

Systematic Review

Interorganisational relationships between funders and implementers in Sport for Development: A scoping review**Engela van der Klashorst^{1,2}, Geoff Dickson¹, Pam Kappelides⁴ Stephane Bignoux⁵**¹ La Trobe Business School, La Trobe University, Australia;² College of Health, Early Childhood Education, Victoria University, Australia;³ School of Allied Health, Human Services and Sport, La Trobe University, Australia;⁴ Department of Management and Marketing, KIMEP University, Almaty, Kazakhstan*Corresponding author email:* Engela.vanderklashorst@vu.edu.au**ABSTRACT**

The formal recognition of sport as a developmental tool by the United Nations in 2003 brought sport into the development arena. The alignment of Sport for Development (SFD) with development distinguishes it from community club and high-performance sports. SFD is also distinguished by the fact that SFD implementing organisations rely on external funding to maintain operations. The funder-implementer relationship is, therefore, crucial as this interorganisational relationship (IOR) support the sustainability of the sector. In this study, we conducted a scoping review of the scholarly literature examining the IORs between and amongst funding and implementing organisations involved in SFD. Guided by Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) framework, we searched peer-reviewed academic literature published between 2009 and 2024. Searching four electronic databases, we identified 27 journal articles exploring aspects of the IORs between funding and implementing organisations in SFD. The thematic analysis identified four themes: a) motivation to engage in an IOR; b) issues of power impacting on IOR; c) tensions within funder-implementer IORs; and d) strategies to create value within the funder-implementer IOR.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (UN) formal recognition of sport as a development tool in 2003 brought sport into the development arena (Burnett, 2009; Burnett, 2015; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Svensson et al., 2016). This resulted in many actors entering the sector (Burnett, 2009; Lindsey & Banda, 2011). International organisations such as the UN,

international sports organisations, e.g. the International Olympic Committee (IOC), sports federations, e.g. Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), multinational corporations, transnational funding agencies, e.g. Comic Relief and Women Win, researchers and international and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) all occupy positions within the sports for development (SFD) ecosystem (Burnett, 2009; Burnett, 2013; Burnett, 2015; Lindsey & Banda, 2011; McSweeney et al., 2021; Raw et al., 2022b; Schulenkorf et al., 2016; Straume & Hasselgård, 2014; Svensson & Woods, 2017; Svensson & Woods, 2017; Walker-Munro, 2020; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2017).

Within this ecosystem, interorganisational relationships (IORs) between funding and implementing organisations are arguably the most crucial, as without these relationships, program implementation is not possible (Burnett, 2013; Raw et al., 2019; Spaaij et al., 2016). Implementing organisations pursue IORs with funding agencies to address financial and other capacity constraints (Svensson & Hambrick, 2016). In turn, funders engage with implementing organisations to achieve agreed development outcomes (Lindsey & Banda, 2011; MacIntosh et al., 2016).

Over time, the terminology between funding and implementing organisations on IORs has evolved. Scholars no longer use terms such as donor and recipient to describe roles within IORs. Instead, they use the more equitable term of partnership (Nicholls et al., 2010), which depicts an equal balance of power between partners. However, despite changes in terminology, there is still an inherent power differential between the funder and implementer in IORs. This differential results from resource dependency and the

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differential between Global North – and Global South (Hasselgård & Straume, 2015, p.88). The discourse is bounded - the Global North is associated with wealth and advancement, and the Global South with development challenges and dependency (Burnett, 2013; Darnell & Hayhurst, 2012; Giulianotti et al., 2016; Latino et al., 2022; Lindsey & Grattan, 2012; Millington et al., 2019; Mwaanga, 2013; Nicholls et al., 2010).

For several reasons, understanding what is known - and not yet known - about funder-implementer IORs is important. First, with increased encouragement of collaborations and partnerships by funders and policymakers, there is a need to understand the quality of IORs between funders and implementers and how it impacts the achievement of program outcomes. (AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). Second, there is a need to understand the complex dynamics between funding and implementing organisations in IORs (Lindsey & Banda, 2011). Third, there is a need to analyse and synthesise what is known about the complex power dynamic between funding and implementing organisations, that is, to analyse how the power imbalance between funders and implementers in IORs impacts the achievement of program outcomes and the sustainability of the relationship (Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Oxford & Spaaij, 2020).

METHODS

We applied Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) widely used scoping review framework. This framework consists of five essential stages: (1) identifying the research question, (2) identifying relevant studies, (3) study selection, (4) charting the data, (5) collating, summarising, and reporting the results (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005).

Stage 1: Identifying the Research Question

Research questions in scoping reviews are generally broad (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Levac et al., 2010). This scoping review is guided by the following research question: 'Within the sport for development literature, what is known about the IORs between funding and implementing organisations?'. A broad research question is a sound way to start our research; however, Levac et al. (2010) caution that a broad research question must still provide sufficient direction, clarity, and focus. Given this advice, the research question is supplemented by the following sub-questions: (i) In IORs, how does the power differential between funding and implementing agencies impact the relationship? (ii) In IORs, what strategies are adopted to create value between funding and implementing organisations?

Stage 2: Identifying Relevant Studies

To comprehensively include studies related to the use of IORs within SFD, we searched three electronic databases: Scopus, SPORTDiscus, and ProQuest Social Science Database, as well as a manual search using Google Scholar. Given the multifaceted nature of IORs in the context of SFD, we started with a search for studies containing "sport for development" OR "sport for development and peace" in the title, abstract and keywords (search #1). The initial search was then followed by a search for the IOR-related terms (search #2): "inter-organisational relationship" OR "interorganizational relationship" OR "inter-organisational relationship" OR "collaboration or collaborations or collaborate" OR "partner or partnering or partnership" OR "network or networking" OR "cooperation or cooperate" OR "conflict or conflicting" OR "power" OR "competition or compete". A third search (s#3) combined the first two searches (s#1 and s#2). This process generated 1258 studies (SCOPUS, N = 238; SPORTDiscus, N = 138; ProQuest Social Science Database, N = 7; Google Scholar = 889). Applying inclusionary criteria (i.e., full text, English language, peer-reviewed) reduced the number of relevant articles to 224 (SCOPUS, N = 108; SPORTDiscus, N = 127; ProQuest Social Science Database, N = 4; Google Scholar = 12). After removing duplicate articles, the number was further reduced to 174.

Stage 3: Study Selection

Studies were selected collaboratively by the first and second authors using a two-phase approach. The researchers used Covidence, a web-based software that assists researchers in screening references and undertaking data extraction. In Phase 1 of Stage 3, both the abstracts and titles of the 174 articles were reviewed by two authors. As voting on Covidence is blinded, the first phase resulted in an agreement on 78 decisions, after which a discussion resolved conflicts on 96 articles. Phase 1 concluded with 75 studies. In Phase 2, two authors conducted a full-text review of the remaining 75 studies asynchronously. After a final meeting to resolve conflicts, 27 studies were retained for inclusion in the scoping review.

Stage 4: Charting the Data

A Covidence extraction template was created to extract and chart the data. Data extracted encompassed the author(s), author(s) location, year of publication, title, journal, methods, participants, study themes, IOR and relationship focus.

Stage 5: Collating, Summarising and Reporting the Results

Stage 5 consisted of three distinct phases: (i) analysing the data, (ii) reporting results, and (iii) applying meaning to the results. The extracted data was exported to Microsoft Excel. A descriptive numerical summary was developed for author location, publication, methods, and study focus variables.

The thematic data was exported to NVIVO for analysis. We followed Braun and Clark's (2006) six-step reflexive thematic analysis process. This included (1) becoming familiar with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining themes and, finally, (6) writing up the findings. An inductive process was followed for the thematic analysis process, during which themes were derived from the data set and not the research questions. The research questions were used to discuss the themes identified in the results (Campbell et al., 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Journals

Studies were published in a range of academic journals; however, most were published in Sport Management Review (N=5), International Review for the Sociology of Sport (N=5), International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics (N=3), Sport in Society (N=2), European Sport Management Quarterly (N=2). These are summarised in Table 1.

Year of Publication

The search strategy generated 27 peer-reviewed articles for detailed review. Most studies (N = 22) were published between 2015 and 2023, with only five articles published between 2010 and 2015.

Table 1

Journals and Number of Articles

Journal	# of articles
Sport Management Review	5
International Review for the Sociology of Sport	5
International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics	3
Sport in Society	2
European Sport Management Quarterly	2
Communication & Sport; Corporate Governance; Forum for Development Studies; Frontiers in Sports and Active Living; International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing; Journal of Global Sport Management; Journal of Sport Management; Journal of Sport for Development; Sociology of Sport Journal; Sustainability	1*

Note: 1* = 1 published article per listed journal

Authorship

The 27 articles have 60 authors. Banda (N=3) and Hayhurst (N=3) were the most prolific authors. Twenty-three first authors authored the 27 studies. Within SFD, there is a prevalent discourse on the Global South - Global North distribution of knowledge and power (Darnell et al., 2018; Nicholls et al., 2010; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). To explore this discourse within the 27 studies, we compared the first author's country of university (at the time of publication) with study locations. The first authors are from universities in 10 countries in the Global North (i.e., Australia, Canada, England, Germany, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United States of America). We found few differences between Global North and Global South about where the studies are conducted. Out of the 19 countries in which studies are conducted (excluding 2 with programs presented globally), a slight majority are in the Global South (N=15), while the remainder are in the Global North (N=10). To illustrate the disparity in the Global South-Global North distribution of knowledge and power, none of the studies were conducted by researchers from a university located in the Global South.

Study design

Most studies utilise qualitative methods (N = 26), with only one study using a quantitative methodology. The most prevalent study design among the qualitative studies is case studies (N = 7). The average number of participants average number of participants for studies that collected data via interviews and/or focus groups is 25. Qualitative data analysis reported ranged from coding, content analysis and thematic analysis to network analysis and critical discourse analysis. Researchers rely on paper-based approaches to analyse data and software such as NVivo. The quantitative study used a questionnaire to collect data and analysed data through a combination of descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations followed by a stepwise regression.

Theoretical Frameworks

Fourteen (52%) studies specified theoretical frameworks, for example, Resource Dependency Theory (Ferguson et al., 2023; MacIntosh et al., 2016; Córdova Paredes et al., 2019) and Post-Development Theory (Håsselgard, 2015; Straume & Steen-Johnsen, 2012). The remaining thirteen (58%) studies either do not specify a theoretical framework or refer to a concept as distinct from a theory. These include 'partnership dynamics as a lens of analyses' (AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022, p.6) and partnership theory (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). The use of theories is summarised below in Table 2.

Table 2

Theoretical Frameworks

Theoretical framework	Studies
Actor Network Theory	Darnell et al., 2018
Post-Development Theory	Håsselgard & Straume, 2015; Straume & Steen-Johnsen, 2012
Stakeholder Involvement Theory	Banda & Gultresa 2015
Conceptual framework of social innovation (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014)	Svensson & Hambrick, 2019
Collaboration Theory	Welty Peachey et al., 2018
Hybrid Organising (Battilana & Lee, 2014)	Svensson & Seifried, 2017
Outcomes-based accountability	Ferguson et al., 2023
Organisational capacity	Ferguson et al., 2023
Resource Dependency Theory	Ferguson et al., 2023; MacIntosh et al., 2016; Córdova Paredes et al., 2019
Partnership theory	Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010
Paradox Theory	Raw et al., 2022
Systems Theory (Luhmann, 1984)	Schreiner et al., 2022
Settler Colonial Theory	Latino et al., 2022

Inter-organisational relationships

Of the 27 studies, 24 examine partnerships and three study networks. Regarding the dynamics of IORs, 13 include collaboration and/or cooperation, 5 study conflict and/or tension, 3 include competition, and 6 explore power dynamics within IORs.

Table 3

Summary of articles included in analysis

Authors	Title	Interorganisational relationship	Strategic governance focus
AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022	Adapting to Local Context and Managing Relationships: A Case Study of a Multinational SDP Partnership in Bahrain	Partnership	Conflict
Banda & Gultresa, 2015	Using Global South Sport-for-Development experiences to inform global north CSR design and implementation: A case study of Euroleague basketball's One Team programme	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Córdova Paredes, Moreno & Dos Santos, 2019	Key determinants on non-governmental organization's financial sustainability: A case study that examines 2018 FIFA foundation social festival selected participants	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Darnell, Giulianotti, Howe & Collison, 2018	Re-assembling sport for development and peace through actor network theory: Insights from Kingston, Jamaica	Network	Competition
Ekholm & Holmlid, 2020	Formalizing sports-based interventions in cross-sectoral cooperation: Governing and infrastructuring practice, program, and preconditions	Network	Collaboration/cooperation
Ferguson, Hassan & Kitchin, 2023	Policy transition: public sector sport for development in Northern Ireland	Partnership	Conflict
Hasselgård & Straume, 2015	Sport for development and peace policy discourse and local practice: Norwegian sport for development and peace to Zimbabwe	Partnership	Power
Hasselgård, 2015	Norwegian sports aid: Exploring the Norwegian 'Sport for development and peace' discourse.	Partnership	Tension
Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010	Inevitable tensions: Swiss and Canadian sport for development NGO perspectives on partnerships with high performance sport	Partnership	Competition
Hayhurst, Wilson & Frisby, 2011	Navigating neoliberal networks: Transnational internet platforms in sport for development and peace	Network	Collaboration/cooperation
Hermens, Verkooijen & Koelen, 2019	Associations between partnership characteristics and perceived success in Dutch sport-for-health partnerships	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Holmes, Banda & Chawansky, 2015	Towards sustainable programme design? An examination of CSR initiatives within a Zambian SfD NGO	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Keane, Negin, Latu, Bauman & Richards 2021	'Governance', 'communication', 'capacity', 'champions' and 'alignment': factors underpinning the integration of sport-for-development within national development priorities in Tonga	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Latino, Giles, Rynne & Hayhurst, 2022	Extractives Companies' Social Media Portrayals of Their Funding of Sport for Development in Indigenous Communities in Canada and Australia	Partnership	Power
Lindsey 2017	Governance in sport-for-development: Problems and possibilities of (not) learning from international development	Partnership	Power
Lindsey & Banda, 2011	Sport and the fight against HIV/AIDS in Zambia: A 'partnership approach'?	Partnership	Competition
MacIntosh, Arellano & Forneris, 2016	Exploring the community and external-agency partnership in sport-for-development programming	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Morgan & Baker, 2021	Strategic or communicative partnerships? Insights from sports programmes in the criminal justice sector	Partnership	Conflict
Nicholls, Giles & Sethna, 2010	Perpetuating the 'lack of evidence' discourse in sport for development: Privileged voices, unheard stories and subjugated knowledge	Partnership	Power

Parent & Harvey, 2017	A partnership-based evaluation of a community-based youth sport and physical activity programme	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Raw, Sherry & Schulenkorf, 2022	Managing Sport for Development: An Investigation of Tensions and Paradox	Tension	Conflict
Reis, Vieira & De Sousa-Mast, 2016	"Sport for Development" in developing countries: The case of the Vilas Olímpicas do Rio de Janeiro	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Schreiner, Kastrup & Mayer, 2022	Coordination processes in partnerships between German governmental organizations and German sports federations in jointly implemented SDP projects	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Straume & Steen-Johnsen, 2012	On the terms of the recipient? Norwegian sports development aid to Tanzania in the 1980s	Partnership	Power
Svensson & Seifried, 2017	Navigating plurality in hybrid organizing: The case of sport for development and peace entrepreneurs	Hybrid	Power
Svensson & Hambrick, 2019	Exploring how external stakeholders shape social innovation in sport for development and peace	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation
Welty Peachey, Cohen, Shin & Fusaro, 2018	Challenges and strategies of building and sustaining inter-organizational partnerships in sport for development and peace	Partnership	Collaboration/cooperation

Thematic Findings

The thematic analysis resulted in 63 codes from which four themes were identified: (i) motivation to engage in an IOR, (ii) issues of power impacting on relationship, (iii) tension and challenges within IORs, and (iv) strategies to strengthen the funder-implementer relationship.

Theme 1: Motivation to engage in an IOR

Strong IORs are essential to sustaining SFD organisations and their initiatives (Hambrick et al., 2019; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Funders and implementers' motivation to engage in an IOR is influenced by the expected benefits of the collaboration, which include an increase in financial and relational capacity, enhanced image, and legitimisation of an organisation.

Increased capacity. Motivation to engage in IORs varies among stakeholders; however, increased financial capacity is most pervasive (Håsselgard & Straume, 2015; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Córdova Paredes et al., 2019; Parent & Harvey, 2017; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019; Svensson & Seifried, 2017). SFD organisations face human resource and structural capacity constraints (Svensson & Hambrick, 2016). International development assistance provides implementers with expertise via technical consultancies, access to a support network and implementation support to enhance service delivery (AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022; Ekholm & Holmlid, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2023; Hambrick et al., 2019; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016).

Enhancing image and legitimisation of organisation. Engaging in IORs with funders has two advantages for SFD

organisations. First, it provides SFD organisations with financial resources, and second, it supports their legitimacy and status, consequently impacting their ability to secure additional funding (Svensson et al., 2018). For example, partnering with high-performance sports organisations legitimises the SFD agenda through its association with the sport (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). Funders also share this motivation. For example, in a recent study, Latino et al. (2022) show that extractive industries engage in corporate social responsibility IORs and use this relationship to enhance the industry's reputation and mitigate opposition to extractive operations.

Theme 2: Issues of power impacting on IOR

Issues of power impacting the IOR between the funder and implementer included the Global North – Global South power dynamic, the unbalanced power relationship between funder and implementer, funder influence and impact, and suppressing local voices and disregarding local contexts.

Global North – Global South power dynamic. A prominent theme in the literature is the impact of power dynamics associated with the Global North – Global South development. As the Global North is generally more resource-rich, Global North actors have more authority over project goals and content and over which outcomes are recognised as successful. This dominance perpetuates colonial ideas and the dominance of the Global North over the Global South (Nicholls et al., 2010). As a result, projects implemented in SFD are characterised by 'donor-driven priorities and top-down approaches' suppressing the voices, experience, and knowledge of local, Global South implementing organisations (Darnell et al., 2018; Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Córdova Paredes et al., 2019; Reis et al.,

2016; Schreiner et al., 2022).

The complexity of bridging the local and global within SFD is manifested within the rhetoric of IORs between funders and implementers. Within this development discourse, Global South actors are often presented as poverty-stricken and in need of saving, whereas Global North actors are positioned as the 'benevolent, educated development worker' (Nicholls et al., 2010, p.250; Córdova Paredes et al., 2019).

SFD narratives are predominantly based on the perspectives of actors from the Global North, with voices from the South markedly absent (Latino et al., 2022; Lindsey & Banda, 2011). Dominant actors from the Global North leave little opportunity for actors in the Global South to exert influence (Reis et al., 2016; Schreiner et al., 2022). Welty Peachey et al. (2018) found that power relation issues were more pronounced for SFD organisations in low to middle-income countries than in North America or Europe. The funding partnership reinforces a neo-colonial agenda and resource dependency (Welty Peachey et al., 2018).

Only one study offers a counterargument (AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022). In studying multinational SFD IORs in Bahrain, AlKhalifa and Collison (2022) illustrate that Global South countries can acquire local (i.e., non-Global North) funding, thereby shifting the power towards organisations in the Global South.

Unbalanced power relationship between funder and implementer. Even though the relationship between funding and implementing organisations is no longer described within the context of donor-recipient roles, the IOR remains structured through this relationship (AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022; Hasselgård & Straume, 2015; Reis et al., 2016; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019). While partnership assumes equality between the organisations involved, this is not always true. Resource dependency, including financial dependency, between partners results in asymmetrical IORs (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Latino et al., 2022). This unbalanced power relationship can position the less powerful partner as passive and as a recipient of not only financial resources but also ideas, information, and influence (AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Latino et al., 2022; Morgan & Baker, 2021; Córdova Paredes et al., 2019; Parent & Harvey, 2017). The following quote is taken from a Director of an NGO and illustrates the point above: 'So there are times when I think we have a funding relationship, where it's hard for our funders to treat us as equals, and that doesn't come naturally.' (Welty Peachey et al., 2018, p.169).

Funder influence and impact. Organisations enter IORs with divergent expectations regarding reciprocity, involvement and impact (Holmes et al., 2015, p. 40). As the more powerful partner, the funder's influence is prominent in program development and implementation (AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022). However, this is only negative if the top-down influence of funding limits the actions of the implementing organisation and forces them to follow the funder's agenda (Ferguson et al., 2023).

Suppressing local voices and disregarding local contexts. A consistent sub-theme in the literature is the invalidation and suppression of the knowledge and experience of implementing organisations. Funders take a critical stance on local program implementation and decisions made by implementing organisations. The perceived inability of funders to value the relevant experience and expert position of implementing organisations highlights the power differential inherent within the relationship (Hasselgård & Straume, 2015). Nicholls et al. (2010) argue that the lack of co-creation of knowledge and the enactment of donor-driven priorities have subjugated the knowledge and experience of implementing organisations. Alternative knowledge and experience are devalued because of hegemonic assumptions privileging scientific Northern knowledge: 'If Southern partners are not considered to have valuable contributions to make to the partnership process, then it merely perpetuates the cycle of domination of the donor/recipient relationship instead of a partnership approach' (Nicholls et al., 2010, p.256).

Theme 3: Tensions within funder–implementer IORs

IORs carry both benefits and costs to funders and implementing organisations. As previously mentioned, tensions arise when unequal power relations make one partner more dependent on the other partner for resources (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; MacIntosh et al., 2016). Sources of tension within the relationship can come from funder expectations, short-term funding, the misalignment of organisational logic, and the non-validation of implementer knowledge and experience (Holmes et al., 2015; MacIntosh et al., 2016; Morgan & Baker, 2021; Raw et al., 2022b).

Funder expectations. SFD programs are impacted by the demands of varied funding streams (Holmes et al., 2015). Funding authority is exerted through auditing and reporting requirements, which can add strain to the work of a small implementing team. Constant reporting requirements, from implementors to funders, i.e., through targets, bring tension into the relationship, especially if the implementing organisation does not see the value in fulfilling the requirements (MacIntosh et al., 2016; Morgan & Baker, 2021; Raw et al., 2022a).

Tension through short-term funding. Addressing social development issues requires long-term investment and continued support. Short-term funding cycles associated with SFD initiatives can create tensions within the relationship and challenge achieving long-term sustainable outcomes (Lindsey, 2017). This can impact the stability of the IOR, especially if there is uncertainty about the continuity of funding and support (Lindsey, 2017; Córdova Paredes et al., 2019; Raw et al., 2022a).

Misalignment of organisational logics. Competing logics are reflected in differences in cultural values, goals, target populations, and approaches to program delivery within each organisation (Hasselgård & Straume, 2015; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Raw et al., 2022a; Raw et al., 2022b). Competing logics can be submerged (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010) and can result in tension within the relationship (Holmes et al., 2015; Keane et al., 2021; Raw et al., 2022a; Schreiner et al., 2022).

Non-validation of partner's knowledge and experience. Whilst on the surface, IORs may appear to be positive, tension may exist within the relationship because of a perceived lack of agency and ownership over local programming (Ferguson et al., 2023; Holmes et al., 2015).

Theme 4: Strategies to create value within the funder-implementer IOR

SFD organisations utilise a variety of strategies to strengthen IORs and, in so doing, address challenges and barriers inherent in these relationships. Strategies include aligning organisational logics, collaboration, communication, addressing power imbalances, and legitimising local knowledge and experience.

Aligning organisational logics. For IORs to be effective, there should be a shared understanding of goals, values, and approaches amongst the organisations involved (Ferguson et al., 2023). When partners can redefine boundaries, roles, and functions and work together to find creative solutions, the partnership is strengthened (Hermens et al., 2019; Keane et al., 2021). Clarity must be found by aligning the organisational logics to create value for both organisations (AlKhalifa & Collison, 2022; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Morgan & Baker, 2021).

Collaboration, communication and addressing power imbalances. Shared leadership and a bottom-up approach where power is shared within the relationship are critical to building trust in relationships (Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Raw et al., 2022b). The active involvement of partners in two-way communication facilitates a sense of shared

ownership, allowing for critical debate and a willingness to listen and understand the other organisation (Banda & Gultresa, 2015; Holmes et al., 2015; Morgan & Baker, 2021, p.728). In a recent study, AlKhalifa and Collison (2022) show that trust can be built through pre-event or pre-partnership workshops.

Legitimising local knowledge and experience. In their 2015 study, Håsselgård and Straume (2015) find that implementing SFD organisations must find ways to bridge local knowledge and practices with that of the external partner. An alternative strategy to bridge knowledge is the co-production of knowledge and strengthening of local agencies (Nicholls et al., 2010; Reis et al., 2016). They encourage implementers to actively pursue more significant influence with the support of those currently in positions of power to disrupt hegemonic practices and enhance the co-production of knowledge, thereby legitimising local knowledge. Input is needed from actors in the Global South, thereby acknowledging the context, experience, and knowledge of implementing organisations (Banda & Gultresa, 2015; Hasselgård & Straume, 2015; Holmes et al., 2015; Nicholls et al., 2010).

DISCUSSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

At the start of the study, the research question posed was, 'Within the sport for development literature, what is known about the IORs between funding and implementing organisations?'. Study findings will be discussed by answering the two sub-questions: (i) In IORs, how does the power differential between funding and implementing agencies impact the relationship? (ii) In IORs, what strategies are adopted to create value between funding and implementing organisations?

There is an inherent power differential embedded within the IORs between funders and implementing organisations, created by a combination of resource dependency and the historical Global North – Global South power discourse. Even though the SFD literature describes IORs as partnerships, a power imbalance remains (Burnett, 2014). This power differential directly impacts the relationship by suppressing local voices and thereby introducing tension into the IOR (Raw et al., 2022b; Schreiner et al., 2022). The unbalanced power relationship perpetuates the dominance of the funder and positions the implementing organisation as passive receiver and not as an active partner.

As more powerful partner, funders influence program areas and -development, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of program outcomes. Implementing agencies counteract this dominance by adapting programs to the local context

and only reporting on outcomes that aligns with funder expectations. Future research should investigate how collaborative practices such as co-design can facilitate the development of shared goals within the partnership, thereby equalising the power balance. Researchers should avoid reinforcing neocolonial practices such as focusing on how funding organisations from the Global North develops the evaluative capacity of implementing organisations. To combat neocolonial practices, the focus should rather be on identifying strategies that will allow implementers and funders to collaboratively validate each other's knowledge and experience thereby creating value for both partners within the IOR (Burnett, 2014). Investigating the multiple realities that constitute SFD, with a focus on including knowledge and experience of Global South implementing organisations, will initiate a better understanding of how diverse realities impact program development and implementation (Hasselgård & Straume, 2015; Holmes et al., 2015; MacIntosh et al., 2015; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Future research can explore the diverse realities by adopting a participatory research methodology, for example Participatory Action Research (PAR).

There are pronounced differences in partner organisations' values, practices, beliefs, and expectations within the IOR. The misalignment of organisational logics between funders and implementers is exacerbated by the power differential within the IOR. Exploring partnership tensions arising from misaligned organisational logics within the IORs between SFD implementing and funding organisations remains ripe for future research (Dixon & Svensson, 2019; Raw et al., 2022b).

Organisations are motivated to engage in IORs to increase capacity, enhance their image, and obtain legitimacy. From the data, it was clear that there is a reciprocal relationship from which both partners benefit, and that even though implementing organisations benefitted from the additional resources, funding organisations also benefitted from the IOR. Capacity to engage in external partnerships vary across the life stages of an organisation (Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019). Future research should explore the capacity of implementing organisations to engage in IORs with funders across the life stages of the organisation. In addition, future research should also consider the impact of geographical location and other contextual factors on the capacity of the implementing organisation to engage with funders (Svensson et al., 2018).

The results of the scoping review identified several strategies currently used to create value within the IOR between funders and implementing organisations. At the core of the identified strategies is the acknowledgement of

the contribution of both partners within the IOR between funders and implementing organisations. The shared ownership of a project actively addresses the inherent power differential in the partnership and creates a space in which partners can collaborate and create value within the relationship (Banda & Gultresa, 2015; Holmes et al., 2015; Morgan & Baker, 2021). Future research may explore how the shared ownership of a project impacts on the value created within the relationship as well as on program outcomes.

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