HPSNZ.

Mutual Power and Benefits Inside an Umbrella Governed Structure

SBNZ maintains a preference for self-governance. Skate NZ also felt that there is some merit for skateboarding NSO to do so. At this stage, the relationship appears to have both power imbalances and mutual benefits at play. While the SBNZ/Skate relationship might not be perceived as preferable to both parties, there do appear to be some mutual benefits. For instance, the relationship reduces or negates the coercive pressures by both SBNZ and Skate NZ to provide institutional governance for NZ skateboarding. Skate NZ can provide governance of NZ skateboarding, allowing SBNZ to do the job for them with a limited commitment of financial or human resources. There also appear to be mutual benefits as Skate NZ legitimises SBNZ with the regulative legitimacy it needs with other MSGBs. In contrast, SBNZ holds the necessary cultural legitimacy for Skate NZ to be the official governing body.

Additionally, the relationship further enhances SBNZ's authenticity with the NZ skateboarding community by being skater-led and perceivable safeguarding the community's best interests. However, there is a risk here for SBNZ. As Batuev and Robinson (2019a) explained, as action sport NSOs become more adherent to regulation and institutionalisation, it can be a detriment to their cultural legitimacy as their communities become more resistant to the governing body. The challenge for SBNZ will be to negotiate and balance the delicate space between regulative and cultural legitimacies. In sum, while the SBNZ/Skate NZ relationship has been controversial, political, and challenging for both NSOs, there appear to be some mutual benefits of sharing the governance of NZ skateboarding. However, this may change when (if) more substantial high-performance and sport development funding becomes available for NZ skateboarding.

Strategies for Maintaining Skateboarding New Zealand's Cultural Legitimacy

SBNZ has remained constant about the fact that to be taken seriously by the NZ skateboarding community, it needs to manage its cultural legitimacy. One strategy used to retain control of NZ skateboarding (its "ownership") and its cultural legitimacy (i.e. authenticity), has been for SBNZ to ensure that its committee members come from the skateboarding community. That SBNZ being skater-led appears to be more important than its capabilities to negotiate the NZ sport system prevails even today (see Chapter Six). The legitimising benefits of maintaining a skater-led committee for SBNZ are twofold. First, it assures the NZ skateboarding community that their pragmatic interests are protected from misrepresentation and "cashing in" by outsiders (including roller sports). Secondly, it provides cultural legitimacy (or authenticity) for SBNZ to be perceived favourably by the NZ skateboarding community. Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) found the same concern among those

involved in Surfing NZ, who rationalised that it needs to be run by surfers regardless of individual capabilities.

As nascent organisations often struggle to provide favourable outputs early on, their stakeholders will determine their credibility based on the personal characteristics and reputations of those running them (Jahn et al., 2020; C. Jones et al., 1997). The authenticity of individual committee members appears to also play a role in SBNZ's authenticity. As identified in Chapter Four, veteran or ex-pro male skaters appear to possess a significant degree of authenticity with the NZ skateboarding community, which is unsurprising given that previous studies have also shown veteran and ex-pro male skaters as being more "core" or "authentic" and have more influence in skateboarding communities (Dupont, 2014; Widdicombe & Wooffitt, 1990; Willing et al., 2020). Since its establishment in 2016, 11 out of 15 of SBNZ's committee members have been male veteran skaters in their 30s to late-40s with reputable skating ability, and well-known to the NZ skateboarding. While two of the male committee members have come from the skateboarding industry, none I met felt they had the capabilities to negotiate the NZ sport system.

Historically, there have been no women skateboarders on the SBNZ committee. However, two women (i.e. "skate mums") have been committee members (one former and one current) that have previous experience in dealing with Councils and acquiring funding. These findings mirror both the skateboarding industry nationally/internationally and the lack of female representation on sport boards or committees more widely (e.g. Ferkins et al., 2009; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2015a; Sam & Ronglan, 2016; Stenling et al., 2020; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018b, 2021). This lack of female representation is significant and aligns with previous studies on female representation regarding the governance of action sports, including skateboarding (see, Wheaton & Thorpe, 2018b, 2021).

As previous research has shown, young male "rad skaters" and veteran skaters have a higher degree of authenticity compared to female skaters (Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Beal & Wilson, 2004; Buckingham, 2009; Dupont, 2014). Possibly male skaters are more empowered to apply for and are perceived more favourably for leadership roles by the skateboarding community. Women considered for sport board selection are subjected to the socially constructed criteria set by males, often underpinned by notions of masculinity, merit and alignment with the board's current goals (Shaw, 2019; Stenling et al., 2020). Given women's inequitable power status, female skaters may not experience the same motivations or inclinations to apply for leadership roles. It also suggests that the leverage of being a skateboarder, one's skating ability, reputation, personal characteristics, and seemingly being male, may outweigh one's business and management capabilities, such as knowledge, experience, and abilities.

However, at the 2022 SBNZ AGM (November), the first two women skaters were elected to the SBNZ committee. One of the new women committee members owns a popular girls-only skateboarding school and has a favourable public profile as several mainstream print and video media articles have also been about her story and school. The other is a veteran woman skater with some success at professional skateboarding competitions overseas. Of the other seven committee members elected, there are four male veteran skaters, two NZ top male skaters, and one "skate-mum" who was on the previous committee. These findings may further indicate the impact of the changing fratriarchal masculine culture typically associated with skateboarding (Beal & Wilson, 2004; Kelly et al., 2005; Pomerantz et al., 2004; Porter, 2003), or possibly SBNZ's attempt to recognise the growth of women and girls skateboarding in Aotearoa and be seen to be responding to it. Wheaton and Thorpe (2021) noted how the IOC's mandate for gender equity in Olympic teams had increased the visibility of women in sport-skateboarding. Similar pressures for gender equity may have

prompted SBNZ to respond, recognise and be more inclusive of women's skateboarding. Therefore, Olympic inclusion may have positively impacted how the NZ sport-skateboarding community observes women and girls skateboarding.

The Ongoing Paradox of Cultural Legitimacy

Despite SBNZ starting to progress, its committee members still experience a lack of support, ongoing criticism and mistrust from some of the NZ skateboarding community. As a SBNZ committee member explained: "The negativity within the community, and the insular attitude [Laughs]…The core values that have carried skateboarding for over the 40 years that skateboarding has existed it's like your strengths are your weaknesses. That's really challenging to deal with" (personal communication, February, 2019).

Mistrust of those involved with SBNZ also appears to be ongoing. A committee member said that he was sick of members from the skateboarding community questioning his involvement with SBNZ, asking: "Why are you doing this? What are you getting out of it?" (personal communication, November 2020). Even in 2022, committee members said they regularly experienced questions about their "true intentions" from various skateboarding community individuals. During the SBNZ AGM in November 2022, one committee member explained how he had received verbal and physical threats to himself and his business. Two good examples of NZ Skateboarding community criticism that SBNZ experiences are: (a) negative feedback regarding a SBNZ 2020 development camp for top NZ skaters, and, (b) SBNZ's involvement in NZOC Tokyo 2020 promotion involving a giant-sized skateboard; Both are discussed next.

In the first example, SBNZ experienced criticism over its 2020 development camp. Much of this criticism was centred on the fact that SBNZ used some of the Solidarity Funding that it had received from the NZOC to pay the camp's coaches and mentors, who were all personal acquaintances of those involved with SBNZ. Additionally, other criticism

was focused on the athlete selection process (or lack of), as several young skaters at the camp were the children of SBNZ committee members or veteran skaters. Additionally, the skating ability of some selected athletes was also questioned. SBNZ's President addressed these concerns at the 2021 AGM and promised improved processes for future camps to ensure impartiality and transparency. Whether the criticism of the 2020 development camp is valid or not, this case is another good example of the mistrust and fear skateboarders maintain about individuals or organisations cashing in on skateboarding.

The second example of mistrust involves SBNZ's participation in an NZOC initiative to construct a giant-sized skateboard called "Eke Tahi" (NZ Maori translation "ride as one") to promote the NZ Olympic team in the lead-up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics (see Figure 5 below). It also highlights the ongoing scepticism NZ skaters have for SBNZ for selling out. The NZOC launched a nationwide press release featuring the NZ Olympic team posing with the 12-metre-long skateboard, followed by a 41-day national roadshow, later becoming the centrepiece for the NZ Team HQ Fan Zone, Auckland (Berkeley, 2021; New Zealand Olympic Committee, n.d., 2021).

SBNZ took responsibility for conducting the roadshow and organised two top NZ skaters to tour with the giant skateboard. However, SBNZ received considerable negative feedback from some skateboarders via social media regarding their involvement (see: Skateboarding New Zealand, 2021). Criticism centred on the NZOC cashing in on skateboarding's Olympic status, SBNZ perceivably selling out by partnering with the NZOC, and SBNZ's apparent willingness to promote the Olympics compared to its lack of action to develop a national competition. Additionally, the Eke Tahi promotion appeared hypocritical as no NZ skateboarders were part of the NZ Olympic team for Tokyo 2021. These findings and examples illustrate the ongoing scepticism of anyone involved in the commercialisation or institutionalisation of skateboarding culture.

Figure 5

Eke Tahi: "Ride as one"

Note. Photographs of Eke Tahi taken at the NZ Team HQ Fan Zone, Auckland, in 2021. Own work.

The Shortfall of Staying "Skater-Led"

SBNZ's strategy to have only skaters as committee members (i.e. "skater-led" governance) to keep its cultural legitimacy, is also potentially an "Achille's heel". While core skaters contribute to SBNZ's cultural legitimacy, it is less clear how they contribute to developing a capable and effective NSO that could impact its organisational legitimacy (i.e. credibly). There were several occasions in my field notes where I reflected that voting

decisions were being made on a nominee's popularity rather than their capability or experience.

One example was the 2022 AGM, in which I was asked by two SBNZ committee members to apply for a board role and for which I was successful. However, after a recount, two of us failed to make the final list of members, instead being asked to play advisory roles. Some of the overlooked nominees appeared to have the knowledge, experience and resource that would have benefited SBNZ's future, such as previous experience in the sports sector and contacts with other sports organisations, city councils and commercial businesses. I also noted the reactions of those in the room, particularly towards some of the more recognisable skateboarder nominees before voting. It felt more like a popularity contest. One of those elected included a founding SBNZ committee member who had previously been criticised by other committee members for their lack of involvement (see Chapter Six).

These incidents further illustrate the importance SBNZ and the sport-skateboarding community continue to place in keeping "outsiders" out and that any governance for skateboarding in Aotearoa remains skater-led. However, this may be detrimental to SBNZ's development and progress because, as research has shown, boards/committees should consider not just the individual characteristics of their members but also the capabilities and resources they can bring (Ferkins & Kilmister, 2012; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). For example, Skateboard GB has several board and management team members that are not 'core' skateboarders and have considerable experience with other sports and commercial businesses. The NSO has made significant progress in acquiring funding, helping skatepark development, supporting elite skaters, and bringing in the skateboarding industry (Skateboard GB, 2021).

In contrast, at the time of writing (June 2023), SBNZ's progress is still slow, and the NSO appears nascent. While the NSO has been more visible by supporting local

skateboarding events, securing some HPSNZ funding, and being occasionally more visible in mainstream media to comment on matters related to skateboarding, its progress towards its intended purpose of providing skatepark development advocacy, establishing national skateboarding competitions, and acquiring funding is still unrealised.

Conclusions

This chapter has presented and discussed the past and ongoing struggles and challenges for SBNZ in creating a national skateboarding structure while conforming to mandated sport governance under Skate NZ and operating in the NZ mainstream sport system. The IOC mandate provides significant coercive pressure that trickles down the hierarchical ladder to all of the levels of the roller sport global federation. While there were coercive pressures experienced by SBNZ to affiliate under NZ roller sport, this research also shows that both NZOC and Skate NZ felt pressure to provide some form of governance for NZ sport-skateboarding, and to replicate the dictated institutional federated model.

SBNZ has made some progress towards providing structure for sport-skateboarding, such as event sanctioning, HPSNZ funding, providing development camps, assisting with elite skaters' travel, and brokering a drug-testing policy with DFSNZ. However, in other sport development areas, such as establishing a national sport and competition structure, there has yet to be some progress. The inability to acquire sport-related funding further impacts SBNZ's skateboarding NSO's ability to do so. Potential future commercial partnering could provide further income opportunities for SBNZ but may be at the risk of its cultural legitimacy. However, it is evident that the federated organising model is challenging for SBNZ, inhibiting its ability to create a membership base from the lack of existing RSOs and clubs and impacting its legitimacy with the MSGBs. However, SBNZ's move to utilise the simpler Unitary Model may address its membership issues.

This chapter also supports previous research that has identified that when there is some flexibility between the MSGBs and the action sport they can find mutually beneficial outcomes (e.g. Coates et al., 2010; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019). Despite both NSOs seeing some benefit in sport-skateboarding being self-governing, SBNZ has concluded that it needs to maintain its relationship with Skate NZ. While there are still some tensions in the relationship, there are some mutually legitimising benefits. Skate NZ provides SBNZ with the regulative legitimacy and access to federation resources it needs and SBNZ provides Skate NZ with cultural legitimacy and connection with the NZ sport-skateboarding community. Both NSOs manipulate and consolidate their power over the other to protect their interests by controlling whom they maintain as committee members. Skate NZ's committee members are from its internal sports, and SBNZ's are from the skateboarding community. Regardless of SBNZ's efforts to have the NZ skateboarding community as a centre of its focus and to remain "skater-led" by only having members from the skateboarding community, it still experiences ongoing challenges to its cultural legitimacy by some in this stakeholder group.

Lastly, the NZ skateboarding community members and commercial brands have traditionally and continue to provide for skateboarding in Aotearoa. Without traditional sport structures or MSGBs, members of the NZ skateboarding community have developed an assortment of for-profit and non-profit organisations working towards entrepreneurial and philanthropic objectives such as skate schools, RSAs/RSGs, wellness and community groups, and skateboarding events. Whether there are national or regional governing bodies for skateboarding in Aotearoa, as skateboarding history has proved during its various stages of popularity over the years, there will always be skateboarders, skateboarding-related organisations and Councils providing for the sport/activity.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions, Reflections, and Implications

In this final chapter, I summarise and highlight the key findings. I reflect on my research methodology and theoretical approaches and discuss how the thesis contributes to the Sport Management and Sociology of Sport literature. I also identify implications for professional practice, research limitations, and possible avenues for future study. My final thoughts and concluding remarks on this research close the chapter and thesis.

Thesis Summary

The purpose of this research was to explore the processes and politics involved in developing "legitimate" forms of governance in the New Zealand skateboarding context and the implications for action sport more widely. In Chapter One I provided the broader context for my research question; specifically, how Olympic inclusion of skateboarding has led to the institutionalisation of the sport in Aotearoa. Chapter Two explored and discussed the bodies of literature used during this research: Sociology of Sport, Sport Management, and Organisational Studies. These three bodies of literature provided the conceptual lens regarding sociocultural elements of action sports participation, organisational network theory, organisational legitimacy, and sport governance. Chapter Three outlined and explained the qualitative methodological approach, interpretative epistemology, and research design. This chapter discussed the research philosophy of social constructionism and the interpretative ethnographic perspectives. The qualitative research design, data collection, modes of analysis and my positionality are explained.

The findings from this research are presented in four empirical chapters (Chapters Four to Seven) with overlapping themes. Chapter Four showed that the evolution and

popularity of skateboarding in Aotearoa have closely mirrored global trends driven by the consumption of predominantly US-based print and online media. During this chapter, I identify two broad, distinct but interrelated stakeholder groups based on how they participate in skateboarding: (a) "Sport Skateboarders" who actively compete, strive for a professional career and practice to improve their sporting skills, and (b) "Lifestyle Skateboarders" who embrace the subcultural elements of skateboarding without a strong focus on competition. Nonetheless, there the many other ways people (i.e. "Recreational Skateboarders") engage with skateboarding, such as play, coaching, physical and mental wellbeing reasons, social connection, leisure and transport.

Community interaction occurs at local skateparks and "street/skate spots", skateboarding competitions and Skate Jams, word-of-mouth and social media. The NZ skateboarding community is close-knit, highly connected and perceives itself as inclusive of age, gender and ethnicity. However, some girls and women skaters experience marginalisation by male skaters, and dominant discourses of masculinity are present. Veteran skaters enjoy a high degree of authenticity and respect, providing informal governance for the community. The mentoring of younger skaters by veterans allows them to reinforce their skateboarding identities and connect with younger skaters. While there is a cultural shift among some younger skateboarders away from the traditional anti-establishment and rebellious skateboarding ideology, it is still prevalent among older core skaters.

In Chapter Five, the primary providers for skateboarding in Aotearoa are identified as the regional and city councils via constructing and maintaining public skateparks. However, Regional Skateboarding Associations/Groups (RSAs/RSGs) are important as they advocate for their communities to petition councils regarding skatepark developments and improvements. Despite a steady increase in RSGs, skate schools, skatepark groups and the establishment of SBNZ in 2016, the NZ skateboarding scene remains unstructured, with an

informal participatory network of skateboarding-related organisations and groups connected by the social engagement of individuals involved in these organisations. Regarding sport-skateboarding, NZ skateboarding companies provide limited support to the competitive scene, with skater-owned brands viewed as the most authentic. While significant events such as Bowlzilla and The Mangawhai Bowl Jam received some financial support from brands, smaller events and skaters receive limited sponsorship. Local skate shops, skate schools, and RSAs/RSGs remain the leading providers of smaller local competitions and Skate Jams. Nonetheless, the NZ skateboarding scene is still highly dependent on the skateboarding industry for its provision.

Particular focus was directed toward the experiences of female skateboarders during Chapter Five, as skateboarding has been a male-dominated activity. Similar to international trends, female skateboarding in NZ has also been growing. It have been driven by NZ girls and women skaters through social media groups, coaching schools, and female-only events. However, women and girls continue to face marginalisation from male skateboarders. For women sport-skaters this included, men not taking women skateboarding seriously, prize money inequity, and lack of age-group competitions. One organisation, Yeah Gnar, has tried to address these issues by sponsoring female skaters and events, but more attention is needed from event organisers to support women in sport-skateboarding competitions. Both Chapters Four and Five offer a key finding of this research in that they contextualise and characterise the NZ skateboarding scene, showing the range of organisations (i.e. governmental, commercial, community-based, philanthropic) and other stakeholder groups responsible or self-appointed (i.e. formal and informal) for skateboarding provision in NZ.

Chapter Six presented the hierarchical structure of NZ sport-skateboarding from the international to the national level. A case study of the development of a new skater-run NSO, SBNZ, identified the challenges and struggles to establish a national structure for sport-

skateboarding in Aotearoa. Like other countries, the IOC's umbrella governance strategy has created coercive pressure for NZ skateboarding to sit under the roller-sport NSO Skate NZ. World Skate Oceania and NZOC also reinforced the coercive pressures by recognising the IOC's mandated pathway and expecting that SBNZ would do so. However, this situation has also created challenges for Skate NZ as the roller sport NSO experienced similar pressure from the MSGBs to provide governance for NZ skateboarding which it was unprepared for or capable of doing. Consequently, Skate NZ was reliant on a relationship with SBNZ to provide this role. While some National Olympic Committees (NOCs) have allowed for some flexibility in how skateboarding is governed in their countries, the NZOC has been less so, retaining the umbrella governance model as it provides predictability through the replication of the traditional sport model. Therefore, NOCs have played a central role in determining whether skateboarding NSOs can self-govern.

The SBNZ case study shows that establishing a new sport NSO can be challenging, especially at the corporate governance level (i.e. committee/board level). The case study identified the importance of having capable and experienced people to navigate the complexity of the NZ sport system. While best practice suggests that there should be a separation between the board and the management, for new and small sport organisations, this is not feasible. The SBNZ case also showed how action sport NSOs are challenged to balance their regulative and cultural legitimacy to meet the requirements of the MGSBs (external legitimacy) and the expectations of their sub-cultural communities (internal stakeholders). Despite its efforts, SBNZ continues to experience criticism from the NZ skateboarding community.

Building on the discussion in Chapter Six, Chapter Seven identified past and ongoing struggles and challenges for SBNZ in creating a national skateboarding structure while conforming to mandated sport governance under Skate NZ, and operating in the NZ

mainstream sport system. The IOC's mandate for a global roller sport federation created institutional (i.e. coercive) pressures that are experienced at all levels of the multi-level federated system. As this research has shown, the IOC's umbrella governance strategy creates power imbalances and interdependencies, concerns and tensions regarding the ownership of the action sport, who has access to and control of action sport funding, and who is best for the action sport's stakeholders (i.e. its community members).

Regarding the NZ roller sport federation, being the central governing body, Skate NZ possesses the highest degree of power through its control of and access to the federation's resources, such as regulative legitimacy with the MSGBs, eligibility to receive sport funding, and competitive pathways to international roller sport competitions such as Oceania and World Championships, and the Olympic Games. Regulatory legitimacy is the most crucial Skate NZ resource as it underpins access to the other two (i.e. funding and competitive pathways). Skate NZ further consolidates its power over its affiliates by maintaining an independent committee/board devoid of any representatives from its affiliated sports. However, SBNZ also has some leverage over Skate NZ, as the skateboarding NSO has cultural legitimacy and the means to govern the NZ sport-skateboarding community for Skate NZ. It is doubtful that Skate NZ could do so without the relationship with SBNZ or a similar skateboarding NSO.

Even though SBNZ has made some progress towards providing structure for sport-skateboarding in terms of athlete development camps, international travel support, sanctioning competitions and drug-testing policies, it continues to struggle to acquire sport-related funding from Sport NZ and, until recently, from HPSNZ. While some common ground has been established between SBNZ and Skate NZ, it remains to be seen how the relationship between the two NSOs will evolve to provide effective governance and structure for NZ sport-skateboarding. However, regardless of the outcome, it is clear that the NZ

skateboarding community and commercial brands will continue to provide and support the sport in Aotearoa.

Methodological Reflections

Constructionism and interpretivism play crucial roles in analysing and interpreting my research findings. Both ontological and epistemological views helped allow me to determine what Yin (2009) referred to as the "what" (i.e. the underpinning reasons) and the "why" and "how" (the reason the phenomenon exists). Coming to this project as an "outsider" (i.e. a non-skater with little skateboarding community association), I had limited knowledge or experience of skateboarding culture globally or in Aotearoa. At times I struggled to comprehend the social and cultural context underpinning some responses participants provided. For example, I could see why NZ skateboarders would not want to sit under the NZ Roller Sport umbrella as roller skating is perceivably "uncool" and culturally at odds with skateboarding. In contrast, drawing on my sport management background, I could "understand" the philosophy and inner workings of Sport NZ and the NZOC. I could also see the administrative efficiencies for the Skate NZ relationship to exist for the MSGBs and SBNZ. Therefore, at times I did not quite understand how passionate "skateboarders" were to be self-governing, uncooperative with Skate NZ and the NZOC, and "against" Olympic inclusion.

Regardless of my secondary data research on the global and NZ skateboarding scenes and culture, I still relied on the accounts and views provided by interviewees. However, being recognised as an outsider by interviewees did prove beneficial. For instance, participants would take their time to explain the meanings behind and the importance of some of their accounts without prompting. I enjoyed hearing the stories and views provided by the research participants. My knowledge and appreciation of the skateboarding scene and culture globally

and in Aotearoa have grown considerably. However, this research focused on the institutionalisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa, interviewees were actively interested in its sportisation. Subsequently, their accounts and views may only be relevant to their specific skateboarding sub-culture (i.e. "sport-skateboarding") and may be irrelevant and/or ignore those of recreational or lifestyle skaters.

Ethnographic Enquiry

Ethnographic enquiry attempts to understand the subjective perspectives of individuals in a social context involving the researcher's immersion into a social reality to gain first-hand experience of the underlying cultural norms and values (P. Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Goulding, 2005; Gray, 2014; Rosen, 1991), and it played a significant role in my research. I did not initially set out to fully immerse myself in the NZ skateboarding community for a prolonged period which is often attributed to ethnographic study (see: Goulding, 2005; Gray, 2014; Rosen, 1991). However, as the research progressed, I realised that I was immersed in the research social setting. For instance, I volunteered for SBNZ, formed lasting relationships with some interviewees, attended skateboarding competitions/events and SBNZ meetings and AGMs, and regularly engaged with skateboarding niche media. I also started to share similar opinions with those provided by some research participants and was able to develop my critical reflections to create my narrative of the case.

The organisational ethnographic approach was also instrumental in documenting the case of SBNZ, its political issues and struggle, and the cultural tensions between the organisational and the MSGBs and skateboarding community. For example, through volunteering for SBNZ, I was able to gain and experience first-hand/insider knowledge regarding its management team's efforts regarding operational matters and dealing with the MSGBs, skateboarding-related organisations, and the NZ skateboarding community. As I

have been involved with SBNZ since just after its establishment in mid-2016, I feel that I have gained considerable insight concerning the organisation's struggles and evolution, especially in those earlier years. Perhaps, more so than those currently on SBNZ's committee and management team.

Theoretical Reflections

This research has addressed several gaps in the academic literature. First, it bridges the gap between Sport Sociology and Sport Management (and Organisational Studies) regarding the formalising of action sports. It also explores the implications of sportisation and institutionalisation on action sports at the national and regional levels, and it is the first that has focused on such matters regarding the national governance of skateboarding. Additionally, it addresses the limited similar research focused on NZ action sports, including NZ skateboarding. My research also addresses calls to investigate the legitimacy of the federation as a governing structure for future sport coordination, including action sports. Finally, it explores the relationship between distinctions and similarities between the sociology and theoretical concepts of cultural legitimacy and "authenticity" concerning creating new sport structures or organisations. I discussed the above in more detail in the following sections.

For this thesis, I drew on theory and concepts from the Sociology of Sport, Sport Management, and Organisational Studies bodies of literature. Together, these bodies of literature played an essential role in synthesising my research findings and conclusions. Sport Management academics have tended to focus attention on matters concerning corporate and federated governance, stakeholder concerns and sport policy for mainstream sports (for a few examples, see: Babiak, 2007; Babiak & Thibault, 2008; Sam, 2015; Sam & Schoenberg, 2019; Shilbury, 2000; Shilbury et al., 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). Only a little work has

focused on skateboarding from a sport management perspective (for a few exceptions, see: Batuev et al., 2020; Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Renfree et al., 2021). However, the Sport Management literature was instrumental in identifying, analysing, and discussing the various concepts related to sport governance, policy and stakeholder concerns associated with the traditional sport system and structure.

Concepts from the Organisational Studies literature regarding organisational networks and legitimacy was central to my understanding. These conceptual frameworks helped identify, describe, and critique the differing "types" of legitimacy and their respective tensions derived from different stakeholder groups (see: Deephouse et al., 2018; Scott, 2014; Suchman, 1995). They also supported understanding the foundations and issues related to institutionalisation and multi-organisational governance. Organisational theory has played a role on sport organisations regarding governance, policy, and professionalisation (for few examples see: Babiak, 2007; Babiak & Thibault, 2008; Crawford, 2018; Dickson et al., 2005, 2010; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010, 2015a; Frisby et al., 2004; Gerke et al., 2018; O'Brien & Slack, 2004; Parent et al., 2018; Sam & Ronglan, 2016; Shilbury et al., 2013; Stewart et al., 2005; Waugh et al., 2014).

In contrast, governance matters relating to action sports have taken more of a Sociology of Sport lens, being more culturally focused (Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Sterchele et al., 2017; Wheaton, 2013; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016). This sociological lens was crucial for analysing and identifying the sub-cultural tensions at play and their implications, and the varying views, arguments and power relationships of different stakeholder groups regarding institutionalisation and sportification of actions sports (e.g. Beal & Ebeling, 2019; Dupont & Nichols, 2021; O'Connor, 2021; Puddle & Wheaton, 2023; Wheaton, 2013; Wheaton & O'Loughlin, 2017; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). By integrating the various literature, I was able to identify and explore how the mandated umbrella governance and resulting coercive

pressure are not just experienced by the action sport (e.g. SBNZ and NZ skateboarding) but also by the parent (e.g. Skate NZ) and National Olympic Committees (e.g. NZOC).

Through applying, contrasting, and synthesising the abovementioned literature, it was possible to present the complexity of the SBNZ struggles as being "regulatory legitimate" with the MSGBs while trying to balance its "cultural legitimacy" (in management terms) or "authenticity" (in sociocultural terms) with the NZ skateboarding community. Organisational Network Theory provided the lens for how multi-organisational networks, especially sport federations, are structured and the difficulty for many action sport NSOs such as SBNZ to adopt, develop, or fit into traditional forms of governance. Similarly, the Sport Management literature focus on sport federations and Board/Committee (or "cooperate") sport governance helped to understand the issues of governing multiple organisations and the boards' strategic role in maintaining power imbalances to retain control over these organisations. The Sociology of Sport illuminated the deeper cultural politics and tensions underpinning the perceptions of those mentioned above, such as retaining control and power, "ownership", mistrust by action sports of MSGBs (i.e. "outsiders") "cashing in", and suspicion of those involved in action sport-related organisations ("insiders") "selling out".

One observation of the literature is the confusing use of standard terms that have similar but distinct meanings dependent on the academic discipline. Initially, navigating the literature was challenging, and sometimes explaining specific topics during writing took some work. For example, institutionalisation in the Sociology of Sport literature signifies the sportisation, creating structure, formality, and governance of action sports. In contrast, the Sport Management literature uses terms such as professionalisation and formalisation. In contrast, the Organisational Studies literature refers to institutionalisation as adopting, adapting, replicating, or redundancy of socially accepted or unaccepted industry behaviours by nascent or existing organisational institutions resulting from pressure to be seen as a

legitimate entity. However, through exploring and utilising these different but similar literatures, I now have a better understanding of the multifaceted meaning of these terms. This research may help others to navigate and negotiate similar nuances and similarities regarding the social and functional themes in the study of sport organisations.

Contribution to the Literature and Theory

Much of the focus on the institutionalisation and sportisation of action sports has been on the global level and how national federations fit into that international structure. Previous work on skateboarding has tended to have focused more specifically on global governance (e.g. Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021) or exploring the implications at the national in other countries (e.g. Ellmer & Rynne, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021; N. S. Williams, 2021a). This research addresses the gap by providing a national-level examination of the institutionalisation of an action sport. It shows that the difficulties and struggles experienced by one action sport to establish national structures and governance are similar potential challenges for other action sports. The research is also the first comprehensive study focused on skateboarding in NZ, its culture, forms of community interactions, and different forms of participation such as "lifestyle", "recreational", and "sport" skateboarding. It builds on findings from research on other action/informal sport institutionalisation in the NZ context, such as parkour and surfing (see: Puddle, 2019; Puddle et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021).

This research also extends knowledge regarding IOC-mandated governance. While the impacts of the IOC's imposed umbrella governance on action sports have been documented, this has generally ignored the impact on the parent/governing mainstream sport. While not the main focus of this research, the findings also show that Skate NZ experienced pressure from World Skate Oceania and NZOC to provide some form of governance for NZ skateboarding. Consequently, similar to action sports or other new sports included in the

Olympic charter, mainstream sports also experience coercive pressures to provide governance of a sport where they have had no previous involvement and no cultural legitimacy.

My research also shows that the integration of this literature allowed for not only the organisational government and management matters to be explored but also the sub-cultural considerations and implications that underpin action sports and their organisations. For instance, the Sport Management literature allowed for the exploration and analysis of matters related to the "business" of sport, such as "good governance", building capable sport organisations, sport structure and leagues, policy and funding. In contrast, the Sociology of Sport lens allowed for deeper analysis by exploring the cultural considerations that underpin the above themes, especially the debate regarding legitimacies (i.e. regulative versus cultural/authenticity) concerning action sports. SBNZ experienced coercive pressure to affiliate with Skate NZ to meet its regulative requirements with the MSGBs (i.e. its regulative legitimacy). As the case of SBNZ shows, the committee was aware that adhering to and affiliating with a mainstream sport would be to the detriment of how the NSO would be perceived by the NZ skateboarding community (i.e. its cultural legitimacy or authenticity). Finally, my findings illustrate the value of integrating multi-disciplinary literature in the study of sport culture and organisations and other broader contexts or research focuses.

Contribution to Policy and Practice

While this research has focused on the institutionalisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa, its findings can also be extended to the sportisation of other action sports and more broadly to new sports wishing to establish forms of governance and structure. For instance, this research identified that the traditional federation sport model may not be suited to many informal sports and/or event-based sports. Even though new sports (including action sports) experience pressure (often coercive) to replicate traditional institutional sports models such as

federation and hierarchical national structures, they often lack the capacity, capability, financial resources or stakeholder support to do this (Batuev & Robinson, 2017, 2018; Renfree et al., 2021; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). Consequently, it is hard for new sport NSOs to meet the regulative requirements to be seen as legitimate entities by governmental funding agencies and other MSGBs.

Additionally, the issues highlighted in this research about the inflexibility of national funding models, have been experienced by other action sports in Aotearoa, such as Parkour New Zealand and Surfing New Zealand (see: Puddle, 2019; Puddle et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). While adhering to the traditional sport model provides predictability for the MSGBs, these findings suggest that to allow for new sports to develop at the national, regional and local/club level sports, there needs to be a shift in this mindset. MSGBs and other governmental funding bodies should consider providing some flexibility in how sports are structured and developing other forms of funding criteria to allow action sport NSOs (and other event-based sports) to develop.

This work supports earlier research that has identified that the IOC's umbrella governance strategy is for administrative reasons and often devoid of cultural considerations associated with most action sports (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019b, 2019a; Renfree et al., 2021; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). Additionally, if there is more flexibility in structure and regulation considered by both the MSGBs and action sport NSOs, improved cooperation and coordination between the two can develop (Coates et al., 2010; Steen-Johnsen, 2008; Sterchele et al., 2017; Strittmatter et al., 2019).

Self-governance appears to be preferable for some action sports, as shown by the views of SBNZ and NZ sport-skateboarding. Action sport NSOs are forced to balance the interplay between cultural and regulative legitimacies to appease their internal and external stakeholders; Namely, the regulative requirements of their respective MSGBs and the cultural

considerations for their communities. MSGBs can reduce these tensions through better consultation and consideration of the reasons why action sports prefer to self-govern. While the umbrella governance model may seem like a practical strategy to the IOC at the global level, this may not be the best solution at the national and regional (and local) governing levels. Consequently, consideration and flexibility could be implemented by World Skate Oceania and NZOC to allow action sports and their NSOs, such as NZ sport-skateboarding and SBNZ, to self-govern to encourage buy-in and cooperation while avoiding cultural tensions. The MSGBs assisting in negotiating the regulative requirements of the mainstream sport environment and developing capable organisations and structures would also benefit the development of action sport NSOs.

Action sport NSOs believe that retaining control and ownership of the sport is vital (Batuev & Robinson, 2018, 2019b, 2019a; Renfree et., 2021; Strittmatter et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe, 2016, 2021). SBNZ's strategy is to maintain a committee composed of skateboarding community members regardless of their capabilities to do the role, with knowledge of and experience with the NZ sport sector considered less important. As shown, their communities often perceive action sport NSOs who have outsiders as committee members, as lacking cultural legitimacy/authenticity. However, as the case of SBNZ shows, maintaining inexperienced committee members (and management staff) can be detrimental to the action sport and its NSO's development. If having outsiders (e.g. non-skateboarders) as committee members and management staff is not an option, perhaps action sport NSOs need to be more open-minded and creative in seeking advice and support from their parent governing MSGB, or mentoring from other individuals with experience in the NZ sport sector. Therefore, my research identifies how the culture of an activity/sport is or needs to be reflected in its governance structures.

Finally, governmental bodies and funding agencies may find it beneficial to continue to explore initiatives and make financial support available for action sports as ways to meet health and physical activity policy objectives. Globally, due to their increasing popularity, some governmental bodies have started to recognise the untapped potential of some action sports to meet their physical activity obligations for their constituents (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011, 2017; Green, 2009; Jeanes et al., 2019, 2022; Kellett & Russell, 2009; Turner, 2017). The categorisation and characterisation of the various NZ skateboarding-related organisations and groups identified in this research (i.e. RSAs, RSGs, skate schools, event providers, and other industry and non-profit entities) can help inform better policy development for community physical activity initiatives. Learning how to better engage and support action sport practitioners and related organisations in their constituencies could be advantageous for regional and city councils.

Limitations and Future Research

Olympic inclusion has been the primary driver for the institutionalisation of skateboarding for this research. Therefore, the focus was to approach participants from skateboarding-related organisations that have been involved or are interested in the governance and formalisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa. Consequently, "skateboarder" interviewees were mainly enthusiastic about the sportisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa to varying degrees. However, as my research progressed, I realised that I was only dealing with a small part of the NZ skateboarding community and an even smaller stakeholder group, those interested in the Olympics and the institutionalisation of NZ sport-skateboarding. As the focus of this study was at the organisational level, I did not explore the opinions or perceptions of individual skaters themselves (the "voice from the street" per se) regarding

these matters. This perspective could help to understand the ongoing challenges for skateboarding institutionalisation in Aotearoa.

Another possible limitation of this research is the inability to secure interviewees from all the stakeholders. In particular, I would have liked to interview the two HPSNZ representatives who had some limited involvement with SBNZ regarding funding for elite skaters. Understanding HPSNZ's perspective of having to consider skateboarding as an elite level and Olympic sport and its funding policy would be very valuable. Additionally, the views from some key (and "core") NZ skateboarding companies ("brands") could have further contextualised their input in the NZ scene and what they stand to benefit from the sport's institutionalisation and Olympic inclusion. Accounts from the more prominent core skateboarding brands could have provided a more comprehensive picture and understanding of the NZ scene and industry.

The COVID-19 pandemic was another significant factor that limited this research. Enforced governmental restrictions significantly impacted the sport sector both internationally and in Aotearoa during 2020 and 2021. Although participant interviews were still able to be conducted online via Skype and Zoom with little impact, the provision of skateboarding provided by the various skateboarding-related organisations in NZ was inhibited, including the development and efforts of SBNZ. The pandemic also impacted top NZ skateboarders' ability to travel to large global skateboarding competitions to earn World Skate skateboarding ranking points to be considered for Olympic selection. It would have been interesting to have tracked the progress made by SBNZ and NZ elite skaters leading up to Tokyo 2020.

Future Research

There are several suggested avenues that future research could take. Research should continue documenting SBNZ's strategies, challenges and progress towards institutionalising

skateboarding in Aotearoa. Continuing the narrative of SBNZ will provide further insights into the ongoing politics and struggles in establishing skateboarding NSOs in NZ and internationally, and for those to wish to do the same in the future. Also, future research should focus on the importance of regional skateboarding organisations and where they would sit in a national structure. For instance, what are the similarities and distinctions between RSAs and RSGs? How do RSAs/RSGs compare to the traditional RSOs? Do RSAs/RSGs see they can contribute or affiliate with a national governing body such as SBNZ? Can RSAs/RSGs facilitate a local skater "club" and/or "membership" for their regions?

As noted above, further exploration of the full range of NZ skateboarding community voices regarding governance and sportisation of skateboarding in Aotearoa could be beneficial. More specifically, those skateboarding stakeholders that did not participate in this research, such as lifestyle skateboarders, younger and women skaters, skateboarding brands and other retail businesses. This would determine what (or if wanted) a governing body for skateboarding (i.e. SBNZ or other) can provide for lifestyle skaters and their consideration as stakeholders. Similarly, the views of industry players such as international and NZ skateboarding brands would give insight into any value they perceive could be attained through the institutionalisation of the NZ scene and different governance models. Possible partnerships and collaborations between industry brands and SBNZ could also be identified.

Future research should also explore how Sport NZ and the NZOC can work more collaboratively with new, informal, and/or action sports to develop capable NSOs. Areas of focus should be eligibility criteria for development funding, assistance with building organisational capability and capacity, and developing ways to recognise alternative forms of structure and organising. This information will also be beneficial for future sport policy development. Additionally, while the literature has focused on the reductive or limiting

impact of umbrella governance on the action sport and its NSO, the impact of this IOC mandate on the "parent" mainstream sport appears to have been largely overlooked. Future research focused on the political issues, tensions, and coercive pressure experienced by mainstream sport NSOs who have been mandated to take an action sport under its umbrella is essential to understand the ongoing implications of the IOC's strategy.

Finally, due to the need for more available information regarding NZ skateboarding, work should be done to formally record and document the history of skateboarding in NZ and of its skaters for future generations in Aotearoa. Providing this content in print and video form would address the lack of print and visual content on NZ skateboarding's history.

Concluding Remarks

This research has explored the processes and politics involved in developing "legitimate" forms of governance in the New Zealand skateboarding context, with implications for action sport more widely. It has shown that SBNZ's road towards providing governance and structure nationally has been complex and challenging. The IOC has continued to ignore the requests by some action sports to self-govern, creating coercive pressures and tensions at all levels (i.e. global to local) of governance (Wheaton & Thorpe, 2021). While there are politics at play between SBNZ and Skate NZ and the other MSGBs, there are also cultural political issues as the NSO struggles to maintain its "cultural legitimacy" or "authenticity". Adhering to traditional models of sport governance and structure, such as the federation structure, provides MSGBs with the comprehension and predictability they need to deal with action sports through the use of familiar models. However, the same rationale inhibits the growth of some action sports as they do not have the existing structure, funding, or knowledge (and possibly the desire) to develop such institutional sport models.

Consequently, there is a need for MSGBs such as Sport NZ and the NZOC to be more flexible in recognising alternative forms of governance and structure for action sports. Where the IOC and other MSGBs do not see self-governance as being a viable option for new or action sports, being more diplomatic as opposed to authoritarian to allow flexibility could be a productive strategy. This would require a philosophical shift in how governance, structure and sport funding models are viewed by MSGBs. Alternatively, maybe the institutional logic and discourse surrounding elite sport that perceives that sport has to be governed are at fault. Perhaps changing the logic and rhetoric from "governance", "structure", and "regulation" to "collaboration", "coordination" and "administration" that allows sporting codes to "pathway" rather than "sit under" an MSGB could be useful to achieving buy-in by some action sports. After all, the need for some action sports to institutionalise has been driven by the IOC to provide pathways for action sport athletes to the Olympics, directly impacting only a tiny minority of practitioners worldwide.

Perhaps there is no need for NZ skateboarding to be governed? Similar to the rest of the world, skateboarding's popularity has fluctuated over the last five to six decades, yet many New Zealanders have continued to skate. Skateboarding-related organisations/groups and businesses have been around since skateboarding was first introduced to Aotearoa. However, the increase in skateboarding participation levels over the last decade has also coincided with an increase in skateboarding-related organisations that advocate and provide events for the NZ skateboarding community. Along with regional and city councils that provide facilities/skateparks, the NZ skateboarding scene fundamentally provides for itself. What is missing is the coordination, administration, and sport development support needed for high-performing skateboarders to have a pathway to elite competition including the Olympics, World and Oceania roller sport games, and professional skateboarding events. Possibly with some funding (and/or sponsorship), rather than being a "traditional sport-style"

NSO, SBNZ could maintain an administrative role looking after the pathways to the Olympics and other international skateboarding events. Connecting with the various skateboarding-related organisations/groups (as opposed to formal membership) could allow SBNZ to play an advocacy role for NZ skateboarding by being a spokesperson for the scene. A truly authentic organisational purpose.

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Appendix A

Ethics Approval Confirmation

The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Gate 1, Knighton Road
Hamilton, New Zealand

Human Research Ethics Committee
Karsten Zegwaard
Telephone: +64 7 838 4892
Email:humanethics@waikato.ac.nz

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

3-Sept-2018

John MacFarlane
By email: jmacfarlane@unitec.ac.nz

Dear John

**UoW HREC 2018#05 : Management strategies towards legitimate action sport federations:
A national structure for Skateboarding New Zealand**

Thank you for submitting your amended application HREC 2018#05 for ethical approval.

We are now pleased to provide formal approval for your project within the parameters outlined within your application.

Please note, you have amended your application to allow for participants to identify themselves using real names rather than pseudonymous. This is something we can approve, however, our advice here is to tread the safer path and simply not allow this option – especially since you do not require for your research that their identity to be declared.

Please contact the committee by email (humanethics@waikato.ac.nz) if you wish to make changes to your project as it unfolds, quoting your application number with your future correspondence. Any minor changes or additions to the approved research activities can be handled outside the monthly application cycle.

We wish you all the best with your research.

Regards,

_____

Karsten Zegwaard PhD
Acting Chairperson
University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix B

Consent Form

Consent Form for Participants

Te Huataki Waiora -
Faculty of Health, Sport and
Human Performance

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Management strategies towards legitimate action sport federations:
A national structure for Skateboarding New Zealand

Consent Form for Participants

I have read the **Information Sheet for Participants** for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study up to three weeks after receiving transcripts of interviews, or, to decline to answer any particular questions in the study. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out on the **Information Sheet**.

☐ I agree for this interview to be audio recorded

☐ I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the **Information Sheet** form.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Name and contact information:

John MacFarlane (BSp, MBus)
Te Huataki Waiora / Faculty of Health, Sport,
and Human Performance
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Mobile 021 342 944
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Supervisor's Name and contact information:

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Approved by the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) on 03/09/2018,
Reference number HREC 2018#05

Participant Information Sheet

Te Huataki Waiora -
**Faculty of Health, Sport and
Human Performance**

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Project Title: Management strategies towards legitimate action sport federations:
A national structure for Skateboarding New Zealand

An Invitation

I would like to invite you to participate in a research project focusing on the development and sustainability of credible governing bodies for action sports.

The project is being undertaken by John MacFarlane, a Doctorate student with the Faculty of Health, Sport and Human Performance (Te Huataki Waiora), University of Waikato.

This research takes a specific focus on the organisations, Skateboarding New Zealand, Skate New Zealand, Taranaki Skateboarding Association, Yeah Gnar, and, Wellington Skateboarding Association, however this may extend to other similar organisations if identified as this study progresses.

You were selected as you are currently involved in the organising and development of skateboarding in New Zealand and associated to one of the above organisations in some way. Your participation in this project will involve at least one to three interviews over an approximate 12-month period. I may ask you also to provide copies of relevant published materials in subsequent emails or verbal communications, if you are willing to do so.

Participation is this study is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any stage before, during, or after interviews have taken place.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to identify mutually beneficial and credible forms of governance, organising, and, partnering for action/lifestyle sport organisations in New Zealand.

It attempts to record the various first-hand experiences, opinions, and, beliefs of representatives from those associations mentioned above. However, other organisations related to the case may also be involved.

With this research, genuine forms of organising may be identified that will contribute to a mutually beneficial national structure for New Zealand skateboarding associations.

It will identify preferred forms of governance, and the benefits/limitations experienced from partnering with other organisations.

How was I chosen for this project?

You were selected to participate in this research project as you are either a representative from: (a) SBNZ, Skate New Zealand, Taranaki Skateboarding Association, Wellington Skateboarding Association, or, (b) an individual or other industry organisation associated with one of these organisation, skateboarding, or, other actions sports in New Zealand.

What will happen in this research?

You will be asked to sign a participant consent form and take part in an interview at a time and place that is convenient to you. The interview will focus on your personal experiences and impressions of being involved with your organisation, skateboarding management, and sport governance in New Zealand.

The interview will be recorded via audio-recording and note-taking. The data collected from these interviews will be later analysed by identifying common themes.

A transcript of your interview will forwarded to you at a later date for you to review, provide feedback on, and, approve its use. Additionally, you will have the right to withdraw from this study either partially or entirely up to three weeks from receiving the interview transcript.

What are the discomforts and risks?

No discomfort or risk is expected. Privacy measures will be implemented (outlined in next section) to help ensure all participants and their comments will remain confidential. You will also have the opportunity to review the transcript of discussions and amend or withdraw your comments. However, if you experience any discomfort in discussing some aspects of your experience, you do not need to take part and should feel free to withdraw at any stage.

What are the benefits?

It is anticipated that the findings from this study will beneficial for the future development, coordination, and sustainment of skateboarding in New Zealand.

Additionally, its finding should be useful for your organisation by enhancing its relationships with the other organisations involved in the study by identifying strategies for increasing organisational capability.

Finally, this information may be beneficial to other actions sports and potentially traditional sports as well.

How will my privacy be protected?

To ensure that the privacy and confidentiality of respondents is maintained, participant identification codes will be utilised to avoid any possible recognition. This will include each participant, as well as the participant's organisation, and location being assigned an alias for the report. Temporary softcopy transcripts of all interviews and recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the student researcher's personal data storage device.

These files will be permanently deleted on completion of the Doctoral thesis. Additionally, hardcopies of all transcripts and recordings will be maintained in a secure filing cabinet at the University of Waikato for maximum of five years at which point they will be destroyed by the University's commercial office document destruction service. Consent forms of respondents will be maintained on the same basis as the interview data with the exception that it will be secured in a separate filing cabinet to avoid the possibility that the two could be matched up.

That said, I recognize that the New Zealand skateboarding community is small and that there may be a chance that those involved in this research will know each other and could be determined regardless of my attempts to maintain their anonymity. I will endeavour to make sure that you are happy with the accounting and presentation of all information provide by you before being made public.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The only cost involved in participating in this research is the participant's time. Interviews will approximately 60 to 90 minutes in length, with the possibility of a few brief follow-up interviews over an approximate 12-month period if further clarifications are needed or for updates on your organisation.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

If you wish to participate, you are asked to consider and respond to this invitation within seven (7) days from receipt of this invitation **(date).**

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you would like to participate in this research, please contact the researcher John MacFarlane at jmacfarlane@unitec.ac.nz or 021 342 944.

You can either email the signed Consent Form to John at that time, or it can be provided just prior to your interview.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Every participant in the research will receive a summary copy of the findings.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Belinda Wheaton, bwheaton@waikato.ac.nz, +64 07 838 4466 Extn 6205

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the School Human Research Ethics Committee Secretary: Lois Vuursteen, humanethics@waikato.ac.nz, +64 7 838 4166

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details

John MacFarlane (BSp, MBus)
Te Huataki Waiora / Faculty of Health, Sport,
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The University of Waikato
Mobile 021 342 944
Email jdm37@students.waikato.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details

Dr. Belinda Wheaton (Assoc. Prof.)
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The University of Waikato
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Email: bwheaton@waikato.ac.nz

Appendix D

Indicative Interview Questions

Background

1. Tell me about the history of your organisation?

2. What were the motivations behind the formation of your organisation?

3. Tell me what your organisations does?

4. What important challenges is your organisation currently experiencing?

5. How do you see your organisation's contribution to the future development of skateboarding in New Zealand?

Stakeholder relationships

6. What other organisations do you have relationships with?

7. What are the benefits/limitations of these relationships?

8. What have been your interactions/experiences with Sport New Zealand?

9. What are your thoughts on Sport New Zealand's support for skateboarding in New Zealand?

10. What were your initial thoughts when you found out that skateboarding would be included in the Olympics? - Now?

11. Do you think there is enough support from Sport New Zealand for New Zealand's top skaters?

Governance

12. What were your initial thoughts when you found out that International Roller Skating Federation would be involved the international governance of skateboarding? – Now?

13. What were your initial thoughts when you found out that Skate New Zealand could potentially be the governing body for New Zealand skateboarding? – Now?

14. How could Skateboarding New Zealand/Skate New Zealand/the skateboarding associations help you out more?

15. How do you think that skateboarding should be governed in New Zealand?

Other

16. How would you compare the development of skateboarding in New Zealand to other countries?

17. What lessons might New Zealand skateboarding associations learn/take from other countries?

18. How do you see the future of skateboarding in New Zealand?

Appendix E

Thematic Hierarchical Allocation of Themes

Figure E1
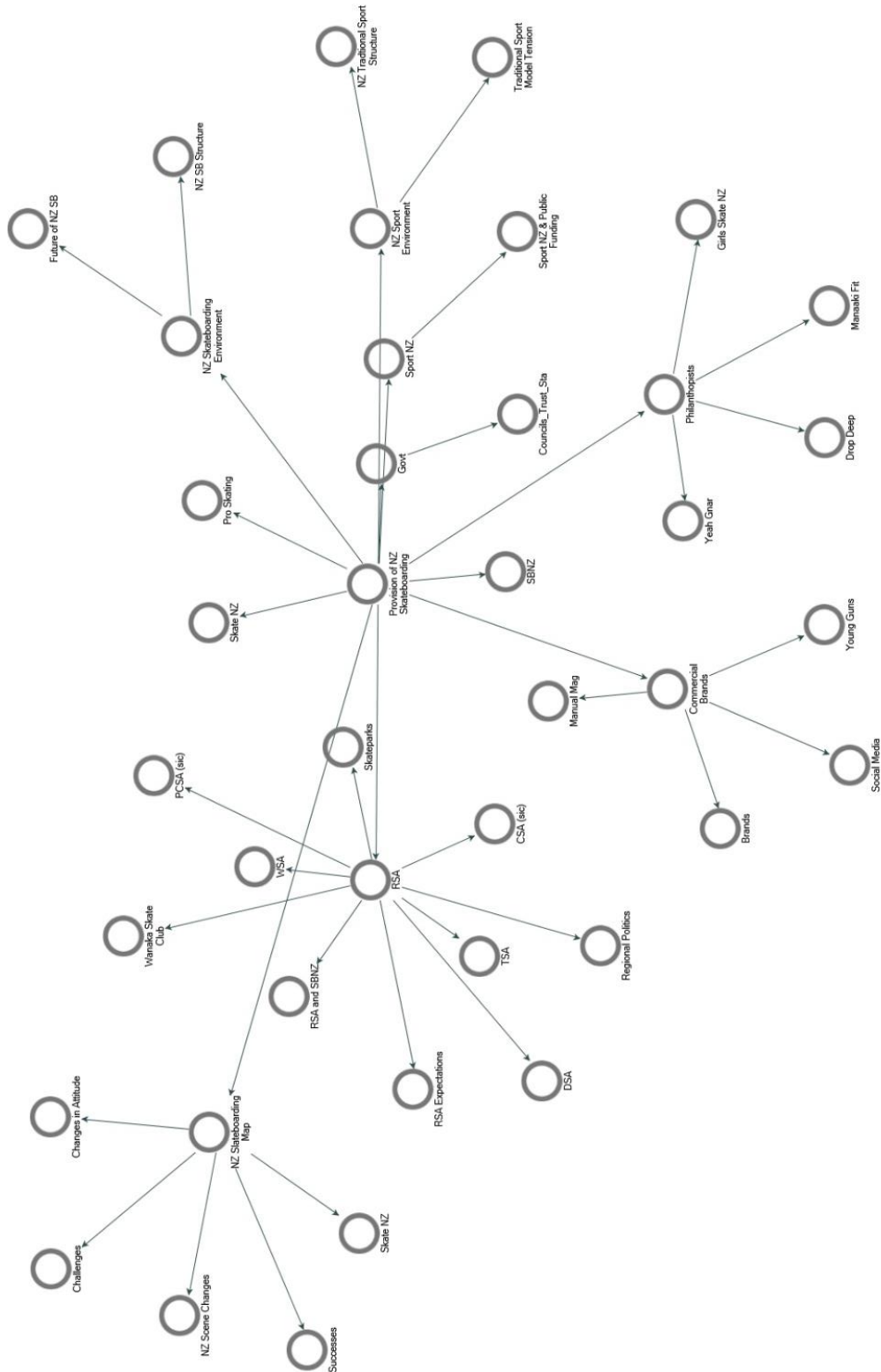
Provision of New Zealand Skateboarding

Figure E2

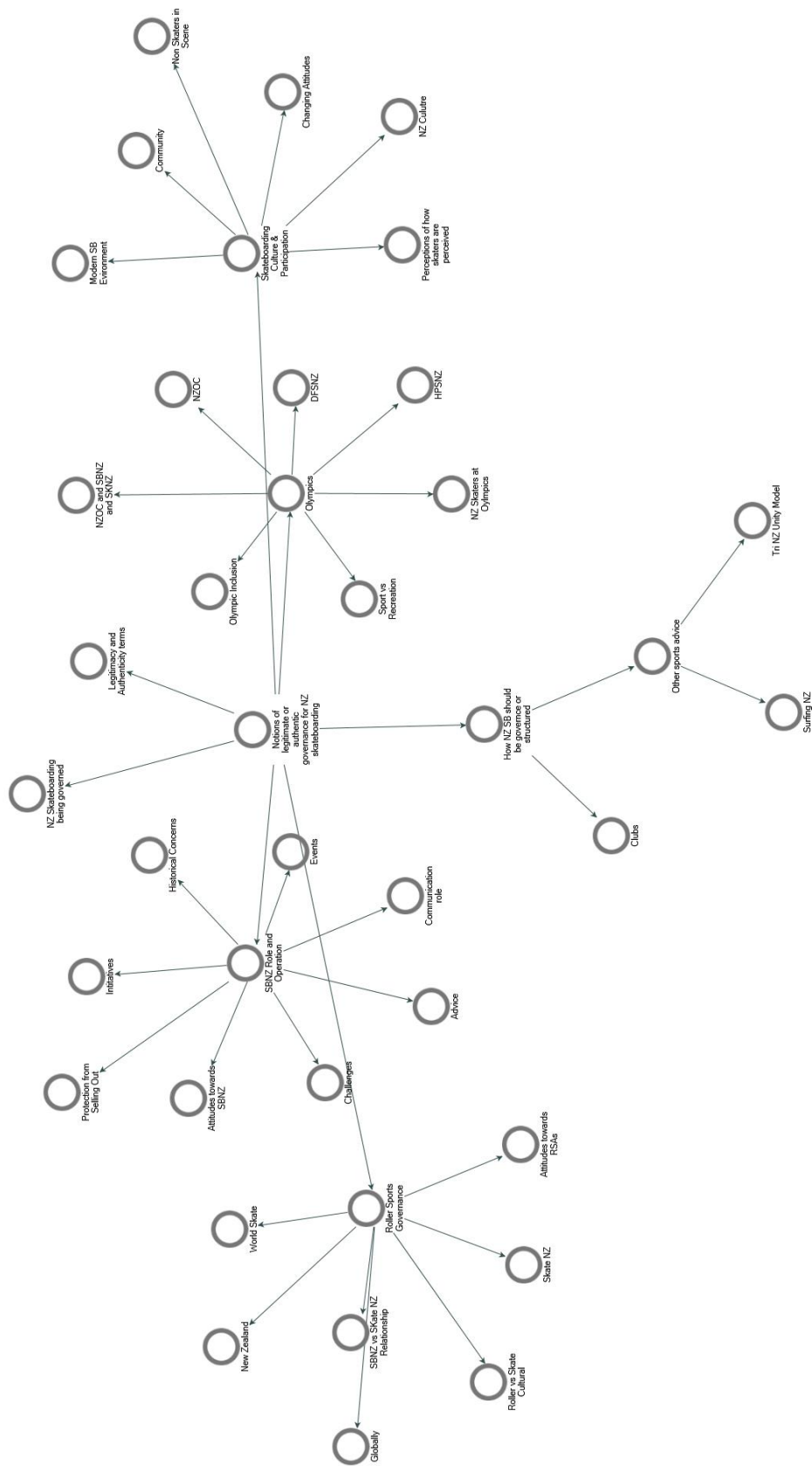*Notions of Legitimate Governance for New Zealand Skateboarding*

Figure E3
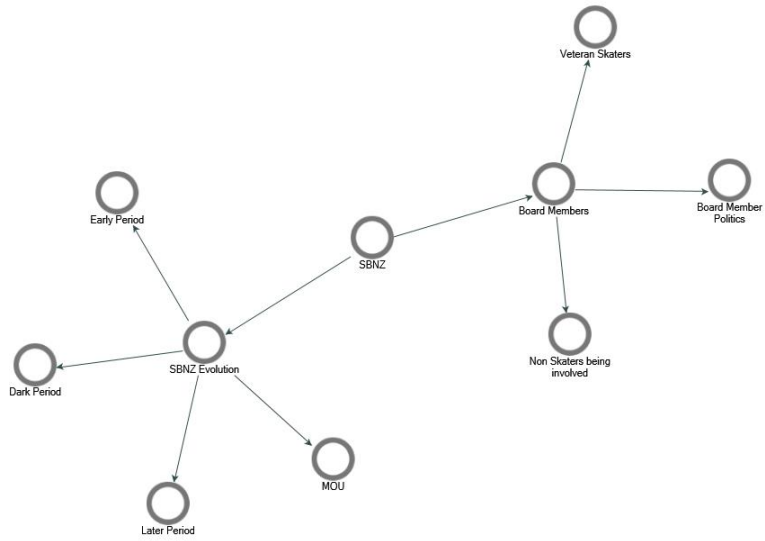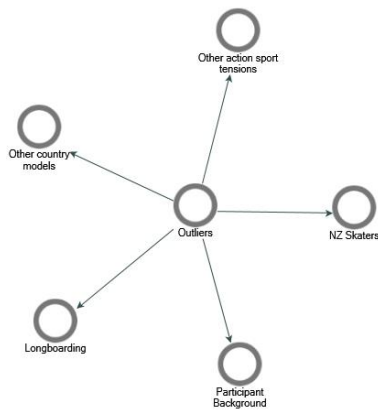
Skateboarding New Zealand Governance and Evolution

Figure E4

Outliers

Skateboarding-Related Businesses, Organisations and Groups URLs

Below is a list of internet URLs for New Zealand-based skateboarding-related

organisations and groups identified during this thesis but not cited directly in-text.

Regional Skateboarding Associations/Groups

- Dunedin Skateboarding Association (DSA) https://www.facebook.com/theDSAcrew

- H-Town Skate Project https://www.facebook.com/htownskateproject

- Palmerston North City Skateboarding Community (PNC)

  https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063713760340

- Taranaki Skateboarding Association (TSA)

  https://www.facebook.com/taranakiskateboarding

- Wanaka Skate Club https://www.facebook.com/groups/wanakaskateclub

- Wellington Skateboarding Association

  https://www.facebook.com/wellingtonskateboardingassociation

Skateboarding Community Groups

- Auckland Skate Spots https://www.facebook.com/groups/172896169457892

- East Skate Club https://www.facebook.com/eastskateclub

- Shut Up and Skate NZ https://www.facebook.com/groups/447129676966729

- Skate School Nelson - Facebook page closed

- Skateboard Collectors New Zealand

  https://www.facebook.com/groups/313047719123458

- NZ Sister of Shred https://www.facebook.com/NZsistersofshred

New Zealand Skateboarding Retail Industry

- Backdoor https://www.backdoor.co.nz/

- Bordertown https://www.boardertown.co.nz/

- DEF Store https://www.defstore.co.nz/

- Empire Skate Store https://www.empireskate.co.nz/

- Pavement https://pavement.co.nz/

- SK8Factory https://sk8factory.co.nz

- Strange Life Skateboards https://strangelifeskateboards.bigcartel.com/

- Wrong Skate https://wrongskate.co.nz/

NZ Skateboarding Equipment Importers and Manufacturers

- Acid New Zealand Ltd https://acid.nz/

- Irrom Distribution Ltd https://www.instagram.com/irromdistribution/

- Nelson Creek Skateparks & Boards Ltd http://nelsoncreek.co.nz/

- Step Up Industries Ltd https://www.bizdb.co.nz/company/9429031495745/

Skate Schools

- Aroha Skate https://www.arohaskate.co.nz/

- Cheapskates Skate Skool https://www.facebook.com/skateskool/about

- Girls Skate NZ https://www.girlsskatenz.com/

- Jedi Skateboard Academy https://www.facebook.com/theDSAcrew

- OnBoard Skate https://www.onboardskate.org.nz/

- Rad Skate School https://rad.nz/

- Sam's Skate School https://www.facebook.com/samsskateschool/

- Waa Hine Skate https://www.facebook.com/waahineskate/

- Young Guns https://www.younggunsskateschool.co.nz/

Skatepark Developers

- Acid New Zealand Ltd https://www.facebook.com/ACIDSKATEBOARDSNZ/

- Rich Landscapes Ltd https://www.richlandscapes.co.nz/

- Nelson Creek Skateparks & Boards Ltd http://nelsoncreek.co.nz/

- Premium Skate Designs Ltd https://premiumskatedesigns.co.nz/

Skateboarding Competitions/Events

- Bowlzilla NZ https://www.bowlzilla.net/

- Duckbrewe Skate Festival https://www.facebook.com/events/3740849442604957

- Mangawhai Bowl Jam https://www.facebook.com/themangawhaibowljam/

- New Zealand Skateboarding Nationals https://skateboarding.nz/save-the-dates-2023-new-zealand-skateboard-nationals/