# SPORTIVATE: A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES AND THEIR SUSTAINABILITY

A DOCTORAL THESIS

BY

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## Publications

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## **Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| **ANOVA** | Analysis of Variance |
| **CEO** | Chief Executive Officer |
| **CIC** | Community Interest Company |
| **CSP/AP** | County Sport Partnership/Active Partnership |
| **EFA** | Exploratory Factor Analysis |
| **IQR** | Interquartile Range |
| **KMO** | Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin |
| **MD** | Mean Difference |
| **NGB** | National Governing Body |
| **RGB** | Regional Governing Body |
| **RQ** | Research Question |
| **SD** | Standard Deviation |
| **TA** | Target Achieved |
| **TNA** | Target Not Achieved |
| **VSO** | Voluntary Sport Organisation |

# __Abstract__

The purpose of this research was to answer the research question (RQ), which factors play a role in the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisation funded through Sportivate in London? To achieve this, a case-study of Sportivate in London was adopted to measure influence on the perceptions from stakeholders on emerging themes of sustainability. Initially, sustainability factors and the implementation of sport policy were reviewed to determine the existing framework for the theoretical concepts. This research adopted critical realism ontological perspectives and retroductive reasoning to infer causal mechanisms from existing social structures defined by stratified modes of reality.

With a mixed-methods approach, the main body of investigation was conducted across two studies. The first utilised a qualitative research design by conducting 33 interviews from 12 different organisations grouped as Target Achieved (TA) or Target Not Achieved (TNA) delivered Sportivate programmes in London between 2014-15. Interviewees were from TA organisations (n = 18) and TNA organisations (n = 15). Interviewing multiple staff from the same organisation allowed the investigation to explore how emerging themes of sustainability may differ across strategic or delivery-level positions within the organisation.

The second study built upon the sustainability themes emerging from study 1, with the collection of 214 responses from online surveys administered to assemble quantitative data. The collected data informed the research prior to exploratory factor analysis (EFA) which was employed to investigate the reliability of sustainability themes surveyed. Subsequently, analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were relayed as the final step of data analysis procedure, testing hypotheses relevant to the independent variables of organisation type, staff capacity, staff role, and length of time at organisation.

Emerging themes from study 1 included the material sustainability concepts of policy remodelling, sport-for-health, delivery level staff, and revenue dependency. From these, study 2's EFA proposed splitting the revenue dependency concept into themes of funding resources at organisations and public funding dependency. Furthermore, EFA indicated that evaluation and feedback should be considered as a sustainability factor. Neither partnerships nor staff diversity, as artefactual

sustainability concepts, were identified by EFA in study 2. Finally, the social concept of sustainability featured strongly after EFA, as role of the Board and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) detected a need for clear leadership. Also, the autonomy of staff was considered as a sustainability factor, however, the social reality considering social bonds and communications streams was not confirmed by EFA.

Study 2 results indicated the importance of three influential factors of sustainability relating to; a sense of clear leadership and programme championing present between staff at organisation, the importance of funding for medium-sized organisations and governing bodies, and evaluation measures being necessary, but only practical for larger organisations with co-ordinators able to carry this out as a planning activity. These attitudes specifically relate to the nature of influence held by staff roles, staff capacity, and organisation type. However, the limited balance in different types of organisation types who responded to the survey suggests only staff roles and staff capacity can be held as conclusive influences on sustainability factor perceptions emerging from this study 1 and 2. Future developments suggests minimising the likelihood of error in variance for organisation type as this influence on sustainability was reviewed as an important variable affecting community intervention programmes.

# 1    <u>Introduction</u>

## *1.1   Overview*

The sustainability of community intervention programmes has been defined by the continuation of activities beyond the initial input and resources provided to create them (Scheirer, 2005). The importance of this is emphasised by Berg (2014) who highlights that the sustainable benefits of such projects may not be seen for several years. Accordingly, the discontinuation of participation in funded programmes has led to models highlighting themes of sustainability as indicators of long-term success (Mancini and Marek, 2004; Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). With a relative stability in the delivery of community sport, the political climate in the United Kingdom has proposed government intervention towards community sports initiatives (Oakley and Green, 2001; Tacon and Hanson, 2012).

Berg (2016) recognises how political support systems can positively influence the sustainability of community level programmes. The increase of political promotion in community sport for the last 20 years has created a more structured and legitimised sporting system (Green, 2004; Green, 2006). This has led to policymakers devising Sporting Future, the latest sport policy document released by the Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2015a). Subsequently, this has formulated in Sport England (2006) issuing the community sport strategy, Towards an Active Nation. Grix et al. (2017) indicates that, both policy and strategy, aim to address broader social issues alongside tackling issues of physical inactivity. Perspectives on the implementation of policy highlight clear differences between models specifying either top-down or bottom-up approaches (May, Harris and Collins, 2013). Top-down theorists indicate that policymakers play a more important role than street level implementors when determining the implementation of policy (Matland, 1995). However, Bloyce and Smith (2010) specify that the implementation of policy can be influenced by many external variables beyond the control of policymakers. Because of this, the ground-level deliverers can offer forward-thinking perspectives relevant to ongoing critical issues affecting the community sport landscape (Shin, Cohen and Peachey, 2020). This offers argument towards a seemingly logical fusion of the two processes for sport policy in the UK which can only be adhered to through complex bargaining, negotiation and interaction between stakeholders (Hill and Varone, 2017).

Nonetheless, O'Toole (2000) details how research into the synthesised approach can be time-consuming and subsequently sustained interest in its use has waned.

In terms of this research, the timeframe of study means the advance of the Coalition government's Big Society agenda piques interest into the political ideology of working towards meeting participation legacy promises emerging from the London 2012 Olympics (Cabinet Office, 2010). This pan-party policy was part of a political support mechanism for the delivery of London 2012, with community sport policy at the forefront of the Big Society campaign's involvement in a participation legacy for sport and physical activity (Evans, 2011; Houlihan, 2016). Nonetheless, difficulties have emerged in measuring the success of the legacy concept due to the complex nature of tangible and intangible benefits (Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou, 2019).

Houlihan (2016) highlights that hosting mega-events, like the Olympic Games, to create participation legacies is only possible thanks to the introduction of the National Lottery. This pivotal turning point occurred in 1994 and earmarked the transformation of policy implementation through public funding, which has seen the National Lottery fund over £5.7 billion towards community sport and physical activity since inception (Sport England, 2019). Having cross-party support for this continuing revenue source, means a degree of consistency has been evident since the late 1990's and beyond the new millennium (Bloyce and Smith, 2015). Despite this relative stability in the funding landscape, physical activity participation figures stagnated, thereby influencing output-based retention targets for the sustainability of participation (Jefferys, 2012). Subsequently, the current Sport England (2016) strategy, Towards an Active Nation, highlights the need to meet government objectives by encouraging the diversification of revenue streams and the expansion of partnership development to create a stronger, and more unified delivery network of delivery organisations. Whilst Berlin et al. (2007) encourages the critical aspect of revenue diversification for organisational sustainability, Berry and Manoli (2018) specify challenges for organisations who fail to adhere to strategic approaches issued through government policy.

This means that multiple sectors and organisation types must be addressed when reviewing the sustainable delivery of community sport and physical activity (Tacon and Hanson, 2012). One manner in which partnerships have been fused is explained

by Collins (2016) who highlights how Sport England places emphasis upon the utilisation of County Sport Partnerships/Active Partnerships (CSPs/APs). Brown and Pappous (2018) state that these partnerships also extend to involve National Governing Bodies (NGBs) as challenging aspects of nationwide community sport policy delivery has been identified. To facilitate this nationwide policy approach, the understanding of ground-level implementation has also been specified through the roles of Voluntary Sport Organisations (VSOs) and charities (Millar and Doherty, 2016; Skille and Stenling, 2017). Beyond the third-sector, private sector organisations may also supplement the positive outcomes of sustainable participation through wider corporate social responsibility objectives (Giulianotti and Darnell, 2016). With Labour's £162 million school sport partnership strategy being brushed aside, funding cuts and measures like this have placed a burden on various types of organisation who may struggle to deliver programmes without alternative funding (Jefferys, 2012, Bingham and Walters, 2013; Harris and Houlihan, 2016). This depicts how sport policy has moved away from a climate of consistency, with Widdop et al., (2018) highlighting the diminishing role of local authorities in driving sport participation in England.

Having highlighted organisational inconsistencies according to their type, the capacity of each is also a vital aspect of delivering innovative community intervention programmes (Hoeber et al., 2015). An example of this idea stems from local leaders identifying the needs of their organisation whilst ensuring the benefit for their community at the forefront of their programme planning (Vail, 2007; Rowe et al., 2013). Nonetheless, programme deliverers must also act within their organisational culture as ground-level champions build towards the expansion of programmes through innovative measures (Johnson et al., 2004; Campbell et al, 2007; Hoeber et al., 2015). Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) emphasise this further by specifying that additional funding should be allocated towards the resourcing of staffing structures at organisations delivery community intervention programmes.

Strategic direction offers paramount importance for organisation success, and therefore the Board have an influential role in planning for programme sustainability (Brown, 2005). This must be supplemented by the bridging-role performed by CEOs, who may act as programme champions, but still require an amount of Board support to help fulfil their role (Casey et al., 2009a). This highlights how the CEO-Board

dynamics are fundamental to understanding leadership with staff roles and the subsequent effect this can have on sustainability (Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011). With less responsibility sitting with local authorities, Charlton (2010) indicates that Project Officers at organisations also have a pivotal role in understanding the factors that influence sustainability with their decisions. This continues to ground-level staff, Coaches, as an increase in coach development, autonomy, control and interactivity has significantly predicated sustainable outcomes of community sport delivery (Amorose et al., 2016; Newman, Anderson-Butcher, Amorose, 2018; Orr et al., 2018).

The influence of staff roles means that in order to obtain a strategic advantage, organisations should also focus on the retention of high-calibre staff through professional development (Taylor, Doherty and McGraw, 2015). By using staff education programmes, staff longevity increases, which when harmonised with programme fit can negate the negative impact that staff turnover can have on an organisation's implementation of delivering sustainable health-related programmes (Mancini and Marek, 2004; Scheirer, 2005). Because of this, Johnson et al. (2004) identify how essential it is for organisations to have appropriate staff for the continued continued innovation and maintenance of community intervention programmes.

These variables influence themes of sustainability and the implementation of participation legacies through government-led policy and Sport England directives. Sportivate was launched as the flagship programme as part of Sport England's legacy manifesto, with National Lottery funding £56 million towards community sport delivery over six years from 2011-2017 through CSP/APs (CSP Network, 2016). After initially establishing target groups of 14-25 year olds, Sport England (n.d.) expanded the age range to 11-25 year olds in line with specifications for defining the young person demographic. This is due to the decreasing trends in physical activity participation amongst the post-school dropout age group, therefore Sportivate objectives address physical activity levels of young people in order to help sustain participation rates after an individual has passed the age of compulsory education (Sport England, 2014). To achieve this, London Sport (2015), the CSP for London, adopted a strategic approach to generate demand for sport and physical activity, and then supply the provisions for local organisations to meet this demand. They continued by reflecting upon the Big Society agenda to deliver against a national framework with the following local outcomes:

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- Provide a supply chain of sporting activity to supply and match generated demand.
- Increasing the number of young people regularly participating in physical activity by responding to their needs.
- Work closely with a range of relevant providers able to deliver a framework of activities.
- Increase take-up in leisure centres and other available facilities.
- Generate close links with clubs to drive participation and volunteering in NGB affiliated sports clubs.

As part of the evaluation measures, London Sport (2015) defines Sportivate success through the completion rates of participants across a 12-week programme delivery model, with particular emphasis drawn to inactive participants reached and the number of participants sustained.

Justification for using the Olympic Games for mass-participation sustainability objectives stems from the impact it can have on community sport if leveraged properly by host nations (Weed et al., 2015). Sportivate forms part of this as an intervention programme designed to encourage inactive young people towards a lifestyle of sport and physical activity in the aftermath of London 2012 (Thomas, Brittain and Jones, 2018). However, the strategy of researching the leverage of the Olympic Games means long-term output must involve all the necessary stakeholders to advance community-based outcomes (Chalip, 2018). Because of this, strategies must inform local principles for sustainability through national policy, once again indicating the difficulty in measuring the impact of legacy outcomes after hosting an event on long-term participation promises like London 2012 did (Girginov, 2011; Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou, 2019).

According to Girginov (2008) mass participation legacies must inspire activity through organisations that learn from their community and create socially conscious sessions respecting the dichotomy between the development of sport and development through sport. As Sportivate has manifested itself as one of those delivery tools, programme characteristics highlight the need for research in this area. Despite being a national programme, the Sportivate programme very much calls for a regionally directed approach (CSP Network, 2016). With this emphasis on delivering

participation objectives at a community level, research should explore sustainability factors as perceptions from regional or local level groups implementing the Sportivate programme (Harris and Houlihan, 2014; Bloyce and Smith, 2015).

## 1.2  Research question, aims and objectives

This research aimed to answer the RQ, which factors play a role in the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded through Sportivate in London? To achieve this, a case-study of Sportivate in London was adopted to ascertain what factors most influence stakeholder perceptions on sport programme sustainability. Subsequently, the following objectives were indicated for this research:

**Research Objective 1:** Analyse how staff roles influence stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 2:** Determine how organisation types influence stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 3:** Analyse how the length of time in a role influences stakeholder perception on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 4:** Determine how the size of organisation by staff capacity influences stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

By developing a theoretical framework for sustainability, a synthesised lens of policy implementation is utilised to further enhance the theoretical framework of this research. Strength in the application of research design around this theoretical framework development comes from Girginov, Peshin and Belousov (2017), who indicated that multiple organisation types, sizes, individual responsibilities, and staff turnover should be considered when determining strategic orientation and how sustainability influences the delivery of community intervention programmes.

Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) highlight a need to focus research on sustainability to individual fields. This highlights how subsequent research on sustainability should be industry-specific in order to address the influences on sustainability that split across

four spectrums: innovation, context, capacity, and processes and interactions. As themes of sustainability continue to be understood through exploratory processes, research can be used to explore the interrelated nature of sustainability factors (Johnson et al., 2004). Support for this framework is addressed by Scheirer (2005) who highlights the need for sustainability research to focus on the measurement of key components which must evolve and be applied to specific public health programmes to enhance the existing framework. Therefore, this research shall inform on the perceptions of key individual stakeholders as members of organisations responsible for the delivery of Sportivate as a single-case of community intervention programmes. The adoption of critical realism ontological perspectives and retroductive reasoning means the inference of causal mechanisms are possible from existing social structures defined by multiple modes of reality (Bhaskar, 1998; Bhaskar, 2008; Blaikie, 2010; Bryman, 2012).With this in mind, this research considers appropriate methodologies to observe perspectives on the concept of sustainability from social actors and necessary stakeholders. Following this process means an acceptance of realist assumptions highlighted by Pawson and Tilley (1997a), which pinpoint the need to understand multiple layers of programme sustainability from a range of stakeholders. In doing so, realist perspectives offer meaning behind human action, embedding it within social processes from the stratified nature of society, offering greater sense of the knowledge that exists within society (Pawson and Tilley, 1997b).

## 1.3   Thesis structure

Following this chapter, the introduction will be followed by Chapter 2 which details a review of the theoretical constructs of sustainability and policy implementation. These will then be applied to the current political and funding landscape, with the influence that the Big Society agenda has had on this. Subsequently, an evaluation of variables of influence on sustainability are presented before detailing the nature of participation legacy after London 2012 through the delivery of community participation programmes like Sportivate. The thesis will continue with Chapter 3, which first acknowledges the requirement for philosophical considerations prior to adopting a reliable and valid research methodology. With continued evidence of triangulation, the strategy proposed through the selected research design is discussed prior to detailing the processes of study 1 and study 2, which adopt qualitative and quantitative data collection methods respectively in this mixed-methods research approach.

Finally, Chapter 3 summarises by highlighting the ethical considerations and limitations understood from the implemented research design. Prior to presenting the results from this research, Chapter 4 discusses the procedures in place to analyse the data obtained through the methodology described in Chapter 3. This details how collected data informs the research with descriptive statistics. Following this, the use of EFA is explained to investigate the reliability of sustainability themes that were surveyed for study 2. Subsequently, processes of ANOVAs are relayed as the final step of data analysis procedures discussed before the presentation of research results. With the application of realist perspectives, Chapter 5 present themes of sustainability emerging from interviews through multiple depths of reality defined by Fleetwood (2014) as material, ideal, artefactual and social modes (defined in Chapter 3). Adopting this approach highlights how the research accepts critical realist assumptions as social structures do not exist independently from stakeholders and therefore require knowledge to be understood from multiple perspectives of reality (Blaikie, 2010). This chapter builds upon the theoretical framework underlined in Chapter 2 and addresses the survey instrument employed for study 2's quantitative research. Before analysing the data obtained, Chapter 6 highlights the descriptive statistics from collected data. However, due to EFA forming part of the research design, the emerging themes are then identified in Chapter 7 through EFA and reliability analysis. Following Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances, the principal components of sustainability are then statistically analysed through the use of ANOVAs. Finally, Chapter 8 discusses the development of sustainability themes, and subsequent statistical analysis, according to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The thesis concludes with closing remarks addressing the research process and practical implications from the findings of this study.

# 2   Literature Review

## 2.1   Introduction

This chapter offers a critically analytical overview of literature surrounding the Sportivate programme, participation legacies, sustainability, and the implementation of policy and its effects on the current funding climate in the United Kingdom. By reviewing these relevant areas of literature, explanation is offered towards the RQ proposed; which factors play a role on the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded through Sportivate in London? To build knowledge around the topics aiming to contribute towards answering the RQ, this chapter starts by reviewing how sustainability and policy implementation theories build a framework for the research studies to come. However, to apply the theoretical framework to this research, a further review of the current political and funding climate follows, with emphasis drawn to Big Society and partisan ideologies to understand their effect on how community sport and physical activity funding has been influenced. Following this, an overview is offered for Sportivate at both a national and regional level which leads to a review of participation legacy, with the Sportivate programme acting as a case study for how the participation legacy of London 2012 has manifested itself in community intervention delivery format. To garner a greater understanding of this, trends in community sport participation are reviewed prior to developing a theoretical framework for sustainability and the emerging variables that influence it. Finally, this is applied to an overall review of the theoretical framework which develops through this chapter before culminating with concluding statements for the next steps of this research.

## 2.2   Sustainability

It is important to consider the concept of sustainability and its application to both the policymaking process and the delivery of sustainable goals through programmes like Sportivate. Sustainability has been defined as the continuation of activities after the input and resources originally provided to create a programme have subsided (Scheirer, 2005). However, this definition only meets one aspect of a three-tiered approach to sustainability from Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone (1998). Maintaining benefits and continuing programmes within organisations were highlighted, but one difference from Scheirer (2005) stated that sustainability also addresses capacity

building of recipients to continue the programme (Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone, 1998). In extension of this, capacity building addresses one component of Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) influences on sustainability which address four categories related to: innovation, organisational context, processes, and capacity (both internal and external). With Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) broad influences on sustainability and Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone's (1998) three-tiered definition of sustainability, the conceptual framework stated by Mancini and Marek (2004) underlines three dimensions that lead to sustainability through community intervention programmes. The concept of sustainability will be developed throughout this chapter utilising these seven elements of sustainability addressed by Mancini and Marek (2004) in their Programme Sustainability Index.

Figure 1: Model of sustainability through community intervention programmes
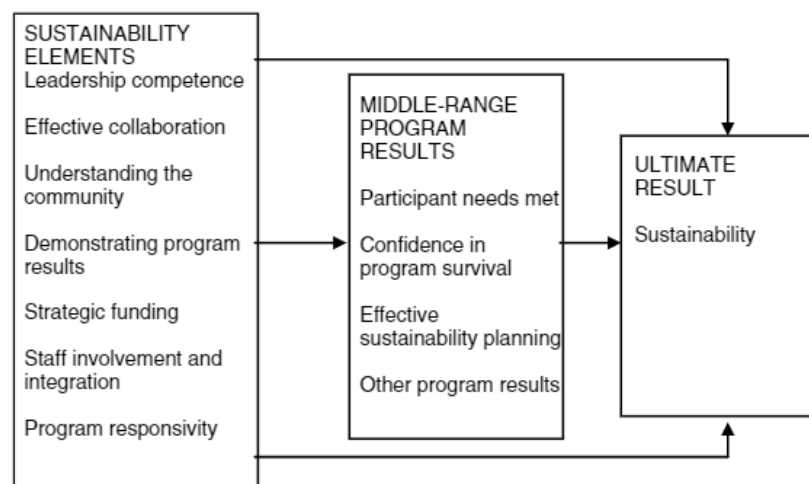


Mancini and Marek (2004, p.399)

Berg (2014) emphasises the importance of physical activity programmes needing to be sustainable because the benefits of such a project may not be seen for several years and any non-sustainable activity may discourage active participation for years to come. This ties in with the model proposed by Mancini and Marek (2004) as it indicates a process of community programmes building towards sustainable outcomes over a long-term model. Lindsey (2008) offers support and context for sustainability in community level physical activity as the maintenance of long-term programmes is considered essential for continued positive impact. Pluye, Potvin and Denis (2004) display strength for this by finding that discontinued programmes add

barriers for sustainable participation, as ending programmes resulted in disillusionment amongst exiting participants. Relating to Mancini and Marek (2004), it is essential that middle-range programme results are not ignored when attempting to achieve long-term objectives through programme delivery. These notions are quite interesting given the struggles of Sportivate to increase sustainable outcomes into Year 4 of the intervention programme (Sport Structures, 2015b).

According to Mancini and Marek (2004), leadership competence is an important factor from their Programme Sustainability Index. Similarly, Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) also highlighted this factor forming one aspect from the broader measure of context as an influence of sustainability. Mancini and Marek (2004) point to the role and responsibilities of leaders to develop a programme vision and ensure all supporting activities are appropriately delivered by those helping meet sustainable outcomes. The importance of this was highlighted by Scheirer (2005) in a review of sustainability research which indicated that most of the reviewed research included the idea of a programme champion or leader as a measured concept of sustainability. Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone (1998) also emphasise the role of a programme champion from a mid to upper level of managerial position within organisations working towards delivering sustainable programmes. Despite also labelling programme champions and leaders as potential influences of sustainability, Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) somewhat contradict this notion as this factor appears less frequent for public health studies due to the increased presence of funding themes in their review.

Even though strategic direction is of paramount importance for organisational success, strategic leadership is somewhat fostered by the planning processes of effective leadership from non-profit boards (Brown, 2005). This would suggest that leadership is governed by the planning processes for organisational objectives, however further nuances for leadership competence stem from the identifying of one sole leader. Hoye and Cuskelly (2003) identified that leadership within organisations is often perceived as being held between a small team consisting of the CEO, Board Chair and a few senior Board Members. Interestingly, this importance is also underlined by Shilbury and Ferkins (2011) who found that CEO-Board dynamics were crucial in enhancing strategic capability in the pursuit of rational management objectives for sporting organisations.

The second component of Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index referred to the idea of using partnerships and effective collaboration. In line with the idea of leadership competence, Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) indicated that collaborations and relationships are fostered by effective leaders who were more commonly found in organisations prepared to sustain new practices. The need for cross-sector collaborations was also highlighted by Mansfield et al. (2015) through the Health and Sport Engagement intervention evaluation. This found that the exchange of knowledge in Phase 1 was paramount to understanding roles and sharing good practice. Support for this appears from Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone (1998) who found that early planning for sustainability through partnership programmes is critical for the success of community intervention programmes. This is something Mansfield et al. (2015) highlighted in their Health and Sport Engagement intervention evaluation, as the knowledge exchange allowed for the successful implementation of planning, training and programme design processes within the first 6 months of the project.

Furthermore, moving into Phase 2 of the Health and Sport Engagement evaluation, a partnership model was used to successfully offer multiple activities for intervention programmes at various sites between delivery organisations (Mansfield et al., 2015). A key aspect of this partnership model is due to the organisational ability to form a social environment tailored to meet participant needs through community intervention programmes (Dearing, 2003). Furthermore, by using these partnerships in the planning process of programme delivery, wider capacity-building benefits are often found for organisations too, which in turn helps to sustain the development of future programmes (Scheirer and Dearing, 2011). An example of this comes from Kokolakakis, Pappous and Meadows (2015) who indicated that planning any initiative must consider the impact on end users to ensure the sustainable development of community swimming programmes.

This alternative benefit to collaboration approaches is also specified by Vail (2007) who found that this community development method goes beyond increasing sport participation levels. However, Misener and Doherty (2012) highlighted how meeting organisational objectives through community sports club partnerships depends on the nature of organisations. They presented the notion that for-profit and

non-profit organisations require fundamentally different partners, with resources and local sport system services specified respectively.

Contrarily, in some instances these types of organisations can collaborate through corporate social responsibility agendas. Bingham and Walters (2013) allude to this, but also describe how an uncertain financial climate born from political instability has driven organisations to collaborate and diversify resource streams. Additionally, there is also a need for appropriate leadership to control how partnerships can support the delivery of community-related objectives and ensure organisational objectives are still met (Rowe et al., 2013). By understanding collaborations as a factor of sustainability, leadership competence emerges as a key component of organisations being able to unite for the delivery of community intervention programmes (Mancini and Marek, 2004). Nonetheless, the theme of partnerships and collaborations is not limited to influence from just leadership competence. Scheirer (2005) identifies that collaborations with other organisations can offer key support within capacity, culture, and the process aspects of Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) factors of sustainability. Thus, further emphasising the point that partnerships must be used by organisations used to improve components of programme planning, training and design (Scheirer and Dearing, 2011; Mansfield et al., 2015).

Another area where some degree of interactivity is evident between factors of sustainability stems from the notion of understanding the community who participate in intervention programmes (Mancini and Marek, 2004). Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones (1998) indicated that the use of a collective mentality between organisations can enhance knowledge about participants and allow for a user-tailored delivery of sustainable programmes that benefit the community. One way to achieve this is to include recipients in the design process of community intervention programmes, offering a sense of ownership for participants when organisations implement sustainable innovations (Johnson et al., 2004). Mansfield et al. (2015) offer an example of this from the Health and Sport Engagement evaluation through the use of a screening process to establish the needs of participants involved in a community intervention programme.

However, Mancini and Marek (2004) specify that understanding community needs must also consider the socio-economic status of participants, as well as considering the requirements of sport policy for the development of community intervention programmes. This is evident when Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) discuss the importance of maintaining core elements of community intervention programmes once initial support has ceased, suggesting partnerships and understanding the community are equally important objectives in achieving sustainability. Scheirer and Dearing (2011) also endorse this idea as the maintenance of community level relationships are essential for understanding recipient communities and subsequently enabling the continuation of intervention programmes. When considering this though, it is also important to remember that many non-profit organisations deliver programmes with altruistic intentions of serving community needs (Misener and Doherty, 2012). This indicates that the type of organisation contributes as a variable affecting the long-term benefits sought from improving sustainability factors like; capacity, effectiveness of partnership and the knowledge required to address local community needs.

According to Mancini and Marek (2004) measuring the success of community intervention programmes is a difficult process to demonstrate but is still essential for overall success. This important measurement process is highlighted by Boutilier et al. (2001) who suggest that merely using quantitative measures would be inadequate to capture programme success. This is mainly because of process goals not being captured, which is particularly important when programme changes are made to fit a greater understanding of community needs. Support for this is offered by Scheirer and Dearing (2011) who detail the use of a feedback model that encapsulates all programme outcomes and processes as a measure of evaluation from a conceptual framework of sustainability.

Figure 2: Feedback model showcasing the conceptual framework for intervention programme sustainability



Inputs:

• Intervention with evidence for effectiveness

• Organizational capacity

• Prior relationships and partnerships

Factors Affecting Sustainability:

• Intervention characteristics

• Organizational support

• Environmental support

Obtaining Financial Resources:

Internal:
• Institutionalization

External:
• Grants
• Fee for service

In kind:
• Volunteers
• Space, logistics

Outcomes (Program Sustained):

• Client benefits
• Intervention activities
• Community partnerships
• Organizational policies
• Broader attention
• Replication

Feedback

Context: Social, Policy, and Financial Environment

Scheirer and Dearing (2011, p.2063)

Not only do intervention programmes require an evaluation that covers processes as well as outcomes, but an examination of an organisation's definition of success is also required (Poulin, Harris and Jones, 2000). Support for this is offered by Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) who state that achieving programme outcomes, and being able to measure them, is dependent on indicators like implementation, functionality of decision-making bodies and co-ordination between the multiple stakeholders involved. This once again highlights the interactivity of latent constructs that make up the framework of sustainability (Mancini and Marek, 2004). Mansfield et al. (2015) lend support to this by complimenting programme specific outcome measures with both quantitative and qualitative process-driven evaluation.

However, it is also important that evaluation methods are not planned in response to programme delivery. Instead, Johnson et al. (2004) highlight that appropriate evaluation methods should be developed in the planning stage of programme delivery. This helps as objectives of delivery outcomes can be considered at this stage with organisation goals that programmes are designed to meet. To

strengthen the demonstration of programme success, Boutilier et al. (2001) emphasises the role of measuring processes and objectives by using a milestone model that breaks down overall programme success into specific components. However, Scheirer (2005) specifies concerns with the priority of organisations to implement evaluation and feedback strategies as many project directors downplayed the role of demonstrating programme results to achieve sustainable goals.

Nonetheless, Scheirer (2005) also noted that other staff members perceived benefits of informal evaluations towards sustainability. This would suggest that staff roles could influence the perception of how evaluation processes are used to demonstrate programme success. By understanding multiple components that influence the effectiveness of evaluation processes, internal and external mechanisms can be understood as factors of programme sustainability (Hanson, Cross and Jones, 2016). The importance of this is further indicated by Mancini and Marek (2004) who specify that evaluation processes of older programmes are vital when strategizing how future funding can be manifested for new or continuing programmes.

This leads to another factor of sustainability identified through Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index, strategic funding. This is particularly important for smaller organisations who may not have collaboration agreements in place with larger organisations, making it an essential part of programme continuity (Goodman and Steckler, 1987). However, further research identifies that strategic funding should also consider the length of funded programmes and the worthiness of programmes for continued financial support (Goodman and Steckler, 1989). This shows the importance of evaluation processes and again displays the interactivity between variables of sustainability already discussed.

Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) also emphasise evaluation processes of funding, but as a measure of allocating additional funding towards resourcing and staffing. However, rather than using evaluation processes to determine programme value or programme length, Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) referred to indicators of funding adequacy which need to be accounted for. In order to do so, Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones (1998) stated that achieving sustainability through appropriate finances requires consideration for: potential cutbacks, the identification of realistic costs, diversifying funding streams, and variety of services offered. Upon reviewing these components of

strategic funding, the overall assessment of community intervention programmes should analyse the cost-effectiveness of delivery during and 12 months after programmes have completed (Mansfield et al., 2012). This research for the Health and Sport Engagement evaluation identified the use of funding for four delivery components; design of programme, training of staff, recruiting participants, and running taster sessions.

However, when considering the four recommendations of Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones (1998) with this, clearly there are conflicting approaches for strategizing funding. This is an important consideration as the payment plan for the Health and Sport Engagement evaluation only provided organisations with 50% funding up-front and then 50% upon meeting initial targets (Mansfield et al., 2012). This is similar to how London Sport (2015) have operated with Sportivate as only start-up costs are provided, with the remaining funds paid upon meeting seasonal targets in a model of incentivisation.

An alternative strategy that could offer a solution to this process for smaller organisations comes from Johnson et al. (2004), who state that funding resources need to be part of a resource acquisition plan that includes funding from continuous streams and staffing. However, this can be difficult as Mancini and Marek (2004) specify the need for diversity in funding support for long-term financial stability. Nonetheless, some consideration is offered for Johnson et al.'s (2004) funding strategy as Mancini and Marek (2004) indicate support for continuous funding streams aiding short-term funding plans, which should be considered separate to long-term funding strategies. Considering this, Bingham and Walters (2013) indicate that the development of long-term social partnerships can diversify revenue streams for sports trusts addressing the corporate social responsibility of commercial organisations.

However, much like other factors of sustainability discussed, consideration must also be offered towards the type of organisation that is adopting a funding strategy. Warner and Sullivan (2004) warn that despite an increase in resource leverage for smaller organisations entering partnerships, the loss of control of a programme counters some positivity from this approach. Support for this stems from Harris and Houlihan (2016) who imply that partnership strategies offer complex patterns of resource dependency. Rather than inspiring organisations to meet objectives, the

funding struggle that enforces partnerships becomes indicative of an external culture set by a government that regulates organisational freedom (Miller and Rose, 2008). Harris and Houlihan (2016) highlight this as the challenge of resource dependency and strategic measures for collaboration due to difficulties around policy implementation. At the time, the Coalition government recommended partnership strategies, however, this was not a new mechanism of social policy delivery as it had been used by previous governments (McDonald, 2005). Furthermore, partnership strategies could offer greater risk for smaller organisations as larger sporting bodies often prioritise new staff recruitment over strategies deemed to benefit external partners (Harris and Houlihan, 2016).

This leads on to the penultimate component of Mancini and Marek's (2004) model of sustainability, the involvement of staff. To influence sustainability, qualified staff should be involved in programme planning, delivery, evaluation and decision making. However, it should be noted that programme sustainability is also dependent on how well staff integration is managed when fostering an organisational culture centred around staff involvement and recognition (Goodman and Steckler, 1987; Goodman and Steckler, 1989). Whilst organisational culture is an important aspect of sustainability, the attributes of staff have also been considered to fit more within the latent construct of capacity (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). This is because workforce stability has been identified with characteristics of skill and attitude, rather than integration within an organisational culture which Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone (1998) identify as being influenced by leadership rather than workforce.

With staff involvement influencing both organisational culture and capacity, attention is also drawn to positive relationships amongst staff responsible for delivering intervention programmes (Johnson et al., 2004). Here it is highlighted that whilst workforces are necessary in planning, delivery and evaluation, as mentioned by Mancini and Marek (2004), positive internal relationships are also essential amongst key stakeholders supporting these functions (Johnson et al., 2004). Furthermore, positive working environments for staff have been described as only being relevant for sustainability if programme staff buy into the process and its benefits for them or their organisation (Scheirer and Dearing, 2011). This offers reason behind why positive relationships are not only important for staff involvement, but also necessary

to include stakeholders in the key decisions from planning to delivering a sustainable intervention programme.

Forde et al. (2015) concur with this as the use of staff champions through a bottom-up leadership approach has offered much influence on the sustainability of intervention programmes. Furthermore, Reid (2006) emphasises that project staff being champion the voice of participants through direct relationships that can be communicated up through an organisation's hierarchical structure. With an increase in the number programme champions at the ground-level, barriers for long-term participation can be minimised as staff turnover is less likely to be an issue for organisations (Forde et al., 2015). However, this can create a problem with participation expectations. To combat this, Schulenkorf (2012) identifies the use of agents of change to champion sustainable participation. This role may be fulfilled from an external community source though, leading to contradictory points around staff involvement as a factor of sustainability which requires further research (Mancini and Marek, 2004).

Further evidence of staff involvement comes from Sridharan et al. (2007) who found that struggling community initiatives failed to consider staff turnover as a factor of influence during the implementation phase of intervention programmes. From here, some insight is offered into the length of time in a role or with an organisation could have on influencing perceptions of sustainable community programme delivery. Additionally, not ceding project leadership to staff or change agents during planning or delivery could result in a drift back towards top-down leadership approaches, neglecting the impact of ground-level deliverers and their autonomy in meeting organisational objectives (Schulenkorf, 2012; Renfree and Kohe, 2019).

The final element of processing sustainability outcomes through community intervention programmes refers to the responsivity of the programme (Mancini and Marek, 2004). In essence, this means how well the programme adapts to the needs of target participants. However, Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) highlight how responsivity forms just one component of programme innovation characteristics which are also made up of influences like programme suitability, programme effectiveness and the concept of programme fidelity addressing the consistency of reproduced programmes. Rather than offering a different viewpoint, there is some concurrence with Mancini

and Marek's (2004) model of sustainability. But according to Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) there is a need for greater understanding of programme characteristics for sustainability purposes.

Support for this comes from Johnson et al. (2004) who identified programme alignment with needs of the community as a key component of meeting sustainable outcomes. However, this agreement is further strengthened as concepts of programme effectiveness and programme integrity are discussed as individual components of attaining sustainability through community intervention programmes.

Figure 3: Sustainability action steps



<div align="right">Johnson et al. (2004, p.145)</div>

Nonetheless, Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones (1998) emphasise the lack of guarantee for sustainable outcomes on the back of an effective project being delivered. One of the reasons for this is because programme effectiveness needs to account for programme adaptations, which cannot realistically be ascertained without programme evaluation protocols being adopted (Schell et al., 2013). However, Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones (1998) highlight the difficulty in conducting evaluation processes, thus limiting the evidence of impact and inhibiting the showcasing of positive programmes. This coincides with Mancini and Marek's (2004) idea of demonstrating programme results being important, once again displaying an interactivity of complex components that make up factors of sustainability.

Part of this evaluation process includes assessing the fit of programmes with community needs. Whist financial support is essential, Casey et al. (2009a) highlight

that failure amongst Regional Governing Bodies (RGBs) to understand local needs could lead to a lack of programme fit when administering a community intervention programme. The suggestion here is that whilst financial capacity and resources will remain a clear and obvious barrier towards participation, these limitations exist in an external climate. However, internal mechanisms are more controllable. Therefore, organisations operating to support projects at a regional and national level must ensure appropriate partnerships are formed to maintain a local fit for sustainable programmes (Bingham and Walters, 2013). Because of this, Scheirer and Dearing (2011) suggest that programme continuity should refer to what successful components of a programme are worth continuing, rather than the entirety of a programme which may no longer meet the needs of a community upon completion. Akerlund (2000) succinctly describes this aspect of programme responsivity to be the degree to which an intervention project can be modified and continually addresses a changing community with consideration towards the social structures that underpin this.

Skille and Stenling (2017) identify social structures as the behaviour of actors intertwined with the established infrastructure to provide opportunity for new action in an ever-evolving process. Similar to concerns from Akerlund (2000), Pluye, Potvin and Denis (2004) stated the concerns of understanding social structures within which programmes are sustained. This sentiment was matched by Skinner, Zakus and Cowell (2008) who identified the strength of broader social networks being used to support programmes. The idea being that with a larger social network there is less dependency on a single organisation to ensure participation does not decrease. However, Mansfield et al. (2015) raise the point that understanding social structures goes beyond the scale of social networks, and in fact highlights the possibility that people can control their own lives and thus influence organisations that impact their lives. Interestingly, this vindicates the third approach towards sustainability earlier stated from Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone (1998) who defined the need for capacity building amongst the local recipients of sustainable programmes. This concept of strengthening social structures also forms part of Johnson et al. (2004) Sustainability Planning Model, where strategic plans are implemented as part of a capacity building process.

As well as increasing inter-organisational networks, delivery needs are also supported by an expansion of internal social structures too. Breuer, Wicker and Von Hanau (2012) champion the notion that greater reliance is placed upon volunteers to

deliver the objectives of their respective programmes. This has also been noted in the United States as a lack of volunteers often meant the discontinuation of sports programmes (Berg, 2016). Additionally, Vail (2007) highlights that building organisational capacity to support sustainability is important when empowering organisations to deliver sustainable programmes at a community level.

Despite this, the work of policymakers does not remain unnoticed as they are known to play a key role in influencing programmes designed to increase physical activity participation (Sallis, Bauman and Pratt, 1998). Berg (2016) recognised the importance of political support for sustainable programmes as any policymaker changes can influence the sustainability of community level programmes. This point is strengthened by Johnson et al.'s (2004) idea of building administrative policies and procedures to sustain programme innovations. However, further issues can also arise when policymakers champion a programme with a level of commitment that fails to offer the substantial effort and support needed to ensure participations levels do not drop upon completion of a physical activity programme.

## 2.3   Policy implementation

Government policy can be considered a primary external factor in the context of how effective community sports and physical activity programmes are delivered. Over the last 20 years there has been a greater political promotion of structured sporting systems to oust the splintered and unplanned approach that previous Labour and Conservative governments had adopted in the United Kingdom (Green, 2004; Green, 2006). This is evident in the latest sport policy, Sporting Future, which outlines a need for transparency from all organisations seeking to obtain funding regardless of the sector they operate within (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015a). Subsequently, the Towards an Active Nation sport strategy, specifies a sustainable responsibility for organisations who must adhere to the practice of transparent and efficient governance prescribed from the government (Sport England, 2016). However, Houlihan (2016) identified that industrial nations have developed and adapted sports policy quite rapidly, with the hosting of mega-events influencing policymaking procedures with diplomatic opportunities, despite a lack of proactive event hosting policy.

In order to understand how policy can impact upon the delivery of community sport and physical activity, this section will identify how changes administered by

governments can contribute both positively and negatively to the ambience of sport and physical activity in the community. The principles for sport policy are clearly set out by the Council of Europe (n.d.) in the European Sport for All Charter which was created in 1975. A range of articles in the Charter help categorize the way in which sport and physical activity policy can encourage equal participation (Marchand, 1990), public funding (Houlihan and White, 2002; Bergsgard et al., 2007), socio-cultural development (Houlihan and Malcolm, 2016; Hartmann-Tews 2006), public authority and VSO partnerships (McDonald, 2005; Phillpots, Grix, and Quarmby, 2010), safeguarding (Lang and Hartill, 2015), accessibility (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015b), legislation (Houlihan and White, 2002; Coalter, 2007; Houlihan and Malcolm, 2016) and governance (Green and Houlihan, 2005; Tomlinson et al., 2005).

No longer does sporting policy sit on the periphery of political agendas across the world. Houlihan (1997) identified the diverse range of issues that sport policy can impact upon, with support from Green and Collins (2008) who addressed similar issues of health, social inclusion, community development, education and elite success in Australia and Finland. This recognises the importance of sport and its role on policy agenda issues as the consequences produced by one policy may interfere with other policies (Majone, 1989). In addition to reviewing these consequences of policy, the importance of government policy changes to sport is explored by evaluating what factors can influence government sports policies both nationally and globally.

Houlihan (2000) articulates an image of sports policy development as proactive policymaking in a robust manner that results in a clear policy direction, but also recognises this as an idealistic view. This resonates with Majone (1989) by drawing attention to densely packed policy spaces which result in competition in policy implementation where numerous interests are forced to adopt reactive stances caused by exogenous factors. Houlihan (2000) took these contrasting impacts of sports policy development and drew comparison with the definitions of policymaking and policy-taking introduced by Dery (1999). Policymaking refers to the assumption of a powerful position in policy development as it implements control over key factors that shape policy in a specified area, which is supported by Houlihan's optimistic definition of sports policy development. However, like Houlihan (2000), Dery (1999) recognises the battle of policy development by defining policy-taking as a pursuit of

set policy objectives shaped primarily by the pursuit of alternative objectives. Therefore, this leads towards to a policy that is a by-product of other competing policies that are applied to pursue other objectives rather than those implicitly required of the policy being developed. The change evident in the Towards an Active Nation strategy highlights how changes to sporting policy aim to counter broader social issues as well as tackling physical inactivity (Sport England, 2016; Grix et al., 2017).

When considering how sport plays a role in influencing multiple areas of policy, it is important to address the approaches taken in the policymaking process for sport and physical activity. Weed (2001) suggests a model for policy development that applies cross-sector reforms between sport and tourism. Whilst the application of such a method maybe useful for sport and tourism, there could be less congruence between cross-sector policymaking for sport and other industries. Because of this, New Zealand follows a system where knowledge is sourced to support a policymaking process that helps sport be used as a tool for developing policy in other industries too (Piggin, Jackson and Lewis, 2009). Advantages of this unified policymaking approach are clearly visible in relation to the sharing of financial and knowledge resources (Wright, 1988; Grix and Phillpots, 2011). However, it is still important to acknowledge role of the government as a key stakeholder in the development of policy (Laffin, 2009). It is here that the sharing of resources can be communicated, with particular emphasis on addressing how specific policymaking decisions can influence other departments and the policymaking process they themselves are undertaking (Wright, 1988). However, when considering policymaking in sport specifically, the role of other stakeholders must also be recognised alongside the understanding that the underlying power still lies with the government (Grix and Phillpots, 2011). Wilks and Wright (1987) refer to this network of stakeholders in policymaking as the policy community. Nonetheless, Goodwin and Grix (2011) outline varying levels of influence in the policymaking process within the policy community and the difficulties faced this idea of a shared responsibility between stakeholders.

The relationship refers to the emphasis placed upon the fulfilment of objectives set by the government through sports policy, meaning autonomous action can remain stifled amongst the other sports policy stakeholders. An example of this can be seen in Australia, as well as the United Kingdom, with the development of whole sport plans through the Australian Sports Commission Volunteer Management Program and

Sport England respectively (Hoye et al., 2018). There is further support for a centralised system of policy development, but it contradicts Goodwin and Grix's (2011) idea of autonomous action being muted for other policy stakeholders. Skille (2008) identified that local sports clubs in Norway have greater autonomous control of action due to the activity of sports clubs mainly being administered on a voluntary basis. This idea is somewhat supported by Nichols et al. (2005) who understood that more influence is exerted through NGBs by Sport England rather than the government. In extension of this, further support stems from Garrett (2004) when discussing the expansion of Sport England's bureaucracy after becoming a distributing agent of the National Lottery. However, this suggests that organisational autonomy for VSOs is likely to stem from the influence held by strategy formulators, like NGBs, rather than the activity administered on a voluntary basis.

The idea of a centralised policymaking approach in Norway was proposed by Skille (2008) who recognised similar government power in Norway's sport policy for grassroots development as Hoye et al. (2018) did in Australia and England. It was noted that policy is dictated by a central state department (the government) and the success of its implementation is dependent on the ability of VSOs executing the sports policy in a localised context. However, Bergsgard and Norberg (2010) denote that Denmark follows a more decentralized model when compared with Norway's governance of sport policy development and delivery. However, problems have been recognised with Denmark's decentralized strategy for sports policy development as an international comparison report from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2011) recognised that over 90% of surveyed Danish people agreed that they could not take advantage of sport and physical activity opportunities in the community. Nonetheless, the relationship between a decentralized sports policy development system and opportunities for access cannot be explicitly determined from this.

Nevertheless, the example of Latin America can be used to portray the difficulties of sport policy being proposed through a central government system (Pye and Pettavino, 2016). Despite the Sport for All Charter being established by the Council of Europe (n.d.), the concept spread to Latin America in the 1970's with Brazil and Venezuela being particularly forward in adopting the Sport for All philosophy. Additionally, Cuba espoused an institutionalised approach for sport in 1961 with the National Institute for Sports, Education and Recreation (INDER). This unified

approach to sports delivery directed and developed all forms of sport and physical activity, suggesting freedom for autonomous action from an independent body. However, the fact that the formulation of INDER was headed by Jose Llanusa Gobel, a close friend of Fidel Castro, suggests that this independent body acted under government command (Pettavino and Brenner, 1999). Pye and Pettavino (2016) state how, over time, the role of INDER has changed but ultimately the decision of sports policy in Cuba cannot be approved without authority from the state through the Council of Ministers. Therefore, it can be argued that INDER was not an autonomous acting organisation for sport policy and rather a governing body for sport which was very much dependent on a centralised policy system influenced by the Cuban government. Baxter and Kraul (2007) further exemplified this argument by highlighting the strong focus towards Cuba's elite sport success and economic stability. This hinted at INDER's role as an administrative body for sport going beyond than the altruistic principles of the Sport for All concept.

There is a suggestion that a centralised system can be used to influence autonomous action from the policy network of relevant stakeholders delivering community sports and physical activity. In turn, this can lead to benefits for the wider policy community and policy universe, with increased levels of consultation and reviews based on any original sports policy proposals (Talbot, 2016). However, consideration must also be offered towards the political climate of a region in order to determine how successful such a centralised sports policy structure can be. Furthermore, Goodwin and Grix (2011) ask the question as to whether the concept of sports for development is truly deliverable without the autonomous action of organisations that sit below the upper echelons of a nation's hierarchical government structure. A feeder system that depicts this top-down approach was also presented by Harris and Houlihan (2014) who identified the process of policy making and transition occurring before its implementation through multiple stakeholders.

Figure 4: Policymaking, transition and implementation in the United Kingdom
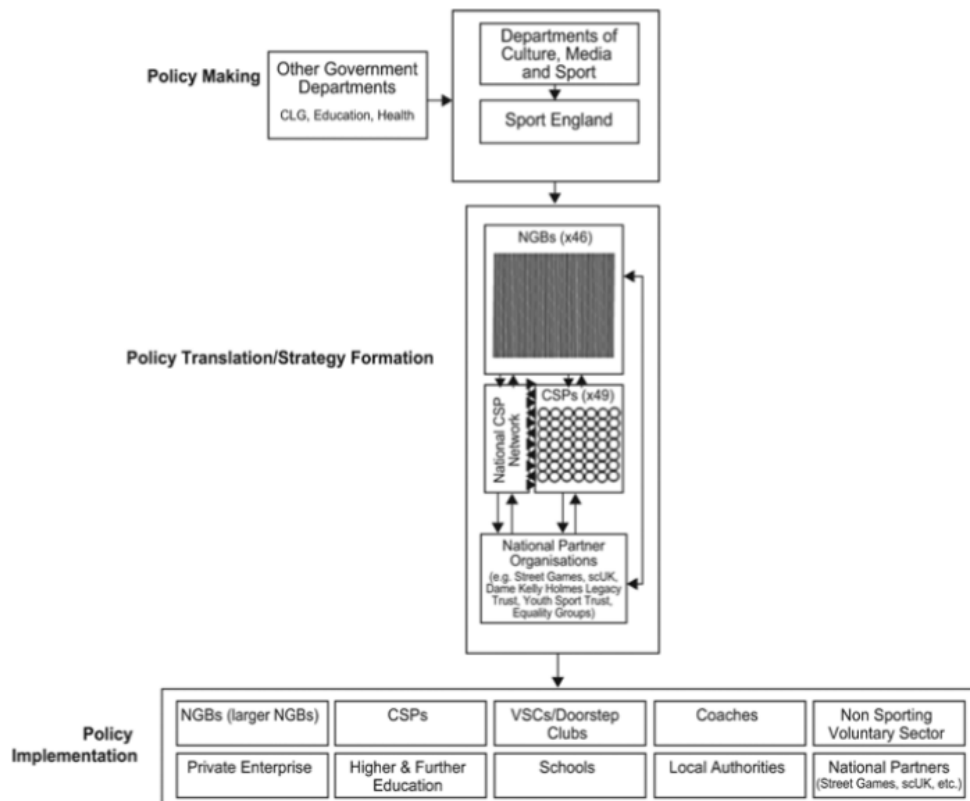


Harris and Houlihan (2014, p.115)

As afore mentioned, Pye and Pettavino (2016) recognised concerns in Cuba with community sport and physical activity policy development being hindered by a motive for success on the stage of elite sport. Whilst much policy has been concentrated towards the development of sport through the Sport for All concept, thoughts have also been offered to the emergence of elite sport development. Green (2004) highlights how achievement on the international stage plays an increasingly important role in policy development. Although initially suggested that this could be due to the political climate of a region, it is apparent that this policy setting schism has been prevalent globally.

In the United Kingdom, both Labour and Conservative governments have included and funded the implementation of elite sport policy (Green, 2006). A key turning point in the transformation of sports policy was the introduction of the National Lottery in 1994, from which funding for sport would benefit immensely. The introduction of sport policy one year later through 'Sport: Raising the Game' steered

United Kingdom to a more elite centric model for sports development (Department of National Heritage, 1995; Green, 2004). Additionally, Houlihan (1997) inferred that an increasing influence of a centralised system was also evident in the publishing of this policy as funding allocations were stringently administered based on a governing body's conditional support of government policy objectives. Penney and Evans (1997) support this as the policy reflected Conservative values of elitism and nationalism, a construct that is not at all lost within the latest Conservative sports policy document, Sporting Future (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015a). Subsequently, this approach embeds centralised systems, funding-use efficiency through partnerships and the tackling of wider social issues through Sport England's (2016) strategy, Towards an Active Nation. The shift towards this approach was not a new movement in government policy as Coalter, Long and Duffield (1988) find it evident in the intervention to move away from a voluntarist approach to sport through the inception of the GB Sports Council in 1972.

In July 2005, London was successful in its bid to host the Olympic Games based on the legacy of inspiring a new generation to become physically active. In the run up to the bid success, Sport England launched Sport Action Zones in 2000 to generate and sustain participation in sport and physical activity in specific localised areas (Houlihan and Lindsey, 2013). Despite advances in schemes like Sport Action Zones, data showed that by 2009 the increase in sporting participation had stalled (Jefferys, 2012). With this run up to the delivery of London 2012 having been passed through different political leadership in the United Kingdom, the participation legacy of the Games importantly received cross-party support to administer this policy promise (Bloyce and Smith, 2015). Independent Sports Review (2005) also recognised the adoption of a Team Westminster approach to the challenge at hand, highlighting that in the field of sport policy, productive debate between parties is pivotal to the successful delivery of policy. Plans for the legacy relied on the unification of organisations to work towards specified objectives, as proposed by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2010) through the targeting of behaviour changes amongst inactive individuals. This was further evident through the Places People Play initiative that sought to leverage London 2012 over a post-Games 5-year plan (Kelso, 2010; Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2011). This programme, rolled out on public funding through the National Lottery, invested in facilities and volunteering as a

promise of delivering a lasting legacy for the London 2012 Olympic Games (Weed, 2016).

However, Bloyce and Smith (2015) highlight how this supposedly new initiative was merely a continuation pre-existing programmes. Despite this repackaging of strategies, there is also acceptance that a level of continuity offers consistency in its approach. As such, Places People Play soon merged paths with Creating a Sporting Habit for Life with aspects of the policy continuing through facility development and Sportivate (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2012). Using this partnership approach for work through a centralised policy was not a new concept from the Coalition government. Instead it was a mechanism of social policy delivery (McDonald, 2005). Nichols et al. (2005) highlighted its importance by describing a nationalised model that filters down to a local level through governments and onto local voluntary sector organisations. Nevertheless, Houlihan (1997) issued early warnings of such a process as the malleability of sport as a policy instrument reduces organisation autonomy when acting to fulfil the requirements of sport policy. These other bodies do not necessarily refer to the major policymaker stakeholders but more so the sport policy implementers. The self-governing nature of many VSOs means projects like Sportivate add a burden of requirements for organisations to work towards or face struggles in accessing public funding. Thus, highlighting how national policy on sport participation and health lack a consistent message to harness the demonstration effect possible for London 2012 (Weed, 2017).

It is also important to consider how policy implementation theorists explore causality and reasons why certain outcomes occur (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973). May, Harris and Collins (2013) identify how there are clear differences between perspectives on policy implementation through top-down processes or bottom-up relations. Top-down theorists are described as those who follow a prescribed centralist ideal that focusses on the formation of policy and its delivery to meet objectives through a hierarchical structure (Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou, 2017). Contrarily, O'Gorman (2011) presents the bottom-up models view that implementation is formulated through negotiation with greater focus on those who implement policy lower down the chain. Another perspective of policy implementation attempts to fuse elements of both the top-down and bottom-up approach in order to analyse numerous variables throughout the policy-making process (Hill and Hupe, 2009).

### 2.3.1 Policy implementation: Top-down

Matland (1995) highlighted how the centralised system of top-down perspectives represents the beginning of the implementation process and therefore policymakers should be considered more relevant in achieving policy objectives. The policy implementation model offered by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) emphasises the focus placed upon organisational control and hierarchical capacities to deliver. Support for this is offered by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) who identified objectives primarily revolving around the policy, the makers, the structure and the commitment of implementer agents to the policy. The notion of human agency commitment is further amplified with Dunsire's (1990) perspective that if implementations through structured systems are not achieved, the failure is because personnel did not comply with the original conception of policymakers. Ultimately, May, Harris and Collins (2013) summarise by stating top-down theorists perceive tighter controls are a requirement of policy implementation, with an increasingly centralised model in place for those deemed in charge of meeting policy objectives.

### 2.3.2 Policy implementation: Bottom-up

The opposing perspective to the top-down model is the bottom-up approach. Theorists in this perspective suggest a policy's success should be measured on the decisions of street level bureaucrats, their routines and the mechanisms invented to cope with the uncertainties and pressures public policies can offer (Lipsky, 2010). In support of this, Bloyce and Smith (2010) highlight the fact that there are too many external processes and variables beyond the control of top-down approaches, emphasising the strengths of working with the delivery agents to guide future policy having worked closer to the tangible problems that exist at a more local level. Furthermore, Sabatier (1986) related criticism of top-down models with the need for alternative, bottom-up perspectives as certain situations involved a lack of dominant policy or agency solely responsible for the implementation of policy. deLoen and deLeon (2002) added the argument that deliverers may become more reliable agents of policy implementation if they are involved in the initial policymaking process. Despite this, the success of bottom-up policy implementation appears as a determinant of an organisation's ability to manage various pressures and obligations. This is due to a need for organisations to persevere with meeting their own objectives whilst still fulfilling the political and strategic

objectives imposed through a centralised system of policymaking and delivery (May, Harry and Collins, 2013).

### 2.3.3 Policy implementation: Synthesis

Sabatier (1986) combined the strongest aspects of top-down and bottom-up perspectives by suggesting a synthesised approach towards policy implementation. The need for such an approach is somewhat justified by Matland (1995) who recognises that multiple organisations can identify the same policy as relevant to its own strategic objectives, but also have differing views with regards to the policymaker's targets and activities. Hill and Varone (2017) described these conflicts stemming from a desire for prescriptive approaches, highlighting a reality to recognise that implementation requires a continued process of complex bargaining, negotiation and interaction. This further solidifies the case for a synthetic approach much like Hjern's (1982) expression of demonstrating the importance of interaction between organisations in order to achieve effective policy implementation and the subsequent meeting of objectives. Despite a seemingly logical fusion of two approaches, O'Toole (2000) highlights a lack of sustained interest in adopting the fledgling approach. This is due to perspectives of policy implementation struggling to adopt such a large scope whilst resources for research become more constrained. Something which has been evident in the adoption of austerity measures which have fostered an unsuccessful attempt to implement policy and increase sustainable participation in sport and physical activity (Widdop et al., 2018).

### 2.4 Big Society

As the role of policy implementation has been theorised, a recent approach in the United Kingdom highlights the Big Society agenda and the role of society, voluntary sector and social enterprise to step in where the state has otherwise struggled (Cabinet Office, 2010; Scott, 2011). Kisby (2010) agrees that the intentions of Big Society were clear with the empowering of communities and promote a culture of voluntary activity. However, Lowndes and Pratchett (2011) noted the difficulties of this as conflicts within the Conservative party, and a failure to adopt an ideology from the Liberal Democrats, led to problems in asserting this new understanding of local self-governance. Furthermore, difficulties arose with feelings of empowering individuals to pursue active citizenship being more obligatory than voluntary in its nature through Big Society ideals (Kisby, 2010). Reasons for this are highlighted by Jordan (2011)

who indicates that an increase in productivity is only possible through Big Society if it creates a sense of value-for-money.

These issues were also raised by Kisby (2010) who found that the idea of promoting social enterprise could be declared idealistic, rather than a realistic goal of policy from the government. Despite these complications, which include a loan-based financial support system as opposed to a grant-based one, there is a wider understanding that there is a level of empowerment for the third-sector in working towards results rather than attaining them immediately (The Economist, 2013). Morgan (2013) also highlights this, despite initial reservations, as there is recognition for the liberation of organisations which are instrumental to the betterment of social capital. However, Jordan (2011) indicates that whilst Big Society wanted to increase civic duty through newly liberated organisations, these new organisations were largely unaccountable to the wider public, thus limiting the success of meeting these targets.

Big Society promised to alter the relationship between those responsible for making policy and those responsible for delivering it (Smith, 2010). Support for this comes from Lowndes and Pratchett (2011) who highlight how the agenda attempted to restore communities due to an overdependence on central government. Furthermore, Phillips and Green (2015) specify that community sport delivery needs to be governed at a local level which aligns with the Big Society agenda ideals. Despite this, Jordan (2011) demonstrates how strengths in restoring local communities could weaken nationalism. With this in mind, national identity is a message that comes through the opening sections of Sporting Future, suggesting an inconsistency between how sporting policy is being used to promote the Big Society agenda (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015a). Nonetheless, despite social capital success with the volunteer force at London 2012, this was recognised as a short-term accomplishment that overshadowed thoughts of a realistic sustainable legacy for sport through the Big Society agenda (Mackintosh and Liddle, 2015). Even short-term accomplishments were limited as Sport and Recreation Alliance (2013) indicated very little growth in volunteering in the months that immediately followed London 2012.

Efford (2015), a Labour MP, highlighted how the impact of Big Society was virtually non-existent as fewer people were physically active than they were in 2012. However, it was the Labour-led Playing to Win policy from the Department of Culture,

Media and Sport (2008) that steered sport towards elite performance goals as London 2012 drew closer. Subsequently, the youth sport policy, Creating a Sporting Habit for Life, issued by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2012) under the Coalition government seemed necessary as it redirected sport policy away elitist ideology. Despite this, a tougher regime of payment-by-results increased the pressure on community groups to move to a more centralised and professional model of sports development through the Big Society agenda. Not only would this impact on measures of monitoring but it also had the potential to affect the participation sustainability objectives of London 2012 (Commission for a Sustainable London 2012, 2011). Subsequently, Evans (2011) highlights that the Big Society agenda has placed strains on third-sector organisations' ability to access public funding, and therefore deliver community intervention programmes. Furthermore, in relation to organisations responsible for community sport, only those with the power and resources can promote the do-more-for-less ideals an agenda like Big Society promotes (Devine, 2013).This emphasises the issue that funding cuts, and measures like this, have on certain types of organisations who may struggle to survive without seeking alternative funding sources (Bingham and Walters, 2013).

Big Society highlighted the austerity measures that swept the nation under the Coalition government. School sport partnerships also fell victim to this as Labour's £162 million strategy was brushed aside, placing pressure on schools to allocate resources for the development of sport partnerships (Jefferys, 2012). The impact of this is highlighted by Mackintosh and Liddle (2015) who indicate that lesser funded state schools are especially limited in their approach to delivering sport and physical activity. Austerity clearly overshadowed the ambitious Olympic legacy targets and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2015a) recognised this with a face-saving policy used to eclipse failed targets. The emphasis placed upon school sport and youth participation in this policy review of 2010-2015 clearly contradicts the actions taken to cut funding at a community level. This is emphasised by Rogers (2010) who stated that £83 billion funding cuts were announced to meet government spending targets for 2014-15. Kokolakakis, Pappous and Meadows (2015) demonstrate the impact of austerity further by underlining the cost-benefit analysis individuals make before deciding if being physically active is worth the financial burden. This indicates that

austerity is not only felt by organisations delivering intervention programmes, but also the participants the delivery organisations are targeting.

Disturbingly for community sport, even with constraints on funding, a 29% increase in funding for UK Sport was announced in 2015, highlighting policy's elitist sentiment towards performance and medals rather than health and participation (Cutmore and Ziegler, 2015). This policy lacks support, with Weed (2017) recognising the need for care when championing physical activity participation goals through elite sport objectives. Furthermore, Widdop et al. (2018) indicate that budgetary constraints and austerity have negatively impacted the role local authorities can play in driving sport participation in England. Where clearer focus has been offered in policy, towards either elite or community sport by various party-led governments, the dichotomy of elite sport and grassroots participation is once again absolved as a singular policy attempts to tackle both issues within 'Sporting Future' (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015a).

Whilst encouraging the hosting of mega-events as an elite sport focus, Sporting Future also attempts to direct sport policy towards key performance outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development (Sport England, 2016). Despite austerity-led funding cuts, Parnell, Spracklen and Millward (2016) highlight an opportunity to influence community sport through the empowerment of third-sector organisations. However, the enabling of third-sector organisations has been restricted by sporting policy that aims to counter broader social issues as well as tackling physical inactivity (Grix et al., 2017).

Sport England's (2016) Towards an Active Nation strategy highlights a change in delivery policy initiated from Sporting Future. This is evident in the promotion of physical activity needs to harness expertise in under-represented groups through partnerships to deliver participation targets, recognising public value and an efficiency in maximising participation in physical activity with large funding cuts in mind (Walker and Hayton, 2017; Widdop et al., 2018). This efficiency of funding use manifested itself in Sport England strategy with the transformation of Sportivate into Satellite Clubs, which require 30 weeks of programme delivery, but similar amounts of funding to the 12-week delivery model of Sportivate (Sport England, 2017).

Nonetheless, the outcomes indicated in Sporting Future place importance on health and wellbeing outcomes which would be better served with incremental policy and strategic adaptations to drive sustainable participation in physical activity (Downward, 2018). This supports Hoeber et al.'s (2015) notion that delivery systems are better served with stealth-like changes to incite positive outcomes through community sport policy and strategy (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015a: Sport England, 2016). Snape and Curran (2017) highlight that Sporting Future's call to empower public authorities and third-sector groups appears ironically as funding cuts have had negative ramifications on their ability to deliver on the legacy of the Olympics. However, it is recognised that change was required as Gibson (2015) states that a 220,000 decrease in participation numbers in 2015 raised major cause for concern in a post-London 2012 review, highlighting the failures of leveraging the Olympics for sustainable participation. With this in mind, Sporting Future moved towards enabling participation through organisations rather than providing platforms for participation through the government (Kumar et al., 2019). Tacon and Hanson (2012) offer support for this as a review of other nation's models indicate that sustainable community physical activity is better fostered with an increase in the types of organisation who meet funding criteria. Therefore, Sport England (2016) focussed on meeting participation objectives as a key outcome rather than the types of organisation's attempting to deliver these objectives.

## 2.5   Austerity

Considering the role of the Big Society on Sport England's approaches to meeting participation objectives, austerity become became the justification for public sector spending cuts in the Coalition's economic and social policy (Levitas, 2012). Austerity refers to policies designed to reduce public deficits through budget cuts as opposed to tax increases (Stuckler et al., 2017). One of the reasons for this is due to the 4.9% increase in government spending under the Labour government between 2007-2010 (Reeves et al., 2013). Therefore, Grimshaw (2013) highlight how the newly elected Coalition government needed to reduce the nation's deficit through a radical reform of public services. Subsequently, in their Comprehensive Spending Review, the coalition government outlined £81 billion of funding cuts to government departments (Parnell, Spracklen and Millward, 2016). This radical reform is highlighted by Reeves et al (2013), indicating that the United Kingdom had the third biggest austerity

measures in Europe, while nations like Sweden, Poland and Germany all increased government spending between 2009-2011. However, in the context of community sport and physical activity sustainable participation has been severely limited through unsuccessful attempts to implement austerity measures in the United Kingdom (Widdop et al., 2018). Furthermore, with ambitious Olympic legacy targets failing to be met, Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2015a) swiftly acted to shift performance indicators towards more achievable targets for local sport and physical activity delivery. This action fell more in line with the Big Society's original agenda of charging local authorities with the administering of expenditure reduction (Audit Commission, 2011). However, as local authorities' staff suffered with wage freezes and job losses, severe restrictions were evident in delivering the Big Society agenda locally with austerity measures set from the national government (This is Money, 2012).

As part of this downturn for public policy in the United Kingdom, provisions for sport and physical activity were also going through considerable change (Mackintosh and Liddle, 2015). The importance of community intervention programmes cannot be understated in this, as Coalter (2013) specifies how there is a consistent correlation between lower participation in physical activity and austerity's impact on social structures like gender, education levels, age, and class. This coincides with Mackintosh and Liddle's (2015) notion that the intervention programmes emerging from the participation legacy of London 2012 were negatively impacted due to austerity's role on social structures. With the decrease in public spending, funding that supported school sport partnerships and school-community club relationships were curtailed, further adding to the detrimental impact on wider physical activity participation levels (Widdop et al., 2018). Subsequently, a tone was set for activity trends to further decrease as cuts to local authority services were predicted to run through to 2020 (Collins and Haudenhuyse, 2015). Thus, the impact of austerity measures administered through local level cuts and the Big Society agenda means any success in local organisations meeting delivery objectives after 2012 were already negated by the Coalition government (Widdop et al., 2018).

Lowndes and Pratchett (2011) drew attention to these local difficulties as national level cuts from a Coalition government had led to local government and services bearing a larger proportion of the damages brought about through austerity

measures. Support for this is highlighted by Parnell, Millward and Spracklen (2018) who highlighted how local authority providers have felt the burden of austerity. Furthermore, voluntary sport clubs have also felt the constraints created through spending cuts (Brown and Pappous, 2018). With public facilities having to raise booking fees, the burden felt by local authorities has also been transferred to the voluntary sport clubs needing to book local facilities for their delivery programmes (Gerard et al., 2020). This indicates how the role of local authorities and facility provision has severely limited the ability of local government in supporting sport participation (Parnell, Spracklen and Millward, 2017; Widdop et al., 2018). Parnell et al. (2019) go on to reflect upon the direct impact of austerity as it marginalised public sports facilities which now depend more on corporate funding to function. This is similar to how other public organisation likes governing bodies have struggled to meet long-term programme delivery targets during a period of austerity (Harris and Houlihan, 2016; Berry and Manoli, 2018). With the viability of organisations threatened by the Big Society initiative and austerity measures, local providers are also struggling to maintain services for sport and physical activity for society's most vulnerable groups (Evans, 2011; Widdop et al., 2018).

The sustaining of participation levels was also made more difficult due to austerities negative impact on social structures and access to physical activity for vulnerable groups (Coalter, 2013). This is supported by Widdop et al. (2018) who indicated that barriers to participation faced by groups from lower income groups were exacerbated through austerity. Ultimately, poverty restricts the opportunities individuals have to participate in leisurely activities like physical activity (Collins and Kay, 2014). Furthermore, Kokolakakis, Pappous and Meadows (2015) demonstrated how austerity had led to individuals weighing up whether participation in sport was worth the financial burden placed upon them. However, the issue faced of ever-increasing costs to the end-user and increased barriers to participation are not solely down to austerity with Coalter (1993) already highlighting the limitations to sustained activity caused by higher entrance charges at sports centres. Nonetheless, it is important to recognise that the privatising of public sector facilities resulting in price increases have created a customer community that often exhibits higher satisfaction when using a facility (King, 2014). This trend is similar to one highlighted by Ramchandani, Shibli and Kung (2018) who identified the change in public sport

facility management meant improvements in financial efficiency and customer satisfaction went hand in hand. Whilst the facility management change seems beneficial, attention is still drawn to strategic failure to ensure the implementation of sport policy reduced barrier to participation for vulnerable social structures (Coalter, 2013; Widdop et al., 2018).

Whilst these struggles have been well documented, it is also important to understand that Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2015a) had attempted to make a difference on front line delivery despite needing to maximise funding to explore options for efficient savings. Furthermore, Sport England (2016) continued this cost saving exercise by stressing the need for identifying opportunities for organisations to make long-term savings to the public purse. However, prior to Towards an Active Nation, questions had already been raised on the ability of organisations like NGBs and local clubs being able to deliver sport strategy with so many funding constraints placed upon them (Collins, 2010; Sport England, 2016). Nonetheless, the Big Society narrative of everyone taking responsibility is highlighted in Sporting Future as talks of substantial savings only being correct if government bodies and connected agencies could work towards them too (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015a). Since then, Sport England (2017) has been able to manifest this approach through Satellite Clubs, which provide funding for 30 weeks of programme delivery, as opposed to a similar amount of money awarded to organisations delivering 12 weeks of activity through Sportivate. As such, the funding landscape requires further discussion to ascertain whether sport policy in the United Kingdom is suitable when trying to meet sustainable participation legacies from London 2012 (Devine, 2013).

## 2.6 *Funding landscape*

Prior to describing the current funding landscape for community sport and physical activity participation, it is also important to recognise changes in approaches for administering funding for community sport in the United Kingdom. Houlihan (2016) identifies that a turning point for fulfilling participation legacies through mega-event hosting was the introduction of the National Lottery. Despite being pivotal in elite sport development, Green (2004) highlights an increase in activity at the regional and local levels of sports participation. However, McDonald (2000) emphasised that this is predominantly due to an alienating culture of elitist sentiment that negates the active

experience of participation while building on talent-driven attitudes within sport. This polarising view is supported by Evans (1995) who found that the National Lottery inception failed to build on sport and leisure promises for the new millennium as local authorities lacked awareness and co-ordination to build on this new stream of funding available to them. This was in fact forewarned by Handler (1987) who reflected upon the use of pseudo-events in modern day society. Upon review, this sentiment would not appear out of context in the evolution of funding landscapes for modern-day community sport with the implementation of policy and strategy through Sporting Future and Towards an Active Nation, respectively (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015a; Sport England, 2016).

Nonetheless, funding structures for delivering community sport in the United Kingdom have remained relatively stable since 2007 (Tacon and Hanson, 2012). One of the reasons for this is due to cross-party support within the government helped community sports initiatives during the late 1990s (Oakley and Green, 2001). This continued into the new millennium with a legacy policy movement that also received cross-party support (Bloyce and Smith, 2015). As National Lottery funding evolved with initiatives like the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's (2011) Places People Play, more emphasis was placed on facilities and volunteers in the promise to deliver legacy goals for London 2012 (Weed, 2016). Despite this, Bloyce and Smith (2015) specify that this supposedly new initiative was just a repackaged continuation of existing programmes. However, there is some merit in this notion as continuity in funding processes could be mechanism of successful policy delivery (McDonald, 2005). However, despite relative stability in the funding landscape, participation data would highlight a stagnation in activity figures suggesting this approach was unsuccessful in meeting retention targets for participation in physical activity (Jefferys, 2012).

One of the reasons offered for this states that rising costs for ancillary services for the Olympic Games led to Lottery income ringfenced for sport being top-sliced, compromising the strategy for physical activity sustainability (Collins, 2010). Bloyce and Smith (2010) highlight this transfer of government funds had already been reduced, causing an escalation in funding issues relating to the cost of London 2012. Strength for this argument is highlighted by Coalter (2007) who indicates that removing Lottery funding from existing community sport causes would severely

threaten the long-term outcomes of them. Furthermore, with limitations in funding available for community projects evident, the move to a sport-for-health model has also hindered the development of alternative strategies that do not address both elite and grassroots sport (Green, 2006). Harris and Houlihan (2016) identified that the funding landscape has been further restricted by the importance placed on the role of NGBs and CSPs/APs. Whilst they do play an important role in developing sustainable sports strategies, the move to focus NGB attention towards closer school links to enhance their elite sport strategy depicts the dual sporting policy approach some organisations were challenged with (Houlihan and White, 2002; Bloyce and Smith, 2010).

With this crossover between elite and community sporting ideals during a time of austerity, and NGB emphasis, Berry and Manoli (2018) found a challenge for organisations not meeting the strategic approach directed by government policy. Whilst partnership approaches to meet grant funding requirements were suggested, Berlin et al. (2007) point to the criticality of sustainability depending on diversifying funding revenues. This need is further exemplified by Collins (2010) who raised questions on the ability of NGB and clubs to deliver Sport England strategy with funding constraints. Furthermore, Renfree and Kohe (2019) note that NGB affiliation for Athletics clubs has resulted in a loss of organisation identity, adding to the issues stemming from NGB-club relationship governance. To combat this, Whitley, Forneris and Barker (2015) propose that organisations should build community-based relationships, as well as with funding agencies, to establish avenues for diversified funding. Strength in this approach is displayed by Vos et al. (2011) in the reduction of resource dependency from single sources in Belgium. With the United Kingdom not learning from failures in participation sustainability from previous Olympics by other nations, lessons of success from other nations could heed greater triumph. Parnell et al. (2019) support this by highlighting a managerially sound organisation being defined by engagement in novel funding streams and multi-sectoral social enterprise. However, Froelich (1999) does indicate that  some degree of caution should be used when targeting diversified funding streams as an increase in partnerships can cause a risk in meeting collaborative objectives whilst retaining a sense of organisational autonomy.

As such, the Towards and Active Nation strategy, proposes objectives to meet Government outcomes including diversifying revenue streams and developing wider networks of partnerships (Sport England, 2016). This resource shift negated the call for local authorities to have the greater fiscal and policy support that Collins (2010) encouraged. Subsequently, Parnell et al. (2019) evaluate that organisations who relied on local authority resources have exhibited higher costs in utilising the resources obtained. Because of this, the dependency on local authority resources has waned. Harris and Houlihan (2016) conclude that this reduction in local authority resources is due to favour in utilising NGB-CSP/AP partnerships. As CSPs/APs have grown, the increase in local strategic partnerships proposed by Sport England (2016) indicates strength in Collins' (2010) evaluation of a sport-for-good mode of wider social outcomes. Nonetheless, this seems necessary with the curtailing of central government funding for local authorities, as an increase in responsibility for community-based organisations suggests prolongation of the government-led Big Society ideal (Evans, 2011). This is despite Civil Exchange (2015) gauging that Big Society encouraged lopsided partnerships between organisations across the private and social sector.

## 2.7 Sportivate

Sportivate was launched in April 2011 with national funding of £56 million over 6 years until March 2017. The investment came from National Lottery funding through Sport England and was delivered via 45 CSPs/APs across the country (CSP Network, 2016). Sportivate was one of Sport England's flagship funding programmes which was aimed at reducing inactivity amongst young people. Initially, the programme was established to target inactive 14-25 year olds, however this expanded to 11-25 year olds from 2013 in line with specifications for who makes up the young persons demographic (Sport England, n.d). Sport England identified 4 key target groups by steering CSPs/APs focus towards inactive young people aged 11-25, women and girls, young people aged 19-25, and disabled young people.

By focussing on these traditionally hard-to-engage groups, programmes like Sportivate aimed to fulfil a responsibility in actively seeking to address participation issues. Support for this notion is offered by highlighting the importance of factors like age, in order to create a more targeted and sustainable approach to increasing participation levels (Seefeldt, Malina and Clark, 2002). Interestingly, the allowance of non-VSOs to apply for funding to run programmes is synonymous with efforts in

Belgium to stimulate effective participation interventions amongst difficult-to-engage target groups in sports (Theeboom, Haudenhuyse and De Knop 2010). As has been successful in other nations, an increase in the types of organisations who meet funding criteria can help develop sustainable measures of community physical activity interventions in the United Kingdom (Tacon and Hanson, 2012). As such, Sportivate guidelines adopted an approach that allowed multiple organisation types to apply for the funding (CSP Network, 2016).

Sportivate was delivered to reflect a national framework from the former Coalition government's Big Society scheme in the United Kingdom (Cabinet Office, 2010). From this, there was a localised focus through the filtering down of responsibility to CSPs/APs that channel funding, oversee applications, monitor progress and ensure the impact of sustainable programmes. Through these methods defined by London Sport (2015), CSPs/APs endeavoured to match and generate new demand for sport and physical activity. An example of this is apparent in the drive towards working with the This Girl Can campaign from Sport England as Active Norfolk launched a marketing campaign prior to accepting applications specifically centred around female-specific activity (Sport Structures, 2015b). To supplement participation demand, CSP/AP groups encouraged applicants to work closely with local providers in order to increase the usage of local facilities. Furthermore, in order to ensure the programme is sustainable, all funded projects were required to establish close relationships with NGB affiliated community sports clubs. The final outcome was of particular importance within Sportivate as NGBs are capable of delivering a wide number of projects for a range of 11-25 year olds. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, these intervention programmes provided clearly signposted exit routes for sustained sporting activity beyond weekly programmes for individuals participating in a Sportivate project (Living Sport, 2013).

Sport England (2014) produced the Youth Insight Pack to gain a greater understanding into the challenges that are faced with growing youth sport. The initial report suggested that in recent years the number of 16-25 year olds taking part in sport had somewhat plateaued. However, one cause for concern was that the rate of participation had declined over the same period of time. It is programmes like Sportivate that were designed to help stop this decrease in the rate of sports participation (Chen and Henry, 2016). By specifically targeting inactive participants and identifying those aged 19-25 as one of its key target groups, the programme aimed

to decrease the number of individuals dropping out of sport upon leaving school. However, this contradicts Telama et al. (2006) who noted that this withdrawal from activity is due to a lack of participation at an earlier age which acts as a prerequisite for the amount of physical activity individuals take part in at a later age. Furthermore, this presents a risk as any planned initiatives ought to consider the impact on existing users to ensure they are not lost from physical activity participation (Kokolakakis, Pappous and Meadows, 2015). The decrease identified is not a particularly new trend given prior research from Sport England (2003) which recognised a 3% decrease in the amount of young people taking part in extra-curricular sport from 1999 to 2002. Even more concerning from the same research was the identification of a 3% increase in young people who took part in no extra-curricular sporting activity whatsoever. Furthermore, there was another 3% decrease in the membership of sports clubs in this same period of time.

With Sport England (2003) highlighting a 3% decrease in young people taking part in extra-curricular sport, the need of Sportivate's application criteria to address accessibility and organisation ability to deliver each project was emphasised. Both factors have been found as key reasons for lapses in sport and physical activity participation (Goretzki and Esser, 2008). Additionally, Sport England (2014) found a 3% increase in young people not doing any extra-curricular sport. This again highlights how London Sport (2015) address this through the targeting of inactive participants for organisations to have their funding applications accepted. Furthermore, London Sport (2015) also emphasised the lack of variety in types of physical activity offered in local areas as a key reason for why young people were not participating in extra-curricular sport. Bocarro et al. (2008) recognised this by emphasising that variety, and not volume, of activity was key for sustainable participation targets to be met through intervention programmes. It was suggested that young people were more likely to participate in sport and physical activity for longer if they had a greater choice available. The time spent in youth sport was identified as a pivotal variable in explaining adult participation in sport, a notion which had prior support from Telama et al. (2006).

It is based on these findings that Sport England decided to expand the minimum age participant criteria for Sportivate projects from 13 years old to 11 years old. Finally, with Sport England (2003) highlighting a 3% decrease in membership of

sports clubs, a clear issue of signposting individuals to sustainable exit routes arises. Sportivate highlights this by emphasising this is a vital aspect of any successful intervention programme (London Sport, 2015). A case study by Sport Structures (2015a) on sustainability through Sportivate programmes identified four key approaches that had to be included within each application; investment in exit routes like continued activity or alternative sessions, investment in club memberships, developing relationships with delivers of sport and physical activity, and the use of local insight to understand community demands for physical activity provisions (Misener and Doherty, 2012; Living Sport, 2013).

Further reports from Sport Structures (2015b) showcased the performance of Sportivate with Year 4 of the programme reaching 176,200 individuals between 11-25 years of age in a total of 11,596 projects. From this total a retention rate of 83.3% was met, however issues were raised in the difficulty of monitoring attendance as double-counting participants was a likely issue to occur. Nonetheless, with Sportivate focusing on 19-25 years old as a key age bracket of targeting participants, increases were evident from the programme's inception to Year 4. Whilst this steers away from the need for increasing participation in younger age groups stated by Telama et al. (2006), the area of focus was successfully met as displayed in Table 1. For Sportivate, this was a key outcome as it evidenced meeting needs to tackle the lack of physical activity amongst individuals no longer accessing state-funded school sports participation. This is also presented in Table 1 as a clear decrease in completed participants is visible for the 14-16 age category. It is difficult to draw comparisons from the 11-13 age category as the expansion to include these ages only occurred in 2013, after two years of the programme had been completed (Sport England, n.d.).

Table 1: Yearly age comparison in percentage of completed participants from Sportivate: Year 1 to Year 4

| Age | Year 1 (2011-2012) | Year 2 (2012-2013) | Year 3 (2013-2014) | Year 4 (2014-2015) | Total 2011-2015) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11-13 | n/a | n/a | 15.2% | 22.9% | 11.3% |
| 14-16 | 58.5% | 56.9% | 42.7% | 32.6% | 45.7% |
| 17-18 | 19.3% | 19.9% | 20.3% | 18.9% | 19.6% |
| 19-21 | 11.9% | 12.9% | 12.0% | 13.8% | 12.7% |
| 22-25 | 10.3% | 10.3% | 9.8% | 11.8% | 10.6% |

Sport Structures (2015a, p.20)

Another key component of Sport Structure's (2015b) evaluation of participation figures presented the sustainability impact of the community intervention programmes delivered through Sportivate. As Table 2 displays, the number of participants retained in sport has decreased in Year 4 by 2.3%, however this change in number is relatively minimal over the four years. Sport Structures (2015b) highlighted from qualitative feedback that the project ending was a key reason for why participants were no longer taking part in the activity. This highlights that the ceasing of intervention programmes is a key reason behind why sustainable outcomes have struggled (Pluye, Potvin and Denis, 2004). Ultimately this raises concerns for Sport England due to their priority in Sportivate projects being able to signpost exit routes for continued provisions of sport for participants following the project completion.

Table 2: Sustainability measure of participants still taking part in sport 3 months after Sportivate programme completion

| Still participating? | Year 1 (2011-2012) | Year 2 (2012-2013) | Year 3 (2013-2014) | Year 4 (2014-2015) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 88.9% | 86.7% | 88.6% | 86.3% |
| No | 11.1% | 13.1% | 11.4% | 13.7% |

Based on a sample of 1,823 participants (Sport Structures, 2015a, p.39)

This is also concerning for the programme as Sportivate was designed to encourage young people to become more active by way of implementing a sports participation legacy post-London 2012 (Thomas, Brittain and Jones, 2017). For London specifically, these issues continued with cumulative sustainability measures resulting in the area having the third lowest sustainable rates for nine geographic areas within Sport England's remit (Sport Structures, 2017). With this in mind, Sportivate will now be discussed in the context of how policy implementation intended to ignite a sustainable legacy of sports participation after the London 2010 Olympic Games.

## 2.8    Legacy

The strategy of leveraging events like the Olympics aims to expand its long-term output by involving necessary stakeholders in advancing community-based outcomes (Chalip, 2018). With the bid for London 2012, Bloyce and Smith (2010) recognised that ambitious sustainability legacies were promised for after the Games. In concurrence, Reis et al. (2017) specified how government policy outlined long-term outcomes through models of sport participation for a sustainable legacy after London 2012. Kelso (2010) indicated that the Places People Play strategy arose as part of a mass participation legacy for London 2012. Within this strategy emphasis was drawn towards developing and maintaining new and old facilities, alongside encouraging a volunteer recruitment programme (Gratton, Taylor and Rowe, 2013). Furthermore, Sportivate played a specific role as an intervention programme designed to encourage inactive young people towards a lifestyle of sport and physical activity (Thomas, Brittain and Jones, 2018).

However, Bloyce and Smith (2010) also highlighted how plans for London 2012 may have overstated the legacy promises, a mistake that has occurred for past Olympic Games. Additionally, Preuss (2007) indicated a need to understand the difference between outcomes relating to legacy (long-term) and impact (short-term). Nonetheless, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2007) highlighted key areas of regenerating communities through a sports participation legacy for the Olympics in London.

One of the ways the London 2012 organising committee intended to achieve this was through the creation of sports facilities that can influence behaviour changes amongst inactive local community members (Schwarz et al., 2017). Sportivate would

play a pivotal part of this as new demand for activity requires organisations to work with local venues to facilitate an increase in participation through intervention programmes (London Sport, 2015). However, with Bloyce and Smith (2010) highlighting previous Olympic Games' overstated ambitions for legacy (Sydney 2000, Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008), using programmes like Places People Play and Sportivate alluded to similar failures of previous Games (Bauman, Murphy and Matsudo, 2013). Learning from the mistakes of other nations is crucial as it is apparent that not having enough adequate facilities is a key factor behind reduced engagement for youth in physical activity globally (Theeboom, Haudenhuyse and De Knop, 2010). However, even with an increase in the availability of facilities, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2011) quickly reduced the lofty participation targets originally set for London 2012 legacy. It seems that despite appearing to address issues from previous Olympic Games through programmes like Sportivate, heightened ambitions were quickly dissipated as strategies for sustainable participation were deemed too unrealistic (Bauman, Murphy and Matsudo, 2013).

Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2019) indicated that one of the key reasons for this stems from the difficulty for organising committees to deliver sustainable legacies due to the temporal nature of delivering the Games itself. However, the very premise of London being awarded the 2012 Olympics was born from the ambitious promise of using the Olympics and Paralympics for economic and social benefits across the United Kingdom (Weed 2010; Weed 2016). As part of the pan-party government policy to support the delivery of London 2012, the implementation of community sport policy was predominantly mediated by the London Council for Sport and Recreation (Houlihan, 2016). Nonetheless, the concept of legacy becomes difficult to define due to the multiple categories of legacy identified by the International Olympic Committee (2012); economic, environmental, social, sport development and urban. Due to multiple areas of legacy being identified, whether tangible or intangible, the benefits remain difficult to measure due to the complex nature of the legacy concept (Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou, 2019). Despite these difficulties, social impact can still be assessed as improvements in nearby sports facilities are a key component of driving behavioural change, particularly amongst an inactive population (Preuss, 2007).

Because of this social impact, Girginov (2011) highlights the need for local strategies to inform the sustainable principles for national policy, rather than a top-

down approach promoting ill-informed legacy targets and measures. With a top-down approach, legacy opportunities can be limited as focus on short-term impact replaces a well thought out sustainable vision for hosting the Olympics (Toohey, 2008). This poses an issue for the concept of legacy and subsequent intervention that emerges from this. Whilst on one hand there is a reliance upon local organisations to implement policy through programme delivery, a lack of input into the policymaking process suggests a missed opportunity for programmes like Sportivate to tackle the issues specific to London and the United Kingdom. Henry (2016) indicates one of the key post-Olympic reasons for this to be the lack of consistent evaluation measures from either top-down or bottom-up data collection processes. In some instances, Henry (2016) highlighted that national data from Sport England could differ in its data collected from local data collection pools through deliverers of intervention programmes. This once again supports the point of Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2019), that measuring the concept of legacy for sports participation outcomes remains a difficult process to conduct.

Some researchers differ in the approach to measure sustainable participation as an outcome of hosting a sporting mega-event like the Olympic Games. The process of evaluation taken by national bodies often skewed data, with limitations for reporting on younger populations, defying the 'inspire a generation' tagline of London 2012 (Henry, 2016). To combat this, Sport England (2016) devised Active Lives as a new data collection tool, which Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2019) describe as an important tailored and sport-specific support mechanism for measurement purposes. Support for this is offered by Girginov and Hills (2008) who had earlier indicated a need to recognise individual sports and communities for an improvement on the earlier utilised Active Peoples Survey.

Despite Girginov's (2008) notion that mass participation legacies must inspire and engage people through a process of learning and creation, social wellbeing evaluations must adhere to principles specific to the target community. Weed et al. (2009) understood this by describing various processes needed to raise effective participation strategies for communities with diverse characteristics. They added that hosting mega-events does not provide an automatic solution to increase sports participation. As a consequence of applying this principle, false attributions for sustainable participation legacies being met through event-hosting can occur

(Ramchandani, Coleman and Christy, 2019). This again highlights the need for sustainable participation legacies to be formed from a synthesis of top-down governance and bottom-up local strategy and evaluation (Girginov, 2011). Furthermore, host cities must address wider legacy issues, which when not appropriately strategized can result in a missed opportunity to increase and sustain physical activity levels (Weed et al., 2015). To aid the planning and delivery of legacy principles, cross-sectoral partnerships have been suggested to yield the desired mass participation effect from hosting the Olympic Games (Bauman, Murphy and Matsudo, 2013).

## 2.9    Community sport participation

Across England, decreasing trends in community sports and physical activity have been particularly prevalent amongst those aged between the years of 16 and 25 suggesting a post-school dropout of participation (Sport England, 2014). This coincides with the viewpoint of focussing on the 14-25 age range in order to decrease the participation dropout from those aged 25 years and above. Telama et al. (2006) noted that this withdrawal from activity is due to a lack of participation at an earlier age which acts as a prerequisite for the amount of physical activity individuals participate in at a later age. These sentiments were resonated by Tammelin et al. (2003), however they denoted that variety of sport was the main factor in determining physical inactivity in later life. This had support from Bocarro et al. (2008) who also emphasised the importance of sporting variety as a participation determinant. Much of this research has been acknowledged through the UK government's 2015 sport policy, Sporting Future (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2015a), which highlights the need to focus on younger age groups in order to increase participation at a later age.

Within the issue of age groups, Rowe (2012) identified that the inactivity of individuals is greater amongst females than males with only one-third of females participating in sport at the age of 18 compared to two-thirds of males. Woods (2016) amplified these findings by highlighting that girls often started participating in sport at a later age and dropped out sooner, extending upon the sentiments of Telama et al. (2006). However, Woods (2016) also found that females were more likely to participate in a wider range of sporting activities, whilst males tended to stick to more traditional sports. This negates the points raised by Tammelin et al. (2003) and Bocarro

et al. (2008) suggesting greater measures need to be considered in order to increase female participation in sport.

An issue presented for community sport delivery highlights the need for innovation amongst a crowded market of organisations (Baregheh, Rowley and Sambrook, 2009). However, it is also important to highlight the process of innovation, with operational components of delivery and incremental changes inciting more positive intervention programme strategies amongst community sports organisations (Hoeber et al., 2015). Additionally, Weed (2017) highlights that a key aspect of community sport delivery manifesting long-term post-Olympic participation is realising that inspiration through elite sport may not be demonstrable. This is particularly the case when targeting inactive young people who make up a hard-to-reach segment group and may not be inspired by a universal appeal to increase physical activity. Hoeber et al.'s (2015) idea of incremental innovations could therefore appeal as it allows organisations to develop strategies directed towards specific segments in a complex community environment (Campbell et al., 2007). This builds on the sustainability tools highlighted to aid the implementation of models designed to support community and state services helping delivery intervention programmes (Johnson et al., 2004).

The justification for using the Olympic Games for mass-participation sustainability objectives stems from the impact it can have on community sport participation if leveraged appropriately for host nations (Weed et al., 2015). As Sportivate manifested itself as one of those delivery tools, recognition towards intervention programme characteristics must also be considered. Glasgow, Lichtenstein and Marcus (2003) recognise this by analysing the direction of research on intervention programmes and highlighted the need to assess intervention agents implementing programmes within the community sport matrix. However, shifts in the components that make up this matrix have meant that ambitious sustainability efforts require support from top-level government and multi-agency approaches through years of strategic planning (Bauman, Murphy and Matsudo, 2013). This complexity is further amplified by Harris and Houlihan (2014) who stated the need for more cohesive and effective systems supporting regionally directed programmes. An example of this is offered by Anokye et al. (2018) who found that within the London Borough of Hounslow, community-focussed initiatives can have the desired long-term

physical activity impact through less intensive sports sessions. The success of this project highlights how community sport delivery systems should make function as the local community mandates (Phillips and Green, 2015).

## 2.10 Influences on sustainability

### 2.10.1 Organisation type

The nature of grassroots delivery and the current funding landscape dictated by sport policy means multiple sectors and organisations are involved in the delivery of community sport and physical activity (Tacon and Hanson, 2012). This offers support to the sector model of society showcased by Hoye et al. (2018), which expanded on the three-sector model of sport that includes the public, professional and non-profit sectors.

Figure 5: Sector model of society
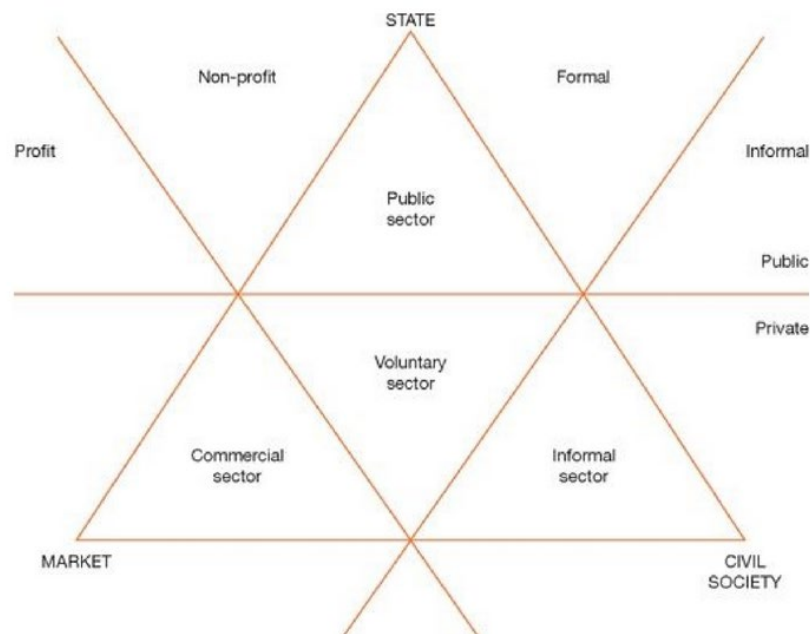


Hoye et al. (2018, p.17)

To understand the role of the various sectors, the stakeholders within these sectors must also be considered, leading to key responsibilities being identified for delivery organisations who sit within the structure of sport (Tacon and Hanson, 2012).

Table 3: Delivery organisations in the structure of sport with responsibilities, status and scope

| Organisation | Responsibility | Status | Scope |
|---|---|---|---|
| Government | - Policy set by Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (formerly DCMS), and implemented by devolved national organisations<br>- Other departments set broader policy context for areas sport has role to play | Governmental | National |
| Sport England | - Sport council that delivers on government sports policy outside of elite sport. | Non-departmental public body | National |
| NGBs | - Set rules and govern them via competitions and frameworks for individual sports.<br>- Clubs, leagues and participants affiliate with regional level groups that feed into the respective NGB.<br>- Receive funding to improve participation and performance in their sport. | Various legal forms – usually public bodies | National (regional for RGBs) |
| Local authorities | - Responsible for key services in their geographical remit.<br>- Traditionally seen as a significant investor for sport in sport and recreation for their area. | Local government | Regional or Local |
| CSPs/APs | - Bring together sport bodies in regions to drive sport and physical activity participation.<br>- Receive central funding from Sport England | Various legal forms – usually non-governmental department body | Regional |

Based on Tacon and Hanson (2012, p.57)

The understanding of key stakeholders in sport delivery also has traction with Amis and Slack (2016). However, they also highlighted an important differentiation between organisations that run with deterministic managers or those with more voluntarist tendencies. With thoughts to cross-sectoral and multi-organisation delivery in sport and physical activity, Collins (2016) highlights how Sport England appreciates the need to cut across sectors to fuse partnerships via CSPs/APs. However, organisations like VSOs and charities, who also sit at the base of Harris and Houlihan's

(2014) policy implementation model, operate for development through sport ideals, rather than the development of sport like other organisations (Giulianotti and Darnell, 2016). Brown and Pappous (2018) indicate this by highlighting the challenging aspect of national disability sport organisations and their partnerships between NGBs and CSPs/APs. Further consideration for VSOs and charities stems from Skille and Stenling (2017) who state the importance of understanding club-level policy implementation. Part of this understanding critiques the top-down model displayed in the current funding landscape for community sport and suggest greater strength in O'Gorman's (2011) calls for a more synthesised policy implementation approach. Further support for this is displayed by the importance of facilitating government directives through VSOs who need their capacity building processes ensured (Harris and Schlappa, 2008; Millar and Doherty, 2016).

Despite calls to increase the intermediary role of VSOs, the reduction in funding has severely impacted the ability of local authorities to offer the targeted services driven through government policy (Widdop et al., 2018). However, Kokolakakis, Lera-Lopez and Castellanos (2014) emphasise the struggle in assessing the role of local authorities due to the multiple variables that have affected organisations when attempting to deliver sustainable community intervention programmes. Furthermore, Feehan and Forrest (2007) indicate that the policy shift away from local authority dependence has been a cause in the regressive grant application processes that fund community and youth projects. Charlton (2010) though, suggests the role of project officers could now sit beyond local authorities as other local groups work towards common sustainability targets. Subsequently, Harris and Houlihan (2016) determine that this sub-regional network sits between CSPs/APs who operate with the specific NGB models that guide a partnership when striving to create recreational opportunities within sport and physical activity. Renfree and Kohe (2019) indicate struggles for this within Athletics as grassroots clubs have noted conflict towards the sport's model of elite and mass participation focus.

Beyond those who sit within the non-profit and public sectors, Giulianotti and Darnell (2016) point to the role of the private sector who supplement sustainable participation through wider corporate social responsibility objectives. Bingham and Walters (2013) support this by indicating that football community trust partnerships have attracted commercial income to increase organisational capacity and, ultimately,

sustainable grassroots participation. Alternatively, from the charity-private relationships, Kesenne (2006) refers to the effectiveness of how public-private sector partnerships can support participation sustainability through the installation and maintenance of sports facilities. Nonetheless, this effectiveness has only been circumstantial because of an increased reliance placed upon the private sector due to funding cuts through austerity measures (Parnell et al., 2019). With a lack of funding available, many sporting organisations have inadequate capacity to run facilities, and therefore, pressure is placed on them to seek external sources of funding (Kenyon, Mason and Rookwood, 2018). This suggests a requirement in understanding the role of organisational capacity, and its complexities, alongside the effects of austerity and the favour towards CSPs/APs collaboration with NGBs (Amis and Slack, 2016; Harris and Houlihan, 2016; Brown and Pappous, 2018; Parnell et al., 2019).

### 2.10.2 Staff capacity

Multiple factors can have an influence on an organisation's capacity to meet objectives across many industries and the same can be said for the theoretical framework's application in community sport delivery (Doherty, Misener and Cuskelly, 2014). Whilst financial capacity is important to consider for revenue diversification, Millar and Doherty (2016) identify that staff capacity offers a more critical outlook on the major concerns faced by community sport organisations. Support for this comes from Hoeber et al. (2015) who identified organisational capacity as a vital aspect of delivering innovative programmes through strong partnerships. However, as Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) identify multiple layers within the sustainability factor of capacity, importance is placed on knowledge as a staff-capacity building concept. Because of this, Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2017) specify that the training of volunteers and coaches at the delivery level of organisations should be a critical component of leveraging strategies steered towards a participation legacy post-London 2012.

By understanding capacity as a concept that individuals, as well as organisations, can expand, Rowe et al. (2013) highlight the need for appropriate leadership to increase capacity to meet delivery objectives. However, the appointment of programme leaders is also linked to the strategic direction of an organisation within a complex community environment (Campbell et al., 2007; Hoeber et al., 2015). In extension of this, Johnson et al. (2004) indicate that essential skills for champions of

programme innovation include strategizing and building capacity. This points to the complexity of understanding capacity as a construct, and strengthens the idea of multiple factors being present in the theoretical application of staff capacity as a variable influencing sustainability (Doherty, Misener and Cuskelly, 2014).

The complexity of capacity as a resource for organisations deepens further due to Warner and Sullivan (2004) warning that increasing capacity as leverage for smaller organisations to develop partnerships could result in a loss of programme control. This could result in a reduction of innovation characteristics, which implies that capacity-building through partnerships cannot tackle issues of resource dependency alone (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). In turn, Miller and Rose (2008) state that the struggle for resources has forced organisations into resource-sharing partnerships which is indicative of a culture set by government policy.

Furthermore, Harris and Houlihan (2016) extend the capacity complex to organisation types, with CSPs/APs being described as not having the resource capacity to make the difference required in the NGB-CSP/AP strategic approach. Reasons for this highlight how CSPs/APs must balance regional priorities whilst maintaining NGB/RGB support for the implementation of sport policy and strategy (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). However, Girginov, Peshin and Belousov (2017) suggest that most research, with regards to organisational capacity, has been conducted on voluntary or community groups. Perhaps this is why calls for stronger third-sector partnerships have been cited as a response needed to combat struggles in resources and capacity (Larkin, Richardson and Tabreman, 2012; Parnell et al., 2015). Despite this, Harris and Houlihan (2016) highlight that NGBs also require more employees, suggesting issues of staff capacity influencing sustainable participation across various types of organisations. Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) also emphasise this by specifying that processes of funding should look at the allocation of additional funding towards resourcing and staffing.

### 2.10.3 Staff roles

In relation to sustainability, increasing the allocation of funding towards staff capacity is not the only aspect of staff within organisations worth considering. Hoeber et al. (2015) highlight the idea of programme champions influencing staff capacity, but Forde et al. (2015) indicate that the positive role of staff as programme champions

could deter from challenges encountered towards programme participation. Within the context of community intervention programmes, appreciation must be awarded to the individual roles of staff, the different types of organisations they work for, and the sectors within which they fit. Considering these factors, Skinner and Stewart (2017) direct the success of meeting organisational objectives down to the fulfilment of staff potential, whether paid or voluntary. This pre-delivery potential has support from post-programme success as Scheirer (2005) noted that staff members perceived benefits of informal evaluations on community intervention programmes. This suggests that staff roles offer influence on how planning and evaluating programmes can be affected through the implementation of sustainable programmes.

Much like elements of organisation types and staff capacity, staff roles also require appropriate leaderships to support the delivery of community-related objectives and yet still ensure organisational objectives are met (Rowe et al., 2013). This is particularly important for the governance of delivery organisations as the fostering of collaborative relations, internal and external, specifies the impact of staff roles and effective leaders (O'Boyle and Shilbury, 2016). Support for this is offered by Zakocs and Edwards (2006) who indicate that appropriate leadership roles are a key aspect of organisation functionality. However, caution is erred when considering where this appropriate leadership sits within an organisation. Hoye and Cuskelly (2003) identify that organisational leadership can be dually held by a team of the CEO, Board Chair and a few senior Board Members. Strength in this case is offered by Shilbury and Ferkins (2011) who stressed the CEO-Board dynamics as crucial in enhancing strategic objectives, which also coincides with Zakocs and Edwards (2006) highlighting of board cohesion as an important leadership role. Despite this, specific characteristic traits for role suitability have been highlighted as some CEOs must display resolute commitment to the overall mission of the organisation and ensure their team do not resort to short-term fund-chasing (Walker and Hayton, 2017). However, with regards to programme facilitation, Casey et al. (2009a) indicate that CEOs as programme champions are still largely reliant on Board support, offering a return to CEO-Board duality being fundamental to how staff roles and leadership can affect sustainability (Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011).

Contrastingly, some argument has been raised that sport for development requires an element of ground-level empowerment, meaning project officers must lead

and assist participants from the outset with their project vision (Rosso and McGrath, 2017). The role of project or development officers has changed with the current funding landscape. Charlton (2010) suggests that their role could sit beyond local authorities, further displaying an interaction of how the type of organisation could influence sustainability factors. Further strength is offered by Harris and Houlihan (2016) who found that the role of officers, that now seemed beyond local authorities, ought to sit in a sub-regional network between CSPs/APs and NGBs. Despite the emphasis placed on the role of project or development officers, Casey et al. (2009a) highlighted that programme champions could just be individuals that are the most influential in supporting community participation rather than specific staff role fulfilment. This suggests that staff roles, whilst specific, may not be consistent in which role has the greatest impact on the sustainability of community intervention programmes.

The notion of influential individuals and characters leads to the importance of delivery level staff who have the most interaction with participants of programmes. Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2017) postulate that the training of volunteers and coaches should be a critical component of leveraging sustainable participation strategies post-London 2012. Support for this is evident from Eime, Pyne and Harvey (2009) who present the notion that programme opportunities and coach development have a positive impact on the long-term involvement of children in sports. Furthermore, when considering the role of coaches in youth development intervention programmes, coach autonomy and interactivity significantly predicted positive outcomes (Amorose et al., 2016; Newman, Anderson-Butcher and Amorose, 2018). This importance of coaches is further exemplified as the ground-level delivery staff offer the first and last interaction with participants, which has an impact on whether they continue to participate in an intervention programme (Orr et al., 2018). Nonetheless, considering the various staff roles and issues surrounding capacity and multi-sector involvement in sustainability targets, the success of organisations requires clear leadership to negotiate staff issues and achieve optimal performance (Frisby and Kikulis, 1996).

### 2.10.4 Staff turnover
Whilst considering organisation type, capacity and roles as important influencers of sustainability, ideas of staff turnover also feature as a stimulus effecting long-term

participation in physical activity. As organisations have been shown to face increased competitivity in seeking funding sources, a manner of obtaining strategic advantage is through the development and retention of high-calibre staff members (Taylor, Doherty and McGraw, 2015). This is particularly the case as Sridharan et al. (2007) find struggling community initiatives often fail to consider staff turnover as a factor of influence for sustainability. Pfahl (2010) strengthens this point by highlighting that developing competencies amongst individuals is vital for staff development and the retention of a sustainable team working on delivering sustainable programmes. By using staff education programmes, Mancini and Marek (2004) point to staff longevity, which when harmonised with programme fit can increase the likelihood of sustainable intervention programme outcomes being achieved.

However, it is not just staff education and development that acts as a precursor for staff turnover influencing the sustainability objectives of community intervention programmes. Casey et al. (2009b) state how increased staff turnover results in the implementation of programmes being slowed down. Because of this, Scheirer (2005) refers to the negative impact that an increase in staff turnover can have on an organisation's delivery of sustainable health-related programmes. Furthermore, Casey et al. (2009b) indicate that staff turnover means organisations are required to employ new staff that must quickly become acquainted with the existing programmes and partnerships helping deliver them. The link between staff turnover and collaborations is also raised by Leenaars et al. (2015) who found that reducing the impact of staff turnover can increase partnership functionality. Subsequently, Jones et al. (2018) found that partnerships revolve around value, and staff turnover decreases partnership value as staff familiarity and commitment may have to start at base-point zero once again.

Further research highlights how organisations can reduce the impact of staff turnover at partner organisations, which Casey et al. (2009b) indicate requires engaging multiple people within an organisation. This point is strengthened by Glisson et al. (2008) who highlight that a lack of staff engagement can result in limited staff functionality and a high-stress climate, all caused by high staff turnover. Furthermore, extra caution should be raised for the damaging impact of staff turnover as the success of sustainable participation programmes can be undone very quickly with a lack of staff retention (Blase et al., 2010).

Because of this Johnson et al. (2004) emphasise how essential it is that appropriate staff expertise is sustained for the continued innovation, fidelity and maintenance of programmes. However, this does present a risk as Jones et al. (2018) find some organisations seek to hire external, but well-qualified individuals rather than allocating financial resources towards the internal development of delivery level staff (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). Furthermore, Svensson and Hambrick (2016) showcase how inadequate funding allocation can negatively impact an organisations ability to implement appropriate staff recruitment and retention strategies. This highlights how multiple factors can affect sustainability, particularly as ill-informed capacity-building strategies can damage staff longevity, and in-turn the delivery of sustainable community intervention programmes (Johnson et al., 2004).

Svensson and Hambrick (2016) assert that the influence of staff turnover on sustainability factors can present a dilemma in that the recruitment of new staff would reduce capacity constraints, but still require training commitments to ensure the implementation of their work was compatible with overall organisational objectives. This scenario is also highlighted by Edwards (2015) who indicates that community sport organisations suffer as the development of important staff skills can be undermined if the contribution to human capital is not supplemented with adequate development opportunities. Much like the delivery of a programme having multiple components, so do internal interactions, with multiple levels within an organisation being subject to staff turnover issues that arise (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). Thus, indications are offered towards the length of time an individual has spent within a specific role being a measure that may influence factors relevant to sustainability (Casey et al., 2009b).

### 2.11   *Theoretical framework*

Industry perspectives have offered calls for expanding on research to increase the understanding of sustainability factors influencing community intervention programmes (Sport England, 2016). This has also been the case from an academic standpoint too, as Harris and Houlihan (2016) highlight the challenges of resource dependency and collaborative strategic or delivery processes for sport policy implementation. Houlihan (2016) identified that sport policy has adapted rapidly, creating a need for researching the ramifications policy directs towards the sustainability of community sport. Support for this comes from Bloyce and Smith

(2010) who specified a need for research on specific programmes devised through the development of sport policy. Nonetheless, despite an understanding of top-down policy creation from the government, Grix and Phillpots (2011) indicate that research must recognise the role of other key stakeholders as part of the implementation of policy. Support for this is confirmed by Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2017) who also highlight the role of other key stakeholders and researching perceptions through exploratory research on the multiple constructs addressing the sustainability of participation legacies. However, existing research adopting policy implementation theory has struggled to fuse top-down and bottom-up processes into a synthesised approach due to constraints with the scope of research required (O'Toole, 2000).

By considering the role of implementors in the research process, an appreciation must also be offered to the difficulties of how programmes like Sportivate present a missed opportunity in tackling issues of sustainable participation in London. A lack of consistent data-collection and evaluation processes means that measuring sustainability as part of a wider legacy-remit post-London 2012 has remained difficult to conduct (Henry, 2016; Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou, 2019). To overcome this challenge, Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) indicate that information generated from researching specific intervention programmes can expand knowledge of sustainability factors that have yet to be comprehensively explored. However, weaknesses in Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) highlight a need to focus research on sustainability to individual fields rather than casting broad nets over various organisations within multiple industries. This highlights how subsequent research on sustainability should be industry-specific in order to address the influences on sustainability that split across four spectrums: innovation, context, capacity, and processes and interactions. As themes of sustainability continue to be understood through exploratory processes, research can be used to confirm the interrelated nature of sustainability factors (Johnson et al., 2004). Support for this framework is addressed by Scheirer (2005) who highlights the need for sustainability research to focus on the measurement of key components which must evolve and be applied to specific public health programmes to enhance the existing framework.

However, Mancini and Marek (2004) indicate the retention of as many sustainability themes as possible to strengthen the holistic understanding of how each element interrelates and perhaps offers a greater understanding than other factors of

sustainability. Hence, more sustainability elements are offered by Mancini and Marek (2004) than the influences of sustainability indicated by Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012). These elements refer to: leadership competence, effective collaboration, understanding the community, demonstrating programme results, strategic funding, staff involvement and integration, and programme responsivity. Because of this, an analysis of these factors through sustainability scale development is validated prior to determining stakeholder perceptions on which factors influence the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded through Sportivate in London. Strength in the application of research design around this theoretical framework development comes from Girginov, Peshin and Belousov (2017), who indicated that multiple organisation types, sizes, individual responsibilities, and staff turnover should be considered when determining the strategic orientation towards how sustainability influences the delivery of community intervention programmes.

## *2.12   Conclusion*

In summary of the literature review, measures of sustainability have predominantly been researched through exploratory processes. This helps determine an appropriate methodological approach towards answering the RQ, which factors play a role in the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded through Sportivate in London? By exploring Sportivate and its role as a participation legacy project post-London 2012, trends of community sport participation have been discussed with factors of sustainability determined and examined. Furthermore, the influence of the Big Society political ideology and subsequent impact of austerity on the funding climate within the United Kingdom were discussed. In addition to this, the evaluation of variables presents an interrelated nature of understanding the sustainability factors emerging from the literature review. Through the development of this theoretical framework of sustainability, a synthesised lens of policy implementation is utilised to further enhance the theoretical framework of this research. Alongside understanding variables that may influence sustainability, this literature review highlights the need for research approaches that can understand individual perceptions of which factors play a role on the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded through Sportivate in London.

# 3  Methodology

## 3.1  Overview

This chapter explains the processes that underpin the approaches used for this research. Before describing these procedures, philosophical assumptions and methodological considerations will be reviewed to provide a framework for the approaches used. Grix (2019) highlights the importance of philosophical considerations by stating that ontology and epistemology are the foundations of logical research. These sentiments are strengthened by Bryman (2012), as these assumptions will feed into the RQ and help formulate the way research should be conducted. It is these approaches that need to be considered as interdependent due to the directional relationship between each assumption (Hay, 2002). The choices of ontological assumptions help determine the epistemological approaches taken. From this, methodology, strategy and concerns should be assessed in order to provide a strong justification for the research design and processes that follow.

This research focussed on using a case study design by using Year 4 of the Sportivate programme to evaluate sustainability amongst organisations who delivered funded community intervention programmes. The reason for selecting Year 4 of Sportivate was that, at the time of writing, this was the last full year of data available on participant retention for community intervention programmes funded through London Sport (London Sport, 2015). Programmes like Sportivate were designed to help stop the decrease in sports and physical activity participation amongst those aged 11-25. With sustainability being a critical success factor of each individual programme, Sportivate was a well-justified case study to assess which themes make up the perceptions of sustainability.

The aim of the research was to investigate the perceptions of sustainability amongst individuals at organisations who delivered a Sportivate programme between 2014 and 2015. Staff roles differentiated individuals as fulfilling roles at the strategic level or delivery level of the organisation's community intervention programme. In order to research this, an existing framework of sustainability theory was used from Mancini and Marek (2004) and Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012). From here, themes of sustainability were reviewed as a starting point prior to theoretical development

through the processes outlined in this chapter. These procedures would help work towards answering the following RQ:

**Research Question:** Which factors play a role on the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded by Sportivate?

Furthermore, this chapter outlines the processes that would work towards meeting the following ROs:

**Research Objective 1:** Analyse how staff roles influence stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 2:** Determine how organisation types influence stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 3:** Analyse how the length of time in a role influences stakeholder perception on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 4:** Determine how the size of organisation by staff capacity influences stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

## 3.2 *Philosophical considerations*

For researchers in the field of social sciences, it is important to consider the interrelationship between multiple core concepts of ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Grix, 2002). The reason for this is because of how a philosophical position can shape subsequent research action. Ontology can be shaped as an assumption that addresses the belief around what constitutes a social reality and defines what things are (Blaikie, 2010). In this sense, epistemology differs by addressing concerns around the nature of knowledge and the reasoning behind the knowledge acquisition process (Grix, 2002). The idea is stated that choosing an epistemological position would lead to a specific methodological process for research purposes. Ultimately, ontology precedes epistemology which directs the methodological approaches taken for research (Hay, 2002). Furthermore, methodology ought not to be misinterpreted for methods. Where methodology

highlights research potential and research limitations, methods understand the research procedures prior to identifying reliable sources of data for collection (Grix, 2002).

This model highlights the importance of considering the directional relationship of these concepts from a philosophical perspective. For this research, the objectives were to ascertain what factors influence staff perceptions on how organisations fulfil the commitment towards increasing sustainable physical activity through funded community intervention programmes. Furthermore, objectives extended to understanding why these factors were deemed more important for certain demographics of respondents. The research underpinned the processes taken for achieving sustainability and lead to the following philosophical positioning.

## 3.3 *Ontology*

For the logical progression of research with epistemological positioning and methodological approaches, Grix (2002) describes ontology as the foundation to start research from. Ontological assumptions are beliefs of what reality is (Rowland, 1995). Prior to ontological sense to proceed, consideration must be offered to the different features of reality that address observations between observer independent and observer relative features (Searle, 2006). Similarly, divisions of objectivity and subjectivity are important distinctions to defer whether research shall assess items that are dependent on or independent of attitudes and feelings of respondents (Grix, 2002; Searle 2006). Nonetheless, Marcoulatos (2003) highlights issues of the dichotomy between objective and subjective perspectives. A stance on reality that sanctions perceptions as either objective or subjective may bring unwanted evaluations. Grix (2002) highlights this by describing the scale of objectivism and constructivism that an ontological position sits within. Whilst this does not completely halt perspectives of individuality between both concepts, the notion lends itself closer to a blended approach, accommodating the middle path with space for social learning and realism (Cronjé, 2006; Byers, 2013).

Blaikie (2010) specifies six ontological assumptions to be considered when designing social research which are: shallow realist, conceptual realist, cautious realist, depth realist, idealist, and subtle realist.

Table 4: Ontological assumptions and their characteristics

| Type of assumption | Characteristics of assumption |
|---|---|
| Shallow realist | - Phenomena exists independently from individuals<br>- Can be observed and experienced<br>- Only what can be observed is relevant<br>- Patterns or sequences exist in observed phenomena<br>- Challenge for science is to understand and describe these patterns |
| Conceptual realist | - Reality exists independently from human minds<br>- It is not the property or social construction of a social community<br>- It is a collective, or a structure of ideas<br>- Not directly observable |
| Cautious realist | - Reality has an independent existence<br>- Due to imperfections in human senses, it cannot be observed directly<br>- Accurate observations are not possible because of human interpretation<br>- A cautious and critical approach must be adopted |
| Depth realist | - Reality consists of 3 domains:<br>  - 1) Empirical: what can be observed<br>  - 2) Actual: what exists independently from the observer<br>  - 3) Real: underlying structures that are not readily observed<br>- Because of this, reality is stratified and has ontological depth<br>- Social structures are less enduring and do not exist independently from social actors or activities of influence |
| Idealist | - Reality consists of representations created by the human mind<br>- Social reality constructed by the reproduced shared interpretations of social actors<br>- Takes on multiple forms:<br>  - 1) Exists independently of socially constructed realities<br>  - 2) External reality places constraints or opportunity for reality constructed activities<br>  - 3) Construction of reality are different perspectives on an external world |
| Subtle realist | - An independent, knowable reality exists independently of social scientists<br>- Cultural assumptions prevent direct access to reality<br>- All knowledge is based on assumptions and purposes<br>- Therefore, it is a construction of humans and cannot be certain |

Based on Blaikie (2010, p.93)

Dobson (1999) identifies that depth realism sits in contrast to other forms of realism as it offers consideration towards the existence of underlying social structures. It is here, with Dobson's (1999) description of depth realism that this research finds its ontological positioning. The argument here is that a key aspect of realist perspectives stem from a concern for recognising causal mechanisms in social phenomena (Layder, 1993). However, this important note is underpinned by the

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recognition of causal mechanisms. Sayer (2000) identifies that the notion of proving causation can be a conventional impulse that is often misguided. Rather, as Layder (1993) infers, identifying causal mechanisms and how they work offers knowledge through the critical realist assumptions. What is noticeable is that this definition of depth realism sits closely with the ontological paradigm offered by Fleetwood (2014) when describing critical realist ontology. Concepts of critical realism brought together perspectives of transcendental realism and critical naturalism (Bhaskar, 1998; Bhaskar, 2008). Critical realism also acknowledges the existence that some social entities exist independently from society's structures and can be categorized as a position of understanding processes. Furthermore, relations can be understood whilst offering multiple interpretations to a single reality (Fleetwood, 2014). In line with the idea of reality having depth, the following table outlines four differing modes of reality:

Table 5: Modes of reality descriptions

| Mode of reality | Description |
|---|---|
| Materially real | Refers to material or physical entities that exist independent of human action and observation. Observations can occur but when identified the materially real becomes a conceptually mediated material entity. |
| Ideally real | Refers to concepts underpinned by entities like discourse, language, meanings, theories and opinions. Ideal realities may not have a referent and therefore ideal entities, like knowledge, differ to non-ideal entities, like people. |
| Artefactually real | Refers to a synthesis of reality modes that are physically present. As entities are conceptually mediated, they can be interpreted in diverse ways. |
| Socially real | Refers to a status or social structure that cannot be physically touched and rely on human activity for the reality to exist. |

Based on Fleetwood (2014, p.204)

This research seeks to understand multiple interpretations to a single theoretical perspective. However, this must be acknowledged as a reality that may exist independently and accounts for underlying social structures, as well as, material, ideal or artefactual realities. Considering this, the research observes perspectives through a critical realist ontological approach and analyses mechanisms created as a measure of sustainability through actors' perspectives of a stratified structure. This is an approach

that Pawson and Tilley (1997a) accept as they point towards realist assumptions pinpointing the layers needed for programme sustainability.

## 3.4 Epistemology

Upon adopting an ontological assumption for research progression, Grix (2002) points to the next step of this directional relationship leading to epistemology. Whilst ontology is the belief of what reality is, epistemological assumptions determine how sense is made of reality (Rowland, 1995). Grix (2002) highlights that epistemology focusses on the development of knowledge, as knowledge is not a static concept but one that constantly changing. Blaikie (2010) specifies six epistemological assumptions to be considered when designing social research which are: empiricism, rationalism, falsificationism, neo-realism, constructionism, and conventionalism.

Table 6: Ontological assumptions and their characteristics

| Type of assumption | Characteristics of assumption |
| --- | --- |
| Empiricism | - Knowledge is produced and verified using human senses<br>- A trained, unbiased observer, with undistorted contact with reality, can have reliable knowledge<br>- Knowledge is certain when accurately representing the external world |
| Rationalism | - Knowledge comes from direct examination of the structure of human thought<br>- Evidence for an unobservable collective consciousness can be found in:<br>    - the consequences it has on people's lives<br>    - thought processes and structures of the mind itself |
| Falsificationism | - Knowledge is produced by trial and error, in which theories are tested against empirical evidence<br>- Reality is not observable directly, therefore theory tests should look to falsify rather than confirm them<br>- Knowledge must be regarded as tentative and open to revision |
| Neo-realism | - Knowledge of causation of observed regularities derives from structure and/or mechanisms that produce them<br>- Discovering these structures and/or mechanisms may necessitate the selection of entities and processes that go beyond surface appearances<br>- Competing or cancelling mechanisms may be present when no event or change is observed |
| Constructionism | - Everyday knowledge is the outcome of people making sense of their daily encounters with outside world and other people<br>- Social scientific knowledge is social scientists reinterpreting this everyday knowledge into technical knowledge |

| Type of assumption | Characteristics of assumption |
|---|---|
| | - Impossible to make completely true discoveries about the world<br>- All social enquiry reflects the standpoint of the researcher and all observation is theory-laden<br>- Because of this there are no permanent, unvarying criteria for establishing whether knowledge can be regarded as true |
| Conventionalism | - Theories are created by scientists as convenient tools for dealing with the world<br>- Theories do not describe reality, they determine what is considered by scientists as real<br>- Decisions about what is a good theory, or a better theory, is a matter of judgement, not proof |

Adapted from Blaikie (2010, p.94)

As Grix (2002) notes on research progression, the philosophical considerations ought to move forward with ontological assumptions determined prior to epistemological discussion. Fleetwood (2014) alludes to this with the notion of epistemology in subordination of ontology. Because of the knowledge development process, pure forms of either positivist or interpretivist approaches in the extreme form are relatively rare (Frazer, 1995).

Interpretivism associates with the way humans make sense of the world along with reality being influenced by the perspectives of the researcher (Bryman, 2012). This is synonymous with this research as there is a dependence on the empirical domain of reality understanding lived experiences of social actors (Blaikie, 2010; Fleetwood, 2014). Furthermore, Blaikie (2010) highlights how the concept of constructionism can offer thoughts to everyday knowledge needing to be interpreted into social scientific knowledge, thus indicating the role of the researcher in understanding the knowledge. However, Frazer (1995) identifies the idea that both interpretivist and positivist approaches are challenged by realism, as the former conceives reality as a construct, and the latter does not offer movement on speculations about reality. There is perhaps less congruence in the idea of a positivist approach aligning to a critical realist and constructionist assumption, as positivism aligns itself to searching for regularities and causal relationships (Bahari, 2010). Nonetheless, Frazer (1995) does offer to resolve some of the inconsistencies surrounding the alignment of critical realism and constructionism. One of those ways is through the assumption that a constructionists understanding of knowledge is through lived

knowledge, offering a resemblance to the observations and events that determine knowledge through the empirical and actual domains of critical realism (Blaikie, 2010; Avenier and Thomas 2015).

Therefore, the research to a direction of taking the middle path suggested by Cronjé (2006) and Byers (2013), as it offers a greater space for critical realist assumptions to progress. Furthermore, Blaikie (2010) identifies the lack of independency between ontology and epistemology, showcasing Grix's (2002) idea of a relationship between both approaches. However, knowledge is tough to determine and relies on uncovering causal mechanisms through the real domain, highlighting how critical realism accounts for the difficult task of reality to be represented (Sayer, 2004; Fleetwood, 2014). As such, Pawson and Tilley (1997a) specify how there is limited scope to satisfy the delivery of findings through a simple approach. Instead, the realist approach to defining theoretical concepts through the research of intervention programmes relies on sustained thinking and creativity. This is due to the lack of permanent, and constantly changing, criteria that makes up knowledge and reality according to Blaikie (2010), and the constructionist epistemic assumption.

### 3.5  *Methodology*

Dobson (1999) identified that epistemological assumptions are those which refer to how knowledge is obtained, whether through sources or how sense is determined. Nonetheless, methodological choices in research differ to this, as they are the means of determining how to meet desired objectives (Rowland, 1995). Grix (2002) however, details methodology as investigating the potentialities and limitations of research techniques, rather than the research methods itself. In acceptance of this, research methods follow on from methodology as the technique and procedure utilised for data collection (Blaikie, 2010).

Ontological and epistemological assumptions have highlighted the importance of accepting an external reality to the agent, and deep structures that are not directly observable. Archer (1995) argues these two (agent and structure) must be considered as the fundamental components of social situations. This is expanded upon by Reed (1997) who supports a critical realist position, as it is structurally robust and can determine explanations of organisational phenomena. However, despite these assumptions leading the research towards a particular set of research methods,

consideration must be returned to the original RQs to steer towards the most appropriate direction (Grix, 2002). Therefore, it is important to consider, alongside these philosophical assumptions, the methodology that allows for the greatest potentialities when determining which factors play a role in the sustainability of community sport and physical activities delivered by organisations that were funded through the Sportivate programme. As such, from a critical realist perspective, it is only possible to understand the social phenomenon by analysing events that transpire from the role of actors, whilst uncovering reality through a series of underlying structures (Easton, 2010).

Critical realism is stated to have suitability in mixed methods approaches because an initial qualitative approach helps identify complex structures and can describe the phenomenon that the RQ states (Zachariadis, Scott and Barrett, 2013). This lends itself to the assumptions of critical realism that allows for research to contribute knowledge that can be added to theory, and readied for investigation (Easton, 2010). However, difficulties arise when considering the role quantitative methods have in critical realist approaches which Downward and Mearman (2002) highlight, as statistical analysis cannot determine a meaningful connection with the findings obtained from qualitative research. Zachariadis, Scott and Barrett (2013) point out that the idea of a mixed methods approach could lead to epistemic fallacy when attempting this. In this sense, epistemic fallacy refers to the conflating of ontology and epistemology, merging the reality of knowledge with the process of how to obtain it (Galbraith, 2015). Despite this, as Jones (2011) points out, methodological pluralism can become a necessity, and one that does not necessarily deter from critical realist approaches, displaying a suitability of the approach taken in this research. Sayer (1992) identified with this, as depth and stratified layers mean multiple practices are required in order to obtain the required knowledge.

Rather than assuming a do-what-it-takes tactic, concepts of critical realism can be aligned to the mixed methods approach. Further support is drawn as Lawson (1997) highlights that the use of quantitative methods are possible because of semi-predictable mechanisms in relationships within a particular setting. It allows for the assumption that it is up to the social scientist to construct appropriate conditions to determine the knowledge and mechanisms that make up the phenomenon being studied (Tsoukas, 1989). These conditions are also accepted through implications of

critical realism depending on the purpose of combining mixed methods approaches. The following table shows some of these critical realist implications and the potential for applying approaches of mixed methods in this research:

Table 7: Implications from critical realism on the use of mixed methods

| Purpose of combination | Description of mixed methods | Implications from critical realism |
|---|---|---|
| Complementary | - Gain complementary views about the same phenomena or events | - Different levels of abstraction of a multi-layered environment require varied methods |
| Completeness | - Used to ensure a complete picture of phenomenon studied | - Requires meta-theoretical considerations |
| Developmental | - One type of research used to infer questions for the next type of research | - Part of retroductive approach of critical realism<br>- Inferences must hypothesize about causal mechanisms, which inspires additional research |
| Expansion | - Implemented to provide explanations or expand on findings from previous research | - Quantitative methods used to guide the qualitative methods that uncover generative mechanisms |
| Corroboration or confirmation | - One method is used to confirm the findings from another study | - Epistemic fallacy occurs when quantitative methods are used to validate qualitative results |
| Compensation | - The weakness of one method is compensated by another method | - Alternative methods are used to compensate for the weaknesses recognised in another |
| Diversity | - Can help obtain divergent views on same phenomena | - Different levels of abstraction of a multi-layered environment require varied methods |

Adapted from Zachariadis, Scott and Barrett (2013, p.865)

The consideration of alternative approaches provides a form of philosophical triangulation, as Joslin and Müller (2016) state that using mixed methods can often appear contradictory within critical realist approaches. The benefit of this is that it overcomes the instability provided by a singular philosophical perspective. Importantly, it shows how the interaction of approaches for appropriate methodology can be the defining feature of systems created for obtaining knowledge. This returns to the point that appropriate conditions must also consider the RQs, scope for

potentialities, and acknowledge limitations, as well as assumptions from philosophical perspectives (Tsoukas, 1989; Grix, 2002). Where this research has determined a mixed methods approach, methodology triangulation is also present as identified and explored themes of sustainability are later analysed for their reliability and validity through the mixed methods approach (Joslin and Müller, 2016).

## 3.6  Research strategy

Prior to determining appropriate research methods, the acquisition of knowledge must be acknowledged through the continued review of methodology utilised (Grix, 2002). This section will review research strategies and propose the most appropriate approach for this research to undertake. In addition to this, approaches must consider the implications from critical realist perspectives on these selected strategies. Initially however, a review needs to be carried out of the appropriate research strategies with the previously stated RQ and processes in mind. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) highlight induction, deduction, and abduction as three logical lines of inquiry for social science research, and this section offers insight into how this research lends itself to these strategies. Moreover, when considering some elements of inference, as this research does in Study 2, the research strategy of retroduction should also be considered (Sayer, 1992).

### 3.6.1  Induction

An inductive research strategy offers the perspective of drawing conclusions by obtaining and observing empirical evidence (Landman and Carvalho, 2017). Research that undertakes this approach tends not to be driven by hypotheses. Rather than being driven by hypotheses, research that undertakes this strategy tends to build and generate theory based on the understanding determined from empirical evidence (Grix, 2019). Application of this appears relevant to Study 1 that helped build an understanding of the underlying structures that make up the factors of sustainability. Support for this is indicated by Bryman (2012) who stated that using an inductive stance means research can have theoretical outcomes. Because of this view, inductive research tends to start with data collection before leading to the abstract descriptions of emerging patterns and a network of accumulative generalisations that can develop theory (Blaikie, 2010). Therefore, inductive research strategies align themselves closer to qualitative research as key characteristics revolve around discovery, theory development, and exploration,

all while using the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

### 3.6.2 Deduction

In contrast to inductive research strategies, deduction strategies use theory to inform research from the beginning and use hypotheses to dictate what the researcher is looking for (Grix, 2019). This means that reason must be applied to a set of operational premises in order to arrive at a conclusion that accepts or falsifies the original hypothesis (Landman and Carvalho, 2017). In the context of social science, Bryman (2012) specifies that data can only be collected in relation to the key constructs that make up the hypothesis. This differs to the accumulative generalisations used to develop theory from inductive approaches and shows how Study 2 adopts a more deductive strategy in its methodological processes. Support for this is indicated by Blaikie (2010) who highlights that theory at the beginning of research logically provides a directly opposing research strategy to that described of inductive processes. Because of this, key characteristics of deductive strategies highlight a traditional connection with quantitative research, as this research displays in Study 2. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) state this is because deduction focusses on testing theory and hypotheses in a process that requires standardized data collection and statistical analysis.

### 3.6.3 Abduction

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) highlight abduction as a backwards working process from an observed effect to a probable cause. This research strategy suggests that making inferences to explanations during the generation of knowledge is entirely possible. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) describe this as the process of uncovering, and then relying on the most reliable explanations in order to understand the results obtained. Whilst it shares some similarities with an inductive approach, abduction distinguishes itself due to a reliance on the view of participants to enhance knowledge through a social science perspective (Bryman, 2012). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) support this notion of a distinguished strategy as abduction seeks to explore data, find patterns, and suggest hypotheses. This also differs from a deductive research strategy as deduction tests logical hypotheses based on the use of pre-existing theory. According to Blaikie (2010) the main characteristic of abduction is that it is an iterative process that helps to generate theory rather than working on a predetermined theory

or coming to a conclusive theory after data analysis. This is particularly relevant when a surprising event occurs and a researcher must try to determine what might have caused it (Teddlie and Tasakkori, 2009). Upon understanding this, whilst this research adopts a cyclical process to understanding the structures that make up sustainability through this research, predetermined theory is utilised to understand sustainability prior to Study 1, which is later confirmed following data analysis during Study 2. Therefore, this research does not adopt the abductive strategy as previously defined by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009).

### 3.6.4 Retroduction

Where this research infers the use of both inductive and deductive strategies across Study 1 and Study 2, there is value in understanding the role of retroductive strategies and how research may adopt them (Sayer, 1992). In terms of social sciences, researchers must infer causal mechanisms that are responsible for observations, which is where the strategy of retroductive reasoning becomes apparent (Blaikie, 2010). Bryman (2012) places particular emphasis on a retroductive strategy, as finding generative mechanisms from observations is neither an inductive or deductive process and aligns itself closer with perspectives of critical realism than them too. This is supported by Cronje (2006) and Byers (2013) who indicate that taking a middle path between these strategies offer greater coherence with critical realist assumptions. The strength of retroduction strategies is supported by Grix (2019), as most research needs a combination of inductive and deductive processes. As this chapter progresses and explanations for the methodological approaches are considered, it is evident that a combination of inductive strategies (Study 1) and deductive strategies (Study 2) are used. This matches the sentiments of Ragin (1994) who described it strategic interplay between inductive and deductive processes. However, it is also important to recognise that some mechanisms may remain unidentified until hypothesised (Sayer, 1992). Furthermore, with difficulty in determining the mechanisms, events and underlying structures that make up the knowledge of sustainability, critical realism can account for how reality is represented through research (Fleetwood, 2014). This underpins the importance of interplay between the inductive and deductive processes in understanding social structures. One of the reasons for this is because retroductive logic makes little sense from a purely positivist or interpretivist approach, hence the

suggestion of interplay between philosophical considerations (McEvoy and Richards, 2006).

### 3.6.5 Selection

After considering the RQ, various strategies, and the critical realist perspective, the most appropriate strategy for this research appears to be the use of a retroductive approach. Grix (2019) describes social research as a course of reflexivity with retroduction allowing for continual movement between concrete data and abstraction. One of the key benefits of this, particularly in a mixed methods approach, is the flexibility in not adopting completely inductive or deductive approaches (Lawson, 1997). This is relevant for research designs adopting the use of case studies that may utilise data collection through both inductive and deductive processes (Easton, 2010). Despite similarities with an abductive strategy, the lack of expectation for surprising events and starting with a point of existing theory, suggests that a retroductive approach is the strategy to apply in this research. Furthermore, through this mixed approach research reliability and validity are strengthened, which lead the research towards its choices in a mixed methods research design (Joslin and Müller, 2016). By overcoming the shortcomings of inductive, deductive, and abductive strategies, retroduction will help determine the social structures that exist as factors of sustainability amongst organisations who have delivered funded community intervention programmes through Sportivate. By understanding actors' perceptions of these structures and the generative causal mechanisms present, theory development and hypothesis testing can both occur through the critical realist perspective using a retroductive research strategy. Hence, the following figures clarifies the use of retroductive logic through the critical realist domains described by Blaikie (2010) in this research.

Figure 6: Application of retroductive logic through domains of critical realism



**EMPERICAL DOMAIN**

Observations at time

Study 1: exploratory interviews to understand the sustainability of community intervention programmes from the perspective of Sportivate stakeholders.

Observations at time

Study 2: survey data analysed through EFA to group themes as factors of sustainability determined by the stakeholders at Sportivate delivery organisations.

Inference by induction: occurrence of unobserved events.

**ACTUAL DOMAIN**

Events

Events

Allows for inferences that unobserved causal mechanisms exist.

Inference by deduction: identifying of causal correct causal mechanisms can explain / predict events and observable patterns.

**REAL DOMAIN**

Mechanisms

From the literature review and exploratory interviews, the nature of causal influences determining factors of sustainability are explained through EFA. These influences become items in survey to explain identify perceptions of underlying structures that make up the sustainability of community intervention programmes.

## 3.7 Methodological concerns

### 3.7.1 Validity

As acknowledged, the choice of methodology must address finding observations based on the identified phenomenon in the most appropriate context (Leung, 2015). Validity of research assesses whether research components measure what they set out to measure (Drost, 2011). In the sense of critical realism, Healy and Perry (2000) state that researchers use a mix of criteria developed for positivist and constructivist research. With this fusion in mind, it is therefore important to consider the type of validity required to support the integrity of the undertaken research. Bryman (2012) specifies different types of validity as: measurement or construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and ecological validity. With construct validity and internal validity being more appropriate, greater emphasis will be offered to justifying the research validity in these contexts. That is not to completely ignore external validity however. Despite Bryman (2012) stating external validity being used to look at the generalisability of research beyond the set research context, Drost (2011) suggests that external validity is still somewhat relevant in specifically targeted populations. Additionally, Schmuckler (2001) postulates that ecological validity concerns itself more with observed behaviour in laboratories, with particular reverence in psychological research, and therefore this research disregarded its appropriateness as a condition of validity.

Construct validity spans quite widely in that it addresses the integrity of causal inferences from research as well as qualitative output through content validity (Drost, 2011). Rossiter (2008) defines this concept as the relevance of an assessment instrument and its representation of the construct that data is being collected for analysis. It is apparent that this has been well covered in the overall research that encapsulates both study 1 and 2. This is because content validity in qualitative research (study 1) is evident through data collection processes that only cease once data saturation has been met (Fusch and Ness, 2015). Furthermore, as study 2 progressed with EFA, Rubio et al. (2003) describes how this is a positive research process to achieving construct validity. With triangulation addressing the key concepts and themes from study 1 through data analysis of surveys collected in study 2, multiple sources of information are used to increase construct validity, which is particularly important in case study designs (Yin, 2013). Trochim, Donnelly and Arora (2016)

present the overview that construct validity refers to the transformation of a construct into an operational reality. Leung (2015) concurs with this by highlighting the need to develop theory and increase abstraction in search of generalizability. This research meets these criteria as it used an initial qualitative study to develop a pre-existing theory into identifiable constructs that can be quantitatively analysed for causal inferences and generalisations through study 2.

Internal validity mainly addresses the presence of causal relationships and whether an appropriate conclusion can be made based on what is being measured (Bryman, 2012). In positivist research, internal validity is met through the attribution of an independent variable causing change in a dependent variable (Healy and Perry, 2000). However, in social sciences this contrasts with the open boundaries set through realist research (Bhaskar, 2008). Nonetheless, as the proposed research strategy of retroduction suggests, most research requires an interplay between the causal and open boundary relationships, signifying this is still required to understand the social structures of the proposed research constructs (Grix, 2019). This research meets the criteria by developing pre-existing theory to understand the measurable constructs of sustainability. Whilst the literature review shows the pertinence of sustainability theory to the research, a more stratified and deeper understanding comes from study 1's qualitative framework-building preparation for study 2. From study 2, the internal validity criteria were met by conducting an exploratory factor analysis to create a scale that accurately measures perceptions of sustainability. By doing this, Healy and Perry's (2000) conditions on the independent variable bringing about controlled changes in the dependent variable were met.

### 3.7.2 Reliability

Another methodological concern to consider is the reliability of the research findings. Neuman (2012) defines reliability as the recurrence of results under the exact same research conditions, thus producing a measure of dependability and consistency. Drost (2011) identifies different types of reliability that are worth considering: test-retest reliability, alternative forms, split-halves, inter-rater reliability, and internal consistency. It is also important to consider the research strategy adopted when considering reliability. Healy and Perry (2000) highlight that in a positivist paradigm, researchers should be concerned with the avoidance of errors to ensure research reliability is retained. Whereas when adopting the constructivist approach,

methodological trustworthiness can be used to build trust in qualitative research methods (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This is extremely important considering Study 1 and its role in this research's mixed methods design. These sentiments are indicated by Neuman (2012) highlights how the concept of reliability is often coined a quantitative researcher's tool, but must consider both research approaches. With the critical realist perspective for this research in mind, a diverse set of measures and interactions can be used as a measure of reliability to illuminate the stratified components of the subject matter.

The test-retest approach for reliability is concerned with reapplying the same tests on the same respondents over a given period of time (Drost, 2011). This is also referred to be by Bryman (2012) as a measure of stability within research, stating that high correlations should be visible between when the first survey was taken to when the second survey was taken. Even though this is a well-documented approach for reliability, issues of practicality arise due to the nature of this research. This approach would be better suited to one that does not consider the maturation of factors or respondents that could be susceptible to change over time (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 2008; Bryman, 2012). Furthermore, if conducted over a short period of time participants may have a sense of familiarity which confounds the measure of reliability (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 2008). Because of these reasons, this research did not use the test-retest approach as a measure of reliability.

In another approach for reliability, Drost (2011) identifies that alternative forms reliability is like the test-retest approach, except that a different measure of the same factor is used on the same respondent, rather than the same measure as discussed in the test-retest process. This is also referred to as a test of equivalence which, according to Long and Johnson (2000), is applicable within qualitative research as well as quantitative research. This research adopted this approach in both formats, firstly through interview questions and observing responses according to specific themes. And secondly through survey statements with the same meaning, and measures of reliability being taken by assessing measures of variance and intercorrelation upon data collection (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 2008). The processes within study 2 further highlight the alternative forms reliability as EFA was used to understand how survey statements could measure the intercorrelation of responses and thus provide constructs

that reliably collect data on the factors of sustainability influencing community intervention programme delivery.

The split-half approach tests reliability by halving combined items to form a second measure of the same behaviour (Drost, 2011). This is indicated by Bryman (2012) who specifies this test as a measure of internal reliability that establishes whether participants score similarly on both measures of the same behaviour. However, Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) identify this approach as problematic, as it is dependent on how a test is divided, suggesting the need for an equation rather than using a random or odd-even split (Drost, 2011; Bryman, 2012). Despite strengths in that the data can be collected within the same process, the two measures must be parallel in what they measure and how many items being measured (Drost, 2011). This means that it should be used only when practicality does not allow alternative forms reliability to take place (Nunnally, 1978). Where this research can apply aspects of alternative forms reliability, the split-half approach is not necessary. Furthermore, the need to have parallel items and measures would not be appropriate as each measure is not made up of the same number of components.

Inter-rater reliability is when multiple researchers are used to rate participants on a particular test, with the correlation between the researchers used to inform on reliability (Drost, 2011). Within qualitative research, Long and Johnson (2000) highlight how this process does not offer much more than an inappropriate standardisation of variable data. Despite this, Neuman (2012) indicates that an inter-rater reliability could be feasible for qualitative research when it comes to content analysis and the coding of data. Nonetheless, this can prove to be a difficult task as consistency becomes dependent on the interpretations of multiple researchers Bryman, 2012). Should these understandings differ between researchers, themes emanating from the collected data could be deemed inconclusive. However, Joslin and Müller (2016) highlight how this process can induce a form of investigator triangulation. For this reason, the research utilised inter-rater reliability by using two other individuals to support the data review process and confirmation of emerging themes from study 1 interviews. These themes were then adopted for the development of a survey instrument for study 2.

According to Drost (2011) internal consistency relates to the measures of consistency within a scale to determine how well a question or statement is measuring a specific factor. This is particularly important as it also allows a researcher to understand if a participant's responses remain concordant within the theme being questioned (Long and Johnson, 2000). Furthermore, Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) specify that internal consistency tells a researcher how much items relate to each other and that way determine the reliability of components. To accurately measure internal consistency, Bryman (2012) points to the Cronbach's alpha test which calculates a coefficient between 0 and 1 to measure reliability with 0 yielding no correlation and a score of 1 indicates complete correlation. Neuman (2012) states that a score of 0.7 or higher tends to indicate a good measure, however Bryman (2012) indicates that a score of 0.8 is the typical figure employed. As this research adopted pre-existing theory and developed this through interviews, multiple measures of programme sustainability were determined prior to survey distribution in Study 2. Because of this internal consistency reliability was adopted to determine which scale items interconnect through EFA as reliable components of sustainability, adopting Neuman's 0.7 Cronbach's alpha score as a measure of high correlation for strong reliability. Based upon this, internal consistency joins alternative forms and inter-rater reliability practices that were adopted for this research to collect reliable data for analysis.

### 3.8  Research methods

This section details the methods undertaken in various sections of this research and investigatory process. Specific techniques are outlined across two separate studies, which together, adopted a mixed methods approach. This utilised the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, which are particularly beneficial for the problems posed in social science research (Creswell, 2013). By focusing on the Sportivate programme, this research adopted a case study framework in order to investigate a contemporary phenomenon through multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2013). The first study implemented a qualitative research approach with two main data collection and analysis methods used (document review and interviews). Questions in the interview were asked based on Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) research reviewing influences on sustainability. The second study utilised a quantitative research approach through an online survey. This was created following a framework built from the data analysis of study 1 and adaptations of Mancini and Marek's (2004) Program

Sustainability Index (See Appendix 10.6). These adaptations were made by using the Program Sustainability Index's original statements and then adding survey statements relating to study 1's understanding of underlying sustainability structures existing in the real domain of critical realism. Following this overview, detailed methods on the frameworks developed and procedures of research undertaken for each study are specified.

### 3.8.1 Case study design choice

As previously mentioned, case study frameworks are often used in order to investigate a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2013). Eisenhardt (1989) detailed the key component of case study approaches being the focus and understanding of the dynamics evident in single settings. This is not to present confusion with the term single settings, as case-studies can be either single or multiple cases within the same research setting (Yin, 2013). When studying multiple cases, the research aims to compare data between the cases (Baxter and Jack, 2008). This suited the design of this research, with the single setting of Sportivate analysed across and within multiple cases (Yin, 2013).

In terms of critical realist approaches, case studies are important for research because of the intensive nature of researchers understanding multiple factors behind the observed patterns within the specific context of Sportivate (Bryman, 2012). Furthermore, critical realism as an ontological perspective offers to resolve inconsistencies in research conducted with epistemic constructionism (Frazer, 1995; Avenier and Thomas, 2015). However, this is also applied to notions of positivism as critical realism aims to develop a deeper understanding of sustainability through this research (McEvoy and Richards, 2006). This explains the need for retroductive logic to be applied as it allows this understanding to move from levels of observations and lived experiences towards the structures that make up sustainability within this case study of the Sportivate programme (Bryman, 2012). Moreover, it is these lived experiences that offer compatibility as experienced events in the empirical domain of critical realism lends itself to the constructionist viewpoint of lived experiences producing knowledge (Avenier and Thomas, 2015). By not adopting completely inductive or deductive approaches there is relevance for case studies in research when using both through the application of retroductive logic (Lawson, 1997; Easton 2010).

Also important to consider was the manner in which data samples are selected from a population (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Tellis (1997) highlights however, that sampling logic in multiple-case studies is improper. With facts drawn from various cases through a multi-organisation operation of analysis, multiple-case studies should follow a replication logic. Perry (1998) highlights how the selection of cases should be purposeful and information-rich, therefore replication logic is a more appropriate case-selection process. However, Stake (1994) indicates that representative case selection is not appropriate for multi-case study research designs. Rather, replication logic should use either literal replication or theoretical implication, in that each case should predict similar results or produce contrary results respectively (Perry, 1998; Yin 2013). With the 12 interviewed organisations sharing the characteristics of applying for Sportivate funding in Year 4 of the London Sport programme, literal replication was used for the first study in this research.

As this research looked to build upon theories of sustainability, cases needed to give a clear insight by building upon theoretical frameworks, and to offer answers to the RQ posed. Pettigrew (1990) noted that extreme polar selections ought to be chosen, as the understanding gathered from case study data needs to be observable in a transparent manner. As this research undertook both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, it was important to understand the specific design choice of the case study research methods. Thus, the case-study design in this research utilised a retroductive strategy, utilising elements of inductive and deductive reasoning across the empirical, actual and real domains of critical realism (Easton, 2010). This is particularly relevant as a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods were used to explore how information is processed through case study designs illustrated through a critical realist framework (McEvoy and Richards, 2006).

Yin (2013) highlighted that case study design varies as exploratory, descriptive and explanatory case studies. This ultimately affects the focus of RQs, research aims and whether the case study analysis has issues on the generalisability of findings to wider audiences (Hartley, 2004). Exploratory case studies, as the name suggests, use a more holistic process by using research to open examination for further understanding to be gathered from the phenomenon that is observed. In this type of case study, the research is often broad, rarely provides definitive answers, and can determine the required methods to be used in subsequent research (Zainal, 2007).

Differing from this are descriptive case studies which set to directly describe the phenomenon in question and therefore, can produce useful insights whilst leading to the formation of hypotheses (Zainal, 2007; Yin, 2013). However, Easton (2010) emphasises the need for descriptive case studies to build upon the theoretical framework to meet the rigour critical realism applies in this research. Finally, explanatory case studies aim to answer questions by examining data at surface level and deeper within the data in order to explain what has been found (Zainal, 2007). Explanatory case studies display an accurate portrayal of facts whilst considering alternative explanations and concludes on a single explanation most relevant to the data that has been analysed (Yin, 1981).

Given the nature of this case study research, a more exploratory approach was adopted. The sequential research design used adequate quantitative measures to build upon the initial qualitative topic exploration to connect data between the two phases of research (Plato Clark et al., 2008; Cameron, 2009). Despite this design fit, criticisms of the mixed methods approach were still apparent. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) highlight the extensive data collection and resource required to complete a mixed method study. However, this is negated by the length of time that was available to conduct both qualitative and quantitative aspects of this research. A further criticism of mixed methods approaches is a lack of inference between the qualitative and quantitative studies conducted (Venkatesh, Brown and Bala, 2013). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) state that to overcome this, assurances in design quality and explanation quality must be met. By achieving this, the use of triangulation, to study the same phenomenon through mixed methodologies, increased the validity of results (Jick, 1979; Denzin, 2017).

### 3.9  Study 1

#### 3.9.1  Overview

The first study used semi-structured interviews with individuals from 12 separate organisations that were identified from Year 4 of the Sportivate programme in London through a multi-case study design. Sportivate was selected as the case study programme as it represented a government-directed policy programme facilitated through Sport England as part of the post-London 2012 participation legacy (Sport England, 2017). Organisation names that made up the multiple cases within this case

study of Sportivate were provided through secondary data obtained from London Sport showed a list of 414 organisations who received funding for Year 4 of the Sportivate programme. With secondary data highlighting the top and bottom participation target meeting performances, desk research was conducted to populate a database of 12 organisations with contact details (Czarniawska, 2014).

From the 12 organisations, five were selected as TA organisations and another seven selected as TNA organisations. Initially, 10 organisations were targeted but a lack of response from individuals within the TNA organisations meant this number was extended to increase the amount of data obtained. Three members of each organisation were targeted for interview across the strategic levels of the organisation: Board Chairs, Board Members, and CEOs. Two additional interviews were sought amongst the delivery level of the targeted organisation: Project Officers and Coaches. Selecting specific participants does present risks due to a potential lack of insight, however Mansfield et al. (2015) stated that this allows a greater understanding of the needs of the main beneficiaries of an intervention programme. From the shortlisted organisations, a total number of 33 interviews were conducted between September 2017 and February 2018. The interviewees represented 12 different organisations, with 18 individuals from the TA organisations and 15 from the TNA organisations.

By building the theoretical framework in Chapter 2, the research in study 1 aimed to give an insight into influences on sustainability through measures of programme innovation, organisational context (internal and external), capacity to deliver programmes, and processes and interactions (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). The importance of these mediating entities is underlined by Fairclough (2005) who stated that they are necessary in claims of critical realism to account for the relationship between structures, processes and events. Furthermore, by understanding core concepts of sustainability there is an allowance for a researcher to explore theory development as the primary instrument of data collection (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Nonetheless, this does not permeate an automatic leaning towards an inductive approach. A more retroductive synthesis between inductive and deductive approaches were required as some mechanisms may not have been understood until hypothesised and tested (Sayer, 1992).

Interview participants were selected based on their organisation's success, or lack thereof, in delivering a Sportivate funded programme (TA and TNA groups). Success was measured through secondary data provided by London Sport, which presented a participant retention percentage from an initial target figure set by organisations during the funding application process. By assessing two different tiers of organisations (strategic and delivery levels highlighted in Chapter 6), this research measured influences of sustainability to exhibit a wider understanding of organisational success in running a community intervention physical activity programme through Sportivate. By addressing the strategic and delivery aspects of an organisation a wider scope of stakeholder judgement was offered, therefore providing further insight into the varying influences on sustainability (Herman and Renz, 1998).

### 3.9.2 Interviews

Boyce and Neale (2006) emphasise the advantages of in-depth interviews, as they provide detailed information that allows the deeper exploration of observations at the time of interview, which has been highlighted in Figure 6's application of retroductive logic within the empirical domain of critical realism. Interviews give an opportunity for individuals to verbally communicate about the social world they have actively constructed (Ritchie et al., 2013). Not only is the chance to communicate important issues essential, but also the privacy a one-to-one conversation offers is vital when extracting rich data. This is recognised by Qu and Dumay (2011) who indicate strengths of semi-structured interviews, as they are capable of disclosing concealed traits of organisational characteristics. With this method, an in-depth understanding was sought, with personal context obtained through individual experiences from stakeholders. By using semi-structured interviews, this research lends itself to Silverman's (2016) view as respondents gave a more authentic and subjective portrayal of their experiences to a flexible line of questioning (see Appendix 10.3). This important point is also noted by Gubrium and Holstein (2002), who state that interview subjectivity provides research with in-depth qualitative interpretations, rather than hard-lined facts.

Despite the advantages of conducting in-depth interviews, there are some research limitations that must be acknowledged. In-depth interviews require a great amount of time to plan, conduct, transcribe, and analyse (Boyce and Neale, 2006; Walsham, 2006). Given the nature of this research as a PhD thesis, time constraints

were negated by a long-term research plan including both qualitative and quantitative studies as a mixed method approach. This research design quells further limitations, in that authors argue there is a lack of causal generalisability from interviews and qualitative procedures (Boyce and Neale, 2006; Smythe and Giddings, 2007; Ritchie et al., 2013). It is worth noting that the purpose of this first study was not to apply findings to all possible relevant populations, but instead provide insight into constructs that exist within the themes of sustainability relevant to the RQ. Thus, Smythe and Giddings (2007) highlight how findings in data obtained from interviews can be carried from one situation to another, providing the situations are somewhat common in culture and context.

Greene (1998) identifies that a more open-ended interview style is also beneficial as it minimises the risk of perspective bias being put onto the interviewee by the researcher. Another way in which to do this is to use focus groups rather than interviews. During focus groups a more passive role is taken by the researcher than when conducting interviews, meaning less perspective bias is presented (Doyle, 2004). Nonetheless, using focus groups would detract from the quality of data as some interviewees may be reluctant to discuss particular issues publicly (Qu and Dumay, 2011). This is relevant for this research as certain tiers within an organisation may not have wished to discuss strategic or delivery matters so openly with individuals from organisations unaffiliated to their own present. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews makes it perfect for tailoring each interview to the individual's role and organisation in order to elicit the required information (Myers and Newman, 2007). This is also an important reason why focus groups were not utilised in this study. The presence of perceived leaders within a single organisation focus group would have impacted upon interaction and response patterns, especially given that influences of sustainability discuss leadership as a relevant factor (Frey and Fontana, 1991; Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). Furthermore, with a competitive funding environment, focus groups were not used to prevent interviewees feeling uncomfortable discussing the organisation's affairs openly (Hoye et al., 2018).

Perhaps the biggest disadvantage of using interviews is the presence of bias from both researchers and participants (Boyce and Neale, 2006). Respondents may display some levels of social desirability bias by choosing responses that reflect a more positive depiction of themselves, rather than echoing their true feelings (Grimm,

2010). To reduce the impact of social desirability bias, this study offered anonymity to individuals names and organisations. Randall and Fernandes (1991) recognise that anonymity does help to reduce social desirability bias but cannot guarantee it. This emphasises the importance of triangulation as a method of reducing the sense of over-claimed measures from interviewees (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2006).

In the context of research bias, another challenge that can occur through interviews is the presence of confirmation bias. Ask and Granhag (2005) state that confirmation bias occurs when an interviewer focusses on information they are searching for, to support pre-determined beliefs. To minimise the prevalence of confirmation bias, the skill of an interviewer and the amount of open-ended questions are considered important (Powell, Hughes-Scholes and Sharman, 2012). Despite this, once qualitative data is obtained, the element of risk in researcher bias is still present in the data coding process. However, with data so rich, the time-consuming process of transcribing, coding and triangulating data means researcher bias is less likely to occur (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2007). This presents another dilemma, as Turner III (2010) states there is a chance of over-analysis from such vast data. However, by using triangulation techniques and having the theme construction and coding process overseen, the issues of researcher bias and over-analysis are minimised (Cresswell, 2013). With this research, this is particularly relevant as transcribes and constructed themes were reviewed by two supervisors to facilitate data verification through triangulation methods.  By doing this, the research negated the deficiencies that are present in single research strategies and increased the ability to interpret the immense amount of data obtained (Thurmond, 2001).

With the large quantity of data available from conducting interviews, and the lack of traditional research sampling procedures, there must be consideration for when enough data has been obtained. Whilst this offers evidence towards ensuring a reliable set of data, it also offers concurrence with the understanding of mechanisms through inductive inferences. Furthermore, as knowledge moves through empirical, actual and real domains of critical realism the mechanisms that help understand sustainability can initiate progress towards deductive inferences as the research moved towards Study 2. In terms of quantity, the most common numbers of interviews used in qualitative studies for PhD research is between 28 and 31 (Mason, 2010). This contrasts to the notion Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) put forward, in that data saturation occurs

within the first 12 interviews. Data saturation is the point at which additional data is no longer developing the concept being researched (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Fusch and Ness (2015) agree, by stating that data saturation is met when there is enough information to replicate the research, and when further coding of information is no longer feasible. However, Francis et al. (2009) highlight how there is no agreed method of establishing data saturation. They recommend on deciding the initial size of the sample and having a recognised stopping criterion when the researcher feels data saturation has been met. This research study had to consider the criteria of interview selection and how many interviews this would amount to. By using Mason's (2010) 28-31 figure as an initial size, the study intended to conduct 5 interviews per organisation, with 10 organisations initially shortlisted. The surplus figure allowed for the unavailability of certain staff members at organisations, and consideration for the requirements of data saturation. Wade et al. (2010) considered this concept particularly useful when implementing theories of sustainability in their research, thus increasing the credibility of the selected methods for this study.

In order to measure the sustainability of public health programmes, Scheirer and Dearing (2011) recommend interviews with multiple informants within an organisation. In the case of this research, this was attained by interviewing Board Chairs, Board Members, CEOs, Project Officers, and Coaches. Doing so collected data from multiple actors that make up the stratified staff system across strategic and delivery levels of the organisation. This offers a diverse perspective from a range of individuals involved with an organisation, which can offer interesting comparisons within organisations as well as across them for in-depth case studies. Savaya, Spiro and Elran-Barak (2008) followed this process when assessing the sustainability of social programmes, organisational factors, and the social and political environment. The application of this process has been deemed important in cross-functional and inter-organisational entities, especially as it gives a more complete depiction of the complex phenomena studied (Carter and Easton, 2011; Kaufmann and Saw, 2014). This research study aimed to assess stakeholder perceptions on influences of sustainability. Therefore, interview participants were selected from the major functioning aspects of each organisation relating to the exploration of community intervention programmes (Stubbs and Cocklin, 2008; Hahn and Kühnen, 2013).

### 3.9.3 Observations

Observations can be conducted in two ways; structured or unstructured (Pretzlik, 1994). According to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), the idea of this is to gather any data that can shed light on the emerging issues from the session. Researchers can undertake these observations by participating, overtly or covertly, or observing other participants in a natural setting (Cresswell, 2013). One of the benefits of using observations in this study, was the complimentary process of supporting the data obtained from a more structured process in the interviews. This is based on structured coding instruments often being developed after unstructured observations had taken place (Silverman, 2016). For this reason, unstructured and covert observations of Sportivate sessions were used to complement the core data collection through semi-structured interviews. According to Jick (1979), this process creates a richer portrait of the data, and allows for the presence of triangulation within the research design. However, it is still important not to overestimate the value of these unstructured observations. They are often difficult to replicate due to the natural setting and time constraints of research (Tsang and Kwan, 1999).

Due to these time constraints, the unstructured observations only took place at 4 out of 12 organisations selected for interviews. Nonetheless, there is justification for this choice of conducting semi-structured interviews as the core qualitative data collection process, and having the unstructured observations used to supplement this. The observations were able to display congruence between what individuals stated in their interviews and what was displayed in their organisation's session delivery. This was particularly important when interviewing Project Officers and Coaches, as they were more focussed on the delivery level of meeting organisational objectives. Furthermore, the purpose of the observations was more about providing a form of methodology triangulation to corroborate with the themes emerging from interviews within the qualitative data collection of study 1. Should more extensive data be required from observations in future, structured observations should be used in order to provide this.

### 3.9.4 Interview inclusion criteria

Initially, secondary data was obtained from London Sport for Year 4 of the Sportivate programme. Year 4 was chosen as this covered 2014-2015, the last available fully completed year of data collection for Sportivate prior to starting this research. Within

this data was the name of each organisation who received Sportivate funding in Year 4 of the programme. These were split according to geographical location across 5 areas of London; North, East, South, West, and Central. Alongside this information was the target number of participants for each programme, which were initially stated in the funding application process. Finally, the retained participants were accounted for with a percentage given for the participation target met.

With the use of replication logic rather than sampling logic, it was important to determine which of the 436 organisations to select for interview (Yin, 2013). To obtain a good geographical spread, the five highest TA and five lowest TNA organisations for each of the 5 London areas were selected to be contacted. As described by Czarniawska (2014), desk research was undertaken to obtain contact details for 5 different roles within each organisation: Board Chair, Board Member, CEO, Project Officer and Coach. Sometimes an equivalent role was selected; Chairpersons or Presidents were counted as Board Chairs, a Managing Director equated to a CEO, and Development Officers sometimes replaced Project Officers. By highlighting 25 potential interviewees for both the TA and TNA organisations (50 in total), time was saved in identifying any additional interviewees required later. The need for this could have been due to not reaching data saturation or having a lack of response for arranging interviews (Boyce and Neale, 2006). The best performing and worst performing organisations were selected through desk research, with the next on each list being contacted should the initially contacted organisation show a lack of response or refusal to participate (Czarniawska, 2014).

Table 8: Shortlist for interview list based on highest participation retention rates in the 5 London areas for year 4 of Sportivate

| Area of London | London Borough | Organisation (coded) | Target | Retained | % Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| North | Barnet | NL-TA1 | 25 | 54 | 216.00% |
| | Haringey | NL-TA2 | 26 | 45 | 173.08% |
| | Enfield | NL-TA3 | 16 | 25 | 156.25% |
| | Haringey | NL-TA4 | 70 | 98 | 140.00% |
| | Barnet | NL-TA5 | 30 | 37 | 123.33% |
| East | Newham | EL-TA1 | 36 | 153 | 425.00% |

| Area of London | London Borough | Organisation (coded) | Target | Retained | % Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Barking and Dagenham | EL-TA2 | 20 | 55 | 275.00% |
| | Newham | EL-TA3 | 20 | 55 | 275.00% |
| | Tower Hamlets | EL-TA4 | 22 | 49 | 222.73% |
| | Redbridge | EL-TA5 | 80 | 162 | 202.50% |
| South | Croydon | SL-TA1 | 70 | 296 | 422.86% |
| | Sutton | SL-TA2 | 54 | 147 | 272.22% |
| | Sutton | SL-TA3 | 28 | 70 | 205.00% |
| | Croydon | SL-TA4 | 20 | 41 | 200.00% |
| | Richmond upon Thames | SL-TA5 | 12 | 24 | 261.90% |
| West | Hounslow | WL-TA1 | 21 | 55 | 261.90% |
| | Hillingdon | WL-TA2 | 10 | 20 | 200.00% |
| | Ealing | WL-TA3 | 18 | 33 | 183.33% |
| | Ealing | WL-TA4 | 11 | 18 | 163.64% |
| | Hillingdon | WL-TA5 | 12 | 19 | 256.00% |
| Central | Wandsworth | CL-TA1 | 25 | 64 | 256.00% |
| | Westminster | CL-TA2 | 51 | 123 | 241.18% |
| | Camden | CL-TA3 | 26 | 27 | 103.85% |
| | Islington | CL-TA4 | 15 | 15 | 100.00% |
| | Westminster | CL-TA5 | 55 | 55 | 100.00% |

Table 9: Shortlist for interview list based on lowest participation retention rates in the 5 London areas for year 4 of Sportivate

| Area of London | London borough | Organisation (coded) | Target | Retained | % achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| North | Haringey | NL-TNA1 | 216 | 4 | 1.85% |
| | Barnet | NL-TNA2 | 16 | 2 | 12.50% |
| | Multi-borough | NL-TNA3 | 120 | 32 | 26.67% |
| | Haringey | NL-TNA4 | 100 | 36 | 36.00% |

| Area of London | London borough | Organisation (coded) | Target | Retained | % achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Multi-borough | NL-TNA5 | 80 | 31 | 38.75% |
| East | Redbridge | EL-TNA1 | 110 | 11 | 10.00% |
| | Tower Hamlets | EL-TNA2 | 60 | 6 | 10.00% |
| | Bexley | EL-TNA3 | 25 | 3 | 12.00% |
| | Greenwich | EL-TNA4 | 16 | 2 | 12.50% |
| | Hackney | EL-TNA5 | 22 | 3 | 13.64% |
| South | Richmond upon Thames | SL-TNA1 | 36 | 12 | 33.33% |
| | Kingston upon Thames | SL-TNA2 | 28 | 10 | 35.71% |
| | Sutton | SL-TNA3 | 28 | 11 | 39.29% |
| | Bromley | SL-TNA4 | 36 | 15 | 41.67% |
| | Sutton | SL-TNA5 | 40 | 20 | 50.00% |
| West | Ealing | WL-TNA1 | 14 | 1 | 7.14% |
| | Hounslow | WL-TNA2 | 40 | 3 | 7.50% |
| | Hillingdon | WL-TNA3 | 60 | 6 | 10.00% |
| | Hounslow | WL-TNA4 | 33 | 4 | 12.12% |
| | Brent | WL-TNA5 | 70 | 9 | 12.86% |
| Central | Lambeth | CL-TNA1 | 50 | 6 | 12.00% |
| | Southwark | CL-TNA2 | 40 | 6 | 15.00% |
| | Westminster | CL-TNA3 | 50 | 11 | 22.00% |
| | Wandsworth | CL-TNA4 | 150 | 36 | 24.00% |
| | Islington | CL-TNA5 | 60 | 15 | 25.00% |

### 3.9.5 Data collection and analysis

From the shortlisted organisations, a total number of 33 interviews were conducted between September 2017 and February 2018. The interviewees represented 12 different organisations, with 18 individuals from the TA organisations and 15 from the TNA organisations. A problem in the data collection process was the lack of response from the TNA group. Despite the initial contact being made without reference to the organisation's performance visible from the secondary data (see

Appendix 10.4), it was necessary to extend the contact to 2 additional organisations for the TNA group. This helped create a more balanced pool of interviewed individuals between the TA and TNA groups.

Table 10: Staff roles of completed interview list for TA organisations

| Organisation | Staff role | Interviewee (coded) | Date conducted |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Board Chair | TA-BC1 | 4th October 2017 |
| | Board Member | TA-BM1 | 6th September 2017 |
| | Project Officer | TA-PO1 | 12th September 2017 |
| | Coach | TA-COA1 | 11th October 2017 |
| 2 | Board Member | TA-BM2 | 14th September 2017 |
| | Coach | TA-COA2 | 14th September 2017 |
| 3 | Board Chair | TA-BC3 | 9th November 2017 |
| | Board Member | TA-BM3 | 9th November 2017 |
| | CEO | TA-CEO3 | 9th October 2017 |
| | Project Officer | TA-PO3 | 27th September 2017 |
| | Coach | TA-COA3 | 17th October 2017 |
| 4 | Board Member | TA-BM4 | 6th October 2017 |
| | Project Officer | TA-PO4 | 16th October 2017 |
| | Coach | TA-COA4 | 2nd November 2017 |
| 5 | Board Chair | TA-BC5 | 16th January 2018 |
| | Board Member | TA-BM5 | 19th December 2017 |
| | CEO | TA-CEO5 | 14th December 2017 |
| | Project Officer | TA-PO5 | 14th December 2017 |

Table 11: Staff roles of completed interview list for TNA organisations

| Organisation | Staff role | Interviewee (coded) | Date conducted |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Board Member | TNA-BM1 | 3rd October 2017 |
| | CEO | TNA-CEO1 | 20th September 2017 |
| | Project Officer | TNA-PO1 | 20th September 2017 |

| | Board Chair | TNA-BC2 | 31st October 2017 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Board Member | TNA-BM2 | 26th September 2017 |
| | CEO | TNA-CEO2 | 31st October 2017 |
| 3 | CEO | TNA-CEO3 | 4th December 2017 |
| 4 | Board Chair | TNA-BC4 | 11th December 2017 |
| | Board Chair | TNA-BC5 | 12th December 2017 |
| 5 | CEO | TNA-CEO5 | 12th December 2017 |
| | Project Officer | TNA-PO5 | 12th December 2017 |
| | Coach | TNA-COA5 | 12th December 2017 |
| 6 | Board Chair | TNA-BC6 | 23rd January 2018 |
| | CEO | TNA-CEO6 | 23rd January 2018 |
| 7 | CEO | TNA-CEO7 | 14th February 2018 |

Table 12: Total number of each staff role interviewed for TA and TNA organisations

| TA / TNA | Board Chair | Board Member | CEO | Project Officer | Coach | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TA | 3 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 18 |
| TNA | 4 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 15 |
| **Total** | 7 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 33 |

Once the interviews were completed, codes were given to each participant in order to anonymise the collected data. This was for research ethics purposes, and participant reassurance, allowing an open dialogue with the freedom to respond with true thoughts without danger of it coming back to them (Fielding and Thomas, 2001). In addition to this, some information was removed or altered, regarding the type of organisation, the main activity for their programmes, and in some instances, geographical location. This is considered important for data anonymization as this information can sometimes lead to interviewee identity being predictable (Hennink, 2007).

Upon following the iterative process of data collection and analysis for the interviews, a point of data saturation was met, where no new themes emerged

(DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Despite knowing little about the differences between TA and TNA organisations, pre-meditated themes on factors of sustainability were used to develop theory and infer generative causal mechanisms. Thus meaning a more retroductive approach to data collection and analysis was used (Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor, 2004; Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). Hsieh and Shannon (2005) highlight this as a more directed form of content analysis due to this research employing theories of sustainability as an initial source to guide the formation of codes from the data collected. Support for this is indicated by Hickey and Kipping (1996) where directed content analysis extends upon the existing theoretical framework. However, in order to align this with epistemic constructionism, social reflections were analysed by the researcher to construct knowledge from the everyday sense participants made of sustainability (Elliot et al., 2000; Blaikie, 2010). Therefore, after the initial directed content analysis, a more conventional content analysis of the data was required to align with constructionist approaches (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). This also applies the strategy of retroductive logic as inductive approaches offer understanding towards the real domain of critical realism, after content analysis (directive and conventional), and before study 2's more deductive approaches.

To analyse the data, it was suggested that data was broken down into three stages of coding (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). These three stages are known as: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Similarly, Charmaz (2006) proposed these stages with alternative titles as: initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding. However, with pre-conceived themes and research philosophy considerations, realism researchers can bypass the first stage and move immediately to the second stage (Sobh and Perry, 2006). This was not preferred as these first stages aided the familiarisation of data transcripts, which allowed the researcher to be more aware of repeated themes that have emerged from the data (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994). Moreover, due to Sobh and Perry's (2006) concerns that some relevant data could be overlooked, the requirement to construct knowledge to meet methodological assumptions meant the research had to pursue a more robust process of thematic analysis more suited to the constructionist approach. Because of this, Nowell et al.'s, (2017) 6-stage model of thematic analysis was adopted as it was more reflective of building trustworthy constructs of underlying structures that made up knowledge of sustainability through

a constructionist approach whilst ensuring retroductive logic was evident through critical realism.

Table 13: 6-stage model of thematic analysis

| Phases of Thematic Analysis | Means of Establish Trustworthiness |
|---|---|
| Phase 1: Familiarizing yourself with your data | "- Prolong engagement with data<br>- Triangulate different data collection modes<br>- Document theoretical and reflective thoughts<br>- Document thoughts about potential codes/themes<br>- Store raw data in well-organized archives<br>- Keep records of all data field notes, transcripts and reflexive journals" |
| Phase 2: Generating initial codes | "- Peer debriefing<br>- Research triangulation<br>- Reflexing journaling<br>- Use of a coding framework<br>- Audit trail of code generation<br>- Documentation of all team meeting and peer debriefings" |
| Phase 3: Searching for themes | "- Researcher triangulation<br>- Diagramming to make sense of theme connections<br>- Keep detailed notes about development and hierarchies of concepts and themes" |
| Phase 4: Reviewing themes | "- Research triangulation<br>- Themes and subthemes vetted by team members<br>- Test for referential adequacy by returning to raw data" |
| Phase 5: Defining and naming themes | "- Researcher triangulation<br>- Peer debriefing<br>- Team consensus on themes<br>- Documentation of team meetings regarding themes<br>- Documentation of theme naming" |
| Phase 6: Producing the report | "- Member checking<br>- Peer debriefing<br>- Describing process of coding and analysis in sufficient details<br>- Thick descriptions of context<br>- Descriptive of the audit trail<br>- Report on reasons for theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices through the entire study." |

(Nowell et al., 2017, p.4)

### 3.10 Study 2

#### 3.10.1 Overview

The second study built upon the findings from study 1 with the collection of responses from online surveys administered to collect quantitative data. This moved the research from study 1's inductive approaches towards study 2's more deductive inferences through causal mechanisms, highlighting the philosophical interplay through retroductive strategies for the research as a whole. In order to expand upon the findings from the qualitative analysis, an extension upon Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index was used to elicit responses from participants. In addition to this, categories based on findings from Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) factors of sustainability were also included in the survey. These tools were tweaked slightly to include a wider selection of potentially influential factors, with reference to those that featured in the findings of Study 1 in addition to pre-existing sustainability theory (see Appendix 10.6).

Support was sought from London Sport to increase the response rate of the survey. Deadline constraints meant not a great deal of time remained in terms of obtaining the appropriate number of responses, therefore, having London Sport as the CSP/AP on board helped legitimise the research from an industry perspective. Another reason for this requirement was due to the research relevancy of studying Sportivate as a case study. With the programme ceasing to exist, it was important to examine the programme sooner rather than later. However, this limitation is somewhat quelled by the formation of a more extended Sportivate style funding programme labelled Satellite Clubs, as reviewed in Chapter 2 (Sport England, 2017).

The assistance from London Sport meant staff that were initially difficult to prompt to complete the survey became more accessible. This was particularly relevant for Board Chairs, Board Members and CEOs at organisations, thus increasing the likelihood of gaining responses from multiple staff roles at a single organisation. By obtaining responses from a wider range of staff roles, Herman and Renz (1998) recognise a consistent approach as a wider scope of stakeholders provides greater insight into the factors that influence sustainability.

*3.10.2 Surveys*

Greene, Caracellie and Graham (1989) identified five justifications for utilising quantitative data analysis in combination with qualitative data analysis. Firstly, methodology triangulation places emphasis on the corroboration of results from different methods. Secondly, it is important to seek clarification of results to determine if one method compliments the other. Thirdly, by using quantitative analysis to follow the initial qualitative research, this research determined how emerging themes have developed between methods. Penultimately, there is the idea of initiation, which allows for the discovery of new perspectives through questions or results that may stem from study 1. And finally, expansion, which extends the range of inquisition components through the different methods utilised, validating implications brought about from the adoption of critical realist approaches (Zachariadis, Scott and Barrett, 2013). With these benefits, the use of utilising quantitative analysis to contribute to a mixed methods research design serves to validate previous findings and the production of a more coherent and complete investigation (Kelle, 2006).

This research used an online survey creator tool, Online Surveys (formerly Bristol Online Surveys). One of the main advantages of using an internet-based survey was the saving of time. Wright (2005) highlights two specific moments where time is saved using online surveys. Firstly, the survey software provided assistance to create and design the survey. And secondly, the survey was easily distributed to a unique audience with an increased pool of potential respondents within a short time period. Other advantages of using electronic platforms for survey distribution related to response rate, which despite an initially slow rate, later increased due to survey sharing from London Sport (Baruch and Holton, 2008). Whilst online surveys have a similar response rate to mail surveys, the use of email reminders to increase response rates has been evident, which was how London Sport aided the survey distribution (Kaplowitz, Hadlock and Levine, 2004). However, this contrasts to the findings of Baruch and Holton (2008) who found no significant difference between response rates of web or paper-mail based survey distribution. Despite this lack of difference, the amount of follow-up reminders and the timing of them was pivotal for study 2's survey response rate and subsequent data collection (Kittleson, 1997). This justifies the research's use of London Sport to support survey distribution and following Yun and Trumbo (2000) recommendation to use on week reminders, which was somewhat

earlier than Dillman's (1978) paper mail follow ups at one, three, and seven weeks after the original survey request.

However, due to time constraints, and a slow response rate, more alternative strategies were used to evoke further responses. Yun and Trumbo (2000) concluded that multi-mode survey techniques, not only increase response rate, but also increased the representativeness of the sample. This helped the research alleviate Wright's (2005) concerns of sampling issues through online surveys. These concerns include a lack of information known about personal variables, and self-selection bias, where certain individuals are more likely to complete an online survey than others.

Despite these processes, a limitation in this study was that the response rate was initially low, thereby slowing down the data collection process. Links to the survey were sent by email and on social media platforms but elicited minimal responses. As social media provides a wide net of participants, it was important to add questions at the start of the survey to ensure participants met the research criteria. Furthermore, due to the initial slow response rate, social media was utilised through LinkedIn. This allowed for the direct targeting of Board Chairs, Board Members, CEOs, Project Officers, and Coaches from organisations who had accessed Sportivate funding for their organisation for community intervention programmes in Year 4 of the programme. Whilst this was quite specific criteria, and difficult to assess from viewing profiles, engaging in small dialogue prior to sending a survey proved a successful solution that helped increase the response rate.

To yield further responses, paper format surveys were distributed to community sports network groups to circulate at forums and meetings alongside the online versions. Using the researcher's network meant that some participants would encounter the survey without meeting the necessary criteria. Therefore, to minimise this risk, further questions were included within the paper format survey to guarantee respondents met the specific requirements of the survey response criteria.

### 3.10.3 Protocol

Participants were identified by accessing information available on organisation websites and creating a contact database through desk research. This collated contact details for individuals who fulfilled specific staff roles at organisations for ease of communication. Contact information included links to email addresses and LinkedIn

pages, as it was deemed that this may be another way to recruit participants to complete the survey. Additionally, hard-copy surveys were distributed to known addresses with the option of returning by post, collection, or scanned data input. This option was taken to increase the response rate amongst participants, however, as many took up on this option unexpectedly, timeframe was once more inhibited with the need to input data manually on to Online Surveys prior to analysis. Before proposed participants were contacted however, a pilot study was conducted to test the survey by four academics within the field of sport management. The importance of this cannot be understated as it helped ascertain issues around research failure, protocol not being followed, or inappropriate method and instrumentation (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002).

The survey created using Online Surveys (see Appendix 10.6) was made up of some questions relating to information around the independent variables of: organisation type, staff capacity, staff role, and length of time at organisation (staff turnover. These questions were followed by 82 statements that were clustered to create a smaller number of latent variables based on groupings displayed in Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index and Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) factors of sustainability. Slight amendments or further statements were included based on the findings that emerged from the qualitative data analysis from study 1. Each variable was measured on a 5-point Likert scale as recommended by Mancini and Marek (2004). These ranged from strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5) on the opposite spectrum ends. The independent variables measured stemmed from key influences on sustainability as highlighted in Chapter 2. The procedure for statistical analysis on this data can be found in Chapter 4.

As the focus of this research revolves around the Sportivate programme, individuals at organisations who had obtained Sportivate funding for their London-based programmes were targeted. Much like Study 1, the participant criteria required individuals to hold the respective positions of Board Chair, Board Member, CEO, Project Officer, or Coach. Despite this approach, initial response rates were slow, and follow-up contact emails were sent with the attachment of a supporting letter from London Sport for legitimacy purposes. Upon opening the survey link participants were greeted with an information page that acted as the Participant Information Sheet (see

Appendix 10.5). This ensured individuals were aware of the ROs prior to consenting to their participation.

### 3.10.4 Sampling

As stated, the participants of this survey were made up of individuals who fulfilled the roles of Board Chair, Board Member, CEO, Project, or Coach at organisations that had obtained Sportivate funding in Year 4 of the programme. As organisation type and size varied between possible respondents it was difficult to determine a population total for this study. After desk research, the contact database created for Year 4 participants in the Sportivate programme deemed that this study should utilise the list of 414 organisations who successfully applied for funding from that year. Therefore, 2,070 made up the population for the survey. Despite a low response rate of 10.34%, a total of 214 participants was considered enough to understand thoughts and perceptions on factors of sustainability through analysis. Furthermore, it is unrealistic to consider that every staff role was fulfilled at each organisation. Therefore, the 2,070 population, whilst feasible, cannot be deemed wholly accurate as a population of this case study.

### 3.11 Ethical considerations

According to Diener and Crandall (1978) the principles of ethics can be broken down into four areas of consideration. These areas are: harm to participants, informed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception. Grix (2019) identifies that ethical considerations act as a moral compass concerning confidentiality and professionalism in research. However, it is also important to understand the research design and which principles are appropriate for consideration (Jones, 2015). In light of this, this methodology will not consider harm to participants, as no physical or mental harm was brought to participants through the data collection process.

Informed consent indicates that participants have voluntarily agreed to take part in the research following a complete understanding around the nature of the research, who is involved, what their involvement is, and how long their involvement will be for (Blaikie and Priest, 2019). To offer a robust understanding of the research, Jones (2015) specifies the use of a participation information sheet. However, this should be more than a box-ticking process as certain requirements for key details are required (McNamee, Olivier and Wainwright, 2007). After the obtaining of participation

information, informed consent was collected through three signed forms; researcher copy, institution copy, and participant copy (See Appendices 10.1, 10.2 and 10.5).

Another ethical consideration is that of an individual's privacy and confidentiality when involved in research (Grix, 2019). This information was also included in the participant information sheet and consent forms provided to individuals prior to participation in interviews or surveys. Here the idea was for participants to feel safe that they knew who had access to research data, which was kept to as minimal people as possible (Jones, 2015). Blaikie and Priest (2019) highlight how one way to consider this is through the offer of anonymity. This is extremely important as it can offer reassurances to participants that their responses will not be made public in an identifiable manner (Bryman, 2012). Ethnical strength for the research is also furthered by offering anonymity to participants which can help reduce the impact of social desirability bias, but not completely eradicate it (Randall and Fernandes (1991). For this research, particularly from the interviews, some information was removed or altered, regarding the type of organisation, the main activity for their programmes, and in some instances, geographical location. This was considered important for data anonymization as this information can sometimes lead to interviewee identity being predictable (Hennink, 2007). Furthermore, for data protection purposes, all personal data from interviews and surveys was coded in a manner that was only identifiable to the researcher.

The final ethical principal for consideration is the idea of deception. According to Grix (2019) this is the deliberate giving of incorrect information to elicit a particular response from participants. However, Bryman (2012) identified varying scales of deception that can include limiting a participant's understanding of the research, which can help obtain data more natural to the ROs. Despite this, Blaikie and Priest (2019) highlight how deception cannot be used without justification from an ethics committee, as it is unethical by nature. Nonetheless, Bryman (2012) does specify acceptance when a researcher appreciates where to draw the line with deception, particular when there is limited distress to participants. This is particularly important, as in some instances participant awareness can influence the responses given (Jones, 2015). With this in mind, the research used very limited doses of deception, with ethical approval obtained, in order to encourage participation and elicit a greater depth of information from the interviewees. If individuals knew they represented

organisations that did not meet participation targets and were labelled as a TNA organisation, they would have been less likely to participate in the research. Furthermore, targeting equal representation from TA and TNA performing organisations for interviews meant a varied response to questions were expected. To avoid social desirability and conformity bias, indicators for top and bottom performances were withheld as it was preferred that individuals did not automatically conform to a social construct that was identified through organisation performances. Additionally, by withholding this information, privacy protection was offered to London Sport who had supplied secondary data regarding Sportivate performance.

### *3.12 Limitations*

As is the case with social sciences, research conducted using mixed method approaches will undoubtedly encounter limitations. However, by following an appropriate and justifiable methodology a research can enhance the critical awareness of these limitations and make moves to minimise them (Bryman, 2012).

Perhaps the biggest disadvantage of using interviews is the presence of bias from both researchers and participants (Boyce and Neale, 2006). Whilst researcher bias was minimal, it was felt that some participants were attempting to give an ideal answer rather than an honest one. Randall and Fernandes (1991) recognise that anonymity does help to reduce social desirability bias but cannot guarantee it. This emphasises the importance of triangulation as a method of reducing the sense of overclaimed measures from interviewees (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2006). This was particularly important as the post-survey EFA would highlight the correlative factors of sustainability that were triangulated against the themes emerging from interviews. Future research could utilise the themes explored, but to resolve this issue again, confirmatory factor analysis is recommended when using the established themes of sustainability.

In-depth interviews require a great amount of time to plan, conduct, transcribe, and analyse (Boyce and Neale, 2006; Walsham, 2006). With specific individuals in particular roles at targeted organisations required for interviews, an added burden of constraints was placed on this process. Interestingly, individuals at TNA organisations were more difficult to arrange interviews with, hence the criteria of five separate organisations in each category being extended to seven. By reopening the shortlist and

contacting a greater number of organisations, further time-constraints were added to this process. Suggestions for future research would be to expand the shortlist for organisations and give an early position of strength to the data collection process. In this case, the researcher would be able to reject unneeded interviews, rather than chase new leads because of a lack of initial engagement from participants.

Deadline constraints also affected the survey development and analysis, however having London Sport on board helped legitimise the research from an industry perspective. This did help with an initial spike in responses, however, further work was required to obtain a justifiable sample size for the survey. Paper format surveys were distributed to community sports network groups to circulate at forums and meetings alongside the online versions. This would have limited the meeting of criteria for survey completion, however further criteria-based selection questions were added to this physical copy document to guarantee respondents met the specific requirements of participation.

Beyond time constraints, another limitation looks at the inaccuracy of the population determined for the survey administered in study 2. Many organisations that obtained Sportivate funding could have employed more than one person to a staff role, or alternatively, fewer individuals than the five specified roles. This does make the 2,070 population figure somewhat inaccurate, however, given the difficulty for precision, the figure is justified as an acceptable number making up the total population.

### 3.13 Summary

This methodology chapter presents considerations for philosophical approaches and step-by-step interrelations that lead to the ontological and epistemological approaches utilised in this research. Upon review, approaches suggested a critical realist ontology and constructionist epistemology were strongly justified as perspectives to use for this research. This is due to critical realism identifying layers of social structures that rely upon actors to relay perceptions on the stratified nature of sustainability. From this, it was clear that the constructionist epistemological approach was vindicated, as people making sense of observations and events was a key component that would allow a researcher to interpret this information as data and relay it as knowledge through the domains of critical realism.

With these considerations, the methodology had to offer a middle ground that defined the development of initial theoretical concepts and expand towards uncovering causal mechanisms. This was underpinned by the retroductive research strategy utilised, as this did not rely solely on an inductive or deductive approach. Instead, a combination of the two through a retroductive approach allowed for interplay between inductive and deductive approaches that were necessary to address the RQ and ROs through a mixed methods design. Due to the lack of permanent, and constantly changing criteria that makes up knowledge and reality, the critical realist ontology, constructionist epistemological and retroductive strategy lead to a mixed method case study research design utilising both qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative data was obtained using semi-structured interviews with individuals at TA and TNA organisations through a case study of Year 4 of the Sportivate programme in London. The knowledge gained was interpreted as themes of sustainability that emerged through a coding process prior to administering a quantitative survey to a wider sample population. The survey used a more deductive approach, after theoretical constructs had undergone the process of EFA. For both studies, participants had to meet the criteria of being a Board Chair, Board Member, CEO, Project Officer, or Coach with an organisation who had used 2014-15 Sportivate funding to deliver a community intervention programme in London. The criteria for interviews were more selective as a shortlist of organisations that met a TA or TNA threshold was utilised. These limitations were not in place for study 2, which was open to a wider population of individuals fulfilling these job roles at organisations who received Sportivate funding in London for Year 4 of the programme. The procedure for analysing the data from study 2 will be presented in the following chapter.

# 4   Data Analysis Procedures

## 4.1   Introduction

This chapter will give an overview for the procedures undertaken to complete the quantitative data collection and analysis for study 2. As part of this, detail will also be provided on the types of variables used, with reasoning for why each was utilised in the study. Additionally, a brief description of the use of Likert scales with advantage and disadvantages will also be displayed. Prior to showing the statistical analysis techniques used, the collection and display of descriptive statistics will be described, highlighting issues with any outliers that may have impacted the data. Upon doing this, the procedures required for statistical analysis will then be completed, starting with an explanation of how EFA was used in this research. Having completed the EFA, this chapter will go on to discuss the importance of reliability analysis prior to conducting post-hoc ANOVA's, which assessed the strength of between-group relationships in each test. The procedures undertaken for this data analysis highlights how the RQ moulds the framework within which this research was designed (Blaikie and Priest, 2019). This research adopted the following RQ:

**RQ:** Which factors play a role on the sustainability of community sport programs delivered by organisations funded by Sportivate?

From this, ROs can be formulated which were required to achieve an overall answer for the RQ posed (Jones, 2015). These are another essential aspect of guiding the data collection and analysis procedures with a sense of purpose steered towards answering the overall RQ (Blaikie and Priest, 2019). As Chapter 2 and study 1 helped build the conceptual framework set within the RQ, study 2 set out to meet ROs indicated:

**RO1:** Analyse how staff role influences the perceptions on factors that affect the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**RO2:** Determine how organisation type influences the perceptions on factors that affect the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**RO3:** Analyse how the length of time in a role influences the perceptions on factors that affect the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**RO4:** Determine how the size of organisation by staff capacity influences the perceptions on factors that affect the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

Upon setting the ROs, Bryman (2012) indicates that hypotheses must be set to convert concepts and questions into measures that can be systematically tested. However, prior to stating the hypotheses, this research needed to ascertain the core factors of sustainability that were identified through EFA. To describe the process of EFA, this chapter first details data components that are important for data analysis, starting with the makeup of variables within the data set.

## *4.2 Variables*

In the context of research variables, it is important to understand what the independent and dependent variables of study are. Grix (2019) highlights that the independent variable can often be referred to as the causal variable that brings about a change in the dependent variable, sometimes labelled the outcome variable (Landman and Carvalho, 2017). A multitude of variables had data collected for them from the original survey. By using existing frameworks of sustainability theory from Mancini and Marek (2004) and Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012), the initial number of variables were vast in quantity. However, these variables were reduced in number as the research determined which were more important for meeting the ROs. The following table displays the independent and dependent variables that were initially considered for study 2, and highlights which were included for further analysis based upon a review of the existing theoretical framework:

Table 14: Initial independent and dependent variables for study 2 quantitative analysis

| Independent variables | Dependent variables |
|---|---|
| Organisation type* | Role of the board* |
| Staff role* | Evaluation and feedback* |
| Length of time at organisation | Role of the CEO* |

| Independent variables | Dependent variables |
|---|---|
| Length of time in current role* | Funding resources at the organisation* |
| Number of full-time staff at organisation* | Autonomy of staff* |
| Number of volunteers | Dependency on public funding* |
| Number of Board Members | Collaboration and partnerships |
| | Programme fit/effectiveness |
| | Staff involvement |
| | Community understanding |
| | Climate within organisation |
| | Climate within industry |
| | Culture within organisation |
| | Influence of sport policy |
| | Relationship building |

*considered for data analysis

The independent variables were made up of smaller categories for which data was collected. Frequencies for these categories are displayed in Chapter 6. This table shows each of the sub-categories that were able to group respondents from the survey administered for study 2:

Table 15: Categories of independent variables for study 2

| Independent variable | Category |
|---|---|
| Organisation type* | Education |
| | For-profit organisation |
| | Local authority |
| | National governing body |
| | Regional governing body |
| | Social enterprise |
| | Sole trader/individual |
| | Trust |
| | Non-profit organisation |
| Staff role* | Board Chair |
| | Board Member |
| | CEO |
| | Project Officer |
| | Coach |
| Length of time at organisation | 0-6 months |

| Independent variable | Category |
|---|---|
| | 6-12 months |
| | 1-2 years |
| | 2-5 years |
| | 5+ years |
| Length of time in current role* | 0-6 months |
| | 6-12 months |
| | 1-2 years |
| | 2-5 years |
| | 5+ years |
| Number of full-time staff at organisation* | None |
| | 1-10 |
| | 11-20 |
| | 21-35 |
| | 36-50 |
| | More than 50 |
| | Don't know |
| Number of volunteers | None |
| | 1-10 |
| | 11-20 |
| | 21-35 |
| | 36-50 |
| | More than 50 |
| | Don't know |
| Number of Board Members | None |
| | 1-3 |
| | 4-6 |
| | 7-9 |
| | 10-12 |
| | More than 12 |
| | Don't know |

*considered for data analysis

Where survey responses highlighted "Don't know" as a response, this data set was removed as an incomplete response. Blaikie and Priest (2019) demonstrated that a critical issue for data analysis procedures comes from the need to match appropriate techniques to the type of data collected. Furthermore, Schwab (2011) emphasises the need for empirical research activities needing to relate through the measurement of data, analysis of data, and the overall research design. This implies that should data not comply with the processes, objectives and overall question to be answered, their removal from further analysis is justified. The following graphic displays the interconnected nature for empirical research practice, within which the selection of appropriate variables for analysis must be suitable for study:

Figure 7: Relativity of research practice and influence of design on analysis and measurement of variables
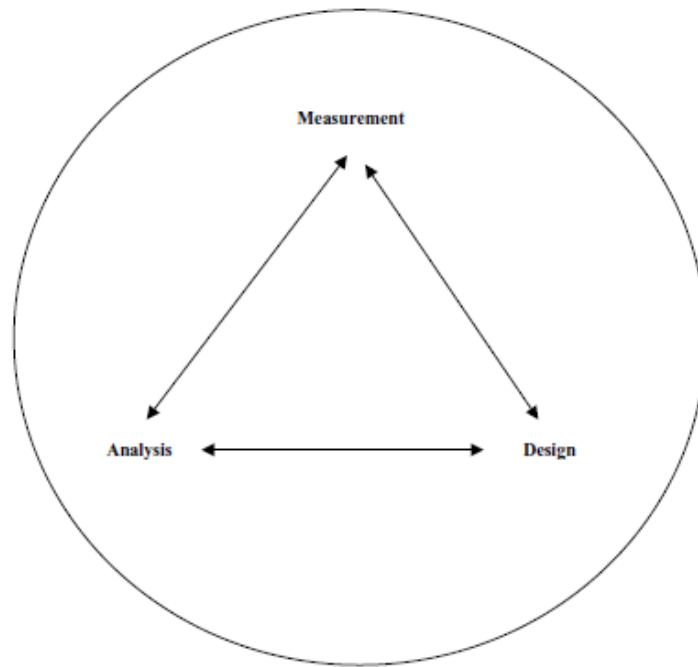


Schwab (2011, p.7)

However, the understanding of variables goes beyond simply differing the dependent variables from the independent variables. It is also necessary to distinguish between the types of variable as a property of measurement (Bryman, 2012). Field (2017) indicates that two main types of variable measurement exist, categorical and continuous variables. Each variable entity can also be divided into sub-groups of differing characteristics. The three categorical variables types are: binary, nominal and ordinal. Bryman (2012) also refers to binary variables as dichotomous variables, which contain data that can only split into two categories. Field (2017) states a person being dead or alive as an example of measuring binary or dichotomous variables. This differs from nominal variables which comprise of more than two categories and cannot suggest any rank order or relationship between the groups (Jones, 2015). When a variable indicates some form of logical order between categories, this is then known as an ordinal variable (Field, 2017). Bryman (2012) extends upon this by highlighting that the distances between categories do not have to be equal. This is further supported by Jones (2015) who indicates that ordinal data is ordered, but no suggestion of between group differences are highlighted.

Alternatively, the other main type of variable refers to continuous variables. Within this variable type there are two sub-groups, interval and ratio (Field, 2017). Jones (2015) suggests that interval data highlights an equal measurement difference between the values of data collected. For example, Bryman (2012) indicates that a person using equipment for 32 minutes compared to someone using equipment for 31 minutes, is the same as the difference between two people using the same equipment for 9 and 8 minutes respectively. However, it is only the intervals between data that represent some level of equal measurement. Jones (2015) emphasises that a data value of 10 is not necessarily representative of double the score of 5 in the same set of data. Should this be the case, the continuous variable would move from an interval characterisation to one of being a ratio variable.

Bryman (2012) distinguishes between the two by emphasising the fixed zero point that exists for ratio variables. Whilst the ratio data holds similar properties with interval variables, the data scores must also make sense relative to the value of responses given. Field (2017) offers an example by highlighting that ratings on an anxiety scale must indicate that a score of 16 must indicate double the anxiety of someone who has scored an 8. Because of this, the point of having an absolute zero is what distinguishes ratio variables from the similarities shown in proportionalities with interval variables (Jones, 2015). However, Neuman (2012) errs for caution when considering a data value of 0 as in some instances this may not be the case with an absence of the unit measured. For example, temperature measured at 0 degrees does not mean there is a complete absence of zero, much like 40 degrees cannot be considered double the heat of 20 degrees. The following table highlights what type or variable measurement property was set for each of study 2's variables that had data collected for them:

Table 16: Measurement properties indicated variable type for variables of study 2

| Variable | Type | Measure |
|----------|------|---------|
| Organisation type* | Independent | Nominal |
| Staff role* | Independent | Nominal |
| Length of time at organisation | Independent | Interval |
| Length of time in current role* | Independent | Interval |

| Variable | Type | Measure |
|---|---|---|
| Number of full-time staff at organisation* | Independent | Interval |
| Number of volunteers | Independent | Interval |
| Number of Board Members | Independent | Interval |
| Role of the board* | Dependent | Interval |
| Evaluation and feedback* | Dependent | Interval |
| Role of the CEO* | Dependent | Interval |
| Funding resources at the organisation* | Dependent | Interval |
| Autonomy of staff* | Dependent | Interval |
| Dependency on public funding* | Dependent | Interval |
| Collaboration and partnerships | Dependent | Interval |
| Program fit/effectiveness | Dependent | Interval |
| Staff involvement | Dependent | Interval |
| Community understanding | Dependent | Interval |
| Climate within organisation | Dependent | Interval |
| Climate within industry | Dependent | Interval |
| Culture within organisation | Dependent | Interval |
| Influence of sport policy | Dependent | Interval |
| Relationship building | Dependent | Interval |

*considered for data analysis

It is worth noting that five independent variables from study 2 were labelled as interval, giving them properties of measurement of a continuous variable type. Despite offering sub-groups within the variables that are categories, some form of rank order was evident, but they were not uniform in their order. However, Pasta (2009) indicates that there is a more powerful approach in considering ordinal variables as continuous in form. With concerns around the equal spacing between the variable measures, Pasta (2009) addresses this by highlighting the need for appropriate coding for naturally occurring categories appearing as a continuous measure. As such this research adopted length of time in current role, number of full-time staff at organisation, length of time at organisation, number of volunteers and number of Board Members as continuous

interval measures. Despite having zero as an absolute value representing none, setting the measures for these variables as ratio was deemed inappropriate. For example, within the number of full-time staff at organisation variable, the range 1-10 cannot always be seen as half of the 11-20 range as the specific number would fall within the range and remain unknown. Without this definitive response, the variables were measured as interval independent variables, an idea accepted by Pasta (2009) when examining the linear component of ordinal variables as continuous. Further support for this is offered by Neuman (2007) as ratio levels of measurement are rarely used in social sciences.

## 4.3   Likert scale

Having ascertained the variables and distinguished the appropriate measurement properties of each, this section continues by discussing the process of understanding the data that was obtained. However, to do so, the way data was collected for each variable should be stated. For study 2, a Likert scale was used as the method of item analysis to assess whether respondents agreed or disagreed with survey statements (Jones, 2015). Furthermore, using such a process for perceptions to be rated along a numerical scale has been deemed acceptable (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 2008). As this research aimed to study perceptions of sustainability themes, a Likert scale was appropriate as it can be used to measure the intensity of feelings by offering options on whether an individual strongly agrees or disagrees with the statement posed (Bryman, 2012). Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) specified that a 7-point Likert scale is appropriate as it reaches the upper limit of the Likert scale reliability. However, Marton-Williams (1986) indicates that a 5-point Likert scale would be sufficient in order to increase response rate whilst allowing respondents to complete the survey in a more comprehensible manner. Furthermore, Mancini and Marek (2004) noted that a 5-point Likert scale would be more effective than a 3-point scale as item variance explanations could be expanded. Because of these benefits, the 5-point Likert Scale was adopted for study 2 when addressing survey statements measuring dependent variables.

This is not the only area of contention for using a Likert scale as individual item properties should also be considered. Jamieson (2004) identified that the response points are not equal distances apart on Likert items meaning they should be treated as ordinal variables with only nonparametric statistics applied. Nonetheless, Lubke and

Muthen (2004) support the use of parametric statistics on Likert items, as true values can be found when using factor analysis. Given the process of using EFA for study 2, it was deemed appropriate to set Likert items as interval data when analysing. Furthermore, as themes of sustainability emerged from EFA, the need for reliability analysis was also evident. Brown (2011) indicates this use of Likert items within a scale suggests the applicability of interval measurement properties being used for the scale. Due to the responses characterizing a value placed upon perceptions of sustainability, further support is offered for the notion that Likert items function with underlying continuous properties (Clasen and Dormody, 1994).

## 4.4 Descriptive statistics

Upon collecting the data through survey responses on the Likert scale, and ensuring the data had been screened for errors, descriptive statistics were used to characterise the sample and address the variables presented in the ROs (Pallant, 2016). The independent variables presented in Table 16 were extended upon in Chapter 6, which presents the frequency distributions of each category. This information was presented using frequency tables to display the number of respondents and the percentage of individuals a category populated within an independent variable (Bryman, 2012). According to Field (2017) measurements of frequency that work around a normal frequency distribution can deviate through skewness or kurtosis. Pallant (2016) describes skewness as a value indicating the distribution symmetry, whereas kurtosis represents the peakedness of distribution. Field (2017) indicates that distribution symmetry is indicated by the grouping of responses for categories in either a positive skew (lower end clustering) or negative skew (higher end clustering). Distribution peakedness differs as Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) indicate that responses for categories are in either a leptokurtic grouping (positive and peaked) or platykurtic grouping (negative and flat). Should distribution be perfectly normal a skewness and kurtosis value of 0 is expected, however this is uncommon in social sciences (Pallant, 2016). This forms part of a quantitative data analysis method known as univariate descriptive methods (Blaikie and Priest, 2019).

Another summary measure that falls within the category of univariate descriptive methods that were used for study 2's results was the measure of central tendency. Jones (2015) indicates that the uses of means and medians would be an appropriate measure of central tendency for data obtained. This process is supported

by Blaikie and Priest (2019) who specify that other measures of central tendency exist, however the use of means and medians are more likely to be used. Jones (2015) highlights the use of means is most common and provides a sum of all data divided by the number of scores provided. However, Field (2017) errs for caution when using means as any extreme scores can influence the measure of central tendency, particularly when a low sample size is evident. Nonetheless, study 2 avoids this by using a 5-point Likert scale, negating the impact of extreme scores, and having an appropriate sample size where any anomalies had a minimal impact on the measures obtained. Pallant (2016) distinguishes between the use of means and medians as the former is a parametric statistic, whereas the latter is a non-parametric statistic. The median refers to the point that splits the data in two equal sections when ordered (Jones, 2015). In order to present the median value, Pallant (2016) describes the need to also display measures of dispersion.

Measuring dispersion refers to the spread of data from the measures of central tendency used, which in the case of study 2 refers to the mean and median (Jones, 2015). This can also protect from extreme scores as Pallant (2016) highlights the cutting of top 25% and bottom 25% scores to provide a middle 50% representing the inter-quartile range. By doing so, the higher quarter indicates the upper half of data from the median, whereas the lower quarter indicates the lower half of data from the median (Field, 2017). Alongside the inter-quartile range, Blaikie and Priest (2019) recommend the use of standard deviation to measure the dispersion of data from the mean obtained through measuring central tendency. Jones (2015) describes standard deviation as the amount data deviates from the mean obtained. A small standard deviation indicates that data points are close to the mean and a high standard deviation represents data points that are distant from the mean (Field, 2017).

Prior to using these measures of central tendency and dispersion however, Pallant (2016) warns that some data may be returned incomplete from participants. This was the case for study 2 as 214 datasets could be used from a total of 249 survey responses received. 35 datasets were removed due to missing demographic information (13), incomplete responses (20), or utilising the right to withdraw data from the research (2). Once ascertained, the measures of central tendency and dispersion were displayed in Chapter 6. This chapter will now progress to examine

how these measures were reviewed in preparation for use in inferential data analysis to explain differences between multiple variables in study 2.

## *4.5 Exploratory Factor Analysis*

Despite utilising existing sustainability theory to understand the theoretical framework for this research, study 2 did not use pre-existing survey statements. These statements were developed in the empirical domain of critical realism to identify causal mechanisms, however the perceptions of underlying structures in the real domain had to be explored (Blaikie, 2010). With a large amount of data collected, Blaikie and Priest (2019) indicate that some quantitative research requires manipulation for the data to become more suitable for inferential data analysis. Because of this, EFA was used for data reduction and to identify interrelationships amongst variables in order to group them as common factors (Pett, Lackey and Sullivan, 2003). Bryman (2012) describes this process as the determination of distinct variables that can cluster to make up a single factor used for data analysis. As EFA offers a precursor for data analysis it was not used to test the hypotheses that govern inferential data analysis (Pallant, 2016). Instead, latent variable modelling allows for an increase in understanding the data preceding inferential data analysis (Costello and Osborne, 2005). Subsequently, the use of EFA addresses the RQ; which factors play a role on the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded by Sportivate in London? This supports how the research follows a middle path between research strategies by bridging inductive (study 1) and deductive (study 2) reasoning with retroductive logic through critical realism (Cronje, 2006; Byers, 2013). Prior to conducting an EFA, consideration was offered to the 4 assumptions of factor analysis presented by Pallant (2016) in order to review whether the data collected was suitable for this process.

Table 17: Assumptions of factor analysis

| Assumption | Description |
| --- | --- |
| Sample size | Overall sample size should be more than 150 and at least 5 cases in each variable |

| Assumption | Description |
|---|---|
| Factorability of correlation matrix | Correlations should display r = 0.3 or greater. Bartlett's test of sphericity should be statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value should be 0.6 or above |
| Linearity | Due to being based on correlation the relationship between variables is linear |
| Outliers | As part of the initial data screening process, these should be checked for and removed |

Pallant (2016, p.156)

Study 2 was able to meet all assumptions proposed by Pallant (2016). With 214 completed surveys, the research met the requirement to surpass 150 in the sample size. Nonetheless, the need to have at least 5 cases in each variable could propose an issue with the independent variable of organisation type. As displayed in Chapter 6, multiple variables have less than 5 cases due to the diverse nature of organisation's accessing Sportivate funding in London, suggesting due care should be taken when reporting results from EFA and further inferential data analysis.

By assessing the factorability of the correlation matrix from EFA, the research could measure the suitability of data for this process. The first step was to identify the correlation matrix and summarise sampling adequacy using the KMO measure. Despite Pallant (2016) identifying a value of 0.6 or above as suitable, Stewart (1981) indicated 0.6 as a mediocre measure. Instead, a higher KMO measure was preferred in order to measure sampling adequacy with values of > 0.7 being considered more appropriate. The higher this figure was the stronger the case for measuring the principal components would be (Field, 2017). In addition to measuring the KMO, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity also had to be measured for the purpose of data suitability for EFA (Pallant, 2016). For data to be deemed appropriate for this process, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity should be significant with $p < 0.05$ (Williams, Onsman and Brown, 2010). In the case of this research, the KMO value was .890, whilst Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This further supported the data's appropriateness for factor analysis.

Table 18: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity measures summarising sampling adequacy and data suitability

| Measure | Score |
|---|---|
| KMO | 0.890 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | .000 |

To reduce response bias, some survey statements were negatively worded to assert consistency across variable responses for each factor. These were transformed by reverse coding at the analysis stage. Field (2017) describes how this does not greatly impact the reliability measure of factors, as negatively loaded items within factors only require reverse coding to address the suitability of data. This is supported by Pallant (2016) who stated that negative worded items can reduce response bias and have next to no effect on the ability to perform EFA on the data collected. To further reduce response bias, recommendations for varying the position of negatively worded statements within the survey was also utilised (Salazar, 2015). To achieve this, some negatively worded statements were positioned closer together when compared with others. Furthermore, Salazar (2015) also recommended the keeping apart of corresponding positive statements from negatively worded items, which was also adopted for this research. For study 2, having reduced response bias in collected data, the importance of reversing the items was because negative loading could influence the α score offered for Cronbach's reliability test (Field, 2017).

Table 19: Negatively worded survey statements reverse coded for data suitability in factor extraction from EFA

| Statement number | Score (Factor) | Survey statement |
|---|---|---|
| 27 | -.496 (1) <br> -.493 (4) | Administrative duties put the organisation off applying for pots of funding |
| 29 | -.432 (14) | Staff at the organisation are stretched to near-maximum capacity |

| Statement number | Score (Factor) | Survey statement |
|---|---|---|
| 33 | -.468 (4) <br> -.418 (2) | Organisational problems are common in effecting your organisation's ability to deliver upon a long-term vision for community intervention programme |
| 38 | -.447 (17) | Governance changes have been a high priority for your organisation in the past 6 months |
| 47 | -.702 (2) | Information is often lost when directing information between the Board and delivery staff |
| 55 | -.443 (1) | Retaining organisational autonomy is more important than following the direction of government sports policy |
| 68 | -.504 (5) | Participants tend to drop out of activity after your organisation's programme has run its course |
| 77 | -.426 (1) | The organisation's evaluation methods for an intervention programme tend to follow quite an informal process |
| 97 | -.407 (4) | Organisational objectives struggle to be met due to a lack of staff |

In addition to reversing negatively coded items within the survey, EFA had to consider the suitability of each variable loading into one single factor with a suitable measure of communalities. According to Pituch and Stevens (2016), if the sample size of research is greater than 200 then the use of a Scree plot is fine provided communalities are reasonably large. The reason for ascertaining the value of communalities comes from the subjectivity of Scree plot interpretations (Williams, Onsman and Brown, 2010). Any communalities that are close to 0 should be removed from the data prior to running the analysis of principal components (Pituch and Stevens, 2016). Pallant (2016) describes how the Scree test plots the eigenvalues of factors and that the point at which the curve begins to plateau should be the point to where factors should be considered. In this research, none of the variables rejected this assumption, presenting linearity between variables which align with Pallant's (2016) third assumption of conducting factor analysis. For this research, these eigenvalues, alongside the variance explained, were stated below each principal component to

emerge from the analysis presented in Chapter 7. In its simplest terms, the eigenvalue for each factor should be over 1, which was an assumption met by each of the 6 factors proposed from the analysis.

Following this, Pallant (2016) described the process of rotating the principal components. This presents the use of an orthogonal approach to rotation, using the varimax rotation method. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), this is the most commonly used orthogonal rotation method as it minimises variables that have high loadings on each factor. Additional support was also presented by Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) who highlighted that varimax rotation methods eases the interpretation of variables into identifiable clusters. This process helps to sharpen the contrast to display higher factor loadings for components, lower loadings for removing variables, and minimising the number of medium loadings (Pituch and Stevens, 2016). However, following the guidelines for principal component analysis should not be limited to how variables measure following varimax rotation. Pett, Lackey and Sullivan (2003) highlight that the rotated solutions can only produce a best fit and cluster based on emerging data, and therefore researcher intuition is still required to create conceptually suitable factors after EFA.

However, prior to creating the factor outputs from principal components analysis, further assumptions must be met to determine factor suitability. Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988) had indicated that any components with 4 or more variables loading with a value of $> 0.6$ would be reliable regardless of sample size. However, Pituch and Stevens (2016) determined that factor loadings should be $> 0.4$ for data that has many variables. Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988) also stated that the principles of component retention mean each component should explain at least 5% of the total variance and that each component should have a minimum of 3 variables. Williams, Onsman and Brown (2010) also indicate this by defining suitable factors as those with 2 or 3 variables loading within it. Additionally, Pallant (2016) adds that variables should only load on one component at the stated value in order to determine a simple structure of factors from the initially complex structure prior to analysis. However, it is also important to consider researcher intuition once again as Henson and Roberts (2006) note that the meaningfulness of factors is ultimately dependent on the factor label that can be attributed by the researcher. Chapter 7 shows the final structure of components

that emerged from the EFA, leading to the interpretations of each factor that follow the table.

The final assumption to address for EFA from Pallant (2016) specified the sensitivity for outliers which had to be checked, recoded or removed through an initial data screening process. Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) describe an outlier as an extreme score that does not fit with the majority of responses from data collection. Extreme values should be considered as those dispersed from measures of central tendency, resulting in mean scores being most vulnerable to the presence of outliers when presenting data (Bryman, 2012). The ideal solution to dealing with outliers was suggested by Pallant (2016), who identified that outliers should be revalued as a less extreme score and therefore the respondent data would still be suitable for use in the analysis whilst not distorting the overall statistics. Fortunately for study 2, no outliers were evident in the collection of data for scores measured on a Likert scale. However, it is worth noting that independent variables indicating staff capacity through the number of full-time staff, volunteers and Board Members sometimes elicited the response of "Don't know". To retain data suitability the data for these respondents was removed prior to EFA, ensuring only appropriate and complete data was used to create conceptually accurate factors.

## 4.6  *Reliability analysis*

As presented in Chapter 3, this research used internal consistency and alternative forms as the chosen methods of testing the reliability of data obtained. This was particularly important at this stage of the research as reliability analysis would allow study 2 to measure the consistency of interaction between variables within components emerging from the EFA (Pallant, 2016). Blaikie and Priest (2019) specified that the use of Cronbach's test offered a simpler approach to item analysis, which assessed the degree of which responses correlated with the sum of all other items. Support for this was offered by Henson (2001) who highlighted that this form of internal consistency testing aids the identification of how each item within a component measures against other variables within it. Furthermore, Jones (2015) insisted the need to identify if selected variables were measuring the same phenomenon, especially as study 2 adopted its own scale creation. Thus, as each component was set out to measure a different factor of sustainability, internal

consistency testing ensured each component was reliably measured (Jones, 2015). This allowed the researcher to understand if participant responses remained concordant within the theme being questioned (Long and Johnson, 2000).

To accurately measure internal consistency, Bryman (2012) points to the Cronbach's alpha test which calculates a coefficient between 0 and 1 to measure reliability. 0 yields no correlation, whereas a score of 1 indicates complete correlation. Neuman (2012) stated that a score of α = 0.70 or higher tends to indicate a good measure, however Bryman (2012) indicates that a score of α = 0.80 is the typically employed figure. Both values ring true when considering Tavakol and Dennis' (2011) indications of using α = 0.70-0.95 as an acceptable criterion. Despite a measure of α = 0.70 being widely accepted, Pallant (2016) recommended that scores above this figure should be used for stronger results from reliability analysis. Nonetheless, for study 2 a value of α = 0.70 was deemed acceptable for each factor. Despite being able to use SPSS to conduct reliability analysis, Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) recommended the following formula for Cronbach's alpha test:

$$R^{\text{Cronbach}} = \left(\frac{n}{n-1}\right)\left(1 - \frac{\Sigma(S_i^2)}{S_t^2}\right)$$

The results from the internal consistency test for reliability analysis are presented in Chapter 7, where the α measure for each factor is discussed and presented forward for the next stage of study 2's data analysis procedure.

### 4.7 One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Having completed the EFA and subsequent reliability analysis, clear factors of sustainability were determined, making up the dependent variables for study 2. The data analysis procedures should be designed with the testing of specific hypotheses in mind (Jones, 2015). These explain the relationship between the independent and dependent variables as a measurement of concepts determined through the building of the research's theoretical framework (Grix, 2019). For study 2 the following hypotheses were tested for each of the factors:

*Role of the Board*

H1: There will be a significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of the role of the board as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of the role of the board as a factor of sustainability.

H2: There will be a significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of the role of the board as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of the role of the board as a factor of sustainability.

H3: There will be a significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of the role of the board as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of the role of the board as a factor of sustainability.

H4: There will be a significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of the role of the board as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of the role of the board as a factor of sustainability.

*Evaluation and Feedback*

H5: There will be a significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between staff roles on perceptions evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability.

H6: There will be a significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability.

H7: There will be a significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability.

H8: There will be a significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability.

*Role of the CEO*

H9: There will be a significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of the role of the CEO as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of the role of the CEO as a factor of sustainability.

H10: There will be a significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of the role of the CEO as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of the role of the CEO as a factor of sustainability.

H11: There will be a significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of the role of the CEO as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of the role of the CEO as a factor of sustainability.

H12: There will be a significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of the role of the CEO as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of the role of the CEO as a factor of sustainability.

*Funding resources at the organisation*

H13: There will be a significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of funding resources at the organisation as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of funding resources at the organisation as a factor of sustainability.

H14: There will be a significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of funding resources at the organisation as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of funding resources at the organisation as a factor of sustainability.

H15: There will be a significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of funding resources at the organisation as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of funding resources at the organisation as a factor of sustainability.

H16: There will be a significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of funding resources at the organisation as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of funding resources at the organisation as a factor of sustainability.

*Autonomy of staff*

H17: There will be a significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of the autonomy of staff as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of the autonomy of staff as a factor of sustainability.

H18: There will be a significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of the autonomy of staff as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of the autonomy of staff as a factor of sustainability.

H19: There will be a significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of the autonomy of staff as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of the autonomy of staff as a factor of sustainability.

H20: There will be a significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of the autonomy of staff as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of the autonomy of staff as a factor of sustainability.

*Dependency on public funding*

H21: There will be a significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of the dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between staff roles on perceptions of the dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability.

H22: There will be a significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of the dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different lengths of time in current role on perceptions of the dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability.

H23: There will be a significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of the dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between organisation types on perceptions of the dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability.

H24: There will be a significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of the dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability.

H0: There will be no significant difference between different number of full-time staff at organisations on perceptions of the dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability.

Upon reviewing the hypotheses being tested for acceptance through statistical analysis it was apparent that a one-way ANOVA would have to be conducted. A one-way ANOVA was the chosen method as this allows the differences between more than two groups to be measured (Jones, 2015). Pallant (2016) extended upon this by highlighting that mean scores can be compared between one independent variable, split into sub-categories, and multiple levels within a dependent variable. However, this test can only specify if groups differ, not how, and therefore post-hoc tests were required for any significant results produced (Field, 2017).

Prior to conducting the ANOVA though, consideration had to be offered towards the assumptions that deem an ANOVA a suitable method of statistical analysis for this research (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 2009). The first assumption to consider was the levels of measurement, as dependent variables needed to be analysed as continuous variables to meet the requirements of ANOVA suitability (Pallant, 2016). Support for this comes from Nardi (2018) who matches these sentiments through a statistical decision model.

Table 20: Statistical decision steps for ANOVA

Independent variable → Dependent variable → Statistical analysis used

| Three or more categories | → | Interval/ratio | → | ANOVA |
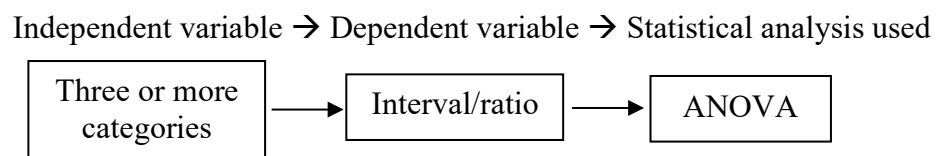
Based on Nardi (2018, p.202)

The second assumption from Pallant (2016) highlights the need for using a random sample from the population which was met by study 2. Thirdly, to meet ANOVA suitability, observations must be completely independent and avoid any influence from other observations that have occurred through data collection processes (Pituch and Stevens, 2016). Penultimately, assumptions for ANOVA state that dependent variable values should be normally distributed. However, Pallant (2016) continues to state that sample sizes of more than 30 are more tolerant of violations towards this assumption, and therefore this assumption was not considered prior to

statistical analysis on the collected data. The final assumption before conducting a one-way ANOVA was to consider the homogeneity of variance which was analysed using Levene's test of equality of variances (Pallant, 2016). Levene's test uses the following equation:

$$W = \frac{(N-k)}{(k-1)} \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{k} N_i (Z_{i\cdot} - Z_{\cdot\cdot})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^{k} \sum_{j=1}^{N_i} (Z_{ij} - Z_{i\cdot})^2},$$

In simpler terms, Rosenthal and Rosnow (2009) describe this test as one that hypothesises, if all groups were equal in sample size then results would show similar findings to what has been seen. However, some degree of caution is recommended when interpreting the analysis output as significant results of $p < 0.05$ mean variances are unequal and this assumption is violated (Pallant, 2016). Similar to the assumption of normal distribution, ANOVAs are robust enough to deal with violations in homogeneity of variance, providing group sizes are reasonably similar (Pituch and Stevens, 2016). In consideration of study 2 however, a lack of similarity in group size amongst the independent variable of organisation type was evident. Furthermore, from Levene's test of equality of variance it was evident that factor 1 (role of the Board) and factor 2 (evaluation and feedback) were significant as $p < 0.05$ (see Chapter 7). Because of this, caution was erred when reporting on differences relating to factor 1 and factor 2 from the dependent variables and any hypothesis testing involving the independent variable of organisation type (H3, H7, H11 and H15).

This caution was also extended to the possible occurrence of Type I and Type II errors when inferring statistical significance (Bryman, 2012). Type I errors occur when a relationship is incorrectly reported as existing, meaning the null hypothesis has been wrongly rejected (Neuman, 2012). In contrast to this, both Bryman (2012) and Neuman (2012) highlight that Type II errors occurs when a relationship is mistakenly reported as not existing, meaning the null hypothesis has been falsely accepted. A further problem lies in the inverse relationship between the two error types, as controlling for a Type I error actually increases the likelihood of a Type II error occurring (Pallant, 2016). This issue is usually determined by the researcher's choice in level of significance as Bryman (2012) describes that using $p < 0.05$ increases the likelihood of making a Type I error when compared to using a $p < 0.01$ level of significance. Bryman (2012) continues and indicates that by using $p < 0.01$

instead would increase the chances of a Type II error, thus supporting Pallant's (2016) notion of an inverse relationship between the two error types. To alleviate this issue the results reported in Chapter 7 highlight where $p < 0.05$ or $0.01$ have been used depending on the value of significance measures from the ANOVA. A decreased likelihood of Type I and Type II errors was also strengthened by the fact that a large sample size of 100 or more increases the power of the parametric test adopted for Study 2 (Pallant, 2016; Pituch and Stevens, 2016).

As mentioned by Field (2017), a one-way ANOVA reporting significance can only inform if a group differs to another, but not the actual relationship that exists. To understand effect size, the eta squared value was calculated alongside obtaining values of significance or non-significance between each independent and dependent variable (Pallant, 2016). Worth noting in the consideration of effect size is how to specify what is a large and small effect. Cohen (1988) indicates that 0.01 indicates a small effect, 0.06 a medium effect and 0.14 is a large effect when measuring the eta squared. For the calculation of eta squared, Brown (2008) offers the following equation:

$$\eta^2 = \frac{SS_{effect}}{SS_{total}}$$

In addition to measuring effect size, the interpretation of results should be treated with caution as statistical significance cannot be relied upon for the strength of relationships, instead it can only be used to confirm if a relationship exists (Nardi, 2018). To navigate around this issue, any significant results from the one-way between-groups ANOVA were followed up with a post-hoc Tukey HSD test. Pallant (2016) suggests this process as one necessary to determine the strength of relationships discovered from the initial one-way between-groups ANOVA. For study 2, this means the Tukey HSD was used to ascertain the differences of means between independent variable groups, and thus measure the size of effects on existing relationships with dependent variables.

### 4.8 Summary

This chapter presents the procedures undertaken for complete data analysis used for study 2 of this research. Initially, an understanding was offered towards the use of variables and scales to ensure the data was suitable for the statistical analysis that

would follow. Prior to doing this however, descriptive statistics procedures were discussed with emphasis drawn towards measures of central tendency and dispersion. To ensure all statements measured the factors they set out to do, this chapter also outlines the steps taken towards completing EFA. Upon clustering groups of statements to form accurate and measurable constructs of sustainability, reliability analysis was conducted to ensure each factor was suitable for analysis. Finally, this chapter illustrates the steps taken to conduct a one-way between-groups ANOVA for each independent variable with the six sustainability factors that emerged from EFA. The chapters following this data analysis procedures outline provide further details on the results that emerged from the statistical analysis. Prior to presenting the descriptive statistics and inferential statistical analysis results, the following chapter will outline the results obtained from qualitative interviews in study 1, which were used to build a framework towards study 2.

# 5    Study 1 – Exploring Themes of Sustainability

## 5.1    Overview

This chapter aims to collate the views obtained from semi-structured interviews conducted in study 1. Interviews were conducted with various members of organisations who had received funding for Year 4 of Sportivate and performed as a TA or TNA organisation. These members were made up of Board Chairs (7), Board Members (7), CEOs (8), Project Officers (6) and Coaches (5), totalling 33 interviews following the meeting of data saturation at this number (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Focus for the interviews was placed on understanding attitudes towards participation sustainability for an organisation's community intervention programme delivery. Due to the stratified nature of this concept, a critical realist approach was adopted to demonstrate the levels of sustainability in order to progress the theoretical understanding already displayed. As Blaikie (2010) specified, critical realism (or depth realism), states that reality consists of 3 domains: real, actual and empirical. By using critical realism, the concepts of sustainability can be broken down into underlying structures causing change (real), the consequence of mechanisms when activated (actual), and perspectives on the experiences and observations of actors (empirical).

These results rely on the accounts of observers and therefore, much of the focus in this chapter will steer towards the empirical reality. The domains of the actual and real were already fed by existing theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 2, which helped construct the line of questioning for the interviews. The data obtained was analysed following the retroductive approach through a constructionist epistemological perspective, as existing theoretical frameworks expanded upon important factors that influence sustainability. Figure 6 (see Chapter 3) indicates the use of retroductive approaches within the empirical, actual, and real domains of critical realism (Blaikie, 2010). Furthermore, as factors of sustainability relied upon actors making sense of observations from the empirical domain, and events from an actual domain, the retroductive approach towards answering the research question is displayed within this chapter. Therefore, the research legitimises the constructionist epistemological approach as everyday knowledge of sustainability factors are sought through the lens of critical realism (Reed, 2005; Blaikie, 2010). Moreover, Latour and

Woolgar (1989) bring attention to the reliance upon researchers to interpret collected data which further evidences the need for a more generative constructionist consideration, whilst remaining coherent with the assumptions of critical realism. As observations, events and mechanisms of sustainability are understood, through retroductive logic study 1 offers multiple interpretations to a single reality. This helps identify the generated constructs of sustainability through Fleetwood's (2014) material, ideal, artefactual and social modes of critical realism.

## 5.2 Results: Material mode of reality

### 5.2.1 Policy remodelling with the same struggles for delivery

Looking at the material layer of reality the empirical domain of critical realism adopts retroductive approaches with the inductive inferences made for this generated construct of sustainability. Interviewees highlighted disparity between the changes in policy and emphasised the struggles that ground-level delivers face in meeting objectives (Orr et al., 2018). This was illustrated in responses received during interviews across individuals at both TA and TNA organisations shortlisted for interview. The suggestion comes from both sets of criteria, in concurrence with Girginov (2011), that the top-down policy implementation approach has a lack of consideration for the ability of local organisations to deliver community intervention programmes.

> *"It gets rather confusing. Policy changes, but then the delivery needs have not changed that much. Whatever the name of a policy or funding scheme the short-term measures to get a certain number of people through the door in limited time remains."* – TA-CEO5 (VSO)

It appears that a lack of consideration for bottom-up or synthesis approaches in policy implementation has alienated smaller grassroots organisations. Not only has this frustration led to negative views of policy implementation, but also discontent towards policies favouring larger, more reputable organisations (Miller and Rose, 2008). This dissatisfaction has led to attitudes of an apparent advantage in the current system for established organisations to capitalise on.

> *"Policy creates too many hoops to jump through. Big money tends to go to more established organisations, but more money should go to smaller*

*organisations working on the ground who do far more to engage local communities."* – TA-BC5 (VSO)

Additionally, this appears to have created a defeatist attitude around the ability of organisations ability to meet the workload burdened upon them by government policy (Weed, 2017). Not only do grassroots organisation show signs of discontent towards policy and larger organisations, but also in the administrative requirements that severely limits the ability to access suitable funding. This is mainly due to the need of fulfilling requirements that decrease the value in the funding accessed, limiting the use of funding that directly supports programme delivery (Rogers, 2010).

*"The amount of work involved in monitoring requirements made it non-worthwhile. Most definitely there was a lot of bureaucracy thanks to modern day policy for added workload."* – TNA-CEO7 (VSO)

*"Policy can change but how much does it really help? We still suffer. Times are uncertain and public funding is becoming scarcer due to political measures in place."* – TNA-BM6 (VSO)

One of the reasons offered for this is because sport policymakers consult with larger governing bodies in charge of specific sports. This consultation process is meant to direct governing bodies to work with organisations under their authority to help trickle down sports policy through appropriate implementation mechanisms (Nichols et al., 2005). Nonetheless, it is apparent that individuals at multiple organisation types, across both TA and TNA organisations, highlight how this policy implementation model does not fit all organisations. Because of the processes of policy implementation respondents highlight the lack of ground-level knowledge despite strategic measures put in place after successful consultation with the necessary governing bodies (Rosso and McGrath, 2017).

*"In terms of current sports policy, it chimes with us. We understand it and try our best. We recognise what they are saying but reaching inactive people and delivering to the measures required is a difficulty that policy sometimes does not recognise."* – TNA-BC6 (VSO)

*"The problem is the one-size fits all policy whether you are an NGB or a local level organisation. How can the same policy apply to both of those types of*

*organisations? We can manage but smaller organisations that are delivering are suffering."* – TNA-BM1 (NGB)

*"Knowledge of the ground level seems very thin. National Governing Bodies have their own pressures on restructuring, directed by the government. This affects the regional and local levels because without this change funding would be cut."* – TA-BM3 (RGB)

A further issue that has been highlighted by interviewees is how elite sport target meeting has impacted on community level delivery in participation models. Despite being separately identified, failure to meet objectives at an elite level appears to impact organisations within that sport as participation goals become more difficult to meet. Arguments are that even if participation was to increase, meeting grassroots objectives will not protect funding because policy overly emphasises the importance of sports having an elitist medal-winning mentality (Weed, 2017). Furthermore, in congruence with Cutmore and Ziegler (2015), larger governing bodies also recognise this by highlighting their own objectives to meet medal targets as well as aiding participation at the same time.

*"So what if participation is increasing? Ultimately if our elite teams are not winning medals the funding gets slashed because policy makes that happen, and the grassroots delivery suffers."* - TNA-CEO7 (VSO)

*"In order to meet our objectives and get required funding for operations we must achieve at least 4 Olympic and Paralympic medals and continue to increase community participation through this success."* – TNA-CEO3 (NGB)

*"Funding goes where gold medals can be won. Policy dictates a long-term plan for models, but when it comes to participation it's a short-term vision."* – TNA-BC5 (VSO)

*"We work from a strategy that comes direct from government policy to increase medal chances. As a consequence, my role is to focus on how to manifest participation from this success."* – TNA-PO1 (NGB)

*"£1million per medal. Surely it's far better to invest in building a community of people that is active and healthy, and not just thrown in at the top end." –* TA-PO1 (RGB)

Policy filters down from government level to community organisations through the mediation and manoeuvring of mid-tier organisations that work with the government to structure sport in a top-down model of policy implementation. Despite consultancy with some relevant bodies, the remodelling of policy exists independently from the interviewees, who make up the actors in this material mode of reality observed through critical realist perspectives.

Individuals at both TA and TNA organisations highlight the struggles that policy has in working with the delivery level of community intervention programmes. There was an appreciation that organisations must try to follow strategy, but this has not been helped by attitudes that government policies have not obtained necessary knowledge of the ground-level prior to policy development and implementation. This was exemplified as both TA and TNA groups criticise a one-size fits all policy that does not account for the different types of organisations working to increase sustainable participation. Furthermore, this disparity between policy making and implementation is further concreted as individuals felt an emphasis on elite motives like medal winning have taken a focus of work away from delivering community intervention programmes to produce sustainable participation.

### 5.2.2 The loss of sport and moving towards health and wellbeing

The second theme to emerge from the material mode of reality, according to perspectives of critical realism, relate to the how the emphasis of sport has diminished and made way for an increasing call for activity for the sake of health. This somewhat links to the implementation of policy as there have been increasing calls from government legislation for physical activity to be used to combat health concerns that burden society (Green and Collins, 2008). However, given the frequency of this particular theme, it was important for "health over sport" to be a stand-alone factor that not only stems from policy but also has its own impact on programme sustainability. The interview data shows that individuals at both TA and TNA organisations held similar attitudes towards the loss of sport and the move towards activity for the sake of health.

*"Now there is a government message to say playing sport is more for health reasons. That is the biggest shift in community sport."* – TNA-CEO1 (NGB)

*"There is a big push around health. That's why London Sport has been doing more work around getting people healthier and active."* – TA-BM5 (VSO)

*"The direction that is coming to us from Sport England is that we need to push healthy living and healthy lifestyles. A lot of our attention is not on the sport but now on how to be more healthy in our communities."* – TA-COA3 (RGB)

*"Sport England has had to move away from sport a bit and direct an organisation like us towards health objectives. But that is difficult because we are still a sports body that needs to meet our own targets for the sport itself."* – TNA-COA3 (NGB)

These initial statements recognised changes in the way community sport is operating, however not much concern was raised until interviewees were asked about the contribution of the government in aiding these changes. One of the key issues raised stems from how sport appears to contribute towards the cutting of costs for other government departments. TA and TNA organisations highlight how these costs are not subsidised in community sports budgets that seem to still be decreasing from public funding purses. The argument from those interviewed was that if sport should continue to cross-over and be seen as a public good aiding the cost of other services such as the NHS, then there should be subsidies for long-term success to be continued through community intervention programmes (Downward, 2018). Furthermore, it is interesting to note that sports bodies seem to accept the role they play in supporting other government departments. The main issue is that sustainability is influenced due to the change in mentality that is not supported financially for long-term benefits.

*"The problem with some sports strategy is the lack of contribution from other governmental departments. There is an expectancy for sport to contribute to save money for the NHS through health benefits but we're having to lose emphasis on sport because of that."* – TNA-CEO3 (NGB)

*"The government is trying to reduce costs on things like the NHS by getting people more active and healthier. But, if anything, there's less money for us to do this work."* – TA-COA3 (RGB)

*"There has been a shift towards activity and away from sport. This means working with NHS organisations as they have had their funding slashed and using sport as a tool to get people more active. That's okay, but we should be subsidised for this work by those departments we help save on costs."* – TA-PO3 (RGB)

Further cause for concern was also raised by individuals at both TA and TNA organisations relating to how these health objectives have not translated into action from policy due to strategic failures from governmental implementors. Interestingly, the comments raised were from strategic level roles within the TA and TNA organisations. This would suggest that there is a strategic understanding of some of the failures incurred by the government when trying to promote health through sport ideals (Scheirer, 2005). Not only do comments refer to a failure in implementing a health through sport attitude at non-sporting organisations, but also suggest sporting stakeholders having the opportunity to capitalise on a system that favours the promotion of health through sport (Jefferys, 2012).

*"The government may communicate about healthy living and cutting obesity but then look at the priorities of schools. It's all about academics and not sport played at school. When cuts are in place the first to go are PE teachers, not the Science or Maths teachers. PE does not impact academic tables so it's the first to go."* – TA-BM2 (VSO)

*"I could probably maximise more money for our sport from the government and public purse if we pushed community level participation programmes as nothing more than a health service."* – TNA-CEO1 (NGB)

Regardless of the action of TA and TNA organisations, it is apparent that the theme of health presiding over sporting objectives is one that sits independent of action from stakeholders. The direction taken externally by the government is what highlights its place within the material mode of reality. Through the perspective of critical realism, insight was offered by individuals at both TA and TNA organisations that showed government objectives to be steering towards sport-for-health motives. It was apparent that organisations were accepting of this transition but were quick to point out flaws in the implementation of this idea, denoting strategy and action not to be acting symbiotically. Furthermore, with the lack of contribution from other

government bodies to subsidise the action of sports bodies, an option to exploit the strategy by working towards health objectives to obtain funding was offered as a solution to the issues proposed by this factor of sustainability.

### 5.2.3 Ground level staff capacity important for delivery success

Continuing with the material mode of reality identified through perspectives of critical realism, the capacity of organisations to have staff capable of assisting community programme delivery appears to be a factor of concern. Both TA and TNA groups highlight similar concerns for the inhibitions caused by a lack of delivery capacity. However, some differences were noted between the groups when talking about not having enough delivery level staff and the solutions to overcome this issue. Prior to these contrasting outcomes, there were similarities in the issue of sharing responsibilities becoming a burden that stretches existing staff which potentially damages an organisation's approach to programme delivery (Doherty, Misener and Cuskelly, 2014). Furthermore, this also impacts on the growth of an organisation as individuals cited restrictions on developing new programmes to help grow their community delivery programme.

> *"We would need to find volunteers to go out and run programmes so there is a balance that's needed because it's no good having that money but no real capability to spend it."* – TA-BM1 (RGB)

> *"We can only bring on specific people for a specific funding delivery. We're agile in what we do. There's no person hanging around just not doing much. We wouldn't be able to afford it."* – TNA-BM6 (VSO)

> *"I have to manage programmes even though as a CEO I shouldn't be. I even cover sessions if I must because a coach may not show or fall ill. It's a capacity issue more than anything."* – TA-CEO5 (VSO)

> *"There's added admin and bureaucracy so why would people with limited time want to stress over something they are giving up time to enjoy. It becomes a burden. That's not why coaches sign up."* – TNA-CEO5 (VSO)

This is an interesting point raised by both TA and TNA organisations, but one that also alludes to the strength of people on the ground when it comes to the delivery of community intervention programmes. Both TA and TNA groups highlight the key

role coaches and ground-level delivery staff play, indicating this is a factor that affects the sustainability of participation through the funded programmes. Key points raised still point back to the struggles faced by delivery staff. This supports Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) idea that the strategic level of organisations must do all they can to support their work to meet organisational delivery objectives.

> *"One is the strength of our people on the ground. The knowledge and enthusiasm of our staff across their specific roles is huge. The other aspect is the fact that the board can get behind these people and assist them."* – TA-BC3 (RGB)

> *"The people really drive the benefits for the participants. We give up a lot of free time to make it happen. The effort from the start has to be there, the knowledge to know where we can go play, and develop relationships too."* – TA-BM2 (VSO)

> *"It has to be the delivery staff that drive it. We don't have many but really the small team we have really are the driving force of what we do."* – TA-CEO5 (VSO)

> *"Volunteers are brilliant. They are the lifeblood of the sport and they are essential to the success of any grassroots participation."* – TNA-PO1 (NGB)

Despite similar responses from both the TA and TNA groups, some differences were evident in the reaction to how organisations should deal with the difficulties in expanding staff capacity. As illustrated by the quotes from interviews, TA groups, whilst hindered, were prepared to find solutions or compromise in the issue around staff capacity in order to continue working towards meeting the delivery goals of funding criteria.

> *"Due to staff shortages we lack in some areas of delivery. Anything we do now has to be self-funded through the club or using funding sources to get new coaches onto new programmes."* – TA-COA2 (VSO)

> *"Because of the funding amount we'd only have one coach at a session and work with smaller numbers. It's difficult but that's why have to have solutions to the issues we face."* – TA-PO4 (NGB)

*"We were looking to setup more community-based sessions. But we would have to time it well to suit the club needs as there would be a stretch of staff available to deliver the extra sessions."* – TA-PO4 (NGB)

Whilst these difficulties are much alike for both TA and TNA organisations, a key difference that emerges from the interview responses lies in the way solutions are found. Where TA groups opt for compromise and working within means to ensure sustainability, TNA groups held attitudes of staff shortages being the main cause of why long-term programmes could not develop (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). This does not appear too different from the TA organisation attitudes however, there is a lack of planning and how to overcome these issues when cited by individuals at TNA organisations.

*"It's the volunteers. I mean in the sense that we don't have enough or actually that some stay too long and there's a lack of succession planning."* – TNA-COA5 (VSO)

*"We don't have enough volunteers but then there isn't enough funding to drive the capacity to work towards what we need to be a success."* – TNA-COA5 (VSO)

*"The desire and inclination to do volunteer work is lower, these days people expect to be paid for the work they do. Holding onto volunteers is hard because of this, and we don't have the money to pay every person involved in delivering a project."* – TNA-BM1 (NGB)

The material mode of reality specifies entities that exist independent from the actions of interviewees. This perspective of critical realism offers insight into how both TA and TNA organisations have been impacted by the issue of staff capacity and how it is a contributing factor towards programme sustainability. Despite these difficulties, it was noticeable to see how individuals across strategic and delivery positions considered the role of ground-level staff pivotal to the success of sustainable community intervention programmes. Nonetheless, with both citing concerns around a lack of delivery capacity, TA organisations tended to have a greater insight into solutions to deal with the issue. Contrarily, individuals at TNA organisations

bemoaned the struggle, but lacked the knowledge in how to compromise on some ambitions for the sake of protecting the sustainable impact of existing programmes.

### 5.2.4 Funding central to the growth of delivery

The final theme emerging within the material mode of reality through critical realism perspectives looks at observations on securing funding as imperative to sustainable activity. Similar to staff capacity, individuals at both TA and TNA organisations cited funding as a central component of how to achieve sustainable outcomes through funded community intervention programmes. However, within this theme there were similar approaches from the two sets of groups in how to tackle this issue. Whilst accepting difficulties, TA and TNA steer thoughts and perceptions towards solutions to overcome the problem. However, TNA organisations, whilst also accepting the problem, tended to state more frequent attitudes of how the funding has drastically limited their work. It is also worth noting similar sentiments towards how there are some connections between funding issues and staff capacity as sustainability factors, but given the nature of interviewee perceptions, the two themes have also been developed independently (Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou, 2017).

> *"We get an allocation from the NGB and if they cut back then we will suffer. We had a cut back of 9% of our workforce grant which severely limits the development of our programmes."* – TA-BM3 (RGB)

As suggested the lack of funding has been more prominent with interviewees who operated at TNA organisations. Whilst this does not implicate a significant difference in how the factor relates to sustainability between TA and TNA groups, it does offer some insight into the attitude taken by individuals at TNA organisations. Clearly, TA have also suffered with funding cuts, but this did not feature as a central theme for why this factor has impacted sustainability. Nonetheless, the difficulties stated by TNA organisations can point to how some organisations struggle to deal with a loss of funding which is central to the development of sustainable community intervention programmes.

> *"We have actually just lost a large amount of funding, so the reality is that we have not got that money from the public purse so it's at the forefront of what stops us developing new programmes and continuing existing ones."* – TNA-BC4 (NGB)

*"The money is reduced and reducing still from the government. Over the last few years the corporate support has lessened too. The market has shrunk since the financial crash and its organisations like us that suffer."* – TNA-BC6 (VSO)

*"About 6 years ago our organisation was getting £10million over 4 years. Now we're on £4.5million over 4 years. It's a massive difference on what you are trying to deliver."* – TNA-CEO3 (NGB)

Unlike the findings from the theme of staff capacity though, both TA and TNA organisations appear to have a clear solution to help overcome this issue and continue developing sustainable delivery profiles. Whilst funding is central to success, interview responses show that public funding is not the only access to finances that can help develop an organisation's community intervention programmes. Clear emphasis was drawn frequently towards Bingham and Walters (2013) ideas on diversifying funding streams through alternative funding like sponsorship or corporate partnerships. Interestingly, all statements for this theme emerged from interviewing strategic level individuals (Board Chair, Board Member, or CEO) at VSOs. They also cited fundraising through things like events as another way of diversifying funding. This suggests that the solution is required at the ground-level of delivery, but novel strategic approaches are required to maximise the income possible from events and corporate sponsors (Parnell et al., 2019).

*"Well we only have a certain amount of funding from statutory sources like Sport England, so we need to think about accessing corporate partners. We have some income from events too which is a fairly standard funding profile for a charity."* – TNA-BC6 (VSO)

*"We need to attract sponsors through the programmes that we deliver. It gives us that little bit of independency on how to use the money we gain for future programmes."* – TNA-CEO7 (VSO)

*"A lot of the work relies on funding but going forward it's about finding the big corporate companies to get involve and help within the remit of what we do."* – TA-BC5 (VSO)

*"Public funding is not always there and not always guaranteed. Really, we need to look at different funding like donations, events and corporate injection."* – TA-BM5 (VSO)

However, despite being a common issue amongst those at VSOs, the issue of diversifying funding in this factor of sustainability does not go unnoticed by other organisations. Corporate partnerships are something larger organisations and governing bodies have recognised as a necessity, but still something that can be quite difficult to access as priorities vary depending on organisation size and objectives (Harris and Houlihan, 2016).

*"No-one is swimming in resources. Everyone is always working all guns blazing and then being told we are not efficient, that we shouldn't be reliant on Sport England money. I find that quite a hard pill to swallow and difficult to overcome."* – TA-BM4 (NGB)

With the difficulties of diversifying funding streams also comes the issue of how to spend the public funding that is accessed. When asked about Sportivate, only TA organisations responded with direct reference towards sustainability, even though severe limitations to short-term programmes have been recognised. These reference points were also directed by delivery level staff at the TA organisations, suggesting that the importance of a strategic direction for accessing and using funding has filtered through to the ground-level staff. Furthermore, these attitudes on how to be sustainable with the funding acquired stems from governing bodies rather than VSOs (Houlihan, 1997). This may imply that these types of organisations are better equipped at transmitting consistency through strategic direction and the approach taken in delivering sustainable community intervention programmes.

*"We probably need to have a look at how we intend to keep it sustainable from that perspective as the budget is not something you want to dip into too often from here."* – TA-COA3 (RGB)

*"Obviously something like Sportivate helps start something up. It removes that initial setup risk barrier where we don't have to use our own money. But it doesn't last forever so we have to be smart with it."* – TA-COA4 (NGB)

*"Sometimes these short programmes don't work out in the long-run. It's really a short-term fund, and as long as you treat it like that you will find other ways of making that programme sustainable."* – TA-PO3 (RGB)

It is apparent that funding is a central component of sustainability with regards to organisations accessing public money for the delivery of their community intervention programmes. As the final theme emerging within the material mode of reality, funding was shown to be independent from individual's attitudes as its presence did not depend on the action of those interviewed. The importance of diversifying funding streams was a perception highlighted by strategic level staff at both TA and TNA organisations. However, it was delivery level staff at TA organisations who pinpointed the need to think about organisational sustainability when delivering community intervention programmes. This suggests that some degree of compliance is required between filtering the strategic direction from board level, through the CEO, and acted upon by ground-level staff. Nonetheless, these solutions were still cited with difficulties that could arise, suggesting that funding dependency is a key factor in influencing sustainability regardless of whether you are a VSO or NGB.

## 5.3   Results: Ideal mode of reality

### 5.3.1  Evaluation is important, but difficult to demonstrate

The ideal mode of reality from Fleetwood (2014) uses an inductive approach to infer how the sustainability of stakeholders' Sportivate programmes valued programme evaluation but often lacked clear demonstrations of its use (Henry, 2016). From the interview responses there were clear differences between the TA and TNA organisation, and interestingly also between strategic level and delivery level staff roles. Initially, difficulties were stated by individuals at TA organisations as evaluation measures were highlighted as a low priority action. Appreciation for its importance was displayed by delivery level staff, but prioritisation meant that it sat low on the actions of deliverers. This opposes Mansfield et al.'s (2015) compliments towards programme evaluation as respondent inhibitions towards evaluation processes highlighted growth limitations of organisations developing sustainable delivery mechanisms.

*"Generally, we do try to do feedback forms with participants. But again, it's so tough to get rich information. They hate the forms and it's easy to get lost and becomes doing it for the sake of it with no real use at the end."* – TA-COA1 (RGB)

*"We don't tend to review our work as much as we should, but we probably don't have the time and resources to dwell on it. We still have targets to hit and we have to think about where we can go set up our next sessions."* – TA-COA3 (RGB)

*"In hindsight, an error is that because of the lack of evaluation we tend to focus on the easy stuff so we can go and meet our targets with what we know works."* – TA-PO3 (RGB)

It may be surprising that TA organisations have low prioritisation of evaluation despite recognising the uses of it. However, a bigger surprise is shown by individuals at TNA organisations as they highlight how evaluation and feedback is offered at the end of programmes, neglecting Johnson et al.'s (2004) idea of using evaluation as a planning tool as well. Nonetheless, responses from the TNA organisations tended to relate evaluation to an exercise that highlights if targets have been met, rather than assessing the quality of a programme. Where TA organisations have low priorities for evaluation, they still show a commitment to long-term sustainable programme development. This could offer explanation behind some of the reasons why TNA organisations have failed to meet targets and sustain participation through their community intervention programmes. Furthermore, with responses relating to this predominantly come from Board Chairs and CEOs. With a top-down model, this strategic issue transcends to ground-level delivers too (Scheirer, 2005).

*"We send it out, they then to return it to me anonymously, then we collate responses and then the numbers are presented at the board meeting to make sure we're hitting targets."* – TNA-BC4 (NGB)

*"We talk about hitting specific targets so once we hit that number that's fine. We don't have evaluation for all the clubs"* – TNA-BC6 (VSO)

*"We have our exec quarterly review where each department feeds back their results based on targets. This feeds from the delivery staff, to managers, then to myself and the board to make sure we're on track."* – TNA-CEO3 (NGB)

Despite TA organisations prioritising other factors of sustainability for delivery model growth, they have shown through interviews that there are some informal measures in place for evaluation purposes. It was apparent that these processes lacked a formal structure and were focussed around building upon existing relationships with participants. This is a clear difference from the TNA organisations' approach, which used outputs as a mechanism for evaluation. Rather than this, the more successful organisations refer to outcomes that were openly discussed with community members to understand the success and failures of a programme (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). Particular benefits of this for sustainability show that TA organisations were able to informally evaluate programmes while maintaining healthy long-term relationships with participants.

*"We do it but it's a very informal in a way. Almost over a bacon sandwich and a cup of tea. We'll talk with people involved and listen to their thoughts but there's not really a formal process."* – TA-PO5 (VSO)

*"But a big major problem with these is that you can't continuously track where every participant goes so how do you measure that as a success? We find a solution in just keeping in touch and listening to what they have to say."* – TA-CEO5 (VSO)

*"We concentrate on the relationship with individuals we work with. I'm still in touch with many people from the gang intervention I worked on years ago. Knowing that we are more than just getting numbers in for the sessions. It's a buddy-up and mentoring ethos we have."* – TA-PO5 (VSO)

For the first theme within the ideal mode of reality, the general discourse of interview responses highlighted opinions on how evaluation is important, but not necessarily the most imperative work an organisation will do, particularly for TA organisations. The differences shown between individuals of TA and TNA emphasise the reason for evaluation as a key factor of sustainability measures. Where TNA groups focussed on the targets they have been set and communicating this within their

team, TA organisations concentrated on participant relationships that provide honest insight of their programme's success and failures. Despite these positive responses the lack of a structured process could be a limitation in developing future programmes. However, from what has been understood with the material mode of reality through decreases in staff or funding capacity, this theme highlights how evaluation is an important component of sustainability. It was indicated that evaluation processes need to be managed according to organisational capability, suggesting that opinions related to this sustainability factor are dependent on how the material mode of reality is perceived first.

## 5.3.2 Adaptability of programme fit helps towards sustainability

One of the factors of sustainability to be measured through funded community intervention programmes assessed an organisation's ability to innovate their programmes to their own objectives or those of funders (Baregheh, Rowley and Sambrook, 2009). This theme falls within the ideal mode of reality when observing the perspectives through critical realism as opinions from interviewees highlighted the meaning behind their organisations approach to sustainable programme delivery. It was apparent that attitudes towards Sportivate identified a short-termism about the programme which hindered long-term and consistent participation.

> *"Sportivate's programme was just too short and could only be an introductory thing. Especially if we're trying to promote a healthy lifestyle. 6 to 8 weeks just isn't long enough unless there is a follow up somewhere along the line"* – TA-BM2 (VSO)

This response indicates how short-term programmes can be useful as an introduction to activity if the organisation strategizes that projects like this should be used to build towards more sustainable outcomes in future. However, this response from an individual at a TA organisation differs to the discourse revealed from interviews with individuals at TNA organisations. As Toohey (2008) warned, rather than recognising an opportunity for growth from shorter programmes, respondents lacked foresight towards sustainable outcomes that could arise from projects like Sportivate.

*"I'm not convinced that I have seen very much legacy emerge from this or much that is sustainable but that's just how I see how that funding that has been used with us."* – TNA-PO1 (NGB)

*"It doesn't have an end date and is an immediate mechanism to get people playing, but beyond that you cannot really do much."* – TNA-BC4 (NGB)

*"It's no good telling people go play sport for a number of weeks and have nowhere to go after."* – TNA-BC6 (VSO)

Contrarily, this introduction to activity through short-term projects was revealed by individuals at TA organisations to be an opportunity for growth. Similar issues were raised about the problems of this, but suggestions of how to turn the projects into sustainable programmes highlight the emphasis TA organisations placed on long-term objectives. With ideas relating to Pluye, Potvin and Denis (2004), TA organisations revealed that using other organisations allowed them to guarantee an individual the opportunity to continue participating in the activity once their own had ceased to function. The attitude and opinions that emerged from TA organisations was shared across strategic roles as well as delivery ones. This highlights a clear direction that was transmitted from the top of an organisation through to the ground-level staff in charge of delivering the programme. Essentially, this meant that they would lose the participant attached to their own programme, highlighting a discourse that emphasised the importance of sustainability over short-term target hitting. However, it is worth noting that these responses came from governing bodies at a national and regional level. This highlighted that the same vision for sustainability may not have been shared by local-level VSOs, indicating issues towards the mandate for local and regional functionality from Phillips and Green (2005).

*"We introduced them to a sport and hope for them to continue. After the sessions were complete, we would try to move them to a partner club if we could not afford to continue running the project."* – TA-BC1 (RGB)

*"For us it was about then moving individuals into a club environment so that the participation is sustainable."* – TA-CEO3 (RGB)

*"From what I was led to believe is that, we setup a project and then move individuals on from there to a more sustainable outcome than what's initially on offer."* – TA-COA3 (RGB)

*"A lot of the time it tends to be that people love it after 6 weeks which means we can create a new club or move people on to clubs where they can still play."* – TA-COA4 (NGB)

This selfless attitude of TA organisations differs from the language observed by individuals at TNA organisations. However, this is not to suggest that TNA organisations would act selfishly to retain participation numbers. Instead, the inability to adapt, and strict adherence to objectives, displays an approach of resilience akin to Casey et al.'s (2009a) notion towards a lack of community specific responsiveness. Nonetheless, for TNA organisations the staunch retention of their own goals could be a reason behind the failure to capitalise on the opportunities presented by a project like Sportivate.

*"I think when you look at the likes of Sportivate and local funding I do find it very arduous at times. I mean what they are asking for and what we want to achieve does not match up. So, what is the point of it really?"* – TNA-BC2 (RGB)

*"We need to be selfish in such a way but then not causing resentment with the way we do it. But then you can argue, why are we spending so much time on things like this that doesn't represent our own objectives."* – TNA-BM1 (NGB)

The general language from TNA organisation interviewees almost displays a degree of resentment to programmes like Sportivate. But therein lies a key difference between the discourse emerging between TNA and TA organisations. Particularly as adapting to the contextual environment was a success factor displayed by TA organisations towards meeting sustainable outcomes.

*"Yeah we didn't always have the same project. It was adapted according to the needs of the audience and how to get them participating long-term."* – TA-PO4 (NGB)

*"Sportivate was quite helpful. It's a short-term thing but we could be flexible in our delivery. If something worked out long-term then great, but if we could see it wasn't working, we were happy to adapt to ensure participants remained active in the long-run."* – TA-BM1 (RGB)

*"We are always looking to the future that looks on where we are and where we need to go and how to help participants remain active for longer than 8 weeks"* – TA-BM3 (RGB)

*"It feels like Sportivate is about getting the numbers up. It doesn't feel like what we were setup to do. We are about engaging with young people and changing lives long-term. Maybe that's why we were so successful with how we used Sportivate."* – TA-PO5 (VSO)

The ideal mode of reality emphasises knowledge underpinned by concepts emerging from entities like discourse and language (Fleetwood, 2014). The opinions highlighted, through the perspective of critical realism, that TA organisations were more prepared to adapt and merge funding programme objectives with their own desire for sustainable outcomes. In contrast to this, respondents from TNA organisations dwelled on how a project like Sportivate was too short-term and sticking to the criteria means they give up on aspirations of sustainable participation. Flexibility is also shown from TA organisations in their attitude that allows participants to join other projects if it ensures they would continue participating in an activity. This highlights how being flexible and adaptive are key to ensuring a programme fits towards organisational objectives of sustainability. A lack of emphasis on this priority could lead to failures in meeting short-term targets through projects like Sportivate, as shown in the language and rhetoric displayed from TNA organisations respondent data.

## 5.4   Results: Artefactual mode of reality

### 5.4.1  Appropriate partnerships needed for delivery

After highlighting themes within the material and ideal modes of reality, inferences by induction use the interview data which was identified into themes through an artefactual mode of reality. This perspective of critical realism indicates a synthesis of multiple modes of reality that can be interpreted diversely due to the mediation of

concepts through interview responses (Fleetwood, 2014). The first of these highlights the importance of using appropriate partnerships to aid the delivery of programmes (Mancini and Marek, 2004; Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). As already identified in the ideal mode of reality, partnerships are vital for TA organisations as they help to move participants on to sustainable activity. However, these partnerships exist beyond the need of participants and include aspects of the material mode of reality with perceptions of capacity discussed to highlight the need for partnerships (Scheirer, 2005).

> *"As someone who goes out into the community, funding can be deemed a barrier too, so working in these partnerships helps provide support in some cases. But there is a limitation from funding criteria's which forces organisations to need to work together"* – TA-COA1 (RGB)

> *"I guess cost sharing is good but its enforced. It's better to have partners that share ideas and multiply the impact of projects."* – TA-BM5 (VSO)

As identified by Miller and Rose (2008), these responses indicate that some partnerships are enforced due to limitations in delivery capacity. Whilst this is not ideal, TA organisations highlight how these partnerships can be used to benefit the overall output of a programme. The sharing of resources is not just limited to the use of material things like finances and human resources. Social components also benefit through the developing relationships which help organisations work towards a shared interest that could offer a wider impact of sustainability (Scheirer and Dearing, 2011). The forging of strong relationships through the sharing of material and social constructs is evident from the ideal partner characteristics emphasised by individuals at TA organisations.

> *"Our role in that respect is to assist our partners to meet the requirements to obtain funding. We have done that fairly successfully over a long period of time. It comes back to having strong relationships."* – TA-BM3 (RGB)

> *"It's about sharing resources and being efficient. Also, we get to share ideas and build common platforms to expand the impact of our programmes, helping them to become more sustainable."* – TA-BM4 (NGB)

*"Having those initial links with our partners helped us tick over the initial stages into this long-term project which is now still running here today."* – TA-COA3 (RGB)

Despite these positive approaches to partnership and collaboration work highlighted by interviewees at TA organisations, the type of partner was also highlighted. The general language when using partnership models emphasised that organisations must retain their own objectives and work with collaborators willing to fulfil required needs whilst sharing common goals (Froelich, 1999). Furthermore, individuals at TA organisations stressed the importance of partners willing to work towards meeting sustainable outcomes and not just the short-term goals applied by certain funding criteria. In some instances, these particular relationships were formed to cover an area where TA organisations could not fulfil the needs of working towards sustainable measures by themselves (Walker and Hayton, 2017; Widdop et al., 2018).

*"I think from our perspective we will work with anybody that allows us to work in a capacity towards the sustainable goals we want to achieve."* – TA-BC5 (VSO)

*"Partnership work is massive. Without facilities, without activators, without volunteers, without coaches we just wouldn't have sessions. We have to share that burden to succeed with long-term plans."* – TA-COA3 (RGB)

*"We can't do all of that ourselves so it helps us to meet targets when we can work with organisations that have already accessed funding and we help support the delivery of their programmes with our expertise."* – TA-PO3 (RGB)

With these attitudes it was clear to see how TA organisations successfully approached partnership work to meet common goals of long-term and sustainable participation through the delivery of community intervention programmes. When this factor of sustainability was discussed with individuals at TNA organisation however, the results appear somewhat different to the previously highlighted success factors. Interviewees from TNA organisations appeared to have a lack of self-drive towards working in partnerships. However, it should be noted that some of these failures in collaboration efforts are because the requirements stated by TA organisations were not

met. This includes the sharing of expertise not being utilised appropriately or the lack of common goals being met. Essentially, this means individuals at TNA organisations shared the importance of working in appropriate partnerships. However, individuals in strategic roles at TNA organisations held attitudes where ideals in non-compatible collaborations had affected their drive towards sustainable outcomes. It could be argued that this relates back to a lack of adaptability already displayed from interview data in the ideal mode of reality (Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones, 1998).

> *"Well there are plenty of networking opportunities organised by UK Sport and Sport England where they do workshops or lunches with other chairs and CEOs, but sometimes it feels everyone is out for themselves."* – TNA-BC4 (NGB)

> *"We have no particular hang up about working with others. Where we have a hang up I suppose is where others appear to be taking over the work we do. And once the independence of an organisation is compromised then people will walk."* – TNA-BM1 (NGB)

> *"With our hosts though it has been more difficult. They have no expertise in our sport as they have a focus on another sport, but it has been an upward learning curve for them. They brought in people from their sport, but it really didn't help our promotions."* – TNA-CEO5 (VSO)

This artefactual mode of reality synthesises aspects of material, ideal and social modes of reality. Through the ontological perspective of critical realism, it was clear that the mechanisms of partnership work could be interpreted in a diverse and stratified manner. It should be noted that the material issues surrounding capacity and policy means organisations are compelled to work together for programme delivery (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). However, TA organisations highlighted this approach should only be considered with like-minded organisations that either plug a resource gap or work towards common sustainability objectives. These sentiments were also inferred from TNA organisations who described the opposite of this as a failing point of the collaborations they had entered. This would suggest that the mechanisms of partnership work need to be considered and specific (Walker and Hayton, 2017; Widdop et al., 2018). Subsequently, sustainable outcomes would be more achievable

from community intervention programmes delivered in conjunction with another organisation.

### 5.4.2 Diversity for representation, not just ticking a box

The second theme within the artefactual mode of reality identified respondents' feelings towards diversity within an organisation and how representing the target community of programmes is an important factor of sustainability (Weed et al., 2009). The notion of diversity was common and frequent with individuals across both TA and TNA organisations. With the rhetoric of material policy highlighting the need for Boards to be more diverse, it would appear this ideal discourse has been approached positively by deliverers of community intervention programmes. One of the key reasons for this is to ensure the target population of a community project feels represented by the organisation whose programme they are participating in.

> *"Making the board more representative of our community and target market for projects has been essential. People feel like part of something which keeps them interested with what we do."* – TA-BC3 (RGB)

This highlights a social identity for an organisation that stems from the material policy set by government, and ideal language from responsive stakeholders. Despite a positive approach to diversity, concerns were raised by interviewees from both TA and TNA organisations. The fear that the dictation of policy could become another box-ticking exercise reiterates a message that suggests organisational objectives still need to be steered by ideals of sustainability. Further issues point to the fact that change was indeed possible. However, organisational ideology must adopt diversity because it fits the needs of their delivery, rather than carried out because of a material ransom governed by sports policy (Miller and Rose, 2008).

> *"We can do it, but the culture won't change. The mindset won't change. People won't buy into it. It has to be done where balance is met. Especially if we're looking at diversity at board level. It has to be done because we want to, not because we need to tick a box."* – TA-BM4 (NGB)

> *"You can't pick and choose with governance structure. It must fit and work for you. The problem is that we lose independence on how to govern our organisation because there are certain boxes to tick on diversity and the board.*

*If we don't comply, we might lose funding. That's not right."* – TNA-BC4 (NGB)

Additionally, it is interesting to note that much of the conversation around diversity stems through governing bodies and strategic level individuals. Essentially these stakeholders represent the first stage of policy implementation, hence why these particular organisations and individuals see this as a key theme of sustainability (Houlihan, 1997). Respondent data affirms the notion that this should not just be a box-ticking exercise as diversity is an ideology and social outlook that represents the community an organisation operates within. Interviewee responses highlight different stages of accepting diversity from TA organisations and TNA organisations, the latter of whom appear in a transitional stage of acceptance.

> *"Our board has to be more reflective of the type of people we would like to come join our sport. It should be a sport that attracts large sections of minority groups, but it doesn't. One of the reasons that it might not is because the board is reflective of a certain demographic."* – TNA-BC4 (NGB)

> *"I think that over the last year and a half we have become a much more professional structure. We are working towards a better leadership compared to what we had and one that represents our community more."* – TNA-BM1 (NGB)

> *"I feel strongly that our board and staff represent the communities that are around, and diversity plays a huge role in meeting sustainable goals for the benefit of our programme participants."* – TA-BM4 (NGB)

This theme fits within the artefactual mode of reality as it comprehends a policy implementation process that is materially real alongside an ideal reliance upon the discourse and knowledge around an organisation's target community. However, the theme of diversity was not always interpreted in the same way. Responses from individuals holding strategic roles at TA and TNA organisations split into two understandings of this concept. The first highlighted that this policy felt like a box-ticking exercise set by policy formulators. The second considered the demographics of target communities, and this being the real cause for change should an organisation see fit. The effectiveness of diversity was only apparent if the idea related to the

representation of individuals who participate in an organisation's community intervention programmes. Only with this approach did stakeholders feel comfortable that it would be a determinant of success in meeting sustainable goals.

## 5.5   Results: Social mode of reality

### 5.5.1   Staff autonomy

The final mode of reality identifies a status or structure that relies on the social interactivity of humans in order to exist. As noted, elements of what is socially real can be synthesised into artefactual modes of reality (Fleetwood, 2014). This is coherent with constructionism as social knowledge is enhanced as participants offered knowledge to be interpreted by researchers as knowledge of sustainability. However, interviewees identified the autonomy of staff as something that is governed by the social structure and environment within their organisation (Skille and Stenling, 2017). Differences were evident between individuals at TA and TNA organisations though. Respondents from TA organisations emphasised the need to trust staff members, and one of the ways to develop this is through the social structure that exists internally (Johnson et al., 2004). Furthermore, emphasis was placed upon the organisation leaders to create an environment that allows this social trust and autonomy to flourish and fulfil objectives contributing to sustainable success. These points were raised by both strategic level and delivery level individuals, suggesting a clear social strategy that allows autonomy to work successfully at TA organisations (Mansfield et al., 2015).

> *"We're given a lot of freedom to delve into our fields of interest and do our job well. That's a tone set from the top that gives us confidence to do our jobs to the best of our ability."* – TA-PO1 (RGB)

> *"That's the dynamic I look for in a person to work with and I think I can assess if I will trust a person to get on with things."* – TA-CEO5 (VSO)

Interestingly the social dynamic highlighted by TA-CEO5 indicates that staff are people they work with, rather than people that work for them. This indicates an in-this-together attitude that transcends trust and confidence through the approach taken by the CEO. However, this leadership and social environment is also evident from the Board, once again emphasising a strategic approach that emanates belief that delivery

staff can achieve sustainable outcomes based on their skill and knowledge (Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones, 1998).

> *"We believe we have a good structure that allows us to put the best people in the best places to perform in the various aspects we need to promote our sport. If you have people feeling like they are the best, they will achieve long-term objectives automatically."* – TA-BM3 (RGB)

> *"I have good faith in our coaches to deliver the sessions and keep the continued outreach which the coaches support with. They have to reach out to the estates and get people working in the communities that are being provided for."* – TA-BM4 (NGB)

The importance of staff autonomy was also described by individuals at TNA organisations. However, when compared to TA organisations, some differences were evident when the social environment and staff autonomy were discussed. In some instances, delivery staff felt they had autonomy to do their job, but the brash sense of ownership indicated that a lack of positive social environment was noticeable. Components of trust were not mentioned by individuals at TNA organisations. Instead, strategic level and delivery level staff pointed to their own job importance as a reason for why they should be left alone to do their work (Amorose et al., 2016; Newman, Anderson-Butcher and Amorose, 2018). This differs to the staff autonomy present at TA organisations and identified a lack of social environment created from the leaders of the TNA organisations. Also evident was the lack of identifying staff autonomy helping to meet sustainable outcomes, offering an indication of where some failures may have come from for TNA organisations.

> *"There's no way I can police the board, nor do they police me and my time. So the autonomy given to the deliverers is pivotal to the success."* – TNA-PO1 (NGB)

> *"We must have autonomy to do our job. The big picture of the trustee is to keep the charitable status of the organisation. We have our business and our goal is to meet that."* – TNA-BM6 (VSO)

What separates staff autonomy as a social mode of reality from an ideally real one is the dependence on human activity and interaction. Ideals of knowledge differ

to non-ideal entities, like people. By using the critical realist perspective, an understanding is offered for the social mechanisms that make up the stratified and multi-factored theory of sustainability. In this sense, TA organisations highlight a positive social environment and how a top-down approach instilling trust and confidence supports staff ability to work towards sustainable goals. However, this strategic approach was not evident amongst TNA organisations where autonomy was declared as a sense of ownership for one's own work. For sustainability to be met through this factor, a clear model of social concepts is strategically required, which was evident amongst interviewees at TA organisations.

### 5.5.2 Board or CEO? Clear leadership is required

The social environment referred to in the theme of staff autonomy, according to individuals at TA organisations, needed to be created in a top-down structure. This leads to the second theme within the social mode of reality, which is the requirement for a clear leadership being present within an organisation (Frisby and Kikulis, 1996). From TNA and TA organisations of any type (VSO, NGB or RGB), and across all staff roles, leadership appeared split across two levels. On a strategic level the general consensus was that the Board take the lead, whereas on a delivery level leadership would sit with the CEO (Hoye and Cuskelly, 2003).

> *"That would be with the chairman for the strategic direction of the organisation but the overall leadership for the delivery of the strategy sits with me."* – TNA-CEO1 (NGB)

> *"Ultimately the strategy the guides all action is our responsibility as a board of directors."* – TNA-BM1 (NGB)

> *"The leadership on delivery is definitely with the CEO. They direct the ground-level staff on what is expected from the programmes they develop."* – TA-BC5 (VSO)

What is difficult to ascertain from this data is whether the size of an organisation plays a role in the identification of leadership across strategic and delivery levels. Some organisations tend to have a CEO that transmits the strategic direction to a team of managers who preside over delivery objectives (Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones, 1998). As well as organisational capacity, organisation type also influences leadership

differences as a factor of sustainability (Hoye et al., 2018). However, for certain organisations, the internal recruitment of a CEO who has worked up from the delivery level makes them an easily identifiable leader for delivery objectives. This highlights Casey et al.'s (2009b) point around staff continuity, underlying the importance of how individuals can achieve sustainable outcomes through service longevity which was highlighted by both TA and TNA organisations.

> *"Most of that comes from the CEO. We have had quite a recent change in CEO who has worked from the development officer level right through the ranks to the top which helps as they understand the work needed for our delivery to be sustainable."* – TA-PO3 (RGB)

> *"It would probably come to me and the sports director to see if the programme was compatible with our aims and objectives for the organisation. It helps that I used to be a coach and project officer here before being CEO."* – TNA-CEO3 (NGB)

Despite clear positives displayed by having a separate leader for strategic and delivery objectives, the identification of a clear leader does not come without stumbling blocks (Brown, 2005). Individuals at both TA and TNA organisations highlighted that in some instances the Board and CEO would not adopt consistent leadership measures. Consequently, some elements of this slowed down and impaired the ability to fulfil sustainable objectives through the delivery of community intervention programmes (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). Therefore, there are some counter arguments offered for this sense of dual leadership across the strategic and delivery levels of an organisation.

> *"Some of the work is quite difficult because the Board aren't fully aware of everything that goes on. Some of them come from business backgrounds where it's all about profit, but our services are about growing the sport, not the finances."* – TNA-CEO3 (NGB)

> *"At times I would have to chase up an email because I do not have the remit to clear a payment. That sits with the CEO. If they don't agree with it, we have to hold a meeting and come to a consensus and in some instances the Board would disagree with CEO."* – TA-BM1 (RGB)

*"There is a huge gap between a project starting and setting out to meet sustainable outcomes. Sometimes the Board don't understand what it takes, but they dictate what the CEO can and can't do which affects my work down the line."* – TA-COA3 (RGB)

Interestingly, this lack of cohesive leadership points to a battle for leadership that can occur within both TA and TNA organisations. This power struggle is not just felt amongst the Board and CEO, but also transmits a lack of leadership down to delivery staff too (Mancini and Marek, 2004). Nonetheless, within this theme of leadership, interviewees pointed to the need for a collaborative approach similar to one that identified separate leaders for strategic and delivery goals. However, this was highlighted with a greater sense of collaboration required between the staff roles (O'Boyle and Shilbury, 2016). Board Chairs and CEOs indicated this by highlighting the need for a clear leadership strategy that limits hinderance towards delivery staff's ability to meet sustainable objectives through community intervention programmes.

*"For me, it has to be a kind of partnership between the Board and myself. Everyone needs to know their roles and their function. Perhaps the Board have to take the overall lead as they hire me, but really it's a joint leadership."* – TNA-CEO3 (NGB)

*"Broadly speaking it's the CEO that needs to be supported by the Chair and Board. That's why we have multiple management committees, so areas of responsibility have their own expertise and leadership."* – TA-BM3 (RGB)

*"Sometimes it feels like it's me. But I feed the organisation's performances into the board who hold me accountable. I don't mind that, because there's a sense of joint-responsibility to lead the organisation to sustainable success."* – TA-CEO5 (VSO)

The penultimate theme within the social mode of reality identified the need for clear leadership, whether that comes from the Board, the CEO, or both. However, given that some individuals reported a power struggle at some organisations, the compatibility of joint leadership was brought into question. This highlights a great difficulty in understanding the mechanisms of leadership and how they feed into the theme of sustainability. Leadership was a theme discussed frequently and at great

length with most interviewees. As evident, variations of anointed leadership have led to critical success factors of sustainability, as well as some instances where meeting goals has been hindered. Because of this, the splitting of leadership into a dually held role labelling a strategic leader and a delivery leader seems too simplistic. Instead a greater understanding would be required to understand the role of leadership on the theme of sustainability and how stakeholders are affected by this.

### 5.5.3 Social bonds and communication streams aid delivery efficiency

The social environment that builds trust and confidence, also referred to communication and the bonds build within an organisation (Johnson et al., 2004). Hence, this mode of reality has identified social bonds and communication as the final factor of sustainability emerging from the interview data. Most respondents that referred to the importance of this theme came from TA organisations, once again suggesting that the presence of a positive social environment was a characteristic of more successful groups (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012). This environment is one that transmits from the leadership right through an organisation to the ground-level staff.

> *"I don't feel confused and there is a clear direction. If anything changes, we are always aware of it quite quickly from management. We meet regularly and are quite open to conversation about life in general."* – TA-COA1 (RGB)

> *"I speak to my manager most days on the phone for a catch up. Sometimes it's just a social call. But at least I know, if I ever need anything, I can rely on management for support."* – TA-COA4 (NGB)

> *"We are fed reports from everyone on a monthly basis and it's fair to say we are very happy with the general direction we are heading in. Plus, the meetings feel like a bit of a social event at times as it's nice to get together and catch up. That's how we do it and as part of our future planning, our strength comes from that."* – TA-BM3 (RGB)

Interestingly, this directional relationship is two-way, meaning social bonds must help communication flow back up to the board from the delivery staff too. Responses alluding to this came from individuals at both TA and TNA organisations, suggesting that regardless of performance, communication streams are considered key components of working towards sustainable outcomes in a synthesised manner

(O'Toole, 2000). Importantly, interviewees highlighted that clear communication streams between staff, regardless of level, made for a more efficient working process.

> *"I always make sure the view of the Board is fed down to the management team who then feed that back to the staff, so everybody is well informed."* – TNA-CEO1 (RGB)

> *"I attend meetings with others so we're a close organisation and that's a challenge for me and the board to ensure we tie up different strands into one organisation's work."* – TA-BC3 (RGB)

> *"There is a communication system internally that we can use across different levels and communicate with people immediately on a one to one basis. It's very much instrumental to the success we have."* – TA-PO4 (NGB)

Where interviewees at both TA and TNA organisations highlighted these views, only respondents from TA organisations indicated how communication streams allowed for greater internal workload support, reinforcing Scheirer and Dearing's (2011) idea of positive internal environments. This idea of cooperation and sharing workload is something that TA organisations identified when approaching external relationships. Therefore, a multi-layered importance of social bonds and communication were ascertained. Firstly, strong social bonds help open communication streams which allow for work to be shared internally. Secondly, it is worth noting that the positive social environment mediated by human activity creates an efficiency in working towards meeting sustainable outcomes of community intervention programmes (Mancini and Marek, 2004; Wiltsey Stirman et al, 2012).

> *"Having the system in place really helped with timing and less mistakes were made over time. It also allowed our staff to support each other more through internal communications."* – TA-BM1 (RGB)

> *"So now in the development team we had people covering different areas, but they would actually cross over. In order to get a session set up we would need to communicate and cross-over"* – TA-PO3 (RGB)

*"I have decent relationships with the development teams. I have engagement with the board generally too. Some I have a closer relationship with if they're working in line with the area of work I am involved in."* – TA-BM4 (NGB)

The final theme within the social mode of reality highlighted the importance of social bonds and open communication streams. Interestingly, at TA organisations it was ground-level staff who indicated their inclusion in the conversations around delivery. Much of this was attributed to the strong social environment within the organisations they operated within. Using critical realism, it was apparent that, as a factor of sustainability, this theme appeared stratified with multiple components. The first identified the strength of social bonds emanating from a positive social environment. Secondly, these social bonds help to create communication streams that help increase work efficiency both internally and externally. And finally, this same work efficiency was achieved even more successfully due to the crossover between staff to support each other in meeting delivery objectives.

## 5.6 Summary

The ontological perspective of critical realism highlights a state of depth that reality exists within (Blaikie, 2010). This depth related to three domains that conceptualise sustainability into underlying structure causing change (the real), consequences of activated mechanisms (the actual), and perspectives on the experiences of actors (the empirical). With the domains of the real and actual domains being fed by existing theory, the development of this theoretical framework through the empirical domain vindicates the methodological approach taken. Grouping the emerging themes into Fleetwood's (2014) four modes of reality (material, ideal, artefactual and social) indicates how critical realism acknowledges the existence that some social entities exist independently from society's structures and can be categorized as a position of understanding processes and relations whilst offering multiple interpretations to a single reality.

The unique perspectives of actors expand the understanding of sustainability, particularly when discussing short-term programmes like Sportivate. With a model of funding criteria causing delivery objectives to focus on meeting participation figures, valuable insight into the difficulties of sustainable participation were ascertained. However, due to the multi-layered and stratified nature of sustainability, complexities

in analysis also emerged from interview data. In terms of contribution to the theoretical concept of sustainability, there is a clear development of multiple components that require further analysis. The first stage of this retroductive strategy has developed sustainability theory, and offers indication towards hypotheses for testing, as accepted in Chapter 3 for this mixed-methods, critical realist approach. Knowledge obtained within the multiple modes of reality indicated differentiations between organisation type, staff capacity, staff roles, and staff turnover, as well as an organisation's initial Sportivate performance. These complexities provide an indication towards the influence these themes of sustainability have as mechanisms towards the successful delivery of long-term community intervention programmes. Furthermore, answers towards the RQ of which factors play a role on the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded by Sportivate begin to develop. The following chapter will seek to address these factors through the initial description of results from data obtained for study 2.

# 6 Study 2 – Results of Sustainability Survey

## 6.1 Introduction

This results chapter focusses on the findings from the sample population made up of individuals at organisations who had received funding for the delivery of their Sportivate programmes in London. The main objectives were to understand existing perceptions within these organisations, and what themes of sustainability were perceived important when planning, delivering, and evaluating funded programmes. Descriptive statistics have been detailed and explored to give a base understanding of what was found from the survey responses. Details on statistical analysis will be presented in the following chapter after EFA, reliability testing, ANOVAs and post-hoc testing. Chapter 3 previously stated how the independent variables (organisation type, staff capacity, staff role, and length of time at organisation or staff turnover) were investigated. This chapter indicates, initially through descriptive statistics, how the stated categories can create dividing perceptions across the functionality of key themes of sustainability when delivering community intervention programmes in London.

## 6.2 Population and sample of survey respondents

A total of 249 responses were obtained from the survey administered for this research. However, of these, 214 have been detailed and analysed for this chapter as they represent the fully-completed survey sets. A total of 35 were removed due to missing demographic information (13), incomplete responses (20), or utilising the right to withdraw data from the research (2). Based on secondary data provided by London Sport, a total of 414 organisations received funding in Year 4 (2014-15) of the programme. 5 responses were possible to obtain from any organisation who met the criteria for having received funding for the delivery of their community intervention programme in London. These responses were possible from the Board Chair, any other Board Member, the CEO, a Project Officer, and a Coach who delivered on the Sportivate programme. Therefore, a total of 2,070 individuals made up the population for the survey. Despite a low response rate of 10.34%, a total of 214 participants was considered enough to understand thoughts and perceptions on factors of sustainability through analysis.

Issues surrounding data collection have been documented in Chapter 3. Following desk research, participants were identified through a self-built database that

highlighted contact details as well as an individual's staff role. Initially, emails were sent directly to individuals for participation in the survey, but with low success rate, emails were sent to other available contacts to pass on to appropriate staff members. Further issues regarding survey responses highlight the difficulty in obtaining more survey responses as Board Chairs and CEOs tended to be more difficult to gain contact details for. Other approaches taken were to search for individuals on LinkedIn and utilise hard-copy surveys to be sent out to individuals which increased the return of responses. However, collecting data and manually inputting survey responses on software for descriptive and statistical analysis meant time constraints would also play a role in limiting the survey responses. Thus, the sample data obtained from 214 individuals was deemed satisfactory given the climate of distribution and return of the surveys.

### 6.3  *Demographic data*

As afore mentioned, independent variables (organisation type, staff capacity, staff role, and length of time at organisation or staff turnover) were measured in preparation for determining perception trends amongst themes of sustainability. Respondent demographic data highlighting the independent variables are presented below. Excess variables were originally obtained (and included below), however, as laid out in previous chapters only the highlighted variables were carried forward for further statistical analysis.

Table 21: Number of respondents according to demographic variables of survey respondents

| Variable | Group | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Education | 2 | 0.9% |
| | For-profit organisation | 6 | 2.8% |
| | Local authority | 3 | 1.4% |
| | NGB | 16 | 7.5% |
| Organisation type* | RGB | 14 | 6.5% |
| | Social enterprise | 3 | 1.4% |
| | Sole trader/individual | 3 | 1.4% |
| | Trust | 2 | 0.9% |
| | Non-profit organisation | 165 | 77.1% |
| | Board chair | 40 | 18.7% |
| Staff role* | Board member | 50 | 23.4% |
| | CEO | 27 | 12.6% |

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| Variable | Group | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Project Officer | 42 | 19.6% |
| | Coach | 55 | 25.7% |
| Length of time at organisation* | 0-6 months | 16 | 7.5% |
| | 6-12 months | 12 | 5.6% |
| | 1-2 years | 41 | 19.2% |
| | 2-5 years | 52 | 24.3% |
| | 5+ years | 93 | 43.5% |
| Length of time in current role | 0-6 months | 19 | 8.9% |
| | 6-12 months | 19 | 8.9% |
| | 1-2 years | 52 | 24.3% |
| | 2-5 years | 57 | 26.6% |
| | 5+ years | 67 | 31.3% |
| Number of full-time staff* | None | 99 | 46.3% |
| | 1-10 | 56 | 26.2% |
| | 11-20 | 14 | 6.5% |
| | 21-35 | 14 | 6.5% |
| | 36-50 | 7 | 3.3% |
| | More than 50 | 16 | 3.7% |
| | Don't know | 8 | 7.5% |
| Number of volunteers | None | 1 | 0.5% |
| | 1-10 | 104 | 48.6% |
| | 11-20 | 47 | 22.0% |
| | 21-35 | 14 | 6.5% |
| | 36-50 | 3 | 1.4% |
| | More than 50 | 32 | 15.0% |
| | Don't know | 13 | 6.1% |
| Number of board members | None | 1 | 0.5% |
| | 1-3 | 68 | 31.8% |
| | 4-6 | 57 | 26.6% |
| | 7-9 | 30 | 14.0% |
| | 10-12 | 32 | 15.0% |
| | More than 12 | 14 | 6.5% |
| | Don't know | 12 | 5.6% |

*considered for data analysis

Organisation types were originally split into five categories of non-profit organisations, for-profit organisations, local authorities, NGBs and RGBs. However, upon reviewing data obtained from specifying "Other" options, the groups of education, social enterprises, sole traders/individuals, and trusts were added. The majority of responses came from individuals working for a non-profit organisation (n = 165, 77.1%). This was expected due to these types of organisations often applying for funding for the delivery of funded community intervention programmes (Tacon and Hanson, 2012). In line with this notion, non-profit organisations were made up of

VSOs, Community Interest Companies (CICs), and charities. Following the non-profit organisations in survey response frequency were individuals at NGBs (n = 16, 7.5%) and RGBs (n = 14, 6.5%). The remaining categories (for-profit organisations, local authorities, social enterprises, sole traders/individuals, education, and charitable trusts) all registered below 5% each in the number of responses from individuals at those organisation types.

A more even representation of sample data was seen across the category variables of staff role. It was important to have an even spread of respondents in this category, as this would allow the research to draw differences in strategic and delivery levels of an organisation. As the research intended to use the analysis to draw differences from strategic and delivery levels of organisations, it was important to have an even spread of respondents in this category. Coaches made up most of the survey respondents with 25.7% of the respondents (n = 55). This group was then followed by Board Members who totalled 23.4% of the respondents (n =50). 19.6% of the survey respondents were Project Officers (n = 42), who were closely followed by Board Chairs (n = 40, 18.7%). The group who responded the least were the CEOs, of whom 12.6% of the sample data was received from (n = 27). To analyse across strategic and delivery the following figure depicts the respondents across the stated levels within the organisation.

Figure 8: Survey respondents according to levels within the organisation
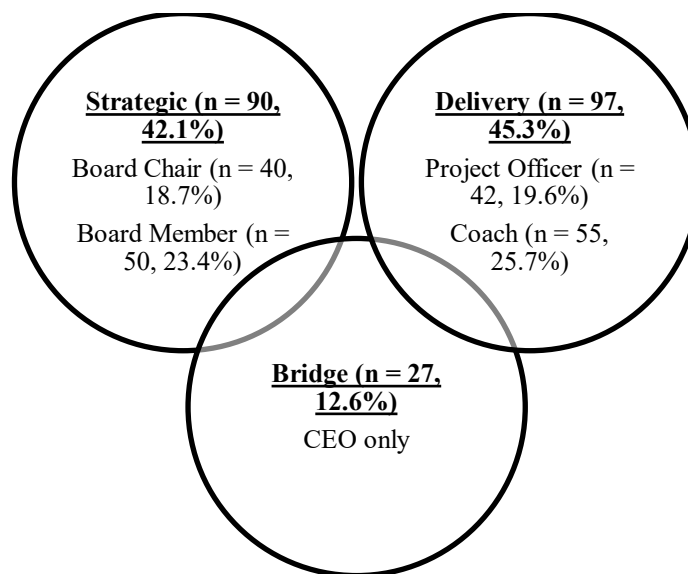
Due to the complicated nature of the CEO's role in many organisations, they have been shown as a bridge between the strategic board and delivery staff (Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011). This is particularly important when considering their role in smaller organisations where, often, the CEO must be responsible for contributing and reporting at both levels of organisation activity (Walker and Hayton, 2017). Organisation size was determined by the number of full-time staff (staff capacity), volunteers, and Board Members who played an active role in the organisation's activities. Most survey responses should be considered to come from small or voluntarily run as 46.3% (n = 99) of respondents stated there were no full-time members of staff at their organisation. This approximation of organisation nature is only strengthened by the fact that 77.1% of responses came from individuals at non-profit organisations. Suggesting that most of these responses are made up of individuals at VSOs rather than charities. Smaller organisations made up most of the responses as the next populated category was the 1-10 group (n = 56, 26.2%), meaning anything from 0-10 full-time members of staff totalled 72.5% of the respondents. The remaining categories (11-20, 21-35, 36-50, and more than 50) all registered less than 10% of the amount each. It is also important to note that 7.5% (n = 8) of respondents did not know the number of full-time staff present at their organisation, therefore when analysing the demographic variable of full-time staff, these results will be removed. Hence the sample data is reduced to 206 for this category.

Another reason for why the majority of the 165 responses from non-profit organisations seem to have come from individuals at VSOs is the high frequency of respondents from lower volunteer number demographic groups. Most respondents were with organisations who had 1-10 (n = 56, 26.2%) or 11-20 (n = 47, 22%) volunteers. This corresponds with the frequency of respondents shown in the number of full-time staff present at organisations as this time the category of none only made up 0.5% (n = 1) of responses. Suggesting that a lack of full-time staff at organisations would mean responses in this research have come from those placed at VSOs themselves. Much like the number of full-time staff, the more than 50 category makes up the third highest frequency of respondents with 15.0% (n = 32). The other categories (21-35 and 36-50) make up 7.9% (n = 17). 6.1% (n = 13) of respondents stated that the did not know how many volunteers worked with their organisation,

therefore, following the removal of this data, the sample population when analysing this category is reduced to 201.

With this research theorising the constructs that make up sustainability in Chapter 2, the longevity of an individual was deemed a strategically important factor to analyse (Mancini and Marek, 2004). One category looked at the length of time an individual had spent at the organisation they currently worked for. Most individuals fell within the largest time frame category of either more than 5 years (n = 93, 43.5%) or 2-5 years (n = 52, 24.3%). The next largest of the response contingent came from the 1-2 years category with a 19.2% (n = 41) of respondents. The final two categories of 0-6 months (n = 16, 7.5%) and 6-12 months (n = 12, 5.6%) represented both the least amount of time, and least amount of responses from the survey data.

When reviewing the variables presented in the demographic data from Chapter 3, not only was staff turnover an issue, but also the movement of staff within an organisation. Hence, it was deemed appropriate to measure how the length of time in a respondent's current role would alter perceptions on factors of sustainability. Perhaps unsurprisingly, results were similar to response data from the length of time at an organisation. Most responses came from individuals who had been in their role for more than 5 years (n = 67, 31.3%), followed by those in their current position for 2-5 years (m = 57, 26.6%). However, when considering length of time at the organisation as a point of comparison, a substantially reduced number of people had been in their current position for more than 5 years. This is also shown by the increase in length of time in current role for the categories of 1-2 years (n = 52, 24.3%), 6-12 months (n = 19, 8.9%), and 0-6 months (n = 19, 8.9%). This suggests that, while many respondents have stayed with the organisation they have worked with in the last 5 years, they have not stayed in the same role at the organisation.

### 6.4 Partnership and collaboration data

Further questions posed in the survey collected information relating to what type of organisations were more likely to be project partners at different stages of completing a funded community intervention programme in London. The following table indicates the prevalence of organisation types as partners at three phases of measuring a successful project (planning, delivery, and evaluation).

Table 22: Survey responses to types of organisation respondents perceive their organisation to work in partnership/collaboration with

| Variable | Group | Responses | | Percent of cases |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percentage | |
| Project partners | Non-profit organisation | 204 | 27.8% | 95.3% |
| | For-profit organisation | 97 | 13.2% | 45.3% |
| | Local authority | 129 | 17.6% | 60.3% |
| | RGB | 169 | 23.0% | 79.0% |
| | NGB | 81 | 11.0% | 37.9% |
| | Sole/individual | 52 | 7.1% | 24.3% |
| | None | 3 | 0.4% | 1.4% |
| | *Total:* | 735 | | |
| Planning partners | Non-profit organisation | 123 | 25.1% | 57.5% |
| | For-profit organisation | 48 | 9.8% | 22.4% |
| | Local authority | 100 | 20.4% | 46.7% |
| | RGB | 136 | 27.8% | 63.6% |
| | NGB | 62 | 12.7% | 29.0% |
| | Sole/individual | 15 | 3.1% | 7.0% |
| | None | 6 | 1.2% | 2.8% |
| | *Total:* | 490 | | |
| Delivery partners | Non-profit organisation | 203 | 40.7% | 94.9% |
| | For-profit organisation | 58 | 11.6% | 27.1% |
| | Local authority | 83 | 16.6% | 38.8% |
| | RGB | 61 | 12.2% | 28.5% |
| | NGB | 42 | 8.4% | 19.6% |
| | Sole/individual | 45 | 9.0% | 21.0% |
| | None | 7 | 1.4% | 3.3% |
| | *Total:* | 499 | | |
| Evaluation partners | Non-profit organisation | 75 | 16.8% | 35.0% |
| | For-profit organisation | 47 | 10.5% | 22.0% |
| | Local authority | 95 | 21.3% | 44.4% |
| | RGB | 127 | 28.5% | 59.3% |
| | NGB | 69 | 15.5% | 32.2% |
| | Sole/individual | 19 | 4.3% | 8.9% |
| | None | 14 | 3.1% | 6.5% |
| | *Total:* | 446 | | |

### 6.4.1 Planning partners

A total of 490 selections were made when respondents were asked what organisation types they perceived as a collaborative partner in planning the delivery of a funded community intervention programme in London. The descriptive statistics show that respondents felt planning support predominantly came from RGBs (n = 136, 63.6% of cases), non-profit organisations (n = 123, 57.5% of cases), and local authorities (n = 100, 46.7% of cases). NGBs (n = 62, 29% of cases) and for-profit organisations (n =

22.4% of case) were deemed the next highest likely types of organisations to be a planning partner. Only 6 respondents (2.8% of cases) stated they had no planning partners for their projects. When looking at demographic data, the high number of VSOs that makeup the non-profit organisation category is a point further strengthened. This is due to the planning partner figures showing RGBs being key partners at this phase of a project delivery. This could be due to many respondents being grassroots clubs who must affiliate with a RGB and prepare their projects in line with local sporting governance requirements (Bingham and Walters, 2013).

### 6.4.2  Delivery partners

RGBs as project partners see a large negative change from the planning phase to the delivery phase (n = 61, 28.5% of cases). This resulted in a -35.1% difference between the percentage of cases highlighting RGBs as delivery partners from those who highlighted them as planning partners. However, this difference is not as large as the 37.4% positive change in delivery partner cases registered by respondents for non-profit organisation partners. These organisations were selected as partners at this stage by 203 of the 214 cases, denoting a 94.9% case selection rate from the sample data. Another difference worth noting comes from the sole trader/individual category, which sees a positive change of 14%. 45 cases (21.0% of cases) are shown where sole traders/individuals were selected as delivery partners, suggesting specialist coaches for specific activities were used to assist in the delivery of a project.

### 6.4.3  Evaluation partners

The frequency of partners selected was greatest for the delivery partners question (n = 499). This is somewhat less for the evaluation partners question that was posed (n = 446). This either suggests that less importance is placed on the evaluation of projects by the delivering organisations, or less support being available for evaluation purposes. This was not the case for RGBs however. They saw another large change, this time from delivery partnerships to evaluation partnerships (n = 127, 59.3% of cases), as they returned to a similar number of selected cases from the planning phase of a project. Whilst this data does not tell us anything conclusive, it does increase allusions towards the notion that many of the VSOs who participated in this research are grassroots clubs. Due to affiliation requirements, these clubs would have to connect with RGBs to plan their upcoming projects and report on the success of them, hence why there is an increased occurrence of RGBs as evaluation partners, despite

the total number of selected cases decreasing. Another reason for this was the responsibility held for the distribution of funding, which regional bodies, much like local authorities, can be responsible for through the balancing of regional priorities (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). Interestingly, this point is strengthened by the fact that local authorities made up the next largest percentage of cases selected as evaluation partners (n = 95, 44.4% of cases).

## 6.5 *Descriptive statistics based on Programme Sustainability Index*

As outlined in Chapter 3, the theoretical framework for the survey implementation consisted, in some parts, of Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index. Each statement was measured on a 5-point Likert scale, and grouped according to the construct category identified in the Programme Sustainability Index. The numerical responses were scaled on a range of 1-5, representing strongly disagree to strongly agree. Chapter 6 displays the descriptive statistics from survey responses from all respondents, grouped by construct and statement items. Data for each construct group displayed within this table (mean, standard deviation, median, and interquartile range) are then highlighted. This is prior to the presentation of further statistical analysis following the subsequent EFA and ANOVA testing as stated in Chapter 3.

Table 23: Descriptive statistics of all survey responses according to theoretical constructs of Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index

| Construct | Statement | Mean | SD | Median | IQR (Q1-Q3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Demonstrating program results | - Projects run by your organisation have had their effectiveness measured through methods of evaluation | 2.66 | 1.293 | 2 | 2-4 |
| | - Evaluation results are used to modify your organisation's community intervention programmes | 2.48 | 1.376 | 2 | 1-4 |
| | - Communication plans are in place to publicise the success of your organisation's community intervention programmes | 3.46 | 1.327 | 4 | 2-5 |
| | - Programme evaluations are conducted on a regular basis by your organisation | 2.56 | 1.294 | 2 | 1.75-4 |
| | - Evaluation plans are developed by your organisation to identify clear project goals | 2.38 | 1.395 | 2 | 1-4 |
| | - Results of programme evaluations are often used to adapt the creation of your organisation's future community intervention programmes | 2.37 | 1.286 | 2 | 1-3.25 |
| Effective collaboration | - Project collaborators share responsibility for providing resources for intervention programmes | 3.42 | 1.039 | 4 | 3-4 |
| | - Project collaborators share a vision with your organisation for community intervention programmes | 3.57 | 0.789 | 4 | 3-4 |
| | - Partnership projects are often used by your organisation to delivery community intervention programmes | 3.49 | 1.205 | 4 | 2-4 |
| | - Partnership approaches help alleviate problems caused by turf issues of participant catchment areas | 3.41 | 1.113 | 3 | 3-4 |
| | - Collaborators share credit for your organisation's successful community intervention programmes | 3.36 | 0.903 | 3 | 3-4 |
| Leadership competence | - Project sustainability is planned for by the Board prior to programme creation | 3.36 | 1.380 | 4 | 2-5 |

| Construct | Statement | Mean | SD | Median | IQR (Q1-Q3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | - The Board clearly establish the mission and vision for community intervention programmes | 4.01 | 1.163 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - The CEO developed and follows a realistic project plan for your community intervention programmes | 2.63 | 1.535 | 3 | 1-4 |
| | - Alternative strategies for the survival of a project are made available by the CEO | 2.52 | 1.506 | 2 | 1-4 |
| | - The CEO clearly establishes the mission and vision for your organisation's community intervention programmes | 2.69 | 1.569 | 3 | 1-4 |
| | - Project sustainability is planned for by the CEO prior to your organisation's community intervention programmes | 2.52 | 1.503 | 3 | 1-4 |
| | - The Board developed and follow a realistic project plan for your organisation's community intervention programmes | 3.79 | 1.258 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Alternative strategies for project survival are made available by the Board at your organisation | 3.10 | 1.270 | 3 | 2-5 |
| Program responsivity | - Positively received projects have their facilities consolidated for use in the future for further projects | 3.92 | 0.895 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - New intervention programmes are developed by your organisation when community needs change | 2.93 | 1.132 | 3 | 2-4 |
| | - Community intervention programmes are eliminated by your organisation when they do not meet community needs | 2.48 | 1.116 | 2 | 2-3 |
| Staff involvement | - Staff are involved in the programme design for community intervention programmes | 3.31 | 1.408 | 4 | 2-5 |
| | - Staff at the organisation are trusted to meet objectives with autonomy | 3.80 | 1.214 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Staff are involved in programme evaluation | 3.17 | 1.196 | 3 | 2-4 |
| | - Staff are recognised by your organisation with rewards for positive work in community intervention programmes | 3.46 | 1.051 | 4 | 3-4 |
| | - Staff involved in the planning of community intervention programmes are suitably qualified to work on the project | 4.03 | 0.988 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Staff at your organisation are adequately trained in programme delivery | 3.79 | 1.218 | 4 | 3-5 |

| Construct | Statement | Mean | SD | Median | IQR (Q1-Q3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | - Staff turnover is an issue at the organisation | 2.29 | 1.142 | 2 | 1-3 |
| Strategic funding | - Current funding at the organisation is sufficient for project operations | 2.47 | 1.269 | 2 | 1-3 |
| | - There is a person responsible at the organisation for grant proposal/fund bid writing | 2.45 | 1.614 | 2 | 1-4 |
| | - There is adequate funding made available by your organisation for hiring and retaining quality staff | 2.24 | 1.294 | 2 | 1-3 |
| | - Funding is available for your organisation's project operations for at least the next 2 years | 2.45 | 1.334 | 2 | 1-3 |
| Understanding the community | - Community resources are regularly assessed | 3.25 | 0.974 | 3 | 3-4 |
| | - Community intervention programmes run by your organisation acknowledge diversity in the target community | 4.57 | 0.687 | 5 | 4-5 |
| | - Community members are involved in the delivery of your organisation's community intervention programmes | 4.19 | 0.931 | 4 | 4-5 |
| | - Community needs are regularly assessed for your organisation's community intervention programmes | 3.35 | 0.920 | 3 | 3-4 |
| | - Community resources are used by the community intervention programmes run by your organisation | 4.18 | 0.848 | 4 | 4-5 |
| | - Your organisation's community intervention programmes address key areas of need for your community | 3.94 | 0.806 | 4 | 4-4 |

*(IQR = interquartile range, SD, = standard deviation)*

### 6.5.1  Demonstrating programme results

This construct was made up of five statement items assessing perceptions surrounding an organisation's ability to use communication or feedback models as part of project planning, delivery, or evaluation. According to Table 23 the majority of statement items scored towards the disagree end of the scale on perceptions of demonstrating program results. However, an increase was evident for the statement item addressing whether communication plans are in place to display the success of the organisation's community intervention programmes (Mean = 3.46, SD = 1.327). Interestingly, this is the only statement that does not refer to methods or processes of evaluation within this construct. This suggests cause for further exploration between the demographic variables into why evaluation, as an index of sustainability, has scored lower than communication plans within this construct.

### 6.5.2  Effective collaboration

Once again, five statements made up the construct that assessed the perception of an organisation's ability to utilise partnerships to positive effect. All statement items scored just above a neutral mid-scale response of neither agree or disagree. The highest of these statements looked at the strategic vision of collaborators and whether these were synchronised with the respondent's organisation vision for community intervention programmes (Mean = 3.57, SD = 0.789). The low SD shows a generally consistent set of results as the responses did not vary too far from mean average stated. Whilst the lack of any strong lean towards agreement or disagreement does not suggest too much at this point, the general consistency of results shown for effective collaboration means any discrepancies between demographic variables would be an interesting discussion.

### 6.5.3  Leadership competence

This construct is the largest categorisation of statements from the survey with eight survey statements attributed to this group. However, it is worth noting that these statements are split according to perceptions surrounding the involvement of CEOs or Boards across the planning and delivery phases of community intervention programmes. Table 22 shows how all four CEO-related statements scored in the lowest four averages in perception responses. Compare this to the Board-related statements, and it is noticeable how these averages were higher with a lower standard deviation. The highest scoring of these statements refers to strategy setting measures for planning

intervention programmes (Mean = 4.01, SD = 1.163). A discussion point that is worth expanding upon could be to look at the demographic of respondents. Less CEOs responded to completing the survey, furthermore there has been suggestion that many VSOs were grassroots clubs that make up the non-profit organisation category (Skille and Stenling, 2017). Therefore, there may be strength to the role equivalency point made in Chapter 3, that these organisations operating with a committee see their leader as the Board Chair rather than the CEO, as indicated by the title of Chairperson or President at these types of organisation.

### 6.5.4 Programme responsivity

The construct of programme responsivity asked respondents to rate their perceptions of how their organisation reacts to changes in project delivery in relation to circumstantial adaptations. The highest agreeing statement was whether organisations secured facilities from successful projects for future programme delivery (Mean = 3.92, SD = 0.895). From the lower average scores for the other statements it is seen that, generally, less emphasis is placed on developing (Mean = 2.93, SD 1.132) or ending (Mean = 2.48, SD = 1.116) programmes based on the needs of the community. Furthermore, whilst all statements relate to perceptions on programme assessment, the statement regarding facilities also refers to the planning and delivery of future successful programmes.

### 6.5.5 Staff involvement

This construct assessed the perceptions of how their organisations use staff as a resource for the development, delivery, and evaluation of community intervention programmes in London. Most of the statements scored above the neutral level, leaning towards agreement that staff involvement is a key factor in their programme's sustainability. The highest of these related to the adequate qualification or training staff had to work on the programme (Mean = 4.03, SD = 0.988). This also displayed the lowest SD, highlighting the strength of average response scores due to a lack of variance from the displayed average scores. The only item within this construct to score below a neutral level related to the issue of staff turnover (Mean = 2.29, SD = 1.142). This suggests that personal development is a stronger factor than turnover issues amongst the staff at organisations who have delivered funded community intervention programmes.

### 6.5.6 Strategic funding

Four strategic funding statements referred to perceptions relating to the approaches taken to use funding to deliver sustainable community intervention programmes. All statements, except one, scored neutrally by being close to a mean average of 2.50. However, scores relating to using enough finances to hire and retain staff placed slightly lower than the other 3 statements (Mean = 2.24, SD = 1.294). Given that the construct of staff involvement did not highlight staff turnover as a key issue at organisations, a discussion point could be raised to suggest this statement relates more to the retention of current staff rather than hiring of new staff.

### 6.5.7 Understand the community

Respondents perceived that the construct of utilising community resources and understanding community needs is a key factor in programme sustainability for their organisations. This is shown by all mean scores for each statement being above the 2.50 neutral score, and limited variation displayed by the standard deviation. It is worth noting that the lowest scoring of these six statements related to evaluation processes. The assessment of community resources scored lowest (Mean = 3.25, SD = 0.974), followed by the assessment of community needs (Mean = 3.35, SD = 0.920). An argument could be raised that lower evaluation-related statement scores were expected due to the lower evaluation-related scores highlighted in the construct of demonstrating programme results. Interestingly, scores relating to delivery phase involvement of community members (Mean = 4.19, SD 0.931) and community resources (Mean = 4.18, SD = 0.848) were relatively high. This suggests respondents perceive understanding community needs to be a more important factor at the delivery phase of community intervention programmes rather than the evaluation phase. The highest rated perception however, refers to the acknowledgement of diversity in a community being strongly considered as a factor of sustainability (Mean = 4.57, SD = 0.687). With this statement covering both the planning and delivery phase of a programme, it reinforces the perceived idea that the evaluation phase of community intervention programme is less considered for measures of sustainability.

### 6.5.8 Comparison

Whilst conclusive findings cannot be drawn from the data presented in Table 23 just yet, some reflections worth considering have been noted from the descriptive statistics. The first of which relates to respondents' perceived notion that evaluation processes

are less considered than reflections on the planning or delivery phase of community intervention programmes. This is initially displayed in the construct of demonstrating programme results and is then further exemplified by low scores for assessment criteria in programme responsivity and understanding the community.

However, within programme responsivity, the idea of securing facilities from successful projects for future programmes was unanimous in its strength. It can be argued that this indicates some perceived importance on the evaluation of resources, however, the statement also relates to an importance in planning for future programme delivery. This is also shown when considering how respondents perceived their organisation understands community needs. Examples of this relate to the use of an organisation's community, members or resources, to support the delivery of their community intervention programmes.

Another key issue that appears from these findings highlights perceptions on various levels of staff (strategic and delivery). Respondents noted that staff at their organisations were adequately trained in their position to support the development and delivery of programmes. Despite this, questions could be raised with regards to the spending of funding, as low scores were recorded for the allocation of finances towards hiring or retaining staff. Considering this, a suggestion is raised that this could be a capacity issue for hiring new staff, as the staff turnover was not a high-scoring item as a contributing factor within the construct of staff involvement.

Finally, an interesting comparison can be drawn within the construct of leadership competence. As noted, the category could be split into 2 sub-groups, grouping statements for CEO and board involvement respectively. Respondents attitudes towards these individuals highlighted an increased involvement of the Board in all phases of community intervention programme their organisation delivered. However, demographic variables have raised the point that most non-profit organisations could be VSOs or grassroots clubs. Meaning an issue regarding organisational structure could be the reason behind CEOs being perceived as less involved in the delivery of an organisation's community intervention programmes. Furthermore, indicators from demographic data stated that less CEOs than Board Chairs and Board Members completed the survey, subsequently offering explanations for why leadership competence favoured Board involvement over statements relating to the CEO.

## 6.6  *Descriptive statistics based on factors of sustainability*

In extension to Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index, the survey implemented theoretical constructs from Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) factors of sustainability. As previously outlined, each statement was measured on a 5-point Likert scale and grouped according to the construct categories identified in Chapter 3. However, one slight difference from the Programme Sustainability Index is displayed in Table 23. This highlights how each construct is then sub-categorised with constructs within each theme of sustainability. Data for each construct group displayed within this table (mean, standard deviation, median, and interquartile range) are then highlighted. This is prior to the presentation of further statistical analysis following the subsequent EFA and ANOVA testing as stated in Chapter 3.

Table 24: Descriptive statistics of survey responses according to theoretical constructs of Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) factors of sustainability

| Construct | Statement | Mean | SD | Median | IQR (Q1-Q3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Capacity: Funding | - Cuts to public funding have damaged the organisation's ability to meet objectives through the delivery of community programmes | 2.81 | 1.060 | 2 | 1-3 |
| | - The organisation obtains funding from a variety of sources | 2.99 | 1.426 | 3 | 2-4 |
| | - The organisation is reliant upon public funding for its project operations | 2.93 | 1.350 | 3 | 2-4 |
| | - There has been a great deal of strain placed on the organisation's administrative capabilities due to funding cuts to the sports sector | 3.63 | 1.071 | 4 | 3-4 |
| Capacity: Resources | - Administrative requirements of running a funded intervention programme are shared amongst staff | 2.86 | 1.342 | 3 | 2-4 |
| | - Provisions for facilities are adequate for your organisation's ability to deliver community intervention programmes | 3.05 | 1.209 | 3 | 2-4 |
| Capacity: Workforce | - Staff at the organisation are stretched to near-maximum capacity | 4.42 | 0.867 | 5 | 4-5 |
| | - Programme planners are aware of organisational objectives when designing community intervention programmes | 4.06 | 0.820 | 4 | 4-5 |
| | - Organisational objectives struggle to be met due to a lack of staff | 3.56 | 1.268 | 4 | 3-5 |
| Context: Climate | - Administrative duties put the organisation off applying for pots of funding | 3.57 | 1.290 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Governance changes have been a high priority for your organisation in the past 6 months | 2.66 | 1.447 | 2.5 | 1-4 |
| | - Your organisation adapts the way it meets objectives according to sports policy dictated by the government or government agencies (e.g. Sport England) | 2.56 | 1.396 | 2 | 1-4 |
| | - You are under pressure to meet key performance indicators as part of your objectives | 3.86 | 0.995 | 4 | 3-5 |
| Context: Culture | - There is a strong communication flow between the Board and Management at your organisation | 4.06 | 1.069 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Communication tends to flow from the top-down in your organisation | 3.77 | 1.195 | 4 | 3-5 |

| Construct | Statement | Mean | SD | Median | IQR (Q1-Q3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | - Information is often lost when directing information between the Board and delivery staff | 2.53 | 1.262 | 2 | 1-4 |
| | - Your organisation has a strong development and community focus | 4.54 | 0.754 | 5 | 4-5 |
| | - In your role you must balance focus between competitive sport and community sport objectives | 3.95 | 1.511 | 5 | 3-5 |
| | - Delivery staff are encouraged to communicate up to senior management and the Board | 4.21 | 1.009 | 5 | 4-5 |
| Context: Leadership | - Delivery staff are given autonomy to meet organisational objectives through project development | 3.62 | 1.279 | 4 | 3-5 |
| Context: Setting characteristics | - Organisational problems are common in effecting your organisation's ability to deliver upon a long-term vision for community intervention programme | 2.79 | 1.202 | 3 | 2-4 |
| | - Internal policies support the methods used when planning and delivering your organisation's community intervention programmes | 3.39 | 1.094 | 4 | 3-4 |
| | - You understand the current direction of sports policy | 2.79 | 1.528 | 2 | 1-4 |
| | - Retaining organisational autonomy is more important than following the direction of government sports policy | 3.91 | 1.057 | 4 | 3-5 |
| Context: System/policy change | - Management and delivery staff are aware of changes in organisational policy by the Board, and how it may impact their ability to implement community intervention programmes | 3.54 | 1.251 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Your organisation struggles to adhere to changes in policy set by government | 2.23 | 1.074 | 2 | 1-3 |
| | - The benefits of intervention programmes for the organisation are considered a higher priority than the benefits for the end-user | 2.70 | 1.309 | 3 | 2-4 |
| Innovation: Effectiveness | - Most of your organisation's community intervention programmes are designed to be longer than 12 weeks in length | 4.63 | 0.750 | 5 | 4-5 |
| | - Participants tend to drop out of activity after your organisation's programme has run its course | 1.98 | 0.916 | 2 | 1-3 |
| Innovation: Fit | - The organisation relies on start-up funding to kick-start its community intervention programmes | 3.28 | 1.197 | 3 | 2-4 |

| Construct | Statement | Mean | SD | Median | IQR (Q1-Q3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | - Funded programmes are designed around a consistent model adopted by the organisation | 3.39 | 0.981 | 3 | 3-4 |
| | - Your organisation's old community intervention programmes are reshaped as new projects for new funders | 3.30 | 0.890 | 3 | 3-4 |
| | - Your organisation's community intervention programmes are always designed according to specifications of funding criteria | 2.83 | 1.218 | 3 | 2-4 |
| Processes: Partnerships or collaborations | - There are issues regarding turf-ownership of geographical areas when referring to specific areas used for your organisation's project delivery | 3.57 | 1.272 | 4 | 3-5 |
| Processes: Evaluation or feedback | - Direct feedback is taken from the participants of the community intervention programmes delivered by your organisation | 3.60 | 1.108 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Participants are aware of exit routes for activity after your organisation's community intervention programme has completed | 4.21 | 0.891 | 4 | 4-5 |
| | - The organisation's evaluation methods for an intervention programme tend to follow quite an informal process | 3.58 | 1.088 | 4 | 3-4 |
| Processes: Relationship building | - Your organisation always offers benefits for other organisations when developing a relationship with them | 3.88 | 0.925 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Social relationships between the Board and staff are important for organisation success | 3.87 | 1.264 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - Meetings are used as a way to update everyone on your work within the organisation | 3.55 | 1.262 | 4 | 3-5 |
| | - You are still in touch with individuals/organisations you have worked with on prior programmes | 4.09 | 0.972 | 4 | 3.75-5 |
| | - Most of your programme collaborators have been in partnership for 2 or more years | 2.99 | 1.214 | 3 | 2-4 |
| | - Strong social bonds between staff are important for organisational success | 4.39 | 0.819 | 5 | 4-5 |

### 6.7   Capacity

### 6.7.1   Funding

Funding as a factor of sustainability made up one of three factors within the construct of capacity. From the four statements within this factor, all statements yielded an average score above the mid-point neutral of 2.50. However, the perception of strain placed upon an organisation's administrative capability due to funding cuts is somewhat higher than the other three statements (Mean = 3.63, SD = 1.071). Interestingly though, a similar statement that reviewed perceptions on how funding cuts have damaged an organisation's ability to meet objectives did not score as highly (Mean = 2.81, SD = 1.060). Suggestions here could be that administrative capabilities suffer a greater hit than organisational objectives due to funding cuts. At this point thought is provoked into how perceptions of administrative abilities and meeting objectives compare across staff role demographics, according to strategic or delivery level status within the organisation.

### 6.7.2   Resources

The second factor within the construct of capacity assessed perceptions on how influential resources are to an organisation. Respondents scored both statements above the neutral score of 2.50. However, provisions for facilities were deemed quite positive in assisting the delivery of sustainable community intervention programmes (Mean = 3.05, SD = 1.209). It is worth noting that an earlier statement regarding the consolidation of facilities also scored highly from the Programme Sustainability Index perceptions. An indicator here is that perceptions of facilities are quite positive in helping support long-term programme delivery as they are secured for future use as well as the delivery of any current programme. The other statement in this factor assessed perceptions of sharing administration responsibilities (Mean = 2.86, SD = 1.342). Whilst this is above the 2.50 neutral level, it is quite a decrease from the perception of funding cuts damaging administrative capabilities within the construct of funding. The notion suggested is that respondents have found funding cuts damaging with regards to administrative capabilities due to the inability to share tasks amongst a team.

### 6.7.3 Workforce

The final factor within the construct of capacity assessed respondent perceptions around the organisation workforce. All three statements within this theme scored strongly amongst respondents suggesting workforce is an important factor in the sustainability of community intervention programmes in London. The highest scoring perception reviewed respondent's feelings on whether staff were stretched to near-maximum capacity (Mean = 4.42, SD = 0.867). Limited variance in responses infers a lot of similar responses were received for this statement. This lack of variance from the mean is even lower in the second highest scoring statement which assessed perceptions of how wary programme planners were of organisational objectives in the planning phase of an intervention programme (Mean = 4.06, SD = 0.820). This was perhaps expected as administration duties being shared were quite low amongst resource responses. Furthermore, meeting organisational objectives was perceived to be less damaged than administrative duties when assessing funding capacity. Despite this, organisational objectives were perceived as a struggle to meet when considering the lack of staff available at an organisation to meet them (Mean = 3.56, SD = 1.268).

## 6.8 Context

### 6.8.1 Climate

The climate within which an organisation operates was deemed another important factor of sustainability according to Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012). This was one of five themes within the construct of context. Perhaps unsurprisingly, with issues regarding too few staff to meet objectives, perceptions of pressure to meet objectives score highly amongst respondents (Mean = 3.86, SD = 0.995). Additionally, with administrative capabilities being affected by funding cuts, the factor of climate suggests that respondents perceive their organisation to apply for less funding due to administrative requirements (Mean = 3.57, SD = 1.290). The other two statements in this theme, relating to governance changes (Mean = 2.66, SD = 1.447) and adapting objectives according to changes in sports policy (Mean = 2.56, SD = 1.396), score close to neutral. Furthermore, they both have relatively high variance amongst responses. It would be interesting to review how demographic variables have an effect on responses when considering this factor.

### 6.8.2 Culture

The second factor of sustainability within the construct of context asked respondents to perceive the culture surrounding their organisation's ability to delivery sustainable community intervention programmes. The strongest response related to the organisation's focus on development and community (Mean = 4.54, SD = 0.754). This was followed by two statements relating to communication. These focused on delivery staff communicating up to the organisation strategists (Mean = 4.21, SD = 1.009) and strong communication flow within the strategic level of an organisation (Mean = 4.06, SD = 1.069). Despite respondents perceiving top-down communication lower (Mean = 3.77, SD = 1.195), this is still a perception that was agreed with. The notion of strong communication is further strengthened by the comparatively lower score for information being lost in the top-down approach (Mean = 2.53, SD = 1.262). However, with the idea of strong feelings of a stretched workload, respondents did believe they had to balance focus between competitive sport and community sport objectives (Mean = 3.95, SD = 1.511).

### 6.8.3 Leadership

With measures of leadership competence from the Programme Sustainability Index already being assessed, there was only one statement reviewing leadership as a factor of sustainability. Respondents felt that delivery staff were given autonomy in project development to meet organisational objectives (Mean = 3.62, SD = 1.279). This is slightly lower from the perceived responses for a similar statement within the construct of staff involvement. However, a key difference within this construct specifically assessed perceptions of delivery staff role. It would be interesting to see how this differs in perception across demographic variables.

### 6.8.4 Setting characteristics

The penultimate factor of sustainability within the construct of context assessed respondent perceptions on the setting of characteristics within their organisation. Respondent data suggests that most individuals agreed with the perception that internal policies support the planning and delivery of community intervention programmes (Mean = 3.39, SD = 1.094). This average score was somewhat closer to neutral when individuals perceived whether organisational problems effected the ability to deliver these programmes with a sustainable vision (Mean = 2.79, SD = 1.202). This seems quite understandable when considering the results as internal

policies appear trusted and well relied upon to deter from the occurrence of organisational issues.

### 6.8.5 System or policy change

The final factor within the construct of context looked at individual perceptions regarding changes in system or policy. The highest scoring statement amongst respondent perceptions related to organisational autonomy being more important than following government policy (Mean = 3.91, SD = 1.057). This may offer some reason for the lower perception of an individual's organisation struggling to adhere to changes in government policy (Mean = 2.23, SD = 1.074). Rather than this refer to an organisation not struggling, a suggestion could be made that an organisation chooses not to adapt due to a preference for their own autonomous action. In addition to this, strong perceptions of internal communication are further strengthened in this factor as staff perceived that staff were aware of organisational policy changes from the board (Mean = 3.54, SD = 1.251).

## 6.9 Innovation

### 6.9.1 Effectiveness

Two factors of sustainability made up Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) construct category of innovation. The first that was assessed through statement responses looked at programme effectiveness. The highest scoring response referred to community intervention programmes being perceived as longer than 12 weeks (Mean = 4.63, SD = 0.750). With such higher scores and low variance, it is clear to see that most respondents agreed that their programmes were longer than Sportivate programmes, as reviewed in Chapter 2. Another statement with low variance scored very low. This referred to participation dropout rates after programme completion (Mean = 1.98, SD = 0.916). A connection could be made from these two statement scores in that individuals perceived their organisation as running longer programmes, which helped sustain participant activity following programme completion. Despite these responses, the focus on benefits for the organisation rather than participants scored higher than expected (Mean = 2.70, SD = 1.309).

### 6.9.2 Fit

The second factor of sustainability within the construct of innovation addressed the theme of how well a programme fit to adopted principles, policy and models of

delivery. The highest rated responses referred to perceptions of using a consistent model for programme design (Mean = 3.39, SD = 0.981) and the re-use of old programmes as new projects (Mean = 3.30, SD = 0.890). With the rehashing of old programmes perceived relatively strong, the former statement of using consistent models for programme design seem somewhat expected. In addition to this, with the perceived preference for organisational autonomy over policy-adapted objectives, another unsurprising result is the lower response for programmes being designed according to funding criteria (Mean = 2.83, SD = 1.218). Finally, with funding already being identified as a key issue within the construct, reliance upon start-up funding is also perceived quite strongly by respondents (Mean = 3.28, SD = 1.197).

## 6.10 Processes

### 6.10.1 Partnerships or collaborations

The final construct in Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) factors of sustainability addressed the processes an organisation undertakes to deliver long-term community intervention programmes in London. The first of three categories within this construct assesses perceptions on the use of partnerships or collaborations to help meet objectives. Having already been somewhat assessed from Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index, only one statement was used to measure this factor. Due to the use of effective collaborations to reduce turf-issues scoring high amongst respondent perceptions, the influence of turf-ownership issues in project delivery scoring quite similarly are unsurprising (Mean = 3.57, SD = 1.272). Given that effective collaborations for sharing resources was a strong perception of successful programmes, respondents still feel there are issues of turf-ownership. This suggests a need for further collaboration or alternative processes to deter from this issue effecting the delivery of community intervention programmes in London.

### 6.10.2 Evaluation or feedback

The theme of evaluation or feedback was the second factor of sustainability assessed within the construct of processes. The highest scoring perception asked respondents to rate how much they agree on participant awareness of exit-routes after an intervention programme has completed (Mean = 4.21, SD = 0.891). With low variance, the majority of individuals responded quite favourable for this factor of sustainability. This was to be expected perhaps, as this links quite closely to

participation dropout rates that scored very low in the measure of programme effectiveness. Scores were quite similar when respondents were asked about direct feedback being obtained from programme participants (Mean = 3.60, SD 1.108) and whether the evaluation methods used followed informal processes (Mean = 3.58, SD = 1.088). This differs to how evaluation results compared in the Programme Sustainability Index construct of demonstrating programme results. This is due to evaluation results appearing low as a factor of sustainability in planning processes. However, an explanation for this could be from the implementation of ad-hoc evaluation processes perceived by respondents from the evaluation or feedback factor of Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) sustainability measures.

### 6.10.3 Relationship building

The final theme of sustainability within the construct of processes examined respondent perceptions towards relationship building with staff and other organisations. The strongest influence of sustainability was perceived about the importance of strong social bonds between staff (Mean = 4.39, SD = 0.819). Social relationships were also seen as an important influence between the strategic and delivery levels of an organisation (Mean = 3.87, SD = 1.264). The strength of these relationships was also translated by the perception that individuals remain in contact with participants from prior programmes (Mean = 4.09, SD = 0.972). However, with a Board Member's lack of direct involvement in community intervention programme delivery, it would be interesting to see how this statistically differs between demographic variables. Where the strategic level of an organisation is involved though, is through communicating objectives from the top, down to staff at a delivery level. There is strength to this from respondent results as meetings are used to keep all staff updated on organisation progress (Mean = 3.55, SD = 1.262). These strongly rated perceptions are also carried between organisations through benefits offered to project partners (Mean = 3.88, SD = 0.925). However, scores were lower when perceptions were considered for whether project partners had been working in collaboration for two or more years (Mean = 2.99, SD = 1.214). Despite strong processes with regards to relationship building, the lower score for relationship length suggests some respondents perceive their organisations have a higher frequency of short-term relationships.

### 6.11 Comparison

Despite conclusive findings not being drawn from the data available in Table 24, some comparisons are worth making from the descriptive statistics prior to further statistical analysis. The first of which comes between workforce and capacity factors within the construct of capacity. Respondents felt a high rate of awareness for organisation objectives, however a lack of staff to meet them means funding cuts have damaged their ability to fulfil administrative duties. This issue was further strengthened by respondents, as statements referring to resources as a capacity were perceived to offer little sharing of administrative duties. One of the reasons for this was offered from the climate the organisation operates. The feeling of high pressure to meet objectives and an increase in administrative duties could be linked to the lack of sharing administrative duties amongst too few staff. What has perhaps not helped this, is the perception that there is a culture of balancing competitive objectives with community ones. This is even though community development focus scored high in the theme of culture.

Despite the presence of opposing priorities in meeting community or competitive objectives, programme effectiveness does offer further strength to a culture of strong community objectives. Respondents perceived their organisation's community intervention programmes to last longer than 12-weeks and a low rate of drop-outs was also suggested. Furthermore, strength for this comes from the construct of processes where respondents reported on feedback of programme participants continuing activity after their respective programmes had completed. Further connections can conceivably be drawn from responses perceiving a continued relationship between staff and participants after the programme has completed.

This could partly be due to the value of autonomy staff received to fulfil their role in programme delivery and evaluation. With increasing pressures on meeting objectives, it seemed being able to get on with a job was a valued response from staff attempting to deliver community intervention programmes. This corroborates with a similar response to staff involvement from Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index. However, a difference between the two sets of statistics lies in the statements varying in that one specifies working towards meeting organisation objectives, and the other towards developing programmes. Nonetheless, both response scores were above the neutral mid-point of 2.50, suggesting a value in customer

perception for staff autonomy being a valued indicator for successful community intervention programme sustainability. Furthermore, this feeling of autonomy appears to extend towards programme evaluation too. Respondents did not value score evaluation processes highly in demonstrating programme results, however when reviewing evaluation as an ad-hoc and direct process, staff appeared to find strength in evaluation as a factor of sustainability.

As well as staff autonomy, it was perceived by respondents that organisational autonomy was higher rated as a factor of sustainability than adapting to government policy. Results regarding system or policy change also show a connection with the culture of strong communications within all levels of the organisation, particularly considering the perception of a top-down model led by the strategic board. This links to the competence of leadership displayed from the Programme Sustainability Index, which is further highlighted through the system or policy change factor. Mainly because of a strong awareness for changes in meeting objectives set by board members amongst the respondents. It is also apparent that these internal policies are viewed strongly as a factor of sustainability amongst respondents assessing the characteristics set within their organisation. Further backing for this is apparent with lower scores for perceived organisational issues detracting from successes in delivery a community intervention programme. Internal relationship building also supports this as strong scores were recorded for perceptions on social bonds between staff at all levels of an organisation. These show similarities from relationship building to the factor of culture within the construct of context.

However, despite strong relationship building and effective collaboration scores already displayed, this strength did not translate to solving issues of turf ownership in an organisation's location of delivery. This idea could be due to respondents perceiving that most external partnerships had not exceeded two years in the relationship with their organisation (Bingham and Walters, 2013). Nonetheless, with the value shown in respondent perception for effective collaboration, alternative strategies for successful relationships are valued. These stem from the involvement of local communities in project planning and delivery, as shown by perception scores from the Programme Sustainability Index. Furthermore, respondents perceived the facilities used for programme delivery were an adequate resource. This suggests local community involvement, facilities or members, is a solid indicator for success in

delivering a sustainable community intervention programme in London. Additional strength to this notion is offered from the Programme Sustainability Index responses too. This is because perceptions were already drawn towards the consolidating adequate facilities to help deliver future programmes with the support of community resources.

With declarations for relationship building with external providers in the local community being perceived as strong, it also appears that strong facilities are not the only aspect of a programme consolidated. Respondents perceived their organisations to adopt consistent approaches in delivering a community intervention programme. Furthermore, the programme fit responses meant perceptions stated that old programmes were re-used and delivered as new programmes. Some of this also relates back to organisation autonomy, but also relays the idea of organisations lacking adaptation for government policy changes. Furthermore, with the idea of a lack of staff capacity, responses could be justified as programmes are easier to develop through these consistent measures, rather than the creation of new programmes according to new funding criteria.

# 7  Study 2 – Statistical Analysis of Survey Data

## 7.1  Overview

To determine the results from statistical analysis this research looked to answer the RQ, which factors play a role in determining the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded by Sportivate? Chapter 5 developed attitudes towards the factors of sustainability and advanced the theoretical understanding of the concept originally discussed in Chapter 2. This chapter will present results from the statistical analysis of survey responses obtained from 214 individuals. Results highlight perceptions of individuals appointed by organisations with regards to Sportivate sustainability through deductive inferences drawn from study 2. This evidences how the research adopts retroductive logic as it moves from inductive approaches towards a more deductive explanation of causal mechanisms that exist from observable patterns and events within the actual domain of critical realism (Blaikie, 2010).

To answer the RQ, the ROs highlight four independent variables to measure as influencers of the dependent variables which were made up of sustainability factors. The four independent variables were staff role, organisation type, length of time in role and size of organisation based on staff capacity. An ANOVA test was conducted to statistically analyse each component emerging from EFA. Following this, post-hoc tests were undertaken on statistically significant independent variables to understand differences within each independent variable and how they influence the component factor analysed. Prior to exhibiting the results from ANOVA and post-hoc tests, this chapter will display results from the EFA conducted to examine the components of sustainability to be statistically analysed.

## 7.2  Exploratory Factor Analysis

With a total of 82 survey statements, EFA was carried out to determine distinct clusters of variables that could make up a single factor for analysis, applying retroductive logic within the real domain of critical realism (Blaikie, 2010; Bryman, 2012). Pett, Lackey and Sullivan (2003) highlight that factor analysis should be used to identify interrelationships among a large data set and then, through data reduction, the variables can be grouped as a common factor. Despite an initial understanding of sustainability factors based upon the developing theoretical framework, survey

statements did not utilise pre-existing statements. Instead, newly created survey statements were adopted based on Mancini and Marek's (2004) Programme Sustainability Index and Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) elements of sustainability. Therefore, the factor analysis was used to explore components making up factors of sustainability, rather than a confirmatory process of factors from an existing survey. A total of 249 responses were received, however, upon review, 35 datasets were removed due to missing demographic information (13), incomplete responses (20), or utilising the right to withdraw data from the research (2). Meaning a total of 214 complete data responses were used for EFA.

As approached in Chapter 4, Pallant (2016) indicated that prior to deciding the make-up of components, a number of processes would have to be understood to measure whether a factor was appropriate for analysis or not. The first step was to identify the correlation matrix and summarise sampling adequacy using the Kaiser Meijer-Olkin (KMO) measure. Stewart (1981) indicated that a KMO of > 0.70 means the data set is appropriate for EFA. The higher this figure was, the stronger the case for measuring the principal components would be (Field, 2017). In the case of this research, the KMO value was .890, whilst Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This further supported the data's appropriateness for factor analysis.

According to Pituch and Stevens (2016), if the sample size of research is greater than 200 then the use of a Scree Test is fine provided communalities are reasonably large. Any communalities that are close to 0 should be removed from the data prior to running the analysis of principal components. In this research, none of the variables rejected this assumption. Therefore, steps were taken to observe the eigenvalues presented from the Scree Test. Pallant (2016) describes how the Scree Test plots the eigenvalues of factors and that the point at which the curve begins to plateau should be the point to where factors ought to be considered. For this research, these eigenvalues, alongside the variance explained, are stated below each principal component to emerge from the analysis. In its simplest terms, the eigenvalue for each factor should be above 1, which was an assumption met by each of the six factors proposed from the analysis.

Following this, Pallant (2016) described the process of rotating the principal components. This presents the use of an orthogonal approach to rotation, using the varimax rotation method. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), this is the most commonly used orthogonal rotation method as it minimises variables that have high loadings on each factor. Pituch and Stevens (2016) highlight how rotating the principal components using this process helps to sharpen the contrast to display higher factor loadings for components, lower loadings for removing variables, and minimising the number of medium loadings.

However, to determine which variables reliably fit into each component a number of assumptions had to be considered. Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988) indicate that any components with four or more variables loading with a value of $> 0.6$ would be reliable regardless of sample size. However, Pituch and Stevens (2016) determined that factor loadings should be $> 0.4$ for data that has many variables. Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988) also stated that the principles of component retention should mean each component ought to explain at least 5% of the total variance and that each component should have a minimum of 3 variables. Furthermore, Pallant (2016) adds that variables should only load on one component at the stated value in order to determine a simple assembly of factors from the initially complex structure prior to analysis. This chapter shows the final structure of components that emerged from the EFA, leading to the interpretations of each factor that follow the table.

Table 25: Factor loading scores of each component determined through EFA

| | | FAC1 | FAC2 | FAC3 | FAC4 | FAC5 | FAC6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Eigenvalue:** | 5.831 | 4.877 | 3.730 | 2.321 | 2.174 | 2.093 |
| | **Variance explained (%):** | 20.83 | 17.42 | 13.32 | 8.29 | 7.76% | 7.48% |
| **Component** | **Survey statement** | | | | | | |
| Factor 1: **α = 0.924** Role of the Board | - Management and delivery staff are aware of changes in organisational policy by the Board, and how it may impact their ability to implement community intervention programmes | .834 | | | | | |
| | - The Board developed and follow a realistic project plan for your organisation's community intervention programmes | .832 | | | | | |
| | - Project sustainability is planned for by the Board prior to programme creation | .809 | | | | | |
| | - There is a strong communication flow between the Board and Management at your organisation | .807 | | | | | |
| | - Alternative strategies for project survival are made available by the Board at your organisation | .785 | | | | | |
| | - Delivery staff are encouraged to communicate up to Senior Management and the Board | .779 | | | | | |
| | - Social relationships between the Board and staff are important for organisation success | .757 | | | | | |
| | - Information is often lost when directing information between the Board and delivery staff ** | .725 | | | | | |
| | - The Board clearly establish the mission and vision for community intervention programmes | .718 | | | | | |
| Factor 2: **α = 0.935** | - Programme evaluations are conducted on a regular basis by your organisation | | .900 | | | | |
| | - Evaluation results are used to modify your organisation's community intervention programmes | | .885 | | | | |

| | | FAC1 | FAC2 | FAC3 | FAC4 | FAC5 | FAC6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evaluation and feedback | - Evaluation plans are developed by your organisation to identify clear project goals | | .859 | | | | |
| | - Results of programme evaluations are often used to adapt the creation of your organisation's future community intervention programmes | | .850 | | | | |
| | - Projects run by your organisation have had their effectiveness measured through methods of evaluation | | .724 | | | | |
| | - Staff are involved in project evaluation | | .719 | | | | |
| Factor 3: α = 0.968 Role of the CEO | - Alternative strategies for the survival of a project are made available by the CEO | | | .902 | | | |
| | - Project sustainability is planned for by the CEO prior to your organisation's community intervention programmes | | | .886 | | | |
| | - The CEO clear establishes the mission and vision for your organisation's community intervention programmes | | | .882 | | | |
| | - The CEO developed and follows a realistic project plan for your community intervention programmes | | | .874 | | | |
| Factor 4: α = 0808 Funding resources at the organisation | - Current funding at the organisation is sufficient for project operations | | | | .840 | | |
| | - Funding is available for your organisation's project operations for at least the next 2 years | | | | .810 | | |
| | - There is adequate funding made available by your organisation for hiring and retaining quality staff | | | | .730 | | |
| Factor 5: α = 0.822 Autonomy of staff | - Staff at the organisation are trusted to meet objectives with autonomy | | | | | .845 | |
| | - Delivery staff are given autonomy to meet organisational objectives through project development | | | | | .808 | |
| | - Staff are involved in the programme design for community intervention programmes | | | | | .596 | |
| Factor 6: α = 0.754 | - The organisation is reliant upon public funding for its project operations | | | | | | .824 |

| | | FAC1 | FAC2 | FAC3 | FAC4 | FAC5 | FAC6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dependency on public funding | - The organisation relies on start up funding to kick-start its community intervention programmes | | | | | | .776 |
| | - Your organisation's community intervention programmes are always designed according to the specification of funding criteria | | | | | | .703 |

** - variables with this indication refer to factors that negatively loaded and therefore had to be reverse coded.

## 7.3 Interpretation of components

### 7.3.1 Role of the Board

This factor is made up of nine variables that loaded into the component labelled "Role of the Board". The loaded items varied in the nature of the content as topics like organisational policy change, project planning, communication, strategic adaptations and social relationships were referred to. However, due to the common presence of the Board's role in all these items, Factor 1 was interpreted and titled in relation to the Board's role in the sustainability of community intervention programmes.

### 7.3.2 Evaluation and feedback

Six variables loaded into the component titled "Evaluation and feedback". These survey statements addressed perceptions of individuals relating to the evaluation processes their organisation undertakes for their community intervention programme delivery. The loaded items relate to evaluation regularity, programme development, planning, programme effectiveness and staff involvement. Because of this, Factor 2 was interpreted and titled in relation to the role evaluation and feedback has in the sustainability of community intervention programmes.

### 7.3.3 Role of the CEO

Factor 3 was quite similar to Factor 1, but instead addressed the role of the CEO at organisations. Four variables loaded into this factor that addressed strategy, project planning and establishing objectives. All the loaded items directly addressed the CEO in the survey statements, and therefore respondent's perceptions for this factor were interpreted and titled in relation to the CEO's role in the sustainability of community intervention programmes.

### 7.3.4 Funding resources at the organisation

Three variables loaded into Factor 4, meaning the minimum loading for a factor in EFA was met. These three variables related to financial resources at the organisation with reference to project funding budgets, long-term availability, and funding for staff hire or retention. Because of this, Factor 4 was interpreted and titled in relation to the role an organisation's funding resources plays in the sustainability of community intervention programmes.

### 7.3.5 Autonomy of staff

Much like Factor 4, this factor met the minimum load requirements for a component through EFA as three variables loaded into Factor 5. These three variables related to trust in staff to meet objectives, delivery staff autonomy to develop projects, and involvement of staff in programme designs. All these statements addressed staff involvement and autonomy. Therefore, respondent's perceptions for this factor were interpreted and titled accordingly to analyse the role of staff autonomy in the delivery of sustainable community intervention programmes.

### 7.3.6 Dependency on public funding

Similar to Factors 4 and 5, Factor 6 also met the minimum load requirements for a component through EFA with three variables loading into it. The three variables relate to perceptions of an organisation's use of public money for project operations, start-up costs of programmes, and meeting funding criteria. Whilst the first two variables clearly relate to dependency on external public money, the final variable could relate to programme design. However, meeting funding criteria is a requirement for organisations to access public money for programme development. Therefore, this statement joined the previous two variables in being interpreted as the influence dependency on public funding has on the sustainability of an organisation's community intervention programmes.

## 7.4 Reliability analysis

Having completed the interpretations of components to emerge from the EFA, it is also important to consider the reliability of the scales selected for research (Pallant, 2016). This form of internal consistency testing identifies the degree to which the variables within each component jointly measure each construct (Henson, 2001). Thus, as each component is set out to measure a different factor of sustainability, internal consistency ensures each component is reliably measured, ensuring the real domain of critical analysis understands the underlying structures of sustainability initially inferred (Blaikie, 2010; Jones, 2015). Tavakol and Dennick (2011) indicate that internal consistency is calculated by using a Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha$). They go on to state that acceptable valued for $\alpha$ = 0.70-0.95. Pallant (2016) supports this by suggesting a value of 0.80 as a preferable score for very good internal consistency reliability, but anything above 0.70 is generally acceptable. Table 25 highlights the $\alpha$ values for each factor that emerged from EFA.

Table 26: Reliability analysis of components extracted from EFA

| Factor | Cronbach (α) |
|---|---|
| 1. Role of the Board | 0.924 |
| 2. Evaluation and feedback | 0.935 |
| 3. Role of the CEO | 0.968 |
| 4. Funding resources at the organisation | 0.808 |
| 5. Autonomy of staff | 0.822 |
| 6. Dependency on public funding | 0.754 |

As Table 26 displays, each of the six factors that emerged from EFA meet the assumption of having a α value > 0.70. The average for all components combined is α = 0.865 with a range of 0.754-0.968, thus meeting the optimal measure with strong internal consistency reliability. Individually, the strongest reliability value came from Factor 3 (α = 0.968) which assessed the "Role of the CEO". This was closely followed by Factor 2 (α = 0.935) which grouped variables to assess perceptions of "Evaluation and feedback". Factor 1 analysed the "Role of the Board" and had a fairly similar internal consistency value to those measuring evaluation as α = 0.924 for Factor 1. "Autonomy of staff" was measured in Factor 5 which also produced very good internal consistency reliability (α = 0.822). Similarly, Factor 4, which assessed "Funding resources at the organisation", also had a strong alpha value (α = 0.808). The lowest, but still acceptable, reliability value was with Factor 6 (α = 0.754), which addressed the "Dependency on public funding" for organisations.

## 7.5 ANOVA

### 7.5.1 Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance

Prior to conducting the ANOVA and subsequent post-hoc tests on each factor emerging from the EFA, Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance was carried out on each component. This assumption test was required due to unequal sample sizes for each independent variable stated for this research. Each factor was tested to determine if the dependent variables met the null hypothesis that variances were equal

across the sample groups. If $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected, and assumptions would not be met for ANOVA.

Table 27: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance for each factor prior to ANOVA

| Factor | f | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Role of the Board | 1.870 | 94 | 111 | 0.001** |
| 2. Evaluation and feedback | 1.577 | 94 | 111 | 0.011* |
| 3. Role of the CEO | 0.657 | 94 | 111 | 0.982 |
| 4. Funding resources at the organisation | 0.918 | 94 | 111 | 0.664 |
| 5. Autonomy of staff | 1.080 | 94 | 111 | 0.384 |
| 6. Dependency on public funding | 0.728 | 94 | 111 | 0.943 |

\* $p < 0.05$
\*\* $p < 0.01$

Displayed in Table 27 are the results from Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance conducted for each component that emerged from the EFA. Due to Factor 1 and Factor 2 reporting $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis for these components is rejected and thus, do not meet the assumption for ANOVA. For the purpose of reporting, ANOVAs will still be conducted on these factors, but with a degree of caution due to them failing the test for variance equality. The reason for this is that some analysis may produce interesting findings that could offer a development on the understandings from study 1. Furthermore, results may produce some results that are worthy of discussion within this research and proposals for follow-up studies. The remaining factors (FAC3-6) can all accept the null hypothesis that variances were equal across the same groups. This is because results display $p > 0.05$ for Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance for "Role of the CEO", "Funding resources at the organisation", "Autonomy of staff" and "Dependency on public funding". This chapter will now continue by displaying the results from six ANOVA tests individually conducted for each component emerging from the EFA.

### 7.5.2 Factor 1: Role of the Board

Table 28: Between-subjects ANOVA for Factor 1

| Independent variable | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|
| Staff role | .000** | .323 |
| Length of time in current role | .028* | .057 |
| Organisation type | .756 | .026 |
| Number of full-time staff at organisation | .096 | .049 |

\* $p < 0.05$
\*\* $p < 0.01$

A one-way between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to investigate the independent variables' influence on perceptions of the role of the board in relation to sustainability of community intervention programmes. As previously mentioned, this factor violates Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance and therefore, some reservations were held for the findings from the analysis for Factor 1. Two variables were shown to be statistically significant in its association with Factor 1, however "Organisation type" and "Number of full-time staff at organisation" were not statistically significant as $p > 0.05$ for both. "Staff role" ($F (4, 184) = 21.95$, $p < .001$) and "Length of time in current role" ($F (4, 184) = 2.79$, $p < 0.05$) were both statistically significant when associated with Factor 1. Therefore, H1 and H2 can be accepted as staff roles and different lengths of time in current role display significant differences on the role of the Board as a factor of sustainability. Hence, post-hoc tests were conducted on both of these independent variables to see where the differences occur within each group in relation to Factor 1. Furthermore, it is worth noting that "Staff role" has the largest effect size, explaining 32.3% of the variance of Factor 1 from the independent variable. Comparatively, "Length of time in current role" is quite different with just 5.7% of variance explained. This could mean that the role of the staff member completing the survey has the biggest impact on the perception of the Board's role in the sustainability of community intervention programmes.

Table 29: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Staff role" on Factor 1

| Staff Role (I) | Staff Role (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Board Chair (n = 40) | Board Member | 0.060 | .996 |
| | CEO | 0.723 | .002** |
| | Project Officer | 1.459 | .000** |
| | Coach | 1.089 | .000** |
| Board Member (n = 50) | Board Chair | -0.060 | .996 |
| | CEO | 0.662 | .004** |
| | Project Officer | 1.398 | .000** |
| | Coach | 1.028 | .000** |
| CEO (n = 27) | Board Chair | -0.723 | .002** |
| | Board Member | -0.662 | .004** |
| | Project Officer | 0.736 | .001** |
| | Coach | 0.366 | .270 |
| Coach (n = 55) | Board Chair | -1.089 | .000** |
| | Board Member | -1.028 | .000** |
| | CEO | -0.366 | .270 |
| | Project Officer | 0.370 | .145 |
| Project Officer (n = 42) | Board Chair | -1.459 | .000** |
| | Board Member | -1.398 | .000** |
| | CEO | -0.736 | .001** |
| | Coach | -0.370 | .145 |

** $p < 0.01$

For the independent variable of staff role, seven statistically significant differences were found through multiple comparisons from the post-hoc one way between groups ANOVA on Factor 1. Board Chairs appeared to perceive the role of the Board more highly than all other staff roles as the post-hoc mean differences show a positive difference when compared with other staff roles (Brown, 2005). These results were statistically significant when compared with perceptions from CEOs, Project Officers and Coaches. The largest difference was seen between the Board Chair and Project Officers (MD = 1.459, $p < 0.01$), which indicates Board Chairs perceived the role of the Board in sustainability to be much stronger than the perception of Project Officers. The second largest difference when comparisons were made with Board Chairs was with Coaches (MD = 1.089, $p < 0.01$). Given these were two largely positively differences in favour of Board Chairs perceptions, a clear split between strategic level and delivery level perceptions are indicated for Factor 1. A

smaller positive difference for the final statistically significant difference was apparent between the perceptions of Board Chairs and the CEO (MD = 0.723, $p < 0.01$).

There were similar findings for the comparisons of perceptions for Factor 1 between staff roles when compared with Board Members. All roles but the Board Chairs had a positive difference when assessing the role of the board on the sustainability of community intervention programmes. Much like the Board Chair perceptions, Board Member perceptions were statistically significant in that they held more positive attitudes on the role the Board plays in sustainability than the attitudes of CEOs, Project Officers and Coaches. The largest positive difference was found with Project Officers (MD = 1.398, $p < 0.01$), which was closely followed by the difference between Board Members and Coaches (MD = 1.028, $p < 0.01$). Once again this shows the schism in perceptions between strategic level and delivery level staff in relation to perceptions of the Board's role on the sustainability of delivery programmes. Finally, a smaller positive difference was evident between Board Members and CEOs (MD = 0.662, $p < 0.01$).

The CEO plays a mediating role between strategic and delivery levels of organisations, which is suggested once again in the perceptions obtained on the role of the board for sustainability. As already seen, the CEOs held slightly lower perceptions when compared to the strategic level, however more tellingly when compared with delivery level staff perceptions were higher. Statistically significant differences were found between the CEOs and Project Officers (MD = 0.736, $p < 0.01$), highlighting the more positive perception held by CEOs in relation to the role of the Board on Factor 1.

Table 30: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Length of time in current role" on Factor 1

| Length of time in current role (I) | Length of time in current role (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0-6 months (n = 16) | 6-12 months | 0.430 | .424 |
| | 1-2 years | 0.186 | .900 |
| | 2-5 years | 0.329 | .498 |
| | 5+ years | 0.028 | 1.000 |
| 6-12 months (n = 12) | 0-6 months | -0.430 | .424 |
| | 1-2 years | -0.244 | .770 |
| | 2-5 years | -0.102 | .988 |

| Length of time in current role (I) | Length of time in current role (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 5+ years | -0.403 | .269 |
| 1-2 years (n = 41) | 0-6 months | -0.186 | .900 |
| | 6-12 months | 0.244 | .770 |
| | 2-5 years | 0.142 | .883 |
| | 5+ years | -0.149 | .212 |
| 2-5 years (n = 52) | 0-6 months | -0.329 | .498 |
| | 6-12 months | 0.102 | .988 |
| | 1-2 years | -0.142 | .883 |
| | 5+ years | -0.301 | .212 |
| 5+ years (n = 93) | 0-6 months | -0.028 | 1.000 |
| | 6-12 months | 0.403 | .269 |
| | 1-2 years | 0.149 | .817 |
| | 2-5 years | 0.301 | .212 |

Based upon the multiple comparisons post-hoc test for "Length of time in current role", there were no major differences in the mean scores in relation to Factor 1. Furthermore, any minor differences were found to be statistically non-significant. Looking back at Table 28, less of an effect size for "Length of time in current role" was present when compared to the independent variable of "Staff role".

### 7.5.3 Factor 2: Evaluation and feedback

Table 31: Between-subjects ANOVA for Factor 2

| Independent variable | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|
| Staff role | .022* | .060 |
| Length of time in current role | .599 | .015 |
| Organisation type | .334 | .048 |
| Number of full-time staff at organisation | .000** | .132 |

*p < 0.05
**p < 0.01

A one-way between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to investigate the independent variables' influence on perceptions of evaluation and feedback in relation to the sustainability of community intervention programmes. As previously mentioned, this factor violates Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance and therefore, some reservations were held for the findings from the analysis for Factor 2. Two variables

displayed statistically significant results in their association with Factor 2, however "Length of time in current role" and "Organisation type" were statistically non-significant. "Staff role" (F (4, 184) = 2.93, $p < 0.05$) and "Number of full-time staff at organisation" (F (5, 185) = 5.600, $p < 0.01$) were both statistically significant in relation to Factor 2. Therefore, H5 and H8 can be accepted as staff roles and different number of full-time staff at organisations display significant differences on the role evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability. Multiple comparisons post-hoc tests were consequently conducted for both independent variables to analyse where differences occurred between each of the groups within them. The effect size for Factor 2 independent variables were closer than when considered for Factor 1. The largest effect size for Factor 2 was explained by "Number of full-time staff at organisation" at 13.2%, whereas "Staff role" explained 6% of variance. This means that staff capacity could offer slightly more influence than the role of staff on the perception of evaluation processes as a factor of sustainability.

Table 32: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Staff role" on Factor 2

| Staff Role (I) | Staff Role (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Board Chair | Board Member | 0.123 | .962 |
| (n = 40) | CEO | -0.956 | .000** |
| | Project Officer | -1.049 | .000** |
| | Coach | -0.308 | .419 |
| Board Member | Board Chair | -0.123 | .962 |
| (n = 50) | CEO | -1.079 | .000** |
| | Project Officer | -1.172 | .000** |
| | Coach | -0.431 | .082 |
| CEO | Board Chair | 0.956 | .000** |
| (n = 27) | Board Member | 1.079 | .000** |
| | Project Officer | -0.092 | .992 |
| | Coach | 0.648 | .011* |
| Project Officer | Board Chair | 1.049 | .000** |
| (n = 42) | Board Member | 1.172 | .000** |
| | CEO | 0.092 | .992 |
| | Coach | 0.740 | .000** |
| Coach | Board Chair | 0.308 | .419 |
| (n = 55) | Board Member | 0.431 | .082 |
| | CEO | -0.648 | .011* |
| | Project Officer | -0.740 | .000** |

For the independent variable of "Staff role", six statistically significant differences were found through multiple comparisons from the post-hoc one way between groups ANOVA on Factor 2. CEOs and Project Officers had the most statistically significant differences when compared with other groups as each had three statistically significant results. CEOs were more favourable in perceptions of evaluation as a factor of sustainability when compared with Board Members (MD = 1.079, $p < 0.01$) and Board Chairs (MD = 0.956, $p < 0.01$). This was also the case when comparing CEO attitudes against those of Coaches (MD = 0.648, $p < 0.05$), however there was not as much difference in the mean scores relative to those of the Board Chairs and Board Members.

Similar to CEOs, Project Officers also yielded three statistically significant differences when comparing Factor 2 perceptions between the groups. Board Members (MD = 1.172, $p < 0.01$) and Board Chairs (MD = 1.049, $p < 0.01$) were the two largest differences, with Project Officers perceiving stronger towards evaluation as a sustainability factor than the two strategic level roles. Following the pattern from comparing CEO differences with other groups, Project Officers also scored favourably for Factor 2 between themselves and Coaches (MD = 0.740, $p < 0.01$). CEOs and Project Officers both scored more favourably on evaluation compared to Board Chairs, Board Members and Coaches. These results indicate that Factor 2 is more influential as a sustainability factor with roles that do not sit on the extremes of either strategic or delivery level spectrum.

Table 33: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Number of full-time staff at organisation" on Factor 2

| Number of full-time staff at organisation (I) | Number of full-time staff at organisation (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| None (n = 99) | 1-10 | -0.762 | .000** |
| | 11-20 | -0.776 | .017* |
| | 21-35 | -0.851 | .006** |
| | 36-50 | -1.605 | .000** |
| | More than 50 | -1.420 | .000** |
| 1-10 (n = 56) | None | .762 | .000** |
| | 11-20 | -0.014 | 1.000 |
| | 21-35 | -0.089 | .999 |

| Number of full-time staff at organisation (I) | Number of full-time staff at organisation (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 36-50 | -0.843 | .125 |
| | More than 50 | -0.658 | .066 |
| 11-20 (n = 14) | None | 0.776 | .017* |
| | 1-10 | 0.014 | 1.000 |
| | 21-35 | -0.075 | 1.000 |
| | 36-50 | -0.829 | .270 |
| | More than 50 | -0.644 | .289 |
| 21-35 (n = 14) | None | 0.851 | .006** |
| | 1-10 | 0.089 | .999 |
| | 11-20 | 0.075 | 1.000 |
| | 36-50 | -0.754 | .376 |
| | More than 50 | -0.569 | .431 |
| 36-50 (n = 7) | None | 1.604 | .000** |
| | 1-10 | 0.843 | .125 |
| | 11-20 | 0.829 | .270 |
| | 21-35 | 0.754 | .376 |
| | More than 50 | 0.185 | .997 |
| More than 50 (n = 16) | None | 1.420 | .000** |
| | 1-10 | 0.658 | .066 |
| | 11-20 | 0.644 | .289 |
| | 21-35 | 0.569 | .431 |
| | 36-50 | -0.185 | .997 |

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$

When testing "Number of full-time staff at organisation" it is worth noting that eight data sets were removed as results showed respondents stated "Don't know" when asked to specify a category their organisation meets for this variable. In relation to "Number of full-time staff at organisation", five statistically significant differences were found through multiple comparisons from the post-hoc one way between groups ANOVA on Factor 2. Each of these were found between "None" and all other groups within this variable. All mean differences displaying organisations without full-time staff had a lower mean difference than that of other groups, indicating evaluation as a stronger sustainability factor for organisations with full-time members of staff. The largest differences were found between "None" and the larger number categories, with "36-50" (MD = -1.605, $p < 0.01$) and "More than 50" (MD = -1.420, $p < 0.01$). The next largest mean difference for a statistically significant result was found between "None" and "21-35" (MD = 0.851). The smaller categories of "1-10" (MD = -0.762, $p < 0.01$) and "11-20" (MD = -0.776, $p < 0.05$), had the lowest mean difference when compared with the "None" group. This highlights that as the staff capacity of

organisations increases, there is a higher perception of the role evaluation has a factor of sustainability when delivering community intervention programmes.

### 7.5.4 Factor 3: Role of the CEO

Table 34: Between-subjects ANOVA for Factor 3

| Independent variable | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|
| Staff role | .000** | .153 |
| Length of time in current role | .352 | .024 |
| Organisation type | .790 | .025 |
| Number of full-time staff at organisation | .000** | .144 |

** $p < 0.01$

A one-way between-subjects ANOVA was performed to investigate the independent variables' influence on perceptions the "Role of the CEO" in relation to sustainability of community intervention programmes. Two variables displayed statistically significant results in their association with Factor 3, however "Length of time in current role" and "Organisation type" were statistically non-significant. "Staff role" (F (4, 184) = 8.319, $p < 0.01$) and "Number of full-time staff at organisation" (F (5, 184) = 6.193, $p < 0.01$) were both statistically significant, therefore, H9 and H12 can be accepted as staff roles and different number of full-time staff at organisations display significant differences on the role of CEOs as a factor of sustainability. This means multiple comparison post-hoc tests were conducted on both. It is also worth noting that the effect size was fairly similar for both with "Staff role" explaining 15.3% of variance and "Number of full-time staff at organisation" accounting for 14.4% of variance.

Table 35: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Staff role" on Factor 3

| Staff Role (I) | Staff Role (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Board Chair (n = 40) | Board Member | -0.015 | 1.000 |
| | CEO | -1.226 | .000** |
| | Project Officer | -.0.331 | .348 |
| | Coach | 0.405 | .127 |

| Staff Role (I) | Staff Role (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Board Member (n = 50) | Board Chair | 0.015 | 1.000 |
| | CEO | -1.212 | .000** |
| | Project Officer | -0.316 | .072 |
| | Coach | 0.420 | .341 |
| CEO (n = 27) | Board Chair | 1.226 | .000** |
| | Board Member | 1.212 | .000** |
| | Project Officer | 0.896 | .000** |
| | Coach | 1.631 | .000** |
| Project Officer (n = 42) | Board Chair | 0.331 | .348 |
| | Board Member | 0.316 | .341 |
| | CEO | -0.896 | .000** |
| | Coach | 0.736 | .000** |
| Coach (n = 55) | Board Chair | -0.405 | .127 |
| | Board Member | -0.420 | .072 |
| | CEO | -1.631 | .000** |
| | Project Officer | -0.736 | .000** |

** $p < 0.01$

The multiple comparisons post-hoc test for Factor 3 highlighted that the CEOs were more favourable towards their own role, just as the Board did for their own role in Factor 1 when compared with other staff roles. In total, five statistically significant difference were found from the one way between groups ANOVA conducted on the "Role of the CEO" as a sustainability factor for community intervention programmes. Four of these derived from CEOs displaying more positive perceptions for their own role when compared with other members of staff. The largest statistically significant difference was found between "CEO" and "Coach" (MD = 1.631, $p < 0.01$). This was followed by fairly similar differences found between the "CEO" responses and those of "Board Chairs" (MD = 1.226, $p < 0.01$) and "Board Members" (MD = 1.212, $p < 0.01$). The final statistically significant difference between the "CEO" perceptions and another staff role came with the "Project Officer" group (MD = 0.896, $p < 0.01$). This difference was not as large as others displayed, suggesting that the strategic and ground level staff do not emphasise "Role of the CEO" as much of a sustainability factor when compared with the "CEO" themselves. Support for the "Project Officer" group having stronger perceptions for the role CEOs play as a factor of sustainability is also evident with stronger perceptions for Factor 3 when compared with the "Coach" group (MD = 0.736, $p < 0.01$).

Table 36: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Number of full-time staff at organisation" on Factor 3

| Number of full-time staff at organisation (I) | Number of full-time staff at organisation (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| None (n = 99) | 1-10 | -1.155 | .000** |
| | 11-20 | -0.942 | .001** |
| | 21-35 | -0.754 | .014* |
| | 36-50 | -0.660 | .285 |
| | More than 50 | -0.795 | .004** |
| 1-10 (n = 56) | None | 1.155 | .000** |
| | 11-20 | 0.213 | .948 |
| | 21-35 | 0.401 | .547 |
| | 36-50 | 0.495 | .635 |
| | More than 50 | 0.360 | .605 |
| 11-20 (n = 14) | None | 0.942 | .001** |
| | 1-10 | -0.213 | .948 |
| | 21-35 | 0.188 | .989 |
| | 36-50 | 0.282 | .973 |
| | More than 50 | 0.147 | .996 |
| 21-35 (n = 14) | None | 0.754 | .014** |
| | 1-10 | -0.401 | .547 |
| | 11-20 | -0.188 | .989 |
| | 36-50 | 0.094 | 1.000 |
| | More than 50 | -0.041 | 1.000 |
| 36-50 (n = 7) | None | 0.660 | .285 |
| | 1-10 | -0.495 | .635 |
| | 11-20 | -0.282 | .973 |
| | 21-35 | -0.094 | 1.000 |
| | More than 50 | -0.135 | .999 |
| More than 50 (n = 16) | None | 0.795 | .004** |
| | 1-10 | -0.360 | .605 |
| | 11-20 | -0.147 | .996 |
| | 21-35 | 0.041 | 1.000 |
| | 36-50 | 0.135 | .999 |

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$

In association with Factor 3, multiple-comparison post-hoc tests were conducted for "Number of full-time staff at organisation". Results yielded four statistically significant results, all of which were found with negative mean differences when comparing the "None" group with four of the other groups within this variable. The largest mean difference that produced a statistically significant result was found between the "None" and "1-10" group (MD = -1.155, $p < 0.01$). The next category for number of full-time staff was the "11-20" group (MD = -0.942, $p < 0.01$) which

yielded the second largest negative mean difference when compared with perceptions of organisations without any full-time staff members. The two remaining statistically significant results for "Number of full-time staff at organisation" on Factor 3 were between the "None" group and the "21-35" (MD = -0.754, $p < 0.05$), and also the "More than 50" group (MD = -0.795, $p < 0.01$). Upon analysing the "Staff Role" and how CEOs perceived the role they play in sustainability, an argument could be raised that the individual within organisations with no full-time members of staff adopts the role of the CEO, perhaps even as a volunteer. However, these results do not concur with this suggestion as the CEO themselves would be a full-time member of staff and negative mean differences occurred in perceptions of Factor 3 from the "None" group. Interestingly, as organisation size grew in the categories the mean difference was smaller for the statistically significant results between "None" and other variables, highlighting the role of the CEO in sustainability being more prevalent in perceptions amongst individuals at organisations with greater staff capacity.

### 7.5.5 Factor 4: Funding resources at the organisation

Table 37: Between-subjects ANOVA for Factor 4

| Independent variable | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|
| Staff role | .003** | .082 |
| Length of time in current role | .149 | .036 |
| Organisation type | .094 | .070 |
| Number of full-time staff at organisation | .000** | .200 |

** $p < 0.01$

Factor 4 was labelled "Funding resources at the organisation" as a measure of the organisation's financial capacity. A one-way between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to investigate the independent variables influences on perceptions of Factor 4 as a factor of sustainability. Similar to Factor 3, "Staff Role" (F (4, 184) = 4.082, $p < 0.01$) and "Number of full-time staff at organisation" (F (5, 184) = 9.193, $p < 0.01$) were the 2 independent variables to produce statistically significant results for Factor 4. Therefore, H13 and H16 can be accepted as staff roles and different number of full-time staff at organisations display significant differences on the role funding resources organisations has as a factor of sustainability. However, varying from Factor 3, the

effect sizes were quite different for the two as "Staff Role" explained just 8.2% of variance, whereas "Number of full-time staff at organisation" accounted for a larger 20%. This suggests that the latter contributes a greater impact in relation to the role an organisation's financial capacity has as a factor of sustainability.

Table 38: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Staff role" on Factor 4

| Staff Role (I) | Staff Role (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Board Chair (n = 40) | Board Member | -0.089 | .991 |
| | CEO | 0.315 | .626 |
| | Project Officer | -0.292 | .587 |
| | Coach | 0.353 | .343 |
| Board Member (n = 50) | Board Chair | 0.089 | .991 |
| | CEO | 0.403 | .333 |
| | Project Officer | -0.203 | .820 |
| | Coach | 0.442 | .103 |
| CEO (n = 27) | Board Chair | -0.315 | .626 |
| | Board Member | -0.403 | .333 |
| | Project Officer | -0.606 | .049* |
| | Coach | 0.039 | 1.000 |
| Project Officer (n = 42) | Board Chair | 0.292 | .587 |
| | Board Member | 0.203 | .820 |
| | CEO | 0.606 | .049* |
| | Coach | 0.645 | .005** |
| Coach (n = 55) | Board Chair | -0.353 | .343 |
| | Board Member | -0.442 | .103 |
| | CEO | -0.039 | 1.000 |
| | Project Officer | -0.645 | .005** |

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$

A multiple comparison post-hoc test was undertaken for "Staff role" on Factor 4, which looked at the differences between perceptions of different staff and their role on how "Funding resources at organisation" impacts on sustainability when delivering community intervention programmes. Two statistically significant differences were found, with both involving attitudes received from the "Project Officer" group. Both had similar mean differences, with the largest of the two coming between the "Project Officer" and "Coach" responses (MD = 0.645, $p < 0.01$). A comparable mean difference that was statistically significant, was also found between perceptions of the "Project Officer" group and "CEO" group (MD = 0.606, $p < 0.05$). In terms of being

a factor of sustainability, the role an organisation's financial capability is shown by results to be perceived more important to Project Officers than CEOs and Coaches. Project Officers tend to have a greater level of involvement in community intervention programme development and transcending strategic goals down to a delivery level. From these results it could be argued that the burden of financial responsibility is felt most by those developing programmes for their organisation. Looking back to Factor 1 and Factor 3, Project Officers highlight a weaker perception of the Board and CEO roles in sustainability. This could explain the reason why the only statistically significant differences found for Factor 4 involved Project Officers. The sentiment of responsibility felt by this group and the role they play in managing projects through programme development indicates a burden of organisational financial capacity that is explained within Factor 4.

Table 39: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Number of full-time staff at organisation" on Factor 4

| Number of full-time staff at organisation (I) | Number of full-time staff at organisation (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| None (n = 99) | 1-10 | -0.367 | .139 |
| | 11-20 | -0.394 | .631 |
| | 21-35 | -1.229 | .000** |
| | 36-50 | -1.355 | .002** |
| | More than 50 | -0.504 | .291 |
| 1-10 (n = 56) | None | 0.367 | .139 |
| | 11-20 | -0.027 | 1.000 |
| | 21-35 | -0.862 | .017* |
| | 36-50 | -0.988 | .067 |
| | More than 50 | -0.136 | .994 |
| 11-20 (n = 14) | None | 0.394 | .631 |
| | 1-10 | 0.027 | 1.000 |
| | 21-35 | -0.835 | .134 |
| | 36-50 | -0.961 | .186 |
| | More than 50 | -0.110 | .999 |
| 21-35 (n = 14) | None | 1.229 | .000** |
| | 1-10 | 0.862 | .017* |
| | 11-20 | 0.835 | .134 |
| | 36-50 | -0.126 | 1.000 |
| | More than 50 | 0.726 | .230 |
| 36-50 (n = 7) | None | 1.355 | .002** |
| | 1-10 | 0.988 | .067 |
| | 11-20 | 0.961 | .186 |
| | 21-35 | 0.126 | 1.000 |

| Number of full-time staff at organisation (I) | Number of full-time staff at organisation (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | More than 50 | 0.852 | .286 |
| More than 50 (n = 16) | None | 0.504 | .291 |
|  | 1-10 | 0.136 | .994 |
|  | 11-20 | 0.110 | .999 |
|  | 21-35 | -0.726 | .230 |
|  | 36-50 | -0.852 | .286 |

\* $p < 0.05$
\*\* $p < 0.01$

As the one-way between-subjects ANOVA produced statistically significant results for "Number of full-time staff at organisation" in relation to Factor 4, a multiple-comparison post-hoc test was conducted to analyse the differences between the groups in this independent variable. Three statistically significant differences were found from this test, two of which were evident with the "21-35" group. The largest of these differences were found between this group and the "None" category (MD = 1.229, $p < 0.01$). Further statistically significant mean differences were found for between the "21-35" category and "1-10" group (MD = 0.862, $p < 0.05$). This would suggest that medium-to-large staff capacity sized organisation valued the role of funding resources much higher than those organisations with less or no full-time staff members.

Similar findings were also evident between the "36-50" and "None" category (MD = 1.355, $p < 0.01$). Organisations without any full-time staff feature twice with statistically significant and lower mean differences when compared to a larger size organisation. With this pattern it would be expected to see this continue with the "More than 50" group. However, this could be explained as financial resources at organisations this size are healthy enough to recruit more than 50 individuals (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). Hence the impact of Factor 4 has been felt more by mid-sized organisations, especially when differences were compared with organisations with a smaller staff capacity.

### 7.5.6 Factor 5: Autonomy of staff

Table 40: Between-subjects ANOVA for Factor 5

| Independent variable | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|
| Staff role | .395 | .022 |
| Length of time in current role | .864 | .007 |
| Organisation type | .618 | .033 |
| Number of full-time staff at organisation | .150 | .043 |

"Autonomy of Staff" was Factor 5 as a measure of staff freedom to independently work towards sustainable outcomes for their organisation's community intervention programmes. A one-way between-subjects ANOVA was performed to analyse this independent variable's influence on the perception of Factor 5 as a measure of sustainability. However, each independent variable was found to be non-significant in relation to this factor. Therefore, no multiple comparison post-hoc tests were required to measure differences between groups of each independent variables and the null hypothesis for each hypothesis within the factor of staff autonomy can be accepted.

### 7.5.7 Factor 6: Dependency on public funding

Table 41: Between-subjects ANOVA for Factor 6

| Independent variable | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|
| Staff role | .534 | .017 |
| Length of time in current role | .797 | .009 |
| Organisation type | .043* | .082 |
| Number of full-time staff at organisation | .000** | .127 |

*$p < 0.05$
**$p < 0.01$

Factor 6 was categorised as a measure of sustainability through an analysis of individual's perceptions towards an organisation's dependency on public funding. Following a one-way between-subjects ANOVA, two statistically significant independent variables were found. "Organisation type" emerged as statistically

significant (F (8, 184) = 1.721, $p < 0.05$). The other statistically significant independent variable was "Number of full-time staff at organisation" (F (5, 184) = 5.826, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, H23 and H24 can be accepted as organisation type and different number of full-time staff at organisations display significant differences on the role public funding dependency has as a factor of sustainability. The latter explained the most variance with 12.7%, whereas "Organisation type" accounted for 8.2%. This suggests that full-time staff capacity would have the largest impact with Factor 6 as a measure of sustainability when delivering community intervention programmes.

Table 42: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Organisation type" on Factor 6

| Organisation type (I) | Organisation type (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Education (n = 2) | For-profit organisation | 1.019 | .922 |
| | Local authority | -0.127 | 1.000 |
| | NGB | -0.752 | .975 |
| | RGB | -0.814 | .962 |
| | Social enterprise | -0.319 | 1.000 |
| | Sole trader/individual | 0.493 | 1.000 |
| | Trust | -0.361 | 1.000 |
| | Non-profit organisation | 0.196 | 1.000 |
| For-profit organisation (n = 6) | Education | -1.019 | .922 |
| | Local authority | -1.146 | .739 |
| | NGB | -1.771 | .007** |
| | RGB | -1.833 | .006** |
| | Social enterprise | -1.338 | .547 |
| | Sole trader/individual | -0.526 | .997 |
| | Trust | -1.380 | .683 |
| | Non-profit organisation | -0.999 | .291 |
| Local authority (n = 3) | Education | 0.127 | 1.000 |
| | For-profit organisation | 1.146 | .739 |
| | NGB | -0.625 | .977 |
| | RGB | -0.687 | .962 |
| | Social enterprise | -0.192 | 1.000 |
| | Sole trader/individual | 0.620 | .996 |
| | Trust | -0.234 | 1.000 |
| | Non-profit organisation | 0.147 | 1.000 |
| NGB (n = 16) | Education | 0.752 | .975 |
| | For-profit organisation | 1.771 | .007** |
| | Local authority | 0.625 | .977 |
| | RGB | -0.062 | 1.000 |
| | Social enterprise | 0.433 | .998 |

| Organisation type (I) | Organisation type (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Sole trader/individual | 1.245 | .446 |
| | Trust | 0.391 | 1.000 |
| | Non-profit organisation | 0.772 | .053 |
| RGB (n = 14) | Education | 0.814 | .962 |
| | For-profit organisation | 1.833 | .006** |
| | Local authority | 0.687 | .962 |
| | NGB | 0.062 | 1.000 |
| | Social enterprise | 0.496 | .995 |
| | Sole trader/individual | 1.307 | .394 |
| | Trust | 0.453 | .999 |
| | Non-profit organisation | 0.834 | .048* |
| Social enterprise (n = 3) | Education | 0.319 | 1.000 |
| | For-profit organisation | 1.338 | .547 |
| | Local authority | 0.192 | 1.000 |
| | NGB | -0.433 | .998 |
| | RGB | -0.496 | .995 |
| | Sole trader/individual | 0.812 | .976 |
| | Trust | -0.042 | 1.000 |
| | Non-profit organisation | 0.339 | .999 |
| Sole trader/individual (n = 3) | Education | -0.493 | 1.000 |
| | For-profit organisation | 0.526 | .997 |
| | Local authority | -0.620 | .996 |
| | NGB | -1.245 | .446 |
| | RGB | -1.307 | .394 |
| | Social enterprise | -0.815 | .976 |
| | Trust | -0.854 | .984 |
| | Non-profit organisation | -0.473 | .994 |
| Trust (n = 2) | Education | 0.361 | 1.000 |
| | For-profit organisation | 1.380 | .683 |
| | Local authority | 0.234 | 1.000 |
| | NGB | -0.391 | 1.000 |
| | RGB | -0.453 | .999 |
| | Social enterprise | 0.042 | 1.000 |
| | Sole trader/individual | 0.854 | .984 |
| | Non-profit organisation | 0.381 | 1.000 |
| Non-profit organisation (n = 165) | Education | -0.020 | 1.000 |
| | For-profit organisation | 0.999 | .291 |
| | Local authority | -0.147 | 1.000 |
| | NGB | -0.772 | .053 |
| | RGB | -0.834 | .048* |
| | Social enterprise | -0.339 | .999 |
| | Sole trader/individual | 0.473 | .994 |
| | Trust | -0.381 | 1.000 |

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$

The multiple-comparison post-hoc test produced three statistically significant differences between the groups making up with "Organisation type" variable for Factor 6. Interestingly, these differences were statistically significant when analysing perceptions between for-profit or non-profit organisations against the attitudes of governing bodies at a national and regional level. The "For-profit organisation" group had much lower mean differences that were statistically significant with the "NGB" group (MD = -1.771, $p$ < 0.01) and the "RGB" group (MD = -1.833, $p$ < 0.01). This would suggest that profit-focussed organisations had much less emphasis on needing public funding than sporting governing bodies of any scale.

Comparatively, the "Non-profit organisation" group also yielded lower mean differences than the "RGB" group and produced statistically significant results (MD = -0.634, $p$ < 0.05). Meaning VSOs placed less emphasis with their organisation's dependency on public funding as a factor of sustainability than RGBs. Some explanation could come from how public funding is provided through policy implementation and directly to public bodies in order to meet targets as a strategic outcome (Collins, 2010; Bingham and Walters, 2013). Furthermore, non-public bodies like the "For-profit organisation" and "Non-profit organisation" groups highlight the importance of diversifying income away from public funding dependency (Wicker and Breuer, 2011). However, it is worth noting that despite accepting the null hypothesis through Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance, there is large disparity in frequency of respondents between the groups for this independent variable.

Table 43: Multiple comparisons post-hoc test (Tukey HSD) for "Number of full-time staff at organisation" on Factor 6

| Number of full-time staff at organisation (I) | Number of full-time staff at organisation (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| None (n = 99) | 1-10 | -0.333 | .257 |
| | 11-20 | -1.144 | .000** |
| | 21-35 | -0.723 | .069 |
| | 36-50 | -1.395 | .002** |
| | More than 50 | -0.024 | 1.000 |
| 1-10 (n = 56) | None | 0.333 | .257 |
| | 11-20 | -0.811 | .040* |
| | 21-35 | -0.390 | .713 |
| | 36-50 | -1.062 | .049* |

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| Number of full-time staff at organisation (I) | Number of full-time staff at organisation (J) | Mean difference (I-J) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | More than 50 | 0.309 | .842 |
| 11-20 (n = 14) | None | 1.144 | .000** |
| | 1-10 | 0.811 | .040* |
| | 21-35 | 0.421 | .829 |
| | 36-50 | -0.251 | .992 |
| | More than 50 | 1.120 | .013* |
| 21-35 (n = 14) | None | 0.723 | .069 |
| | 1-10 | 0.390 | .713 |
| | 11-20 | -0.421 | .829 |
| | 36-50 | -0.672 | .611 |
| | More than 50 | 0.699 | .301 |
| 36-50 (n = 7) | None | 1.395 | .002** |
| | 1-10 | 1.062 | .049* |
| | 11-20 | 0.251 | .992 |
| | 21-35 | 0.672 | .611 |
| | More than 50 | 1.371 | .015* |
| More than 50 (n = 16) | None | 0.024 | 1.000 |
| | 1-10 | -0.309 | .842 |
| | 11-20 | -1.12 | .013* |
| | 21-35 | -0.699 | .301 |
| | 36-50 | -1.370 | .015* |

\* $p < 0.05$
\*\* $p < 0.01$

In relation to Factor 6, "Number of full-time staff at organisation" produced statistically significant results in the one-way between-subjects ANOVA. Therefore, a multiple comparison post-hoc test was performed to analyse the differences between the groups within this variable. Six statistically significant differences were found from this test, with three each when comparing the "11-20" and "36-50" groups with other organisations. Similar large differences were found with the "11-20" group yielding a stronger perception towards public funding dependency as a sustainability factor in comparison with the "None" group (MD = 1.144, $p < 0.01$) and the "More than 50" group (MD = 1.120, $p < 0.05$). Still with a positive mean difference, but slightly less so relative to these two groups was found between the "11-20" group and "1-10" group (MD = 0.811, $p < 0.05$). This means the "11-20" group held Factor 6 as a stronger aspect of sustainability than the two smallest staff capacity groups, and also the largest one.

A similar pattern was also present for the statistically mean differences found between the "36-50" group and other categories within this variable. The largest of

these mean differences was also with the "None" group (MD = 1.395, $p < 0.01$). However, deviating from the differences found from the "11-20" category, the second largest mean difference for the "36-50" group was found with the "More than 50" group (MD = 1.371, $p < 0.05$). The final statistically significant difference emerging from the analysis was between the "36-50" group and the "1-10" group (MD = 1.062, $p < 0.05$). Interestingly, as medium size organisations were found to hold financial resources as an important factor of sustainability, it was perhaps unsurprising that another financially driven factor was also held in high esteem as a factor of sustainability (Harris and Houlihan, 2016; Millar and Doherty, 2016).

## 7.6  Summary

This chapter offers an overview of study 2 and the findings from the quantitative analysis conducted. The first part of this analysis involved an EFA and conducting reliability analysis to reduce survey statements to categorized factors of sustainability within the real domain of critical realism. These factors of sustainability were made up of roles of senior management from the Board to the CEO, the autonomy of staff to fulfil objectives, processes of evaluation, and financial factors relating to both existing resources and public funding dependency. One-way between-subject ANOVAs were then conducted on each factor to understand which independent variables were statistically significant. Following this post-hoc tests were carried out to analyse differences between the statistically significant groups.

Staff roles featured prominently as a variable of influence on the perceptions of factors as measures of sustainability. The Board and CEO both held their own respective roles in positions of strength as factors of sustainability, whereas the Project Officers as programme developers felt the burden of financial restrictions on sustainable project creation more so than other staff members. CEOs and Project Officers also placed more emphasis on the evaluation processes and implementation has on a sustainable community intervention programme.

Along with staff roles, staff capacity as a measure of organisation size also frequented as a statistically significant variable on factors of sustainability. Organisations with no full-time staff twice held strong negative differences with other groups, which were statistically significant in relation to evaluation and the role of the CEO. Perceptions towards sustainability factors with staff capacity as a key variable

also resulted in financially driven factors holding stronger perceptions of sustainability with medium sized organisations, particularly when compared with organisations with none, or very small capacity, or very large staff numbers. The nature of organisations also yielded one statistically significant difference for organisation type in relation to dependency on public funding. For-profit and non-profit organisations both offered less strength to relying on public funding compared with governing bodies at a national and regional level.

To understand what these results offer in the wider theoretical framework of sustainability, the following chapter will look to focus on discussing the main themes that have emerged from the studies that have formed this research. This includes looking back to the previously reviewed literature and study 1 that offered a development of the theoretical landscape. As the research discusses findings from study 2, retroductive logic (see Figure 6) is utilised to determine the mechanisms and events observed that make up the knowledge of sustainability (Fleetwood, 2014). The inclusion of findings and results from this chapter will complete the discussion in the following chapter, with particular emphasis drawn towards the ROs and subsequent hypotheses that were previously declared.

# 8   <u>Discussion and Conclusions</u>

## *8.1   Introduction*

The aims of this research were to provide detailed insight into how community intervention programmes devised through the implementation of sport policy have been perceived by key stakeholders at organisations responsible for their delivery. Specifically, the purpose of the two studies were to build upon the existing theoretical concept of sustainability and apply it to specific programmes, as suggested by Bloyce and Smith (2010). With Harris and Houlihan (2016) indicating rapid adaptations for policy implementation, this research utilised the case of Sportivate and measured perceptions of key stakeholders exploratorily with a mixed-methods approach. Support for this is indicated through the value of retroductive strategies being able to find generative mechanisms through a middle path of inductive and deductive reasoning, whilst adopting perspectives of critical realism too (Bryman, 2012). This is important as observations, events and mechanisms were understood through this research within the empirical, actual, and real domains of critical realism (Blaikie, 2010). Strength for this stems from Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2017) who highlighted the necessity for this method as the multi-layered tools addressing sustainability have, thus far, failed to explore specific programmes from stakeholder perspectives. Furthermore, ensuring a synthesised approach was adopted, addressing thoughts on the implementation of sport policy through community intervention programmes in greater scope than has been conducted before (O'Toole, 2000). Furthermore, this synthesised approach to address sport policy implementation is also coherent with the inferences made through inductive reasoning before a more deductive explanation of causal mechanisms (Grix, 2019).

The conclusion of the research is presented in this chapter with a summary of the main findings that answer the RQ by meeting the set objectives. The RQ posed, which factors play a role on the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded through Sportivate in London? With the theoretical framework expanded from study 1, study 2 analysed stakeholder perceptions on the themes of sustainability through the following ROs:

**Research Objective 1:** Analyse how staff roles influence stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 2:** Determine how organisation types influence stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 3:** Analyse how the length of time in a role influences stakeholder perception on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

**Research Objective 4:** Determine how the size of organisation by staff capacity influences stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of funded sport and physical activity intervention programmes.

This chapter will be broken down into the findings for the key themes of sustainability highlighted from the two studies presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Through the adoption of a critical realist ontological approach and taking a middle path between interpretivist and positivist epistemological consideration, causal mechanisms will be discussed for the Sportivate programme, and themes of sustainability emerging from key stakeholders (Grix, 2019). To understand these perspectives, Blaikie's (2010) idea of a retroductive strategy was selected in this case-study design (Yin, 2013). Key findings offer interesting results on how themes of sustainability, building upon the concept reviewed from Mancini and Marek (2004) and Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012), differ according to the variables of: organisation type, staff capacity, staff role, and length of time at organisation (staff turnover). Subsequently, the chapter will outline recommendations for future research and how results can be applied to practical environments for community intervention programmes. Finally, reflections will be offered towards the research process that makeup the closing remarks for this thesis.

## 8.2  Empirical findings: study 1

The objective of study 1 was to build upon the concept of sustainability initially understood from Chapter 2, with particular reference to Mancini and Marek's (2004) elements of sustainability that fit into their Programme Sustainability Index, and Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) themes of sustainability. By adopting critical realism as the chosen ontological approach, study 1 adopted exploratory semi-structured interviews within the empirical domain to allow stakeholders to offer their perceptions of sustainability (Blaikie, 2010). This offers the first step in this research's strategic

interplay, as highlighted by Ragin (1994), adopting a more inductive approach at this stage. To understand the underlying structures of sustainability, the real domain of critical realism offers brief explanation of observation, events and mechanisms through four modes of reality: material, ideal, artefactual and social (Fleetwood, 2014).

### 8.2.1 Material mode of reality discussion

Because of the cyclical nature of the United Kingdom government, policymakers' roles can often be changed, and given their influence on community sports programmes, policy for increasing physical activity is regularly remodelled (Sallis, Bauman and Pratt, 1998). However, results show that individuals at funded organisations feel the ever-changing political environment can have a detrimental effect on sustainability. Interviewees highlighted administrative and bureaucratic issues for smaller organisations without being able to offer input on future policy. This contradicts the notion of Johnson et al. (2004) to build administrative policies to help sustain community physical activity programmes. Whilst the idea of an increase in administration was designed to support sustainability, respondents indicated that this makes it more difficult for smaller organisations to function because emphasis is taken away from the delivery of programmes. Interviewees support this point as *"policy creates too many hoops to jump through" (TA-BC5 VSO)*, thus providing evidential support for Bloyce and Smith's (2010) feelings of legacy promises being overstated when attempting to meet sustainability outcomes through the delivery of the Olympic Games. Furthermore, with ground-level understanding of delivery needs being important for successful programme delivery, Girginov's (2011) idea of highlighting the need for local strategies to support national level policymakers is strengthened.

Part of the struggle for ground-level implementors also appears to be the loss of sport-for-sports sake, and a move to sport-for-health through physical activity (Green, 2006). Results indicate that government direction has led to facilitating the implementation of policy by tackling wider policy issues beyond the sporting remit desired from organisations. *"Now there is a government message to say playing sport is more for health reasons" (TNA-CEO1 NGB)* and *"Sport England has had to move away from sport a bit and direct an organisation like us towards health objectives," (TNA-CEO3 NGB)* highlights two points raised by CEOs at NGBs that showcase support for Weed's (2001) idea for a unified model for policy development delivery.

However, this creates a struggle for organisations who have become more interdependent on knowledge resources due to the requirements of understanding policy directives (Wright, 1998; Grix and Phillpots, 2011). Nonetheless, these quotes indicate an understanding of the policy climate set in in this top-down approach with a clear tightening of policy implementation necessities (May, Harris and Collins, 2013). However, this in turn contradicts Girginov's (2011) recommendations for a more symbiotic approach between top-down policymakers and delivery-level implementors. Further neglect for this balance between policymakers and implementors is evident from the results as there is a *"lack of contribution from other governmental departments" (TNA-CEO3 NGB)* and calls for intervention programme delivery to be subsidised *"by those departments we help save on costs" (TA-PO3 RGB).* These findings are supported by Downward (2018) who agreed that sustainable success depends on the subsidies offered for the public good provided by cross-sector implementation.

One way to alleviate these concerns has been to utilise CSPs/APs to ensure sport and physical activity remains at the forefront of intervention programme objectives (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). However, results indicate the big push for health-related initiatives also stems from organisations like London Sport who have *"been doing more work around getting people healthier and active" (TA-BM5 VSO).* This showcases how Collin's (2016) idea of Sport England cutting across sectors through CSPs/APs has been recognised. Furthermore, it indicates that Girginov's (2011) symbiotic approach has largely been disregarded, which Sport England (2016) themselves take responsibility for as key performance outcomes highlight health, social, community and economic development. Whilst this is seemingly enforced from the top-down policy implementation model, organisations like VSOs and charities tend to operate through sport ideals, thus the loss of sporting identity has negatively impacted smaller organisations delivering community intervention programmes (Giulanotti and Darnell, 2016).

The burden this creates for organisations can also be related to limited ground-level capacity. Respondents suggest that receiving funding is not enough due to the lack of staff available to help sustain delivery. Furthermore, the connection between added administration and staff capacity was indicated by one respondent who highlighted that staff already have limited time without the added bureaucracy burden.

These results concur with Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) who emphasise the need for funding to be allocated towards staffing resources. However, more importantly for Sportivate funded organisations was the strength offered by the delivery level of organisation. Characteristics of Project Officers and Coaches were often highlighted by TA and TNA organisations, with strategic level individuals indicating a reliance on ground-level staff as *"the lifeblood of the sport… essential to the success of any grassroots participation" (TNA-PO1 NGB).* This concurs with the notion that successful sustainable outcomes are found at organisations led by individuals who appreciate the work of delivery level staff (Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone, 1988). Further support is offered as respondents noted that staff involvement needs to be combined with characteristics of skill and attitude to make sustainability objectives more achievable (Goodman and Steckler, 1987; Goodman and Steckler, 1989; Mancini and Marek, 2004).

With ground-level staff being key to programme delivery, funding cuts have had a detrimental effect on TA and TNA organisations in meeting sustainability objectives. An issue that funding cuts have meant is the hindrance towards *"developing new programmes and continuing existing ones" (TNA-BC4 NGB).* With Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) highlighting the resourcefulness of allocating funding towards staffing requirements, cuts are inevitable in having a negative impact on programme development as staff are limited in their capacity to fulfil community needs. TNA organisations cited that some partnerships formed to counter the effect of funding cuts were not successful and this matches the sentiments of Warner and Sullivan (2004), who found that the loss of programme control counters the positive impact that could be had through collaborative projects. The link inferred between funding and capacity suggests that some smaller organisations have entered collaborations for reasons of resource-dependency, further highlighting the impact of funding as a factor of sustainability (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). These sentiments correspond to the direction of sport strategy from Sport England (2016), as austerity has severely restricted the ability of smaller clubs to deliver physical activity programmes (Collins, 2010).

### 8.2.2 Ideal mode of reality discussion

Mancini and Marek (2004) highlight evaluation processes, and the demonstration of them, as a key element of sustainability to leverage the long-term success of

intervention programmes for new or continuing sessions. However, as realised by Henry (2016), organisations often lack the ability to demonstrate the effective use of evaluation process. The results indicated in Chapter 5 highlight this as respondents specified a lack of time and resources to dwell on demonstrating evaluation, instead focussing on getting on with the delivery of programmes. This lack of consistent evaluation relates to Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2019), who specified this limitation of leveraging London 2012 for post-Olympic sustainability measures. However, results signify that whilst organisations appreciate the importance of evaluation, they also recognise errors in their lack of reflection as, *"we tend to focus on the easy stuff... and meet our targets" (TA-PO3 RGB).* As indicated here, some organisations misinterpreted quantitative target-hitting reviews as evaluation process which are then presented at Board meetings to stay on target. However, these misgivings bring Boutilier et al.'s (2001) thoughts to attention on how quantitative measures are inadequate in capturing programme success. Without process goals being reviewed, neglect towards a feedback model encapsulating all programme outcomes to ensure sustainability is evident (Scheirer and Dearing, 2011). Nonetheless, Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) details the difficult steps required for appropriate evaluation as it should entail the specification of outcomes, the measurement processes, and functionality or co-ordination between multiple stakeholders involved. Without adopting Johnson et al.'s (2004) approach for developing evaluation measures in the planning stage of delivery, the demonstration of evaluation processes followed Scheirer's (2005) review of approaches that were *"very informal" (TA-PO5 VSO)* or *"just keeping in touch and listening" (TA-CEO5 VSO).* This downplaying of evaluation measures resonates with concerns about organisations lacking priority towards evaluation and feedback strategies (Scheirer, 2005). A lack of appreciation towards measuring successful components of intervention programmes limits the development of future programmes (Scheirer and Dearing, 2011).

One of the reasons for this is because programme effectiveness needs to account for programme adaptations, which cannot realistically be ascertained without programme evaluation protocols being adopted (Schell et al., 2013). Furthermore, issues are present with the notion that long-term legacy and short-term impact need to be understood as different constructs of community programme delivery (Preuss,

2007). Respondents indicate that Sportivate promotes too many ideals of short-termism and quick fix solutions which decrease the number of young people participating in long-term physical activity (Sport England, 2014). More concerning is how this differs from the objectives of London Sport (2015), who highlight the identification of activity exit routes as a key part of the funding application process. To assess programme adaptability, respondents pointed to the local community needs having to be at the forefront of any programme creation, which supports Johnson et al.'s (2004) idea of aligning programme and community needs to meet sustainable objectives. However, interviewees feel restricted by a programme like Sportivate as it encourages an *"immediate mechanism to get people playing, but beyond that you cannot really do much" (TNA-BC4 NGB).* This suggests that lessons from Pluye, Potvin and Denis (2004) have not been learnt as they found the ceasing of an intervention programme to be on the key reasons behind why retention rates are difficult to sustain. Therefore, Akerlund's (2000) idea of community project modification to support local needs becomes redundant and near impossible to fulfil when a programme is completed and individuals *"have nowhere to go after" (TNA-BC6 VSO).*

### 8.2.3 Artefactual mode of reality discussion

In congruence with an organisational culture being initially set by leadership, Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) indicated that partnership models are more likely to be fostered by effective leaders to sustain new practices. TA groups particularly emphasise the importance of appropriate collaborations as the sharing of resources and expertise has allowed their organisation's programme delivery to be sustained. Part of this success is due to organisations being prepared to enter long-term relationships developed over time, rather than a quickly created collaboration to receive funding for a short-term programme. This supports Dearing's (2003) idea that a positive social environment is key to fostering effective partnerships for programme delivery. However, this cannot always be the case as short-term partnerships and programmes are still regular occurrences in community sport and physical activity. TNA organisations draw attention to this by specifying a lack of appropriateness or expertise available through some of their partnerships, thus hindering the meeting of sustainability objectives. One of the reasons for this is due to the desperation to access funding which encourages collaborations determined by a culture of governmentally regulated freedom (Miller

and Rose, 2008). Support for this comes from Hill and Varone (2017) who indicate that these partnerships are a result of complex bargaining set by a fusion of top-down policymaking and bottom-up delivery emphasis. This suggests a link between sustainability factors of policy, capacity and partnerships, which when utilised effectively success is evident. However, when not developed to meet community needs, TNA groups have struggled to value partnerships as an effective tool to improve the sustainability of their community intervention programmes.

Further evidence of how artefactual reality findings highlight the interconnected elements of sustainability stems from perceptions regarding the diversity of strategic levels of organisations and the representation of participant communities (Mancini and Marek, 2004). One respondent highlighted this representativeness between the Board and target market *"for projects has been essential" (TA-BC3 RGB)*. This supports the importance placed by Weed et al. (2009) on the feelings towards diversity and representation as an important factor of sustainability. The feeling of making *"people like feel part of something" (TA-BC3 RGB)* relates to Johnson et al.'s (2004) sentiments around offering a sense of ownership to programme participants. However, despite this appreciation for synthesis between Board diversity and understanding the community, some organisations highlighted the adoption of diversity strategies as material ransom governed by sport policy (Miller and Rose, 2008). Responses highlight this by indicating, *"it has to be done because we want to, not because we need to tick a box" (TA-BM4 NGB)* and that *"we lose independence on how to govern our organisation because there are certain boxes to tick on diversity" (TNA-BC4 NGB)*. Furthermore, these points draw attention to why many non-profit organisations deliver intervention programmes, which is not based on representative diversity, but to target participants with altruistic intentions of serving community needs (Misener and Doherty, 2012). Additionally, it is interesting to note that diversity conversations tend to stem through governing bodies and strategic level individuals with Board Chairs and Board Members at NGBs. They state the importance of being *"more reflective of the type of people we would like to come join our sport" (TNA-BC4 NGB)* and *"working towards a better leadership… one that represents our community more" (TNA-BM1 NGB)*. This is an important point for strategic level individuals at governing bodies as these stakeholders represent one of the first steps of sport policy implementation (Houlihan, 1997). Despite some resistance towards what some

stakeholders state as a tick-box exercise, TA organisations tend to appreciate the role diversity can have in meeting sustainable goals for the benefit of programme participation. This endorses Scheirer and Dearing's (2011) idea that understanding recipient communities is essential to enable the continuation of intervention programmes.

### 8.2.4 Social mode of reality discussion

Glisson et al. (2008) indicate that a lack of staff engagement can result in limited staff functionality, much of which can be caused by staff turnover. However, another staffing issue raised from the results presented in Chapter 5 show that perceptions of staff autonomy to fulfil objectives are an important factor of sustainability. Strengths of this factor tend to stem from TA organisations because of a strategy that placed *"the best people in the best places to perform" (TA-BM3 RGB)*. The importance of organisation strategists emphasising the role delivery-level staff play exemplifies the sense of coach development and autonomy predicting sustainable outcomes (Amorose et al., 2016; Newman, Anderson-Butcher and Amorose, 2018). One of the reasons for this is because of the first and last moment interactions offered between coaches and participants which impact on continued participation in programmes (Orr et al., 2018). Furthermore, Shediac-Rizkallah and Bones (1998) relate to these ideas as skill and knowledge-based deployment of delivery staff have been shown to achieve sustainable objectives of community intervention programmes. Some delivery staff indicated that they were *"given a lot of freedom to delve... do our job well... a tone set from the top that gives us confidence to do our jobs." (TA-PO1 RGB)* This supports the arrangement of delivery staff being largely dependent on clear leadership to negotiate the fulfilment of staff requirements (Frisby and Kikulis, 1996). Nonetheless, while TA organisations appreciated the staff autonomy available, some TNA organisations showed signs of too much emphasis on Board autonomy rather than delivery level aspects, offering insight towards clear differences for lesser performing organisations. One Board Member indicated that *"the big picture of the trustee is to keep the charitable status of the organisation. We have our business and our goal" (TNA-BM6 VSO)*. This highlights the important of social structures and environments offering support for delivery staff autonomy, with some staff at TNA organisation displaying signs of resentment towards the idea having their time policed by the Board (Skille and Stenling, 2017). The importance of allocating financial resources to the

development of internal staff was indicated by one CEO as they looked to assess the level of trust they can put in a person to get on with things, offering support for Wiltsey Stirman et al.'s (2012) idea of internal development of delivery staff being a factor of sustainability. Developing a *"good structure" (TA-BM3 RGB)* showed itself as a positive indication of a clear social strategy to allow TA organisations to work successfully towards sustainable objectives. With Mansfield et al. (2015) also highlighting this, the importance of developing staff and giving them the autonomy to perform by supplementing human capital with adequate opportunities cannot be understated (Edwards, 2015).

Further suggestions from TA and TNA organisations to increase sustainability would be to appoint leaders from within the ranks of the organisation. By recruiting CEOs who have followed a pathway from the delivery level of the organisation, an understanding of work required on delivery has aided the evaluation of programmes to see if they meet strategic objectives. However, issues did arise where leadership was not clearly indicated by interviewees who often felt conflicted between whether the Board or CEO played a more influential role in the delivery of sustainable goals. Organisations who exhibited positive signs for this factor note that having a clearly identifiable leader for strategy and delivery led to a better direction towards sustainable goals. This offers support to Mancini and Marek's (2004) idea that roles and responsibilities of leaders include strategizing the vision as well as ensuring all supporting activities are appropriately delivered. It is evident that some respondents appointed one leader for strategy and another for delivery aspects of their organisation. The Board predominately took responsibility for strategic vision, whilst the CEO takes control of *"overall leadership for the delivery of the strategy" (TNA-CEO1 NGB)*. This dual-leadership, whilst complex, identifies a leader for specific components of delivering a programme like Sportivate, suggesting the need for a programme champion at the mid-upper level of management with the organisation to aid delivery through strategic objectives (Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone, 1998). However, in some instances, the declaration of joint leadership from individuals at TNA organisation showed a clear difference from the approach taken by TA organisations. TA groups showcased an effective internal collaboration by appointing clear areas of expertise to lead on specific aspects of programme delivery, which TNA organisations failed to recognise when discussing this theme of sustainability. This supports the

understanding that strategic capability and rational delivery objectives should be emphasised when attempting to understand the dynamics between the Board and CEO (Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011).

The final factor of sustainability determined from interviews expands on the complexities of relationships to the social structures that bind together the rest of an organisation delivering community intervention programmes. Dearing (2003) highlighted the social environment as a key component of relationship building and partnership development. TA organisations highlight how clear leadership and increased communications have allowed for the dispersion of information to help sustain delivery activities. This is particularly relevant when adaptations are required because *"if anything changes, we are always aware of it quite quickly from management" (TA-CEO1 RGB)*. In some regards this relates to an environment fostered by meetings and formal conversations which *"allowed our staff to support each other more through internal communications" (TA-BM1 RGB)*. However, a positive social environment was also cited by TA organisations as this helped individuals *"communicate and cross-over" (TA-PO3 RGB),* suggesting a willingness to fulfil workload beyond their role requirements. This supports Johnson et al.'s (2004) findings which emphasise the necessity of fostering positive relationships between staff. This is due to the complexity of programme delivery which necessitates that a collective workforce should plan, deliver and evaluate community programmes (Johnson et al., 2004; Mancini and Marek, 2004). Thus, supporting the notion that clear leadership can result in effective communication and inspire a positive working and social environment for staff to thrive in.

## 8.3  Empirical findings: study 2

The objectives of study 2 related to the analysis of sustainability theme perceptions, identified by EFA, and the differences shown between the independent variables of: organisation type, staff capacity, staff role, and length of time at organisation (staff turnover). This approach considered critical realist ontological perspectives as analysis through actors' realities offered perceptions towards the stratified nature of sustainability (Pawson and Tilley, 1997a). In some regards, critical realism has been critiqued as less applicable to quantitative research methods (Downward and Mearman, 2002). However, due to the mixed-methods design encapsulating the entire theses, the notion of methodological pluralism was necessary and highlighted demi-

regularities involved within a specific setting (Lawson, 1997; Jones, 2011). Support for this also stems from the use of retroductive strategies where the more deductive approach adopted in study 2 can be inferred within the actual domain of critical realism (Sayer, 1992; Blaikie, 2010). This aided the application of critical realism modes to study 2 and the subsequent findings highlighted for each emerging factor within the stratified structure of sustainability developed from study 1.

Emerging themes built upon models of sustainability proposed by Mancini and Marek (2004) and Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012). Results from study 1 included the material sustainability concepts of policy remodelling, sport-for-health, delivery level staff, and revenue dependency. From these, study 2's EFA proposed splitting the revenue dependency concept into themes of funding resources at organisations and public funding dependency (Johnson et al., 2004; Evans, 2011; Weed, 2017). Ideal sustainability concepts highlighted evaluation and programme adaptability as factors. Subsequently, EFA indicated that evaluation and feedback should be considered as a sustainability factor (Scheirer, 2005; Schell et al., 2013; Mansfield et al., 2015; Hanson, Cross and Jones, 2016). Neither partnerships or staff diversity, as artefactual sustainability concepts, were confirmed by EFA in study 2. Finally, the social concept of sustainability featured strongly after EFA as role of the Board and CEO confirmed a need for clear leadership between the roles (Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone, 1998; Hoye and Cuskelly, 2003; Scheirer, 2005; Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011; Walker and Hayton, 2017) Also, the autonomy of staff was also considered as a sustainability factor from the social mode of reality (Schulenkorf, 2012; Amorose et al., 2016; Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou, 2017; Newman, Anderson-Butcher and Amorose, 2018. However, the social reality considering social bonds and communications streams was not identified by EFA. The following section discusses the results using of study 2 from the empirical domain of critical realism whilst drawing upon Fleetwood's (2014) modes of reality.

### 8.3.1 Social mode of reality

#### 8.3.1.1 Clear leadership required between CEO or Board

EFA highlighted that the role played by CEOs and the Board should be considered as sustainability factors and the interrelation between both suggests the importance of leadership competence within organisations delivering sustainable community

intervention programmes (Hoye and Cuskelly, 2003). Results indicate that strategic level individuals (Board Chairs and Board Members) held higher regard in their perceptions on the role the Board plays when compared with the role played by delivery level staff (Project Officers and Coaches) in sustainability. These results corroborate with Brown (2005) who underlined the importance of fostering effective leadership from non-profit Boards. This indicates that perceptions on leadership fostered by strategists govern planning processes for sustainability objectives through top-down models of policy implementation (May, Harris and Collins, 2013). However, with delivery staff perceiving the role of the Board much lower than strategists, results offer support to Forde et al. (2015) and the importance of ground-level staff as programme champions. This suggests that the top-down implementation model has posited a schism of working around the role of the Board as a factor of sustainability between strategists and deliverers. Further support for this idea stems from the higher perceived scores by Board-level strategists for the role they play when compared with the perception of CEOs. This supports Zakocs and Edwards (2006) on their ideas of board cohesion, but also the notion here suggests that while CEOs may adopt the role of programme champions, they will still be reliant upon Board support to fulfil sustainable objectives (Casey et al., 2009a). Nonetheless, results indicate that CEOs did view the role of the Board significantly higher than Project Officer perceptions. This offers some degree of support for the role of the Board from a CEO perspective and highlights the need for a dynamic relationship fostered between the two groups (Hoye and Cuskelly, 2003). Furthermore, with CEO-Board dynamics crucial in meeting strategic objectives, the importance of programme delivery means the CEOs can bridge strategy and delivery with a mediating role between the two levels of staff (Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011; Walker and Hayton, 2017).

Interestingly, perceptions of staff role surrounding the role of the CEO follows a similar pattern of self-interest in affecting leadership as a factor of sustainability. Results highlight that CEOs perceive their own role to be a strong factor of sustainability when compared with the perceptions of Board-level strategists and ground-level delivery staff. This idea further supports the notion that CEOs feel that they themselves should fulfil the role of programme champions (Casey et al., 2009a). However, Coaches had a large negative difference from CEO perceptions on the role of the CEO, suggesting Casey et al.'s (2009a) idea is not true from perspectives of

ground-level staff. This highlights thoughts towards Coaches feeling that they themselves should be programme champions, particularly as similar sentiments towards the role of the Board was felt. Support is therefore offered towards Hayday, Pappous and Koutrou (2017) who specified that the training of ground-level delivers should be a critical component of leveraging participation legacy strategies. As such, reflections upon the role of strategists within organisations suggest that ground-level staff may place more importance on their own role in sustainability (Eime, Pyne and Harvey, 2009; Orr et al., 2018). With these self-interest patterns across the role of the Board and CEO, it is apparent that results deter way from the advice of Rowe et al. (2013) who highlight the need for appropriate leadership to meet delivery objectives.

Interestingly, Rowe et al.'s (2013) suggestion for appropriate leadership also relates to fostering staff capacity which also appears to have an influence on the perceptions of sustainability relating to the role of the CEO. Results indicated that organisations with no full-time staff members highlighted the role of the CEO significantly less than all other categories of organisation size. This highlights that organisations with no full-time staff members would retain elements of individual control over their delivery programmes, supporting Warner and Sullivan's (2004) idea that the retention of programme control is important for programme sustainability. The measure of difference between organisations with no full-time staff and other categories also suggests that the larger the organisation, the increased dependency on CEOs as factors of sustainability. Linking back to the idea of CEOs as programme champions from Casey et al., (2019), results also support the role of CEOs as having a role of increased dependency as staff capacity increases at organisations. Furthermore, smaller organisations perhaps have a dependency on external partnerships rather than internal leadership, with larger capacity organisations more able to self-sustain through the governance of a member of staff like the CEO (Miller and Rose, 2008; Harris and Houlihan, 2016)

### 8.3.2  Material mode of reality

#### 8.3.2.1     The importance of funding
The importance of funding was confirmed by EFA, leading to the factors of funding resources available at organisations and the dependency on public funding as themes of sustainability. Much like social modes of reality, staff capacity appears as an

influential variable on how perceptions of sustainability alter depending on the size of an organisation (Doherty, Misener and Cuskelly, 2014). Millar and Doherty (2016) noted that staff capacity offers a more critical outlook on sustainability than funding capacity, so it is perhaps even more interesting that staff capacity has bearings of influence on material factors relating to funding. Results from study 2 stated that organisations with large staff capacity (36-50, 50+) valued the role of funding resources higher than those organisations with less or no full-time staff members. With Miller and Rose (2008) indicating resource struggles leading to resource-sharing partnerships, the notion could be that it is easier for organisations with more staff to access funding through partnerships due to their increased social structures (Johnson et al., 2004; Skille and Stenling, 2017). With this pattern it would be expected to see the largest staff capacity organisations to continue highlighting the importance of public funding when compared with medium sized organisation (11-20, 36-50). However, results indicate that medium size organisations have perceptions on public funding dependency greater than that of larger organisations. Even though this contradicts Johnson et al., (2004) idea of increasing funding accessibility because of organisation size, the idea that financial resources at larger organisations being healthy enough to recruit more staff is supported (Harris and Houlihan, 2016). This explains why funding importance has been felt more by medium-sized organisations, as the criticality of diversifying funding revenues becomes more prevalent at this level (Berlin et al., 2007; Whitley, Forneris and Barker, 2015).

In terms of staff role as an influence on funding resources as a sustainability factor, Project Officers perceived this theme more important than CEOs and Coaches. It is interesting to note that Project Officers would sit between the roles of CEOs and Coaches within organisational structures, highlighting Rosso and McGrath's (2017) point that Project Officers roles have changed in line with the current funding landscape. One of the reasons offered for this is because of the notion that programme champions must be influential in the delivery of community intervention programmes and therefore, Project Officers must fulfil a role that sits closely to the planning and delivery of sessions (Casey et al., 2009a). Based upon this it can be argued that the burden of financial responsibility is felt most by those developing programmes for their organisation. Looking back to the social mode of reality, Project Officers highlighted a weaker perception of Board and CEO roles in sustainability, and the

importance of funding factors may offer reasons for why this was the case (Forde et al., 2015).

Further importance was identified for the importance of funding through the influence organisation type had on perceptions of public funding dependency. For-profit organisations had much less emphasis on needing public funding than sporting governing bodies on a National or Regional level. This supports the challenges identified in Chapter 2, as the increased governing body influence on programme delivery has posed issues regarding sustainability, especially during a period of austerity (Harris and Houlihan, 2016; Berry and Manoli, 2018). However, it is due to these funding cuts that the public sector has had an increased reliance upon the public-private sector partnerships, as described by Kesenne (2006), to support the delivery of community programmes during austerity (Parnell et al., 2019). Moving to the non-profit sector, VSOs placed less emphasis on their perceptions of public funding as a factor of sustainability when compared to RGBs. This supports the idea that public funding is provided through policy implementation models and therefore public bodies, like RGBs, are more dependent on them to meet their strategic goals (Collins, 2010; Bingham and Walters, 2013). By highlighting non-public bodies like for-profit and non-profit organisations having less public funding dependency, the culture of diversifying revenue streams away from public funding is one that could be quite apparent already in society (Mancini and Marek, 2004; Wicker and Breuer, 2011; Bingham and Walters, 2013). However, this presents Renfree and Kohe's (2019) idea of issues around grassroots clubs and governing body relationship governance being further challenged by their moves towards differing levels of importance placed upon public funding.

### 8.3.3 Ideal mode of reality

#### 8.3.3.1 Evaluation and feedback

Patterns from study 1 highlighted an appreciation for evaluation and feedback, but difficulties were noted when the capacity fulfilling these processes were brought into question. These patterns continued into study 2 with staff capacity being a key influence on the sustainability factor of evaluation and feedback of programmes. Results stated that as staff capacity increases, there is a higher perception for the role evaluation processes must play in community intervention programmes. Mansfield et

al. (2015) indicated that evaluation processes must go through screening processes to establish participant needs, and this becomes increasingly difficult with less staff capacity to fulfil the feedback requirements adopted to inform these measures. This is further evidenced by Wiltsey Stirman et al. (2012) who specified that an increased number of stakeholders eases the evaluation of programme outcomes. Furthermore, the evaluation difficulties faced by organisations with no full-time members of staff indicate that planning for evaluation methods and demonstrating success post-programme become increasingly challenging (Boutilier et al., 2001; Johnson et al., 2004).

As well as staff capacity, the role of staff was also a significant influence on the sustainability factor of evaluation and feedback. Interestingly, both Project Officers and CEOs followed the same patterns of perceptions with regards to Board-level strategists and delivery-level Coaches. Both held greater perceptions on the role of evaluation and feedback as a factor of sustainability when compared to the Board and Coaches. For CEOs, this supports Walker and Hayton's (2017) idea of CEOs adopting a resolute role to all aspects to programme sustainability. Also, this supports findings from Casey et al., (2009a) who highlighted the influence of CEOs but also highlights the role of Project Officers in all aspects of planning and delivery. Nonetheless, results from study 2 offer support to both causes which opposes the view of Forde et al., (2015) that ground-level stuff should have more of a role to play in evaluation components of sustainability. With Project Officers and CEOs rating evaluation perceptions as they did, results indicated that this theme does not sit on the extremes of either strategic or delivery level ends of the staffing spectrum. Because of this mid-level positioning of both staff roles, evaluation processes are aided by the understanding of internal and external mechanisms contributing to sustainability (Hanson, Cross and Jones, 2016). Despite evaluation tools tending to be adopted in an informal nature, strength for this process is still aligned between study 2 results and previous literature. However, care should be taken when addressing evaluation planning and the demonstration of programme success which has been downplayed by Project Officers and CEOs (Scheirer, 2005).

## 8.4   *Future research*

As this research adopted the use of critical realism perspectives and retroductive approaches, the utilisation of a mixed methods design vastly expands upon the

understanding of sustainability for organisations delivering community intervention programmes in London. Initial recommendations include applying the EFA-determined sustainability survey instrument to other geographical locations or case-studies of programmes designed to implement government directed sport policy, and subsequently use CFA to further validify the sustainability scale.

The use of CFA should also be used to confirm the relevance of staff autonomy as a factor of sustainability. Despite EFA identifying this factor, it was found to be non-significant when detailing the effect of organisation type, staff role, staff capacity and staff turnover as influences on this sustainability factor. A suggestion for future research would be include other independent variables, some of which had data collected in this research but were not carried forward for further analysis based upon a review of literature suggesting other more influential variables on sustainability factors.

Future research should also consider the role of organisation type as an independent variable of influence on sustainability. This research ascertained the importance of this influential variable, however a lack of parity in response data for the demographic means accepting the null hypothesis for Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance limits the understanding on this influence of sustainability through this research. One suggestion is for this variable to adapt statistical analysis to solely include VSOs and measure how other influences on sustainability effect ground-level organisations responsible for delivering community intervention programmes.

## 8.5 Practical applications

The discussion of results from this thesis produced empirical evidence for recommendations to be offered to stakeholders who can practically apply this understanding of Sportivate and programme sustainability to their own practice:

1 - There should be consideration towards a more synthesised sport policy implementation model that considers the role of individual staff within this model. Whilst this may appear ambitious, the lack of research on synthesis approaches has been somewhat quelled with this research, and evidence is provided for the differences between strategic and delivery level staff to be considered. This is particularly relevant for factors relating to perceived leadership, funding importance, and evaluation as factors of sustainability. The differing levels of importance placed by each staff role

on these factors suggests a one-size fits all policy cannot work effectively for staff to work towards delivering sustainability community intervention programmes. One area this should relate to is looking into how Project Officers can be supported to mediate strategic and delivery objectives alongside CEOs, rather than maintaining a directional relationship that replicates the model of top-down policy implementation.

2 - The failures of the singular, centralised approach to policy implementation is also directed from research findings ascertaining that staff capacity at organisations makes a significant difference on sustainability factors. The current sport policy, Sporting Future, and sport strategy, Towards an Active Nation, indicate advantages for larger organisations who are already better placed to deliver long-term community programmes. With less emphasis on the importance of funding, and increased attention on diversifying funding sources, medium-sized organisations require extra care and attention when reviewing how efficiently funding can be utilised to maximise the impact of sustainability. Further support should be offered with the diversification of revenue being a supported scheme, rather than one dictated out of necessity.

3 - Surprisingly, smaller organisations did not infer the importance of funding as a greater factor of sustainability when compared with medium-sized organisations. The suggestion here is that smaller organisations are more capable than medium-sized organisation of operating within their means. However, less emphasis is placed on planning for evaluation which should be governed by CSPs/APs or NGBs/RGBs as a key aspect of any programme delivery within their remit. Larger organisations have the capacity and resources to carry out these seemingly informal tasks, and therefore further support and new evaluation measures should be utilised especially for organisations less resourced with staff.

## 8.6  *Research process reflection*

This thesis relates to the experience and development I have journeyed through in this process. By taking inspiration from real-life industry experience of community intervention programme delivery, the academic development and learning processes display the importance of philosophy, theory and research application to enhance knowledge on a given subject. When commencing the research of the methodological fundamentals for this thesis, less appreciation was given at the time of writing. Upon reflection, it is difficult to say I would like to have approached this differently, but

with the support of my supervisors, being able to develop my research ideas alongside this core component of research is something I look back on with great thankfulness. Upon collecting accurate and valid data according to the RQ, ROs and hypotheses that govern the research, the use of philosophical considerations really began to take shape. This extends to the process of analysing and understand the data which inherently is what makes me reflect and see as the only possible way this vast amount of research can come together as one coherent thesis.

Additionally, as an inexperienced researcher, my own trait for wanting to dive into topics means challenges were faced in the early part of this research. These would add to frustrations of slow progress and insufficient suitability of proposed data collections. However, by taking time to understand core theoretical constructs in sustainability and policy implementation, I have been able to devise a sustainability scale I hope to be applied to other areas of sport and physical activity intervention programmes. Without this necessary process of gathering knowledge in a patient and precise manner, the creation of this scale would not have been possible. In future, the application of this scale would allow me to continue to reflect upon all the processes within this research and apply the same principles that govern my academic guidelines for the foreseeable future.

## 8.7 Closing remarks

The main purpose of this research was to investigate factors that play a role in the sustainability of community sport programmes delivered by organisations funded through Sportivate in London? To do this, a mixed-methods design meant this was possible as a step-by-step process that firstly, aimed to build upon the theoretical concept of sustainability by exploring themes. Secondly, this informative process allowed the research to understand further emerging themes of sustainability through rich-data gathering and analysis. This was then applied to devising a sustainability scale, which once confirmed with latent variables of sustainability, provided specific insight into how variables like staff role, organisation type, staff capacity and staff turnover can influence the factors of sustainability.

This research not only provides valuable conclusions, but also methodological processes that can contribute to further research. With the development of an instrument scale, further research on sustainability is possible for the development of

long-term community intervention programmes. Furthermore, with a gap in existing research for looking at a synthesised and symbiotic approach for sustainability research, the impracticality of this time-consuming process has been been somewhat negated for future research. For this study, the application of a sustainability scale to Sportivate has shown policymakers, and bodies responsible for funding distribution (Sport England and CSPs/APs), that a one size fits all approach cannot be heeded if lessons from past failures on sustainability are to be prevented. The ambitious plans for building a participation legacy in London 2012 may still be a missed opportunity. But this period of time has provided valuable lessons for sustainability in relation to how organisations and their staff, as stakeholders, can maximise long-term success should sport policy act upon the misgivings of previous policy failures.

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# 10  Appendices

## *10.1 Participant information sheet – study 1*

**University of Kent**

**Study**

Sportivate: a case study assessing the impact of strategic and delivery relationships within organisations and their impact on the delivery of sustainable community physical activity legacy programmes.

**Why have I been invited to take part?**

I am inviting you to take part in this research project into the evaluation of the impact of Sportivate Funding in helping the community physical activity program that your organisation runs to meet its objectives. You have been invited to take part in this study as you have been identified as a relevant stakeholder involved in the design and delivery of community sport programs funded by Sport England through Sportivate.

**What is the purpose of the research?**

The purpose of this research is to determine the influence of internal factors (such as collaboration and relationships among stakeholders, staff involvement, leadership competence, community characteristics and programme responsivity) and external factors (such as government policy, Sport England strategy, funding and media campaigns) on how effective an organisation can be in delivery community sport and physical activity programmes. By understanding these relationships we can identify internal adaptations to work patterns in order to create more efficient project delivery systems. Furthermore, we can work closely with funding providers in order to understand both positive and negative relationship factors that may affect an organisation's capability to successfully meet delivery requirements for a funded project.

**How much time will it take?**

The interview will last from 30-45 minutes and there will be no need for a follow up meeting. Participation is voluntary and all participants may withdraw from the research at any time without any required reason for withdrawing. This also includes if the interview has already been conducted and participants wish to remove themselves and any data collected from them. It may be necessary to contact you briefly by email or phone at the analysis stage for clarification if any part of the transcript is unclear. This will only take a few minutes of your time should it be required.

**What will I be asked to do?**

The interview will follow a semi-structured style in that most questions will be pre-determined and last no longer than 30-45 minutes. This will be recorded on a Dictaphone and typed up in full transcript.

**Will my information be kept confidential?**

All data collected during the interviews will remain anonymous and confidential, being kept in either an encrypted and password protected computer, or in a locked cabinet at the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences, University of Kent if it is hard copy confidential information. No published or shared documents will name you or reveal private information about yourself. Anonymised data may be kept for up to 5 years following the last publication arising from the data. Any personal data and consent forms will be kept for a maximum of 12 months to allow for audit of the informed consent procedures, and then destroyed or deleted.

This research project is funded and ethically approved by the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Kent. It also has the support of London Sport in using the Sportivate project as part of the research focus.

All interview recordings and transcripts will be stored privately on a password protected laptop. Personal data and consent forms will be stored here for a maximum of 12 months. Names of participants and organisations will be removed and replaced with a coded letter and number which will allow the organisation to remain unidentifiable throughout the research. De-identifiable data will remain for 5 years after the publication of any work arising from the data collected.

**Is my participation voluntary?**

All participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the research at any time with no reason for withdrawal being required. Should you wish to withdraw from participation after the interview or survey has taken place please use the contact information to speak to the lead researcher about extracting your data from the research if you so wish.

**Will you contact me after the study has finished?**

Your contact details will be kept in order to arrange for the completion of a quantitative survey which will form part of a follow-up study. Should you not want to take part in the follow-up research, personal data will still be kept for 12 months, but no contact will be made for the follow-up study data collection.

**What are the contact details of the research team?**

If you wish to contact the lead researcher at any time you can do so by emailing Anees Ikramullah at ai233@kent.ac.uk . If you have any further queries that cannot be answered by the lead researcher, the study's supervisor, Dr. Niki Koutrou, can be contacted at N.Koutrou@kent.ac.uk.

Should you need to contact the University regarding a complaint about the research you can contact the Head of School for Sport and Exercise Science by emailing a.pappous@kent.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for your consideration in taking part in this project.

**University of Kent**

**Title of project:** Sportivate: a case study assessing the impact of strategic and delivery relationships within organisations and their impact on the delivery of sustainable community physical activity legacy programmes

**Name of investigator:** Anees Ikramullah

**Participant Identification Number for this project:**

**Please initial box**

1. I confirm I have read and understand the information sheet dated _____ for the above study.  I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. I can do so by contacting Anees Ikramullah email (ai233@kent.ac.uk).

3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis.  I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. Any direct quotes from the interviews will be anonymised prior to their use within the research.

4. I agree to take part in the above research project.

_____        _____

Name of participant          Date                    Signature


_____        _____

Name of person taking         Date                    Signature
consent
*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*


_____        _____

Lead researcher               Date                    Signature


Copies:

*When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher site file; 1 (original) to be kept in main file*

### 10.3 Semi-structured interview questions– study 1

Introduction to the interview will include a brief introduction of the research which will follow the introduction information shown in the participation information sheet. Again, it will be reiterated that should the interviewee wish to withdraw from the interview during, or not have any collected data used after the interview, the opportunity will always be there.

Following this a small discussion will be had for 2-3 minutes as an interview opening in order to get to know the interview in terms of their role and the organisation. This will not be used as primary data and is only to be done in order to put the interviewee at ease which would allow for a more natural flow of answers.

1) Can you tell me about the Sportivate programme as you understand it?
- How did your programme emerge as part of the Sportivate programme

2) Did the programme continue after the initial 6-8 week funding period?
- If yes, how did the programme develop from the original 6-8 week programme?
- If no, why didn't the programme continue?

3) What are the main benefits of participating in the programme?
- If no knowledge of the programme (strategic?) then ask about general benefits of accessing funding for programmes
- Short term goals?
- Long term goals?

4) How was a consistent approach ensured in the delivery of all the Sportivate sessions?
- If no knowledge of the programme then ask about general consistency of other programmes the programme adopts

5) How well do you work with other members of the organisation?
- Board level (Board chair, board members)
- CEO
- Other staff
- How easy is it to work in collaboration with people at the organisation?

6) What is the feeling of the organisation towards working with other organisations to delivery intervention programmes?
- Do you have examples of how the organisations works with any other organisations?

7) What is your feeling towards the pressure placed upon VSO's and community organisations taking more responsibility for decreasing participation trends in sport/physical activity?
- Follow up on increased professionalisation amongst VSO
- Positive answer – how have these changes helped?
- Negative answer – how have these changes hindered your work?

8) How would you describe the influence you have in the implementation of programme intervention objectives?

- Who would take the overall lead on strategic objectives?
- Who would take the overall lead on delivery objectives?
- Who would assume the role of planning programmes and applying for funding for these programmes?

9) Are there any organisational issues that affect your ability to fulfil your job role, if so please describe them?
- how well does information flow between colleagues?
- who assumes overall leadership at the organisation?
- how are long term objectives for the organisation decided?

10) What is your understanding of UK sports policy before and after London 2012?
- How has sports policy impacted the organisation's ability to fulfil objectives?
- How are the organisation's key objectives aligned to sports policy guidelines?
- How has sports policy impacted the organisation's ability to run programmes?
- What are your thoughts on Sporting Future (2015) and how your organisation intends to fulfil requirements set by it

11) How does the organisation financially commit to a long-term vision for physical activity programme interventions?
- What has the organisation done to deal with cuts to public funding?
- If public funding high – why is there so much reliance upon public funding?
- If public funding low – why is there such little reliance upon public funding?

12) What is the organisations workforce and facility resources like?
- How has this helped/hindered the ability to deliver programme sessions?
- What is done to upskill new/current members of staff?
- How are facilities obtained in order to run programmes? (partnership test)

13) How does the organisation ensure informative evaluation and feedback takes place on its programmes?
- How does this process ensure the long-term participation of individuals in physical activity?

Please note that the follow up questions may need to be asked on an ad hoc basis to allow clarification or further explanation

To close the interview, each participant will be informed that any personal data and consent forms will only be kept for 12 months. De-identified data will be kept for 5 years after the last publication that may arise from any work produced based on the data collected.

Additionally, a request will be made to keep direct contact details in order to arrange for the completion of the quantitative survey which will form part of study 2. Should the request be denied, they will be reminded that personal data will still be kept for 12 months, but no contact will be made for the follow-up study

### 10.4 Draft contact email – study 1

Hello,

I am PhD student from the University of Kent developing research that looks into the efficiency of community sports and physical activity programmes that have used public funding in order to run. My research focus looks at the Sport England flagship programme, Sportivate, and its sustainable impact on the legacy of participation. Given [organisations name] involvement in the Sportivate programme, either in the past or currently ongoing, I am hoping to conduct interviews with multiple members of staff at [organisations name] including;

- Board Chair, 1 Board Member, and the CEO
- Project officer in charge of the Sportivate project, coach who coached on the programme (if the sessions are ongoing this can be via a session observation too if possible)

I am aware that the required members of staff lead busy schedules so I would be very grateful for any time made for this research that aims to improve programme delivery and sustainability amongst organisation who secure funding.

If you are not the best contact at [organisations name] for this enquiry, please could you send me the best person to contact in order to progress with this research? I look forward to hearing from you and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the research.


Regards,

Anees Ikramullah

*10.5 Participation information sheet – study 2*

**University of Kent**

**Study**

Sportivate: a case study assessing the impact of strategic and delivery relationships within organisations and their impact on the delivery of sustainable community physical activity legacy programmes.

**Why have I been invited to take part?**

I am inviting you to take part in this research project into the evaluation of the impact of Sportivate funding in helping the community physical activity program that your organisation runs or has run to meet its objectives. You have been invited to take part in this study as you have been identified as a relevant stakeholder involved in the design and delivery of community sport programs funded by Sport England through Sportivate.

**What is the purpose of the research?**

The purpose of this research is to determine the influence of various factors on how effective an organisation can be in delivery community sport and physical activity programmes. These factors will look at both internal and external reasoning behind the success or lack of success of organisations who have delivered a funding programme through Sportivate over the last 4 years. By understanding this we can work to create a more efficient system of delivery to help subsidise pressures that may be placed on organisations that commit to delivering a funded programme in the community.

**How much time will it take?**

The survey will take a maximum of 30 minutes to complete and there will be no need for any follow up participation. Participation is voluntary and all participants may withdraw from the research at any time without any required reason. This also includes if the survey has already been completed and participants wish to remove themselves and any data collected from them.

**What will I be asked to do?**

The survey will be formed of two parts, one asking for general personal data which will be held in strict confidence as per the University's policy on data protection. Personal data does not include your name or the organisation you work with. It will merely refer to points of reference like your job, tenure and size of organisation. Secondly, a rating scale will be used to from 1-5 for respondents to score how much they agree with selected statements included in the survey.

**Will my information be kept confidential?**

All data collected from the surveys will remain anonymous and confidential, being kept in either an encrypted and password protected computer, or in a locked cabinet at the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences, University of Kent if it is hard copy confidential information. No published or shared documents will name you or reveal private information about yourself. Anonymised data may be kept for up to 5 years

following the last publication arising from the data. Any personal data will be kept for a maximum of 12 months and then destroyed or deleted.

This research project is funded and ethically approved by the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Kent. It also has the support of London Sport in using the Sportivate project as part of the research focus.

All survey data will be stored privately on a password protected laptop. Personal data and consent forms will be stored here for a maximum of 12 months. De-identifiable data will remain for 5 years after the publication of any work arising from the data collected.

**Is my participation voluntary?**

All participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the research at any time with no reason for withdrawal needed. Should you wish to withdraw from participation after the interview or survey has taken place please use the contact information to speak to the lead researcher about extracting your data from the research if you so wish.

**What are the contact details of the research team?**

If you wish to contact the lead researcher at any time you can do so by emailing Anees Ikramullah at ai233@kent.ac.uk . If you have any further queries that cannot be answered by the lead researcher, the study's supervisor, Dr. Niki Koutrou, can be contacted at N.Koutrou@kent.ac.uk.

Should you need to contact the University regarding a complaint about the research you can contact the Head of School for Sport and Exercise Science by emailing a.pappous@kent.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for your consideration in taking part in this project.

## 10.6 Survey instrument template – study 2

**Community intervention programmes and sustainability**

What is the name of your organisation? _____

Which of the following options best describes your organisation? Tick one
Voluntary sports organisation (community clubs/charity/CIC)
For-profit organisaiton
Local authority
Regional governing body
National governing body
Sole trader/individual
Other
If you selected Other, please specify:

What position do you hold at the organisation?
Board chair
Board member
CEO
Project officer/development officer
Coach
Other
If you selected Other, please specify:

How long have you worked with the organisation?
0-6 months
6-12 months
1-2 years
2-5 years
5+ years

How long have you worked in the current position you hold at the organisation?
0-6 months
6-12 months
1-2 years
2-5 years
5+ years

How many full-time members of staff work for your organisation?
1-10
11-20
21-35
36-50
More than 50
Don't know

How many volunteers work for your organisation (not including the Board of Trustees)?
1-10
11-20
21-35
36-50
More than 50
Don't know

How many board members serve the organisation?
1-3
4-6
7-9
10-12
More than 12
Don't know

Unless instructed otherwise, please rate the statements on a scale of 1-5, based on how much you agree/disagree with the statement presented.
1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Current funding at the organisation is sufficient for project operations
1       2       3       4       5

Staff are involved in the programme design for community intervention programmes
1       2       3       4       5

The benefits of intervention programmes for the organisation are considered a higher priority than the benefits for the end-user
1       2       3       4       5

There are issues regarding turf-ownership of geographical areas when referring to specific areas used for your organisation's project delivery
1       2       3       4       5

Projects run by your organisation have had their effectiveness measured through methods of evaluation
1       2       3       4       5

The organisation relies on start up funding to kick-start it's community intervention programmes
1       2       3       4       5

Project sustainability is planned for by the Board prior to programme creation
1       2       3       4       5

Positively received projects have their facilities consolidated for use in the future for further projects
1       2       3       4       5

Your organisation always offers benefits for other organisations when developing a relationship with them
1     2     3     4     5

There is a strong communication flow between the Board and Management at your organisation
1     2     3     4     5

Cuts to public funding have not damaged the organisation's ability to meet objectives through the delivery of community programmes
1     2     3     4     5

Community resources are regularly assessed
1     2     3     4     5

Project collaborators share responsibility for providing resources for intervention programmes
1     2     3     4     5

Staff at the organisation are trusted to meet objectives with autonomy
1     2     3     4     5

There is a person responsible at the organisation for grant proposal/fund bid writing
1     2     3     4     5

You understand the current direction of sports policy
1     2     3     4     5

Administrative duties puts the organisation off applying for pots of funding
1     2     3     4     5

The Board clearly establish the mission and vision for community intervention programmes
1     2     3     4     5

Staff at the organisation are stretched to near-maximum capacity
1     2     3     4     5

Tick all that apply. The following types of organisations are project partners on your organisation's community intervention programmes
Voluntary sports organisations (community clubs/charities/CIC)
For-profit organisations
Local authorities
Regional governing bodies
National governing bodies
Sole traders/individuals
Do not work in any partnerships
Other
If you selected Other, please specify

Direct feedback is taken from the participants of the community intervention programmes delivered by your organisation
1     2     3     4     5

Community intervention programmes run by your organisation acknowledge diversity in the target community
1     2     3     4     5

Organisational problems are common in effecting your organisation's ability to deliver upon a long-term vision for community intervention programme
1     2     3     4     5

Staff are involved in programme evaluation
1     2     3     4     5

Communication tends to flow from the top-down in your organisation
1     2     3     4     5

The CEO developed and follows a realistic project plan for your community intervention programmes
1     2     3     4     5

Funded programmes are designed around a consistent model adopted by the organisation
1     2     3     4     5

Governance changes have been a high priority for your organisation in the past 6 months
1     2     3     4     5

Staff are recognised by your organisation with rewards for positive work in community intervention programmes
1     2     3     4     5

Tick all that apply. The following types of organisations are involved in the programme design of your organisation's community intervention programmes:
Voluntary sports organisations (community clubs/charities/CIC)
For-profit organisations
Local authorities
Regional governing bodies
National governing bodies
Sole traders/individuals
Do not work in any partnerships
Other
If you selected Other, please specify

Participants are aware of exit routes for activity after your organisation's community intervention programme has completed
1     2     3     4     5

Social relationships between the Board and staff are important for organisation success

1  2  3  4  5

Alternative strategies for the survival of a project are made available by the CEO

1  2  3  4  5

The organisation obtains funding from a variety of sources

1  2  3  4  5

Most of your organisation's community intervention programmes are designed to be longer than 12 weeks in length

1  2  3  4  5

Staff involved in the planning of community intervention programmes are suitably qualified to work on the project

1  2  3  4  5

Information is often lost when directing information between the Board and delivery staff

1  2  3  4  5

Community members are involved in the delivery of your organisation's community intervention programmes

1  2  3  4  5

Administrative requirements of running a funded intervention programme are shared amongst staff

1  2  3  4  5

Tick all that apply. The following types of organisations are involved in the programme delivery of your organisation's community intervention programmes:
Voluntary sports organisations (community clubs/charities/CIC)
For-profit organisations
Local authorities
Regional governing bodies
National governing bodies
Sole traders/individuals
Do not work in any partnerships
Other
If you selected Other, please specify:

Evaluation results are used to modify your organisation's community intervention programmes

1  2  3  4  5

Meetings are used as a way to update everyone on your work within the organisation

1  2  3  4  5

Project collaborators share a vision with your organisation for community intervention programmes
1       2       3       4       5

There is adequate funding made available by your organisation for hiring and retaining quality staff
1       2       3       4       5

Retaining organisational autonomy is more important than following the direction of government sports policy
1       2       3       4       5

The CEO clearly establishes the mission and vision for your organisation's community intervention programmes
1       2       3       4       5

New intervention programmes are developed by your organisation when community needs change
1       2       3       4       5

Your organisation adapts the way it meets objectives according to sports policy dictated by the government or government agencies (e.g. Sport England)
1       2       3       4       5

Community members are involved in the delivery of your organisation's community intervention programmes
1       2       3       4       5

The following types of organisations are involved in the programme evaluation of your organisation's community intervention programme
Please select at least 1 answer(s).
Voluntary sports organisations (community clubs/charities/CIC)
For-profit organisations
Local authorities
Regional governing bodies
National governing bodies
Sole traders/individuals
Do not work in any partnerships
Other

Communication plans are in place to publicise the success of your organisation's community intervention programmes
1       2       3       4       5

Partnership projects are often used by your organisation to delivery community intervention programmes
1       2       3       4       5

Community needs are regularly assessed for your organisation's community intervention programmes

1 2 3 4 5

Staff at your organisation are adequately trained in programme delivery

1 2 3 4 5

Project sustainability is planned for by the CEO prior to your organisation's community intervention programmes

1 2 3 4 5

The organisation is reliant upon public funding for its project operations

1 2 3 4 5

Internal policies support the methods used when planning and delivering your organisation's community intervention programmes

1 2 3 4 5

Participants tend to drop out of activity after your organisation's programme has run its course

1 2 3 4 5

Your organisation's old community intervention programmes are reshaped as new projects for new funders

1 2 3 4 5

Programme evaluations are conducted on a regular basis by your organisation

1 2 3 4 5

Provisions for facilities are adequate for your organisation's ability to deliver community intervention programmes

1 2 3 4 5

Partnership approaches help alleviate problems caused by turf issues of participant catchment areas

1 2 3 4 5

Your organisation has a strong development and community focus

1 2 3 4 5

The Board developed and follow a realistic project plan for your organisation's community intervention programmes

1 2 3 4 5

Delivery staff are given autonomy to meet organisational objectives through project development

1 2 3 4 5

Funding is available for your organisation's project operations for at least the next 2 years
1       2       3       4       5

The organisation's evaluation methods for an intervention programme tend to follow quite an informal process
1       2       3       4       5

Staff turnover is an issue at the organisation
1       2       3       4       5

Community intervention programmes are eliminated by your organisation when they do not meet community needs
1       2       3       4       5

Management and delivery staff are aware of changes in organisational policy by the Board, and how it may impact their ability to implement community intervention programme
1       2       3       4       5

Evaluation plans are developed by your organisation to identify clear project goals
1       2       3       4       5

You are still in touch with individuals/organisations you have worked with on prior programmes
1       2       3       4       5

Community resources are used by the community intervention programmes run by your organisation
1       2       3       4       5

In your role you must balance focus between competitive sport and community sport objectives
1       2       3       4       5

Programme planners are aware of organisational objectives when designing community intervention programmes
1       2       3       4       5

There has been a great deal of strain placed on the organisation's administrative capabilities due to funding cuts to the sports sector
1       2       3       4       5

Your organisation's community intervention programmes are always designed according to specifications of funding criteria
1       2       3       4       5

Alternative strategies for project survival are made available by the Board at your organisation
1       2       3       4       5

Collaborators share credit for your organisation's successful community intervention programmes
1      2      3      4      5

You are under pressure to meet key performance indicators as part of your objectives
1      2      3      4      5

Delivery staff are encouraged to communicate up to senior management and the Board
1      2      3      4      5

Most of your programme collaborators have been in partnership for 2 or more years
1      2      3      4      5

Your organisation's community intervention programmes address key areas of need for your community
1      2      3      4      5

Your organisation struggles to adhere to changes in policy set by government
1      2      3      4      5

Results of programme evaluations are often used to adapt the creation of your organisation's future community intervention programmes
1      2      3      4      5

Strong social bonds between staff are important for organisational success
1      2      3      4      5

Organisational objectives struggle to be met due to a lack of staff
1      2      3      4      5