
Catherine Louise. Rule
University of Windsor

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ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: A COMPARISON OF SPORT CANADA AND THE AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION

by

Catherine L. Rule

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research through the Department of Kinesiology in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Human Kinetics at the University of Windsor

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to compare Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission using organizational structure theory. The organizations were compared using a qualitative methodology, with data collected via document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The Australian Sports Commission was found to be more complex, more formalized and less centralized than Sport Canada. The results can be attributed to the Australian Sports Commission’s greater size and decreased proximity to government.
Dedication

To my Mum and Dad for their support in every way.
Acknowledgments

To all the friends I made during my time in Canada, including my fellow graduate students, the residents of Electa Hall and numerous others. The people I met and the things I learnt made my time in Canada the most rewarding of my life to date.

Thanks go to Dr. Paraschak for befriending me, teaching me to view things in a new way and to appreciate the diversity in the world.

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Thanks also goes to Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission for their assistance in the collection of data for this research.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank Dr. Gordon Olafson, for his continual guidance through this ‘journey’. His teaching has prompted me to ask questions, seek answers and find order in the disorder. Thanks for stretching and challenging me.

“Raise new questions, explore new possibilities, regard old problems from a new angle”

Albert Einstein
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Sport in Australia and Canada has developed in similar ways, with interesting parallels between the development of the sport delivery systems in each country. Government involvement in sport was triggered by similar factors and the resulting government agencies exhibit many of the same characteristics. There has been some limited discussion of such similarities (Baka, 1983; Houlihan, 1997), however there has been no empirical research comparing the two systems. This study aims to facilitate further discussion of the respective systems by empirically evaluating the structures of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to identify similarities and differences in the organizational structure of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission. Three sub-problems were addressed, these being (1) what are the similarities and/or differences in the complexity of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission, (2) what are the similarities and/or differences in the formalization of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission and, (3) what are the similarities and/or differences in the centralization of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission?
Significance of the Study

The aim of this study was to be significant in two ways - theoretically and practically. Theoretically the aim was to contribute to understanding of sport and government by furthering work already done in this area by Kondratovsky (1995) and Frisby (1985). Practically, the aim was to provide an understanding of how different governments have developed sport delivery mechanisms. Such an understanding aims to be useful to both the government organizations involved in this study, and others outside of this study by providing an assessment of the structure of government agencies responsible for sport in Canada and Australia.

Methodology

A descriptive, qualitative methodology was used in this study. Data was collected using two techniques - document analysis and semi-structured interviews. Data was analyzed and compared using the theoretical framework of organizational structure, with emphasis on the variables of complexity, formalization and centralization.

Delimitations

The present study was delimited to the main government sport bodies in Canada (Sport Canada) and Australia (Australian Sports Commission). The study was
further delimited to the existence of these organizations in the year 1997/98. The variables in this study were delimited to complexity, formalization and centralization found in organizational structure theory.

The study was also restricted to an analysis of literature originating from each organization and interviews conducted with senior officials in both Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission. The analysis of documents and the interviews focused solely on the structural variables in the organizations included in the study.

**Limitations**

The results of this study concern Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission exclusively. Extrapolation of these results to other sport organizations and other countries is problematic and should be done with extreme caution. The study was limited in that it was conducted in 1997/98, a time of change for both organizations. Thus, the results must be considered as a temporally specific part of the life-cycle of each organization.

The scope of this study was limited to the variables examined and by the data collection methods. The document analysis was limited to those available in each organization and the interviews were limited to a small number of officials. This limitation may result in an incomplete picture of each organization.
Chapter 2

Background to the Study

Australia and Canada are societies that lend themselves to comparison as they share many common cultural, political and economic characteristics. Houlihan (1997) states “Canada has much in common with Australia in terms of its imperial origins, its size and sparsity of population, and its relative youth as an independent country. It also shares with Australia a federal structure of government” (p. 31). Although the parliamentary systems in Canada and Australia are derived from the British system, the federal governments in each country play differing roles. The Canadian federal system gives a lot of autonomy to the provinces, whereas the Australian system is much more centralized (Sharman, 1994). Both nations rely heavily on natural resources as a source of revenue and immigration has resulted in a high degree of multi-culturalism (Alexander, 1988; Alexander and Galligan, 1992).

Cultural, political and economic similarities between Canada and Australia are reflected in sport. Sport is a central and valued part of society in both countries. Hall, Slack, Smith and Whitson (1991) describe sport as a “pervasive phenomenon in Canadian society…sport is such a significant aspect of our culture” (p. 11). Likewise, Cashman (1995) describes Australian sport as “…central to the business of being Australian…sport is the regular theatre for ordinary Australians” (pp. 207-208).
A common theme in the development of sport in both Canada and Australia is identity. In both cases, sport has been used as a vehicle for promoting nationalism and establishing a cultural identity in the emerging nations. In Canada, sport was used as a means of establishing an identity distinct from Britain and the United States. Sport, and sporting heroes “...played a central role in establishing a Canadian identity that challenged its colonial subordination to Britain and attempted to guard against the increasing influence of the United States” (Jackson, 1994, p. 434).

Sport in Canada has also been used as a means of addressing problems of national unity. Canadian society has been marked by a significant division between anglophone and francophone communities, with Quebec periodically pushing for greater autonomy and independence for French Canadians (Houlihan, 1997). Macintosh, Bedecki and Franks, (1987) believe that sport has served as a means for preventing the separatism that continually threatens to divide English Canada and French Canada by providing a common cultural focus point for all Canadians.

Sport in Australia has been used as a visible means of asserting independence from Britain. Since the 1800s, cricket in particular has provided a forum in which Australia could develop a distinct national identity. Cricketing victories over the British are legendary in Australian history and have been frequently discussed as one of the catalysts for the development of a distinctly Australian identity (Adair and Vamplew, 1997; Cashman, 1995; Houlihan, 1997).
Sport has also been prominent in the development of Australia as a multicultural nation, with many ethnic groups influencing sporting culture. Mosely et al. (1997) identify sport as having two purposes in the ethnic communities in Australia. Firstly, ethnic communities have used sport as a way of establishing and maintaining their own identity by introducing new sports, such as soccer, to Australia. Secondly, ethnic participation in sport has been driven by assimilation, with many ethnic groups having significant involvement in traditional ‘Anglo’ sports such as rugby league and Australian rules football.

Sport and politics in both Canada and Australia have been inextricably linked. For example, sport has been used as a vehicle for foreign policy in both nations. Morse (1987) states “The Canadian government and its foreign affairs bureaucracy have had continuous and intimate experience of sport and politics” (p. 16). Likewise in Australia, “Sport and foreign policy issues have become closely intertwined” (Cashman, 1995, p. 127). Both nations have been involved in situations where sport has been used as a tool for international political maneuvering. For example, both countries were party to the 1977 Gleneagles Declaration which discouraged sporting contact with South Africa due to that country’s apartheid policy (Cashman, 1995; Morse, 1987).

The political and cultural significance of sport is reflected in the level of Canadian and Australian government involvement in the funding and administration of the sport delivery system at the federal and provincial/state levels. Despite
differences in the federal governments, both countries have developed comparable mechanisms for the distribution of government money and the provision of support and services to sport. In both cases, organizations have been developed to coordinate federal government involvement in sport. Many similar sports programs and services also exist in each country in such areas as coach accreditation, sport information, athlete funding and drugs in sport (Australian Sports Commission [ASC], 1996; “Sport Canada Programs”, 1997).

**Sport Canada**

Sport Canada is the agency responsible for coordinating and implementing the federal government’s involvement in high performance sport, existing as a branch of the Citizenship and Canadian Identity Sector of the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage. The Department of Canadian Heritage was established in 1996 and has wide ranging responsibilities including Canadian identity and values, cultural development, heritage and areas of natural historical significance. The mission of the Department is “to strengthen and celebrate Canada - its people and its land” (“Departmental Overview”, 1998). Portfolios of the Department include official languages, multiculturalism, broadcasting, arts, heritage and national parks (“Departmental Overview”, 1998).
Sport Canada’s objectives are:

- To strengthen the unique contribution that sport makes to Canadian society, identity and culture.
- To support the achievement of high performance athletic excellence through fair and ethical means.
- To work with key partners to sustain the development of the Canadian sport system ("What is Sport Canada", 1997).

**History of Sport Canada**

In the first half of this century, federal government involvement in sport was minimal. The Strathcona Trust (1909), the Youth Training Act (1937) and the National Physical Fitness Act (1943) were all government initiatives based on physical fitness (Corran, 1985). However, federal government involvement in competitive sport on a large scale did not officially begin until 1961 with the enactment of *An Act to Encourage Fitness and Amateur Sport*¹. The Act was a response to poor international athletic performances and the decline in general fitness levels of Canadians compared to the USA and Europe (Houlihan, 1997; Olafson, 1970). To rectify these problems, the government committed to assisting in the development of amateur sport.

The purpose of the *Fitness and Amateur Sport Act* (1961) was to “encourage, promote and develop fitness and amateur sport in Canada” (p. 3249). The Act gave

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¹ This Act is often referred to as Bill C-131 in Canadian sport literature.
power to the Minister of Health and Welfare to "coordinate federal activities related to the encouragement, promotion and development of fitness and amateur sport" (p. 3250) and allowed the government to become involved in numerous activities including national and international sport, coaching, research, information distribution and the provision of services and facilities to sport. The Act has served as "the cornerstone of the huge fitness and amateur sport edifice that has grown up in Canada" (Dubin, 1990, p. 7).

In 1969, the report of the Task Force on Sports for Canadians was presented to Parliament and it had a significant influence on subsequent sport policy. The Task Force resulted from a pre-election promise by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau who said he had "come to the realization that the government must do more for sport" (Broom and Baka, 1979, p. 27). The mandate of the Task Force was to report on amateur and professional sport, to assess the role of the federal government in sport and to explore ways in which the government could improve sport (Task Force, 1969). The formation of Sport Canada was among the recommendations made by the Task Force. This report was followed by Health and Welfare Minister John Munro's Proposed Sports Policy for Canadians which placed a heavy emphasis on high performance sport (Macintosh, Bedecki and Franks, 1987).

Following the recommendations of the Task Force and the Proposed Sports Policy for Canadians, two bodies were established under the Fitness and Amateur Sport Directorate. Recreation Canada was established to administer and implement
mass participation sport and Sport Canada was given responsibility for elite, amateur
sport (Macintosh, Bedecki and Franks, 1987).

In the 1990s, the role of Sport Canada has been altered to reflect the need for
greater autonomy for national sporting organizations. The highly influential Dubin
Report (1990) recommended sweeping changes to the Canadian sport delivery
system. This report criticized the federal government’s over emphasis on funding and
programs for high performance sport. Dubin suggested sport organizations be given
the scope to focus more on the delivery of broader based social sports programs, such
as participation initiatives and physical education, rather than the delivery of elite
sport (Semotiuk, 1994). However, the Canadian government has largely ignored these
recommendations and has confirmed elite sport as a policy priority (Houlihan, 1997).

Canadian government has undergone significant changes in the past five years,
with the number of ministries drastically reduced, resulting in the establishment of
large, multi-function government departments (Houlihan, 1997). In line with the
government wide reductions, the Fitness and Amateur Sport Directorate was
disbanded in 1996 and Fitness Canada and Sport Canada were relocated into different
government departments. Fitness Canada was relocated into the Department of Health
and Sport Canada was placed into the newly formed Department of Canadian
Heritage (R. Oullette, personal communication, December 3, 1997).

In the 1990s, there has been a decline in the level of support provided to elite
sport in Canada, with less government funding being made available to Sport Canada,
resulting in a smaller organization and a decrease in services. In 1991-92, the Canadian Government allocated $CAD 68,255,000 to Sport Canada. By 1995-96 that figure had dropped by more than $CAD 20 million (Fitness and Amateur Sport, 1992; "Sport Canada Contribution", 1997).

**Sport Canada Today**

The Government of Canada continues to support elite sport through the programs of Sport Canada. Although the government has recently encouraged sport organizations to maximize their autonomy and to garner revenue from other sources, funding to sport continues through Sport Canada (Macintosh, 1996). In 1995-96 Sport Canada distributed $CAD 47,234,004 in federal funds to sport ("Sport Canada Contribution", 1997).

Sport Canada is a sub-branch of the Citizenship and Canadian Identity sector of the Department of Canadian Heritage. The Assistant Deputy Minister for Canadian Heritage is responsible for directly overseeing the activities of Sport Canada on behalf of the Department. The Director General of Sport Canada administers the day to day activities of the organization including liaison with the Assistant Deputy Minister and others in the Department. The Director General, the Director of Sport Policy, the Director of Sports Programs and the Manager of Administration make up the management team which is responsible for many of the activities of Sport Canada (R. Oulette, personal communication, December 3, 1997). The activities of Sport Canada are divided into two divisions – Sport Policy and Sport Programs.
**Sport Policy**

This division has three main functions - strategic analysis, planning, sport policy development and inter-government policy ("What is Sport Canada", 1997).

**Sport Programs**

Sport Programs has two primary responsibilities - the organization of sport and high performance sport and major games ("What is Sport Canada", 1997).

Sport Canada is responsible for the implementation of numerous programs and policies. These include:

- **National Sport Organization and Multi-Sport/Multi-Service Organization Support Program** – aimed at assisting National Sporting Organizations (NSOs) to achieve their objectives. The program involves determining funding eligibility for NSOs, distributing funds and holding NSOs accountable for the use of funds.

- **Athlete Assistance Program** – provides funding for international athletes to support training, coaching, sport science support and living and study allowances.

- **Hosting Support Programs** – funding provided for the hosting of single and multi sport events, helping to increase the international profile of Canadian sport.

- **National Multi-Sport Development Centres** – supports the holistic development of national and provincial level athletes in partnership with other Canadian sporting organizations.
• Women in Sport Policy – aims to attain equality in sport by providing equal opportunities for women at all levels of sport.

• Official Languages Policy – ensures NSOs are committed to federal policies on official languages (French and English).

• Policy on Tobacco Sponsorship of NSOs – prevents all NSOs from receiving any revenue from tobacco company sponsorship.

• Business plan for Canadian sport - focuses on providing alternative sources of income for NSOs.

• Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport – ensures NSOs comply with federal policies on doping ("Sport Canada Programs", 1997).

**The Australian Sports Commission**

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC), established in 1984, is a statutory authority operating under the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Technology. The Australian Sports Commission has two objectives:

• Increased participation in sport and sport activities by all Australians.

• Excellence in sports performance by Australians (ASC, 1997, p. vi).
History of the Australian Sports Commission

Until the late 1970s and early 1980s, the role of the Australian government in sport has been minimal. Prior to 1972, government involvement in sport consisted of the National Fitness Act (1941). The initial purpose of this Act was to ensure men were physically fit for active service in war time (Adair and Vamplew, 1997). However, following World War II the Act continued to focus on physical education and fitness and provided limited funding to state administered programs. Irregular funding was also provided for team travel to Olympic and Commonwealth Games and other special events (Baka, 1984).

Government involvement in sport remained minimal until 1972, with the election of the Labor Government. The election ended 23 years of Liberal government and had a significant effect on sport (Penniman, 1977). The Liberal Government had pursued “a limited role for government authority in both the economic and social spheres” (Kemp, 1988, p. 230). However, the incoming Labor Government was more intent on adopting an extensive role in Australian social life (Kemp, 1988). In 1972, the new Government created the Department of Sport and Recreation with promises of increased funding to sport. The new Department placed a heavy emphasis on fitness and sport for the masses. Funding was provided to support national sporting organizations, to build new facilities and to create a fitness awareness campaign (Baka, 1984).
The level of support to sport however, was not maintained. In 1975, the Labor Government was dismissed by the Governor General under controversial circumstances (Theophanous, 1980). The resulting election reinstated the Liberal Party, under Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser. Fraser was intent on decreasing government spending and subsequently abolished the Department of Sport and Recreation and withdrew the majority of funding to sport, moving it from a public concern to the private domain (Daly, 1991; Farmer and Arnaudon, 1996). Responsibility for sport was moved to three different departments during the next eight years, highlighting its low status on the Liberal agenda (Baka, 1984).

Throughout the late 1970s, sport suffered from a decline in international performances. Performances reached the lowest point in 1976, when the Australian team recorded its worst performance ever at an Olympic Games. In 1985, John Brown, Minister for Sport, Recreation and Tourism, identified the 1976 Olympics as the catalyst for the resumption of government funding. "Our performance at those games, together with some concerted pressure by the sporting community, saw a measure of support reinstated" (ASC, 1985, p. 1).

In 1974, Professor John Bloomfield was commissioned by the Government to examine the state of sport and recreation in Australia. The focus of this report was to produce recommendations on elite and mass participation sport to guide government policy (Farmer and Arnaudon, 1996). The report, entitled The Role Scope and Development of Recreation in Australia, favoured greater government involvement in
sport, recommending the establishment of a national sport and recreation system, the establishment of an Australian sports institute and the provision of government grants to sport and recreation programs (Bloomfield, 1974). Bloomfield suggested several of the initiatives of the Canadian government’s sport delivery system be adopted in Australia. “A plan similar to that of the Canadians would be desirable for Australia” (p. 14). For instance, the establishment of a sport and fitness branch under a government department of sport was recommended, similar to that established in Canada under the directorate of Fitness and Amateur Sport.

The Confederation of Australian Sport (CAS), an independent lobby group, also produced an influential report on Australian sport. CAS, in its Master Plan for Australian Sport, recommended the government become formally involved in sport because “…in both mass participation and elite performance, Australia is lagging behind the rest of the world” (CAS, 1980, p. 2).

In response to these reports, and increasing public pressure for government involvement in sport, the government provided a grant of $AUD 2,700,000$ for the opening of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in 1981. In 1985, the Australian Sport Commission was established under An Act to Establish the Australian Sports Commission. The Act lists three purposes of the Commission “(a) to encourage the private sector to contribute to the funding of sport to supplement assistance by the Commonwealth, (b) to provide leadership in the development of Australia’s

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2 At time of writing, approximately $1 Canadian = $1 Australian (“Currency Rates”, 1997).
performance in sport, (c) to encourage increased participation by Australians in sport” (p. 2). In 1989, it became the government’s sole sport agency when the AIS became a branch of the Australian Sports Commission (Cashman, 1995).

**The Australian Sports Commission Today**

The Federal Government has continued its support of sport through the Australian Sports Commission. In 1996-1997 the budget of the Australian Sports Commission was approximately $AUD 84,320,000 (ASC, 1997). The Australian Sports Commission is administered by a board of commissioners appointed by the Minister responsible for sport. In 1996-97 the board consisted of 10 commissioners from areas including sport, government, business and media (ASC, 1997). The day to day running of the Commission is done by the Executive which consists of the Executive Director and the 11 Directors appointed throughout the organization.

Unlike Sport Canada, the Australian Sports Commission is responsible for administering programs at both the elite and mass participation levels. However, more of the organization’s resources are spent on delivering elite sport programs and services. Adair and Vamplew (1997) suggest the Australian Sports Commission spends six times more money on high performance sport than mass participation sport.

Australian Sports Commission funding has been boosted in recent years, with extra funding allocated to elite sport up to the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. This extra funding is administered under the Olympic Athlete Program and totalled $AUD 20
million in 1996-1997 (ASC, 1997). This program was commenced in 1994, following Sydney’s successful bid for the 2000 Olympics at which time the Federal Government committed a total of $AUD 135 million to the preparation and development of Olympic athletes. This program will be discontinued following the 2000 Olympics (ASC, 1994).

Houlihan (1997) suggests that the Australian Sports Commission’s focus on the 2000 Olympics has distorted the organization’s priorities and activities by focusing on elite level Olympic sports, at the expense of participation based programs.

The policy impact of Sydney 2000 is illustrated not just in the distribution of ASC funding, but also in the relative immunity of sport from public expenditure cuts which have severely affected other branches of government since the election of the budget-cutting Liberal coalition government (p. 73).

In 1995, the ASC was restructured, with seven divisions incorporated into three major branches – the Australian Institute of Sport, Sports Development and Policy, and Sport and Business Services (ASC, 1995).

*The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS)*.

The Australian Institute of Sport is the Australian Sports Commission division responsible for the development of elite sport throughout Australia. This division includes elite sports development, sports science and medical services, sports
management activities, athlete welfare activities, the Olympic Athlete Program, the Sports Assistance Scheme and the AIS scholarship programs (ASC, 1997).

**Sports Development and Policy**

This division coordinates the national development of sporting activities including grass roots participation and special interest sports programs. These programs include the Australian College of Sports Education, Olympic Training Centre Programs, Australian Coaching Council, Volunteer Involvement Program, Disabled Sport, Women and Sport, Mature Age Sport, Aussie Sport and Indigenous Sport (ASC, 1997).

**Sport and Business Services**

This division administers the corporate and business activities of the Australian Sports Commission. This includes marketing, human resources, assets and property, planning and finances, records management, the National Sports Information Centre and information technology (ASC, 1997).
Chapter 3

Review of Literature

Theories of Organizational Structure

Organizations are inherently structured entities, taking innumerable forms. Structure in organizations serves three purposes - it produces organizational outputs aimed at achieving organizational goals, it is imposed to make individuals conform to the needs of the organization and it is the setting in which decisions are made, power is exercised and in which the organization’s activities are carried out (Hall, 1982).

An understanding of structure facilitates comparison of different organizations and lends understanding to the way in which they operate. The development of a tested, empirical theory of the structure of organizations has allowed for comparison by providing a theoretical framework for researchers to deal systematically with variations among organizations (Pugh, Hickson, Hinings and Turner, 1968). Such a framework is essential to ensure methodological rigour. Without such a theoretical basis for comparison, research can be considered haphazard, difficult to replicate and conclusions dubious (Udy, 1965).

Theories of organizational structure emerged out of Weber’s (1947) work on bureaucracies. As a sociologist, Weber was concerned with the way in which social systems were integrated and the forces that ordered social life (Blau, 1963). He
believed bureaucracies were part of the order of society and a means for separating
the bureau from private domicile, both socially and financially. The establishment of
such a structure enabled public monies and property to be separated from the private
property of public officials. He viewed bureaucracy as

among those social structures which are the hardest to destroy. Bureaucracy is
the means of carrying community action over into rationally ordered societal
action...bureaucracy has been and is a power instrument of the first order - for
the one who controls the bureaucratic apparatus (Weber, 1948, p. 228).

Weber (1948) identified seven distinct characteristics of bureaucracies. He
believed bureaucracies exhibited the following - official functions bound by rules, a
specific division of duties, a hierarchy, technical training of individuals, a separation
between administration and production, an absence of appropriation of official
positions by employees and a detailed system of record keeping. He believed
bureaucracy was the ideal form of organization due to its technical superiority over
any other form of organization. Precision, speed, absence of ambiguity, and reduction
of material and personal costs were characteristics found in bureaucracies that other
forms of organization did not possess (Weber, 1947).

Weber (1981) distinguished between bureaucracy and other systems based on
different types of authority. He identified three forms of authority - (1) traditional
authority which rests on an established belief in traditions and the legitimacy of those
exercising authority under them, (2) charismatic authority which rests on a devotion
to the character of an individual and (3) rational authority which rests on a belief in the legality of patterns of rules, and the rights of those in authority under such rules to issue commands. Bureaucracy is characterized by the third type of authority due to the coherent system of laws and rules arising from the overall system of administration. Such rules give rise to the authority of the administrative structure (Mansfield, 1973).

Although Weber (1981) claimed that bureaucracy was the ideal type of organization, he recognized that it did not exist across all realms of organizational life. He believed that a fully developed form of bureaucracy existed "in political and ecclesiastical communities only in the modern state, and, in the private economy, only in the most advanced institutions of capitalism" (p. 8). Unless an organization exhibited all seven of Weber’s characteristics, it could not be considered a bureaucracy.

Weber’s work sparked many more studies into the characteristics of organizations and the basic principles of his theory are still evident in structural research (Daft, 1983b; Hall, 1982; Zeffane, 1989). However, in the 1960s and 1970s, many scholars refuted Weber’s claim that bureaucracies exist in one ideal form. Pugh, Hickson, Hinings and Turner (1968) found that “bureaucracy is not unitary, but that organizations may be bureaucratic in any number of ways” (p. 88). Blau (1963) also found that bureaucracies exist in multiple forms. “If we modify the type in accordance with the empirical reality, it is no longer a pure type” (p. 306).
A seminal study in structural research was known as the Aston study (Pugh et al., 1968). The aim of this study was “...to investigate and measure structural differences systematically across a large number of diverse work organizations” (p. 66). The study examined 52 organizations in various industries including manufacturing, government and retail. Initially the authors identified five primary dimensions of structure - specialization, standardization, formalization, centralization and configuration.

Most of the five dimensions identified by the Aston study closely parallel the characteristics of bureaucracy suggested by Weber twenty years earlier. Standardization parallels Weber’s claim that bureaucracies are based on procedures and rules. Centralization can be linked to Weber’s principle of an hierarchical system of authority. The Aston group’s dimension of formalization reflects Weber’s theory that bureaucracies are managed through a system of written documents. Finally the concept of specialization is implicit in Weber’s discussion of the characteristics of bureaucracy (Mansfield, 1973).

The Aston group measured and scaled the five concepts of organizational structure and identified four empirical dimensions of organizational structure.
These were:

1. Structuring of activities - the degree to which the intended behaviour of employees is overtly defined by task specialization, standard routines and formal paperwork.

2. Concentration of authority - the degree to which authority for decisions rests in controlling units outside the organization and is centralized at the higher hierarchical levels within it.

3. Line control of work flow - the degree to which control is exercised by line personnel instead of through impersonal procedures.

4. Relative size of supportive component - degree of vertical span and percentage of line personnel in overall work unit (Pugh et al., 1968; 1969).

From their analysis, the authors concluded “...it is clear that to talk in terms of the bureaucratic ideal type is not adequate, since the structure of an organization may vary along any of these four empirical dimensions” (Pugh et al., 1968, p. 89). Pugh, Hickson and Hinings (1969) further developed this assertion by identifying seven types of organizations with each one exhibiting different combinations of the four empirical dimensions of structure.

The seven types of organization identified by Pugh et al. (1969) were full bureaucracy, nascent full bureaucracy, work flow bureaucracy, nascent work flow bureaucracy, pre-work flow bureaucracy, personnel bureaucracy and the implicitly structured organization. Government departments and authorities were identified as
typically exhibiting the characteristics of a personnel bureaucracy with low level structuring of activities, high concentration of authority and high line control of work flow.

Hage and Aiken (1967) used similar variables to those employed in the Aston study to examine techniques for measuring structure in organizations. The authors explored “…the relationship between centralization of power and what we feel are two critical aspects of an organization’s social structure - the degree of formalization and the degree of complexity” (p. 73). They found strong support for the hypothesis that “the less the degree of centralization, the greater the degree of complexity” (Hage and Aiken, 1967, p. 89). They also found weak support for the hypothesis that “the less the degree of centralization, the less the degree of formalization” (p. 89). Like the Aston scholars, Hage and Aiken found that organizations exist in many different forms and there is no one ideal type.

Numerous replications of the Aston study supported the original results and further emphasized the reliability of the scaled dimensions of structure. Child (1972) employed the measurements developed by Pugh et al. (1968) to study the structure of eighty two British firms. He found there was a significant relationship between specialization, standardization of procedures and structuring of activities. However, his findings on centralization differed from those of the Aston group. He found that centralization was negatively related to structuring of activities.
Hinings and Lee (1971) also used the measurements developed by Pugh et al. (1968) to examine nine engineering and electrical goods firms in England. Their findings paralleled the original findings of the Aston group as “specialization, standardization, and formalization were positively and significantly related...also that centralization was negatively related to specialization and standardization, but positively related to lack of autonomy” (p. 92).

Grinyer and Yasai-Aredekani (1980) supported the findings of Pugh et al. (1968) and Child (1972) through an analysis of 502 British electrical engineering firms. They found support for the main findings of the Aston group however rejected their findings on centralization. Grinyer and Yasai-Aredekani supported Child’s notion that decision making in bureaucracies is characteristically decentralized.

The different variables used in the Aston studies and others have also been examined individually and in relation to other organizational theories. Marsh (1992) used the variable of centralization to examine decision making in Japanese factories. He found a number of factors could affect the level of centralization in the firms sampled. Increased spatial dispersion and higher levels of technology led to increased centralization whilst larger size and an increased number of levels in the organizational hierarchy resulted in more decentralized decision making.

Moch and Morse (1977) coupled structural variables with other organizational theories. They examined size and centralization and their effect on the adoption of innovations in organizations. They found centralization and size did not appear to
affect the adoption of innovations that were not compatible with the interests of lower level decision makers. Regardless of organizational size or the level of centralization, the adoption of innovations was low in instances where the innovation was not in the best interests of the lower level decision makers. They also found that differentiation of tasks (specialization) facilitated the adoption of innovations. The more specialized personnel in an organization, the more likely that organization would be to adopt innovations.

Walsh and Dewar (1987) explained formalization in relation to organizational life cycles. They theorized that the level of formalization differed during different phases of an organization’s life. They suggested that formalization would be a positive feature in the early phases of an organization’s life cycle. Formalization at this stage helps the “young, entrepreneurial organization to deal with its increasing growth and size” (p. 222). However, later in the life cycle, formalization may be a hindrance to efficiency as procedures, rules and standards firmly embedded in organizational tradition prevent change and ensure power relationships in the organization are maintained.

Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood (1980) took structural research into a different realm by examining power and the production and recreation of meaning within organizational structures. They drew upon the sociological work of Giddens and Bourdieu to discuss the ways in which formal structures in organizations produce and recreate meaning and power. They argued that structural research should consider
the form an organization takes as the product of "a complex interaction of
interpersonal cognitive processes, power dependencies, and contextual constraints"
(p. 1).

It has been suggested that research into organizational structures, particularly
the work of Pugh et al. (1968) and Hage and Aiken (1967), has aided in the overall
study of organizations and the development of organizational theories (Dewar,
Whetten and Boje, 1980; Grinyer and Yasai-Ardekani, 1980). Organizational
structure theory has created measurable variables which reflect the characteristics of
bureaucracy originally developed by Weber (Mansfield, 1973). From the vast amount
of research in this area has emerged a generally accepted theory of structure in
organizations. The three elements reflected most widely in structural research are
complexity (or standardization), formalization (or specialization) and centralization
(Daft, 1983b; Hage and Aiken, 1967; Hall, 1982; Pugh et al., 1968; Slack, 1997).
These elements exist in varying forms to make up numerous types of organizations,
rather than the single form of bureaucracy proposed by Weber (1947).

**Complexity**

Complexity, or specialization, is concerned with the division of labour in an
organization and the distribution of duties among a number of positions (Hinings and
Lee, 1971). It is one of the most visible characteristics of organizational structure and
has a major effect on the nature of the organization and those who work in it (Daft, 1983b). It is regarded as a major characteristic of modern organizations and is recognized as being an important determinant of other structural features (Hsu and Marsh, 1983).

Pugh et al. (1968) originally conceptualized complexity as being "...concerned with the division of labor within the organization, the distribution of official duties among a number of positions" (p. 72). Hage and Aiken (1967) claimed that organizations were inherently complex and varied in the number of occupational specialties they utilize in achieving organizational goals. Large organizations, or those involved in a broad range of activities, are more likely to exhibit a high degree of complexity due to the need to differentiate responsibilities to personnel to achieve organizational outputs (Hage, 1965).

There are three ways in which complexity manifests itself in organizations - horizontal differentiation, vertical differentiation and spatial dispersion (Daft, 1983b; Hall, 1982; Slack, 1997). Horizontal differentiation is the number of departments or jobs within an organizational structure. An organization with a high degree of horizontal differentiation will have a large number of departments and individual roles. Alternatively, organizations with low horizontal differentiation will be divided into few departments, with few specialized roles.

Vertical differentiation is the number of levels present in the organizational hierarchy. Organizations with a high degree of vertical differentiation would
characteristically be ‘tall’ organizations, with a structure that features a large number of departmental levels. Conversely, organizations with low vertical differentiation would be ‘flat’ organizations, with fewer levels in the hierarchy.

Spatial dispersion deals with the degree of physical or geographic separation of the organization. Organizations with a high degree of spatial dispersion would have a significant percentage of staff located outside of one central location. Those with low spatial dispersion would have most staff concentrated in one location (Daft, 1983b; Hall, 1982).

**Formalization**

Formalization (or standardization) is the extent to which the organization’s activities are governed by rules, procedures, instructions and policies (Child, 1972; Hinings and Lee, 1971). Two different conceptions of formalization have been suggested in early structural research. Pugh et al. (1968) suggested “formalization denotes the extent to which rules, procedures, instructions and communications are written” (p. 75). Hage and Aiken (1967) described formalization in a similar way, however they made an important distinction by including rule observation in their definition of formalization. Therefore, they suggested formalization is not only the extent to which rules and procedures are codified, it is also the extent to which such rules are observed.
In a highly formalized organization, there will be comprehensive policies and procedures and specific job descriptions which are closely adhered to. This results in employees having little autonomy to decide when and how they will do their work. Conversely, in an organization with little codification of procedures, or little adherence to such procedures, employees will exhibit a high degree of independence in their work (Slack, 1997).

Walsh and Dewar (1987) suggested formalization occurs when rules and standards of behaviour become reified in such a way that they are readily remembered and understood. They believed the function of formalization in organizations is two fold. They described these twin roles as “first, contributing to efficient and effective administration, and second, servicing power and authority relationships” (p. 218).

Formalization assists with efficient administration by reducing communications time by clearly defining communication channels between levels of the organizational hierarchy. It also makes performance predictable by designating roles, outlining interactions within the organization and reducing the variability of individual behaviour in the organization. Finally, formalization is efficient as it sets standards against which behaviour can be measured, thus defining acceptable and unacceptable behaviours and appropriate punishments and rewards.

The second function of formalization, according to Walsh and Dewar (1987), is to service power and authority relationships within an organization. This occurs by establishing and directing desired patterns of behaviour and providing legitimacy for
the behaviours of those in positions of power in the organization. Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood (1980) also supported this assertion by identifying structure and formalization as a means for producing and recreating power relationships within organizations.

The two-fold purpose of formalization means it can be both a negative or a positive force in an organization. Formalization can foster effectiveness and also act as a means of influence. Walsh and Dewar (1987) claim that formalization may vary according to the organization’s stage of development. For example, they suggest that an organization that is in the early stages of its life cycle will be positively influenced by formalization as it will enhance administrative efficiency. However as the organization proceeds through the stages of its life cycle, formalization as influence may become a negative force by reproducing power relationships and serving only the needs of those in positions of power.

**Centralization**

Centralization is the locus of authority to make decisions affecting the organization (Child, 1972). Pugh et al. (1968) believed authority to make decisions could be ascertained by asking “who is the last person whose assent must be obtained before *legitimate action* is taken - even if others have to subsequently confirm the decision?” (p. 76). Hage (1965) suggested that the degree of centralization in an
organization reflects how power is distributed in that organization, with a high degree of centralization reflecting an organization in which power is concentrated at the top of the hierarchy and vice versa.

Most researchers agree that centralization is a measure of decision making in an organization (Child, 1972; Hall, 1982; Hage, 1965; Moch and Morse, 1977; Pugh et al., 1968). However, there are different opinions regarding the scope of centralization. Hage (1965) suggested that centralization is a measure of the proportion of organizational members who participate in decision making and the number of decision making areas they participate in. Mansfield (1973) conceptualized centralization as an indicator of the mean hierarchical position at which a variety of decisions affecting the organization are made. He does not identify the role of individuals in decision making or the types of decisions being made. Likewise, Marsh (1992) does not identify the types of decisions being made as a factor in centralization.

In a centralized organization, most of the decision making occurs at the top of the hierarchy. In a decentralized organization, employees at lower levels of the structure have power to make decisions. According to Marsh (1992), maximum centralization exists when all major decisions are made by a single individual. Conversely, minimum centralization exists when the authority to make decisions is exercised by all members of the organization, regardless of their position in the hierarchy.
Pugh, Hickson and Hinings (1969) found that government bodies generally exhibit a high degree of centralization because “the owning-controlling group is always outside and above the operating organization, being the central government” (p. 123). Therefore decisions are often made at a high level in the hierarchy due to the ultimate control of the government over the organization.

**Relationship Among Structural Variables**

Each of the structural variables is related and changes in one can significantly affect the others. However, there is no agreement among structural scholars on the relationship among the variables. The vast number of ways structural variables can interact reinforces one of the biggest criticisms of Weber’s theory of bureaucracies. There is not one ideal form of bureaucracy; rather, bureaucracy can exist in innumerable different forms with each of the structural variables relating to each other in different ways (Hinings and Lee, 1971).

Pugh et al. (1968) demonstrated that complexity and formalization were positively and significantly correlated. Therefore, as complexity increases or decreases, so will formalization and vice versa. Centralization however was found to be negatively correlated to the other variables. Thus, as formalization and/or complexity increase, centralization decreases.
Although the work of Pugh et al. (1968) is widely recognized as a central study in structural research, not all studies support their findings. A study by Crozier (1964) suggested a relationship between high centralization and a high degree of formalization. Likewise, Hage and Aiken (1967) found a similar relationship between centralization and formalization. Blau, Heydebrand and Stauffer (1966) suggested relationships among structural variables will differ according to the characteristics of the staff. An organization staffed by those with a high level of professional training and specialization will be more decentralized than one with few professional staff. Their research suggested that professional staff demand more autonomy and thus the organization must be more decentralized, regardless of the degree of formalization and complexity.

Hage (1965) made several propositions about the correlations among structural variables:

1. The higher the centralization, the higher the production
2. The higher the formalization, the higher the efficiency
3. The higher the centralization, the higher the formalization.
4. The higher the complexity, the lower the centralization (Hage, 1965).

Hage (1965) linked each of these propositions to Weber’s theory of bureaucracies, including the assertion that bureaucracy exists in one ideal form. However, the vast number of studies into organizational structure support the notion that Weber’s model cannot be applied arbitrarily across organizations, industries and
cultures. Structural variables can interrelate in innumerable different ways and there is no single combination of variables that can be applied arbitrarily to all organizations.

Recognizing that organizations can vary in numerous ways according to each structural variable, several researchers, both in general organizational studies and in sport management, have attempted to develop taxonomies of structure in organizations (Frisby, 1985; Hage, 1965; Pugh et al., 1969; Kikulis et al., 1989). The use of such taxonomies or classifications facilitates a synthesis of research and aids in the comparison of different organizations.

Pugh et al. (1969) described a taxonomy as a classification based upon empirically established, measurable dimensions. The authors identify three uses of an empirically established taxonomy:

(1) it would be strategically helpful for refining hypotheses; (2) it would aid in the investigation of the validity and utility of intuitively based typologies; (3) it could serve as a basis for predicting organizational decisions or change. It might also be added that it serves as a simplifying summary of complex underlying patterns (p. 116).

Pugh et al. (1969) identified seven types of organizations in their taxonomy of structure. They were full bureaucracy, nascent full bureaucracy, workflow bureaucracy, nascent workflow bureaucracy, pre-workflow bureaucracy, personnel bureaucracy and the implicitly structured organization.
These seven types of organizations represent different types of organizational structures, with varying combinations of structural variables.

Hage (1965) developed a taxonomy containing two ideal types of organizations, organic and mechanical. These organization types are taken from wider organizational theory and he attempted to identify the structural characteristics of organic and mechanical organizations. He predicted the organic model will exhibit a high degree of complexity and a low degree of both centralization and formalization. The mechanistic model will exhibit low complexity, high centralization and high formalization (Hage, 1965). However, this model fails to recognize other possible combinations of structural variables or organizational types.

**Sport Management Research**

Sport management scholars have frequently been criticized for failing to produce work strongly grounded in theory (Olafson, 1990, 1995; Paton, 1987; Zeigler, 1987). Slack (1991) identified the lack of theory in sport management research as a major problem and suggested the majority of work in this area has failed to link research findings with a strong theoretical framework. To allow sport management to fully establish itself as a legitimate field of academic endeavour, it is essential to develop theory related to the management of sport.
One theoretical area which has been partially explored and adapted to the study of sport organizations is organizational structure. A number of studies have established a strong empirical understanding of structure in sport organizations. However, the application of this theory has been limited to certain types of sport organizations. Structure has frequently been applied to the study of Canadian national sport organizations (Frisby, 1983; Kikulis, Slack and Hinings, 1992; Kikulis, Slack, Hinings and Zimmerman, 1989; Slack and Hinings, 1987; Thibault, Slack and Hinings, 1991) however, theory has not readily been applied to the study of different types of sport organizations or those in other countries.

Slack and Hinings (1992) utilized structural theory to explain change in Canadian national sport organizations (NSOs). The degree of complexity, standardization and centralization was measured in thirty six NSOs at two year intervals to assess the way in which organizational structures had changed over six years. They found that the NSOs had become more professional and bureaucratically structured, meaning there was an increase in complexity and standardization and a tendency for decision making to become less centralized over the duration of the study.

Thibault, Slack and Hinings (1991) focused on the degree of professionalism in voluntary sport organizations. Increased government funding to sport has resulted in more Canadian sport organizations employing professional staff to replace volunteer administrators. Thibault et al. studied the effect this change had
on the structure of organizations. The study revealed a drastic increase in
specialization and standardization, whilst centralization remained relatively stable.

These studies and others (Frisby, 1983; Kikulis, Slack and Hinings, 1992; Slack and Hinings, 1987; Thibault, Slack and Hinings, 1991) have utilized the three
dimensions of organizational structure to explain and understand the behaviour of
sporting organizations. Slack and Hinings (1987) describe the utility of organizational
structure for understanding sport organizations.

The structure of amateur sport organizations is too complex to be explained
simply as a linear progression toward a more bureaucratized and
professionalized organizational form.... to capture this variation and provide a
basis for a more comprehensive understanding of these organizations, it is
necessary to move beyond the initial concepts of bureaucratization and
professionalization and identify the different structural designs they exhibit (p.
130).

Frisby (1985) attempted to develop a conceptual framework for measuring
structure in sport and leisure organizations. She used the dimensions of organizational
structure and operationalized them for application to sport and leisure organizations.
The framework suggested combines theoretical and operational definitions relevant to
the structure of sport and leisure organizations, in particular those with a voluntary
component. Formalization was operationalized through the measurement of the
documents applied to work practices in an organization. Centralization was measured
by identifying the point in the organizational hierarchy where various types of
decisions are made. Complexity (specialization) was measured by counting the
number of different types of roles in the organization.

Kikulis, Slack and Hinings (1992) also adapted theories of organizational
structure to the study of sport organizations. They rejected the notion that
organizations in the sport sector were similarly structured. They identified three major
types of organizational designs amongst Canadian national sport organizations. The
three types were

1. Kitchen table - typically high in centralization, low in formalization and
   low in complexity. These organizations may be those that rely on fund
   raising and membership funds to administer broad based sport and leisure
   programs.

2. Boardroom - slightly higher level of complexity, formalization and
   centralization. These organizations are usually volunteer non-profit
   organizations funded by both private and public monies to deliver
   competitive sport opportunities.

3. Executive office - a high degree of complexity, high formalization with
decisions decentralized to professional staff. Such organizations rely on
   government funding and corporate sponsorship to deliver high performance
   sport at a national or international level.
Whilst this framework may aid the application of structural theory to sport organizations, its focus is on one type of organization in one country’s sport delivery system. It does not include design archetypes of government sport bodies, provincial/state sport organizations, commercial bodies or many other types of organizations that exist within the sports sector.

Many studies in sport management have identified government funding as a catalyst for structural change in national sport organizations (Kikulis and Slack, 1995; Kikulis et al., 1992; Slack and Hinings, 1987; Thibault et al., 1991). However, there have been few attempts to understand the structure of the government agencies which are thought to have prompted change. It is the aim of this study to build on current sport management research by examining the structure of government sport agencies in Australia and Canada.

Much of the research in sports management has focused on physical education and sport in a university setting, professional sports bodies, national sport organizations and fitness clubs (Slack, 1996). However, in order to gain an holistic understanding of the diverse sports industry, it is necessary to examine a range of sporting organizations, other than those that have received a great deal of academic attention. Government is one such area that has been neglected as an area of sport management research.

Not only has research been limited to specific types of organizations, it has also been limited to specific countries. A large amount of research into the sports
industry, and the organizations within it, has been focused on North America. Research into sporting organizations in Australia has been extremely limited, due to the emerging nature of sport management study in Australia. There are few university programs teaching sport management in Australia, and there is no established research tradition. Much of the work on Australian sporting organizations is limited to descriptive, narrative pieces with little empirical analysis of sporting organizations in Australia.

One study has taken sport management research into a new realm by looking at government sport agencies in Canada and Belarus. Kondratovsky (1995) used contingency theory, an integration of structural and contextual elements, to compare government agencies responsible for sport in Canada and Belarus. He found Goskomsport Belarus to be very centralized, moderately formal and fairly complex. Sport Canada was found to be moderately decentralized, moderately formalized and fairly complex.

**Comparative Study of Organizations.**

Peters (1989) suggested that governments throughout the world are becoming increasingly responsible for a wide range of regulatory activities which were previously administered in the private domain such as television, commercial aviation and energy. Governments are managing the expanded work load associated with such
regulatory activities by developing public administration bodies. The role of these bodies is to “translate the authoritative decrees of legislatures or other lawmaking bodies into action” (Peters, 1989, p. 6). Sport is one area in which the Canadian and Australian governments have adopted a significant regulatory role through public administrative bodies.

Peters (1989) suggested the comparative study of these types of public administration bodies is invaluable due to the common functions across these types of organizations. Such bodies often have the common purpose of producing administrative outputs based on decrees from higher in the political system. Peters also suggests that an examination of formal structures “constitutes an important place at which to begin the inquiry” (p. 6).

The application of comparative study to the examination of government sport bodies is particularly relevant. Sport, government and politics are inextricably linked, with sport frequently used as a vehicle for furthering the political motives of governments throughout the world. Governments in many countries, such as South Africa, the United States, Germany, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, France and others have developed mechanisms for the delivery or regulation of sport on a national level. An understanding of these organizations helps understand sport delivery systems and methods for dealing with a new area of public administration.
Chapter 4
Methodology

The structure of sport organizations has been the subject of numerous studies, however, there is a distinct lack of research related to government sport agencies. The aim of this study was to contribute to sport management by applying the theory of organizational structure to Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission. This aids in the development of a more holistic understanding of the structure of sport organizations by examining government agencies which have been frequently identified as catalysts for change in sport.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined similarities and differences in the organizational structure of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission. A qualitative methodology was used to compare the two organizations with organizational structure theory forming the theoretical framework. Hall (1982) identified three variables of organizational structure - complexity, formalization and centralization which constitute the three variables examined in this study. A full explanation of each of these variables can be found in Chapter 3: Review of Literature.

The purpose of this study was to identify similarities and differences in the organizational structure of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission.
In order to address the problem in more detail, the following sub-problems were examined:

1. What are the similarities and/or differences in the complexity of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission?

2. What are the similarities and/or differences in the formalization of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission?

3. What are the differences and/or similarities in the centralization of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission?

Significance of the Problem

The aim of this study was to be significant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study aims to further comparative research on sport and government by extending the work of Kondratovsky (1995). The aim was to also contribute to structural research on sport organizations by examining the agencies recognized as catalysts for change in NSOs and thereby building upon the work of Frisby (1985).

Practically, this study highlighted ways in which Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission have developed and adapted in a climate of rapid change. The resulting information, it is hoped, will be useful to both organizations as it provides an overview and analysis of how each country is approaching sport delivery at the federal level. The study also aimed to prompt discussion of
international sport systems, an area which has not received adequate attention in sport management research.

**Research Methodology**

A descriptive, qualitative methodology was most applicable to this study because of the depth and detail of information such an analysis can yield and because of the small sample size (n=2). Qualitative analysis allows the researcher to gather detailed information about a small number of unique cases (Patton, 1990), and therefore was most appropriate to the analysis of this research problem.

Qualitative research methods are not only useful for examining a small number of cases, they are also particularly useful in the examination of organizations. “Qualitative research is concerned with the meaning rather than the measurement of organizational phenomena....Organizations are assumed to be enormously complex social systems that cannot be studied effectively with the same techniques that are used to study physical or biological systems” (Daft, 1983a, p. 539).

Debate over the utility of qualitative research methods has focused on the validity of such techniques (Patton, 1990). McGuire (1986) suggested the “…link between theoretical constructs and their manifestation in the organization is comparable to the methodological issues of internal and construct validity” (p. 12). A strong theoretical framework will enhance the validity of qualitative inquiry by
serving as a critical guide to research and conceptualization and by setting the
direction of empirical study (Denzin, 1989).

To enhance validity, the theory of organizational structure, developed from the
work of Pugh et al. (1968) formed the framework for this study. The structural
variables of complexity, formalization and centralization were assessed through
qualitative analysis allowing for the identification of similarities and differences in
the structure of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission.

*Data Collection*

Data was collected using two techniques - document analysis and semi-
structured interviews thus increasing the reliability of the study by allowing for the
cross-checking of information from different sources (Patton, 1990). Such
methodological triangulation can also “…improve the accuracy of their
[organizational researchers’] judgements by collecting different kinds of data bearing
on the same phenomenon” (Jick, 1979, p. 602).

*Document Analysis*

The first data source was official documents from each organization.
Documents examined included annual reports, ad-hoc reports, organizational charts,
programs, policies, procedures, discussion papers and other publications originating
from each organization. The document analysis was restricted to those which were
produced by Sport Canada, the Australian Sports Commission or the federal
governments in both countries. Innumerable documents exist that discuss the activities of each organization. Such documents were not included in the document analysis unless produced by the organizations being examined. The time frame for documents selected for analysis covered the five years preceding this study (see Appendix A).

The documents were obtained from the respective organizations, from the National Sport Information Centre in Canberra, from the Sport Information Resource Centre in Ottawa and from other miscellaneous sources including the internet and the national libraries in each country. The documents were collected and reviewed prior to the conduct of the semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured Interviews.

The second source of data was semi-structured interviews with senior officials in both organizations. Officials were selected according to their position in the organizational hierarchy. Those interviewed were either responsible for overseeing the entire organization or a major department within the organization. In Sport Canada, the officials interviewed (n=2) were both directors of major departments of the organization. In the Australian Sports Commission, the officials interviewed (n=2) were the executive director of the Commission and the director of a major department.

The interviews were structured to allow participants to provide data on all three variables being examined and to support or refute the information gathered in
the document analysis. General information was also gathered in the interviews, with each participant being asked to comment on the future direction of the organization and any other issues they felt to be relevant to the study.

Each interview was semi-structured, with a number of questions identified prior to the interview. The interviews lasted approximately one hour. Questions included in the interview protocol (see Appendix B) were developed based on the work of Kondratovsky (1995) and Frisby (1985). Additional questions were also added following the collection and analysis of documents from each organization. Questions other than those included in the protocol were also asked at the interviews to clarify points of uncertainty, to ensure complete data was collected and to reflect the different roles and responsibilities of the interviewees.

Potential subjects were contacted by letter prior to the interviews. The letter outlined the purpose of the study and the role interviewees were being asked to fulfil (see Appendix C). Initially, four potential subjects were contacted in each organization. Potential subjects were then contacted by telephone and mutually agreeable times for the interviews were established. Two officials from Sport Canada and two officials from the Australian Sports Commission agreed to take part in the interviews. Australian Sports Commission staff interviewed are identified in the results section as ‘ASC 1’ and ‘ASC 2’. Sport Canada staff interviewed are identified in the results section as ‘SC 1’ and ‘SC 2’. The interview protocol was sent to each participant approximately one week before the interview was scheduled to take place.
Interviews were conducted in the Sport Canada offices in Hull and in the Australian Sports Commission offices in Canberra. A micro-cassette recorder was used to tape all interviews with the permission of the participants.

**Data Analysis**

Documents were analyzed and data compiled according to the three variables of complexity, centralization and formalization. Horizontal complexity was measured by obtaining organizational charts and counting the number of departments in each organization and the number of designated positions in each department. Vertical complexity was measured by counting the number of levels in the organizational hierarchy and spatial complexity was measured by reviewing documents to ascertain the number of staff located in different geographical regions from the main office of each organization.

Data on formalization was obtained from document analysis using a technique developed by Frisby (1985). She operationalized this variable by making total word estimates of official documents by “…calculating the average number of words per line, multiplying this by the average number of lines per page and then multiplying by the total number of pages” (p. 610). Such a procedure was employed in this study, to analyze all documents collected in relation to both organizations (see Appendix A).

Information from documents was also gathered to assist in the measurement of centralization in each organization. Organizational charts were used in the semi-
structured interviews to assess this variable by asking interviewees to identify the point in the organizational hierarchy where various types of decisions were made.

Each semi-structured interview was transcribed verbatim. Segments of all four interviews were then classified according to the three variables of complexity, formalization and centralization to facilitate comparison. Each question related to one of the variables and answers were easily classified according to which variable they addressed. The qualitative data yielded by the interviews gave this study depth and greatly enhanced and extended the preliminary information gathered in the document analysis. Whilst the number of interviews conducted was low, the data collected was rich and offered important insights into each organization.

**Comparison of Data.**

Following the collection and analysis of data, a qualitative comparison of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission occurred, using the three variables of complexity, formalization and centralization. Due to the small sample size, it was possible to compare results in a descriptive, inductive analysis using patterns, themes and categories from the data, rather than categories imposed prior to data collection (Patton, 1990). Kondratovsky (1995) found that no methodological tools existed for comparing two sport systems. Therefore he used a simple juxtaposition of data collected on each variable. Such an approach was also used here. Data from interviews and document analysis were presented and compared using the
three structural variables of complexity, formalization and centralization, with major themes being induced from the data.

Data for each variable were compared in the following ways:

- **Complexity** -
  - horizontal differentiation - comparison of the number of departments and the number of positions within the departments.
  - vertical differentiation - comparison of the number of levels in the organizational hierarchies.
  - spatial dispersion - comparison of the number of employees located outside of the central location of each organization.

- **Formalization** -
  - comparison of the number of documents and the number of words per document.
  - comparison of transcribed interview results from each organization.

- **Centralization** -
  - comparison of transcribed interview results from each organization on each decision making area.
Chapter 5

Results

**Complexity.**

Both Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission were found to be complex organizations however, the Australian Sports Commission exhibited a greater degree of horizontal differentiation, vertical differentiation and spatial dispersion. Therefore, it was found to be a more complex organization than Sport Canada. A summary of these findings can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1**

**Summary of Results for Complexity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Horizontal Differentiation</th>
<th>Vertical Differentiation</th>
<th>Spatial Dispersion</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depts Sub-Depts Positions</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Canada</td>
<td>3 5 38</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Sports</td>
<td>3 7 424</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Horizontal Differentiation**

The Australian Sports Commission exhibited more horizontal differentiation as it had 3 major departments and 7 sub-departments. Sport Canada also had 3 major departments but only 5 sub-departments. The Australian Sports Commission had a much greater number of employees (n=424) than Sport Canada (n=38), however, the responsibilities of the Australian Sports Commission were wider than those of Sport
Canada. The Canadian government had established separate organizations for the administration of mass participation sport (Recreation Canada) and elite sport (Sport Canada). The Australian Sports Commission was responsible for both of these areas. Approximately 76 staff at the Australian Sports Commission work in the mass participation area.

**Vertical Differentiation**

Both organizations had a similar, traditional organizational hierarchy (see Figure 1 and Figure 2), however the Australian Sports Commission had a greater number of levels in the hierarchy (n=6) than Sport Canada (n=5).

**Spatial Dispersion**

The Australian Sports Commission showed a higher degree of spatial dispersion than Sport Canada. A total of 388 staff work at the Australian Sports Commission’s Canberra headquarters and a further 36 staff worked in other Australian capital cities. Sport Canada exhibited no spatial differentiation, as all 38 staff were located in the organization’s headquarters in Hull, Quebec.
**Formalization.**

Both Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission were found to be formalized, however, formalization manifested itself differently in both organizations. The rules, regulations and documentation affecting the Australian Sports Commission were organization specific and were produced and followed by the Australian Sports Commission only. Sport Canada however was more affected by rules, regulations and documentation that were specified by the Canadian Government and also applied to other government departments.

**Documentation.**

The Australian Sports Commission was found to have a greater number of documents affecting work activity, amounting to approximately 1.2 million words. Documents included policy and program documents, annual reports, strategic plans, discussion papers, evaluations and others. Sport Canada had a much smaller range of documents, amounting to approximately 677,000 words. These included policy documents, research papers, discussion papers and annual reports. Sport Canada documentation also included wider government documentation such as Department of Canadian Heritage annual reports and policy documents (see Appendix A).
Figure 1: Sport Canada Organizational Chart
Figure 2: Australian Sports Commission Organizational Chart
Interviews with senior managers in both organizations revealed a similar degree of formalization. However, such formalization was displayed in different ways in each organization. Each position within the Australian Sports Commission had a job description. Interviewees stated that such descriptions were fairly detailed and supplemented by performance agreements that outline specific tasks and desired outcomes. However it was suggested that the Australian Sports Commission is “moving away from the notion of having jobs and job descriptions which is a very public service way of doing things. We have a position and that position is defined and you find an occupant to fill the position. The jobs will go to the person rather than the person fitting into the job” (ASC I).

Job descriptions in the Australian Sports Commission were supplemented by performance agreements which were developed by individuals in conjunction with their senior manager. These agreements outlined specific tasks and desired outcomes and were reviewed every six months by senior managers.

Sport Canada also had job descriptions, however these were not individualized. Job descriptions reflected Canadian government regulations and employment designations rather than the specific activities and tasks included in the position. Job descriptions were generic outlines of responsibilities according to the position’s classification.
Neither organization had specific policies and procedures manuals however, both had mechanisms in place for outlining practices in the organization. The Australian Sports Commission had business plans that were developed at all levels of the organizational hierarchy. Business plans were in place for the board, each department and the major sub-departments. These plans outlined specific tasks and desired outcomes and strategies for achieving those outcomes. The detail of the business plans varied according to the level in the hierarchy at which the plan was being implemented. “As we go up the system they [business plans] become more and more abstract” (ASC 1). Such plans were closely adhered to, guiding the activity of the Australian Sports Commission at all levels.

No specific policies and procedures manual existed for Sport Canada. However, various government wide policies and procedures were applicable. “There are regulations within Treasury Board, there are union related agreements related to federal public service employees and so on. We are subject to all of those agreements. Those are government wide and are obviously very elaborate” (SC 1). Such policies and procedures were very closely adhered to and enforced throughout all levels of government, including Sport Canada.

Meetings

Both organizations participated in a similar range of meetings. The Australian Sports Commission held regular staff meetings in various formats. The Executive (the
11 senior officers) met each fortnight. These meetings were documented formally, with an agenda circulated and minutes recorded. The senior program managers met with the Executive once a month. These meetings were not documented to the same extent, with documentation usually consisting of a list of actions required or decisions taken at the meeting. The whole staff of the Australian Sports Commission met approximately four times a year. Such meetings took place on an ad-hoc basis and were not scheduled as a regular event. "If necessary from time to time we may need to communicate with all staff together. We do that about four times a year" (ASC 2). There were also numerous other meetings that take place at all levels of the Australian Sports Commission as the need arises. Such meetings were not usually documented formally.

Sport Canada was found to have a similar range of meetings on a regular basis. The whole staff of Sport Canada met bi-monthly. These meetings were usually information sessions for staff at which management could communicate with the whole staff. Management meetings, involving the Director General, the two directors and the administrative liaison, took place on a weekly basis and on demand when issues required addressing.

Meetings were documented differently according to their purpose. All staff meetings were not generally documented unless there was something circulated at the meeting or a follow up arose from that meeting. Management meetings were documented on internal e-mail and circulated to all staff. Such documentation was
described as “not really editorialized. It is just simply a matter of communicating decisions and notices and so on” (SC /). Individuals participating in meetings usually took personal notes as well to document the information being communicated in meetings.

Centralization

Sport Canada was found to be more centralized than the Australian Sports Commission as decisions were more often made at a higher level in the organizational hierarchy. Sport Canada also had more Ministerial involvement in a range of decisions than the Australian Sports Commission.

Budget Decisions

Respondents from Sport Canada identified two levels of decision making pertaining to budgets. Firstly there was the grants and contribution scheme and the operational budget relating to general administrative costs. The Programs division was responsible for making initial recommendations on grants and contributions budget decisions. However, these decisions were ratified at a higher level in the organization, first going to the management team with ultimate approval being given by the Minister. The management team were responsible for making budget decisions related to the operational budget.
Budget decisions in the Australian Sports Commission were made by the board, following the recommendations of the Executive. Program managers made a submission to the Executive on what funds they would require to run their programs. The Executive then fitted the different submissions together and allocated funds as appropriate to the different programs. The board had final discretion over the decisions, however “The Executive recommends to the Board and in most cases that is accepted” (ASC 1).

**Personnel Decisions**

Personnel decisions in Sport Canada were made initially by the manager directly responsible for the position being staffed. If a manager was hired then the Director or Director General would be involved and if it was a Director or Director General being hired then the Public Service Commission would be involved.

The Australian Sports Commission followed a similar process when making personnel decisions. Managers directly responsible for the position being staffed would be involved in the decision making. The Executive Director ratified all personnel appointments however, it was suggested that this process is becoming more decentralized, with individual program managers having more power over personnel decisions. Program manager and Executive Director appointments were made by the board, with concurrence of the Minister.
Promotion Decisions

Promotion decisions in the Australian Sports Commission were made at the program manager level. Program managers were responsible for promotion of staff working beneath them. In Sport Canada, promotion decisions were made outside of the organization. The Canadian Public Service Commission had responsibility for these decisions.

Policy and Goal Decisions

Policy and goal decisions in each organization were made at very different levels. The Minister responsible for Sport Canada set policy directions and formulated goals for the organization. The management team also had input into these areas, however ultimately decisions were made by the Minister, in consultation with the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Minister.

The Australian Sports Commission set policies and formulated goals at the Executive level. The Executive consulted with the program managers and made decisions in these areas. Each division of the organization also had some autonomy to set their own goals, providing these goals contributed to the meeting of wider organizational goals and complied with stated policies.

New Program Decisions

New program decisions were made at the same level in each organization. Sport Canada was found to make new program decisions at the management team
level and the Australian Sports Commission made such decisions at the Executive level.

Both organizations stated that everyone was involved in the decision making process and all levels of the hierarchy were consulted, according to the decisions being made. Much of the preliminary work in the decision making process was done at the bottom level of the hierarchy, with information feeding up throughout the organization, with decisions ultimately being made at the management/executive level and higher.

**Future Direction**

Subjects interviewed in both organizations had distinct views on the future direction of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission. Respondents at the Australian Sports Commission portrayed the future as the period beyond the 2000 Sydney Olympics. They suggested the direction of the organization was defined for the period up until 2000 with significant change expected after the completion of the Sydney Olympics. The future role of the Australian Sports Commission was perceived as a regulator of the overall elite sport environment, with a decreased involvement in the day to day activities of national sport organizations. The structure of the organization was expected to change after the 2000 Olympics with the Commission becoming leaner by delegating many organizational functions to national
sport organizations. It was suggested elite sport would remain the focus of the organization’s priorities.

Subjects interviewed in Sport Canada suggested that policy and strategy would become a more significant part of the organization’s activities in the future. “Work will become more knowledge based, policy work will have a higher value” (SC 2). Such policy work would be aimed at elevating the status of sport to the benefit of coaches and athletes. Additionally, it would be aimed at positioning sport within the broader federal government policies and initiatives to further sport and the overall government objectives.
Chapter 6

Discussion of Results

An examination of the results of this study reveals two obvious structural differences between Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission. Sport Canada is significantly smaller than the Australian Sports Commission and it is more closely intertwined with the mechanisms of government than its Australian counterpart. Despite these differences, the government mechanisms for sport delivery in Canada and Australia are reasonably similar. Both governments have chosen to be involved in sport to a similar extent and have developed organizations specifically for coordinating such involvement.

The results of this study will be discussed in three ways. The findings for each structural variable will be examined and the relationship between size and structure will be discussed. The relationship between sport and government will also be discussed.

Complexity

The Australian Sports Commission was found to be more complex than Sport Canada, with greater horizontal differentiation, vertical differentiation and spatial dispersion. Greater complexity in the Australian Sports Commission was reflected in
the greater number of levels, departments and designated roles within the organizational hierarchy (see Table 1). Such structure meant the labour in the Australian Sports Commission was more divided and specialized than the labour in Sport Canada.

Hage (1965) suggested that organizations involved in a broad range of activities may exhibit a high degree of complexity due to the need to differentiate responsibilities to personnel to achieve organizational outputs. The Australian Sports Commission is responsible for a broader range of organizational outputs than Sport Canada. For example, the Australian Sports Commission administers participation programs, school based sport, elite training facilities and information services. Such programs are not administered by Sport Canada. Greater complexity reflected the need of the Australian Sports Commission to administer a broader range of activities than Sport Canada by distributing duties amongst a greater number of specialist staff.

**Formalization**

Both Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission were found to exhibit a degree of formalization, however, such formalization was greater in the Australian Sports Commission which had more documents that were routinely applied to everyday work practices. Staff interviewed at the Australian Sports
Commission had working knowledge of such documentation and used it regularly in their work.

Sport Canada had a lesser number of documents that applied to routine work. Such documents were generally applicable across all Canadian federal government departments and were not specific to the organization. The staff interviewed did not have an intimate knowledge of such documents and referred to them only when special circumstances arose.

The Australian Sports Commission also had several plans in place which monitored work outputs of individuals and units within the organization. Business plans outlined directions and strategies for units of the organization and performance agreements existed for each individual within the organization. Such plans and monitoring mechanisms were not formally utilized in Sport Canada. Meetings in both organizations exhibited a similar degree of formalization and occurred with similar regularity and were documented in the same ways, according to the type and purpose of the meeting.

The difference in degrees of formalization may be attributable to differences in the age of the organizations. Sport Canada was established as a result of the 1969 Task Force on Sports for Canadians. The Australian Sports Commission was not established until 1985, making it a much younger organization than its Canadian counterpart.
Walsh and Dewar (1987) suggested that formalization is a positive feature early in the life cycle of organizations as it helps to deal with growth, expansion and size. However, later in the organizational life cycle, formalization may become a negative force by hindering efficiency through the imposition of rules and standards and the maintenance of power relationships. Due to the fact that Sport Canada is further developed and at a more advanced stage of its organizational life cycle, the high degree of formalization needed in a young organization may have been reduced to allow increased effectiveness.

**Centralization**

Sport Canada was more centralized than the Australian Sports Commission, reflecting its closer proximity to government. Decisions at Sport Canada were routinely made and ratified at the Director level. However, many decisions were also made by the Assistant Deputy Minister and the Minister for Canadian Heritage, thus taking the decision making above Sport Canada.

Decisions in the Australian Sports Commission were also made at the Executive level (equivalent to Sport Canada's Director level). Some decisions were identified as being made and ratified at the board level. However, rarely did the decision making power lie with the Minister or those outside of the organization itself.
The higher level of centralization in Sport Canada supports the notion of Pugh, Hickson and Hinings (1969) who found that government bodies generally exhibit a high degree of centralization as the central government is responsible for control of the organization, including decision making. Being an actual part of the mechanisms of the federal government, Sport Canada was more closely tied to the central government than the Australian Sports Commission. As a statutory authority, the Australian Sports Commission had more autonomy to make decisions within the organization. Such autonomy is reflected in the decreased centralization of the Australian Sports Commission.

**Size and Structure**

The results of this study showed the Australian Sports Commission was more complex, more formalized and less centralized than Sport Canada. The Australian Sports Commission was significantly larger, with 424 employees, compared to Sport Canada’s 38 employees. The differences between structural variables may be due to the vast difference in size but it is not possible to draw conclusions on causality from the qualitative observation of just two organizations. However, the results of several other studies support the notion that the larger the organization, the greater the degree of complexity and formalization and the lower the degree of centralization (Grinyer

Size can contribute to increased complexity, formalization and decentralization as these are mechanisms that allow an organization to operate when a large number of employees make up the organization. Hinings and Lee (1971) suggest that once an organization grows beyond a size which allows for personal control, it must be more explicitly structured to allow for effective management.

Mansfield (1973) found

...increasing size forces organizational managers to create rules to govern behaviour and hence reduce the range of possible day-to-day problems which confront them. This increase in rules and paperwork allows them to delegate the right to make decisions without losing overall control, as these delegated decisions are made within guidelines designated by the rules (p. 488).

The effect of size on an organization can be linked back to the Weberian concept of bureaucracy. He felt that bureaucracy was a necessary form of organization as governments modernized and power was removed from society’s elite. “With the qualitative increase of tasks administration has to face, administration by notables reaches its limits” (p. 214). As such administration reached its limits, bureaucracy, evolved as the ideal form of organization for the modern state. Documentation was a way of standardizing work practices as bureaucracy and
administration grew. Likewise, the development of a hierarchy and the distribution of
decision making capabilities were characteristic of large bureaucratic organizations.

Organizations develop mechanisms to deal with increases in size and a
diminishing span of control for those at the top of the hierarchy. The bigger an
organization becomes, the less it is possible for those at the top of the hierarchy to
have direct control over what is occurring at the various levels throughout the
organization. To deal with a decreasing span of control, the organization becomes
more complex, more formalized and less centralized.

Grinyer and Yasai-Ardekani (1980) suggested that bureaucratization takes the
form of complexity, formalization and decentralization. The purpose of such a
structure is “...knowledge based control that permits decentralization” (p. 414).
Producing a complex organizational hierarchy allows those at the upper levels of the
structure to safely delegate decision making powers to those beneath them.
Formalization and complexity allow those at the top to retain control via procedural
devices, despite the fact that decision making has been delegated to a lower level in
the organization.

The results of this study support the notion that increased size requires greater
formalization, greater complexity and less centralization. The Australian Sports
Commission was found to be significantly larger than Sport Canada and was more
complex, more formalized and less centralized. Although the Australian Sports
Commission was more complex, Sport Canada also displayed formalization, utilizing
government wide documentation and standards to outline work practices.

Formalization may manifest itself in organizations such as Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission as a way of controlling public administration in an ever increasing number of areas.

Coakley (1990) suggested “As societies become more complex, and as relationships within societies become more interdependent, government intervention has increased in all spheres of life. Sport is no exception” (p. 302). The governments in Canada, Australia and other countries, have adopted a regulatory role in sport, which has subsequently had a significant impact on the sports system. Formalization amongst public administration agencies allows the government to decentralize these areas of administration and decision making, ensuring the activities of these organizations are still safely controlled. Therefore, formalization may be an inherent characteristic of government sport delivery mechanisms.

**Sport and Government**

The results of this study show how the governments of Canada and Australia have chosen to deliver sport at the federal level. The results show the Australian Sports Commission is more decentralized than Sport Canada. Such decentralization reflects the Australian Government’s decision to keep sport and the delivery of sport
services at an ‘arm’s length’ from the mechanisms of government, whilst still maintaining control.

There has been much debate over the relationship between sport, politics and government. In both Canada and Australia, there has been concern about the level of government involvement in sport. Cashman (1995) suggested that Australians widely believe that sport and politics should not mix. However, increasing government involvement in sport has ensured it is a political domain. Likewise in Canada, there have been suggestions that the government should minimize direct involvement in sport (Broom and Baka, 1979).

Both nations have chosen not to keep sport and government separate. This decision has had a significant impact on the overall sport delivery system in each country. Hall et al. (1992) suggested that the Canadian government’s involvement in sport has ensured “Organizations that once showed low levels of specialization, little in ways of formalized operating procedures, and consensual decision making with control by volunteers now show high levels of specialization and formalization with most decision-making in the hands of professionals” (p. 93).

Generally in Australia, the government push toward more professional, bureaucratically structured sport organizations has been viewed as a positive influence, allowing sport organizations to more effectively deliver sport services (Adair and Vamplew, 1997; Farmer and Arnaudon, 1996). Government support through the provision of resources, support services and the imposition of practices
such as planning, annual reporting and budgeting has allowed sport organizations to become more business like in their approach to sport delivery.

It has been shown in this study that the Australian government has provided more autonomy to sport by decentralizing the decision making to a statutory authority, effectively allowing for a small amount of distance between government and sport. Sport Canada may be more firmly entrenched in the mechanisms of the federal government, however the results point to a recent demand for sport organizations to have more independence from the government.

Although the suggestion can be made that the Australian government has allowed the Australian Sports Commission to be more decentralized, the difference in the degree of state intervention in sport is minimal. Both governments, by international standards, play a significant role in the sport delivery system and have a great deal of influence over such a system. Compared to other nations, such as the United States of America, where the government is not involved in the funding and administration of sport at all, the similarities between Australia and Canada are greater than the differences. Further longitudinal research is needed to examine the extent of the influence of governments in sport and the impact this has on the delivery of effective sports services.
Chapter 7

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

This purpose of this study was to identify the similarities and differences in the organizational structure of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission using a qualitative methodology. From the data gathered, it is possible to conclude the Australian Sports Commission was more complex, more formalized and less centralized than Sport Canada due to its greater size and decreased proximity to the mechanisms of government. An examination of these organizations revealed the federal governments in Canada and Australia had adopted similar mechanisms by establishing bodies responsible for coordinating government involvement in sport, with some structural differences for the delivery of sport at the national level.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine similarities and differences in the organizational structure of Sport Canada and the Australian Sports Commission. The organizations were found to differ in the degree to which they exhibited the three structural variables. The Australian Sports Commission was found to be more complex, more formalized and less centralized than Sport Canada. This may be due to
the Australian Sports Commission's greater size and Sport Canada's closer proximity to the mechanisms of the federal government.

From this study, several methodological and theoretical issues were identified and discussed, with an aim to increasing the utility of organizational structure as a tool for examining sport organizations. Several areas for further study were also identified to make a contribution to the development of sport management. This study raises more questions than it answers and the discussion of future research is by no means exhaustive. Sport management scholars must continue to look for areas that need attention and for questions that have not been answered. This will allow sport management to further develop as an academic discipline and will aid in the understanding of sport as an important social institution.

**Recommendations: Methodological and Theoretical Issues**

The use of theories of organizational structure provided a useful framework for the comparison of the Australian Sports Commission and Sport Canada. However this study has also raised several methodological issues regarding the conceptual and operational definition of structural variables. Despite more than thirty years of research in this area, there are no universal definitions of structure and its components. Differences in the definition of variables make comparison between studies difficult and the drawing of conclusions problematic.
Each of the structural variables is defined differently in a variety of studies. For example, Pugh et al. (1968) described complexity as the division of labour within an organization whereas Hage and Aiken (1967) outlined complexity as the number of occupational specialties and the training of individuals within an organization. Formalization was described by Child (1972) as the rules, procedures and policies that exist within an organization. Walsh and Dewar (1987) claimed that formalization only occurred when such rules, procedures and policies were readily remembered and applied to everyday work. Mansfield (1973) defined centralization as the point in the hierarchy where decisions were made. However, Hage (1965) suggested centralization was a measure of the number of people who participated in decision making.

This study was based upon a range of definitions to establish comprehensive variables that reflected the strengths of other studies examining organizational structure. For this theoretical area to continue to be relevant to the study of both sport and non-sport organizations, universal definitions of complexity, formalization and centralization need to be developed, tested and validated through replication.

In examining structure, it is also necessary to chose carefully the organizations to be studied. It may be more insightful to compare and contrast organizations of a similar size to allow a more complete understanding of how the variables of structure exist and interact in organizations. By controlling size as an independent variable, it
will be possible to more fully understand the manifestation of complexity, formalization and centralization in organizations.

Future study using organizational structure theory may also be enhanced by assessing the context in which the structures exist. Organizations do not exist in isolation and a more complete picture may be obtained by exploring the relationships between structure and environment. For example, studies in this area may be extended by examining the political and economic environment in which sporting organizations exist and the affect such surroundings have on structure.

**Recommendations: Future Research**

As an emerging field of academic endeavour, it is important sport management scholars address questions which have not been fully explored in research using sound methodologies and theoretical frameworks. This study provides the basis for several possibilities for future research in sport management by highlighting areas in which more research is needed. Areas identified for further examination include sport organizations in Australia, the relationships between sport, government, national sport organizations and sport and politics. Some suggestions for future research, that build upon this study are outlined.
Sport Organizations in Australia

The review of literature revealed an overwhelming lack of data on sport organizations in Australia. As sport management becomes a more established academic discipline in Australia, scholars need to examine all areas of the sports system such as government, school sport, professional sport, club sport, commercial sport organizations and others, using a strong theoretical basis and sound research methodologies.

Sport, Government and National Sport Organizations

This study also pointed to a lack of research on sport and government throughout the world. There is a limited body of literature which relies on descriptive, narrative information with little empirical testing of theories. Governments can have a significant impact on the nature of the sports system and to enhance the understanding of sport, the involvement of governments throughout the world needs to be examined in more depth.

Once there is a more comprehensive understanding of the role of various governments in sport, it will be possible to examine the relationship between government and the wider sports system. For example, in Australia it would be beneficial to further examine the Australian Sports Commission and its relationship to national sport organizations. Longitudinal study of sport organizations, both
government and non-government, will help to enhance understanding of sport which is increasingly recognized as a legitimate social institution.

In Australia and Canada, the results of this study and the work of Kondratovsky (1995) can be utilized as baseline data for further study into government sport agencies. For instance data may be collected for a subsequent period of time and compared to that collected in this study. It may also be useful to use such data on Sport Canada to examine more fully the relationship between national sport organizations and government. Numerous studies have already been conducted into structure in Canadian national sport organizations (Frisby, 1983; Kikulis et al., 1992; Kikulis et al., 1989; Slack and Hinings, 1987; Thibault et al., 1991). Now it may be possible to discuss the relationships between sport and government using these studies and building upon data already collected.

It would also be useful to compare organizations such as those examined in this study according to significant moments in their lifecycle. After 1993, the Australian Sports Commission experienced growth which may be attributed to the extra support given to sport in Australia prior to the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. However, following the Games, it is likely such support will decrease. A similar situation occurred in Canada before and after the Montreal Olympics and the Calgary Winter Olympics. A comparison of these two organizations before and after the hosting of Olympic Games may facilitate an understanding of the relationship between sport and government and the political motives for supporting such events.
Sport and Politics

From the information gathered in this study, some inferences may be made about the political context in which these organizations exist. Sport Canada is a part of the Department of Canadian Heritage as a program of the Citizenship and Canadian Identity sector. The location of Sport Canada in this department may be some indication of the political motives for federal government involvement in sport. Sport is being used as a tool for preventing national separatism and providing a common cultural focal point for French and English Canadians. The Australian government is also using sport to further political motives, albeit for different reasons. Sport in Australia is part of the Department of Industry, Science and Technology and many of the government’s initiatives in sport focus on maximizing business and economic benefits arising from sport, particularly the Sydney Olympics.

There is no question sport and politics are inextricably linked, however research into political motives, climates and ideologies pertaining to sport is minimal. Future research should make use of political science theory and methodologies to examine the relationships between sport, government and politics. The use of such theory would facilitate an understanding of the motives for government involvement, such as those suggested above.
Appendix A

List of Documents
Sport Canada

- Economic and heritage impact of hosting multi-sport games: an international comparison
- Economic dimensions of hosting multi-sport games: a discussion paper
- Sport Canada's women's program
- Foundation themes for an emerging sport plan for Canada
- Report of the core sports commissioner
- Planning framework for sport in Canada
- Sport participation in Canada
- Sport Canada consultation report
- Business plane for sport in Canada
- Sport Canada policy framework
- Discussion papers
- Federal policy for hosting international sporting events
- International representation assistance program
- Sport Canada quadrennial planning program
- Winter quadrennial review report
- Best ever quadrennial review report
- Core support program 1990-1991, 1995-96
- Sport Science program policies and guidelines: 1992-93, 1994-95
- Sport Canada contribution program guidelines 1996-97
- Sport: the way ahead
- Canadian Treasury guidelines, policies and procedures
- Department of Canadian Heritage recruitment policy
- Department of Canadian Heritage publication guidelines
- Employment designations
- Department of Canadian Heritage world wide web pages
- Department of Canadian Heritage annual report 1996-97
- Department of Canadian Heritage roles and responsibilities
- Canadian government financial reporting requirements
Australian Sports Commission

- ASC annual reports: 1990-1997
- ASC operational plans: 1994-1997
- ASC strategic plans: 1996-1998
- Ultimate performance
- The AIS Thredbo training centre
- Inquiry into the funding of community sporting facilities
- Aussie sports
- Working with sport: the role of the ASC
- Evaluation of the ASC’s impact on participation in sport
- Sports research needs
- AIS: 1981-1996 major achievements
- A guide to the ASC’s grants and programs for NSOs
- Australia South Pacific 2000 sports program
- Position statement on sports violence
- Australian women in sport strategy
- National Aussie Sport unit strategic plans 1994-1996
- Junior sport statement of principles
- Evaluation of Sportsfun program
- Evaluation of SportIT
- National junior sport policy
- Executive management plan 1996-1997
- Maintain the momentum
- On tour
- Strategies for change
- Volunteer Involvement Program national framework
- Volunteer Involvement Program guidelines
- Funding guidelines
- An assessment of sport export opportunities
- OAP: Making great Australians
- Strategic information technology plan 1991-1993
- Guidelines for the conduct of Masters Games
- Revised doping policy
- National drugs in sport framework
- ASC staff code of conduct
- Delegations for ASC staff related decisions
Appendix B

Interview Protocol
1. Give a brief overview of your position, roles and responsibilities.

2. Does each position within the organization have a job description?

3. Are such descriptions detailed or rather general?

4. Do you have a policies and procedures manual?

5. If yes, how closely is such a manual adhered to?

6. Do you have staff meetings? How often? Who participates? What is the format?

7. How are meetings documented?

8. Where are most budget decisions made in the organization?

9. Where are most personnel decisions made in the organization?

10. Where are most policy and goal decisions made in the organization?

11. Where are new program decisions made in the organization?

12. Where are promotion decisions made in the organization?

13. Who participates in the decision making process(es)?

14. How many levels of the organization participate in the decision making process?

15. What decisions do you have discretion over?

16. What direction do you see the organization taking in the future?
Appendix C

Letter to Interviewees
Dear [NAME],

I am currently in the process of completing my Master’s degree in sport management at the University of Windsor, Canada. For my Master’s thesis I am conducting a study comparing the Australian Sports Commission and Sport Canada.

To complete my research I would like to interview senior officials in each organization. I would appreciate your contribution to my study by participating in a short once off interview. The interview would be conducted in person, at a time suitable to you. A list of questions would be forwarded to you prior to the interview to allow you time to prepare answers.

I believe this study will yield interesting results for both your organization and Sport Canada. In a time of rapid change, a comparison of two similar systems will show how each country has faced the many challenges in sport at the present time. The Australian Sports Commission/Sport Canada [DELETE ONE] will be forwarded a copy of the results of the study following its completion.

I would like to contact you personally to discuss the possibility of an interview and to schedule a time. Your input into this study is invaluable and I look forward to discussing it further with you.

If you have any questions regarding this study please do not hesitate to contact me on [INSERT PHONE NO.].

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Rule
Graduate Student


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Vita Auctoris

NAME: Catherine L. Rule

PLACE OF BIRTH: Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1974

EDUCATION: Merici College, Canberra, Australia
1987-1992

University of Canberra, Canberra, Australia
1993-1995 B.A. Sports Studies (Sports Administration)

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1996-1998 M.H.K. (Sport Management)

Outstanding Graduate Student of the Year
University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1997-98