Coventry University

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Sponsorship of Major Sport Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach

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Award date:
2021

Awarding institution:
Coventry University

[Link to publication](#)

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PhD

August 2021

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the University's requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

August 2021

Acknowledgements

Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this doctoral thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge, the present doctoral thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Content derived from this thesis has been rewritten and contributed to published outputs as follows:

Peer-reviewed journal article

Cook, D., Biscaia, R., Papadas, K., Simkin, L., & Carter, L. (2021). The Creation of Shared Value in the Major Sport Event Ecosystem: Understanding the role of Sponsors and Hosts. *European Sport Management Quarterly*. DOI: 10.1080/16184742.2021.1931394.

Peer-reviewed academic conferences

Cook, D. (2016). 'The Cultural Legacy of Sport Mega Event Brands'. 11th Association for the Study of Sport and the European Union (Sport & EU) Conference, Madrid (Spain), 27-28th June 2016.

Cook, D. (2018). 'Sponsorship of Sport Mega Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach'. 1st Global Conference on Creating Value, Leicester (UK), 23-24th May 2018.

Cook, D., Biscaia, R., Papadas, K., & Simkin, L. (2018). 'Sponsorship of Sport Mega Events: A Conceptual Approach for Creating Shared Value'. 26th European Association for Sport Management (EASM) Conference, Malmö (Sweden), 5-8th September 2018.

Cook, D., Biscaia, R., Papadas, K., & Simkin, L. (2020). 'Conceptualizing the Creation of Shared Value in the Sport Ecosystem: The Role of Sponsors and Event Hosts'. 34th North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) Conference, San Diego (USA – held virtually due to COVID-19), 28-30th May 2020.

Abstract

As societies face mounting challenges and businesses experience increasing scrutiny of their methods and practices, the idea of creating shared value (CSV) has gained eminence for its ability to enable companies to simultaneously enhance their competitive market performance whilst also facilitate improvements in society. Against this backdrop, within a sport domain, sponsor firms invest significant sums in utilising the marketable potential of major sport events (MSEs), which can provide a setting for value co-creation by promoting and enabling resource exchange and integration between different actors.

However, both sponsors and MSEs have encountered criticism due to a series of malpractices and scandals. This has led to rising levels of scepticism of the benefits of MSEs, the motives of sponsors, and for some to question whether sponsorship revenues and event platforms could be mobilised more beneficially – for the betterment of the organisations themselves and for society. In this regard, as CSV implies a long-term investment, it offers a progression of corporate social responsibility (CSR) by allowing the creation of incremental value as opposed to redeploying existing value, involves the value co-creation contributions of other actors, and underpins core business strategy.

Although CSV offers societal opportunities for sponsors and MSEs, scarce conceptual analysis and empirical studies exist and modes to harness CSV and its potential benefits within the sport ecosystem are underexplored. Consequently, this thesis investigates how business organisations can concurrently strengthen their respective competitive positioning and create shared value for society via an actor engagement platform. Expressly, the study explores how sponsors and MSEs can create shared value with a range of other actors to produce mutually beneficial outcomes, which may have a continuing effect within the wider ecosystem.

The study was split into two phases: a pilot stage (n=10) to preliminarily analyse and subsequently develop a proposed, literature-based conceptual model, followed by a main study (n=25), in order to help refine the model and gain a more profound understanding of the process of creating shared value and associated outcomes for actors involved in MSEs. Both phases utilised semi-structured interviews of senior industry practitioners with a sponsorship remit and were analysed using a reflexive thematic analysis approach, utilising the benefits of both manual and CAQDAS-based (NVivo) coding strategies. All interviews were conducted before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic (pilot study: 11th May - 17th July, 2018; main study: 31st January - 30th April, 2019).

The results highlight the importance of organisational capabilities, organisational consistency, and cultivation in the creation of shared value. In addition, a symbiotic relationship and the length

of the sponsorship relationship were recognised as playing a role in driving CSV outcomes for MSEs, sponsors, and other key actors including host citizens, athletes, and consumers. The study provides important contributions to knowledge: First, the development of a conceptual framework for understanding CSV in MSEs helps to reveal the importance of business relationships in the value creation process, illustrates value co-creation within a sport ecosystem, provides further elaboration on the internal and external factors influencing CSV, and how value can be created and distributed amongst associated actors. Second, the establishment of a definition of CSV through sponsorship via the identification of a series of CSV sub-codes allows clarification of the nuances of CSV and identifies ways in which businesses can facilitate societal benefits via the sponsorship of MSEs. Third, the provision of practitioner interpretations of CSV and the categorisation of tangible CSV examples relating to *Developing* (i.e., co-creation of assets), *Educating (*i.e., advancing knowledge), *Incentivising* (i.e., financial enticement positioned towards improving society), *Recruiting* (i.e., employment which can help alleviate societal issues), and *Showcasing* (i.e., an accessible stage to highlight CSV) can help guide how shared value may be created for various actors involved in the ecosystem. Together, these findings demonstrate the significance of CSV as a meaningful, evolutionary concept, which represents an important incremental addition to extant literature and an essential strategic management tool for businesses.

Keywords: Creation of Shared Value; Actor Engagement; Service Ecosystems; Business-to-Business Relationships; Sponsorship; Major Sport Events.

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List of Abbreviations

A2A: Actor-to-actor

B2B: Business-to-business

B2C: Business-to-consumer

CAQDAS: Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software

C2C: Consumer-to-consumer

CSR: Corporate social responsibility

CSV: Creating shared value

EASM: European Association for Sport Management

ESA: European Sponsorship Association

ESMQ: European Sport Management Quarterly

IMR: Internet-mediated research

MSE: Major sport event

NASSM: North American Society for Sport Management

PRP: Performance review panel

PSC: Positive social change

SDL: Service-dominant logic

SDG: Sustainable development goal

SFHM: Sport-for-health-model

SPO-BMI: Social purpose organisation business model innovation

SVF: Sport value framework

TA: Thematic analysis

VoIP: Voice over internet protocol

1.   Introduction

1.1 Background to the research issue

Corporate scandals, in addition to global environmental and social upheavals, have contributed towards heightened disapproval of capitalism and the way that firms operate (Menghwar & Daood, 2021). This extends to the realm of sport, where sponsor firms invest heavily in harnessing the commercial potential of major sport events (MSEs; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006; IEG, 2017). Sponsors have attracted criticism for being financially wasteful (Meenaghan, 2013), driven by the self-interest of senior executives and indulgent corporate cultures (Vance et al., 2016), and using their sponsorships to conceal negative brand perceptions (Shoffner & Ko, 2020). In addition, sport events have been plagued by a number of recent scandals involving issues such as corruption (e.g., FIFA executives), state-sponsored doping (e.g., Russian athletes), and labour exploitation (e.g., migrant workers in Qatar). This has led to an escalation in adverse attitudes held towards events (Roberts et al., 2018) and doubt over events' impact (Mao & Huang, 2016).

Consequently, scepticism surrounding claimed and perceived benefits of MSEs has prompted growing demands for them to become more productive and sustainable (Misener et al., 2015; Taks, 2015). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, over £50bn was spent annually by companies on sponsorship rights, with around 70% of this directed towards sport (IEG, 2018). As Cornwell (2016) inquiries of sponsorship revenue, "*is there a better way to spend it that could both be good marketing and do more for humanity?*" A re-mobilisation of the wealth and resources of sponsors through the forum of MSEs could offer a meaningful and co-ordinated approach to these dual aspirations.

Given the growing challenges confronting society and the increased scrutiny of contemporary businesses, the concept of creating shared value (CSV) has gained traction for its potential to enable companies to strengthen their competitive market performance whilst simultaneously facilitate advancements in society (Porter & Kramer, 2011). A number of global enterprises have claimed adoption of CSV as a principle for sustainable growth, in the belief that it provides alignment between maximising profit and addressing societal issues via business strategies. For example, Nestlé has outlined 36 commitments to CSV, allied to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and categorised into three impact areas: individuals and families; communities; and planet (Nestlé, 2021). One such illustration involves Nestlé providing training to coffee producers to help them improve their practices. This aims to generate better-quality beans, build motivation and resilience amongst workers, and increase yields and revenues, whilst causing a smaller environmental footprint (Hoek, 2020).

Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) specifies that value is co-created by numerous social and economic actors. According to Vargo and Lusch (2008), no single actor has the means to create value in isolation. Rather, actors present value propositions, from which value is created via a process of manifold resource integration (Grönroos, 2017; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). An MSE can provide a prime setting for value co-creation by aiding and facilitating resource exchange and integration between various actors, such as sponsors and MSE properties (Horne, 2007; Storbacka, 2019). Therefore, it is important to explore CSV within a sport ecosystem (Woratschek et al., 2014a) in order to help realise the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms that may generate benefits for other associated actors such as consumers, sport fans, and local communities. Woratschek et al. (2014a) put forward a Sport Value Framework (SVF) which adapts the principles of SDL to the particular features of sport networks. These authors affirm that value-in-context is co-created via resource assimilation between different actors within a sport environment but argue that current methods of capturing value creation are ineffective - and that a micro-level analysis (e.g., a dyadic configuration such as that of an MSE and sponsor) can advance knowledge of CSV within sport (Woratschek et al., 2014b).

Sport properties and sponsors have typically operated corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes (Inoue et al., 2017). Although these non-profit related actions can contribute towards addressing social issues, they have become commonplace, focusing on reputation with limited connections to businesses, making them difficult to justify (Porter & Kramer, 2011). As a result, doubts endure as to the capacity of CSR to facilitate authentic societal benefits and provide a source of competitive advantage to firms (Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). CSV represents an advancement of CSR as it allows for additional value to be created rather than redistributing existing value (Wójcik, 2016), requires active participation from other actors to co-create value (Moon et al., 2011), and represents fundamental business strategy as opposed to auxiliary reputational-building activity (Lee et al., 2014).

Moreover, sponsorship literature has tended towards focusing on the transactional, benefit-generating relationship between sport properties and sponsors (Cornwell, 2008); whereby properties benefit economically and sponsors acquire a stage for communication (Demir & Söderman, 2015). Only in more recent times has a relationships-network approach to sponsorship become more prevalent (Ryan & Fahy, 2012) but research remains fragmented across disciplines with both the management of the sponsorship process and the influence of the sport ecosystem on sponsorship in need of further investigation (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020). For instance, prior studies have not fully considered how sponsors, sponsees and other actors in the sport environment can co-create value in order to generate positive outcomes (Johnston & Spais, 2015). As Menghwar and Daood (2021, p. 9) observe, "it is not clear how value will be created and distributed among stakeholders: for which part of society does a firm's shared value initiative actually create value?"

Whilst CSV offers societal opportunities that may extend to sport properties and sponsors, limited conceptual analysis and empirical data exists (Corazza et al., 2017; Grohs et al., 2020). Also, although the SVF applies SDL to a general sport context, ways and means to capture and understand CSV and its potential advantages within the sport ecosystem remain underexplored.

1.2 Study aims and objectives

Given the need for more research focusing on: the criticism of the claimed and perceived benefits of MSEs (Misener et al., 2015); value-in-context at different levels of the sport ecosystem (Woratschek et al., 2014a); the conceptualisation of CSV (Corazza et al., 2017); and the management of the sponsorship process (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020), a holistic approach to address these research issues is needed. Therefore, this thesis investigates how business organisations can simultaneously strengthen their respective competitive position and create shared value for society via an actor engagement platform. Specifically, the study aims to explore the ways by which sponsors and MSEs can create shared value with a range of other actors to produce mutually beneficial outcomes, which may have an enduring effect within the wider ecosystem. In order to do so, perceptions of key sponsor and sport property decision-makers were sought. This research focuses on four key objectives:

- *Explore the necessity for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations*
- *Investigate the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for the creation of shared value with other actors*
- *Identify tangible examples of CSV and provide guidance for practitioners on how CSV can be achieved*
- *Examine CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective*

Through these objectives, it is envisioned that the study will build on current knowledge by extending CSV theory and proposing a conceptualisation that can be applied within the sport ecosystem. It is intended that this will contribute to the further development of productive relationships between sponsors and MSEs aiming at creating a blueprint for practitioners in their strategic decision-making.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

Given that this research focuses on the creation of shared value through the sponsorship of MSEs, following this introduction, **Chapter 2** introduces and explores the wider literature relating to three central areas of the study: firstly, how the idea of CSV offers the prospect for sponsors and

MSE hosts to co-create mutual economic and social value with other associated actors within the sport ecosystem; secondly, the development of MSEs and their significant impact and influence within society; and thirdly, the evolution of the sponsor-MSE relationship, and how such an association may be leveraged to achieve different outcomes. This chapter culminates with the proposition of an initial, literature-based conceptual framework for understanding CSV in MSEs.

In **Chapter 3**, the research methodology is detailed. This includes a rationale for the researcher's selection of semi-structured interview data collection, and thematic analysis and interpretation approaches. This is underpinned by anti-foundationalist ontological and interpretivist epistemological assumptions, and an explanation of how the qualitative research was undertaken. This chapter also details the two phases of the study: a pilot stage to preliminarily analyse and develop the proposed model introduced in the previous chapter; and the main study, which focuses on MSE sponsors and MSE properties in order to help further refine the model and gain a more profound understanding of the processes and components of CSV, and outcomes for associated actors. The study's ethical considerations, alongside aspects of reliability, validity, and positionality, are also acknowledged.

This is followed by a presentation of the pilot study results in **Chapter 4**. A thematic analysis was conducted in both the pilot and main study stages and the quotes were obtained from the interviewees to illustrate classified emergent themes. These are accompanied by the presentation of a refined conceptual model within the main study results reported in **Chapter 5**, which incorporates the findings and helps to advance the understanding of the connection between sponsors and MSE properties, and their roles in creating shared value within the sport ecosystem.

Chapter 6 interprets the results and discusses them within the context of the research objectives and related literature. This includes a summary of the evolution of the study and the results of the pilot and main study phases, and an evaluation of the development of the conceptual framework. This is followed by a discussion of the expansion of the identified themes, which illustrates the study's advancement of the literature, and an explanation of tangible examples of CSV. The chapter culminates with a summary of the key contributions of the research.

Finally, the study's conclusions are outlined in **Chapter 7**. Firstly, a summary of the research findings is provided, which is followed by a discussion of theoretical implications, managerial implications, and limitations and future research avenues. The chapter closes with a reflection on the PhD journey.

2.   Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Creating shared value (CSV) represents a growing opportunity for businesses to identify possibilities to simultaneously create economic and social value (de los Reyes et al., 2017), and as a result, contemporaneously strengthen their competitive position within the marketplace and help to facilitate sustainable advancements in society. Current literature has emphasised the need for companies to adopt an actor-to-actor (A2A) engagement approach (Vargo & Lusch, 2016) in order to strategically re-orientate in accordance with CSV principles (Porter & Kramer, 2014; Windsor, 2017; Wójcik, 2016) and better connect corporate strategy with societal impacts (Corazza et al., 2017). However, to-date, little empirical research has explored the intricacies and nuances of the CSV concept, to enable a more holistic understanding of its potential (Dembek et al., 2016). This is particularly evident within a sport context, where despite recognition of the significance of the relationship between sport properties and sponsors (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020), present understanding of the mechanisms involved in business-to-business (B2B) partnerships within the service ecosystem is limited, specifically in relation to empirical exploration of multiple actor perspectives regarding shared value creation in sponsorship (Morgan et al., 2014).

Sport experiences differ from product and service offerings found within most other business sectors in terms of the distinct emotional connection and powerful meaning consumers ascribe to them (Pritchard & Funk, 2006). As a result, a number of unique aspects prevail. These include the intangibility of the received benefits and fulfilled needs of experiencing a sport event; opportunities for socialisation; the exhilarating, unpredictable nature and lack of marketing control of the core product; a reliance on product extensions; and the notion that sport is both a business-to-consumer (B2C; e.g., in the form of spectating or participating) and a B2B (e.g., providing promotional opportunities for sponsors; Funk et al., 2008) commodity.

Accordingly, the attractiveness and visibility of Major Sport Events (MSEs) provides a 'hook' (Hills et al., 2019) which offers prime positioning opportunities for sponsor brands. MSEs are significant international, continental, and national sport events excluding top tier events such as the FIFA World Cup and Olympic Games (see detailed explanation on p. 42). There are a number of key features of MSEs, which make them unique and appealing spectacles, such as being overseen by a governing body; featuring elite athletes; recurring in a cyclical timeframe; involving sponsorship; and broadcast via TV and/or online platforms. Also, around 70% of all sponsorship revenue is channelled towards sport, spend which continued to increase steadily year upon year before the COVID-19 pandemic (IEG, 2018). At the same time, such events are acclaimed for

helping to realise a range of positive economic, social, environmental, and tourism related factors. As such, MSEs offer rich potential for benefits to be accrued by a range of associated stakeholders (Cornwell et al., 2005; Horne, 2017; Inoue & Havard, 2014), which will be discussed in more detail in this chapter.

However, MSEs have also been described as paradoxical (Emery, 2010; Müller, 2017), mirroring many of the complex and competing propensities of modern life. On one hand, they are cherished for creating widespread euphoria, but on the other, they can possess a darker side (Dowse & Fletcher, 2018) forged from connections with scandals, overestimated benefits, and underestimated financial and non-financial costs which have attracted criticism and scepticism (Misener et al., 2015; Smith, 2014).

There are also concerns that sport-related academic research is being compromised by the increasing commercialism of sport, a development that draws parallels with the growth in sport-related research itself. As Gammelsæter (2020) reflects:

> *"We have to ask ourselves what the discipline of sport management is and should be. What is our mission? In what direction(s) do we influence the social activity of sport, and is this direction sustainable and defendable? Is sport just another industry to which we educate recruits, or is it, on the contrary, a unique organised social activity that deserves a management discipline that is tailored to promote the blessings of sport for as many people as possible?"*

As societal expectations of business intensify, firms have a vital role to play in terms of re-appraising their impact on the world - building shared value-based strategies which provide both themselves and society with the best chance of thriving in the future. Can the rich potential of MSEs provide a successful stage on which to do so?

This chapter reviews literature related to three broad areas pertaining to the study's focus; firstly, how the concept of CSV offers the potential for MSE hosts and sponsors to co-create mutual economic and social value with other associated actors within the sports ecosystem; secondly, the development of MSEs and their growing importance and influence within society; and thirdly, how the MSE-sponsor relationship has evolved to leverage a number of intended and unintended positive and negative outcomes.

Section 2.2 assesses the notion of CSV and considers this within a sport ecosystem. Using the lens of service-dominant logic (SDL), it discusses the importance of A2A co-creation to sponsors and MSE hosts. **Section 2.3** explores the rise to prominence of MSEs, and puts forward an operational definition of such multi-faceted phenomena. **Section 2.4** begins to investigate how the potential platform that an MSE provides can be leveraged by sponsors to achieve different outcomes. It details the intricacies of a sport-media-business driven alliance and evaluates the

event-sponsor relationship. Finally, **Section 2.5** proposes a conceptual model based on the review of existent literature with the aim of helping to clarify the means, outcomes and beneficiaries of shared value in order to provide a starting point for academics and practitioners to better understand how to create shared value within an MSE ecosystem and help produce the basis for an enduring footprint for businesses and society.

2.2 Creating shared value

This section seeks to understand the importance of creating shared value by investigating the evolution of social expectations of business, and how such expectations influence the role played by businesses within society. This leads to an appraisal of emerging value-related literature which asserts that CSV advances the foundations laid by corporate social responsibility (CSR), enabling managers to embrace a heightened configuration between a company's core strategy and the societal issues it has the ability to effect. This is underpinned by the principle that social engagement should also be economically beneficial for a company (Wójcik, 2016) and that service exchange via business relationships is fundamental to value creation. This extends to the sport ecosystem, where *value-in-context* is co-created via resource amalgamation between different actors within a sport setting (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). However, in taking into account the principles of the Sport Value Framework (SVF), additional research is necessary to generate new insights into how sport actors such as sponsors, MSE properties, host locations, citizens, and consumers can integrate their myriad resources to create shared value. The section concludes by accentuating the central role of sponsors and MSE properties in facilitating CSV within the MSE ecosystem.

2.2.1 Understanding the importance of creating shared value

The role fulfilled by businesses in society has long been deliberated. There has never been consensus on an overarching paradigm for businesses and societies research (Jones, 1995). Instead, many partly overlapping and partly conflicting research streams draw on different influences and disciplines (Windsor, 2006). Kotler and Levy (1969) purported to broaden the concept of marketing to include the marketing of organisations, people and ideas. Analogously, social exchange theory (i.e., "the exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two persons"; Homans, 1961, p. 13) allowed for greater understanding of the social, psychological and sociological phenomena prevalent in the micro-level processes of exchange and the macro-structures created in society (Cook et al., 2013).

Corporate scandals, environmental catastrophes, and the growing attention afforded to worldwide resource issues, accentuate the criticism toward capitalism and the way businesses operate (Corazza et al., 2017; Menghwar & Daood, 2021). Moreover, globalisation has accelerated appeals for corporations to use their resources to aid in alleviating a range of social-related problems (Hillman & Keim, 2001), a phenomenon further intensified by social media, which facilitates an increasingly amplified collective public voice (Fournier & Avery, 2011). As Moon et al. (2011, p. 50) summarise, three important implications can be reached; firstly, citizens perpetually desire welfare and fulfilment; secondly, corporations have been perceived as 'bad guys' who do not share their profits; and thirdly, governmental attempts to create prosperity have not proven successful. Kolk (2016) reviewed 50 years' research of business and social issues, concluding that society's expectations of business have evolved significantly, and encompass five core areas: planet (e.g., natural resources such as uncontaminated air, soil, and water), people (e.g., health, sanitation, and education), prosperity (e.g., progressive economies), justice (e.g., secure societies and institutions), and dignity (e.g., combatting poverty and inequity).

Extant research has addressed themes such as sustainability and social entrepreneurship, albeit in a generic manner, without direct relevance for business (Kolk, 2016). Therefore, marketing has a significant part to play in enabling companies to inspire trust in their activities through resourceful and sustainable operating practices (Musteen et al., 2013). Further, Kumar and Christodoulopoulou (2014) suggest that scholars, policy makers and businesses should devote equal attention to development in economic, environmental and social spheres. Achrol and Kotler (2012) recognise the beginnings of an adjustment in marketing philosophy from pursuing growth and high value markets to more emergent, sustainable and lower value markets. Indeed, a coordinated and maintainable operational strategy based on recognised indicators can improve efficiency and enhance the ability of marketing to create value (Mish & Scammon, 2010). In this regard, business can play an instrumental role in helping to address the seventeen global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Appendix A) set by the United Nations (Rosati & Faria, 2019). However, Gordon (2012) stresses there is much to be done, calling for a revision of social marketing by re-framing well-established concepts within the business marketing literature, such as network approaches and the quality of firm relationships. Notwithstanding, research exploring social issues in business is contentious and fragmented (De George, 2005).

These deliberations are exemplified by the enduring academic dialogue related to respective shareholder and stakeholder theories (e.g., Bottenberg et al., 2017; Freeman, 2008; Hillman & Keim, 2001). Shareholder theory builds on the 'invisible hand' perspective of Smith (1759), affirming that the main responsibility of a firm is to maximise the wealth of its shareholders (Friedman, 1962), where self-interest, profit-seeking behaviour is envisaged to indirectly support social welfare, which in itself is viewed as incidental to commercial objectives (Wójcik, 2016).

The combination of economic stability (e.g., sales, profit margins, taxes, working capital and other assets; Huang & Rust, 2011) and social realisation (e.g., reputational advantages gained as a result of firm activities; Carroll & Shabana, 2010) engenders shareholder value (Collins et al., 2007). Alternatively, stakeholder theory considers shareholders as one of a number of stakeholder groups that firms must involve in their strategies (Freeman, 2010). This view considers 'externalities' (i.e., costs generated by corporate activity and shouldered by governments, societies and the environment; Ayres & Kneese, 1969) such as worker income disparity (e.g., Lépineux, 2005) citizen living conditions (e.g., How et al., 2019), and carbon emissions (e.g., Tseng & Hung, 2014) as compulsive reasons for firms to implement responsible and sustainable behaviours and practices.

This shareholder-stakeholder discord has become known as the "Friedman-Freeman debate" (Freeman, 2008, p. 162). Albeit, the latter author professes feelings of embarrassment and weariness at such a perfunctory comparison, downplaying the debate as merely a difference of opinion about how business really works (Freeman, 2008, pp. 164-165):

> *"If business is on one side and ethics is on the other, then we'll have a gap that may come to be known as "corporate social responsibility." I want to suggest that we avoid this gap by having some integrated way to think about business and ethics [...] There is no fundamental value disagreement here, just [...] what it might mean to maximise profits."*

Freeman argues that the principal responsibility of business is to create as much value for stakeholders as possible in order to do likewise for shareholders, by using and optimising trade-offs to manage shareholder-stakeholder conflicts as and when they arise (Freeman, 2008). As societal expectancies evolve, businesses are challenged to modify the value creation process (Schaltegger et al., 2019). Therefore, companies should pro-actively re-assess their impact on the world (Kolk, 2016) in order to optimise the creation of value.

2.2.2 The creation of shared value through business relationships

The concept of *value*, as expressed by Vargo et al. (2008, p. 149) "in terms of an improvement in system (i.e., actors) wellbeing", has been considered at length by academics. Whilst conceptual contestations of value should be acknowledged (e.g., criticised as elusive; Özdilek, 2016 and vaguely defined; Ballantyne et al., 2011; Grönroos & Voima, 2013), these remain outside the scope of this study, which draws from the rationalisations of Vargo and Lusch (e.g., 2004; 2008; 2016), who achieved prominence by expressing SDL based on value being 'co-created' by various social and economic actors, including the beneficiary, who is the determiner of value. For instance, fans that attend an MSE obtain different value depending on their particular motivations

and perspectives (Woratschek et al., 2014a). The term, 'actor' denotes all parties involved in the value co-creation process, with the role of each (e.g., businesses; consumers) being similar in that they "fundamentally do the same things, co-creating value through resource integration and service provision" (Vargo & Lusch, 2011, p. 182). It is also important to recognise the contribution of Grönroos (e.g., 2011; 2017) to the value creation sphere, who contests some of the nuances of Vargo & Lusch's work, such as how the value creation perspective changes depending on which vantage point (e.g., micro or macro) it is viewed from, and defines value creation as being at the point of *value-in-use,* i.e., that one is rendered 'better off' as a result of utilising a proposition of potential value.

SDL is a pre-theoretic lens which emphasises the evolution of a dominant logic for marketing from a goods-based to a services-based provision, focused on intangible, dynamic, 'operant' resources such as core competences and organisational processes, the co-creation of value, and relationships between different entities involved in the value creation process (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). The evolution of SDL can be broadly categorised into three periods: a formative period from 2004-2007, which offered an alternative to the goods-dominant logic (GDL) perspective; a refinement period from 2008-2011, which clarified and expanded the scope of SDL; and an advancement period from 2012 onwards, which denotes SDL's paradigmatic emergence (Brodie et al., 2019).

The application of capabilities for the benefit of another party (the service) is the foundation of all exchange (Vargo & Lusch, 2008), which means that economic exchange can be characterised as an exchange of service for service (Woratschek et al., 2014a). Essentially, it is not possible for individual entities to create and/or deliver value autonomously (Vargo & Lusch, 2008), therefore, actors can independently offer *value propositions* or *potential value* as inputs for possible value creation (Grönroos, 2017; Woratschek at al., 2014a) but *value-in-context* (Vargo, 2008) is co-created via resource amalgamation between different actors (Vargo & Lusch, 2016).

Correspondingly, Porter and Kramer (2011) posit that organisations need to pursue success by committing to *creating shared value* - focusing not only on engendering economic value, but also on creating value for society by attending to its needs and challenges (Wójcik, 2016). CSV approaches require long-term investments that incorporate social value propositions, driving strategic benefits by focusing on societal goals. This approach underlines that the competitiveness of businesses and the health of their surrounding communities are reciprocally dependent (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Such inter-dependent strategies can comprise*: reconceiving products and markets*, where unmet societal needs are identified and reframed as profitable opportunities for differentiation and repositioning; *redefining productivity in value creation*, where opportunities for greater efficiency, less wastage, and reinforcing mutual relationships with stakeholders should

be sought; and *enhancing local cluster development*, where supporting organisations and infrastructure should be nurtured to encourage value creation (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

The CSV concept originated via Porter & Kramer's consultancy work with Nestlé, initially generating a report outlining the company's CSV approach in Latin America, followed subsequently by biannual CSV reporting (Crane et al., 2014). A number of other major corporations (e.g., Experian, 2020; Kirin, 2021; Ricoh, 2021) have since endorsed CSV-related terminology, signalling their value-creating actions within corporate websites, annual reporting and marketing communications. For instance, the Japanese-originated corporation, Kirin, have set the goal of becoming "a global leader in CSV, creating value in the Food & Beverages and Pharmaceuticals domains." (Kirin, 2021). This is broken down into four core areas: health and wellbeing (e.g., the development and expansion of sales of no- and low-sugar, low-calorie products and products with positive health effects); community engagement (e.g., procuring a greater proportion of locally-sourced raw materials); the environment (e.g., reducing water consumption); and being a responsible alcohol producer (e.g., increasing stakeholder engagement in responsible drinking messages). The uptake of CSV amongst corporations may also be due in part to the ability of Porter and Kramer to position such activities in appealing managerial language (Crane et al., 2014). This may be considered a laudable exploit when considering that academic research can often be written in such a way that alienates practitioners (Nunan, 2020).

CSV allows companies to strengthen their competitive position by concurrently tacking issues facing society (Crane et al., 2014). Firms are most likely to create shared value when they have the *capabilities* (unique organisational competences which can yield long-term returns as long as these competences remain resistant to competitive threats and provide added value to consumers and shareholders) to do so; when there is *consistency* (perceived congruence) between the creation of shareholder value and social value, and when social value can be *cultivated* (by other entities) beyond the organisation that originally generated the value proposition (Maltz & Schein, 2012).

A shift towards a CSV mind-set requires A2A exchange (Vargo & Lusch, 2016) to help unite corporate strategy with wide-ranging societal impacts (Corazza et al., 2017). Consequently, a more strategic and cohesive framework connecting concepts and principles from a wider ecosystem is needed (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020), in order for businesses to evolve from seeking to take '*responsibility*' to creating '*value*' (Porter & Kramer, 2014). To this end, CSV is a managerial philosophy built around the missing link between CSR activities and strategies which induce value creation, enabling modern enterprises to sustain themselves in the twenty-first century (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Thus, despite fundamental differences, CSV and CSR are inherently linked (e.g., Crane et al., 2014; Kelley et al., 2019; Windsor, 2017).

CSR pertains to the economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities of businesses (Carroll, 1999), which undertake specific non-profit related actions to help solve social problems (Chen et al., 2020). Walker and Parent (2010) suggest two distinct, long-standing organisational motives for CSR: Firstly, the normative stance, which alludes that encouraging social agendas and benefitting society are the 'right' things to do; and secondly, the instrumental stance, which evokes that CSR should be used as a vehicle to support organisational success through greater perceptual and economic returns. From an organisational perspective, CSR is commonly accepted to relate to maximising positive impacts on society whilst minimising negative effects (McWilliams et al., 2006); enhancing relationships with consumers (Carroll & Shabana, 2010); developing consumer loyalty (Du et al., 2007); and boosting corporate reputation (Pérez, 2015). As noted by Hildebrand et al. (2011), CSR has joined with the concept of sustainability to help firms achieve success by considering both the natural and social environment. As a consequence, an increasing need for social impact has prompted MSEs and sponsors to operate CSR programmes (Inoue et al., 2017) and consider the importance of *event social responsibility*, which denotes consumer perceptions of an event giving something back to the community in which it takes place (Scheinbaum et al., 2019).

To address the societal challenges facing firms, new subsets of business studies have emerged, such as *strategic CSR* (McWilliams & Siegel, 2011), *corporate sustainability* (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002), and *conscious capitalism* (Sisodia, 2011). Whilst it is not the purpose of this study to document the theoretical development of terminology related to CSV and CSR, or to provide an exhaustive record of these terms, Table 2.1 summarises some of these key concepts whilst delimiting them from the notion of CSV. Porter and Kramer (2011) advanced strategic CSR with CSV, resulting in a firm capitalising on their core competitiveness rather than seeking specific reputational reward. Corporate sustainability has been championed as a means to address some of the wider needs of business stakeholders (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002) without considering the full scope of an organisation's value-creating potential; and conscious capitalism proposes a restatement of capitalism (Sisodia, 2011) as opposed to innovating and optimising a firm's business model within the current capitalist system.

Table 2.1. Distinction between CSV and selected related concepts.

Concept	Key definition	Representative studies	Distinction from CSV	Example
CSV	Identification and expansion of the total pool of value through connections between societal and economic progress.	Dembek et al. (2016) Menghwar & Daood (2021) Porter & Kramer (2011)	N/A	Experian's 'social innovation' products designed to positively impact vulnerable communities (e.g., a financial education app) reached 35 million people and generated an additional £28m in business revenue between 2013-2020 (Experian, 2019; 2020).
CSR	Obligations of business people to pursue policies, make decisions, or follow lines of action desirable in terms of societal objectives and values. Implies economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities.	Carroll (1999) Carroll & Shabana (2010) Walzel et al. (2018)	• CSV should supersede CSR in guiding the investments of companies in their communities. • CSR programmes are focused on philanthropy or reputation with a limited connection to the business. Contrastingly, CSV is integral to a company's profitability and competitive position. • CSV leverages the unique resources and expertise of the company to create economic value *and* social value. • Innovation in firms must take into consideration the notion of shared value to sustain its competitiveness.	Adidas and Coca Cola's sponsorship of FIFA, which helped support the South African Department of Education during the 2010 World Cup (Uhrich et al., 2014).
Strategic CSR	'Responsible' activities allowing a firm to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, regardless of motive.	Bhattacharyya (2010) Husted & Allen (2007) McWilliams & Siegel (2011)	• Emphasis on reputational reward, which is incompatible with CSV approach.	Fair-trade coffee, non-animal-tested cosmetics, pesticide-free produce, dolphin-free tuna, and alternative-fuel engines (McWilliams & Siegel, 2011).
Corporate sustainability	Meeting the needs of a firm's direct and indirect stakeholders (e.g., shareholders, employees, clients, pressure groups, and communities), without compromising its ability to meet future stakeholder needs.	Amini & Bienstock (2014) Dyllick & Hockerts (2002) Klettner et al. (2014)	• Not mutually exclusive to CSV as one can create shared value by being sustainable. A key difference is that CSV covers a wider scope of activity than sustainability, which in itself can represent one element of CSV. • A more reactive concept whereas CSV is a proactive means by which firms operationalise their business activities.	Proctor & Gamble launched cold-water detergents Tide Coldwater in the US and Ariel Cool Clean in Europe in 2005 after discovering that using cold water to wash clothes could reduce annual electricity consumption by 80 billion kilowatt-hours. By 2008, 21% of British households were using cold-water detergent, up from 2% in 2002. (Nidumolu et al., 2009).

Conscious capitalism	Advocates a 'superstructure' for business and its reasons for existing. Centres around four interconnected principles (purpose, stakeholder management, leadership, and culture).	O'Toole & Vogel (2011) Sisodia (2011) Wang (2013)	• Products that improve nutrition have an overlap between conscious capitalism and CSV, while cost savings through energy efficiency are at the intersection of sustainability and CSV. However, calls to limit consumption belong to conscious capitalism only. • CSV is about capitalism as it operates today, and not a new version of capitalism. CSV is about innovating a business model not the entire capitalist system.	Supermarket chain Whole Foods Market implementing a more comprehensive employee wellness programme than would be found within a typical organisation. This has helped to lower healthcare costs and improve the quality of life of employees (Sisodia, 2011).

However, CSR has become somewhat contentious (Fukukawa et al., 2007), described as an umbrella term (Walker & Parent, 2010) which is too generically defined to have significant practical utility. Whilst regarded as 'doing good', CSR-related endeavours typically centre on the outlay required to comply with societal obligations, generally causing a sacrifice of profitability (Reinhardt et al., 2008). As a result, Walker et al. (2017) question whether CSR allows corporate organisations to produce a 'win-win' scenario, which involves identifying an opportunity to create economic value (one win) and social value (two wins), as is possible with CSV (de los Reyes et al., 2017).

The optimal degree of CSR activity can be difficult to gauge, as both too weak and too concentrated investment in CSR can negatively impact firm's financial performance (Wójcik, 2016). According to Levermore (2010), many CSR projects are poorly linked to core business objectives and thus unlikely to gain credibility. Such efforts have become run-of-the-mill, focusing on reputation with unconvincing connections to businesses that makes them difficult to justify (Porter & Kramer, 2011), attending primarily to the marketing parameters of multi-national corporations (Gaffney, 2013). This has led to accusations of 'greenwashing', borne from firms' attempts to convince stakeholders that their products, services and/or activities represent genuine attempts to minimise harm to or improve society (Palazzo et al., 2016). As a consequence, it remains uncertain as to whether organisations are successfully doing the best things for society and themselves (Walker et al., 2017).

Walzel et al. (2018) identify a number of limitations within extant sport-related CSR literature, which include: a recognition that CSR research is predisposed toward organisational rather than stakeholder benefits; few efforts toward theoretical development in the context of CSR; and a need for greater focus as to how actors manage possible conflicts, such as social objectives versus business objectives. Consequently, CSR remains largely 'atheoretical' (Windsor, 2006), no longer providing organisations with discernible differentiation or a viable outlet for addressing and facilitating genuine societal change (Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). Therefore, concurrently optimising value for society and for sport organisations within a CSR paradigm is highly problematic (Kelley et al., 2019). Addressing this challenge requires a more holistic conception of CSR beyond select discretionary activities (Walzel et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, the principle of CSV is not to denigrate CSR, but to help reinvigorate and enhance the role played by businesses in society, enabling managers to understand a better alignment between core business strategy and the societal issues it can potentially impact (Visser, 2011). By moving away from examining CSR, per se, considering it as a contextual platform upon which concepts and processes from organisation theory (organisational level) and organisational behaviour (individual level) are examined (Walzel et al., 2018), CSV represents a conceptual response to deficiencies in CSR by underlining that social engagement must be economically beneficial for a company (Wójcik, 2016). The potential of CSV to link strategic, social and societal goals, and connect CSR and sustainability research and practice (Corazza et al., 2017) represents an appealing operational framework.

Several scholars agree that CSV should be regarded as a positive and distinct advancement of CSR (e.g. de los Reyes et al., 2017; Porter & Kramer, 2011; Visser, 2011). Firstly, CSV follows a principle of creating additional value whilst CSR follows a principle of restructuring existing value (Windsor, 2017; Wójcik, 2016). Thus, CSV "expands the total pool of economic and social value" (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 65), instead of solely redistributing "values already created by the firm" (Lee et al., p. 461) by seeking to maximise the value propositions which are generated, rather than merely redeploying value already created by firms. A critical strength of CSV is its explicit advancement of social goals to a strategic level (Crane et al., 2014). In this sense, Porter and Kramer (2011) criticise initiatives such as *Fairtrade* for merely paying farmers higher prices for the same crops (value redistribution)*,* arguing that a CSV approach would lead to improvements such as better growing techniques, a strengthening of associated suppliers and other institutions, and ultimately, increases in efficiency, output, and sustainability (value creation).

Linked to this, secondly, CSV activities cannot take place in isolation. For instance, the offer of charitable donation does not represent a guaranteed value proposition as there is not necessarily a requirement or incentive for co-operation with external entities (Porter & Kramer, 2011) and so would typically represent a form of CSR. However, CSV strategy enables cluster development with fellow actors in the surrounding community (Lee et al., 2014; Moon et al., 2011) in order to enhance value creation. Allied to this, CSV articulates a distinct role for state actors such as governments in constructing "regulations that enhance shared value, set goals, and stimulate innovation" (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 74).

Thirdly, CSV represents a proactive, core business strategy which forms the basis of a company's operation, whilst CSR represents a reactive, non-marketing, corporate citizenship strategy which exists primarily to enhance a company's reputation by reacting to external pressures (Lee et al., 2014). Thus, integrating corporate strategy in responding to societal problems differentiates CSV from related concepts (Menghwar & Daood, 2021). Rather than being influenced primarily by external factors, a company is also motivated internally to pursue shared value creation (Wójcik, 2016). According to Menghwar & Daood (2021), three main external factors influence a firm's CSV strategy. These are *state institutions* (i.e., formal or informal rules that actors follow for normative, cognitive, or material reasons); *competitors' approach* (i.e., policies and strategies of peer firms); and *customers' behaviour* (i.e., that consumers prefer to buy from socially responsible companies). In addition, Menghwar and Daood (2021) assert that CSV strategy is influenced by three internal factors: *emergent strategy* (i.e., companies updating and redesigning their plans as managers learn from experiences over time); *visionary leadership* (i.e., managers' leadership philosophies); and *cognitive capabilities* (i.e., employees' inner knowledge creation, such as thoughts, emotions or images).

Supporters of CSV urge businesses to implement the concept to underpin their entire outlook (e.g., de los Reyes et al., 2017; Mehera, 2017; Moon et al., 2011). For instance, Bosch-Badia et al. (2013)

contend that societal needs, as opposed to conventional economic pressures typically focused on developing and delivering products and services, define markets. This approach should therefore form the basis for innovation (Beschorner & Hajduk, 2017). Moon et al. (2011) conceive that CSV engenders 'smart corporations', which proactively search out previously neglected opportunities to increase their profits, market share, and competitiveness, which in return, improves the entire economic and social system. Aligned with these views, Menghwar and Daood (2021, p. 8) define CSV as "the strategic process through which corporations can solve a social problem which is aligned to their value chain while pursuing economic profits."

Although CSV represents an appealing managerial model built around the missing link between CSR efforts and strategies underpinning competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2011), it has not escaped criticism. Beschorner (2014) argues that the CSV is not a radical departure from standard management thinking, whilst Porter and Kramer themselves are also accused of an outdated and simplistic understanding of CSR (Beschorner & Hajduk, 2017). Epstein-Reeves (2011) claims that CSV and related terms have been conjoined with only the disagreement about their ultimate meanings binding them together. The concept has also been dismissed as part of a "nomenclature […] or some other socially conscious semantics" (Carroll, 2016, p. 7), and a managerial buzzword in need of further elaboration (Dembek et al., 2016).

Further, Crane et al. (2014) perceive a number of shortcomings in the conceptualisation of CSV, namely that it is not original; overlooks tensions between societal and economic goals; displays a naivety about the challenges of business compliance; and is based on a shallow conception of the corporation's role in society. However, Porter and Kramer (2014) address these specific criticisms directly, by reiterating that the reason CSV has gained considerable traction within academic and practitioner circles is because it aligns social progress with corporate intentions in a clear and tangible fashion (i.e., by utilising a profit motive and corporate strategy to simultaneously address societal problems).

On a practical level, Corazza et al. (2017) highlight a lack of uniformity regarding the approach of organisations claiming involvement in CSV, which indicates that further theoretical and empirical advancement is necessary to better understand how CSV can address the unrelenting challenges faced by organisations in contemporary societies (Dembek et al., 2016). From an MSE perspective, this is particularly important because hosts should demonstrate to associated actors the moral (i.e., judgements about whether the event is the 'right' thing to do; Suchman, 1995) and cognitive (i.e., a taken-for-granted right to exist or operate; Suchman, 1995) legitimacy of the event (Getz et al., 2015). There are firm links between legitimacy and organisational success (Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002) as inter-organisational relationships have been recognised as being advantageous (Dacin et al., 2007). From a sponsor perspective, firms need to demonstrate a greater degree of authenticity within their partnerships (Charlton & Cornwell, 2019), by making a meaningful contribution to society. Therefore, adopting a CSV approach presents a compelling opportunity for MSEs to help bring this to life.

To date, there has been little empirical data collected regarding CSV (Corazza et al., 2017; Dembek et al., 2016, Wójcik, 2016). For instance, in a systematic review, Dembek et al. (2016, p. 246) identified 73 papers that use CSV in a "non-trivial way" (such as within the analysis and/or to form part of an argument), of which just eight studies employed empirical investigations and do not provide clarification on its conceptualisation. Examples include Spitzeck et al., (2013) and Spitzeck and Chapman (2012), who conducted small-scale case studies to ascertain examples of commercial success for a company and the synchronised resolution of sustainability issues within its wider community, resulting in shared value creation. Subsequently, Chen et al. (2020) found that although stakeholders are unfamiliar with the CSV concept, the general population is less sceptical towards corporations which practice activities and behaviour compatible with CSV, as opposed to those engaged in intrinsic CSR as a separate activity from their core business interests. More recently, Menghwar and Daood (2021) built on the work of Dembek et al. (2016) by conducting a further systematic review which applied more specific inclusion criteria (i.e., only articles with a central focus on CSV and a clear theoretical contribution), thus identifying 44 relevant studies. These authors (2021, p. 1), argue that "the literature on CSV is riddled with ambiguities, weak theoretical foundations and contradictions." They conclude that CSV is a meaningful, incremental addition to extant literature rather than a revolutionary concept or a buzzword; depends on opportunity costs and transaction costs; and that there is no single universal way to create shared value.

The majority of CSV-related research has focused predominantly on extending the conceptual development of the concept (e.g. de los Reyes et al., 2017; Kelley et al., 2019; Moon et al, 2011; Wójcik, 2016). Moon et al. (2011) supplement Porter and Kramer's (2011) definition of CSV and propose that organisations are classified into separate categories based on the extent of their corporate and social motives and intentions. Wójcik (2016) attempts to extricate CSV from CSR by outlining a conceptual basis for CSV analysis. de los Reyes et al. (2017) posit that a win-win scenario should be known as an 'A-Case', which highlights the strengths of CSV, whist 'B-Cases' ('win-lose' or 'lose-win' scenarios) emphasise the weaknesses of CSV. They propose norm-taking and norm-making approaches in order to maximise the potential for shared value creation from such 'B-Case' scenarios. Kelley et al. (2019) explore the relationship between CSR and corporate financial performance from a shared value perspective, determining that CSV may enhance corporate reputation more than CSR.

Mehera (2017) proposes that the academic debate on the CSV concept is divided between management scholars who depict shared value creation as a welcome 'sweet spot' between shared corporate and societal values, and business ethics scholars who consider shared value creation as a complex tension between contradicting corporate and societal values. Additionally, Dembek et al. (2016, p. 235) demonstrate that a considerable proportion of scholarly works employ shared value as a common phrase "in terms of creating value of different types for various stakeholders" rather than applying the specific theoretical concept put forward by Porter and Kramer (2011). Corazza et al. (2017) argue that although CSV is not philanthropy, nor sustainability, the extent of its relationship with CSR remains unclear and

as a consequence, it remains a contested and socially-constructed concept (Dahlsrud, 2008). Further calls exist to clarify the dynamics and complexities of CSV (e.g., Kelley et al., 2019; Voltan et al., 2017), by developing better measurement criteria, a more commonly accepted conceptualisation, examples of how the concept is operationalised, and a firmer empirical grounding (Wójcik, 2016).

In order for CSV to become more influential, a deeper understanding and more comprehensive application of its principles is necessary (Dembek et al., 2016; Menghwar & Daood, 2021). This is particularly important as objectives relating to showcasing community or social responsibility appear to be losing significance to sponsor managers (IEG, 2018) at a the time where they should be afforded greater priority. Recent crises such as the global COVID-19 pandemic emphasise the need for citizen empowerment and global solidarity more than ever before (Harari, 2020).

CSV's holistic view regarding the interface of the market and society offers some promise for more integrated thinking about the intersection of business and social progress (Chen et al., 2020; Crane et al., 2014). Further empirical research is encouraged to explore how shared value is co-constructed via dialogue and interaction between a company and other actors (Høvring, 2017). This should help to further the notion that "corporations are what they do" (Beschorner & Hajduk, 2017, p. 31) and better understand how to address the challenges faced by organisations in contemporary societies (Dembek, et al., 2016). If new insights are required to determine how shared value can be created, and which outcomes drive effectiveness in multi-stakeholder collaborations, then an improved understanding of not just how value is created but also how different actors capture their share of value is needed (Menghwar & Daood, 2021; Reypens et al., 2016). Shared value can be characterised into two broad categories: the *means* to create shared value; and the resulting *outcomes and beneficiaries* of shared value (Dembek et al., 2016; Mehera, 2017). Therefore, "a way to establish what shared value means is to clarify the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of the outcomes of shared value" (Dembek et al., 2016, p. 244). In doing so, a conceptual model of CSV may represent a road map for actors within the sport ecosystem as it offers potential for MSE properties and sponsors to create an enduring social footprint.

2.2.3 The creation of shared value in the sport ecosystem

Context in value creation relates to "a set of unique actors with unique reciprocal links among them" (Chandler & Vargo, 2011, p. 40) and is important because it affords a setting for the sharing and utilisation of resources (Tsiotsou, 2016). Value creation broadens beyond direct A2A exchanges, which as a result means that an actor's individual value co-creation involvement is "a function of its simultaneous embeddedness within multiple dyads, triads, complex networks and service ecosystems" (Chandler & Vargo, 2011, p. 45). The notion of A2A engagement supersedes previously defined buyer-seller and consumer-producer roles, as an actor's "exchange-based and non-exchange-based resource contributions are facilitated by dispositions, formed partly by actor specific characteristics and partly

by the institutional and organisational arrangements prevalent in the context in which the resource contributions occur" (Storbacka, 2019, p. 8). Moreover, the resources available to actors with which to integrate their value-creation processes can differ considerably depending on the context in which this takes place (Horbel et al., 2016). Resultantly, value co-creation is also known as *value-in-context* (Chandler & Vargo, 2011).

Original SDL philosophy focused primarily on a micro, firm-consumer level, which is reflected in the majority of value co-creation research (see Grönroos, 2017). However, Vargo and Lusch (2016, p. 6) advocate "zooming out" – by shifting orientation from co-production between multiple parties (with the aim of achieving competitive advantage) to a broader co-creation of value in networks (with the aim of creating strategic benefits). For this reason, not only dyadic relationships (e.g., between sponsors and MSEs), but also the resulting collection of associated actors (e.g., media, community, consumers), represent networks, within which value can be created and shared (Reypens et al., 2016). Ritter (1999) developed a concept of a company's network competence, capturing the level of network management task performance and the network management qualifications possessed by the people handling a company's relationships. Network competence enables a firm to forge and benefit from relationships with other organisations by helping it to acquire information, exchange offerings and collaborate (Ritter & Gemünden, 2003).

The SVF acknowledges the specific and unique characteristics of sport networks and builds on the foundational premises (FPs) of SDL by proposing ten guiding FPs on value co-creation in sport management research (Woratschek et al., 2014a):

1. *Sporting activities are the core of sport management.*
   i.e., sport events can themselves no longer be understood as products or services, but as platforms for value co-creation.
2. *Service is the fundamental basis of exchange in sport.*
   i.e., sport goods (products and services) are vehicles that convey the applied knowledge and skills of the actors involved.
3. *Sport goods (products and services) are vehicles for service provision.*
   i.e., the value proposition of the event itself can be interpreted as a platform that fans, spectators and other actors can use as a means of providing their value propositions.
4. *Firms and customers can only offer value propositions.*
   i.e., value co-creation cannot be solely analysed at an intra-level that is limited to single actors.
5. *Sport firms create value propositions mainly in the configuration of a value network.*
   i.e., value is always created as the result of a collaborative process between various actors.
6. *Sport customers co-create value primarily by integrating resources from their social groups.*
   i.e., to fully grasp the foundations of SDL, research on the interplay of actors (firms, consumers, and other stakeholders) in the entire network of value creation is necessary.

7. *Value is always co-created by firms, customers and other stakeholders.*

   i.e., every actor has to integrate its own resources with the value propositions of other actors. As a result, the beneficiary always determines value individually.

8. *Co-created value is always value-in-use.*

   i.e., since value emerges from the actual use of a product or service, such as the participation in a sport event, value is commonly referred to as 'value-in-use'.

9. *Co-created value is always value-in-context.*

   i.e., acknowledges the context dependence of value creation. In the case of MSEs, value is co-created by many different actors (e.g. leagues, teams, event organisers, catering providers, security staff, volunteers, media, fans).

10. *The role of firms, customers and other stakeholders is to integrate the resources of their specific networks to co-create value.*

    i.e., value co-creation as a whole can only be captured if the entire context-specific network is analysed.

Although criticised in some quarters for an overriding focus on consumers (Jalonen et al., 2018), the SVF aligns with Vargo and Lusch's (2016) assertion that the locus of value creation in sport is no longer confined to a singular producer (i.e., sport cannot simply be 'produced' by an individual actor) but instead through resource integration via a collaborative process between various actors (Tsiotsou, 2016). Therefore, value is not created via a linear chain, but rather a network of value co-creators (Vargo & Lusch, 2011; Woratschek et al., 2014a) which facilitate the central provider and beneficiary to integrate resources with associated actors.

Accordingly, sport environments can be seen as service ecosystems; "relatively self-contained, self-adjusting systems of resource-integrating actors connected by shared institutional arrangements and mutual value creation through service exchanges" (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 11). Service ecosystems can be interpreted as subsystems of society (Horbel et al., 2016) and as Kunkel and Biscaia (2020) synopsise, sport service ecosystems are organisations within the sport industry which are connected though their interaction with the sport environment. Sports are temporally extended consumption experiences which stimulate deep attachment, meaning that the value co-creation processes they can facilitate are likely to be complex and prolonged (Erhardt et al., 2019). This is demonstrated by aspects such as pride (Decrop & Derbaix, 2010), identification (Biscaia et al., 2018) and a heightened sense of community (Kaplanidou et al., 2013). SDL within a sport domain should capture it's unique features (Funk et al., 2008) which can comprise intricate networks (e.g., MSE properties, sport teams, fans, governing bodies) and contexts (e.g., social, cultural, historical, economic) that are dynamic and interact with other actors (e.g., sponsors, media, suppliers), leading to continual changes in the nature of the system as it evolves (Tsiotsou, 2016). Therefore, by focusing on a sport ecosystem, it can be clarified in what manner such stages may boost resource interchange amongst actors (Breidbach et al., 2014).

In a sport ecosystem context, the intra-level may include aspects such as a fan's attitude towards a favoured team or sport event or a sport property's marketing strategy; the micro-level may include dyadic (e.g., between fan and event) or triadic exchanges (e.g., between fan, event, and sponsor); and the meso level may refer to the networked and complex relationships between actors such as sport fans, teams, events, athletes, other sport fans, sport media outlets, sponsors, sport governing bodies, volunteers, and other related entities (Tsiotsou, 2016; Woratschek et al., 2014a). Whist the SVF does not consider the macro level as part of the sport ecosystem, Woratschek et al (2014a, p. 19) concede that "an all-encompassing perspective of value co-creation in sports must sometimes include actors from politics, government and companies from other sectors." This represents another limitation of the framework, as a deeper understanding of a macro-perspective, gained by analysing systems of actors in the value-creation process instead of singular actors, can reveal institutions which guide or restrict value creation (Grönroos, 2017).

One such restriction may arise from the unfulfillment of experiential value (i.e., a combination of the intensive emotional and symbolic value derived from the experience of watching, supporting, and otherwise interacting with sports; Erhardt et al., 2019). As the realisation of value is closely related to personal experiences (Vargo et al., 2008), the same value proposition may lead to various concentrations of value derived by different people. Therefore, actor interactions may not enhance the wellbeing of all involved (Grönroos & Voima, 2013) and can potentially induce tensions that stem from competing interests within a collaborative process (Erhardt and Gibbs, 2014). As a consequence, value may be co-destructed (e.g., Plé & Cáceres, 2010). Value co-destruction comprises both an actual decline in value experienced, and the negative deviation from the expected enhancement of wellbeing (Stieler et al., 2014). Furthermore, value co-destruction of one value dimension (e.g., the atmosphere within a stadium) can cause another value dimension (e.g., the excitement of the athletic performance) to gain or lose importance for the individual. This means that value co-destruction should not be viewed merely as the opposite of value co-creation, but that value does not need to have been co-created before it can be destroyed, i.e., in that it does not meet a certain level of expectation (Stieler et al., 2014).

Given that research exploring the creation of shared value in the sport ecosystem is a relatively recent phenomenon, related literature remains limited (e.g., Grohs et al., 2020; Jalonen et al., 2018; Woratschek et al., 2014b; Wu et al., 2020). Further, a dearth in context-specific value co-creation studies is apparent (Horbel et al., 2016), with the majority of sport-related research in this regard taking place at a seller-buyer, sport-fan level (Jalonen et al., 2018; Storbacka et al., 2016). Emergent literature investigates sport ecosystems in a consumer setting (e.g., Tsiotsou, 2016), from the standpoint of team sports (e.g., Stieler & Germelmann, 2018), and from the outlook of branded sport communities (e.g., Popp & Woratschek, 2016). Wu et al. (2020) explore the connection between sport organisation employees' CSV perceptions, work engagement, job performance and the integration of the company's vision and Horbel et al. (2016) investigate sport events from a spectator experience point of view but MSEs remain otherwise under-explored. In addition, synthesis of the complexity of value creation at a

sport B2B level is also lacking (Jalonen et al., 2018; Reypens et al., 2016). These represent significant shortcomings in need of urgent consideration given the sizeable engagement opportunity that MSEs represent (Storbacka et al., 2016); the growing need to understand MSEs from a service-delivery perspective (Kim et al., 2020); the compelling business case put forward for social impact of sponsored events (Inoue & Havard, 2014); and a need for further brand-related research within the sport domain which addresses challenges between brand heritage and brand innovation, driven by increasing globalisation, commercialisation, digitalisation, professionalisation, and strategic management in sport (Ströbel & Germelmann, 2020).

In order to fully comprehend the basis of CSV within the sport ecosystem, further research on the interaction of actors (such as firms, consumers, and other stakeholders) in the entire network of value creation is necessary (Woratschek et al., 2014a). Taking into account the principles of the SVF and considering sport events as platforms for value co-creation should lead to new insights in sport management research and practice. Thus, a new phase of research should move beyond the focus of a limited set of elements under the control of sport firms to a broader understanding of the multiple actors and various factors both within and outside sport properties' control that impact MSE experiences in order to co-create value.

2.2.4 Importance of CSV to MSE sponsorship

Storbacka et al. (2016) argue that value co-creation is difficult to observe empirically and propose that actor engagement represents a micro-foundation of value co-creation. Actor engagement is observable and thus associated research is more designable and manageable and offers a means by which to explore value co-creation. The premise of actor engagement is that resource linkages are considered more important than resource attributes, meaning that the resource value is determined at the point of integration with other resources (Bingham & Eisenhardt, 2008). In order to optimise value creation, principal actors must concentrate on inter-actor resource linkages and encourage other actors to contribute resources (Nenonen & Storbacka, 2018).

Sport events can be viewed as "assemblages of heterogeneous actor-networks taking on a variety of interdependent roles" (Grohs et al., 2020, p. 69). Therefore, MSEs represent an ideal application of contextual value co-creation because sport event organisers can provide a value proposition only to other associated actors (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). For instance, a sport stadium operator cannot fully control everything that happens inside the stadium, but can offer a value proposition that includes aspects such as catering, seating, and staff (Stieler et al., 2014). In this sense, the event host's principal role is to set the stage for, and facilitate the experience, rather than control the experience, enacting a "support mechanism rather than control mechanism" (Erhardt et al., 2019, p. 4207). Therefore, an MSE provides an engagement 'platform' for value co-creation (Grohs et al., 2020; Woratschek et al., 2014a) between the value propositions of actors including sponsors, fans, athletes, and other associated entities.

In turn, experiences are created as a synthesis of cognitive, affective and behavioural actor responses to a stimulating event environment (Erhardt et al., 2019; Getz et al., 2015). For example, the presence of a large and boisterous crowd can add experiential value through chanting or singing (Horbel et al., 2016), or sponsor activations could help achieve emotional positioning of brands by rooting advertising messages in the experiential world of spectators at the event (Uhrich & Koenigstorfer, 2009). The actors and associated resources that contribute to the event experience are unique, meaning that co-created value is also original as it is dependent on the context within which it is created (Horbel et al., 2016).

The influence of consumers, potential consumers and non-consumers on the value creation of sport events is yet not fully understood (Woratschek et al., 2014a). Although it has been demonstrated that actors co-create value in networks at sport events, little is known about how these actor-networks interact and collaboratively co-create value (Grohs et al., 2020). Exploration of shared value creation within a sport event setting has taken place from a consumer-to-consumer (C2C) perspective. For example, Kim et al. (2019) examined how consumer value creation and destruction factors influence consumers' perceived value, leading to citizenship behaviours. Stieler et al. (2014) focused their attentions on a specific sport stadium setting and established that co-creation and co-destruction depend on the value expectation of different actors. Furthermore, Grohs et al. (2020) found in their study of a singular sport event that actor-networks deploy practices to accrue cultural value, hedonic value, social value, status value, and economic value. However, within an MSE sponsorship context, specific illustrations of CSV remain scarce. One such example is Jaguar Land Rover (JLR)'s wide-ranging alliance with the Invictus Games, which encompasses a broader scope than ROI, such as ex-service personnel recruitment; support of JLR employees competing at the event; employee pride and motivation; and innovations in mobility (Cameron, 2019).

As highlighted by Dembek et al. (2016), the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of the outcomes of shared value must be clarified in order to better understand the role of CSV within MSEs. In doing so, application of the 'three C's' of shared value creation (capabilities, consistency, and cultivation; Maltz & Schein, 2012) can be operationalised via the engagement platform created when sponsors and MSEs work together. Capabilities are developed not only according to the way in which a set of activities or processes are collectively undertaken (Brodie et al., 2017) but are also socially constructed by the individuals involved (Lury, 2009). Therefore, the perceptions of those immersed in generating capabilities, in addition to the methods themselves, should be explored (Manoli, 2020). From a sponsorship perspective, Jensen et al. (2016) allude to several benefit-yielding capabilities, such as; the level of sponsorship exclusivity, the extent of an MSE's reach; and the image held by other actors towards the sponsorship. Leveraging existing brand capabilities can lead to successful shared value creation in different contexts (Maltz & Schein, 2012). Regarding consistency, sponsors should seek to balance economics-first and mission-driven approaches, ensuring that business strategies are appropriately focused on both (Maltz & Schein, 2012), over a period of time to build trust (Tate & Bals, 2018). In this sense, Meenaghan and O'Sullivan (2013) question the alignment of current sponsorship

evaluation methods and business objectives in being suitable to assess consistency-related company accomplishments.

With regards cultivation, sport organisations may cultivate certain organisational cultures, depending on the goals of the organisation and its success in achieving them, its people, and the culture of the related sport (Slack & Parent, 2006). Cole and Martin (2018) argue that culture is one of the most important elements of success for sport organisations and pinpoint core values and leadership styles and structure as central components. From a sponsor perspective, asset cultivation represents the development and leverage of attributes that build brand equity and shareholder value (Fournier & Avery, 2011).

Moreover, strategic alliances are a materialisation of inter-organisational, co-operative strategies which involve the merging of skills and resources by cultivation partners in order to achieve one or more goals linked to the strategic objectives of the co-operating firms (Varadarajan & Cunningham, 1995). Naesens et al. (2007) affirm different types of mutually-beneficial collaboration between organisations; vertical collaboration involves shared accountabilities and resources to undertake complementary activities, such as sponsors and service supplier agencies (e.g., a marketing agency helping a sponsor to create an experiential activation for spectators at a MSE); horizontal collaboration involves parties undertaking similar activities, such as different sponsors of the same MSE (e.g., a sponsor from the financial sector assisting other sponsors in establishing payment systems to sell merchandise at an event); and lateral collaboration being a blend of the two aforementioned types. Furthermore, cultivation can be operationalised as cluster initiatives (Alberti & Belfanti, 2019), whereby all participating actors share a common cultivation mission. Following the deployment of an initial value proposition (e.g., by the sponsor organisation), a process of cultivation should facilitate the generation of shared value, leading to collaborative advantage (Alberti & Belfanti, 2019), with each collaborator able to achieve specific and tailored advantages (Reypens et al., 2016). Accordingly, the influence of the shared value initiative is expanded beyond the boundaries of the firm (Maltz & Schein, 2012).

In this regard, actors such as businesses, government agencies, non-profit organisations and citizens can achieve a collective impact by developing a shared understanding of a problem and working together to solve it (Kramer & Pfitzer, 2016). 'Sport clusters' include interconnected organisations that provide sport-related offerings and are characterised by dyadic, triadic, and networked relationships with varying degrees of formality, underpinned by any combination of competition, coordination, cooperation, collaboration, and citizenship (Gerke et al., 2015). These are important in the context of MSEs and can be used as 'middle-range' theory to help connect research on actor networks and related inclusive empirical research designs rather than focusing on isolated elements and single actors of sport industries (Gerke et al., 2020).

Assessing the roles of sponsors and MSE hosts in creating shared value also addresses calls for more research focused on the micro level of value co-creation (Woratschek et al., 2014b), "as this helps gain

a profound understanding of value co-creation processes from a particular actor's perspective" (Woratschek et al., 2014a, p. 15). These authors reason that if too many variables are analysed at once, it can be difficult to gain deep insights. Hence, it is possible to enhance and advance knowledge of sport ecosystems without necessarily addressing all of the FPs of the SVF and focusing on the entire process of value co-creation (Woratschek et al., 2014b).

Whilst concepts such as CSV and the SVF offer considerable appeal and potential to advance knowledge regarding the ability of MSEs to contribute towards and help to influence society, both currently lack empirical support (Dembek et al., 2016; Gerke et al., 2020), in addition to a lack of exploration regarding value co-creation from a sport service perspective (Kim et al., 2019). Furthermore, a number of shortfalls are apparent within existing sponsorship literature. These include a lack of research which examines the management of the sponsorship process (Cobbs et al., 2017); few studies which consider the collaboration between sport and business (Jalonen et al., 2018) and limited inquiries which consider the influence of the relevant ecosystem on the sponsoring process (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020).

Furthermore, the influence of other actors involved in the sport ecosystem on the value creation of sport events is not yet fully understood (Woratschek et al., 2014a). A greater appreciation of CSV can provide a guidance for actors associated with the MSE ecosystem, offering a collaborative engagement platform from which sponsors and MSEs can co-create an enduring social footprint with other associated actors and beneficiaries. Consequently, they must develop strategies for value co-creation and collaborative brand building with other actors in the network.

2.2.5 Summary

- Social expectations of business have evolved significantly as a result of planet, people, prosperity, justice, and dignity-related societal pressures, driven by increasing levels of globalisation, commercialisation, and digitalisation.
- Companies should pro-actively re-assess their impact on society in order to optimise the creation of value. Whilst inherently related to CSR, CSV strategies represent an advancement as they are based on an SDL-informed premise of generating 'win-win' scenarios which simultaneously create mutual economic and social value, whist CSR activities are considered to arise as a result of a compromise in profitability and thus merely re-distribute value.
- Firms are most likely to co-create shared value when they have the capabilities to do so; when there is consistency between the creation of shareholder value and social value, and when social value can be cultivated beyond the original value proposition. Further theoretical and empirical advancement of the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of CSV is necessary to better understand the concept, such as developing a more commonly accepted conceptualisation and effective measurement criteria.

- It is not possible for individual entities to create and/or deliver value autonomously. Therefore, in adopting a network approach, sponsors and hosts operating within the sport ecosystem can integrate resources with associated actors to both co-create and co-destruct value-in-context. MSEs provide an appropriate engagement platform whereby this process can be facilitated and optimised.

2.3 Major Sport Events

This section discusses the rise to prominence of MSEs before arriving at an operational definition of the concept which is applied throughout the thesis. MSEs offer a range of unique opportunities for stakeholder involvement, event-related development, and sponsor brand positioning. Clarifying these aspects is valuable because firms need to understand why they should invest in MSEs and how they can work together with event hosts to help create shared value for society. From a CSV perspective, this is particularly important because sport events represent platforms from which value can be created and shared.

2.3.1 Rise to prominence

It is firstly necessary to explore the development and evolution of large-scale sport events before arriving at a definition which helps frame the study's focus on MSEs. A number of key determining factors have influenced the exponential growth of large-scale sport events over the course of the last half century (Horne, 2007). These include developments in mass communication technologies (e.g., Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006; Knott et al., 2015; McGillivray, 2014); the growing influx of sponsorship revenue (e.g., Cornwell et al., 2005; Nadeau et al., 2013; Papadimitriou & Apostolopoulou, 2009), and increasing promotional opportunities for cities and regions (e.g., Chalip, 2004; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006; Preuss, 2007).

Furthermore, a small number of sport event properties highlight the potential benefits of large-scale sport events. For example, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) refers to "building a better world through sport" by "creating long-term benefits for people and cities" (IOC, 2017a, p. 6). According to the IOC, these advantages include tangible aspects such as *training facilities* and *upgraded leisure areas* and intangible aspects such as *new diplomatic relations* and *improved dialogue between countries*. Similarly, the Commonwealth Games Federation proclaims a framework approach based on "peace, sustainability, and prosperity" (CGF, 2019, p. 33), referring to elements which positively *impact on citizen wellbeing*, such as heightening ambitions and aspirations; *contribute to United Nations SDGs*, such as infrastructure development; and incorporate *rights, inclusion, and equality*, such as the respect, protection, and promotion of human rights. Whilst these efforts help to articulate some of the potential benefits related to sport events, such claims have faced criticism for being vague (Cashman, 2002;

Geeraert & Gauthier, 2018; Kasimati, 2003) and overestimated (Barclay, 2009; Smith, 2014; Whitson & Horne, 2006).

Extant literature illustrates a range of positive aspects derived from sport events, which can be broadly categorised into four distinct areas; *economic*, *tourism*, *social* and *sport participation* (Taks et al., 2015). Economic benefits may include infrastructural developments (Mills & Rosentraub, 2013) and urban regeneration (Gratton et al., 2005). Tourism benefits may include enticing visitor spending and increasing visitor stays (Chalip, 2014), and enhancing the knowledge and skills of citizens (Solberg & Preuss, 2007). Social benefits may include uplifts in civic pride, increased enthusiasm for the community, and a greater sense of community (Crompton, 2004), and boosts in social camaraderie, social responsibility and excitement (Inoue & Havard, 2014). Sport participation benefits may include widening developmental opportunities in host communities, such as volunteering, officiating, and organising (Taks et al., 2013), and greater levels of accessibility (Misener, 2015).

Scholars have made numerous attempts to conceptualise and define large-scale sport events, with several variations materialising (see Table 2.2). As Parent and Smith-Swan (2013, p. 3) reflect, "much has been written in terms of classifying events […] terms such as mega-event, hallmark event, major sporting event, large-scale sporting event, and special event have all been used, sometimes interchangeably." Brown and James (2004, p. 54) further lament there are "as many definitions of events as there are event texts" and Emery (2010) calls for greater clarification to determine a *major* event from a *hallmark*, *mega*, *large* or *minor* event. Essentially, there are no universal definitions or typologies of events (Taks, 2015), which could be considered a confusing and ambiguous scenario.

Table 2.2. Sport event definitions.

Author(s)	Classification(s)	Definition/Explanation	Comment
Ritchie (1984, p. 2)	Hallmark event	"Major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, which serve to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long terms. Such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention."	Focus on the different durations of the event, and the benefits to a tourism destination.
Getz, 1989 (p. 125)	Special event	"Special events are a unique form of tourism attraction, ranging in scale from mega-events such as the Olympics and World Fairs. Through community festivals, to programmes of events at parks and facilities."	Wide-ranging definition. In the same study, Getz concedes that "a universal definition is probably not practical" (1989, p. 125).
Hall (1992, p. 1)	Hallmark event; Mega event; Special event	"Hallmark events, otherwise referred to as mega or special events are major fairs, festivals, expositions, cultural and sporting events which are held on either a regular or a one-off basis."	Acknowledgement that terms are used interchangeably although 'Hallmark Event' is the term adopted by the author.
Roche (1994, p. 1-2)	Mega event	"Short-term events with long-term consequences for the cities that stage them. They are associated with the creation of infrastructure and event facilities often-carrying long-term debts and always requiring long-term use programming. […] they project a new (or renewed) and perhaps persistent and positive image and identity for the host city through national and international media, particularly TV, coverage."	Introduced the media as an important factor for consideration (see Horne, 2007 for an illustration of the full extent of the growth of its importance).
Getz (1997, p. 8)	Special event	"Habitually hosted by a city on a fixed time schedule (such as festivals or exhibitions) [which] may attempt to draw international visitors, but has become part of the rhythm and identity of that particular city."	Narrow focus on cities.
Jago & Shaw (1998, p. 29)	Major event	"A one-time major event that is generally of an international scale. [A major event is] a large-scale special event that is high in status or prestige and attracts a large crowd and wide media attention. […] They are expensive to stage, attract funds to the region, lead to demand for associated services, and leave behind legacies."	Wide-ranging definition which introduces the aspects of prestige and legacy. Limited to one-time rather than recurring events.
Hiller (2000, p. 182-183)	Mega event	"Short-tern, one-time, high profile event hosted by a city. International or large-scale participation […] mass media carries the event to the world. Rotates among cities, occurs intermittently […] and generates intense global media exposure. Ultimate control of the mega-event does not rest with the host city, which is increasingly expected to provide financial guarantees and comply with other rules and timelines set by the sponsoring body."	Focuses on one-time rather than recurring events. Expands on the media aspect introduced in earlier definitions and debates the ultimate control and ownership of the event. Also introduces the financial and regulatory obligations of the event, and implies a tension between host city and sport governing body.

Roche (2000, p. 1)	Mega event	"Large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance."	A sociological way of understanding events, subsequently adopted by other authors. Roche's (2000) definition is cited in a number of papers (e.g., Horne, 2017, p. 329) "in lieu of an agreed definition".
Roberts (2004, p. 108)	Mega event	"Discontinuous, out of the ordinary, international and simply big in composition."	Contrasts other definitions which include recurring events.
Getz (2005, p. 16-17)	Hallmark event	"Describes an event that possesses such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality, or publicity, that the event provides the host venue, community, or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time, the event and destination can become inextricably linked."	Implies a sense of heritage and historical importance.
Horne (2007, p. 92)	The Four 'Knowns' of Mega events (Known knowns; Known unknowns; Unknown unknowns; Unknown knowns)	"Academics need to reflect critically on the effects, both economic and beyond economic impacts that sports mega-events have."	Raised awareness of the existence of research-based criticism of mega events.
Bowdin et al., (2010, p. 19)	Local/Community event; Major event; Hallmark event; Mega event	"Common categories [in ascending size order]. Definitions are not exact and distinctions become blurred."	Emphasises the continuing ambiguity and explicit lack of a widely-accepted categorisation. An early attempt to categorise different types of large-scale sport events.
Taks (2013, p. 121)	Mega sport event; Non-mega sport event	Mega sport event "refers to the largest and most significant events, which by way of their size generate high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige and impact for the host community […] any other type of event that is not of this magnitude could potentially be labelled a 'non-mega' sport event."	Argues that although the majority of research is focused on global, mega sport events, there are many more, smaller non-mega sport events organised, which create durable benefits for host communities.
Black (2014, p. 14)	First Order; Second Order; Third Order Events	First Order: "truly global, large-scale […] events – specifically the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup." Second Order: "international scope but lower participation and profile, for example, the Commonwealth Games, or Cricket and Rugby World Cups." Third Order: "regional or continental events, for example, the Pan American or Asian Games, or the African Cup of Nations."	Categorisation of major sport events into different category levels, based on the view that the secondary and tertiary range of events have been underexplored. There are only two 'First Order' events (Olympic Games

			and FIFA Men's World Cup), these are akin to the definition of 'Giga Event' utilised below by Müller (2015a) (although Müller only classes the Summer Olympic Games as 'Giga') and 'Tier 1' event as utilised by Horne (2017).
Müller (2015a, p. 12)	Giga Event; Mega Event; Major Event (classified on a points-scoring basis)	"Ambulatory occasions of a fixed duration that (a) attract a large number of visitors, (b) have large mediated reach, (c) come with large costs and (d) have large impacts on the built environment and the population."	The creation of a quantifiable classification of mega events based on four subjectively pre-determined key variables (visitor attractiveness, cost, mediated reach, and transformational impact) and three sizing intervals (L, XL and XXL). Includes sports and non-sports events. Attempts to avoid a once and for all classification by stressing the ongoing importance of measurement and evaluation of the criteria. However, unlike some other authors (e.g., Ritchie, 1984) it excludes events recurring in the same location. Only applicable on a case-by-case basis and based on specific, analysed events.
Horne (2017, p. 329)	Tier 1; 2; 3 Events	"[…] the following [examples] as amongst the most significant sports mega-events: Tier 1 – Summer Olympic Games and FIFA Men's Football World Cup; Tier 2 – Winter Olympic Games and UEFA Men's EURO Football championship; Tier 3 – Commonwealth Games and Pan American Games."	A similar categorisation to that employed by Black (2014).
Müller (2017, p. 237)	Mega Event paradoxes	"1. Universalism Paradox - mega events transcend yet reinforce national differences; 2. Compliance Paradox - mega-events require strict following of rules, yet cannot do without violating rules; 3. Winner's Paradox - whoever wins the bid for a mega-event makes a net loss; 4 Participation Paradox – Mega events include people, yet exclude them all the same; 5 Uniqueness Paradox - a 'once-in-a-lifetime' phenomenon, mega-events consist mostly of repetition; 6 Passion Paradox - we love them, we love them not."	Analyses six emergent paradoxes of mega events and proposes strategies (exploration, differentiation, and reframing) which aim to embrace and capitalise on their ambiguity.

The labels, *hallmark* and *special* events emerged in early definitional efforts from tourism and leisure studies in the 1980's, recognising the creation of a unique spectator attraction (Getz, 1989; Ritchie, 1984). Indeed, it is Ritchie's (1984) explanation of a hallmark event as being either one-time or recurring, of temporary nature and of a significance that provides appeal and awareness to a host region, which set the foundation upon which other related characterisations have been built. Ritchie observed that MSEs induce economic, physical, psychological, socio-cultural, and political connotations. The term, *mega event* emerged in the early 1990's (e.g., Hall, 1992; Roche, 1994), modifying prior definitions to incorporate or eliminate other definitional labels and distinguishing one-time events from recurring events (McCartney, 2005). Event periodicity (the interval frequency between events) typically occurs in annual to four-yearly cycles, transpiring in multiple rotating sites with no particular order (e.g., the FIFA World Cup), multiple sites following a rotational order (e.g., the British Open major golf tournament), or a fixed event locus (e.g., the Wimbledon tennis championships; Dollinger et al., 2010). The increasingly important role of the media gained recognition, in terms of helping transmit an event to a much wider global audience and facilitating the creation of exhilarating spectacles (Tomlinson, 1996).

Jago and Shaw (1998) were early adopters of the *major event* label, introducing aspects such as prestige and legacy. By this stage, a major event was regarded as a "prestigious sporting occasion", placing its host on a "global stage" (Essex & Chalkey, 1998; p. 187-189). Such events facilitate planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible legacies that remain after the event itself (Preuss, 2007). Essentially, those bidding for events often emphasise an ambition to create positive longer-term outcomes (e.g., improvements in residents' quality of life; Ma & Kaplanidou, 2017; increased business opportunities; Henderson et al., 2010; and enhancement of sport culture; Mitchell & Stewart, 2015) whist seeking to avoid negative ones (e.g., destruction of local heritage; Chappelet, 2001; depletion of natural resources; Gursoy et al., 2011; and social conflicts; Tosun, 2002).

Around the turn of the twenty-first century, the focus returned to the *mega event* descriptor, with scholars emphasising elements such as providing "financial guarantees" and "intense global media exposure for different stakeholders" (Hiller, 2000, p. 182), reflecting their growth in stature and scrutiny. Roche (2000, p. 1) referred to the "dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance" of events, forging the adoption of a sociological lens subsequently borrowed and adapted by other authors (e.g., Horne 2017, p. 329) "in lieu of an agreed definition." Characteristics such as the promise of a festival of sport, providing emotional moments, and shaping personal horizons render highly significant social, political, economic and ideological consequences for host locations and therefore, an unmediated mega event would be a contraction in terms (Horne, 2007). Moreover, Getz (2005) presented the facet of heritage, implying that by this stage the mega event concept had developed to the extent that an important historical context had emerged.

Table 2.3. Sport event typology comparisons.

Author	Classification(s)	Definition/Explanation	Stated example(s)
Black (2014)	First Order Event	Global, large-scale events attracting sustained and intense levels of domestic and international attention.	• Exclusively the FIFA World Cup and Olympic Games
	Second Order Event	International scope but lower participation, prestige and profile than first order events.	• Commonwealth Games; Cricket World Cup; Rugby World Cup
	Third Order Event	Regional or continental events.	• African Cup of Nations; Asian Games; Pan American Games
Müller (2015a)	Giga Event	11 - 12 points; based on a scoring system of pre-determined criteria (XXL = 3 points; XL = 2 points; L = 1 point) of four dimensions: Visitor attractiveness (number of tickets sold); Mediated reach (value of broadcast rights); Cost (total cost); Transformation (capital investment) – achieving a minimum of 'L' on at least one dimension.	• London 2012 Summer Olympic Games
	Mega Event	7 - 10 points; as outlined above.	• Euro 2012; 2010 World Cup; 2010 Winter Olympics
	Major Event	1 - 6 points; as outlined above.	• 2010 Commonwealth Games; 2011 Pan American Games; 2011 Rugby World Cup; 2013 Super Bowl
Horne (2017)	Tier 1 Event	Utilises a combination of Black's (2014) and Müller's (2015a) categorisations to refer to three numbered 'tiers' of events, albeit with no further rationale or justification provided.	• Summer Olympic Games and FIFA Men's Football World Cup
	Tier 2 Event	As above.	• Winter Olympic Games and UEFA Men's EURO Football championship
	Tier 3 Event	As above.	• Commonwealth Games and Pan American Games.
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport / UK Sport (2018)	Major Sporting Event	Strategically important major international sporting events.	• World Championships (or 'equivalents) in Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth sports • Other World and European Championships • Top-tier/premium World Circuits or World Circuit finals • World Junior Championships • Top-tier World Leagues

Contemporary research on large-scale events has seen comparisons drawn between earlier definitions and a range of resultant categorisations and typologies proposed (Table 2.3). Black (2014) criticises the overriding academic focus on two specific, *first order* events, namely the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup, as justification for further exploration of more widespread smaller *second* and *third order* events. Second order events are deemed to be of international scope but lower participation and profile than first order events (e.g., the Commonwealth Games or Rugby World Cup) and third order events are determined as regional or continental events (e.g., the Pan American Games). This categorisation is largely replicated by Horne (2017), who maintains the *mega event* title but distinguishes between three tiers and is further supported by Müller (2015a, p. 13): "Evidence hitherto is mostly anecdotal: we know comparatively much about the Olympics, less about the Football World Cup and hardly anything about the other events."

Second and third order events may represent more realistic hosting opportunities for many locations, such as Manchester (2002), Glasgow (2014) and Birmingham (2022) - cities which have recently hosted or are due to host the Commonwealth Games (Horne, 2017). Some locations aspire to host first order events and view hosting second and third order events as important catalysts in this process, such as South Africa, which hosted the 1995 Rugby World Cup and 2003 Cricket World Cup before being awarded the 2010 FIFA World Cup (Black 2014).

Müller's (2015a) work is commendable in its attempt to add measurability and tangibility to the event literature by positing a conceptualisation assessing event size on an inductive, point-scoring basis (ranging from 1-3 points) across four identified key criteria: *visitor attractiveness* (number of tickets sold), *mediated reach* (value of broadcast rights), *cost* (total cost), and *transformational impact* (capital investment). This analysis concludes that *giga events* (scoring eleven or more points) are effectively first order events in that only the very largest can be classified accordingly. Indeed, only one event (the London 2012 Olympic Games) is classed as a giga event in the study. Mega events (seven to ten points) include examples such as Euro 2012 and the 2010 FIFA World Cup whilst major events (one to six points) include examples such as the 2010 Commonwealth Games and 2011 Pan American Games.

Whilst Müller avoids a once-and-for-all classification of specific events, recognising that large events are multi-dimensional and require multiple indicators of size, these metrics overlook other related aspects which may contribute to a large-scale sport event, such as the amplification provided by social media (Abeza et al., 2014) and other online and digital platforms (Hutchins, 2014); global viewership (Davies et al., 2010); athlete brand image transfer (Arai et al., 2014); and sponsorship income (Nadeau et al., 2013). Also, because only a small sample of specific events are considered within Müller's (2015a) study, there is a lack of generalisability to other

events. As a result, distinctions between different sized events remain blurry (Billings & Wenner, 2017), causing ambiguity. It has been reasoned that ambiguity of mega events creates a series of unavoidable paradoxes (Müller, 2017, p. 237) as outlined below:

1. *Universalism paradox: mega events transcend yet reinforce national differences.*
2. *Compliance paradox: mega events require strict following of rules, yet regularly violate rules.*
3. *Winner's paradox: whoever wins a bid to host a mega event makes a net loss.*
4. *Participation paradox: mega events include people yet exclude them all the same.*
5. *Uniqueness paradox: mega events are a 'once in a lifetime' phenomenon, but are regularly repeated.*
6. *Passion paradox: we love them, we love them not.*

Whilst the terms, 'paradox' and 'contradiction' are often used interchangeably, a paradox accommodates two opposing statements; where both can prevail, while a contradiction describes two opposing statements that cannot both be true; only one can prevail. Thus, a paradox operates on an inclusive both/and logic rather than an exclusive either/or logic (Müller, 2017). Whereas a contradiction obligates a resolution, a paradox remains unresolved, where "opposites co-exist, coalesce, and connect" (Massumi, 1995; p. 91). The implication for large-scale sport events is that paradoxes reflect many of the conflicting tendencies of modern life (Müller, 2017). In this sense, events are also known for their darker side (Dowse & Fletcher, 2018) and an emerging body of literature illustrates scepticism of the claimed and perceived benefits of events. For instance, Jakobsen et al. (2013) question their associated economic advantages; Næss (2019) highlights a lack of understanding of human rights amongst event hosts which undermines positive intentions; and Misener et al. (2015) argue that a change of mind-set is needed to better capitalise on the opportunities that staging sport events can provide.

The *universalism paradox* describes the tension between the potential of sport events to endorse virtuous principles such as anti-discrimination, multiculturalism, and mutual understanding (Baker & Rowe, 2014) and their propensity to generate fierce rivalry between competitors, often interpreted as rivalries between nations (Müller, 2017). The *compliance paradox* entails the array of rules and regulations which accompany any large sport event, such as the obligation to comply with the laws of the sports themselves (Vamplew, 2007), adhere to governing body rules and regulations, and follow government legislation (Black, 2014; Parent, 2016). Governing bodies can be international, such as The International Cricket Council (ICC); regional, such as The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA); or national, such as UK Athletics. Conversely, Müller (2017, p. 237) asserts that "nowhere do we witness such widespread flouting of rules at the same time." Widely-reported controversies such as the ongoing Russian state-sponsored

doping scandal (The Guardian, 2019); the exploitation of sport venue construction workers (BBC, 2018); and the hosting of sport events in locations with questionable human rights records (Roan, 2019) are examples which suggest that negative attitudes towards events are growing (Roberts et al., 2018). Perceived corruption towards events can also negatively impact citizens' attitudes towards event sponsorship (Kulczycki & Koenigstorfer, 2016) and incite criticism of events' impact (Holmes et al., 2015; Mao & Huang, 2016). In this vein, the term, *sport-washing* has emerged, relating to where a state utilises a sport event as a symbol of progress to gain international acclaim whilst simultaneously aiding to mask negative practices (Næss, 2020). Although sport-washing has been censured as being presumptuous and contentious (Chadwick, 2018), the concept is gaining traction amongst NGOs and media outlets. For instance, Amnesty International has condemned Saudi Arabia and Bahrain for hosting high profile sport events whilst operating unethically (Amnesty International UK, 2020). Chadwick (2018) also questions whether sport-washing should apply to countries such as the UK, with issues such as modern slavery contrasting with the generation of *soft power* (i.e., the ability of nations or political groups to influence, persuade and co-opt others through intangible power resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions; Nye, 1990) by renowned sport entities such as the Premier League.

The *winner's paradox* relates to the notion that event hosts often suffer financially from staging an event. Although events have the potential to generate considerable revenue via aspects such as ticket sales (Bohlmann & van Heerden, 2005), broadcast revenue (Getz et al., 2015), and sponsorship (Nadeau et al., 2013), benefits from large-scale event hosting are routinely overemphasised, while costs are underestimated (Müller, 2015b). Often, the monopoly position of governing bodies ensues a net wealth transfer from hosts (Müller, 2017). From a host location perspective, whether it is worth hosting major sports events is an ongoing debate. In the 1970's and 1980's, many cities were disinclined to host events due to poor financial returns and political controversies (Solberg & Ulvnes, 2017). This outlook changed following the hugely profitable 1984 Los Angeles Olympics (Horne, 2007) but in recent times the appeal of hosting certain events has again declined, with a number of potential hosts withdrawing from bidding processes (Solberg & Ulvnes, 2017). For instance, the 2004 Olympic Games attracted bids from eleven cities, yet only Los Angeles and Paris ultimately remained in contention to host the 2024 and 2028 Games (Bason & Grix, 2018). Domestically, a recent example of a poorly performing event was the 2020 BDO World Darts Championship, which was besieged by poor planning, an unsuitable venue, low attendances, a shortfall in income, diminished prize money, and negative media coverage (Haigh, 2020). Event hosts should consider both economic and strategic objectives to maximize the overall possible value of the event, although the economic impact may be short-term and uncertain, whilst strategic impacts may be difficult to quantify (Tien et al., 2011).

The *participation paradox* affirms the unique ability of sport events to compel involvement from a vast range of stakeholders, in a fashion unlike other kinds of public policy (Lamberti et al., 2011). This ranges from direct participation of elite athletes (Getz et al., 2015; Grix & Carmichael, 2012) and volunteers (Allen & Bartle, 2014) to indirect participation, such as citizens being moved to take up sports or partaking in educational programmes (Müller, 2017). There is an expectation that sport events inspire those who watch, at least to the extent of engaging in sport (Chalip et al., 2017). However, at the same time, events are also subject to *action rationality*, where the requirement for organisers to adhere to project timelines and contractual agreements and essentially get the job done can impede widening participation (Müller, 2017). As a result, sport events often fail to live up to their promises to build sport participation (Taks et al., 2017). For instance, the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games were deemed to be relevant by a large proportion of local citizens, but the event failed to change their attitudes or behaviours towards physical activity (Cleland et al., 2019). The *trickle-down effect* (i.e., performances of elite athletes at events inspire others to become active and partake in sport) has proven ineffective (Misener et al., 2015) and thus, sport events must devise new methods to encourage participation.

The *uniqueness paradox* considers the divergence between the 'once in a lifetime' nature of events, allowing hosts and participants to briefly enjoy the global spotlight (Bob & Swart, 2009) versus the routine cycle of planning and organisation for many of the actors involved (Müller, 2017). Finally, the *passion paradox* associates the conflicting positive and negative feelings that an individual may sense in experiencing an event. On one hand, people may hate them for the expense, disruption and wastage they can cause, but at the same time, love them for the widespread positive feelings and festive atmosphere they can create (Müller, 2017). According to Müller (2017), sport events challenge prevalent rational choice models of cognition and behaviour, as they permit conflicting feelings to manifest in the same person. Müller (2017) therefore argues that rather than attempting to resolve these paradoxes, academics should consider applying strategies that enable better understanding of what they help sport events to achieve. As a result, a shift in scholarly focus is required. For instance, 'reframing' involves the search for new theoretical explanations that are able to accommodate the seeming oppositions in paradoxes. One approach to this may be to consider the different ways in which actors can contribute to, and accrue outcomes from such events.

2.3.2 Arriving at an operational definition

Whilst it is not this study's purpose to attempt to define or re-define the constituents of a large-scale sport event, by adopting the term, 'major sport event', this thesis considers all types of significant international, continental, and national sport events which are not first order/giga/mega

events (Müller, 2015a) as being within scope. Firstly, MSEs offer a more realistic means of pursuing event-centred development for many locations that cannot realistically aspire to hosting a first order/giga/mega sport event (depending on which terminology is applied). Thus, second and third-order events are available to a greater number of communities (Black, 2014), offering increased opportunities for stakeholders to obtain a range of benefits (Smith, 2009). In this sense, the study's interpretation of an MSE also shares several commonalities with Taks' (2015, p. 85) rationalisation of a "non-mega sport event", in that "it is also a major event, but it is generally smaller in size, scale, scope, and reach than its mega counterpart", whilst still generating "very high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige or economic impact for [the] host community" (Getz, 2012, p. 45).

Secondly, MSEs nonetheless offer optimal positioning for sponsor brands seeking to communicate to large audiences (O'Reilly et al., 2008) due to their considerable media coverage (Farrelly et al., 1997) and associated impacts (Ribeiro et al., 2018). For example, the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games was broadcast to a global audience of over one billion viewers across 30 different broadcast agreements, and generated £73 million towards Scotland's Gross Value Added (GVA) during the year of the event (Scottish Government, 2018).

Thirdly, despite the opportunities presented (Black, 2008), smaller second and third order events have received considerably less scholarly attention than first order events, resulting in their outcomes being largely theorised or assumed (Taks, 2015). This represents an appealing research opportunity as positive outcomes of MSEs for host communities are likely to be more concentrated and apparent than for larger events, thus possessing the capacity for MSEs to be "big fish in small ponds" (Taks, 2015, p. 91) in terms of their potential to create durable benefits. Fourthly, an intentionally general categorisation of events avoids a potentially inaccurate 'once and for all approach' due to their ever-changing and evolving nature (Müller, 2015a).

Finally, "major sporting event" is the official term used by the UK Government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in partnership with UK Sport, the government agency responsible for investing in Olympic and Paralympic related-sports in the UK (DCMS & UK Sport, 2015; 2018). It is labelled distinctly from mega events, which are described as "the very largest events" (2018, p. 14). These DCMS and UK Sport first combined in 2015 to produce a *Gold Framework* which set out how both government organisations should collaborate to support the bidding for and staging of major sport events, and was subsequently revised in 2018. It should be acknowledged that the scope of this framework is limited to events not resident in the UK and which typically involve a collective bidding process on the country's behalf (DCMS & UK Sport, 2018), so although it does not take into account the full spectrum of MSEs, it remains of significant value to this study.

Table 2.4. DCMS & UK Sport major sporting event categorisations (DCMS & UK Sport, 2018).

Pinnacle Programme	Performance Programme
Aims to support the staging of the biggest and most impactful events that showcase the best of the UK's brand values. Investment into Pinnacle events will be measured against seven strategic objectives. These are the UK government's five key outcomes listed in Sporting Future – A New Strategy for an Active Nation:	*Aims to attract and host events that explicitly drive performance benefits for UK Sport supported World Class Programmes in order to enable British athletes to win medals at Olympic and Paralympic Games.*
• *Physical wellbeing* • *Mental wellbeing* • *Individual development* • *Social and community development and economic development* • *Elite sporting success* • *Broadening the reach of world-class sport across the UK*	
Types of events that are eligible to be considered:	*Types of events that are eligible to be considered:*
• *World Championships in Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth sports* • *World Championships 'equivalents' in Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth sports*	• *World Championships (that are not prioritised as part of the Pinnacle programme)* • *European Championships* • *Top-tier/premium World Circuits or World Circuit finals* • *World Junior Championships* • *Top-tier World Leagues*

The framework also divides events into two categories; the *Pinnacle Programme* and the *Performance Programme*, as summarised in Table 2.4. In line with much of the extant sport event literature already presented, there is little detail contained within the terminology and categorisations applied, which as a result are left open to the reader's interpretation. For instance, there is no explanation as to which types of events constitute those described as *World Championship equivalents* (DCMS & UK Sport, 2018, p. 15). Similarly, it could be debated as to whether *Top Tier World Leagues* comprise overseas leagues such as the UEFA Champions League or Major League Baseball (MLB). However, given the prominence and ubiquity of the *major sport event* term within industry and academia, it represents the most widely recognisable and appropriate operational definition for adoption by this study. In-line with the aforementioned characterisations of MSEs (e.g., Black, 2008, 2014; DCMS & UK Sport, 2018; Müller, 2015a; Taks, 2015), the following criteria will be incorporated:

1) Overseen by an international or national governing body (e.g., Black, 2014; Parent, 2016)

2) Featuring elite/professional athletes (e.g., Getz et al., 2015; Grix & Carmichael, 2012)

3) Occurring on a one-off or recurrent basis in annual to four-yearly cycles, at multiple rotating sites with no particular order, multiple sites following a fixed rotation, or a fixed event locus (e.g., Dollinger et al., 2010; McCartney, 2005)

4) Sponsored by companies of international and/or national profile (e.g., Cornwell et al., 2005; Nadeau et al., 2013)

5) Broadcasted via television and/or online platforms (e.g., Hutchins, 2014; Müller, 2015a)

2.3.3 Summary

- A number of factors have influenced the growth of large-scale sport events, including developments in mass communication technologies; the growing influx of sponsorship revenue; and increasing promotional opportunities for cities and regions.
- There is no commonly-accepted definition or typology of such large-scale sport events, leading to considerable ambiguity amongst academics and practitioners. This study adopts the term, *Major Sport Event* (MSE), in acknowledgement of opportunities for event-centred development, optimal positioning for sponsor brands, and increased scholarly focus; avoiding a 'once and for all approach'; and aligning with UK governmental terminology.
- MSEs can induce a variety of positive effects, such as: endorsing virtuous principles; generating considerable revenue; encouraging wide-ranging stakeholder involvement and creating the sense of a special, positive occasion; and negative effects, such as: creating financial problems for hosts; failing to live up to promises and being associated with controversies. Consequently, they are considered to be paradoxical.
- There are a number of key features of MSEs, which make them unique and appealing spectacles, such as being overseen by a governing body; featuring elite athletes; recurring in a cyclical timeframe; involving sponsorship; and broadcast via TV and/or online platforms.

2.4 Utilising the platform of MSEs

This section commences by distinguishing the commonly related terms of *impacts*, *leveraging* and *legacy* before offering a rationale as to why leveraging provides a means via which to plan and realise certain objectives related to the operationalisation of a MSE. This is an important clarification as the successful implementation of CSV relies upon focused strategies whereby actor resources are utilised effectively (Maltz & Schein, 2012). The focus of the discussion then turns to an alliance between sport, media, and business, which is essential in enabling exposure

of MSEs to greatly magnified audiences beyond the considerable number of those able to attend in person (Kunkel & Biscaia, 2020) and thus amplifying their potential as vehicles for value-creation. Finally, an investigation of the evolution of the relationship between MSEs and sponsors demonstrates the capacity of the sponsor-sponsee collaboration to create value not only for and between themselves, but with other associated actors in the sport environment.

2.4.1 Impacts, leveraging and legacy

The notion of experiencing or acquiring benefits as a result of staging significant sport events has existed since the purported reinvention of the modern Olympic Games by Pierre de Coubertin in the late nineteenth century (Leopkey & Parent, 2012). Subsequently, the corollaries of MSEs have been extensively debated, with different language used to describe and explain them. These include *impacts* (e.g., Dolles & Söderman, 2008; Malfas & Theodoraki, 2004), *leveraging* (e.g., Chalip, 2014; Smith, 2014) and *legacies* (e.g., Chappelet, 2012; Preuss, 2007).

As discussed in the previous section, MSEs are both temporal and paradoxical - thus their consequences can range from short to long-term and can be positive and/or negative (Horne, 2007; Müller, 2017). Taks et al. (2015) posit that impacts lead to outcomes, which if sustained, can become legacies. Dawson and Jöns (2018) argue similarly that event outcomes should be conceptualised along a chronological spectrum of short-term effects, medium-term impacts and long-term legacies. Events have been extolled in terms of their positive impacts, typically relating to economic (e.g., creating a 'multiplier effect' of spending which induces additional income for the local economy; Gratton et al., 2000); social (e.g., enhanced community pride and sport participation; Inoue & Havard, 2014; strengthened national identity; Heere et al., 2013); environmental (e.g., 'demonstration effects', where sustainable procedures and actions can be piloted and exhibited; Collins et al., 2009); and tourism factors (e.g., improvements in infrastructure and a better service industry; Solberg & Preuss, 2007; enhanced destination image; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007).

However, Taks et al. (2015) question the value of assessing impacts, asserting that they may result from strategic planning, but as this process is often negligible, impacts are typically haphazard and unplanned, tending to arise via luck rather than judgement. In addition, impact measurement has been criticised for being heavily politically-motivated and therefore lacking in trustworthiness, as well as failing to consider specific, intentional methods which can be employed with the aim of achieving success (Chalip, 2014). Furthermore, the credibility of the legacy concept has been subject to contention. Girginov and Hills (2008) claim it was developed by event holders to further a pursuit of global recognition, self-aggrandisement, and power, whilst

Chalip (2014) argues the term has been manufactured by the IOC as a counterbalance to event criticism. Consequently, the concept of legacy has become abused, maligned, misquoted and misunderstood (Grix et al., 2017). Misener (2015) also criticises the legacy literature for being excessively positive and lacking a strategic understanding of how events can be used for more inclusive, positive social outcomes. Moreover, MSEs have typically not been managed optimally (Jago et al., 2010), but in an ad hoc, opportunistic manner (Smith, 2014), leading to a rise in negative attitudes held towards them (Roberts et al., 2018) as expectations grow regarding the impact of MSEs and their obligations towards society (Crompton, 2014a; Næss, 2019). For instance, an MSE attendee generates an 'ecological footprint' (an aggregated indicator of the global ecological impact of resource consumption) seven times greater than that of a person going about their normal daily activity (Collins et al., 2009). Hence, there is a growing call for events to make a more meaningful societal contribution (e.g., Hall, 2012; Müller, 2015b; Næss, 2019; Taks et al., 2017; Warren, 2020).

Given the misgivings relating to the value of impacts and the confusion surrounding the term legacy and doubts over its utility, an emergent body of work concentrates on the staging of events as vehicles through which to plan certain objectives (e.g., Chalip, 2006; 2014; Grix & Carmichael, 2012; Smith, 2014; Taks et al., 2013). In effect, events become a lever by which to develop strategies and tactics that are not directly required to stage the event to enhance event-related outcomes (Misener, 2015), a phenomenon which has been termed *leveraging*; "those activities which need to be undertaken around the event itself which seek to maximise the long-term benefit from events" (Chalip, 2004, p. 228). Whereas estimating impacts per se provides merely a description of outcomes with little basis for evaluating why these outcomes occurred, estimating impacts with reference to event leverage can enable an understanding of which strategies and tactics are effective or ineffective under given conditions (Chalip, 2014). Leveraging emphasises proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities and resources via creative approaches to resource allocation and value creation by event hosts (Crowther, 2011; Misener, 2015) and is part of a wider integration of events and events strategy (Smith, 2014). Therefore, the potential for leverage is greatest with respect to MSEs as these are the most significant contemporary events (Smith, 2014), and as such, represent opportunities for value-creating leveraging interventions (Reypens et al., 2016).

Leveraging contrasts with legacy as MSE hosts are able to proactively pre-plan the effects of specific identified strategies 'ex ante' - rather than being 'ex post'; impacts-driven and outcomes orientated (O'Brien & Chalip, 2007). And so, this approach provides a suitable lens through which to appraise event-related outcomes, as it is imperative that any potential benefits arising from events are afforded careful consideration as part of a thorough strategic planning process (Masterman, 2014).

The perspective of the event owner has scarcely been taken within academic literature (Getz et al., 2015; Henseler et al., 2011) but there is growing traction for both event owners and governments to be held accountable for the impacts of hosting and the degree to which realised outcomes correspond with the promises made (Cornelissen 2012; Dowse 2014). Without dedicated leverage initiatives, it is rare that wider stakeholder groups will experience any advantages (Smith, 2014). Therefore, it should not be assumed that any social initiative automatically leads to social change. For this responsible approach to develop and gain traction, more clarity is required from event hosts about the goals themselves, especially because promoted, perceived and actual goals are not necessarily the same thing (Dowse & Fletcher, 2018). Event outcomes, such as societal benefits, depend not only on an event occurring, but rather the way it is leveraged and other related resources are utilised (O'Brien & Chalip, 2007). Accordingly, there is a need to ensure that leverage initiatives are not merely used as public relations tools (Smith, 2014) but as a means to create value for different actors involved in a MSE network (Ryan & Fahy, 2012).

The conceptual origins of event leverage can be linked to the field of sponsorship, particularly sponsorship activation, whereby positive action needs to be taken in association with event staging to achieve desired effects (Cornwell, 2008). In an era where corporate responsibility is more of a priority, companies like to be associated with social initiatives and so related leverage projects are often paired with relevant sponsors (Smith, 2014) in an attempt to create value for multiple actors (Chandler & Vargo, 2011). Ultimately, effective leveraging depends on partnerships between community stakeholders and event managers (Ziakas, 2010). The next section discusses the importance of the alliance between sport, business, and the media, leading to a discussion about the relationship between sport event properties and sponsors, and the increasing importance of sponsorship and sponsorship activation in helping MSEs to leverage event-themed strategies.

2.4.2 The sport-media-business alliance

Business entities and sport events share a history which can be traced back to Roman times (Enos, 1986) but specific commercial involvement in MSEs gained major traction in the form of a sport-media-business alliance formed towards the end of the twentieth century. This has transformed the MSE landscape (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006) through a commodification process whereby a social phenomenon becomes saleable when it had not previously been perceived in such regard (Slater & Tonkiss, 2001). Accordingly, MSEs were commodified via a multilateral model of merchandising, broadcasting and sponsorship (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006), creating the opportunity for huge audiences and substantial additional sources of income (Whannel, 2009).

For example, ahead of the COVID-19 pandemic, global annual online ticket sales for large-scale sport events were estimated to reach over £22 billion in 2020, representing 10.6% year-on-year growth (Statista, 2019a), with the UK contributing around £1.5 billion (Mintel, 2019). It has also been estimated that MSEs attracted a combined 54.4 million attendees globally between 2013 and 2016 (Sportcal, 2017). Table 2.5 illustrates the live attendances at a range of recent MSEs.

Table 2.5. MSE attendance 2013-2019 (adapted from Mintel, 2019; 2020; Sportcal, 2017).

Event	Host location	Total attendance (million)
2014 Tour de France Grand Depart	England (Multi-site)	4.80
2015 Rugby World Cup	England (Multi-site)	2.48
2016 UEFA European Championships	France (Multi-site)	2.48
2016 Paralympic Games	Brazil (Rio de Janeiro)	2.15
2016 Copa América	USA (Multi-site)	1.48
2015 FIFA Women's World Cup	Canada (Multi-site)	1.35
2014 Commonwealth Games	Scotland (Glasgow)	1.32
2015 CONCACAF Gold Cup	USA/Canada (Multi-site)	1.09
2015 Pan American Games	Canada (Toronto)	1.05
2015 ICC Cricket World Cup	Australia/New Zealand (Multi-site)	1.02
2014 Winter Olympic Games	Russia (Sochi)	1.00
2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games	South Korea (Pyeongchang)	1.00
2013 World Baseball Classic	Japan/Puerto-Rico/Taiwan/USA (Multi-site)	0.89
2013 Summer Universiade	Russia (Kazan)	0.80
2013 Africa Cup of Nations	South Africa (Multi-site)	0.75
2015 IIHF World Championships	Czech Republic (Multi-site)	0.74
2016 ICC World T20	India (Multi-site)	0.70
2015 IAAF World Athletics Championships	China (Beijing)	0.68
2014 FIBA Men's Basketball World Cup	Spain (Multi-site)	0.68
2017 IAAF World Athletics Championships	England (London)	0.66
2019 ICC Cricket World Cup	England (Multi-site)	0.65
2014 Ryder Cup	Scotland (Perthshire)	0.21

Funk et al. (2008, p. 9) outline a number of "unique aspects" of sport events, such as the compelling unpredictability of the competitive sporting element and the considerable opportunity for benefits to be realised by different actors, such as hosts, sponsors, consumers, and citizens. According to Carrillat et al. (2015), there is something powerful about 'being there', which contributes to the efficacy of a sport event by heightening the intensity of arousal for spectators (Bal et al., 2010), rendering events collective consumer experiences (Scheinbaum et al., 2019). Further, Horbel et al. (2016) provide a summary of prime sport spectatorship motives, which comprise: fun and entertainment; atmosphere; physical attractiveness and aesthetics; eustress and

tension; freedom to move around; social contact and interaction; intercultural contact; and identifications with teams and sport events.

The reach of MSEs extends beyond generating large crowds and ticket sales. Their extensive interest and popularity can be traced back to the proliferation of television into Western households (Parente, 1977; Whitson & MacIntosh, 1996), allowing MSEs to reach widespread audiences of previously unattainable sizes. Since the 1970's, sport event TV rights have increased exponentially; for instance, rights for the 1976 Montreal Olympics sold for less than $35 million but had increased eight-fold by the time of the 1984 Los Angeles Games and reached $2.6 billion at London in 2012 (Müller, 2015a; Roche, 2000). The 2016 Rio Olympics were broadcast in 220 countries, reaching a global viewership of 3.2 billion people (IOC, 2016).

Whilst TV has been instrumental in facilitating the globalisation of sport event consumption, recent developments in technology are rapidly changing the consumption of sport (Hutchins et al. 2019). Miniaturised electrical components, growing processor power, high resolution screens, lengthened battery life, and more reliable and widespread network connectivity have transformed the possibilities for mobile engagement with sport (Hutchins, 2014). In this respect, Hutchins (2014) also argues that mobile technologies have considerably impacted the 'sport content economy', significantly altering the commercial and legal arrangements between sport organisations, media companies and fans.

Mobile and streaming capabilities have rendered sport content as being 'on the move' available to consumers anytime, anywhere, and via any device; Martín-Guart et al., 2017). Tablets and smartphones have been labelled as *second screen* (López González et al.,. 2019) or *third screen* devices (Hutchins, 2014) which represent increasingly convenient and prevalent viewing and content-accessing options for users compared with more traditional TV or laptop/desktop computer alternatives. For the purposes of this discussion, the second screen device (SSD) acronym will be applied. A greater proportion of sport broadcasting is now being delivered to audiences via SSDs, creating a multimedia ecosystem of digital communication (Martín-Guart et al., 2017). Many new possibilities for events to connect with stakeholders now exist, such as the ability to simultaneously watch live action, check statistics, and interact with other fans (Vooris & Smith, 2015). These connections most often occur via media platforms including social networking sites, blogs, online communities and discussion forums (Filo et al., 2015). Filo et al. (2015) further illustrate that sport social media research aligns with SDL (i.e., all markets are centred on the exchange of services to benefit the parties involved), demonstrating the role of digital platforms in cultivating relationships between organisations, individuals and other actors involved in a sport ecosystem to create mutual value (Kunkel & Biscaia, 2020). For instance, the terms *prosumer* and *user-generated content* relate to the phenomenon that nowadays, social

media users are not only consumers, but can also be prime content contributors (Abeza et al., 2015).

The consumption and mediatisation of sport is likely to continue to evolve (Lindholm, 2019). One view is that event sponsors should develop different strategies to target physical and virtual attendees (Carrillat et al., 2015). It is expected that TV/first screen devices will remain paramount for the foreseeable future due to being better suited to broadcasting elite sport (Boyle, 2014), and anchoring other SSD viewing methods (Hutchins & Sanderson, 2017), whilst also offering greater reliability (Gantz & Lewis, 2014). Indeed, Mintel (2019) reports that the experience of live sport is still dominated by TV, with all sports watched via this means by more than 80% of fans.

However, a large proportion of MSEs are currently broadcast via subscription services and "locked behind paywalls" (Mintel, 2019). Whilst this has reduced visibility to a potential new target audience, advancements in SSD capabilities are driving a change in media consumption habits and disrupting the sports broadcast industry (Hutchins et al., 2019). For example, ahead of the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, the IOC's Facebook page grew by more than 2 million fans and 24 million people engaged with the event via this platform (IOC, 2014). Similarly, the official 2014 FIFA World Cup app was downloaded 24 billion times (FIFA, 2014). The barriers to entry for attaining and broadcasting live sports rights have consequently been lowered, with some of the world's largest online corporations making acquisitions. For instance, Amazon Prime show American Football (NFL) in the USA, and ATP tennis and Premier League football in the UK. Similarly, Facebook streamed a number of football matches from the Spanish La Liga and Italian Serie A free to its users in the UK (Malyon, 2018). Hutchins et al. (2019) further assert that globally-dominant corporations like Amazon have the potential to disrupt the market much further, possessing the ability to use sports broadcasting as a loss leading tool in order to increase market share for its wider product and service offerings. This has significant implications for the potential impact of MSEs, which are currently able to command *vortextuality*, whereby the event typically enjoys a large proportion of overall media focus for its duration, counteracting media fragmentation (Whannel, 2008). In the case of sponsors, this is particularly appealing as it provides considerable opportunity to increase exposure and maximise leverage opportunities (Cornwell et al., 2005).

2.4.3 Relationship between MSEs and sponsors

The inauguration of sponsorship can be traced back to the USA in 1852, where the Boston, Concord and Montreal Railroad, eager to attract holidaymakers, promoted its transportation of both crews to the inaugural Harvard-Yale Regatta (Smith, 2005). Some years later, at the first

modern Olympic Games in Athens, in 1896, a number of companies, such as the travel agent, Thomas Cook, contributed revenue through advertising for the first time (IOC, 2017b; Li et al., 2012). Around the same time, former baseball pitcher Albert G. Spalding gained notoriety as the first corporate CEO to recognise the advantage of establishing a business relationship to exploit the commercial potential of sport events (Crompton, 2014b). However, despite these early beginnings, sponsorship investments remained relatively small-scale and infrequent until the aforementioned materialisation of a sports-media-business alliance in the latter part of the twentieth century (Crompton, 2014b; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). The notion of sport properties selling exclusive marketing rights related-packages to a limited number of sponsoring partners originated in the UK in the 1970s with Patrick Nally (later identified within the Research Methodology chapter as a participant in this study) and his associate, Peter West, establishing the successful media agency, WestNally (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). From these origins, sponsorship has become widely acknowledged as an established mainstream marketing activity (Cornwell, 2008).

Several media outlets reported a steady rise in total global sponsorship spending pre the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., IEG, 2018; Statista, 2019b, Two Circles, 2019; WARC, 2020a). IEG (2018) reported a 4.5% increase to £50.8bn in 2018, with sport estimated to account for around 70% (£35.5bn) of this spend. From an MSE perspective, the 2017 US Open Tennis Championships was estimated to have generated £50m in sponsorship revenue with the 2017 Wimbledon Tennis Championships a little further behind on £37m (Minassian, 2018). The 2019 Rugby World Cup in Japan was assessed to have earned around £39m (WARC, 2020a). Whilst it was originally anticipated that sponsorship spend would rise by 5% year-on-year in 2020, a decrease of 37% was subsequently estimated as a result of COVID-19 (Two Circles, 2020; WARC, 2020b). In the UK, the share of sponsorship spend by sector is split between financial services (19%), automotive (14%), airline (13%), gambling (12%), alcohol (9%), soft drinks (7%) and others (26%) (Two Circles, 2019).

Within the literature, early articulations of sponsorship, such as that of Meenaghan (1991, p. 36) refer to "an investment, in cash or in kind, in an activity, person or event (sponsee), in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that activity, person or event by the investor (sponsor)." This definition has been regularly re-stated or adapted since (e.g., Cornwell, 2014; Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Madrigal, 2001; Quester & Thompson, 2001; Weeks et al., 2008) to affirm a form of recognition or association that supports the marketing goals of the investor (Cornwell, 2014). Sponsorship has been considered a B2B relationship between a sponsor and a sport entity for mutual benefits (Farrelly et al., 2005). From a sponsor perspective, this may relate to aspects such as: increased brand awareness; brand image transfer;

providing a platform to showcase the company's products or services, product trial and sales opportunities; hospitality; and strengthening employee morale. From a sponsee perspective, this may relate to aspects such as media exposure; financial investment; and 'in-kind' benefits such as product or personnel support (Cornwell et al., 2005; Crompton, 2014b),

Cornwell and Maignan (1998) and Walliser (2003) developed comprehensive reviews of sponsorship-related research focusing on its theoretical development. They began to delineate the field into distinct themes, such as the characteristics of sponsorship, managerial issues, measurement elements, and its strategic deployment. The sponsorship concept has evolved through five interdependent and overlapping philosophical approaches: philanthropic, market centred, consumer centred, strategic resource oriented, and the relationships/networks approach (Ryan & Fahy, 2012). The philanthropic approach relates to the early roots of sponsorship, where the term was considered synonymous with philanthropy (Meenaghan, 1993). In this nascent phase, broad objectives relating to enhancing corporate image (Javalgi et al., 1994) and generating goodwill (McDonald, 1991) were pursued. In spite of this, sponsorship's philanthropic propensities attracted opposition for lacking in mutual benefits for both parties (Ryan & Fahy, 2012) and for being too ad-hoc, lacking in objective selection policies, and evaluation of its effectiveness (Javalgi et al., 1994).

The market centred approach entails an increasingly commercial focus, recognising the potential marketing and brand-related benefits of sponsorship (Ryan & Fahy, 2012) and acknowledging the underlying premise of exchange theory (e.g., Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; McCarville & Copeland, 1994). That is, that two or more parties exchange resources and the resources offered by each party must be equally valued by the reciprocating parties (Crompton, 2014b). At this point, sponsorship was positioned as an alternative communications tool to more established mediums such as advertising (Ryan & Fahy, 2012). Central to the market centred approach is an acknowledgement of the connection between an event and sponsor's target audiences, effected by an increased emphasis on formalisation, objectivity, and measurement (Walliser, 2003) and quantified by measures such as brand awareness, brand image, and return on investment (ROI) (Ryan & Fahy, 2012).

In addition to exchange theory, the sponsorship concept is grounded on the premise of associative networks (e.g., Anderson & Bower, 1973), whereby units of information such as brands, sport organisations, names, and ideas are stored in memory via linked nodes of information (Crompton, 2014b). In triggering a node as a result of being exposed to stimuli, retrieval of stored information is supported (Cornwell, 2008). For instance, Keller (1993) demonstrates that sponsorship activities generate brand knowledge, which is linked to the brand-related node in memory in an

associative network. A large number of linkages leads to a higher degree of associative strength (Cornwell, 2008), otherwise known as schemas (Crompton, 2014b). Brand awareness is achieved by exposing the brand to as many potential consumers as possible (Aaker, 1991) and according to Keller (1993, p. 2); "relates to brand recall and recognition performance by consumers. Brand image refers to the set of associations linked to the brand that consumers hold in memory." These associations may be tangible, such as product experience or packaging, or intangible, such as perceptions of prestige or excitement (Crompton, 2014b). When an association between an event and a sponsoring brand is communicated, the level of awareness helps in generating schemas and can contribute to explaining the attitude held towards the sponsor brand and the propensity to purchase its products (Walliser, 2003).

ROI can be determined by calculating an efficiency ratio of the investment undertaken (Jensen & Cobbs, 2014), such as an increase in sales or the value of media coverage gained. However, whilst such calculations help add tangibility to sponsorship evaluation, overreliance on this metric can be misleading as assumptions and methods employed at different stages of data analysis and monetisation can produce highly variable results. This in turn can distort judgements surrounding the extent of sponsorship effectiveness (Meenaghan & O'Sullivan, 2013). Furthermore, awareness and image transfer are too complex to be accounted for by such a measurement technique, and in isolation ROI could be considered too indirect to be worthwhile in assessing the holistic effects of sponsorship (Ryan & Fahy, 2012). This also underlines a particular limitation of the approach in understanding the perspective of the target audience, typically the consumer (Cornwell, 2008). Accordingly, further marketing efforts were demanded to leverage sponsorship impact (Quester & Thompson, 2001; Smith, 2014), commonly referred to as *sponsorship linked marketing*, denoting the "orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship" (Cornwell, 1995, p. 15).

As sponsor investment continued to increase, the consumer centred approach emerged in light of a desire for greater understanding of consumer behaviour attributes related to sponsorship (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Walliser, 2003). This is exemplified by the attention afforded to consumer response to sponsorship from interconnected cognitive, affective, and behavioural standpoints (Cornwell et al., 2005). Cognitive outcomes relate to how people process information (Close et al., 2015) and comprise awareness and image (Cornwell et al., 2005). Central to this advancement was Gwinner's (1997) work on image creation and image transfer. By applying meaning transfer theory, a phenomenon which emanates from the 'culturally constituted world', and is transferred to the consumer via the tangibility of consumer goods (McCracken, 1986; 1989), Gwinner posited that events assume the voice of particular brand values and, as such, symbolise the values from which the consumer then derives meaning. This creates 'spillover

effects' (whereby the impact of one brand's activity can positively or negatively influence consumer perceptions of related offerings; Balachander & Ghose, 2003) which can both dilute and enrich brand image (Cobbs et al., 2016). Further, positive image transfer from event to sponsor can be heightened by the presence of a close fit or congruence (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Event-sponsor fit is the degree to which an attendee observes an event and its sponsoring brand have a similar image, values, and plausible connection (Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2004), enhancing consumer perception of a brand (Madrigal, 2000). Balance theory has also been used to explain affective responses (e.g., Heider, 1958), where people react positively to consistency and adversely to inconsistency, and therefore avoid perceived inconsistency in behaviour and attitude. In sponsorship, the individual will seek a balanced relationship between the event and the sponsor, and in doing so may re-appraise perceptions in a positive manner (Cornwell et al., 2005).

Affective outcomes encompass increases of liking, positive attitudes, preferences, and favourable emotions (Kim et al., 2015). Sponsorship can influence positive affective consequences in many ways, such as through the function of gratitude, when benefits are perceived as intentional and valuable to the sponsored property (Kim et al., 2010), or when consumers display high levels of identification and involvement in the sponsored property (Madrigal, 2001). In turn, behavioural outcomes include sponsor-related information-seeking, positive word of mouth (WOM), purchase intent and the act of purchase itself (Cornwell et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2015) and are chiefly mediated through cognitive and affective outcomes (Kim et al., 2015). Empirical studies have shown considerable support for sponsorship effects on intentions for favourable behaviours (e.g., Dean, 1999; Pham & Johar, 2001) and purchase (e.g., Close et al., 2015; Lacey et al., 2010). Overall, the consumer centred approach is principally concerned with attaining a greater understanding of consumers, requiring a shift from distinguishing appropriate target audiences towards developing strong emotional links between consumers and brands (Ryan & Fahy, 2012).

The strategic resource approach represents a shift towards sponsorship as a source of competitive advantage, underpinned by the resource-based view (RBV), where a firm's unique capabilities can yield long-term returns for both shareholders and society as long as these competences remain resistant to competitive threats and continue to provide added value (Barney, 2001). A firm's marketing expertise influences its operational ability, which in turn facilitates the relationship between marketing capability and financial performance (Yu et al., 2014). Sponsor capabilities in the context of MSEs refer to the unique, firm-specific resources embedded within the sponsor organisation, whose purpose is to improve the productivity of the other resources possessed by the firm and the sport property (Makadok, 2001). These could comprise elements such as experienced sponsorship managers, market orientation proficiencies, and organisational routines,

all of which translate to sources of competitive advantage (Fahy et al., 2004). The strategic resource approach to sponsorship underlines a shift from a donor-recipient, transactional, configuration to a more equitable relationship-based affiliation between sponsor and sponsee (Ryan & Fahy, 2012). This approach is centred on dyadic associations and interactive behaviour through which a relationship is established, developed, maintained and terminated (Olkkonen et al., 2000).

A more strategic approach to sponsorship has also been driven by the growth in status and value of sport properties as brands in their own right (Parent & Séguin, 2008; Smith, 2006) and a realisation that previous sponsorship descriptors such as 'exploitable' inferred an imbalance of power between parties. This disparity originates from the reality that sponsees are typically dependent on sponsors for financial viability (Cornwell, 2014) and equates to a primitive, under-developed perception of sponsorship (Ryan & Fahy, 2012). Research on sponsoring has thus been decried for principally considering the perspective of the sponsor and underrepresenting the sponsored property (Dickenson & Souchon, 2020; Toscani & Prendergast, 2018). Sponsorship-linked marketing offers the potential for specific brand equity-related benefits to be accrued (Aaker, 1996), such as the development of brand personality, differentiation from competitors, and brand loyalty – all of which can contribute to driving increased financial value for a brand (Cornwell et al., 2001). This necessitates the utilisation of leveraging and activation capabilities such as operationalising sponsorship objectives, developing knowledge of the respective sport property, organising institutional resources, and brand building (Ryan & Fahy, 2012). Indeed, Cornwell and Maignan (1998) purport that leveraging and activation are essential for sponsorship to be a meaningful investment by firms.

Leveraging encompasses all marketing communications collateral to the sponsorship investment, whereas activation relates to those communications that encourage interaction with the sponsor (Weeks et al., 2008). Although the two terms have been used interchangeably (Cornwell et al., 2005), "leverage is the total amount of spending beyond the sponsorship contract and activation is the subset of this that is often on-site or online and interactive" (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020, p. 10). Weeks et al., 2008 (p. 639) contend that activational communications "promote the engagement, involvement, or participation of the sponsorship audience with the sponsor". Therefore, from an audience engagement perspective, activational leveraging is preferable to nonactivational leveraging (i.e., where communications are processed more passively). As Papadimitriou and Apostolopoulou (2009, p. 95) identify, activation involves extra investment by the sponsor on top of the basic fee "to create programmes that will take advantage of the rights gained".

On average, sponsors spend $2.20 on activating sponsorships for every $1 spent on rights fees with 85% of sponsors indicating that their activation budget will remain constant or increase in future (IEG, 2018). Whilst an optimal activation spending ratio is dependent on the unique circumstances of each sponsorship, a range of 1:1 – 7:1 is a reasonable guide for sponsorship decision-makers (O'Reilly & Horning, 2013). However, spend does not directly equate to success - there is a need not only to activate, but to do so strategically (Cornwell, 2019; O'Reilly & Horning, 2013). There are several ways in which leveraging can be strategically maximised, such as through telling a brand story, defending against ambush marketing attempts, and combining message variation with repetition (Cornwell, 2014). In this regard, IEG research (2018) indicates that social media is the most prevalent form of sponsorship leverage, used by 98% of the surveyed sample. For instance, Gillooly et al. (2017a) found that sponsors use Twitter to communicate with stakeholders in four main ways; informing (68% of tweets), interacting (17%), rewarding (13%), and entertaining (2%), citing further opportunities for sponsors to create content which is both entertaining as well as being informative, rewarding, or interactive in order to drive engagement. Furthermore, Kim and Hull (2017) posit that fans display more engagement with Instagram posts related to the sporting objectives of a sport property compared with business and social objectives. According to the IEG (2018), public relations and hospitality (both 79%) are jointly the next most utilised form of sponsorship leverage, followed by on-site experiential activities (77%), internal communications (75%), digital/mobile promotions (62%), traditional advertising (56%), B2B activity (42%), sales promotion offers (33%), and direct marketing (24%). Hence, there exists an opportunity for marketers to harness a combination of leveraging tools to engage audiences in building greater social value into MSEs (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020).

The relationships/network approach considers the sponsor-sponsee relationship as being fundamental to sustained success for both parties (Ryan & Fahy, 2012). A symbiotic relationship is a strategic, shared association of two or more business activities which are mutually dependent (Erdogan & Kitchen, 1998). It has been posited that a sponsor and sport property should share this kind of equally beneficial, intrinsic relationship (Fahy et al., 2004; Farrelly & Quester, 2005; Meenaghan & Shipley, 1999), such as by co-developing jointly beneficial sponsorship objectives (Amis et al., 1997). A positive symbiosis is important because it is held that these two parties can be effectively and synergistically augmented over time (Babiak, 2007; Stipp & Schiavone, 1996). Sponsors should therefore develop a symbiotic relationship with a sport property to legitimise their role (Biscaia et al., 2013; Farrelly et al., 2005), otherwise a sustainable partnership is unlikely to occur (Babiak, 2007). Consistent with this view, Babiak and Thibault (2009) contend there are obstacles in every organisational partnership that may impact value creation, while Baron and Kenny (1986) emphasise that circumstances might exist when expected relationships between actors are less than anticipated. This suggests a symbiosis between sponsor and sport property

would be vital for the creation of shared value between both parties and for other actors involved in the sport ecosystem. The relationship marketing paradigm is important in this case to explain and capture the dynamics of B2B interactions (Grönroos, 1994), but its application to sport sponsorship has thus far failed to address the dynamism of interactions between sport organisations and sponsors (Cousens et al., 2006). Despite the noted importance of the relationship between sport properties and sponsors within the sponsorship literature, the internal nuances of sponsorship associations and the creation of value within these partnerships is surprisingly under-developed, specifically lacking in empirical research exploring qualitative perspectives of stakeholder relationships (Morgan et al., 2014).

The relationships/network approach also acknowledges a transition towards more open and equitable relationships within sponsorship networks, with an emphasis on relationship-specific capabilities such as reciprocal commitment (Farrelly et al., 2006). Further to this, Cornwell (2008) alludes to the increasing number of intermediaries (such as agencies) specialising in brokering sponsorship agreements, media selection and optimisation, and research and evaluation. Wakefield et al. (2007) highlight that sponsorship agreements have become progressively more segmented and tiered. This has resulted in increasingly complex sponsorship environments exemplified by a larger number of third-party relationships. For example, for Euro 2020, UEFA categorises sponsors into three segments; *UEFA National Team Football Official Sponsors*, such as Booking.com and FedEx; *UEFA EURO 2020 Official Sponsors*, such as Coca-Cola and Heineken; and *UEFA EURO 2020 Official Licensees*, such as Hublot and Panini (UEFA, 2020). Accordingly, in addition to how well sponsors and sport properties work together, cultivating relationships with other actors in the wider environment is pivotal (Parent et al., 2012).

The network view recognises the embeddedness of a dyadic relationship between sponsor and sponsored property within a multitude of complex, indirect relationships between other entities (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020). Albeit, extant literature has not fully considered the management of the sponsorship process (Cobbs et al., 2017) nor how sponsors, MSEs and other actors can collaborate to create value for different recipients (Grohs et al., 2020; Johnston & Spais, 2015). These perspectives remain in need of greater understanding, in terms of how such focal organisations are able to thrive in this setting (Ryan & Fahy, 2012). This is somewhat surprising given that no single actor occupies the resources to create value independently (Vargo & Lusch, 2008), the array of entities involved in staging an MSE (Horne, 2007) and the engagement opportunities that sponsored MSEs signify (Storbacka et al., 2016). As Taks (2015, p. 90) enquires, "Events are being organized regardless, so how can they be used to actually *serve* the local community?"

In line with this question, Woratschek et al. (2014a, p. 18) contend that "traditional models of value creation in sport management fall short of capturing the true nature of value creation" and as a result, these authors developed the SVF by relating SDL to a sport environment. Whilst focusing predominantly on consumers, the SVF argues for a shift in scholarly focus from value 'chains' to 'networks', in order to investigate value creation at intra (individual actor), micro (dyadic or triadic configurations), and meso (mid-range configurations) levels, whilst the macro (whole economy) level lies beyond the range of its concentration (Woratschek et al., 2014a; Horbel et al., 2016). Networks can boost the interactions by which firms acquire information, exchange offerings and collaborate (Ritter & Gemünden, 2003). Emerging literature (e.g., Cornwell & Kwon, 2020; Morgan et al., 2020) acknowledges the role of sponsorship in linking business and non-business entities, whilst recognising sponsors and sponsees as networked agents which simultaneously influence and are influenced by the social ecosystem comprised of related businesses, media, consumers, and suppliers, plus economic, cultural, and legal institutions.

The stakeholder marketing framework intimates that value creation is a multifaceted exchange process involving different stakeholders with contrasting interests (Hillebrand et al., 2015). This suggests that both 'internal' and 'external' stakeholders are significant in an interactive process (Pera et al., 2016). Researchers have not yet fully explored the potential of sponsorship ecosystems (Cornwell, 2019) but by adopting an 'ecosystems view', further sponsorship research should consider the inter-connections between parties which depend on each other for success; the tangible and intangible boundaries within which ecosystems operate; and the dynamic nature of sponsorship agreements as means to create value (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020).

It has also been suggested that established interpretations of sponsorship overlook further potential of the concept as an authentic partnership (Charlton & Cornwell, 2019; Cornwell, 2019). Motive attributions relate to the attitudes formed by individuals towards a sponsor and sponsee as a result of their interpretation of the underlying motivations behind a sponsorship (Woisetschläger et al., 2017) and are becoming more significant because of rising sensitivities towards commercialisation (Cornwell, 2019). In these circumstances, Charlton and Cornwell (2019) argue that the perceived quality of the relationship between sponsorship partners is increasingly important in assessing whether a relationship is seen as authentic (driven by perceptions of credibility) or inauthentic (driven by perceptions of scepticism).

2.4.4 Summary

- As calls grow for MSEs to make more meaningful societal contributions, event leveraging offers a means to develop strategies and tactics that are not directly required to stage the event to enhance event-related outcomes as a means to create value for different actors involved with MSEs.

- From a sponsorship perspective, leveraging relates to the total amount of spending beyond the cost of the initial sponsorship agreement and activation is a subset of this that is often on-site at the event or online and interactive. Therefore, activation is a form of leverage essential for sponsorship to be a meaningful investment by firms in engaging target audiences.

- MSEs are consumed by vast numbers of spectators who physically attend an event, and also a highly augmented online audience which access and interact with events remotely via a range of traditional methods such as TV and modern media platforms such as SSDs and social media.

- The sponsorship concept has evolved through five interdependent and overlapping philosophical approaches: philanthropic, market centred, consumer centred, strategic resource oriented, and relationships/networks. More research is needed to explore the further potential of the dyadic relationship between sponsor and MSE in creating value for both parties and with other actors involved in wider sport networks and ecosystems.

2.5 Proposed conceptual framework for understanding CSV in MSEs

The final section of this literature review provides a summary of the extant literature reviewed pertaining to understanding CSV in the context of MSEs, which subsequently forms the basis of a proposed conceptual framework. This framework connects the *means* of CSV (i.e., sponsor brand capabilities, consistency, and cultivation, in addition to a symbiosis between sponsor and MSE property) and the *outcomes and beneficiaries* of CSV (i.e., MSE properties, sponsors, host locations, citizens, and consumers).

2.5.1 Summary of related literature

The review of literature in this chapter provides an introduction to the importance of MSEs and sponsorship, and how such events can be leveraged by sponsors and hosts to create shared value with associated actor networks within the sport ecosystem. Four key aspects highlighted in the literature are pivotal to better understanding the importance of studying CSV in MSEs.

- Firstly, a CSV approach can provide sponsors and MSE hosts with proactive, appealing strategies to help create mutual economic and social value and a sustainable source of competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Firms are most likely to co-create shared value by utilising appropriate capabilities, adopting a consistent approach towards the creation of economic and social value, and when value can be cultivated beyond the original value proposition (Maltz & Schein, 2012). Further theoretical and empirical advancement of the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of CSV is necessary to better understand and advance the concept (Dembek et al., 2016).

- Secondly, as it is not possible for individual actors to create and/or deliver value autonomously, there is a pressing need to explore the co-creation of shared value-in-context at dyadic, triadic, and network levels within a sport ecosystem (Woratschek et al., 2014a) in order to help realise the unharnessed potential of MSEs as actor engagement platforms.

- Thirdly, MSEs are unique and appealing spectacles (Müller, 2017) which attract significant national and international public attention, gain widespread media coverage and generate substantial revenue. Recent controversies and scepticism of the claimed and perceived benefits of events (Misener et al., 2015) and increased societal expectations of businesses (Kolk, 2016), have prompted a growing necessity for sustainability considerations (Taks, 2013). MSEs can induce a variety of positive effects and hundreds take place each year. In this sense, it is important to explore how MSEs can better serve the communities in which they reside.

- Fourthly, sponsorship leveraging offers considerable potential to help co-create shared value for businesses and society within the MSE platform. However, most research has been focused on consumer reactions to sponsors as a way to measure its effectiveness. Relatively little focus has been afforded to the management of the sponsorship process, particularly from the sponsee's point of view (Toscani & Prendergast, 2018) with a lack of attention also on the role played by sponsors within the value co-creation process.

Therefore, this study explores the ways by which sponsors and MSEs can co-create shared value with a range of other actors to produce mutually beneficial outcomes, which may have an enduring, positive effect for different stakeholders. In recognising the interconnectedness and dependence of system members for success and survival (Peltoniemi & Vuori 2004), any model involving the sponsoring process must represent both the sponsor and sponsee perspectives.

Frameworks to capture the true nature of sponsorship, CSV, and value co-creation within a sport ecosystem are lacking (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020; Wójcik, 2016; Woratschek et al., 2014a). It has

been reasoned that 'middle range' theories are necessary to help connect overarching, abstract theories with empirical data (Brodie, 2017). Therefore, a proposed conceptual model is timely and important because the necessitated transition towards a CSV mind-set requires actor dialogue to bridge the gap between the strategic governance of multinational corporations and wide-ranging societal needs (Corazza et al., 2017). By illustrating the means, outcomes and beneficiaries of shared value (Dembek et al., 2016), a conceptual framework of CSV may symbolise a blueprint which offers potential for sponsors and event properties to produce an enduring social effect.

2.5.2 Proposed conceptual framework

The principles of CSV are particularly important within service ecosystems as the creation of value is dependent upon the integration and utilisation of resources by reciprocally-linked actors contained within various networks (Chandler & Vargo, 2011). In the context of B2B relationships such as the sponsorship of MSEs, a more unified and interrelated framework is therefore required to connect concepts and principles from a wider ecosystem (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020) in order to help realise the true potential of CSV in this setting.

Figure 2.1 depicts the proposed framework within the context of MSE sponsorship. This framework does not provide definitive answers, but instead identifies pertinent components for shared value creation processes in a sport ecosystem to be explored empirically. In the following sections, the importance of three sponsor brand 'C's of *capabilities*, *consistency*, and *cultivation* as inputs for creating shared value are outlined. Additionally, a strong *symbiotic relationship* between MSEs and sponsors is pivotal in enhancing the potential of CSV. In turn, *shared value* can be created with several additional actors, such as *host cities or regions*, *citizens*, and *consumers*, resulting in a range of potential positive outcomes for different beneficiaries.
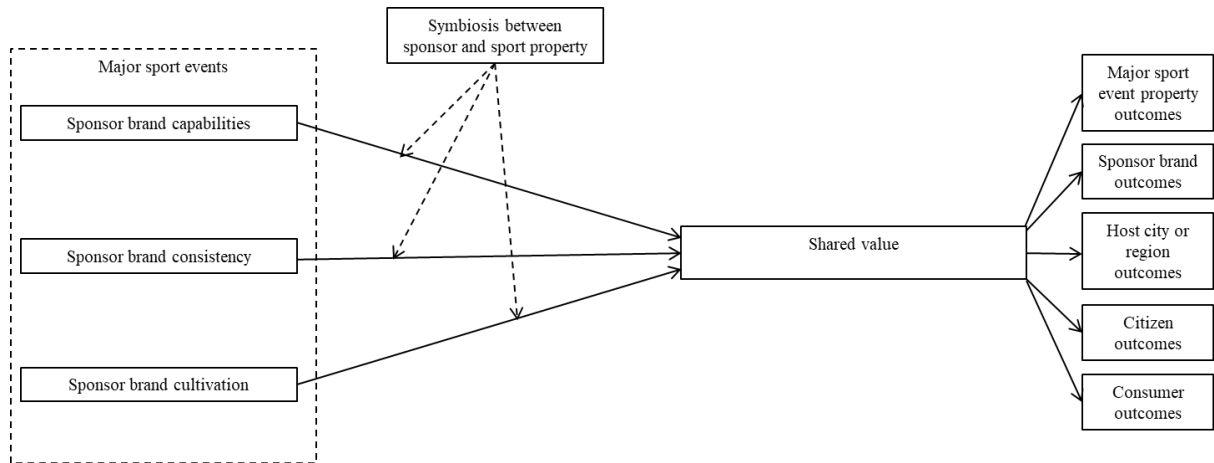
Figure 2.1. Proposed framework for understanding CSV in MSEs

2.5.2.1 Means of creating shared value through MSEs

Sponsor brand capabilities

Consistent with RBV theory, a firm's capabilities can generate lasting returns provided such competencies withstand competitor challenges and add value (Barney, 2001). Within a sponsor setting, such resources may comprise staff expertise (Becker-Olsen, 2003), brand reputation (Skard & Thorbjørnsen, 2014), and distribution channels (Smith, 2008). For example, Guinness is the world's leading brand of stout beer and the market leader in every major global territory, which it has utilised to develop a well-established presence in rugby (Crompton, 2014b). However, whilst the RBV paradigm classifies a broad range of resources with respect to their capacity to restrict rivals from gaining market advantages, brand capabilities within sport organisations remain underexplored (Manoli, 2020). There remains further scope within sponsorship scholarship for understanding the level of action required to yield strategic returns (Demir & Söderman, 2015). Leveraging prevailing capabilities can stimulate successful shared value creation in different contexts (Maltz & Schein, 2012). As MSEs receive significant capital and human resource investment from sponsors (Cornwell, 2014), it is proposed that sponsor brand capabilities positively affect the creation of shared value.

Sponsor brand consistency

Consistency relates to the competing objectives of focusing on social issues whilst striving for better corporate performance (Miragaia et al., 2017) and is a key element for creating shared value for brands and their related stakeholders (Meehan et al., 2006). In a sponsor context, brand consistency relates to the prominence placed by a firm on generating profit versus accruing social

benefits (Maltz & Schein, 2012), over a sustained period of time to build integrity and trustworthiness (Tate & Bals, 2018). For example, Heineken leveraged its sponsorship of Formula One to promote an alcohol-free beer, Heineken 0.0 by 'making moderate drinking cool' - part of a brand commitment to promote responsible drinking (Sport Industry Group, 2020), whilst seeking strong growth within the lucrative low and no-alcohol market segment (Warner, 2019). Brand consistency allows sponsors to integrate societal principles into business strategies to aid resource allocation decisions, measure linkages between social and environmental actions, and financial performance (Epstein & Roy, 2003). Adherence to stated values and the careful selection and development of business partners with complementary social outlooks, is a barometer of an organisation's credibility since failure to "walk the talk" is a common source of criticism of many companies claiming to be socially responsible (Meehan et al., 2006, p. 395). Although brand consistency has been suggested as a crucial component within organisational partnerships (Meehan et al., 2006), the effect of sponsor brand consistency has yet to be assessed in MSEs. It is therefore proposed that sponsor brand consistency has a positive impact on the co-creation of shared value through MSEs.

Sponsor brand cultivation

Value must be cultivated by other entities beyond the value propositioning firm in order for CSV to be optimised (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). This can be achieved through supply-chain influence, competitive response, technology transfer and NGO partnership (Maltz & Schein, 2012). Within a sponsor milieu, cultivation could involve collaboration with non-profit organisations to achieve mutually-beneficial objectives (Cornwell & Coote, 2005). For example, FedEx used its sponsorship of the UEFA Europa League to enable Street League, an employment NGO, to provide underprivileged children with the opportunity to accompany athletes on to the field of play (Connelly, 2016). Brand cultivation has been referred as a key element to trigger the creation of shared value (Meehan et al., 2006), but this assumption has not yet been tested in the context of MSEs, where sponsors should work with other actors to achieve success. Building on previous literature (e.g., Maltz & Schein, 2012), it is proposed that sponsor brand cultivation is positively related to the creation of shared value in MSEs.

Symbiosis between sponsor and MSE property

As noted by (Erdogan & Kitchen, 1998), a symbiotic relationship refers to a shared association of two or more mutually dependent organisations, which aim to achieve a joint strategic goal. In the current study this relates to a sponsor brand and an MSE property. Sponsors and sport properties should share this equally beneficial relationship, because a symbiosis between the two parties helps legitimise the deal in the eyes of the target audiences they try to communicate with

(Biscaia & Rocha, 2018; Meenaghan & Shipley, 1999). A positive symbiosis is important because it is held that these two parties can be effectively and synergistically augmented over time (Babiak, 2007; Stipp & Schiavone, 1996), and in the absence of a symbiotic relationship, a sustainable partnership is unlikely to occur (Babiak, 2007). Consistent with this view, Babiak and Thibault (2009) argue there are obstacles in every organisational partnership that may impact value creation, while Baron and Kenny (1986) highlight that additional aspects might exist when expected relationships are less than anticipated. This suggests that a symbiosis between sponsor brand and sport property would contribute to boost the role of sponsor brand characteristics on the creation of shared value. Nevertheless, there remains a need to further understand this assumption in the context of MSEs to aid the development of sustainable relationships (Charlton & Cornwell, 2019; Cornwell & Kwon, 2020). Whilst the relationship marketing paradigm emerged to explain and capture the dynamics of B2B interactions (Grönroos, 1994), its application to sport sponsorship has failed to address the dynamism of interactions between sport organisations and corporate sponsors (Cousens et al., 2006). Based on the above rationale, one may expect that a symbiosis between sponsors and MSE properties helps to facilitate the ability of sponsor capabilities, consistency, and cultivation in creating shared value for various actors involved in the ecosystem.

2.5.2.2 Outcomes and beneficiaries of creating shared value

Porter and Kramer (2011) state that CSV focuses on identifying and expanding the connections between societal and economic progress. However, greater clarity is needed in determining how value will be created and distributed among actors (Menghwar & Daood, 2021). In this study, CSV refers to the process of creating economic value for sponsors and MSEs, whilst also creating societal benefits by addressing the needs of wider stakeholders within society. The basis for this supposition is that CSV is not about redistributing existing value, but rather finding ways to leverage the link between social and economic progress and create additional value among multiple stakeholders (Lee, et al., 2014; Porter & Kramer, 2011). The more shared value created through the partnership between a sponsor and MSE, the greater the benefits accrued by other actors in the value-creation process (Parent, 2008). That is, in addition to the MSE property and the sponsor, shared value may also be created with, and for the benefit of, other actors such as the host city or region of the event (Andranovich et al., 2001), citizens (Preuss, 2007) and consumers (Florek et al., 2008).

Outcomes for the MSE may include revenue generation (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006), in-kind B2B support (Gillooly et al., 2017b), and media exposure (Andranovich et al., 2001). Sponsor outcomes may include increases in brand awareness and image (Cornwell et al., 2005), and

positive attitudinal and behavioural consumer responses (Biscaia et al., 2013). Host cities or regions may redress issues such as social dysfunction and economic decline (Smith, 2014), enhance their reputation (Horne, 2017), and exert soft power (Grix & Houlihan, 2014). Citizen outcomes may include improved infrastructure and increased sport participation (Aizawa et al., 2018), and increases in social camaraderie, local pride and community spirit (Inoue & Havard, 2014). Consumer outcomes may include pleasurable fulfilment leading to satisfaction (Cronin et al., 2000) and educational benefits (Close et al., 2006). Following previous studies on CSV, MSEs, and sponsorship outlined in this literature review, further research focused on the outcomes of shared value by sponsorship partners is timely and warranted. The proposed, literature-based model suggests the creation of shared value leads to outcomes for the MSE property, sponsor brands, host cities or regions, citizens and consumers. To this end, an in-depth exploration of how sponsors and MSEs can work together to create shared value is pivotal to further understand CSV conceptualisation and develop better measurement criteria for the benefit of different actors involved in the MSE ecosystem.

3.   Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

To reiterate, this study aims to explore how MSEs and sponsors can create shared value with a range of other actors to produce mutually beneficial outcomes, which may have a lasting effect for a range of beneficiaries. The review of the literature in Chapter 2 introduced the concept of CSV through business relationships, the importance and scope of MSEs, and how such events can provide a unique platform for event hosts and sponsors to create shared value with other actors within a sport ecosystem, to encourage enduring mutual social and economic strategic benefits. This highlighted that four key aspects are paramount in helping to better understand the importance of studying CSV within the context of MSEs:

1) Further theoretical and empirical advancement of the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of CSV is necessary to better understand and advance the concept.

2) There is a need to explore the co-creation of shared value-in-context at dyadic, triadic, and network levels within a sport ecosystem in order to help realise the potential of MSEs as actor engagement platforms.

3) Recent controversies surrounding MSEs, scepticism of their claimed and perceived benefits, and increased societal expectations of businesses, have prompted a growing need to explore how MSEs can better assist and support local communities.

4) Although sponsorship activation offers considerable potential to help co-create shared value for businesses and society within an MSE platform, greater focus on the management of sponsorship within the value-co-creation process is needed.

This review culminated in the proposition of a conceptual framework which illustrates the significance of 'capabilities', 'consistency', 'cultivation' and a 'symbiosis' between MSE hosts and sponsors in contributing to the creation of shared value; and demonstrated that benefits may be realised by additional actors such as host cities or regions, citizens, and consumers. Now the focus will turn to the methodological approach of the research.

Grix (2019) asserts that ontology and epistemology form the foundations upon which research is built. That is, in espousing clarity regarding one's ontological and epistemological assumptions, the researcher is able not only to articulate their own position, but can recognise the position of others, understand the interrelationship of the key mechanisms of research, and avoid uncertainty in discussing theoretical phenomena. Therefore, this chapter is organised in accordance with the 'directional relationship' between the key components of research, which links ontology and

epistemology to methodology and methods (Hay, 2002; Grix, 2019). Taken together, these elements comprise research *paradigms* (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016); "conceptual and structural representations of a belief system, encompassing ideas and assumptions that will ultimately shape and reshape the way a person or persons see the world" (Stokes, 2011, p. 94). Consequently, this chapter is structured in-line with the "interrelationship between the building blocks of research" proposed by Grix (2019, p. 62) which comprises: *ontology* (what is out there to know about?); *epistemology* (what and how can we know about it?); *methodology* (how can we go about acquiring that knowledge?); *methods* (which precise procedures can we use to acquire it?); and *sources* (which data can we collect?).

Accordingly, this chapter is compartmentalised as follows: Firstly, the research philosophy (**Section 3.2**) considers the ontological and epistemological positions which underpin the research. Secondly, the methodological approach (**Section 3.3**) discusses the qualitative nature of the project. Thirdly, the research design (**Section 3.4**) details the specific methods undertaken regarding the pilot and main study stages of the research, related to participants and data collection procedures, and the approach to data analysis. Fourthly, the ethical considerations (**Section 3.5**) outlines the importance of ethical principles in guiding appropriate standards of conduct and ensuring the welfare of participants. Then, the reliability, validity, and positionality section (**Section 3.6**) specifies the significance of implementing rigorous quality and consistency measures when undertaking research. Finally, the key ideas contained within the chapter are summarised (**Section 3.7**). Table 3.1 outlines the methodological approach of the study.

Table 3.1. Summary of methodological approach.

Ontology: Anti-Foundationalist/Relativist

Epistemology: Interpretivism

Methodology: Qualitative

Study stage	Sample and procedures	Instrument	Method of analysis	Purpose
Pilot study	Semi-structured interviews with senior sport managers with a remit for sponsorship (n=10)	Interview guide, using dimensions from conceptual model (e.g., Dembek et al., 2016; Maltz & Schein, 2012; Porter & Kramer, 2011)	Thematic analysis; identification of variables, codification based on proposed conceptual model	Refinement of interview guide. Preliminary analysis of the proposed conceptual model
Main study	Semi-structured interviews with sponsor and MSE senior managers with	Refined interview guide from pilot stage	Thematic analysis; refinement of	Test and refinement of the

a remit for sponsorship (n=25)			variables codification	and	proposed conceptual model

3.2 Research philosophy

A research philosophy is an overarching term relating to the development and nature of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2012). Johnson and Clark (2006) argue that research should not only be philosophically informed, but that the researcher is able to reflect upon and justify their philosophical choices in relation to potential alternatives. Only if one has such an understanding, can they examine their assumptions about the way the world works, evaluate their suitability, and develop an ability to refine these perceptions over time (Saunders et al., 2012).

There are two major ways in which to consider research philosophy - ontology and epistemology (Grix 2019; Saunders et al., 2012). The subsequent choice of data collection, analysis and interpretation should be informed by, and understood within, these ontological and epistemological assumptions. Grix (2019, p. 2) suggests many scholars have difficulty in differentiating between ontology ("what is out there to know about") and epistemology ("what and how can we know about it?"). Stokes (2011, p. 90) defines ontology as being "concerned with differing views on the nature of 'reality' and of states of 'being' […] the study of the nature of existence and the assumptions we make about it." Accordingly, some individuals may hold beliefs that will not be valid or established for others (Stokes, 2011). Additionally, Bryman (2016) considers the notion of 'social ontology' whereby social entities are or can be objective entities, which exist independently of social actors, or alternatively they are social constructions in themselves, created by the perceptions, activities and interpretations of individuals. It is not possible to engage in ordered thinking without at least an implicit commitment to social ontology (Lewis, 2002) because any attempt to construct a view of our reality is dependent on our perspective of the nature of social being.

This means ontology concerns views about the nature of actuality and the social world (i.e., "what is", Crotty, 1998, p. 10) and represents the starting point from which epistemological and methodological considerations logically follow (Grix, 2019). By questioning "*What exists that we might acquire knowledge of?*" (Hay, 2002, p. 61), researchers must contemplate whether a 'real' world exists independently of human knowledge in considering their position along a multi-dimensional, dichotomous continuum (Saunders et al., 2012). This ontological spectrum is represented by opposing underlying assumptions: one extreme can be understood as *foundationalism* (reality is thought to exist independently of our knowledge of it; Grix. 2019) or *realism* (espousing objectivity; Stokes, 2011) and the other extreme can be understood as *anti-*

foundationalism (reality is socially and broadly constructed by social actors; Grix, 2019) or *relativism* (espousing subjectivity; Stokes, 2011). As this study is concerned with ascertaining and understanding the viewpoints of social actors involved in the process of sponsorship of MSEs, it assumes an anti-foundational/relativist ontological position.

It is important to understand and appreciate that as well as having an ontological standpoint, all methodological approaches are also set in an epistemological tradition (Stokes, 2011). Whist ontology is logically prior to, and distinct from, epistemology, the two concepts are inextricably linked (Grix, 2019) and tend to emerge together, as "to talk of the construction of meaning is to talk of the construction of meaningful reality" (Crotty, 1998, p. 10). In turn, epistemology is concerned with theories about why and how knowledge is created, and the types of processes and ideologies involved when generating data. As Stokes (2011, p. 41) asserts, epistemology "points at the assumptions a researcher uses… [when] generating data and creating knowledge". Epistemology allows one to adopt a certain perspective when viewing the world and interpreting it (Crotty, 1998), as in effect, the researcher is responsible for choosing the process of creating knowledge.

There are a wide variety of epistemological positions, and these are most broadly encapsulated in terms of the researcher adopting a positivist (aligned with foundationalist/realist ontology), interpretivist (aligned with anti-foundationalist/relativist ontology) or post-positivist (placed between positivist and interpretivist) approach (Grix, 2019; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Saunders et al., 2012). The positivist method assumes that a single, uniform and objective reality exists externally 'out there' and independent from the person (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), emphasising the importance of searching for regularities and causal relationships within a data set in order to create law-like generalisations (Gill & Johnson, 2010). Such 'resources researchers' typically consider themselves external to the process of collecting data and therefore value-free (Saunders et al., 2012). They are concerned with observable social reality, represented by objects that are considered real, existing separately from the researcher (Aliyu et al., 2014). Therefore, a high degree of objectivity is claimed when conducting research (Saunders et al., 2012).

Whereas the positivist method tends towards a direct or empirical realism, where the world is treated as being purely observable (Sayer, 2000) and "what you see is what you get" (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 136), post-positivism is distinguishable in that it tends towards a critical realism (Grix, 2019). That is, there are two steps to experiencing the world: the 'thing' itself and the sensations it conveys; and the mental processing that takes place after that sensation meets our senses (Saunders et al., 2012). Critical realist researchers attempt to combine the 'how' of interpretive understanding with the 'why' of explanatory positivism by connecting the gap

between the two extremes (Grix, 2019). As a result, critical realism combines a foundationalist/realist ontology with an interpretivist epistemology (Tashakkori & Teddie, 2010).

In contrast to positivism, the interpretivist method affirms social reality as humanly constructed and fashioned in ways that make it fluid and multifaceted, with multiple subjective realities in existence (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Thus, what exists is dependent on our intangible mental constructions (Smith, 1989) with regards to how meaning and interpretation are ascribed to objects and the motivations and actions of other people (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Interpretivist researchers hold that knowledge is created via lived experiences and social interaction (Lincoln et al., 2018). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the different roles played by social actors (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These 'feelings researchers' accept they are part of the data collection process, and therefore value-bound (Saunders et al., 2012). Such a notion applies to this study, which is concerned with adopting an empathetic stance towards understanding the world of research subjects from their perspective (i.e., how managers view the creation of shared value in the sport ecosystem), and therefore a higher degree of subjectivity can be apparent. As Saunders et al. (2012, p. 137) further remark, there are compelling reasons for an interpretivist approach to be adopted when undertaking business-related research such as the current study:

"Some would argue that an interpretivist perspective is highly appropriate in the case of business and management research, particularly in such fields as […] marketing. Not only are business situations complex, they are also unique. They are a function of a particular set of circumstances and individuals coming together at a specific time."

As the paradigmatic position moves from positivist to interpretivist epistemology, the research approach changes from attempting to "explain" social reality to seeking to "interpret" or understand it (Grix, 2019, p. 72). Although classicist positivists and interpretivists view their respective paradigm*s* as being ideal for research, many scholars implicitly or explicitly advocate the *incompatibility thesis* (Howe, 1988), postulating that positivist and interpretivist paradigms cannot and should not be combined, leading to 'paradigm wars' (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). However, as explained within Singer et al. (2019, p. 51), such a "constraining process" can be unhelpful and should instead be considered as "paradigm let's try and understand each other's" in order to help better promote knowledge and understanding. Indeed, in reality, research rarely ascribes to neat categories, but often takes place "on the borders" between research paradigms (Grix, 2019, p. 56), ultimately guiding the work of researchers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Therefore, contemplation of such perceptions and suppositions is a necessity for all scholars in informing their philosophical approach.

Consequently, in consideration of the previously outlined research objectives, this study adopts an interpretivist approach for a number of reasons. Firstly, interpretivism recognises the influence

of aspects such as culture, theories, concepts and behaviours that ultimately lead to an understanding of human decisions (Irshaidat, 2019). Different people and groups have diverse perceptions of the world (Willis, 2007), allowing for the collation of a varied range of perspectives in helping to ascertain a thorough understanding of the state of affairs. This is important in the current study because a greater focus on the management of sponsorship within the value-co-creation process is required (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020). Furthermore, there has been little examination of the perceptions and decision-making of senior managers in contributing towards shared value creation (Chen et al., 2020). An interpretive methodology facilitates an environment that permits the examination of what participants have to say about their experiences, enabling researchers to view the world through the insights and experiences of the participants (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). This interpretive approach is important to enhance knowledge of shared value co-creation within a sport ecosystem (Woratschek et al., 2014a).

Secondly, an interpretivist perspective is highly appropriate in business and management research as such complex phenomena are represented by a particular set of circumstances and individuals converging (Saunders et al., 2012). An understanding of the context in which any form of research is performed is critical to the interpretation of the data collected (Willis, 2007). In the context of exploring CSV within the setting of MSEs, this is particularly relevant as the competitiveness of businesses and the health of their surrounding communities are mutually reliant (Porter & Kramer, 2006) and value is co-created via resource amalgamation between different actors (Vargo & Lusch, 2016).

Thirdly, it is important to note that in order to sufficiently comprehend a particular phenomenon, the researcher cannot play a detached role from the matter under examination as reality (and empirical data) is generated through their social interaction with respondents (Irshaidat, 2019). This necessitates a more personal style of approach than other paradigmatic positions and opposes the positivist stance which separates the researcher from the research process (Risse, 2000). Therefore, the interpretivist paradigm corresponds with the personal standpoint of this researcher, in recognising and valuing the importance of social actors in constructing multiple possible realities, and allies with the study's research objectives, which seek to further explore the concept of CSV from a dyadic, managerial perspective within the engagement platform of a MSE. Indeed, clarification of the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of shared value (Dembek et al., 2016) is perhaps more apposite to interpretive rather than positivist reasoning, particularly given the potential impact of CSV and MSEs on individuals and societies (Inoue & Havard, 2014; Misener, 2015; Smith, 2014). As such, interpretivism represents the most suitable approach to the study, allowing the researcher to draw conclusions from the "lived experiences" and accumulated explanations of respondents (Irshaidat, 2019, p. 28). The next section discusses how the

interpretivist paradigm influences the choice and development of the methodological approach, which subsequently directs the study's research design.

3.3 Methodological approach

Once establishing what is out there to know about and what and how can we know about it, methodology concerns how one may go about acquiring that knowledge. Driven by the ontological and epistemological assumptions previously outlined, this section specifies the methodological approach chosen for this study. The project's methodology is concerned with the choice of strategy employed to undertake the research (Grix, 2019). In order to determine the most suitable methodology, the applicability of quantitative and qualitative approaches to the context of the study should be considered. It is important to note that whilst quantitative and qualitative research can be undertaken within a number of paradigms (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), positivist research typically incorporates a predominantly quantitative approach (Lincoln et al, 2018); critical realist research often combines quantitative and qualitative approaches into a mixed methods research design (Saunders et al., 2012); and interpretivist research is most often associated with a qualitative approach (Goldkuhl 2012). As such, the latter approach is that adopted by this study.

Scientific research is widely accepted to be the most potent tool for generating and advancing knowledge by performing systematic and intensive inquisitions which aim to learn and realise truths about the world, explore new theories and perform their empirical validation (Queirós et al., 2017). It is commonly acknowledged that scientific activity takes place within two distinct contexts; *discovery* (the generation of hypotheses, laws and theories) and *justification* (their testing and validation; Park & Park, 2016). Each context contains a set of corresponding states and procedures (Hunt, 1991; Zaltman et al., 1973). Whilst Hunt (1991) acknowledges that no single set of procedures can be considered as optimal, the aspect of discovery typically involves assessing and reviewing existing knowledge; developing concepts and formulating propositions or hypotheses; acquiring data; and analysing and organising findings. This is characteristically associated with qualitative research (Hunt, 1991; Park & Park, 2016) - defined as "an emergent, inductive, interpretive and naturalistic approach to the study of people, cases, phenomena, social situations and processes in their natural settings in order to reveal in descriptive terms the meanings that people attach to their experiences of the world." (Yilmaz, 2013, p. 312). For the qualitative researcher, multifaceted, constructed realities exist and the process of inquiry is a matter of interpreting the interpretations of others (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Therefore, qualitative researchers should acknowledge and report these different realities by relying on the voices and elucidations of participants through extensive quotes, presenting themes that reflect the words and

actions of these respondents, and advancing evidence of different perspectives on each theme (Creswell, 2007). These are often obtained via conducting and analysing interviews, focus groups, and/or observations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The aspect of justification typically involves evaluating and validating results; disseminating research information for generalisation; forming explanations and predictions; and engaging in necessary control activities. This is typically associated with quantitative research (Hunt, 1991; Park & Park, 2016), which is defined as "research that explains phenomena according to numerical data which are analysed by means of mathematically based methods […] in order to determine if the theory explains or predicts phenomena of interest" (Yilmaz, 2013, p. 311). Quantitative research examines relationships between variables, via data collected in a standardised manner, often incorporating statistical analysis techniques (Saunders et al., 2012). As such, quantitative and qualitative research should be considered as meaningfully distinguishable categories, underlying the respective advantages and limitations of each (Morgan, 2018).

Although a qualitative approach is considered most appropriate for this research, its limitations must be acknowledged before outlining its advantages. Principally, a lack of generalisability renders this type of research unsuitable for drawing conclusions about the wider population of interest (Park & Park, 2016, Queirós et al., 2017). Generalisability is also criticised in qualitative research due to the habitually smaller numbers of participants when compared with quantitative studies (Queirós et al., 2017). Further, whilst qualitative research is widely seen as a useful research technique in understanding the viewpoints of subjects, it has been alleged to lack an underlying philosophy of science (Sykes 1990). In this regard, qualitative research is accompanied by a less well-established and widely-accepted set of rules for analysis than quantitative research (Bryman, 2016). However, in this setting, generalisations are not desirable as a key aim of the research is to further explore, better understand and advance the concept of CSV, within a MSE environment (i.e., in-depth analysis rather than generalisability). As Maxwell (1996) observes, the value of a qualitative study may actually depend on its lack of external generalisability, by providing an account of a setting or population that is illuminating as an important or significant case of interest. Singer et al. (2019) extend this idea, arguing that apologising for a small sample or a lack of generalisability misses the point of qualitative research, in that it is intended to have small samples and they are not meant to be generalisable.

As explained previously, CSV remains an under-researched area within academic scholarship in need of further investigation, specifically in establishing the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of shared value (Dembek et al., 2016). Therefore, adopting a qualitative approach in exploring this context offers a number of advantages. Firstly, experiences, perceptions and understandings

of individuals are acquired to uncover reality through participant's views, background, and involvements (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). This enables the researcher to view the world through a "series of individual eyes" and select participants who "have their own interpretations of reality" to encompass the worldview (McQueen, 2002, p. 55).

Linked to this, secondly, 'thick descriptions' of participants allow the researcher to interact and collaborate with participants to guide the discovery of knowledge (Agee, 2009), as "all stakeholders - those whose lives are affected by the problem under study should be engaged in the processes of investigation" (Stringer, 2007, p. 11). Thick descriptions successfully merge participants' lived experiences with the researcher's interpretation of these experiences, thus creating 'thick meaning' for the participants and researcher, as well as subsequent users of the research (Ponterotto, 2006). This approach has been successfully applied in contemporary sport marketing-related research (e.g., Mansfield et al., 2020). Thus, despite a lack of generalisablity, findings are presented which faithfully represent the phenomena studied (Irshaidat, 2019). Rather, the goal is to obtain results which can be transferable to another setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, thirdly, qualitative methods allow for multiple social realities to be gathered, interpreted, and understood in relation to current theory, enabling the advancement of deep insights that aid conceptual development (Andriopoulos & Slater, 2013). Hence, in order to augment understanding of the perspectives and experiences of key actors involved in the sponsorship of MSEs, qualitative methods are considered to be the most appropriate approach to explore the creation of shared value.

3.4 Research design

As noted in Table 3.1, the study was divided into two stages: a pilot stage to preliminarily analyse and subsequently refine the proposed, literature-based conceptual model presented in the previous chapter; followed by the main study, focusing on targeted sponsors and MSEs in order to help further refine the model and gain a deeper understanding of the process of creating shared value. This section details the research design for each stage, outlining the participant selection and data collection procedures, development of the research instrument, and data analysis strategies. Data collection for the pilot stage was undertaken between the 11th May and 17th July, 2018, and comprised ten semi-structured interviews with industry practitioners. Data collection for the main study stage was undertaken between 31st January and 30th April, 2019, and comprised twenty-five semi structured interviews with industry practitioners.

3.4.1 Pilot study

3.4.1.1 Participants and data collection procedures

Following a review of existent literature, a conceptualisation for understanding CSV in MSEs was proposed. Although the literature allowed for the creation of an initial conceptual model, it was evident that there is a lack of empirical research about the concept of CSV. This highlighted the need to develop a step-by-step process of conceptualising CSV, which can subsequently facilitate the development of an empirical research stream. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Dembek et al. (2016) identified 73 papers that use CSV in a 'non-trivial way' (within the analysis and/or to form part of an argument), of which only eight employ empirical investigations. In addition, the majority of these empirical studies employed single case study approaches (e.g., Spitzeck et al., 2013; Spitzeck & Chapman, 2012) to ascertain examples of commercial success for a company and the synchronised resolution of sustainability issues within its wider community. Consequently, individual interviews with experienced, senior industry practitioners may offer valuable insights into understanding the phenomenon of CSV in the context of MSEs, and the plausibility of the concepts and relationships included within the proposed model.

Interviewing is considered to be the most commonly used qualitative technique in social science research (Creswell, 2007), with a semi-structured format the most predominant (Kitchin & Tate, 2013). Semi-structured interviews are typified by an open and partly structured guideline that allows interviewees to freely describe and explain circumstances and experiences (Qu & Dumay, 2011). There are potential difficulties associated with this approach; such as being time consuming, necessitating careful participant selection conditions, and requiring a lengthy verification process to extract compared information (Queirós et al., 2017). However, semi-structured interviews encourage responses that are extensive and developmental, which may lead to the revelation of attitudes or facts (Grummit, 1980). As semi-structured interviews offer the ability to explore new phenomena in-depth, and allow researchers to "find out what's happening [and] to seek new insight" (Robson, 2002, p. 59), this approach was followed to better understand how to conceptualise the concept of CSV and its impact on different actors.

This approach also affords the interviewer flexibility to adjust the sequence of questions based on the flow of conversation, to exclude certain aspects, pose follow up queries and ensure that misunderstandings are clarified (Mansfield et al., 2020). Researchers utilising this approach are able to adjust to the "situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondents, and to new ideas on the topic" (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). In light of these advantages, and the potential to develop a more in-depth understanding of the emerging concept of CSV, this method was deemed suitable for the requirements of the pilot stage of the study. That is, this pilot study represents a first step towards providing a contextual understanding of CSV within sport settings.

The opening stage of sampling involved initiating access (Okumus et al., 2007). In this regard, the process was aided by the researcher's initial utilisation of an extensive set of connections (i.e., practitioners engaged in the requisite roles and sectors of interest to the study), and supplemented by those of the wider PhD supervisory team. In this sense, the selection strategy for the pilot stage involved an element of convenience sampling, where the sample relies on available subjects (Lune & Berg, 2017) and their accessibility and willingness to participate (Etikan et al., 2016), but also a purposive sampling technique (e.g., Etikan et al., 2016; Lune & Berg, 2017; Patton, 2002).

Purposive sampling refers to a non-random process where proficient and well-informed participants are identified and selected due to the qualities and attributes they possess (Tongco, 2007), sometimes referred to as 'key informants' (Bryman, 2016; Marshall, 1996) or 'elites' (Morris, 2009; Welch et al., 2002). Users of purposive sampling procedures should be mindful that the researcher exercises judgment on the informant's reliability and competency (Tongco, 2007), so it is imperative to assure the knowledge and skill of such informants as part of the purposive sampling process, as inappropriate participants will render the data meaningless and invalid (Godambe 1982). Therefore, to help ensure validity and reliability, interview participants were identified and targeted based on whether they were deemed to meet the following selection criteria:

(1) Attainment of a senior managerial or director-level position within their organisation.

(2) A clear remit for sponsorship within their role, evidenced by a minimum of five year's industry experience working within either a sponsor or a sport property-related organisation.

(3) Given the global nature of MSEs, it was necessary for the sample to be multinational, in terms of both nationality and employment location.

Initial contact with participants was made electronically via email or LinkedIn, in order to assess their potential availability. In the event of a positive response, a small number of asynchronous online messages were exchanged in order to create an association with participants over time, ahead of the arranged interview date. Seitz (2016, p. 5) supports this course of action, in that "emailing several times before (interviewing) might […] strengthen rapport."

Over the last few decades, researchers have faced increasing challenges concerning conducting face-to-face interviews, such as time and financial constraints, geographical dispersion, and the physical mobility boundaries of research populations (Cater, 2011). This has necessitated the introduction of varying modes of facilitating interviewing (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). Technological advancements, such as the development of online communication platforms and increasingly reliable internet connectivity, have allowed many of the problems associated with

face-to-face interviews to be overcome as alternative modes of interviewing have emerged. This is known as 'internet-mediated research' (IMR; Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Hooley et al., 2012), and, specifically in this case, 'voice over internet protocol' (VoIP; Iacono et al., 2016). VoIP has distinct communicative properties, allowing the researcher to interview participants using voice and video synchronously via an internet connection (Iacono et al., 2016). It is important to distinguish VoIP from other IMR methods, such as email and online messaging, as these characteristics are not shared by all forms of IMR. For instance, emails are asynchronous and online messaging involves written text. Therefore, IMR and VoIP incorporate different benefits, drawbacks and ethical aspects.

As a result, VoIP was selected as the means by which to interview participants. At the time of data collection, the most popular services that used VoIP were Skype and FaceTime (Iacono et al., 2016). More recently, during the confinement periods imposed in many countries as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, Zoom and Microsoft Teams have also gained popularity (Stokel-Walker, 2020). Each of these platforms enable individuals to video conference using a camera function from computers, tablets or smartphones. Participants can see a full screen image of the recipient(s) of the call on their device through the camera, and vice versa. Skype was the chosen platform, primarily because of its widespread acceptance and predominant usage by business organisations (Bass & Lanxon, 2018) at the time of data collection, and because it is not necessary for the researcher to 'connect' with the participant via Facebook, as is the case with FaceTime.

VoIP offered the researcher wide flexibility in scheduling interviews with participants (Cater, 2011), and as such, there were a number of compelling reasons to use it. Firstly, it negated the need to limit the range of participants to those that could only physically be reached and interviewed in person. This geographical flexibility was imperative in fulfilling the requirements of the study, and enhanced the researcher's ability to access key informants and widen participation (Janghorban et al., 2014). MSEs are a global phenomenon, and accordingly, using VoIP allowed the sample to be recruited from across multiple continents and allowed the key recruitment selection criteria to be met, which would not have been feasible otherwise. This approach is recognised as appropriate when dealing with groups that are dispersed (Sedgwick & Spiers, 2009; Bryman, 2016).

Secondly, the likely time-scarce nature of the roles of the senior executives who comprised the sample meant that most would have been unlikely to participate if the interviews had required any significant time commitment on their part, beyond the interview itself (Cater, 2011). Using Skype eliminated the need for travel, and therefore saved time and costs (Rowley, 2012). Finally, in using the webcam, the interaction was to some extent comparable to the on-site equivalent for the presence of nonverbal and social cues (Stewart & Williams, 2005). However, it is acknowledged

that having sight of only the 'head shot' of the participant provided by a webcam can generate difficulties in witnessing all of the participant's body language (Cater, 2011). As a result, there remains a possibility that the usage of a disruptive environment could affect interviewee focus and data gathering (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014), some of the richness of rapport may be lost (Rowley, 2012), and it may be more challenging to develop a working alliance (Ivey et al., 2013). However, Deakin and Wakefield (2014, p. 8) suggest in their study that, "Skype interviewees were more responsive and rapport was built quicker than in a number of face-to-face interviews. Online rapport is […] only an issue when interviewing an individual who is more reserved or less responsive".

By recording the interview, it was possible for the researcher to concentrate more fully and listen attentively to the responses, rather than focusing on note taking (Saunders et al., 2012). However, brief notes were recorded in order to maintain focus and to document any specific points considered to be worthy of follow-up (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2005). Similarly to Deakin and Wakefield (2014), the choice to utilise Skype within this research is not an attempt by the researcher to completely replicate the face-to-face interview. Rather, it represents an opportunity to access otherwise unfeasible participants, due to time, cost, and geographical constraints, and facilitated the enablement of data collection for the study in the most effective way.

Prior to the interviews, all participants received a 'participant information sheet' (Appendix B) and were asked to read and sign an 'informed consent form' (Appendix C) explaining the purpose of the study. The final sample of the pilot study comprised ten participants, interviewed during the period between 11th May and 17th July 2018, as shown in Table 3.2. Guidelines for ascertaining non-probabilistic sample sizes are scarce, but their size typically relies on the concept of 'saturation', or the point at which no new information or themes are detected in the data (Guest et al., 2006). As noted by Guest and colleagues, saturation often occurs between six to twelve interviews and the saturation point was deemed to be appropriate in the pilot study after ten interviews, with participants representing a broad range of organisational types involved in the sponsorship of MSEs.

Table 3.2. Pilot study sample profile.

Participant number	Nationality	Years' of experience	Organisation type	Industry/sport	Job title	Interview date	Duration (minutes)
PST101	UK	10	Professional Sports Team	Cricket	Commercial Director	11th May 2018	52
MSE102	Belgium	5	Sport Governing Body	Equestrian	Sponsorship Manager, Commercial Department	6th June 2018	30
MSE103	Belgium	15	Sport Governing Body	Football	Head of Marketing Activities and Sponsorship	14th June 2018	36
MSE104	Brazil	5	Sport Governing Body	Basketball	Communication Manager	6th June 2018	34
Sponsor105	India	5	Sponsorship Agency	Mixed	Marketing Manager	13th June 2018	35
Sponsor106	UK	10	Sport Event Sponsor	Beverage	Marketing Director	8th June 2018	38
Sponsor107	UK	10	Sport Event Sponsor	Beverage	Head of Consumer Marketing	9th June 2018	31
PST108	UK	15	Professional Sports Team	Football	Commercial Director	26th June 2018	29
PST109	UK	6	Professional Sports Team	Rugby	Head of Partnership Delivery	29th June 2018	28
Sponsor110	UK	13	Sponsorship Agency	Automotive	Commercial Partnerships Director	17th July 2018	37

The duration of the interviews ranged from 28 minutes to 52 minutes, depending upon participant interest, the degree of information provided, and the readiness of participants to share their views. Lincoln and Guba (1985) advocate maintaining a suitable pace to an interview in order to maximise the potential for useful information to be obtained. This involves striking an appropriate balance between minimising interjections and probing the interviewee by asking a follow-up question when something is stated which is intriguing to the interviewer (Kvale, 1996).

The interviews were audio-recorded via a university-loaned dictation machine and subsequently transcribed verbatim by the researcher. A numerical identifier was assigned to each participant to further censor their identities. The interviewer was located in a private office and all of the interviewees were situated within their own chosen environment (a private office location either within their home or workplace), which as Iacono et al. (2016, p. 10) suggest, may reassure some participants in feeling able to "open up" and as Hanna (2012, p. 241) acknowledges, both the researcher and the respondent are able to remain in a safe location without imposing on each other's personal space. No third party was present in any of the interviews.

3.4.1.2 Interview guide

Semi-structured interview guides were developed for the interviewees, which covered the key issues specified in the literature related to CSV, its antecedents and outcomes. The researcher subsequently sought feedback on the draft version from the supervisory team and three industry practitioners within their network before the questions were finalised. After developing the initial interview guide, a series of five interviews with nine subject academic experts were conducted to further refine the final version.

Accordingly, the interview guide was divided into two sections supported by literature (e.g., Dembek et al., 2016; Maltz & Schein, 2012) and the experts' feedback: The first section initially included questions focused on gaining a better understanding of the precursors of CSV, and the concepts considered were: sponsor brand capabilities, sponsor brand consistency, the symbiotic relationship between sponsor and sport property, and sponsor brand cultivation. This was followed by a further ten questions exploring the potential outcomes and beneficiaries of CSV. A summary of the concepts, supporting definitions and literature, and questions used for each are contained within Table 3.3.

The second section aimed to explore awareness and knowledge of the CSV concept. It included a definition of CSV (Porter & Kramer, 2011), succeeded by asking whether the respondent had heard of the term before, and if so, whether they considered sponsorship of the sport property to be important with regards to CSV.

Table 3.3. Summary of concepts and definitions used to develop pilot study interview questions.

Concept	Definition	Question(s) asked
Sponsor brand capabilities	Unique, firm-specific resources embedded within the sponsor organisation, whose purpose is to improve the productivity of the other resources possessed by the firm and sport property (Makadok, 2001).	In your view, what are the unique capabilities of (your organisation / the sponsor(s) (of x event)?
Sponsor brand consistency	The emphasis placed by a firm on profitability versus social benefit (Maltz & Schein, 2012).	How would you describe your (organisation's / sponsor(s)'s) approach towards contributing to society?

To what extent is your (organisation's / the sponsor(s)'s) approach to contributing towards society a factor in contributing towards the motivation for the sponsorship deal(s)?

How do you decide which (if any) societal issues to attempt to address? Are some given priority over others?

Are there any systems or processes in place to evaluate the impacts of your approach to addressing societal issues on financial performance? If so, please can you explain what these involve? Is there any way to measure the link between addressing societal issues and financial performance? |
| Sponsor brand cultivation | The portion of value aimed at the community of need beyond the shareholders must be able to be cultivated by other entities beyond the boundaries of the firm. This can be achieved in at least four ways: supply-chain influence, competitive response, technology transfer and NGO partnership (Maltz & Schein, 2012). | With the exception of the (sport event property / sponsor(s)), do other organisations combine in some way with your organisation to contribute towards the fulfilment of the sponsorship(s)? If so, what are these organisations? How does this happen? |
| Sponsor brand and sport property symbiosis | A mutually beneficial, intrinsic relationship between a sponsor and a sport property (Farrelly et al., 2005). | How would you describe your partnership with the (sport event property / sponsor(s)) regarding the sponsorship?

What is your level of involvement in the activation/leveraging strategy?

To what extent do you collaborate? Do you share any resources? Are there any joint initiatives? Would you be able to give an example of this collaboration? |
| CSV outcomes | CSV may lead to benefits for several different stakeholder groups: the MSE property (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006); sponsor brand(s) (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999); the host city or region of the event (Horne, 2017); consumers and citizens (Ritchie, 1984). | Are there any specific societal issues the sponsorship(s) is attempting to address? If so, what are these?

Who do you think benefits from the outcomes of the sponsorship(s)? How do you perceive that they benefit from this?

(If not mentioned) How does the sponsor benefit from this? How does the sport event property benefit from this? How does the host city benefit |

3.4.1.3 Data analysis strategy

The analysis of qualitative data is a dynamic, intuitive, creative, and often arduous process of reasoning, thinking and theorising, often lacking a clear division with the process of data collection (Basit, 2003). According to Miles (1979), qualitative data can be considered an 'attractive nuisance' due to the appeal of its richness but the associated complexity of unearthing analytic linkages and patterns. Bryman (2016) explains that techniques for analysing qualitative data comprise broad guidelines rather than unambiguous rules. Therefore, "certain priorities must be established, assumptions made during the design and data-collection phases must be clarified, and a particular research course must be set" (Lune & Berg, 2017, p. 90).

Thematic analysis (TA) using both a manual coding process and NVivo qualitative data analysis software was employed to examine participants' perspectives regarding the factors contributing to the creation of shared value and its benefits in the context of MSE sponsorship, along with the strategies utilised to achieve this. TA is a theoretically flexible, foundational method for qualitative analysis, which involves searching across a data set, such as a number of interviews, to find repeated patterns of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2019; Clarke & Braun, 2017). Although some academics suggest TA is not a specific method, but rather a process which can be incorporated into established academic traditions such as grounded theory (Boyatzis, 1998; Ryan & Bertand, 2000), Braun and Clarke insist TA is a method in its own right (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2019), outlining several advantages of the approach. These include flexibility, generating unanticipated insights, highlighting similarities and differences across a data set, and being conducive to generating thick descriptions.

Braun and Clarke's work emphasises an organic approach to coding and theme development and the active role of the researcher in these processes (Clarke & Braun, 2017). It is widely accredited in providing guidance for researchers regarding the conceptualisation, consideration and practice of TA (e.g., Alhojailan, 2012; Braun et al., 2019; Nowell et al., 2017). TA provides accessible and systematic procedures for generating codes and themes from qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2017). A *code* is the smallest unit of analysis, relating to a chunk of data identified and extracted from a data item, such as an interview (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In qualitative inquiry this is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data (Saldaña, 2013). In turn, a *theme* is an outcome of coding, categorisation, or analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself, coded (Saldaña, 2013). A theme therefore captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents to the researcher some level of patterned response or meaning within a data set. Thus, coded data differ from themes, which are often broader (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

TA has been successfully applied within several different research contexts, including sport management (e.g., Dowling et al., 2018; Inoue et al., 2015; Misener et al., 2013). Braun et al. (2019, p. 2) stress that their TA philosophies are not merely a set of "rules" or "procedures" for researchers to rigidly follow or a "recipe for analysis". The authors also express concern with "problematic uses and interpretations (of TA) […] unknowing, unreflexive and indicative of some degree of conceptual confusion" (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p. 590). Rather, a particular merit of their work is the provision of a series of steps for conducting TA, to support the researcher's "reflective and thoughtful engagement with their data and their reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process" (p. 594). These phases are designed to assist the researcher in engaging with the authors' ideas in a fluid and contemplative manner (Braun et al., 2019) and comprise: *familiarising yourself with the data; generating initial codes; generating initial themes* (revised from 'searching for themes' in Braun & Clarke's more recent works – to emphasise that themes are not 'in' the data, pre-existing analysis, awaiting retrieval; Braun & Clarke, 2019); *reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and producing the report* (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2019). These phases are outlined in relation to the specific processes engaged by the researcher in conducting the current study, in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4. Phases of thematic analysis applied to the pilot and main studies (adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase	Summary of process undertaken
Familiarisation with the data	The process of analysis began by starting to notice, and look for, patterns of meaning and potential interest in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher conducted all of the interviews, recording brief field notes for each (see Appendix D for an example from the pilot study and Appendix E for an example from the main study) and transcribed them verbatim. Examples of interview transcripts from the pilot (Appendix F) and main (Appendix G) studies are contained within the appendices. Saunders et al. (2012) explain that the transcription process is extremely time consuming, suggesting a number of alternative ways of reducing the period needed to transcribe audio recordings, such as using voice recognition software, paying a touch typist to perform the service or only transcribing those sections of each audio recording that are pertinent to the research. However, transcribing is an interpretive act rather than simply a technical procedure, and the close observation entailed can lead to observing unsuspected phenomena (Saunders et al., 2012). This closeness to the data and the attention given to what is actually there rather than what is expected can facilitate insights which emerge during analysis (Bailey, 2008). Therefore, none of these alternative options were deemed suitable and all transcriptions were undertaken by the researcher. The field notes and transcripts were subsequently used to generate initial codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
Generating initial codes	This phase involved the systematic creation of initial codes from the data set, collating data relevant to each code (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The coding process is a key part of the analysis (Miles et al., 2018), which can be more "data-driven or theory-driven" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). In this case, the latter of these scenarios was more applicable, as a number of literature-based variables and definitions were identified to inform the questions contained within the semi-structured interview guide (Table 3.3). This approach corresponded to a

deductive or a priori coding approach (Miles et al., 2018), where a provisional 'start list' of codes was generated prior to field work. Coding can be performed either manually or through specialist computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) programmes (Basit, 2003; Bryman, 2016; Saldaña, 2013) such as *NVivo* (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Within NVivo, it is possible to import several documents directly from Microsoft Word and code on screen. *Coding stripes* can be made visible in the margins of documents so that the researcher can see at a glance which codes have been used where (Welsh, 2002). In addition, it is possible to run search queries and to look-up words and phrases across the imported data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Furthermore, the availability of the software and associated training sessions within the researcher's university institution (Coventry University) was beneficial.

There are certain merits and drawbacks to both manual and CAQDAS approaches. For instance, manual coding can help the researcher to develop an understanding of the fundamentals of data analysis, and can offer more control over and ownership of the work (Saldaña, 2013) - but may be tedious and frustrating (Basit, 2003). On the other hand, CAQDAS-supported coding can help to collect, mark up, sort, and re-organise the data (Weitzman & Miles, 1995). The software can efficiently store, organise, manage and reconfigure large amounts of data to enable human analytic reflection (Saldaña, 2013; Welsh, 2002). However, it is important to bear in mind "the software can only give us back interpretable versions of what we put in" (Lune & Berg, 2017). Essentially, CAQDAS packages do not perform the analysis for the researcher, who must still create the categories and decide what to retrieve and collate (Basit, 2003). This process should still reflect the analyst's awareness of recurring ideas and topics in the data (Bryman, 2016). Furthermore, a risk when using a sophisticated tool is the potential to make mistakes without realising to have done so (Gilbert, 2002).

Therefore, it was decided to undertake elements of both approaches in order to harness the respective benefits of each, and minimise the risks associated with each method when used in isolation. The manual process consisted of: reviewing the audio recordings and initially generated notes and utilising Microsoft Word to annotate transcripts (using the 'new comment' facility); applying different font colours to highlight and indicate potential patterns across the data set; creating a document which captured initial codes from each of the interviews; and arranging these codes within a framework of tables created within the files. In addition, an NVivo 'project' was created, to which the transcripts were uploaded and codes were generated using the same thought process to the previous approach. This generated a number of case 'nodes' (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013) within the project file, by highlighting, dragging, and dropping the relevant text excerpts into the respective nodes. At this stage, a set of codes also emerged that did not seem to fit within a theme anywhere, and were temporarily labelled as 'miscellaneous'.

Generating initial themes　　This phase involved considering how different codes may combine to form overarching themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes are where the interpretative analysis of the data occurs, in relation to which arguments about the phenomenon being examined are made (Boyatzis, 1998). When generating themes, Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggest looking for aspects within the coding such as repetitions, metaphors and analogies, transitions between topics, similarities and differences, linguistic connectors such as 'because' or 'since', and theory-related material. Within the manual process, selected text was copied

and pasted below different theme headings, with each theme highlighted in different coloured fonts for ease of identification and recognition. Within NVivo, the codes contained within the original nodes were assigned to one or more 'parent nodes' using the drag and drop facility within the software. As with the manual approach, this process represented the beginning of the creation of a hierarchy in which nodes representing sub-categories are placed under higher-level nodes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

Reviewing themes	Firstly, the coded extracts were reviewed to determine whether they appeared to form a coherent pattern, or whether they would be more appropriately housed elsewhere or discarded; and secondly, the entire data set was reviewed again to ascertain whether the generated themes 'worked' in relation to the data set, coding any additional data within themes that were missed during the earlier stage of coding and identifying any potential new themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Within NVivo, a combination of 'text search queries', and 'coding stripes' were used to investigate each theme.
Defining and naming themes	Themes should be 'defined and refined', identifying the essence of what each theme is about and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This type of iterative analysis advocates a flexible coding structure, whereby inductive codes were added to an initial template, created using a deductive approach (Guest et al., 2012; King, 2012), utilising initial codes formed from concepts identified within the literature review.
Producing the report	The endpoint of the analysis is the reporting of the content and meaning of patterns in the data, where themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs which the researcher has identified before, during, and after analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2000). In the case of this study, the reporting of results (and subsequent discussion) are presented in the succeeding chapters. One important outcome of the pilot study was the refinement of the interview discussion guide for the main study (Table 3.7). This constituted the addition of questions for further probing of each of the variables developed during the literature review and refined during the TA process, and the development of certain questions to better facilitate the articulations of respondents.

3.4.2 Main study

3.4.2.1 Participants and data collection procedures

For the main study, the purposive sampling criteria were tightened in order to seek practitioners directly involved in key decision making explicitly related to MSE sponsorship, either as a sponsor or MSE manager, to more closely align with the overall aims of the study (Table 3.5). Specifically, this was to better explore the further potential of the dyadic relationship between sponsor and MSE in creating value for both parties and with other actors involved in wider sport networks and ecosystems (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020; Woratschek et al., 2014a).

It has also been argued that the academic community can be more proactive about gaining access to and building relationships with sport organisations, in order to bridge the gap between research and practice (Singer et al., 2019). Therefore, it was important to ensure that "people within […] sport organizations

are helping to create and drive the research so that […] we have a better chance of acting with them and for them" (Singer et al., 2019, p. 53).

Table 3.5. Development of sample profile from pilot study to main study.

Pilot study data collection	Main study data collection	Explanation of change(s)
N = 10 Senior managers with a remit for sponsorship (derived from sport governing bodies, sport event sponsors, sponsorship agencies and professional sport teams).	*N = 25* Senior managers with a remit for sponsorship (derived from sport governing bodies of MSEs, and MSE sponsors).	Tighter sampling frame (i.e., no longer including professional sport teams but exclusively practitioners that are directly involved in sponsorship of MSEs, either as a sponsor or MSE manager).

Similar to the pilot test, initial contact with participants was made via LinkedIn to assess availability and all participants received a participant information sheet (Appendix H) and were asked to read and sign an informed consent form (Appendix I) explaining the purpose of the study. The final sample of the main study comprised 25 participants, interviewed during the period between 31st January and 30th April, 2019, as shown in Table 3.6. In this case, the saturation point (i.e., no new information or themes detected; Guest et al., 2006) was deemed to be appropriate after 25 interviews, with participants representing a broad range of sponsors and MSE properties (also see Table 3.6 for further details on the sample). Each semi-structured interview was conducted via Skype, based on the benefits previously explained in the pilot study section. The duration of the main study interviews ranged from 25 minutes to 80 minutes, taking place in a private office with interviewees situated within their own chosen environment. Once again, these were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, with a numerical identifier assigned to each participant.

Table 3.6. Main study sample profile.

Participant number	Nationality	Years of experience	Organisation type	Sponsor industry/MSE type	Job title	Interview date	Duration (minutes)
MSE201	Italy	19	MSE	Wrestling; third-order	Senior Director Marketing & Commercial Operations	31st January 2019	47
Sponsor202	UK	50	MSE Sponsor	Beverage	Sports Marketing Entrepreneur	1st February 2019	30
MSE203	Australia	23	MSE	Cricket; second-order	General Commercial Manager	7th February 2019	30
MSE204	Brazil	12	MSE	Volleyball; second-order	Executive Commercial Director	20th February 2019	67
Sponsor205	UK	18	MSE Sponsor	Electronics	Brand & Marketing Consultant	7th February 2019	80
MSE206	France	18	MSE	Motorsport; third-order	Chief Marketing Officer	18th April 2019	26
Sponsor207	UK	15	MSE Sponsor	Media	Head of Sponsorship Sales	1st February 2019	33
Sponsor208	UK	10	MSE Sponsor	Automotive	Sponsorship Manager	31st January 2019	44
Sponsor209	UK	28	MSE Sponsor	Beverage	Corporate Events Manager	31st January 2019	58
Sponsor210	UK	15	MSE Sponsor	Media	Senior Sponsorship Manager	1st February 2019	30
MSE212	Sweden	20	MSE	Athletics; third-order	Sustainability Strategist - Destination & Project Development	27th February 2019	48
Sponsor213	UK	16	MSE Sponsor	Financial services	Global Head of Sponsorship	20th February 2019	58

MSE214	UK	12	MSE	Athletics; second-order	Head of Brand Partnerships	14th February 2019	54
MSE215	UK	18	MSE	Rugby; second-order	Head of Commercial Partnerships	14th February 2019	31
MSE216	UK	37	MSE	Athletics; second-order	Commercial Director	21st February 2019	45
Sponsor218	Germany	10	MSE Sponsor	FMCG	Senior Brand Manager	5th March 2019	47
MSE219	UK	12	MSE	Football; second-order	Event Promotions Lead	12th March 2019	47
MSE220	Rep. Ireland	10	MSE	Golf; second-order	Marketing and Brand Manager	6th March 2019	52
Sponsor221	France	18	MSE Sponsor	Petroleum	Global Sponsorship Strategy & Partnerships Manager	7th March 2019	52
MSE222	France	16	MSE	E-Sports; third-order	Head of Sponsorship & Business Development	4th April 2019	50
MSE223	UK	23	MSE	Athletics; third-order	Commercial Director	22nd March 2019	57
Sponsor226	Netherlands	19	MSE Sponsor	Timepieces	Sponsorships Senior Manager	4th April 2019	30
Sponsor227	UK	32	MSE Sponsor	Electronics	Marketing Director	30th April 2019	54
MSE228	UK	18	MSE	Darts; third-order	Chief Executive	3rd April 2019	25
Sponsor229	UK	10	MSE Sponsor	Financial services	Brand & Sponsorship Manager	26th April 2019	41

Note: All interviews were conducted before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.4.2.2 Interview guide

It became apparent during the analysis of the pilot study that further probing of both the means and the outcomes of creating shared value within the proposed framework for understanding CSV in MSEs was necessary, as well as a broader understanding of the relationships between these elements. As a result, the interview guide was significantly refined, with updates made to several existing questions, and a number of additional questions added (summarised in Table 3.7).

In part 1 of the interview guide, capabilities and consistency were now explored at an organisational level (i.e., from the perspective of both sponsors and MSE properties) rather than purely in relation to the sponsor. Additional questions associated with each of these aspects were also added to the interview guide to gain a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives relating to these ideas. Likewise, 'sponsor brand cultivation' was modified to 'cultivation', in order to reflect that this element represents a process which takes place, rather than an organisational attribute (as is the case for capabilities and consistency). In terms of the section of the interview guide which explores the symbiosis between sponsor brand and MSE property, a greater emphasis was added to explore the scope for improvement within a partnership. Finally, in terms of CSV outcomes, it became apparent during the pilot study that several respondents were unable to articulate a range of CSV-related stakeholders without being prompted. Therefore, a further topic was added relating to exploring the key stakeholders of the respondent's organisation. In part 2, a more concise definition and example of CSV was included for greater ease and clarity of explanation to participants, as well as additional probing into CSR-related activity and the organisational ownership model based on participant responses in the pilot study.

Table 3.7. Development of interview discussion guide from pilot study to main study.

Pilot study data collection (May – July 2018)	Content added (+) /removed (-)/ modified (~) for main study data collection (January – April 2019)	Explanation of change(s)
PART 1		
Sponsor brand capabilities	*~ Organisational capabilities*	*Explored from the perspective of both sponsors and MSE properties rather than purely in relation to the sponsor.*
• In your view, what are the unique capabilities of your organisation?	+ Could you give examples of firm-specific and unique resources? + Do you think these brand capabilities (firm-specific resources) are important? (If so, how? If not, why?)	Further probing of elements contained within variable identified as an outcome of the pilot study. Further understanding of paths between variables identified as an outcome of the pilot study.

Sponsor brand consistency	~ Organisational consistency	Explored from the perspective of both sponsors and MSE properties rather than purely in relation to the sponsor.
• How would you describe your organisation's approach towards contributing to society? • To what extent is your organisation's approach to contributing towards society a factor in contributing towards the motivation for the sponsorship deal(s)? • How do you decide which (if any) societal issues to attempt to address? Are some given priority over others? • Are there any systems or processes in place to evaluate the impacts of your approach to addressing societal issues on financial performance? If so, please can you explain what these involve? Is there any way to measure the link between addressing societal issues and financial performance?	~ How does your organisation balance financial performance with contributing to society? + Do you think a consistent or balanced approach between financial performance and societal contribution is important? (If so, how? If not, why?)	Further probing of elements contained within variable identified as an outcome of the pilot study. Further understanding of paths between variables identified as an outcome of the pilot study.
Sponsor brand cultivation	~ Cultivation	Represents a process rather than an organisational attribute
• With the exception of the sport event property, do other organisations combine in some way with your organisation to contribute towards the fulfilment of the sponsorship(s)? If so, what are these organisations? How does this happen?	+ What do these other organisations contribute? + Do you think that combining with other organisations other than the sport property is important in order to deliver the sponsorship effectively? (If so, how? If not, why?)	Further probing of elements contained within variable identified as an outcome of the pilot study. Further understanding of paths between variables identified as an outcome of the pilot study.
Symbiosis between sponsor brand and sport property		
• How would you describe your partnership with the sponsor/ sport event property regarding the sponsorship? • What is their level of involvement in the activation/leveraging strategy?	+ Is there anything in the partnership you would like to improve? What and why?	Further probing of elements contained within variable identified as an outcome of the pilot study.

• To what extent do you collaborate? Do you share any resources? Are there any joint initiatives? Would you be able to give an example of this collaboration?		

Outcomes

• Are there any specific societal issues the sponsorship(s) is attempting to address? If so, what are these? • Who do you think benefits from the outcomes of the sponsorship(s)? How do you perceive that they benefit from this? • (If not mentioned) How does the sport event property benefit from this? How does the host city benefit from this? How do consumers benefit from this? How do citizens benefit from this? How do you, the sponsor benefit from this?	+ Who are your key stakeholders? Have you taken any kind of stakeholder mapping exercise? If not, why?	It became apparent during the pilot study that several respondents were unable to articulate a range of stakeholders without being prompted.

PART 2

CSV

• **Definition:** Creating Shared Value (CSV) is defined as "policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates. Shared value creation focuses on identifying and expanding the connections between societal and economic progress" (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 66). CSV is not about redistributing existing value, but rather about controlling the link between social and economic progress to create more value, which can be shared amongst multiple stakeholders (**Show excerpt example depicting differences between CSR and CSV**). • Have you heard of this term before?	~ **Definition:** Creating Shared Value (CSV) is defined as: "policies and practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates." CSV can benefit multiple stakeholders. (**Show abridged example depicting differences between CSR and CSV**) + Do you have a dedicated CSR function within your business? + Please could you briefly describe your organisation's ownership model (i.e., are there shareholders, a board of directors etc.)?	More concise definition and example for ease of explanation to participants. Additional probing into CSR-related activity based on participant responses in the pilot study. Additional probing into ownership models based on participant responses in the pilot study.

	+ Industry example: Nestle. + Proposed conceptual framework.	Both to be used if needed in order to elucidate responses regarding CSV outcomes and relationships between variables contained within model.

- Do you think your sponsorship of this event is important for CSV? If so how?

3.4.2.3 Data analysis strategy

As for the pilot study, TA was employed to analyse the main study data, and develop the analysis which emerged from the pilot study. A manual approach was deemed to be especially useful for data familiarisation, highlighting the transcripts for different codes, and creating new files which contained excerpts of texts assigned to each of the created themes. NVivo software was again used and found to be particularly effective for searching across all of the transcripts within the data set simultaneously rather than transcript-by-transcript. Coding stripes were utilised to visually highlight where codes appeared within the interviews (Welsh, 2002). This meant than NVivo offered an expedient way of quickly being able to search, re-code and re-sort data.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are central to the research process (Bryman, 2016; Grix, 2019). Practically, ethics is concerned with what "ought to be done and what ought not to be done […] what is right and proper to do. It calls for a moral perspective […] rather than a practical one" (Denscombe, 2002, p. 175). Saunders et al. (2012, p. 231) outline the importance of following a number of ethical principles to ensure that the researcher adopts appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour when undertaking research. These include: the integrity and objectivity of the researcher; respect for others and the avoidance of harm; the voluntary nature of participation and right to withdraw; informed consent of participants; and ensuring the confidentiality of data and the privacy and anonymity of participants. It has been argued that these principles are even more important when applied to qualitative research, which often intrudes into the lives of participants' more than quantitative research (Punch, 2000).

The researcher took into account these considerations for both the pilot and main stages of the study. Firstly, this involved acting openly and with integrity, avoiding deception, dishonesty and misrepresentation – both in terms of communicating with participants and the reporting of findings. Secondly, the researcher built a respectful and professional rapport with each respondent, taking care to minimise any potential for stress or embarrassment during the research process. This involved providing each participant with a brief introduction to the aims and scope of the research, demonstrating interest in their career background and job role, and providing opportunities to clarify and address any

potential questions or concerns. Interviews took place in a secure, convenient and private office location for both the participant and the researcher. Thirdly, although interviews do take up participants' time, it was clearly explained that their contributions were voluntary via the participant information sheet. Similarly, fourthly, the informed consent form provided participants with sufficient information and assurances to make an informed, wilful decision about their participation, and to sign the form to acknowledge this. Finally, numerical identifiers were assigned to censor participant identities and guarantee response anonymity within the reporting of findings, alongside the anonymization of sponsor organisations and MSE properties. Signed informed consent forms, audio recordings and transcripts were stored in a password protected, university-approved, cloud-based drive (OneDrive). Participants were offered the option of being identified and recognised for their contribution and four did provide such permission, so can be acknowledged accordingly as follows:

Matt Porter, Chief Executive (The Professional Darts Corporation).

Nicky Homes, Commercial Director (The Great Run Company).

Patrick Nally, Sports Marketing Entrepreneur (Founder of *WestNally* and credited as a pioneer of modern sports marketing; e.g., Skinner, 2010; Tomlinson, 2005).

Tom Whiteside, Sponsorship Manager (Toyota UK).

In order to help overcome ethical dilemmas and best ensure that high ethical standards are met within academic research, ethical codes and research ethics committees play an essential role within academic institutions (Saunders et al., 2012). Before any data collection could begin, the researcher applied for, and was subsequently granted, ethical approval for the study using Coventry University's 'CU Ethics' system. An online application was created alongside the submission of the participant information and informed consent forms, and a copy of the interview guide. Approval was confirmed on 3rd April 2018, authenticating that the research adheres to the Coventry University Code of Ethics (Coventry University, 2021). For details of the full ethical application please see Appendix J.

3.6 Reliability, validity, and positionality

Reliability and validity are critical concepts for achieving rigor in both qualitative and quantitative research (Cypress 2017). Although the terms 'reliability' and 'validity' are often taken to be synonymous, they infer different meanings in relation to the evaluation of measures of concepts: Reliability is concerned with the consistency of measuring data collection techniques and analytic procedures (Saunders et al., 2012) whilst validity relates to the extent to which a measure of a concept is a true measure of that concept (Bryman, 2016). Both reliability and validity constructs should be considered in order to establish and assess quality and consistency in research (Saunders et al., 2012). Churchill (1979) suggests that marketers are better served with multi-item rather than single-item

measures of constructs, to enhance reliability and validity. However, Stenbacka (2001, p. 551) argues that traditionally-accepted quality concepts in research are more appropriate for quantitative research and should therefore be adapted when pursuing qualitative research:

> "Quality concepts relevant for quantitative research with a purpose of explaining are discussed as if they were relevant even when a qualitative study has the purpose of generating understanding. This use of irrelevant quality concepts leads to unnecessary limitations and to false conclusions of social phenomena."

This notion is supported by Bryman (2016), who suggests that qualitative studies can integrate external (the degree to which a study can be replicated) and internal (the level of agreement between members of a research team about observations or findings) reliability, as well as external (the degree to which findings can be generalised across social settings) and internal (congruence between researcher observations and the development of theory) validity with little change other than to modulate the salience of measurement issues. Alternatively, they can be judged or evaluated according to different criteria from those used by quantitative researchers. Regarding the latter possibility, Lincoln and Guba (1985) specify assessing a qualitative study via its *trustworthiness*.

Trustworthiness builds on the key criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Firstly, credibility concerns the assurance of the truth of the findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose that 'prolonged engagement' is necessary for establishing credibility. Effectively, this equates to spending an appropriate amount of time in the field learning about the phenomenon of interest. In this case, the researcher was active in both viewing and attending a range of MSEs over a number of years, both before and during the doctoral study; gained previous industry experience by working for organisations involved in sport sponsorship; and has teaching and research experience in the field of marketing, both within a business/society and sport management context. In addition, 'member checking' was employed during and after the interviews had been conducted to ensure that the participants' 'voices' were accurately portrayed (Bryman, 2016). Member checking is a quality control process (Harper & Cole, 2012) which involves sharing findings with participants, and allowing them to provide critical feedback on them (Creswell, 2007). During the interviews, this included asking follow-up questions and where necessary, re-stating key ideas that the participants had explained, in order to check that their sentiments had been interpreted accurately. Once the interviews had been completed, each participant was sent a summary of the key ideas that emerged from their interview and asked to comment on their accuracy.

Secondly, transferability relates to the degree to which the research results can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. As mentioned previously, the researcher facilitated the transferability judgment by a potential user through thick description (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). For instance, one could potentially transfer the questions asked in the interviews to other organisations or sectors of industry beyond sport. That is, CSV is important in all societal contexts (Porter & Kramer, 2011); MSEs have connections with a variety of social actors in addition to sponsors (Horne, 2017);

and sponsors of MSEs are often involved in sponsorship deals in other contexts and there may be spill-over effects (Cobbs et al., 2016) of the creation of shared value to these other environments.

Thirdly, dependability concerns the aspect of consistency – in essence, the prospect of the same findings being reached should the study be repeated, or overseen independently by another researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Whilst the interpretivist approach undertaken ensues that the researcher is part of the data collection process (Irshaidat, 2019), and a certain degree of subjectivity is inherent (Saunders et al., 2012), a number of external reviews provided reassurance that the findings emerged organically, within the boundaries of the scope of the study. These reviews included annual 'Performance Review Panels' (PRPs) at the awarding university, where the data analysis process was presented to, and subsequently discussed, with the supervisory team, an appointed independent external chair, and a subject expert from within the university faculty. Furthermore, the study was endorsed by a Board Director of the European Sponsorship Association (ESA), a not-for-profit membership association recognised as the independent and objective authority on all sponsorship matters within Europe (ESA, 2021). In addition, provisional results were presented to and discussed with academic colleagues during a marketing and communications research forum at the researcher's current institution of employment (Nottingham Trent University).

Fourthly, conformability relates to the extent to which the study's findings arise from the data provided by participants as opposed to researcher bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). During the interviews, the interviewer adopted an impartial stance regarding the specific sponsors and sport event properties being discussed. In addition to helping to establish credibility, the member checking process previously outlined can also help to minimise researcher bias. Authenticity criteria can also relate to issues concerning the wider political impact of research (Bryman, 2016).

Furthermore, in order to further aid reliability and validity in this study, the researcher triangulated the data. Triangulation is where a number of sources are used to double-check and confirm a point, issue or observation (Stokes, 2011). Two of the interviews conducted within this study involved a sponsor and a MSE property involved in the same sponsorship arrangement, meaning that multiple perspectives on their relationship were obtained. Additionally, the researcher sought to corroborate certain statements and assertions made by participants, where the data may have been openly available via sources such as corporate press releases, company websites and published news reports. However, it should be acknowledged that triangulation within an interpretivist paradigm cannot confirm any answer or specific truth, but is used to provide an additional layer of richness to the data (Stokes, 2011). In this regard, Hall (1992, p. 258) argues that it is not possible for researchers to produce the same findings as each other because "we all speak from a particular place, […] history, […] experience, […] culture, without being contained by that position". As a result, the respective positions of the researcher and research participants within the wider social structure, and their effect on how the researcher understands the world, should be recognised and taken into account during the research process (Moser, 2008).

Positionality is a strategy employed to contextualise such research observations and interpretations (Cloke et al., 2000) and is crucial to knowledge generation. Merriam et al. (2001) construe a researcher's 'insider/outsider status' (in terms of race, class, gender, culture and other factors) of a studied group as being a key element of positionality, whilst acknowledging that the insider/outsider distinction is blurred, complex, and liable to change at different stages of the research. When interviewing 'elite' senior directors and executives it was important for the researcher to present himself in such a way as to optimise participant responses, whilst maintaining the integrity of the research itself (Morris, 2009). This involved striking a balance between emphasising to participants the value and importance of their input (Herod, 1999), displaying a degree of knowledge in the subject area to establish credibility (Richards, 1996), and being perceived as unthreatening and honourable (Desmond, 2004). In the interviews, the researcher attempted to embody these principles by briefly discussing his background and demonstrating a level of proficiency in the topic area, whilst recognising the interviewee as an authoritative expert and allowing them to speak as freely, openly and in-depth as possible.

3.7 Summary

This chapter detailed the methodological approach of the study. The researcher's selection of data collection, analysis and interpretation approaches should be guided by and understood within their ontological and epistemological assumptions. As the focus of the research is to discover and comprehend the viewpoints of key decision-makers involved in the process of sponsorship of MSEs, it is underpinned by an anti-foundationalist ontology, which holds that reality is socially and broadly constructed by social actors. This is aligned with an interpretivist epistemology, which is concerned with understanding the diverse perspectives of senior managers regarding the creation of shared value in the sport ecosystem, and acknowledges the researcher's inherent connection to the research in attempting to reach conclusions by drawing upon the lived experiences and collected accounts of respondents.

Based on these ontological and epistemological foundations, the methodological stance concerns the strategy employed to undertake the research. It was deemed that a qualitative approach was most suitable in order to interpret the multifaceted constructed realities of participants. As CSV remains in need of further investigation, adopting a qualitative approach in exploring this context offered several advantages. By selecting participants with their own interpretations of reality, it was possible to develop 'thick descriptions', allowing for deep understanding of social phenomena and an authentic representation of participants' 'voices'. This approach can provide a sound basis for multiple social realities to be collated, interpreted, and understood in relation to current theory, enabling the advancement of multi-layered insights that can aid conceptual development.

The study was split into two phases: a pilot stage to preliminarily analyse and subsequently develop the proposed, literature-based conceptual model introduced in the previous chapter; followed by the main

study, which centred on MSE sponsors and MSE properties in order to help further refine the model and gain a more profound understanding of the process of creating shared value and associated outcomes for actors involved in MSEs. Both phases utilised semi-structured interviews with senior industry practitioners, conducted via VoIP (Skype) with participants recruited via a process of purposive sampling. Data collection for the pilot stage comprised 10 interviews and for the main stage comprised 25 interviews, using a more concentrated recruitment criteria. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, and consequently analysed using a reflexive thematic analysis approach, harnessing the benefits of both manual and CAQDAS-based (NVivo) coding strategies.

Ethical obligations were factored in to the research process to help safeguard the well-being of participants and ensure that the study was conducted with openness and integrity. Ahead of the commencement of data collection, the researcher sought and was accordingly granted ethical approval for the study via Coventry University's 'CU Ethics' process. All participants were provided with a participant information sheet and asked to read and sign an informed consent form to verify their agreement to voluntarily take part in the study. Unique numerical identifiers were allocated to expurgate participant identities and guarantee response anonymity within the reporting of findings, alongside the anonymization of sponsor organisations and MSE properties. Signed informed consent forms, audio recordings and transcripts were stored securely.

Finally, aspects of reliability, validity, and positionality were integrated into the study to help establish, assess, and contextualise standards of quality and consistency. From a qualitative perspective, these concepts were adapted to focus on elements of trustworthiness, namely the key criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

4.   Pilot Study Results

4.1 Introduction

The study sought to research four core objectives. These were firstly, exploring the necessity for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations; secondly, investigating the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for the creation of shared value with other actors; thirdly, identifying tangible examples of CSV and providing guidance for practitioners on how CSV can be achieved; and fourthly, examining CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective. In order for these to be addressed, the study was split into two phases: Phase one was a pilot stage which sought to explore and consequently refine a proposed, literature-based conceptual model. Phase two was the main study stage, which focused on MSE sponsors and MSE properties with the aim of further polishing the model and achieving a deeper knowledge of the CSV process and related outcomes for actors involved in MSEs through the integration of knowledge from both literature and experts. Accordingly, this chapter reports the results of the participant interviews from the pilot stage of the research (phase one), using quotes obtained from the interviewees to illustrate classified emergent themes. The results from the main study (phase two) are reported in the next chapter.

The pilot study stage of the research focused on examining the means of creating shared value and its outcomes and beneficiaries through a set of interviews with sponsor and sport property practitioners across multiple countries (as detailed in pilot study sample profile Table 3.2 in the preceding research methodology chapter). This chapter follows the structure of the interview guidelines detailed in the previous chapter and allows for an extension of the topics included there. The findings presented below assist in investigating the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for CSV by helping to shape the conceptual framework. They draw on selected data extracts to illustrate sponsor brand capabilities; sponsor brand consistency; sponsor brand cultivation; the symbiosis between sponsor and sport property; and outcomes of CSV for sport properties; sponsor brands; host cities or regions; citizens; and consumers. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the results of the pilot stage interviews, detailing the sub-codes identified by participants within each concept, which in turn can help to broaden understanding of CSV from a managerial standpoint.

Table 4.1. Summary results of the pilot study interviews.

Concept	Sub-code	PST 101	MSE 102	MSE 103	MSE 104	Sponsor 105	Sponsor 106	Sponsor 107	PST 108	PST 109	Sponsor 110
Sponsor brand capabilities	Expertise		X					X	X	X	X
	Facilitating growth		X	X	X		X			X	
	Large-scale			X			X	X		X	
	Technology		X								X
Sponsor brand consistency	Community	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
	Economics-first vs. mission-driven	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
	Measurability		X	X		X		X			X
	Not strategic			X	X	X					
	Reputational concern		X	X			X				X
Sponsor brand cultivation	Agencies	X				X		X			X
	Local authorities	X									
	NGOs			X				X	X		
	Other sponsors/businesses							X		X	X
	Other sport properties	X								X	
Symbiosis (sponsor-sport property)	Contractual formalities						X	X		X	
	Developing a relationship	X	X	X			X	X		X	
	Mutual benefits	X	X					X	X	X	
	Sharing resources	X	X				X	X			
Sport property outcomes	Goodwill									X	
	Increasing audience		X								
	Increased participation							X			
	Recognition	X									
	Reinvestment		X							X	

Category	Outcome	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8
Sponsor brand outcomes	Brand equity	X	X		X	X	X		
	Employee engagement	X							X
	Extending reach							X	
Host city/region outcomes	Local pride	X							
	Supporting the local economy						X		
Citizen outcomes	Health and/or rehabilitation					X	X		
	Inspiring future generations							X	
	Social programmes	X		X					
Consumer outcomes	Education		X						
	Enhancing consumer experience	X							
	Improving products and services								X

4.2 Means of creating shared value

Sponsor brand capabilities

Sponsor brand capabilities refer to exclusive proficiencies, undertakings, and methods with the potential to provide added value for shareholders and consumers provided that they underpin a differential advantage for the firm. These were acknowledged by eight of the ten interviewees and are highlighted in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Examples of participant responses about sponsor brand capabilities.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Expertise	Core competences of the sponsor	"[Type of sport]…and this is a very important point – is extremely particular and quite niche, and the expertise that can be offered. Not many companies out there understand the uniqueness, necessarily, of our sport." (MSE102) "In comparison with our competitors, we're in an industry where acquisition and merger is relatively normal. Our approach to that dictates that we acquire smaller, regional businesses, but we keep their production facilities, distribution networks, routes to market – within the local community. So when we are engaging with an event or institution, it enables us to operate nationally but activate locally, and that's something that nobody else within our industry is able to offer." (Sponsor107)
Facilitating growth	Sponsor helps to enable opportunities for the MSE to connect with target audiences	"[Country] is a huge, huge market for us – commercially speaking but also, more importantly from a participation standpoint, you know? It's very much to an extent untapped. There are domains we've identified as being significant, which we don't necessarily have at this moment in time. And nor is it, by the way, our core competence to exploit. So we're looking for partners that can balance that out." (MSE102) "[Sponsors help to] bring our brands closer to the fans […] If they bring our product to retail […], it brings our product in tangible ways to fans and to the consumer." (MSE103)
Large-scale	Broad scope of the sponsor's operations and resources	"(…) our scale and size, so being, like I said, the world's third-biggest (manufacturer), we operate in a number of geographies, so across North America, South America, Asia, Africa, we're over all of those continents. So, the first thing we bring is scale. The second thing we typically bring is high brand awareness. So, from a sponsor's perspective, they don't want to be linked with a brand where consumers don't know it. They want to…amplify their own property through whoever they partner with, so that's important." (Sponsor106) "We're very lucky with [Sponsor] and [Sponsor], they are worldwide brands, so it gives us scope to not only go into a market, but the company will be operating in other markets." (PST109)
Technology	Technological proficiencies	"[Sponsor] – they have a bunch of apps which are extremely interesting and that revolve around fan engagement, which we wanted to partner with them on because a part of our commercial strategy and, where the trend of course is going, is we have to be technologically-savvy, as our consumers are." (MSE102) "The simple answer is that we're bringing enjoyment to millions of fans around the world but […] I believe that statement but [it's] a bit, sort of, over the top. Technology is very easy to relate to." (Sponsor110)

The participants' responses, which were based on their views of sponsorship of sport properties, indicate the importance of the proposed means of creating shared value. In fact, all ten participants within the pilot study acknowledged at least one driver of CSV. With regard to sponsor brand capabilities, five participants acknowledged the capacity of the sponsor to facilitate access to potential target audiences, which remain 'untapped' from a commercial and participation standpoint (MSE102) and help bring the MSE 'closer to the fans' (MSE103), enhancing the possibilities for shared value creation.

The importance of sponsor expertise was also recognised by five participants in engendering a greater level of knowledge and adeptness in the sport property. For instance, MSE102 highlighted the high level of understanding its core sponsors demonstrated in the 'uniqueness' of its sport, helping the MSE to redefine productivity in value creation by establishing new programmes and initiatives, such as an e-learning platform. Sponsor107 alludes to its renowned ability to 'operate nationally but activate locally', indicating a tailored approach to CSV where the benefits of a nationally-established reputation and operational knowledge are combined with the nuances of understanding the requirements of a specific market and executing a local activation strategy accordingly. PST109 also recognised the operational benefits of sponsor expertise, in the form of 'kit, equipment, personnel, expertise that we need […] [kit manufacturer] provide the best training and match wear for our players.'

Four respondents mentioned the benefits of the scale and size of a sponsor's operations and resources as a precursor to shared value creation. Sponsor106 referred to an amplification effect provided by one of its brands to a sport property, allowing for the attainment of greater efficiencies in terms of brand building and image. The larger the scale of a sponsor's capabilities, 'it brings our product in tangible ways to fans and to the consumer' (MSE103) and 'there's a lot of properties we can put sponsorship assets on […] when you're dealing with a FMCG brand, you have the ability and the vehicle to get your sponsors' details out to your consumers' (Sponsor106). Such scale benefits offer the potential for greater efficiency and reinforcing mutual relationships with stakeholders in aiding shared value creation.

Finally, technological capabilities were highlighted by multiple participants within the pilot study. MSE102 referenced the mobile proficiency of one of its key sponsors, which it had transmitted to the MSE in terms of assisting it to optimise fan engagement, and also helping to improve the level of education and welfare within the sport via the development of an e-learning platform:

> The global, e-learning platform, which has been made entirely available free of charge to the [sport] community. And it's led by the [MSE property], the content is supplied by the [MSE], using experts and leaders in the fields, to help supplement this information. It's very in-depth. So again, with [Sponsor] and [Sponsor], they help collaborate and provide us with the knowledge that they already have, and the information and the statistics and all that kind of stuff…to feed into the different portals which we have available […]. Because the more educated our stakeholders can be about the different subjects of the [sport], the better the levels of […] welfare. (MSE102)

Furthermore, Sponsor110 explained its significant technological contribution to a sport property:

> We sell a significant amount of the technology that we develop […] into a variety of different sectors, and that's quite important. The biggest thing that [Sponsor] has done, in my opinion [is] more for sustainability in the last five years than any other company in the world. (Sponsor110)

By driving technological advancements within the sport via the 'important marketing platform' of the sport property, this sponsor has been able to strengthen its competitive advantage as the technology has filtered into wider societal usage, which fans and consumers can 'relate to.'

Sponsor brand consistency

Sponsor brand consistency refers to the professed equilibrium between the generation of shareholder and social value in order to create shared value. These were recognised by all ten interviewees and are highlighted in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Examples of participant responses about sponsor brand consistency.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Community	Business strategies with a community focus	"It's about engagement with the local community. So that building of value locally is a key pillar of our approach to sponsorship, while of course the overall goal is around brand awareness and building equity and loyalty. We think that this shared value offers us a way of doing that more effectively than something like advertising, which could cost an equivalent amount of money." (Sponsor107)
		"A lot of it is community. Just the power of sport, the values of sport, and the skills you can learn…by partaking in all sports really. But being a team sport, as it is, there's some great values you can take out the game. So for us it's about trying to inspire the next generation of players and fans, supporters, administrators. And you never know, playing the long game of 25, 30 years' time, the child that has a great time at ten years old at a camp could well be the man that signs a cheque to support the club in the future." (PST109)
Economics-first versus mission-driven	The tension between adopting business strategies which aim to create shareholder value and business strategies which aim to create social value	"In brutal honesty [sponsorship] is commercially driven. An increasingly key element of the money that we make is through our venue. So broadly speaking if we divide our income streams into ticketing, broadcast, and commercial, we're finding increasingly now that sponsorship is a key part of that commercial income stream. So yeah, first and foremost it's financially driven […] Our community department is extremely meaningful and has incredible out-turns, but it's not purely altruistic. You know, there is a commercial element to it and we do look to that side of our business very early in the meetings that we have." (PST101)
		"You may choose to do something, but only once it financially makes sense. It would never be a driving factor of, 'let's do this sponsorship deal because they work with this community project or partner.'" (Sponsor106)
Measurability	Measurement of the balance between the creation of shareholder value and social value	"It's not a linear equation, it is more difficult, it is more subtle, but you could make that [measurement] argument for much of marketing. So I think it is very much around engagement. It's around involvement numbers. It's around reach, but if you combine the reach and engagement, you can get some useful KPIs from that. It's almost akin to tracking goodwill – it's tough. You can put things in place around equity measures of your brand, perception of your brand – but I think that ultimately, for us, it's around ensuring that the body or sport that we sponsor are happy – looking at their measures, making sure that our KPIs are still mutual. And then it's

		around tracing back that impact on what we do and how we leverage in the future." (Sponsor107)
		"It's difficult isn't it? In the same way that economists struggle to value the importance of our forests and clean air. It's very similar in this. Sponsorship generally is in my opinion held back by its measurability, because there's always an element of 'finger in the wind' with everything. And now the reality is that we're competing not with other sponsors, not with each other, but with Facebook, Google, Amazon etc. for any advertising dollars. And those are a lot easier to measure and there's a lot more certainty that brands can have around it." (Sponsor110)
Not strategic	Lack of strategic direction in seeking to achieve an appropriate balance between economics-first and mission-driven approaches	"A partnership allows us to focus our CSR efforts on social causes, and they change depending on where we are playing major events and how we can utilise the massive reach and impact the game has on people's lives, so they change from time to time. At a recent event we had in India in 2016, with our partner, UNICEF we worked on this thing about washing hands. So, it chops and changes quite frequently." (MSE103)
		"It's not very strategic right now (social activity)…we are using this programme so we can go to the market and say, 'Hey guys, you can also work with us on social activities and environmental activities', but this is something we are creating right now, it's not there [yet]." (MSE104)
Reputational concern	Concern expressed related to external perception of economics-first and mission-driven approaches	"[Sponsor] told me; 'We don't want this much visibility (on MSE's website). We actually just want our name'. And we have given them the opportunity for the name and the logo…'Because we feel that discredits us and what we're trying to achieve', right? So in the end, there is content that's collaborated, but they don't want to put the logo, it's just the name […] as they think it looks like they paid for it, purely." (MSE102)
		"At [Sponsor], we're the ninth most powerful brand in the world. We can't partner with damaging brands or brands that are known for poor sustainability records or for workforce abuse and things like that." (Sponsor110)

The participants' responses concerning sponsor brand consistency as a precursor to CSV were heavily-focused around both the importance of the community, and the balance between economics-first and mission-driven approaches, with eight of the ten interviewees referring to these ideas in some way. Sponsor107 made a favourable comparison of sponsorship with advertising in terms of building engagement with the local community. This idea was endorsed by PST109, who reasoned that community investments should harness the power and values of sport to help inspire future generations, with the longer-term aim of growing both social and shareholder value:

> We have one partner who has actually put extra money into the partnership and it's been designated to go to a community programme, so we have a fee that comes in and on top of that is an extra fee that will go directly to our community funds, which will deliver that. So it's a very strong pillar of the partnerships now, in the community, you know, workplace engagement, employee engagement, community engagement. I mean the revenue would be a tiny little blip on their bottom line. But the goodwill and the feeling within a local community, and a national community, in return, is almost priceless. (PST109)

A range of perspectives highlighted an apparent delicate balance for firms in harmonising economics-first and mission-driven actions. One participant encapsulated the emphasis placed by a firm on profitability versus social benefit, noting that 'our community department is extremely meaningful and has incredible out-turns, but it's not purely altruistic' (PST101). Similarly, a sponsor explained that any

activity must 'financially make sense' before its mission-driven benefits are considered, suggesting the latter is not the principal driving factor in their decision-making. A further participant was careful to draw a line between these two elements:

> I don't want to overstate that (the motivation for the brand to contribute towards society) because ultimately [sport] is a business that has objectives for [sponsor brand]. So […] they don't exist to make the world a safer place or a better place or all that. We exist to help ultimately drive sales of [sponsor's products], in a simple sense. […] there's elements that I'd say, are more sort of society but at the end of the day it is about…selling more [products]. (Sponsor110)

This response suggests that for this particular sponsor, a detachment exists between economics-first and mission-driven approaches – considered independently of each other instead of conjointly and complimentary. If decision-making tends to be dominated by either approach, in this case the former, then the potential impact of CSV arising from sponsor brand consistency may be constrained. This detachment may also arise due to a lack of awareness or understanding of the potential of CSV. For instance, one sponsor manager opined:

> Fundamentally, my gut feel would be that there still has to be economic benefit for a brand to be able to do this, because if it's not generating cash as a result, it makes no sense. So as things stand within [sponsor's industry], the competitiveness, the low costs…I don't see a place at the moment where you can squeeze extra value out to deliver this CSV, to the benefit of all people. So it may be different with [other sponsors], where they may have higher margins, can afford to do some of this stuff, but, you know, whilst I think the community stuff we do is good and we should continue to do that, I struggle to see a place in the near future where we can move to this CSV model, because I just don't see there being enough cash in the profit pool to allow us to do that. (Sponsor106)

This response illustrates a misinterpretation of CSV and some confusion with CSR, in the respect that CSV principles do not necessitate compromising profitability and re-distributing value, as is the case with CSR. A similar perspective was shared with PST108, who noted, 'We are not in a situation to swap sponsorship money for money for charity.' Some respondents also alluded to a lack of strategic direction in seeking to achieve an appropriate balance between economics-first and mission-driven approaches. MSE104 admitted that strategies that link to social activities are 'not very strategic' and in a similar vein, MSE103 commented that social value initiatives 'chop and change quite frequently.'

The same participant also demonstrated some unease, enquiring as to whether the researcher was 'from the press'? There appears to be a reluctance amongst some, perhaps even an awkwardness, to declare the commercial benefit of sponsorship leveraging. This interviewee may have been concerned about not saying the 'right' thing when replying:

> I have to admit, that's why I asked if this will be for the press. It (contributing towards society) is not a big driver at the moment yet in sponsorship discussions, to be honest. It's coming, I would say in three, four, five years then it'll be more and more important, but I cannot say that has ever been a starting point of any sponsor discussions. (MSE103)

This reputational concern was evident from both sponsor and MSE perspectives within the sample, which indicates the importance for sponsors in striking a balance between gaining visibility and avoiding perceived overexploitation for each sponsorship activity. Sponsor110 also acknowledged the need to protect the reputation of its brand by avoiding collaboration with 'damaging brands' which may carry associations to 'poor sustainability records or for workforce abuse.' MSE102 made reference to a sponsor which expressed uneasiness with placing it's logo on the MSE's website despite successfully working with the MSE on a number of collaborative projects, for fear of being discredited by appearing to have just paid for the opportunity of exposure. This view is also supported by Sponsor106: 'Even when you're trying to do things for the right reasons and do good, consumers will see through if it appears just…almost doing it to appear good.' Furthermore, PST109 recognised the importance of a win-win approach within sponsorship activity:

> I actually think the scope, the landscape, of partnerships is changing. The days of sticking your branding on something, having a board up, tickets for hospitality is almost given now, that's what people expect. They're now looking at genuine ROIs, how can they track the financial kickback to it? So community engagement, how can they access our wider network to try and make their services as well? So everything that was paramount to delivering a good partnership three or four years ago is now accepted as hygiene. So, you've got to be quite creative in terms of how else you can maximise it. (PST109)

One way to delineate CSR and CSV from a consistency perspective is to suggest that CSR-type decisions are made at a corporate brand level, whereas CSV is operationalised at a brand level via a brand's identity model. This is highlighted by Sponsor106, who observed:

> Fundamentally, the brand is there to be bought, be sold; make money. If there's a rationale and a reason from a brand-level perspective to do it (activity which benefits society), we would do it, but it's a by-product. So, you know, we do have conversations around, 'wouldn't it be great to do something for the community', but if there's no payback for doing that then it doesn't work for the brand. Now that's very different for a corporate level, where actually people are more than willing to give their time, because the brands' performing gives air and capability to the corporate side and community side. But at a brand level, I would say it's a by-product (of good financial performance) rather than a dedicated approach to do something for the community. If there's no payback for doing that then it doesn't work for the brand. Your brand identity model […] should help you make those choices - what is the right and the wrong charity to partner with? (Sponsor106)

A related view is held by PST101, who mentioned that their sport property 'does not just pay lip service to CSR' but that their CSR function is funded 'to the tune of 400 grand a year to deliver in the community, that becomes a saleable property.' As a result, this can enable sponsors to efficiently and easily gain access to initiatives that help develop social value.

Measurability of consistency is also a challenge highlighted by five of the sample participants. PST101 asserted that potential sponsors may be lured away by the easily measurable advertising capabilities of global platforms such as Amazon, Facebook, and Google, allowing for a clear return on investment to

be demonstrated. However, Sponsor107 took a more pragmatic view, reasoning that whilst difficult, consistency can be assessed by a number of measures, such as brand reach and engagement, as well as positive dialogue with the sport property and the formation of mutual KPIs. In this regard, Sponsor105 explained how performance-related KPIs are being utilised at their company:

> [Sponsor] is trying to change the sponsorship model to a more revenue-based one. Essentially, they'll go to their [sport properties] and say, "Right, we want you to pay either on-pitch performance or off-pitch metrics". So, we want to guarantee that you'll finish say top 4 in the conference etc. Or they put in the contract, "work with us to ensure that our brand awareness is up by five percent", something along those lines. So, either on-pitch or off-pitch, but very much, we'll guarantee you, say a partnership fee of a million and then the other million will be dependent on the KPIs. (Sponsor105)

Sponsor brand cultivation

Sponsor brand cultivation refers to the realisation of mutually beneficial collaborative strategies via an integration of resources between the sponsor and other actors within the sport ecosystem. These can be supported by a combination of competition, coordination, cooperation, collaboration, and citizenship and were highlighted by seven of the pilot study interviewees. Examples of the types of cultivation that became known in the pilot study interviews are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Examples of participant responses about sponsor brand cultivation.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Agencies	Third-party businesses which provide marketing-related services to sponsor clients	"We've shared agencies that our respective partners have had on retainers. So, when we've run mutual activity rather than just sharing assets, we've actually utilised their agency to bring a mutual campaign together, which has been really effective. It's saved both time and duplicated cost of resource. We've shared back-office systems and staff." (Sponsor107)
		"I believe that, for long-term success, you need to have people that know brands and know rights holders well. But then, you often see as well people that have got too comfortable, people that aren't very good. You know, there's no new creativity etcetera. Always got to have the balance." (Sponsor110)
Local authorities	Administrative bodies within local government	"When it comes to redeveloping the new stand or installing those floodlights, and we approach local authorities for funding assistance – be that grants or a loan on friendly terms – they're very much prepared to listen, because we can tell the story about community engagement, that global exposure, and about direct economic impact because we've lived it for a period of time. And I think the challenge that a lot of sports properties have, when they pitch to local authorities and to commercial brands, is they tell them what they're going to do rather than what they've done. And that's our strength – that we have this credible story now that goes back ten, fifteen, twenty years, of being caring citizens offering firm value to local authorities and to commercial partners, and having a track record that demonstrates that we can deliver." (PST101)
		"Employability is certainly a recurring theme amongst local professional services and local authority partners. The bigger brands, especially consumer goods, no. They have less of a cause, and for them it's far more about brand exposure, and yeah, trying to steer consumers to make a choice between Pepsi and Coke." (PST101)

NGOs	Non-profit organisations that operate independently of any government, which typically exist for the purpose of addressing a social or political issue	"[NGO] is a really good example. We worked with them on a (product's development); so we produced a one-off [product], which for every pack sold there was a donation to the organisation. And when I say we produced with them, it was around getting some of the troops, some of the service personnel who they worked with to come in and (help with production). So there was full involvement from them, it was what they wanted it to be. They were involved in the product itself, the branding and the campaign. And actually we did then leverage our sponsorship of [sport property] to get involved, and ran a charity match which involved [NGO] and also some current and ex-professional players. And utilised our sponsorship opportunity to have access to the ground and to those people to do so." (Sponsor107)
		"[NGO], for instance. [Sponsor] have done loads of stuff with them, and they've done stuff with them through us." (PST108)
Other sponsors/ businesses	Sponsor or other commercial organisations	"We're starting to find that (partners collaborating with each other regarding their sponsorship of a sport property). So yeah, [sponsor a, b, and c], are all central sponsors, so they sponsor the [sport league] but they also sponsor [sport club]. So, they're starting to talk to each other at the start about how can they leverage their agreements. We had three network events last year, we're going to plan five networking events this year. The whole idea and objective of the networking events is to find those projects that come out of them to say; 'Do you know what, this is being delivered by [sportswear brand], [computer brand] and [car brand] and we've collated this project. So, you know, it's definitely something that we're looking at." (PST109)
		"We would very much see (designing a programme to encourage gender diversity) as both a commercial opportunity but also an opportunity for experts in this field to join with us and make what we're trying to do, better. So you know, we have no real interest in designing it completely ourselves, because we aren't experts in gender diversity, clearly. We aren't experts in this sort of thing, so let's try and use companies that are, or certainly have more expertise than us. And then those companies can benefit from telling that story." (Sponsor110)
Other sport properties	Sport organisations such as governing bodies or other MSEs	"We got an award from the [sport governing body] once for our apprenticeship work. So [Sponsor], who've been the auditors for a long time here. They had a guy, who's very active in [city], he's on the committee now actually. And they've sponsored the [team] shirts for 20 years, and their big thing was around employability, and making sure that kids were well-equipped for the world of work, post education. So we've created this, [Sponsor] apprentice partnership, where they would fund eight apprentices every single summer, and we would have them in the community team, gaining their coaching badges, going into the schools, helping with the academy, and yeah, just starting their path into the world of work. So that was a really nice narrative for that sponsor and a natural fit, and one that the [sport governing body] recognised." (PST101)
		"[Sport governing body] are a big supporter, through their partnership agreements and through their collaborative agreements, they distribute money to the community departments and we have several central programmes that are delivered through [sport governing body] funding. So they're probably the biggest driver of it, as a central kind of overarching organisation for all of the clubs." (PST109)

Participant responses relating to sponsor brand cultivation tended to relate to a process of shared value creation with other organisations beyond the sponsor-sport property dyad. As such, rather than just an attribute, cultivation can also be seen as a process that helps boost capabilities and consistency. This indicates the need to relabel 'sponsor brand cultivation' to 'cultivation' and to change its role in the CSV model. Five types of cultivation were apparent in the interviews. Firstly, the role of marketing

agencies in helping to cultivate CSV became apparent, with four of the sample referring to such a connection. PST101 referenced the advantage of sharing agencies with which respective sponsors have a retainer agreement in place, saving time and avoiding a duplication of resources, which can then be utilised elsewhere for other shared value initiatives. Sponsor 110 also emphasised the benefits derived from agencies that have a successful track record of working with sponsors and sport properties, whilst acknowledging the risks of complacency and a lack of inventiveness: 'You often see as well people that have got too comfortable, people that aren't very good. You know, there's no new creativity.' In this case, heightened competition between agencies may induce a competitive response, prompting CSV.

Secondly, although the role of local authorities in fostering cultivation was only mentioned by one participant (PST101), this particular Commercial Director talked at length about their importance in helping to unlock community-related benefits. If presented with a 'credible story' of sport properties 'being caring citizens offering firm value to local authorities and commercial partners, and having a track record that demonstrates that we can deliver', local authorities can boost shared value initiatives with aspects such as access to loans on 'friendly terms' and legislative support. The same participant also stressed the importance of employability to local authorities, suggesting that employability is more greatly amplified in tandem with local sponsors rather than bigger brands, which 'have less of a cause […] for them it's far more about brand exposure.' This suggests a degree of scepticism about the motives of larger sponsors in seeking to cultivate CSV beyond the sponsorship arrangement.

Thirdly, the importance of NGO's in cultivating value was referenced by three participants. Sponsor107 mentioned an armed forces charity which worked with the sponsor to produce a special edition of its product, creating additional revenue for the charity and being further leveraged by the sport property. In another example, this sponsor collaborates with an NGO concerned with developing local communities:

> One of the competitions we ran was with [sportsperson] – the opportunity for [sport] clubs to win two days with him, training, coaching, engagement, involvement. And that really helped the [sport governing body] in their stated aim of taking some of the top-line and the elite [revenue] into grassroots [sport]. So we were able to activate participation amongst adults, we were able to encourage health through that mean, and we were also able to increase the [sport governing body's] reach into their local communities and local clubs. (Sponsor107)

However, another participant (MSE103) was less convinced about the CSV benefits derived from cultivation with NGOs, describing these associations as being more like CSR:

> We have a series of other NGOs that we support, like obesity, racism and the sponsors have their own. But there is very few, other than the foundation (of the federation), that there is a link with the three partners. It's more that we have our own, they have their own, and the foundation is the way that we can combine things. (MSE103)

Fourthly, three participants acknowledged the benefits of cultivation amongst different sponsors of a sport property. By working together in certain ways, sponsors may be able to facilitate additional shared value creation. Sponsor107 refers to an example of cultivation involving 'joint activity with [retailer], who were also a sponsor, because it just made good sense for us both to leverage our sponsorship [of the sport property] at the same time'. The same participant subsequently cited a further example, this time explaining how cultivation can take place at a triadic level:

> There was a major retailer, […] who were really on-board with it (sponsorship-related activity), so another stakeholder there. They spoke with the founder of [NGO] at an awards function and suggested us as a partner to bring it to life and provided us with the route to market, so it was a very nice line-up and association there for all people concerned really. So they [retailer] got some good PR from it, we got some good PR from it and the charity drove that increased awareness and got a real benefit out of both. (Sponsor107)

PST109 took this idea further, referring to the ambition of trying to create a 'similar-minded family' amongst its roster of sponsors. Sponsor110 offered some insight into how this aspiration can work in practice, highlighting its contribution towards a programme to encourage gender diversity within a sport as both a commercial opportunity to develop a new market for its products and a chance to harness the proficiencies of other organisations: 'We aren't experts in gender diversity, clearly […] so let's try and use companies that are, or certainly have more expertise than us. And then those companies can benefit from telling that story.'

Nevertheless, there remains scope for development in terms of sponsors optimising cultivation with other organisations. For instance, Sponsor110 explained the need for greater emphasis on managing stakeholders:

> Stakeholder mapping is always important from a sales perspective. But also from actually mapping out for the business how they can actually maximise these partnerships, and that is where I still believe businesses or sponsors are very weak. They don't utilise a partnership across the business well enough yet. (Sponsor110)

Fifth and finally, two participants alluded to cultivation being apparent in tandem with other sport properties. PST109 discussed the importance of an overarching sport governing body strategy in helping sport properties to combine in delivering central programmes, via supportive funding from the sport governing body. Further to this, PST101 revealed the positive impact of receiving formal recognition from a sport governing body in acknowledgment of the development of a successful apprenticeship scheme. In receiving an award, this provided 'a really nice narrative for that sponsor' in addition to the reputational boost gained by the sport property and the contribution towards employability within the community.

Symbiosis between sponsor and sport property

In addition to the variables discussed above, the importance of a symbiotic relationship between sponsors and sport properties on CSV was referenced by seven participants and examples are outlined in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Examples of participant responses about symbiosis between sponsor and sport property.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Contractual formalities	Legal commitments made by each party which enters into a formal sponsorship agreement ahead of renewing or terminating the contract	"Pre or post those formal, kind of, years of sponsorship, it's a cold relationship because you're not in with them. So again, it just works for everyone's benefit, while it makes sense. As that comes to a close, or particularly as you're coming to re-negotiation phase, you'll get into a different type of relationship until you re-sign or you exit." (Sponsor106) "You do come to a point where you reach that law of diminishing returns. You're looking at doing activity you've already done and the association is embedded." (Sponsor107)
Developing a relationship	Actions taken over a period of time to grow and strengthen a relationship between both parties	"It fundamentally comes down to relationships, once you get stuff to happen. So if you're in a bad relationship place, you will get things declined for what seems no reason. You'll always find a reason to say yes or no. So that's why the relationships are really important – you build those through a sponsorship term to get to a place which benefits both parties. So that's fundamentally the starting point – you're both trying to expand and grow your brands. If you've got conflict between two big partners, you're just going to hurt both of you." (Sponsor106) "The relationship is crucial – because we know that it's a longer-term return on investment, we want to make sure that the partners we're working with are going to be someone that we can work with over a long period of time to activate that. And that's broadly similar and very important for anyone that we'd be involved with. It's not about the pure commercial money invested, versus eyeballs – any activation is very much about the relationship and how we can leverage things over time." (Sponsor107)
Mutual benefits	Benefits jointly accrued by both parties	"We knew that the things we were looking to achieve were…there was a mutual benefit there. So for example, from their [MSE's] perspective it was about increasing attendance across the country. From our perspective, it was about our local community and customers. Bringing those two things together simplistically, could be, as I say, transportation from some pubs in remote areas." (Sponsor107) "I think as well it gives us a different set of people and businesses and industries to talk to. The partners are very helpful and we get invited to all sorts of events and projects and are involved in things that if they weren't a partner we just wouldn't see it. So I think from a human capital point of view, the staff benefit of interacting with different partners." (PST109)
Sharing resources	The division or allocation of resources between parties	"So whether it's [Sponsor A] for footing, which is an industry leader; [Sponsor B], also an industry leader in the pharmaceutical realm. [Sponsor C], as far as analytics and software is concerned. All of which already have experience in the [sport] field and they can really offer an important, let's say expertise to the table…exchange." (MSE102) "We allowed the [sport property] to use our team from a knowledge perspective, to help them understand what you can and can't do in the marketplace in terms of activation. And they worked with us actually, in terms of helping us to get [Brand] materials to the event, shipping [product] and things like that." (Sponsor106)

These results highlighted four key aspects of the symbiotic relationship between sponsors and sport properties. Firstly, three participants recognised the role of the legal aspect of the sponsorship contract in driving different phases of a sponsor-sponsee relationship. Sponsor106 discussed the 'cold' nature

of the association pre, post, and approaching the renewal phase of the formal sponsorship arrangement, where potential for CSV arising from symbiosis is likely to be significantly reduced. This participant also mentioned that as part of their contractual arrangement, the MSE stipulates a percentage of the sponsorship fee that has to be spent on activation, 'because they wanna make sure we're spending money to activate their brand.' PST109 took a more transactional view, noting the need to weigh up whether 'the cost of leaving is more than the cost of staying' when deciding whether to renew a sponsorship contract. Furthermore, Sponsor107 took a different perspective, explaining the risk of 'diminishing returns' as a result of over-familiarity between sponsor and sport property.

The importance of developing a successful relationship between sponsor brand and sport property for CSV was stressed to some degree by six of the pilot study participants. Sponsor106 mentioned that successful relationships built during a sponsorship term 'get stuff to happen' which is endorsed by Sponsor107, who labelled this relationship 'crucial'. In addition, PST109 described the importance of selecting the right partner and becoming 'entwined' by building a long-term association:

> We really get genuine benefits from long-term engagement, so long-term partnerships. So you've got to get people and partners that you know you can work with for a long time, and that your values and their values align - and also that their objectives and your objectives are similar. (PST109)

Sponsor107 also observed that successful sponsor-sport property relationships are 'not about the pure commercial money invested' but rather, 'the relationship and how we can leverage things over time.' Conversely, 'if you've got conflict between two big partners, you're just going to hurt both of you' (Sponsor106).

Another aspect to emerge related to the symbiosis between sponsors and sport properties was the distinction made by MSE102 between a sponsorship; 'where the entity in question is paying a certain amount of money or rights fees to have their logo plastered all over the place' and a partnership; 'whereby we work with them (on a range of matters)', implying equal status and importance afforded to each party. This is supported by PST109, who stated, 'the whole idea of a partnership is everybody working in tune, and the better and the closer you can work, it really helps.'

Five participants articulated the importance of mutual benefits in begetting a symbiosis between sponsor and sport property. Sponsor106 related this to 'having skin in the game, you get to a real collaborative approach.' Sponsor107 elaborated on this notion further by explaining how benefits were jointly accrued by each party: 'From their perspective it was about increasing attendance across the country. From our perspective it was about […] local community and customers, bringing those two things together simplistically, could be […] transportation from some pubs in remote areas.' In addition, PST109 highlighted the human capital benefit of staff interaction between respective partners.

Finally, four participants recognised how the sharing of resources can contribute to the development of a symbiotic relationship. MSE102 discussed an 'exchange' of experience and expertise between their organisation and its sponsors. This was rationalised further by Sponsor106, who reflected how their

firm had allowed the sponsored property to 'use our team from a knowledge perspective, to help them understand what you can and can't do in the marketplace in terms of activation.' In reciprocation, the sport property assisted by providing logistical know-how in assisting the sponsor to activate successfully at a sport event.

Results indicate that a symbiosis between sponsor brand and sport property can favour the role of capabilities and consistency in creating shared value. For example, regarding sponsor brand capabilities, each of the participants representing sport properties acknowledged the aptitude provided by sponsor partners, with MSE102 referencing the knowledge and technological proficiencies contributed by an 'industry leader' in its field. In the case of sponsor brand consistency, Sponsor107 mentioned that its collaboration with a sport property had enabled it to adapt its strategy in the face of certain 'legislative restrictions' related to its products and contributed towards implementing a long-term, mission-driven approach focused on contributing towards the local community. By contrast, Sponsor106 emphasised that societal principles were integrated into business strategies as a 'by-product' of an allegiance that 'financially makes sense' rather than being the driving factor of forming a relationship.

These findings highlight the importance of developing symbiotic relationships between partners that go beyond the business relationship. In addition, the findings develop this idea by suggesting a potential effect of this symbiosis in a brand's ability to create shared value. What can be drawn from this is that although sponsor brand features such as brand capabilities, consistency and cultivation are important to create shared value, these effects may be heightened when there is a strategic association between sponsor and sport property.

4.3 Outcomes and beneficiaries of creating shared value

Outcomes for five beneficiaries were identified during the pilot study interviews. There outcomes and associated example quotes from participants are reported below.

Sport property outcomes

Four respondents discussed sport event property outcomes, with five elements identified in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6. Examples of sport property outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Goodwill	The generation of positive feelings towards the sport property	"A good feeling towards the club and the company." (PST109)
Increasing audience	Growth or development of market	"Attract more fans, more spectators, more attendance to our events." (MSE102)

Increased participation	Growth or development of participation in the sport	"Activate participation amongst adults […] encourage health through that mean, and we were also able to increase the [sport property's] reach into local communities and local clubs." (Sponsor107)
Recognition	Acknowledgement of achievement	"We got an award from the [sport governing body] once for our apprenticeship work […] that was a really nice narrative for that sponsor and a natural fit, and one that the [sport governing body] recognised." (P101)
Reinvestment	Capital and other resources generated to reinvest back into the sport and/or sport property for the benefit of the sport	"Reinvest into the sport and make it better." (MSE102)

Firstly, 'a good feeling' felt by stakeholders toward the sport property (PST109) can allow favourable attitudes to be formed and offer potential for associated benefits. Secondly and thirdly, generating increases in both audience and sport participation were credited by one respondent respectively. Such increases are vital for sport properties to grow and develop, and ultimately remain viable and sustainable propositions. Sponsor107 expressed the importance of activating participation in a sport, with the knock-on effects of encouraging better health and 'increasing the [sport property's] reach into local communities and local clubs.'

Further to this, receiving acclaim for CSV-related, sponsored activities from a respected and established source such as a sport governing body was seen as being important for sport properties. PST101 referred to the recognition gained from an award for a sponsored apprenticeship scheme and that this simultaneously created value for the sponsor in the form of providing 'a really nice narrative.' These findings emphasise the importance of developing good ties among different stakeholders. Finally, reinvestment was attributed by MSE102 as being crucial to 'make the sport better' in the future.

Sponsor brand outcomes

Six participants within the pilot sample acknowledged sponsor brand outcomes, with three elements outlined in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7. Examples of sponsor brand outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Brand equity	Development of brand equity-related elements such as increased brand awareness or image	"Through some brand health metrics, you may see some stuff show there. We have seen in the past where we've done some work around…you can kind of see through brand health. You get a raise in some of the factors like, 'a brand for me', or 'a brand that I think fondly of'. It's very marginal and it's almost impossible to attribute that to any of the community work you've done." (Sponsor106)

		"Increasing equity measures of your brand, perception of your brand, that [brand] resonance, it's about building those assets over time. Brand awareness and building equity and loyalty." (Sponsor107)
Employee engagement	Internal marketing-related benefits	"[Sponsor] provided all of our tailoring and shoes and shirts for the players to go to Buckingham Palace and collect the trophy and…yeah I see that a lot as well. Heritage brands in their home city wanting to prove that they haven't forgotten where they've come from, particularly when they've got their headquarters here, and their staff take a bit of pride when they see us on the telly, or walking around the city." (PST101)
		"Employees is a big one. Employee engagement is huge. You know, people are constantly wanting to make sure that their employees are behind partnerships and are excited and build pride within the business […] being a more attractive place to work, to retain better talent, just to have the positive PR." (Sponsor110)
Extending reach	Gain access to a broader target market	"I think for some partners, it gives them extra scope, it gives them access to a potential group of people that they would struggle to normally get to." (PST109)
		"We have partners that […] are very well run and they've got great community foundations, but they're not particularly 'sexy' products. [Sport] helps that." (PST109)

Five respondents cited brand equity-related benefits, including uplifts in key metrics such as awareness and image. Sponsor107 explained the importance of 'building those assets over time.' Further, Sponsor106 alluded to looking for elevations in brand health tracking statements such as 'a brand for me' and a 'brand that I think fondly of', whilst also acknowledging the difficulty of making any direct linkage between these and CSV-related activity. This illustrates the challenge recognised by Sponsor105, in that 'companies want tangible return on the kind of investment they're making into sport properties.'

MSE102 mentioned that 'better-educated stakeholders' as a result of 'expertise being showcased' is a benefit derived from a sponsorship agreement, in that enhanced brand knowledge can be vital for the development of consumer relationships. One such example which came to light was outlined by PST101:

> It's just about putting back into the city [sponsor] is from. [They] want to show their staff and customers that they're still proud of their roots despite going national. And another example – [Sponsor], when we won [a trophy], [they] provided all of our tailoring and shoes and shirts for the players to go to Buckingham Palace and collect the trophy. (PST101)

In developing a more knowledgeable consumer base in respect of the sponsor brand's origin and product portfolio, and by improving other aspects of knowledge held by the wider stakeholder base, shared value may be created for both consumers and the wider host region.

Two participants stressed the benefits of employee engagement. PST101 recognised staff pride as being a potential outcome of successful sponsor involvement in CSV, particularly when effected in the local area:

Heritage brands in their home city wanting to prove that they haven't forgotten where they've come from, particularly when they've got their headquarters here, and their staff take a bit of pride when they see us on the telly, or walking around the city in that shirt, and yeah, there's examples of that all over the world. (PST101)

Furthermore, Sponsor110 discussed benefits derived from successful employee engagement, such as 'being a more attractive place to work' and 'retain[ing] better talent.' Another sponsor-related benefit, acknowledged by PST109, concerns extending the reach of the company to a broader target market. Essentially, the platform of sport can provide sponsors with 'extra scope' in accessing markets they may otherwise find difficult to engage, even to the extent of counterbalancing products not typically considered as 'sexy'.

Host city or region outcomes

Two respondents touched upon the role of CSV in promoting city or region outcomes and the benefits derived as a result, as shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. Examples of host city or region outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Local pride	A sense of honour and satisfaction in representing the local area	"The big thing we like here is this sort of 'Team [City]' thing. Any brand that's headquartered here, or employs a lot of people here, they take pride in an association with us. It's just about putting back into the city they're from. Leicester Tigers is a good example: Walkers, Caterpillar, Next – all 'Team Leicester' brands, that want to show their staff and their customers that they're still proud of their roots despite going national." (PST101)
Supporting the local economy	Specific strategies which seek to ensure that local economies are supported	"If you think about it from a FMCG production perspective, having six production sites across the country, all operating differently […] when we do have the land where you could accommodate that across a couple of sites, isn't an efficient production method of operating. But it is based on that strategic belief that the local economies are where our customers are based, they're where our consumers are based, and that's what's going to drive our growth and profit moving forward and is also our differentiation from our competitors. So it's really important that in the sponsorships that we have, that's reflected." (Sponsor107)

PST101 noted the importance of creating a city-based ethos, which harnesses a sense of honour and pride in representing the local area, and 'putting back into the city they're from.' This finding is supported by Sponsor107, who discussed the importance of considering local stakeholders when making strategic decisions and reflecting this philosophy via its sponsorship deals. This, the sponsor believes, is of paramount importance in order to drive 'growth and profit moving forward and is also

our differentiation from our competitors' – even when, in pure profitability terms, it may be more efficient to operationalise from one central base.

Citizen outcomes

Five interviewees mentioned how the creation of shared value leads to citizen outcomes, with examples contained within Table 4.9.

Table 4.9. Examples of citizen outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Health and/or rehabilitation	Contributing towards healthier and more active lifestyles	"The guys in that market with their number one mainstream [product] actually did something around testicular cancer. So they've worked out through the promotion they did, they probably saved about one hundred people's lives because they […] rose awareness of testicular cancer." (Sponsor106)
		"It is that support for our forces, the people that are coming back and needing rehabilitation, and providing some exposure, some awareness of that, also some support." (Sponsor107)
Inspiring future generations	Encouraging future generations to lead a healthy lifestyle and/or a bond with the sport	"For us it's about trying to inspire the next generation of players and fans, supporters, administrators." (PST109)
Social programmes	Tailored strategies for improving the lives of citizens	"We'll go into [area] and deliver all sorts: football, rugby, craft-making, dance, workability programmes – to really try and address social exclusion, you know, in areas that have real problems. And the motivation is certainly not about developing participation, it's about…altering society in a very small way and in a particular part of our locale, so, yeah, that's a big part of our pitch in that respect, because it's an area we can outperform the other guys in the market." (PST101)
		"Well we do have a social programme as well […] [sponsor] is kind of the ones that are interested in helping the community with those brands. They really are interested in creating some social programmes with us, bringing [sport] to other communities." (MSE104)

A couple of respondents cited health and rehabilitation benefits arising from sponsorship, such as a campaign that 'saved about one hundred people's lives because they […] rose awareness of testicular cancer' (Sponsor106). Sponsor107 referred to supporting armed forces personnel in their rehabilitation, whilst simultaneously providing 'some exposure, some awareness [and] some support' for them.

A further participant alluded to the ability of CSV activities to 'inspire the next generation of players and fans, supporters, administrators' (PST109). In doing so, this sponsorship collaboration inspired youngsters to become more active with the aim of helping them to lead healthier lifestyles. Finally, two practitioners referred to tailored social programmes, which helped to improve the lives of citizens. By 'altering society in a small way', PST101 explained how they could help tackle the issue of social

exclusion within the population, which also helped them to 'outperform the other guys in the market' in terms of securing sponsors. In this regard, MSE104 emphasised the drive of a sponsor partner, which was 'interested in creating some social programmes with us, bringing [sport] to other communities.'

Consumer outcomes

Finally, three of the pilot study sample participants provided support for consumer outcomes derived from CSV, as demonstrated within Table 4.10.

Table 4.10. Examples of consumer outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Education	Acquired product-related learning as a result of engagement with the sponsorship	"Whether it's just an average fan who wants to know more about [aspect of sport] and is thanking [Sponsor] because they've helped provide that content to them." (MSE102)
Enhancing consumer experience	Advancements to consumer experience elements, such as the *servicescape*	"So the consumers themselves, I mean that's the most important thing. I hope people recognise that we don't saturate our financial partnerships here. Our strategy is to have a small stable of high fee-paying partners, who can genuinely add something to the experience. And we hope that [consumers] recognise that. They don't necessarily know what's going on behind the scenes but [sponsor], have just paid to refurbish [area of stadium] so it's now a really nice indoor space where people can go and have a sit down and not just be queueing in some kind of concrete…that's an example of a supply partner wanting to do more to service a brand and drive their brand experience." (PST101)
Improving products and services	Increased efficiency in the development of products and services	"So we've had [new] rules from the [sport governing body] that have meant that we've had to change the [technology]. In the last five years, we've improved efficiency by over 20% […] and that technology is then transferring through to [sponsor's products] and gradually, through information transfer, it will be in to lots of other [products] as well. So […] over the next five years almost every [product] will be 20% more efficient as a result of [sponsorship of sport property]." (Sponsor110)

PST101 regarded advancements to the consumer experience, in the form of funding 'a really nice indoor space' as being an important consequence of a successful sponsorship arrangement, whereby the sponsor was able to 'service their brand and drive their brand experience.'

Another consumer benefit was demonstrated by Sponsor110 in the form of improved products and services generated as a result of its sponsorship of a major sport event: 'Over the next five years almost every car on the road will be 20% more efficient as a result of work that we've done to make [driver] go round the lap quicker.' In addition, consumers may be educated via engagement with sponsorship.

In this case, MSE102 referenced a scenario where a sponsor was able to help provide informative content related to the sport.

4.4 Pilot study participant interpretations of CSV

Four of the pilot study respondents explained their interpretations of CSV, as illustrated within Table 4.11.

Table 4.11. Examples of pilot study participant interpretations of CSV.

Participant	Example quote(s)
PST101	"We would never sit down and seek to distil shared values with another partner. I think we would always go front foot, explain what we stand for, how we spend the cash, and why being good corporate citizens is important to us. And then, almost interview the brand or the partner, and ask them if they feel they can follow suit and get on with it. So it's more about us imposing our positive value and hoping they're still listening after 20 minutes of me schpeeling on! Rather than us sitting down and trying to find five or six words or phrases that we think unites us both."
Sponsor106	"I've got to be really honest and say I'm a little bit cynical around [CSV] as an example. So fundamentally, my gut feel would be that there still has to be economic benefit for a brand to be able to do [CSV], because if it's not generating cash as a result, it makes no sense. So as things stand within [industry], the competitiveness, the low costs…I don't see a place at the moment where you can squeeze extra value out to deliver this CSV, to the benefit of all people. I struggle to see a place in the near future where we can move to this CSV model, because I just don't see there being enough cash in the profit pool to allow us to do that."
Sponsor107	(1) "Celebrating our local communities - so, within this regard we obviously supply a lot of pubs, bars, restaurants etcetera within an area. It's about providing jobs within that area and encouraging the local economy through local suppliers. So when looking at a sponsorship opportunity that is really part of the consideration and how we can bring that to life. The other area is around our customers. So, for example, engaging with the [MSE] and one of the grounds in the build-up to a match. It would be around working with them to offer transportation to and from matches, enabling them to advertise within our customers, and that mutual and reciprocal support. We think this shared value offers us a way of doing that more effectively than something like advertising, which could cost an equivalent amount of money."
	(2) "I think shared value is increasing in common parlance within the business. And actually I would argue that some of our five corporate social or corporate social responsibility priorities are akin to shared value, within your model. And so, particularly where we use the term, 'caring about customers' wellbeing and celebrating local communities', actually the tactical approach that underpins that strategy would fit within the creation of shared value.
PST108	"You could turn around and say to somebody, 'sponsorship is a donation'. But it remains a donation while we're doing good things. If we stop doing good things then they'll stop donating, for certain. We are not in a situation to swap sponsorship money for, money for charity. We're just not in that position."

By asking sponsors, 'if they feel they can follow suit and get on with it' PST101 implied an imbalanced perception of CSV, in that partners may seek to merely imitate the actions of the sport property rather than operate in a more collaborative fashion. PST108 exhibited a similarly one-sided view that 'sponsorship is a donation', which also contravenes the joint economic and social value generating principles of CSV. Moreover, Sponsor106's stated scepticism of CSV may arise from a misperception of needing 'enough cash in the profit pool to allow us to do that', a notion more in-line with CSR, where associated initiatives typically compromise business profitability. Alternatively, Sponsor107 acknowledged the 'mutual and reciprocal support' of actors such as local suppliers and customers in driving its sponsorship agenda. This respondent further acknowledged that CSV may represent the 'tactical approach that underpins […] strategy'.

4.5 Summary of results and reflections

The responses collected within the pilot study help examine CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective, suggesting that capabilities and consistency are important drivers in the creation of shared value, not only from a sponsor perspective but also at a sport property level. Regarding capabilities, sponsors can aid in facilitating growth and providing expertise, scale, and technological proficiencies, but just as importantly, sport properties offer both the scope and platform for such resources to be integrated and amplified. In relation to consistency, it has been shown that both sponsors and sport properties acknowledge the deployment of CSV strategies with a community focus, and the inherent tension apparent in adopting, measuring, and executing economics-first (which aim to create shareholder value) and mission-driven (which aim to create social value) business strategies – and the concern of external perceptions of such strategies.

Consequently, the interview discussion guide for the main study was refined to incorporate 'organisational capabilities' and 'organisational consistency' in order to reflect the potential contribution from sport properties in addition to sponsors. Furthermore, on reflection, based on the participant responses, additional probing of elements contained within each of these variables and greater understanding of their relationship paths was necessary, particularly in order to draw out more specific examples and delve further into the participants' beliefs and feelings about capabilities and consistency. Therefore, this was identified as an outcome of the pilot study (see Table 3.7 in the previous chapter for a full summary of the refinements made to the interview discussion guide as a result of the pilot study).

Reflecting further on the pilot study, it was also apparent that dialogue relating to sponsor brand cultivation leaned heavily towards a process of CSV involving other actors outside the boundaries of the sponsoring firm and the sport property (e.g., agencies, local authorities, NGOs, other sponsors and other sport properties) with the potential of heightening the impact of capabilities and consistency. Hence, this necessitates 'sponsor brand cultivation' to be retitled 'cultivation' and its role in the

originally proposed model to be reassessed. It was somewhat surprising that few participants discussed collaborative enterprises with other entities beyond the sponsorship relationship without being prompted. This idea therefore warranted increased attention in the main study, as designated by the addition of two further discussion topics relating to the contributions of other organisations to the sponsorship, and the perceived importance of this.

The pilot study interviews also inveterate the importance of symbiotic relationships between sponsorship partners for CSV. Prosperous symbioses are driven first and foremost by the contractual agreement, in that a contract renewal may compel a different type of relationship until the decision has been made to renew or end the arrangement. There was a consensus that relationship-building actions undertaken regularly over a considerable period are necessary to grow and strengthen a relationship, with shared benefits and the pooling of resources also deemed essential. This indicates that although capabilities, consistency and cultivation are important for shared value creation, their effects may be heightened by a symbiosis between sponsor and sport property, particularly if such an interdependence is sustained over an interval of time. However, in order to further enhance understanding of the relationship, added exploration of identified areas for improvement was sought in the main study, via the addition of a focused discussion topic.

Such CSV efforts can lead to the realisation of benefits for a number of actors associated with the sponsor-sponsee dyad, in addition to these two parties themselves. For sport properties, facets such as goodwill, increases in audience and participation, recognition, and reinvestment are all important derivatives of value. Likewise, for sponsors, upturns in brand equity, greater employee engagement, and an extension of reach into new market territories are examples asserted by participants. In addition, host cities and regions may experience boosts in local pride and support for the local economy. Citizens can realise value arising from education, health and/or rehabilitation, the inspiring of future generations to live healthier and more sport-aware lifestyles and social programmes aimed at improving people's quality of life. Furthermore, consumers are able to enjoy enhancements to the service experience, optimised products and services, and greater product or sport-related knowledge, arising from the sponsorship association. Reflecting on these results, in a similar way to the relative lack of spontaneous responses relating to cultivation, it was felt that greater inquiry to identify key stakeholders was required, to mitigate for a lack of unprompted discussion regarding the potential beneficiaries of CSV.

Finally, analysing participant articulations helps to explore the necessity for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations, indicating that although the concept appears to be gaining traction amongst practitioners, some misunderstanding prevails. Whilst this may be understandable due to the relative newness of CSV and the longer-standing prevalence of CSR, it indicates an opportunity for sponsorship decision-makers to be further enlightened about the key principles and benefits of CSV-related strategies. When explaining CSV to participants, some exhibited difficulty in understanding the concept and its distinction from CSR. Meanwhile, others referenced their organisation's ownership model as being a key driver of its strategy. Thus, a more concise, simplified explanation of CSV was

created for the main study, alongside discussion questions designed to help participants understand its distinction from CSR, and provide some elaboration on their organisations' ownership models.

5.   Main Study Results

5.1 Introduction

Taking into account the learnings derived from the pilot phase, the main study stage of the research focused on a more targeted sponsor and MSE sample (as detailed in main study sample profile Table 3.6 in the research methodology chapter). To re-cap, four key research objectives were considered: exploring the necessity for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations; investigating the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for the creation of shared value with other actors; identifying tangible examples of CSV and providing guidance for practitioners on how CSV can be achieved; and examining CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective. In-line with the first objective, this was in order to expand and extend the investigation into the shared value creating potential within the sponsor-MSE relationship and with other associated actors in broader sport networks and ecosystems. At this stage, only brands involved in the sponsorship of major sport events and respective hosts were considered. As per the second objective of the study, it was the intention that this phase could help further hone the proposed model and acquire a more profound conception of the process of shared value creation.

Accordingly, this section presents findings drawn from data extracts of the main study interviews to illuminate the means of creating shared value, sponsor-MSE relationships, the length of the sponsorship relationship, and outcomes arising from CSV with other actors within the ecosystem. Figure 5.1 depicts the refined conceptual model for understanding the constituents of CSV and the shared value created with key actors.
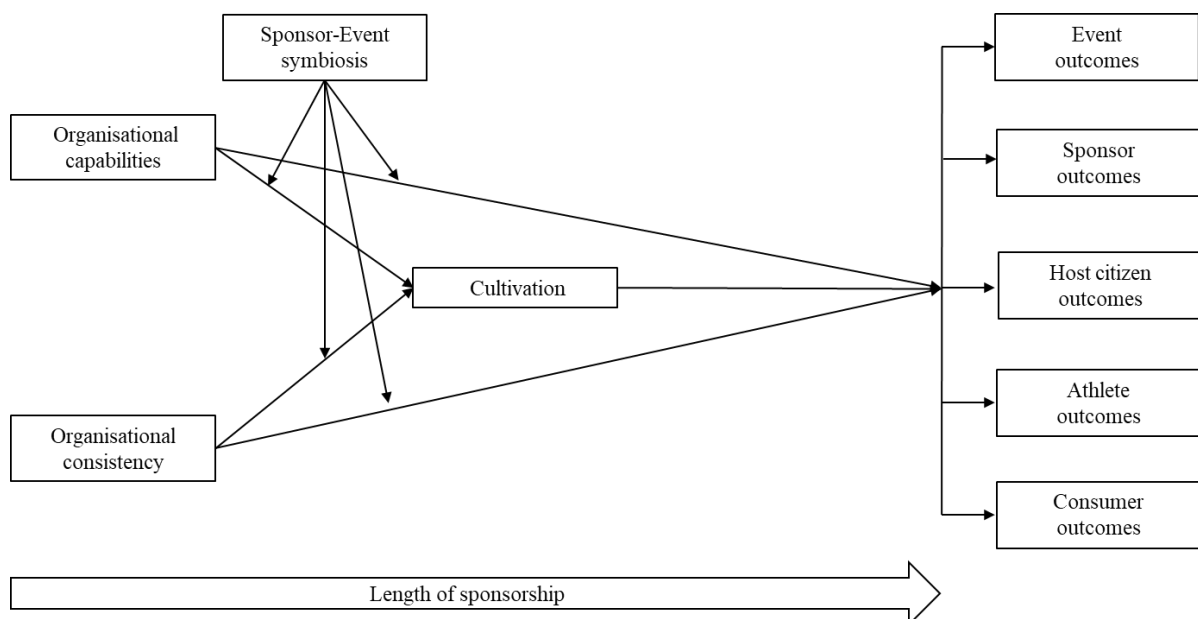
Figure 5.1. Refined framework for understanding CSV in MSEs.

The subsequent sub-sections demonstrate how the model's components contribute towards CSV. Tables 5.1 (participant MSE201 – MSE214) and 5.2 (MSE215 – Sponsor229) provide a summary of these results, detailing the sub-codes within each concept that were identified through the interviews with all participants. These findings help to examine sponsorship from a managerial perspective, and the demonstration of tangible examples arising from CSV in section 5.4 can provide direction for managers on achieving CSV, which corresponsds to the third and fourth objectives of the research.

Table 5.1. Summary results of the main study interviews (MSE201 – MSE214).

Concept	Sub-code	MSE 201	Sponsor 202	MSE 203	MSE 204	Sponsor 205	MSE 206	Sponsor 207	Sponsor 208	Sponsor 209	Sponsor 210	MSE 212	Sponsor 213	MSE 214
Organisational capabilities	Adaptability	X	X						X		X			
	Credibility and trustworthiness			X	X			X	X					X
	Expertise*	X			X				X		X	X	X	
	Family values	X			X						X	X		
	Fun	X			X	X				X				
	Innovation	X			X		X	X	X			X		
	Large-scale*					X								
Organisational consistency	Authenticity	X					X		X					
	Economics-first vs. mission-driven*			X				X					X	X
	Measurability*								X			X	X	X
	Strategic alignment	X					X		X			X		
Sponsor-event symbiosis	Communication				X				X			X		X
	Enhancement of capabilities			X	X		X		X			X		X
	Enhancement of consistency												X	X
	Level of involvement	X										X		
	Mutual benefits*	X				X	X	X	X					X
	Shared philosophy				X		X					X	X	X
Cultivation	Media								X	X				X
	NGOs*	X	X								X	X	X	X
	Other commercial organisations	X			X				X			X		
Length of sponsorship	Aiding evolution	X							X					X
	Continued commitment								X					X
	Experimentation								X					X

Concept	Sub-code												
Event outcomes	Commercial performance												X
	Enhanced image	X		X			X						X
	Increased participation*		X	X						X			
Sponsor outcomes	Brand equity*							X				X	
	Repositioning			X				X		X		X	
	Tangible benefits						X	X				X	X
Host citizen outcomes	Health and/or rehabilitation*			X									X
	Empowerment through inspiration	X						X			X		X
	Supporting the local economy*										X		X
Athlete outcomes	Earnings												
	Profile development										X		X
	Training advancements												X
Consumer outcomes	Education									X		X	X
	Enhancing consumer experience*									X		X	

*Sub-code used in pilot study.

Table 5.2. Summary results of the main study interviews (MSE215 – Sponsor229).

Concept	Sub-code	MSE 215	MSE 216	Sponsor 218	MSE 219	MSE 220	Sponsor 221	MSE 222	MSE 223	Sponsor 226	Sponsor 227	MSE 228	Sponsor 229
Organisational capabilities	Adaptability	X					X						
	Credibility and trustworthiness		X		X						X	X	X
	Expertise*				X	X	X		X				
	Family values								X				
	Fun				X				X			X	X
	Innovation				X		X	X			X		
	Large-scale*				X	X	X	X	X				
Organisational consistency	Authenticity	X	X			X		X	X		X		

Category	Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Economics-first vs. mission-driven*		X	X			X	X		X	X	
	Measurability*		X	X	X		X					
	Strategic alignment		X	X						X	X	X
Sponsor-event symbiosis	Communication	X	X	X	X	X				X		
	Enhancement of capabilities	X			X						X	
	Enhancement of consistency	X	X					X		X		
	Level of involvement							X	X			
	Mutual benefits*	X	X		X	X	X			X		
	Shared philosophy		X		X			X	X	X		
Cultivation	Media		X	X	X			X				
	NGOs*	X	X	X	X		X	X				
	Other commercial organisations	X		X				X	X	X		
Length of sponsorship	Aiding evolution			X			X					X
	Continued commitment	X			X		X			X		
	Experimentation			X								
Event outcomes	Commercial performance	X	X	X			X					X
	Enhanced image	X			X		X				X	X
	Increased participation*			X							X	
Sponsor outcomes	Brand equity*	X								X		X
	Repositioning		X	X			X					
	Tangible benefits		X	X				X		X		
Host citizen outcomes	Health and/or rehabilitation*	X		X			X					
	Empowerment through inspiration						X	X		X		
	Supporting the local economy*											
Athlete outcomes	Earnings						X				X	
	Profile development						X					
	Training advancements											

Consumer outcomes	Education					X		X
	Enhancing consumer experience*	X		X	X	X		

*Sub-code used in pilot study.

5.2 Means of creating shared value

Organisational capabilities

Almost all participants (24 of the 25) within the main study referred to the importance of organisational capabilities (i.e., unique competences held by the organisation) in contributing towards the creation of shared value. Aspects related to adaptability, credibility and integrity, expertise, family values, fun, innovation and scale were all highlighted as key operant resources for value creation by both sponsors and MSE properties.

Expertise. Similar to the pilot study, the worth of expertise was identified by ten respondents as an important precursor to CSV, from both a sponsor and MSE property perspective. Sponsor208 emphasised the importance of 'a grounding that we already have in being seen to be honest, […] forward thinking, [and] progressive.' These attributes have allowed this sponsor to drive a number of CSV-related activities, such as an online platform related to mobility.

MSE201 detailed its organisation's ability to 'deliver excitement, anticipation, surprise […] as well as a story-telling component which is what you get from your soap operas and box TV sets and films that you go and see. We're that kind of fusion of the two.' This kind of story-telling expertise helps the MSE brand to be a 'positive force for good' in engaging with other actors in CSV related activities, such as partnerships with other sport properties to deliver social benefits. Further, Sponsor221 referenced the 'strength and quality of the people' and MSE223 discussed their high level of expertise in event planning and execution, to the extent that the local authority, in the face of having to make staff cuts and save money, 'began to approach [them] and say; "We've got this event, we can't handle it, can you do it for us?"' On the other hand, MSE223 explained the potential pitfalls of a lack of expertise, admitting that their website was 'not the greatest in the world' and that some of its partners 'struggle a bit with stuff like that […] our communication isn't always as slick as some big organisations' might be.'

Three MSE interviewees referenced the importance of being able to call upon 'in-house' expertise in contributing towards CSV. Sponsor213 referred to their organisation's Diversity and Inclusion team, internal experts on nurturing an equitable workforce, who they 'work with quite closely' and have been 'proven to produce better results'. For MSE212, possessing the internal ability to design and implement events without relying on external support was important for the city to 'get a bigger value from these events. If a commercial event producer would be responsible, then we couldn't use it for sustainable issues like getting the citizens to take part in the experience.' This respondent explained that top management, who 'were convinced that sustainability was the right strategy to work with', were the driving force for the development of such internal expertise. MSE04 cited the development of greater in-house capabilities as a major aspiration for their organisation in terms of better understanding their consumers:

I would be doing everything in-house with expertise of the sporting environment. I need people that have understanding […] sometimes you go to an agency or marketers that have corporate but not really sporting experience related to marketing sporting actions. So, it's different. I need these type of people that know what is it like for a fan to be in a line to buy a hotdog. How long does it take to go to the bathroom, to purchase merchandising? Most of the people that I bump into at agencies or [marketing] organisations, they have never done that. So, this type of relationship is very important to me - that marketers understand fans - because this is the future, activation opportunities that we can do within the fans. (MSE204)

However, according to Sponsor210, 'it's too much really for most companies to take the activation in-house themselves, especially when you're looking at a global activation across markets.'

Large-scale. Another similarity with the pilot study was noted in terms of the scale and size of the organisation's operations being seen as integral for building actor engagement platforms, as referenced by six respondents from the main study. Sponsor218 mentioned that the high penetration of its dairy product meant that around half of UK households 'have us in their lives'. MSE223 made an analogous observation that being the biggest event of its kind within the country enabled it to 'motivate, empower and inspire individuals to challenge themselves', by leading healthier lifestyles and 'encouraging them to be whatever is their greatest.'

By the same token, Sponsor221 explained that its vast network of retail sites around the world provided an opportunity for 'repurposing and repositioning' in terms of having the resources and capacity to be able to make 'social investments' such as contributing towards more sustainable energy sources, with the potential of communicating this on a global scale. However, the same participant also stressed that their company was reluctant to rush into communicating this, suggesting a concern for being perceived as inauthentic:

They won't be able to say one thing for communications purposes and operate different practical operational terms […] only if they are really serious, authentic and actually mean something, not just in terms of selling products and services, but also because of a higher purpose. (Sponsor221)

Finally, Sponsor213 acknowledged the budgetary constraints that can hamper shared value creation initiatives. This senior executive admitted that the sponsor found itself 'in a really tricky position' in wanting to be able to match the prize fund of the women's version of the tournament to that afforded to men, but it did not have the budget to do so.

Adaptability. Six participants mentioned the growing need for organisations to adapt to be better positioned to engender CSV. Sponsor202 provided a view of how 'the changes we're experiencing in digital evolution and the whole process of the way people communicate with each other' are affecting sponsors and MSE properties and will necessitate new ways of thinking and working together:

Hours and hours everybody spends on their mobile phones. The way content is distributed, then also with the change of attitudes towards international federations, the transparency, the corruption that we've

seen. Then there is pressure for sports bodies to market themselves in terms of their massive rights because of the impact it's having on top pro players, massive salaries and why shouldn't they enjoy the benefits of all the monies that are now flowing through sports? There needs to be a new, united approach that understands the importance of health, sport, fitness, education. Sport needs to be marketed, presented, managed in a different way, things need to evolve, and therefore, all of these dynamics are coming to a head together […]. There will need to be a different way that sport participation, sport education, sport events are packaged and presented and how commercial partners integrate because they will have to become involved in a different way. (Sponsor202)

In this regard, Sponsor221 highlighted the increasing worth of emotional intelligence for sponsorship decision-makers in redefining productivity in value creation via a reinforcement of stakeholder relationships, where 'there's always something more you can do with regards to dealing with a partner or prospective partner.' Related to this, the concept of 'design thinking' allows managers to 'adapt to their counterparts', by 'listening, relationship-building […] so you can be more upfront, open to saying things you wouldn't otherwise, creating a bond that would open business doors.'

MSE201 referred to being 'flexible' in terms of encouraging a mantra amongst top athletes to accommodate and oblige deserving causes to be able to create 'unique moments' and 'put smiles on people's faces.' This participant emphasised that such flexibility was also apparent in other aspects of the organisation, such as its philosophy in working with partners:

We can go in as simple as they want with joint objectives, joint mission statements and what have you or we can just look at it as well, if you want to do something just for one week we can do it, no problem. (MSE201)

MSE215 explained the importance of being 'progressive' in terms of helping to overcome previous 'bad press' by 'better reflecting society' in driving greater prominence to the female version of its sport. Finally, Sponsor208 discussed its changing business model, necessitated by a desire to provide 'mobility solutions' to an increasingly diverse range of stakeholder needs, which centred around helping 'people get from A to B more effectively.'

Credibility and trustworthiness. The ability to embody and project an image of credibility and trustworthiness was recognised by ten respondents. MSE204 argued that the purity of its sport offers a genuine and plausible stage for value creation:

Do you see [sport] in corruption scandals? Do you see [sport] in doping scandals? Do you see [sport] in match fixing scandals? So, it doesn't come very often to the top of your mind. If I relate it to other sports, you have match-fixing in football, in tennis; in boxing, cycling, tennis you have doping. So, once this becomes clear, people say, 'hmm, this sport has something with value there'. Nobody talks badly about it. (MSE204)

This view is endorsed by both MSE214, who explained the importance of 'integrity, honesty, trust' in underpinning its brand positioning to 'unite and inspire […] that ultimately will underpin everything

because if we don't do that then […] ultimately it won't have its purpose'; and MSE228, who remarked that their organisation has been rewarded for taking 'integrity and credibility as being extremely important' by receiving an accreditation for being the 'cleanest sport' in its country by an independent report. As MSE219 observed: 'It's about the integrity of the game. Effectively, once you start to undermine anyone's trust in the game or anything like that, then as a product you're in real trouble.' This is further supported by Sponsor207, who commented that by demonstrating values of credibility and integrity, important foundations for creating value can be laid as other actors are liable to be more trusting of the organisation's competency and motives.

Family values. A business philosophy built upon family values was also deemed to be a significant organisational capability by five interviewees, all of whom represented MSEs. For MSE204, a family emphasis was essential in terms of facilitating CSV: 'We are driven by family orientation […] the family concept as a driving seat works for us.' This participant elaborated further about its 'very specific niche' of family orientated females 'that drive more traffic to our events.' In addition, MSE223 explained that a family configuration inspired shared value creation: "He's [MSE founder] an amazing man, unbelievably inspirational […] it's very much a family business.' MSE201 mentioned that its 'family-friendly positioning' allows the MSE to:

> Really become multi-generational, so whether you're a child, whether you're a parent with a child, whether you're a grandparent with a child or an uncle or a niece or a nephew, that family friendly positioning enables us to really position the brand in a way that's totally unique.

This also provides an attractive proposition for sponsors, particularly local brands, 'that want to engage with family audiences' (MSE201). This idea was also referenced by MSE212, who referred to an example of utilising a public space in the vicinity of an MSE 'to materialise our family strategy, because we had a big arena for trying athletics for kids, and they also could meet the athletes, and we had the prize giving ceremonies at the Market Square as well.' This enabled the MSE to 'give more people access to the feeling of the event, or part of the event' (MSE212).

Fun. Eight of the sample participants indicated that instilling a feeling of fun into their organisational strategy was conducive to CSV. MSE201 discussed the importance of placing fun 'at the heart of what we do', whilst two sponsors described how connotations of fun underpinned the positioning of their respective brands. Sponsor218 stated, 'we're quite a fun brand really […] we're trying to make people happier and healthier through great products and just having fun, because we're a dairy brand and dairy is important for development and it's good for you'; and Sponsor229 explained:

> As a brand, we're focused on making sure people know who we are, our values, and being able to show we're able to do things a bit differently. We are able to have a bit of fun compared to other brands within our kind of service sector […] just put a bit of a fun spin on it. (Sponsor229)

Three respondents made particular reference to the receptiveness of people to fun-related activation in facilitating CSV. MSE206 asserted that providing a 'fun experience' for guests at the event helped to

facilitate the realisation amongst attendees that 'an electric car could be fun, exciting.' Sponsor218 described being able to help 'make people active through fun' via an activation which entailed visitors 'young and old' replicating some of the sporting activities of the elite athletes ('run, jump, throw, or push') in a fun environment. This participant explained that 'getting them active a little bit through fun, and maybe encouraging them to go for a longer walk or something' was a potential positive outcome for these attendees. Additionally, MSE223 mentioned its prominent role in delivering a campaign called 'Go Have Fun', delivered to 'about a quarter of a million kids from disadvantaged areas […] whose parents would probably never take them to a running event.'

Innovation. An additional type of capability identified within the main study was innovation, as identified by ten participants. MSE201 affirmed the importance of 'listen[ing] to our fans' in contributing towards being 'one of the most innovative rights holders out there.' This marketing director felt that this was exemplified by 'social media growth and engagement' and being 'the number one sports channel on YouTube.' This notion was corroborated by MSE222, who emphasised that being in a position to not 'copy anybody else' was a crucial element in outwardly reflecting a position of innovation.

Sponsor218 believed that being relatively new to sponsorship brought a fresh perspective, leading to innovation: 'Because we weren't in the whole sponsorship circle, we didn't know how it was supposed to be done. I think that was extremely freeing, it's enabled us to do it differently.' On the other hand, Sponsor208 believed that a strong track record of having 'innovation credentials' and being 'forward thinking' lent itself to a wider scope of invention and modernisation related to developing mobility technologies, and a clearer and more congruent positioning for the brand.

Furthermore, Sponsor221 argued that 'innovation is coming from the consumer market and then it's being used in the [sport] […], back-fitting what's been going on in the commercial world.' This suggests that MSEs can also act as a showcase for innovation as well as a mechanism which can generate innovations that are subsequently transferred to other actors (as suggested as a consumer outcome by Sponsor110 in the pilot study). Some supporting examples from the interviews are contained in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. Examples of participant responses about organisational capabilities.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Adaptability	An ability to develop via a flexible approach to change	"We're very flexible, were very adaptable, we can do things that no other sport can do, and to give you an example, we grant more wishes through Make a Wish than any other US rights holder. And why can we do that? Well, it's very simple, we can ensure that one of our top superstars goes and spends half an hour with a child that is unwell, his family or her family 30 minutes before [performing]. We're a very flexible proposition where we can create these very unique moments, to put smiles on people's faces." (MSE201)
		"Our business model is fundamentally changing, so whilst now we are purely an automotive manufacturer, in the future, in the next

		ten, fifteen years, we will be more known as a mobility solutions provider. By mobility we mean anything really that involves human movement, so that might be wheelchairs, it might be ride-sharing apps, it might be city planning, it might be autonomous driving, it might be AI, it might be prosthetics, really anything that helps people get from A to B more effectively." (Sponsor208)
Credibility and trustworthiness	Exhibiting values of integrity and sincerity	"You can trust [sponsor] to do what they say they're going to do, that's why people come back again." (Sponsor207)
		"An independent report in 2017 had [sport] as number one in terms of integrity in the UK. We were top in terms of being the cleanest sport […] we take integrity and credibility as being extremely important and get rewarded for that because some sports have been severely damaged through perception of a lack of integrity." (MSE228)
Expertise	Core competences of the organisation	"We have [expertise in] destination management […] bidding for bigger events [… and] sustainability strategies. We produce [MSEs] in-house. So, the city can get a bigger value from these events. If a commercial event producer would be responsible, then we couldn't use it for sustainable issues like getting the citizens to take part in the experience." (MSE212)
		"One of the things that's happened with the local authorities having less funding is that there were some who actually put on their own events and when they had to make a lot of staff cuts and save money, they began to approach us and say, 'we've got this event, we can't handle it, can you do it for us?'"(MSE223)
Family values	Applying a family-orientated outlook to business decisions	"We are driven very much by family orientation and by entertainment in sport, we think the family concept as a driving seat works for us." (MSE204)
		"He's [MSE founder] an amazing man, unbelievably inspirational and his two children, his son is the now Chief Exec and his daughter is the Marketing Director, it's very much a family business." (MSE223)
Fun	Instilling an undercurrent of fun into organisational strategy and/or related activations	"You can come to see the village and the experience and have a fun experience around you and discover all the new technology so I think for me it's also a way to experiment […] can you help people to realise that an electric car could be fun, exciting?" (MSE206)
		"If we can make people active through fun, which is what we're trying to do, and if we can get people to enjoy themselves a little bit doing sports and getting active, then that makes a massive difference. We have grandparents coming with their kids. And when they come first to the activation area, obviously they push the children to go and have fun. But we're really serious about, 'no, you're going to do it as well, come on - do it with your grandchild!' And I have beautiful pictures on my laptop; we have grannies who haven't moved for years probably, on a racing wheelchair, trying to beat the clock to the best of their abilities. But I think that's what counts, just getting them active a little bit through fun, and maybe encouraging them to go for a longer walk or something." (Sponsor218)
Innovation	Creative and novel advancements to marketing strategy	"We are probably one of the most innovative rights holders out there. What we've achieved in terms of social media growth and numbers and engagement is almost second to none in many respects. We're the number one sports channel on YouTube, number two overall. We're in a very unique position, so really using innovation to give the fans what they want, and we listen

		to our fans and we're able to adapt and tailor our product to them." (MSE201)
		"When we are bringing these new mobility technologies to market, I don't think it would feel too much of a surprise, since we already have, particularly through the hybrid stuff that we have throughout our range, we have quite strong innovation credentials." (Sponsor208)
Large-scale	Broad scope of the organisation's operations and resources	"90% of the UK consume [product], and I think our brand has about 50% penetration of the market. So basically, half the houses in the UK buy our products and have us in their lives." (Sponsor218)
		"We're the biggest event series in the country and we do all different distances, half marathons. (MSE223)

Organisational consistency

Responses concerning organisational consistency (i.e., perceived congruence between shareholder and social value) were referenced by 17 respondents. Aspects related to authenticity; striking a balance between economics-first and mission-driven approaches; measurability; and strategic alignment were all discussed in relation to value creation by sponsors and MSE representatives. Supporting examples from the interviews and definitions of these aspects concerning organisational consistency are contained in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4. Examples of participant responses about organisational consistency.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Authenticity	Demonstrating a genuine desire to create financial value and societal value	"Our strategy for the UK was that we need to go beyond just advertising in order to communicate what mobility means to people, we need to make a tangible impact on people's lives. It's very easy to go out with relatively standardised, big, creative, emotional assets but actually, we need to be seen as an active facilitator and be shown to have a positive impact in the societies or the communities that we operate." (Sponsor208)
		"We work on a strapline at the moment called 'Be Your Greatest'. So, we are very much about empowering and inspiring individuals to do challenges and to motivate them along the way." (MSE23)
Economics-first versus mission-driven	The tension between adopting business strategies which aim to create shareholder value and business strategies which aim to create social value	"'Values' is really becoming a more and more significant part of sponsorship. However, I would also say that there are two massively conflicting forces at work here. At one end, you have everybody talking about values-driven sponsorship and partnerships that actually work on multiple levels; One being how attached they, as a company, can prove themselves to be to the values of the property they're related to. But, almost irreconcilably at the other end of the scale, is the need for marketers to create instant results. Social media has done that because now a marketing manager can sit there and say, 'I've got 50 grand to do something and actually if I do it like this, on a Facebook campaign or whatever it is, I get this many eyeballs, I get that much', and so on. Everything is very short-term, it's very tactical, it's very ROI. So therefore, you've got these two, what are for the moment, almost irreconcilable forces at work in sponsorships and partnerships and I don't believe that at the

		moment, companies have actually put those two things together in most cases." (MSE216)
		"Across all the brands in the UK, we are the seventh-most chosen, which is an unbelievable privilege and honour. But also, it comes with responsibility. In our particular case, what we're trying to focus on is the lack of activity in modern lifestyles. We are a dairy brand and 30% of our milk is produced in the UK, and we work with a massive network of farmers. We have a responsibility to them, as it is the backbone of UK agriculture. But at the same time, the UK is suffering from obesity, dementia and mental health issues. These are growing trends of society that as a business, we have a responsibility to tackle. The NHS is stretched to the maximum, public funding is declining for sports and for schools and libraries. And so, it's kind of this spiral which is currently happening. So, if we can make people active through fun, which is what we're trying to do, and if we can get people to enjoy themselves a little bit doing sports and getting active, then that makes a massive difference." (Sponsor218)
Measurability	Measurement of the balance between the creation of shareholder value and social value	"I do think that as it stands now, we're not quite at the point where it's embedded in the business, maybe in some ways you need some new KPIs about those things that will allow a board to say, 'that's why we can afford to look at value partnering rather than anything else' or why that should be a significant part of an investment that I'm making." (MSE216)
		"We do track brand perception, and then I can see when there's an event on that, you know, perception increases and changes and improves. And over time, so we have now been measuring this for over a year, and over time I can see a steady increase in trends to see, you know, [Brand] is perceived to be healthier, [Brand] is perceived to be better for you, [Brand] is perceived to support local communities." (Sponsor218)
Strategic alignment	Alignment between the organisational marketing strategy and consistency-related activity	"I think when you go on this mission of shared value, what is very important for any brand is to have a clear defined brand platform when you can articulate quite well what is the context, what are the pressing issues that you are facing, what is your big belief in order to fix this issue and what is the role that you are playing? In general, you have to spend time to refine that and then it's easier. What is your positioning as a brand and what are the brand pillars? But this exercise is easier for a young brand but if you are a 60 year-old organisation with already a lot of history and legacy that's where the complexity could arise." (MSE206)
		"I think a point of sponsorship I feel quite strongly about, is that you should only go into any sponsorship to help you with your wider brand objectives, it shouldn't be seen as something which is leftfield. Everything that we're measuring already as a brand and everything that we're trying to progress as a brand, a sponsorship should simply help us to do that, it shouldn't be something which sits on its own, have its own success metrics. What we need to do is really isolate the impact the sponsorship is having on our overall brand, not what impact sponsorship is just having in general." (Sponsor208)

Authenticity. Nine participants discussed the role of authenticity in helping to facilitate consistency for sponsors and MSEs. A number of interviewees touched upon the advantages of integrating an authentic approach, such as Sponsor208, who mentioned the importance of its sponsorship not looking 'like a

badging exercise […] doing it for the sake of doing it.' This particular respondent further expounded that its sponsorship strategy needed to help 'communicate what mobility means to people […] be seen as an active facilitator and be shown to have a positive impact in the societies or the communities that we operate' as opposed to 'standardised, big, creative, emotional assets.' From an MSE perspective, MSE223 explained: 'We work on a strapline at the moment called "Be Your Greatest". So, we are very much about empowering and inspiring individuals to do challenges and to motivate them along the way'; and MSE220 underlined the importance of 'representing the diversity of Europe.'

On the other hand, some respondents expressed reservations about the sincerity of sponsorship activity as perceived by other actors. For instance, MSE228 believed that 'the days of just putting your sign up and expecting everyone to buy your product are gone' as people are 'more educated as to the commercial relationship between brands and sport.' MSE215 felt that 'a lot of these brands are just trying to reflect society' without necessarily supporting their aims with corresponding activity. This was supported by MSE206 ('the reality is that partners and sponsors looked at us as a way to help their own brand in terms of positive sentiment […] I would say we are helping them more than they are helping us') and MSE216 ('most people who partner with [us], they primarily, I would say, have a motivation of brand warmth and brand regard'). Another interviewee added:

> It worries me that you see the likes of [MSE] and even ourselves sometimes, where we almost pay lip service to society, but I actually think there is a bigger halo and long-term effect when you genuinely do involve society. (MSE220)

Such a 'halo effect' of authenticity is detailed by MSE216, who commented that many brands are now 'waking up to that fact' by 'looking to a more purpose-led approach in terms of positioning and doing something that really stands out […] because people are looking and seeing.' This respondent went on to highlight a sponsorship which became a 'positive force for social change' by putting a spotlight on 'gender equality and empowerment.' In this vein, another executive emphasised that 'you can sponsor as much as you want but if you can't do anything meaningful with it then what's the point?' (MSE201).

Economics-first vs. mission-driven. Complementarily, ten participants noted the importance of balancing generating shareholder value and social value. MSE216 mentioned that 'more and more [property owners] are finding the need to express their brands in terms of wider impact.' This indicates that consistency strategies are applicable to MSE hosts as well as sponsors, particularly for 'inspiring activity, health […] dealing with stress and tension, mental health issues and so forth.'

As MSE214 stated; 'They're both intertwined. One has to come with the other. Societal impact has a wider effect long-term, financial has a greater impact short-term, we constantly look at this balance between those two drivers.' A number of other participants acknowledged the importance of striking an equilibrium in this respect. MSE222 described the compilation of its portfolio of sponsors as 'the balance between being meaningful, so the brands have to make sense for the [target market] and at the

same time, be interested to invest heavily in the ecosystem.' In addition, Sponsor207 made a distinction between 'maximising' and 'optimising' revenue to the benefit of generating social value:

> The objective has never been to maximise revenue […] to get as much money as you possibly can. I would say 'optimise revenues' is a way to describe it. So, if you wanted to really squeeze it for every cent you might sell it in a different way to how we do it now. (Sponsor207)

This notion is also supported by MSE223, who considers their organisation 'as a social enterprise because we are not completely dictated by profit' At the same time, this commercial director stressed, 'we are a commercial operator and proud to be. We are not a charity, but we do help lots of other charities raise money.' Furthermore, MSE03 rationalised that it was more important for their sport property to collaborate with appropriate partners in order to strike a suitable balance between financial performance and societal contribution, rather than partner with sponsors that may contribute the greatest amount purely in terms of revenue:

> If there wasn't [an appreciation of a balanced approach between financial performance and societal contribution] we would certainly go down the betting partner route because that's more money but it's not the greatest thing you can do. (MSE203)

MSE228 held a similar view with regards to their sponsorship arrangements, in that 'it's quite hard to put a definite financial value or grading on it, we don't necessarily do it for that reason.'

Other respondents alluded to a delicate tension in terms of the tangibility of shareholder returns and social initiatives:

> When we approach people new to partner with us, we get a lot of quite young marketing managers who just don't get why they would have to, in terms of their day to day job and the pressure that they're under to make their money work, how they can see that spending money on something that is not full of tangibility is actually quite a difficult decision. (MSE216)

Examples of this confliction were also evidenced by other interviewees. MSE223 shared an example of one of its sponsors being focused 'purely on selling as many [products] as possible and we're judged on that. They're quite cut-throat […] if we don't sell enough [product] they don't come back the following year.' Conversely, another of its sponsors are 'all about community fundraising […] it's completely run out of their community team rather than their marketing team and for them it's all about how much money they raise for their chosen charity.' MSE228 highlighted that their method is often 'ad-hoc, sometimes we'll have approaches from sponsors, venues, broadcasters […] we look at it on a case by case basis to see where we can provide a benefit.' This philosophy is borne out of a pragmatic mind set whereby, 'in an idealistic world you might say we'll have a global partner in this sector, that sector and the other sector but that isn't always possible so you have to see where you're commercially valuable.'

MSE216 also cited a misalignment in the respective outlooks of senior executives and middle managers involved in the sponsorship process. They felt managers making day-to-day ROI-related decisions lacked empowerment with the 'values-driven approach becoming in-vogue at board level.' When this particular MSE engages with prospective partners they often encounter inexperienced marketing managers, who are obliged to demonstrate shareholder value but often seem reluctant to justify 'spending money on something relatively intangible.' Sponsor227 also admitted that they 'would like to do more in that area [community involvement] but the tangible benefit to [sponsor's] business is more difficult to document [...] if I had more money I'd do more of that.' Such an 'almost irreconcilable' disconnect between the need to 'create instant results' whilst demonstrating an attachment 'to the values of the property that they're related to' (MSE216) poses a considerable opportunity for sponsors and MSEs to further develop more integrated consistency-led approaches focused on better harmonising these priorities.

Strategic alignment. Nine respondents focused on the importance of aligning sponsorship with overall organisational marketing strategy as a means of actualising consistency. MSE201 explained that it is 'not something we just do on the side when we've got a set 5 minutes [...] because it ultimately has a positive reflection on the brand.' Sponsor208 noted that sponsorship 'shouldn't be something which is leftfield' by helping to develop the brand and not coming across as a 'badging exercise.' This sponsorship manager continued: 'We don't want it to feel like greenwashing, doing it for the sake of it.' Another sponsor representative mentioned that sponsorship:

> Needs to become part of the DNA of the business. If it's just a project on the side-lines, not aligned with core strategy, then it will always just be a logo slapped on something. In order to fully benefit, it needs to become part of who you are, and aligned with what you're trying to achieve as a business.

Other interviewees referenced the need for alignment. Sponsor229 discussed how their company was 'looking to align sponsorship in a more strategic manner [...] you can't just pluck something out of thin air and decide, right, that's what we're going to champion.' Critical to this is a 'relatable factor' in terms of how an organisation can 'make a difference'. MSE228 referred to this as being an underpinning business philosophy ('something we believe in, an ethos of the company') rather than a 'prescribed policy':

> We're not a big corporate entity who has hundred page documents on every single policy that we do, it's something we believe in, we like to make a difference and have a positive impression of ourselves from others, so it's more of an unwritten rule, I think rather than a defined policy. (MSE228)

MSE212 offered some insights into such a strategic philosophy at their organisation, disclosing that elements of technology, family and sustainability were crucial in supporting its ambition 'to be one of the most sustainable events ever.' Other interviewees referred to the role of brand-related 'pillars' in helping to encase a shareholder and societal focus within its strategy. Sponsor227 referenced 'engagement, education and brand confidence' as driving activity such as an educational programme

which aimed to 'bring insight into professional [sport] that the average fan wouldn't necessarily see' and helped to 'reflect our diversity values and investment in future leadership.' Sponsor229 held a similar perspective, alluding to:

> Consistent brand messaging about unearthing and sharing progressive stories in [sport]. We have a benchmarking system where we have five key pillars, if we do any piece of activity we will say, does it align with at least four or five of these? (Sponsor229)

In addition, MSE206 suggested that creating purposeful, mission-driven strategies via a 'clear defined brand platform' are 'easier for a young brand like [MSE], because if you are a 60 year-old organisation with a lot of history and legacy that's where the complexity could arise.'

Measurability. Another aspect related to organisational consistency that was highlighted during the interviews was measurability. Eight of the executives referred to aspects concerning measurability of consistency-related strategies. Sponsor208 made a linkage between the importance of strategic alignment and measurement, noting that:

> Everything that we're measuring already and everything that we're trying to progress as a brand, a sponsorship should simply help us to do that. It shouldn't be something which sits on its own, have its own success metrics.

Similar to the pilot study, a number of respondents use brand-related measures to help monitor and evaluate consistency-related aspects. MSE222 tracks brand preference, brand affinity and unaided awareness 'as the outputs and outcome of what we need to achieve.' Sponsor218 mentioned that their firm assesses brand perception: 'Over time I can see a steady increase in trends to see [whether] [Brand] is perceived to be healthier, [Brand] is perceived to be better for you, [Brand] is perceived to support local communities.' This participant further elaborated that in terms of the key metrics regarding the commercial evaluation of its sponsorship activity, 'the number one is media, the second is products sold and the third is brand consideration.' This idea was further developed by MSE216:

> Most people who partner with [MSE], they primarily, I would say, have a motivation of brand warmth and brand regard. That's measurable in the sense of being a normal marketing research indicator and pretty much everybody can and has seen a measurable change in terms of brand regard and brand warmth from partnering with [MSE]. (MSE216)

MSE216 further explained specific measurement criteria of a collaboration with a key sponsor to create an online platform to assist disabled people as being: 'More people flowing through the website, more people registering, more becoming part of the community. The website is at the heart of setting up a whole bunch of new KPIs.' In addition, 'employee surveys - workplace happiness, health and wellbeing' were also cited as useful for assessing the effectiveness of social initiatives (Sponsor218), which was a view shared by MSE212 ('our internal audiences here are crucial, so we track on engagement with the sponsorship amongst them and their sentiment towards it').

A note of caution, though, was sounded by MSE212, who explained:

> I would say that's one of our weak spots, the measuring and monitoring, and especially when it comes to sustainability issues, and even more when it's a one off event, it's hard to argue to get the money in a tight budget to be more the measuring [sic]. And it's really hard to get good data, because there are so many stakeholders involved. (MSE212)

For this practitioner, being able to access sufficient funding to conduct effective monitoring and evaluation of consistency-based strategies can prove to be challenging, particularly for a one-off event compared to one that reoccurs. This suggests that measurement of consistency may be problematic for certain MSEs.

Sponsor-event symbiosis

The importance of symbiotic relationships between sponsors and MSE properties for CSV was emphasised by 20 participants. These results underlined the significance of six key constituents of the symbiotic relationship between sponsors and MSE properties: communication, enhancements of capabilities; enhancement of consistency; level of involvement; mutual benefits; and a shared philosophy. Examples of these elements are displayed in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5. Examples of participant responses about symbiosis between sponsor and MSE property.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Communication	Clear, regular, and/or open dialogue between sponsor and MSE property	"We don't just talk a good game, we actually ask our partners every year what they think of us, what we're doing and where we could get better and we're in a pretty healthy state there which is encouraging. I think it's trying to get partners and dare I say it some people this end at times to think slightly more commercially." (MSE215)
		"It's got to be listening, relationship building, trying to build a relationship to a point where you have trust. And the ear of your counterpart so that you know that you can allow yourself to be more upfront, more open, and also allow yourself to say things that you wouldn't say otherwise, create a bond that actually would open up business doors that would not necessarily be open otherwise. If this is about making a choice between having a phone call or a video call I would always go for a video call. If the opportunity is to go and meet face to face rather than at a distance I would always go face to face." (Sponsor221)
Enhancement of capabilities	The capabilities of the sponsor or MSE property are boosted via a symbiosis with the respective partner	"We wouldn't be able to do something so brave [with activation] and, I don't think, on any sort of scale like that without their collaboration. I think what we'd probably end up doing is something a lot more safe, something which probably didn't deliver for us at the level that we wanted to deliver for us and it would be much more labour-intensive again on our part." (Sponsor208)
		"We don't spend a huge amount of money on our marketing, our own money. Our partners become our marketers, or they become the

		funders of our marketing programme and so, where we look at choosing or working with partners we will look at ones that will go and do great work for us." (MSE214)
Enhancement of consistency	The consistency of the sponsor or MSE property is boosted via a symbiosis with the respective partner	"We initiated [gender summit] in 2014 and it started in a [temporary building near the MSE]. We had about 30 people and it was hosted by our CEO, with [newsreader] and [sports professional] and we had a panel session. The feedback we got was tremendous. The year after it was slightly bigger and it grew to about 80 people. Then last year it was in [major events venue in the UK] which is quite a big venue and we had 150 people. So it's grown every year and it's something that I'm personally really proud of. It definitely sits outside the normal boundaries of sponsorship - we want to celebrate diversity, inclusion and equality." (Sponsor213)
		"When you look at the expression of what [Sponsor] is trying to do, repositioning itself as a mobility provider, so they don't want to be recognised purely for being a car manufacturer, they want to talk about mobility and there's a good reason for that because when you're looking at, say, electric, you're looking at self-driving, you're looking at mobility aids like exoskeletons, the kind of motorised wheelchairs that can deal with stairs. These are the developments where they find the perfect expression through the [MSE] because they're actually talking about mobility as a source of freedom and a source of personal expression." (MSE216)
Level of involvement	The connection between sponsor and MSE in assisting the delivery of each other's objectives and strategy	"Our title partners, as far as I'm concerned they almost own us, so if they want my Partnerships Director to go and work out of their office two days a week then I will try and make that happen. And if they want to come and work here then that's absolutely fine. Once we've got a title partner in place it's such a significant amount of money we want our business to almost be part of them. If they want it to be like that we are literally, 'how high?' when they say 'jump' when it comes to that, so the title partners absolutely. The category partners, not so much." (MSE223)
		"[MSE properties] must get a new mind-set that makes them proactively think, what is it that those sponsors and brands need to optimise that platform? All the rights holders have a responsibility to help their partners grow their business, it's not just about cashing in the money and saying, 'thank you very much' and we delivered on what's in the contract. I think rights holders, if they think that that's enough then they will lose in this battle of sponsorship, the battle is getting fiercer and fiercer. If I had any advice to rights holders it would be get someone on board who used to work for a company that sponsors because only that way will you understand that mind-set. Many rights holders are used to sitting back and delivering on the basics and have no idea how hard it is to be in a competitive profit seeking company that absolutely must sell and must constantly justify why they're pumping money into you as an event. It needs to be a constant, they should feel that same pressure that their sponsors do in terms of holding onto their sponsors and doing constantly better." (Sponsor226)
Mutual benefits	Benefits jointly accrued by both parties	"You always talk about sports rights holders having partnerships with brands. They're not sponsors anymore, they're partners. So, it's not supposed to be a kind of one-way badging exercise anymore. Yes, they pay money for the right to get certain IP and what have you but we should be working together as a partnership to benefit each other." (Sponsor207)
		"A partnership where we can genuinely have shared value and we also have a shared purpose and it's just a fantastic partnership that has actually got nothing to do with putting a logo up next to anybody, it's actually about both of us needing something from each other and

		we could only do it, achieve what we want to do by working together." (MSE214)
Shared philosophy	Synergetic organisational values, beliefs and ideas	"We are not comfortable asking somebody or having an event to promote our brand if they don't align and share our values. When things come across our desk we can tell pretty quickly whether we have shared values and whether they align with our brand." (Sponsor213)
		"All of our partners, when we approach them and get into serious negotiations, we discuss what it is that we believe is important for the long term future of the [MSE]. So, in a sense, we have a bit of a hurdle for all of our partners to get over, which is we asked them all to buy into the vision of the organisation. So, we have a conscious conversation about do you believe that partnering with us will move forward the position for disabled people in this country and when you do that, what other things will you do to help support that? So, right from the beginning we have conversations with them about their own diversity and inclusivity policies, what they do to increase diversity and inclusivity in recruitment, in the workplace, every element where there is some possibility of increasing and improving the opportunities for disabled people, that's an agenda that we push with every single one of our partners." (MSE216)

Communication. Ten participants emphasised the role of communication in helping to develop a symbiotic relationship with their respective sponsorship partners. Several referred to the need to communicate regularly. For example, MSE215 ('we don't just talk a good game, we actually ask our partners every year what they think of us, what we're doing and where we could get better and we're in a pretty healthy state there which is encouraging'); Sponsor218 ('we have bi-yearly strategy meetings with the federation. It's where we are like, OK, this what we're trying to do next year, and try to align our goals with their goals') and Sponsor227 ('[MSE] and ourselves, we sit down every season and go – what's worked well this year, what hasn't worked so well this year?) noted the importance of formal communication at defined time intervals. In addition, MSE204 felt that less formal communication, such as 'picking up your phone and call[ing] somebody […] just to say hello' was also important for strengthening the relationship. This view was also supported Sponsor208, who reflected:

> We have an extremely collaborative relationship with [MSE], there wouldn't be any days really that I don't speak to them. I feel like we're very much pulling in the same direction, we appreciate the value that they provide to us and they appreciate the value that we provide to them. We see it almost as an extension of our team, they're a hugely valuable partner. (Sponsor208)

Sponsor221 developed this idea further, suggesting 'there's always something more or better you can do with regards to dealing with a partner'. Regular and good quality communication is a facet of 'emotional intelligence' that can contribute towards 'shared value growth'. This executive further contemplated: 'Are you able to actually listen and adapt to your counterpart so you can make a better job out of it, so you can both benefit?'

The value of 'good, open dialogue' between partners (Sponsor227) is important for 'trying to build a relationship to a point where you have trust', which can lead to the creation of a bond 'that actually

would open up business doors that would not necessarily be open otherwise' (Sponsor221). This is articulated by MSE212 as an ability to 'communicate and visualise the potential within the event' for the respective partner which may otherwise be more difficult for them to comprehend. When MSE216 enters into dialogue with prospective partners, they 'discuss with them what it is that we believe is important for the long-term future of the MSE.'

Further, MSE215 explained, 'our best critics at times can be our major sponsors […] a pissed-off sponsor can give us a right kick up the backside at times to actually see improvements.' This suggests that open, trusting relationships allow for a certain level of conflict which can be beneficial in overcoming challenges and generating improvements. However, MSE220 lamented, 'we probably didn't have an open dialogue enough with our sponsors' to be able to explain to them the advantages of additional spend on activation in order to provide additional benefits to a wider range of stakeholders. This idea was also discussed by MSE214, who admitted that 'we could absolutely improve on making sure [sponsors] don't just talk six months out [from the MSE taking place]' with 'a more strategic outlook and a more robust communication strategy sooner rather than later.'

Enhancement of capabilities. A symbiosis between sponsor and MSE can also boost the effect on both organisational capabilities and consistency. Regarding capabilities (i.e., exclusive proficiencies which can return added value to the organisation as long as these remain impervious to competitive activity), nine participants acknowledged the augmentation provided by their counterparts. Whilst recognised as a sponsor brand capability in the pilot study, growth can also be facilitated because of the symbiosis between sponsor and MSE, as MSE204 explained:

> For us it's very important to grow these events. This specific sponsor in China where we have most of our top leading events taking place now […] has a very important role, because […] this type of association will lead into more awareness and consequently, will lead into more sponsorships or interest from the Chinese companies to be associated with the events (MSE204).

MSE14 referenced the marketing knowledge and technological proficiencies contributed by sponsor partners 'who become our marketers'. In this case, sponsor selection criteria were based around 'choosing partners that will go and do great work for us'. The same participant also emphasised a boosting effect afforded by the MSE to the sponsor:

> We articulate your message quicker because we have one of the most recognisable symbols in the world. When people see [our logo] they think of key terminology: inclusiveness, participation, dedication, and by association, people articulate your message instantly and we make your money work a lot harder for you. (MSE214)

This was also supported by MSE203, who argued that 'a relatively young, dynamic, exciting' sponsor, 'used by young people', enabled the MSE 'to engage with young people all over the world in a digital manner'. The potential boosting effect of a positive symbiosis was also suggested by MSE220, who explained how their sport event did not realise the full potential of a particular sponsorship as the

sponsor did not communicate 'how proud they were' of the arrangement, and subsequently the MSE was not 'receiving that additional kind of visibility'.

Other respondents provided further details of the type of enhancement of capabilities a symbiotic relationship can provide. Sponsor208 admitted 'we wouldn't be able to do something so brave […] on any sort of scale' in terms of activation were it not for the strength of its collaboration with an MSE partner. For MSE212, sponsors 'help to boost with their activation, or with the actual operational side of getting stuff done.' MSE206 emphasised improvements in branding, reach, and audiences as a result of its collaboration with a beer brand. Furthermore, MSE215 considered the opportunity to learn from its partners, such as via staff secondment schemes, as being a key element in advancing its own capabilities:

> We don't necessarily know all the answers and some of these [sponsor] brands are some of the biggest marketing companies in the world, let alone the UK, so let's not be arrogant and let's try to tap into their resources and as we look towards resourcing and stuff, can't we do secondee programmes, are people going to work in their businesses and vice versa? And I know that worked well when I worked at [MSE], we had lots of secondees coming from various sponsors and that added a dynamic, people from the outside coming in. (MSE215)

Enhancement of consistency. The importance of a sponsor-MSE symbiotic relationship to increase the impact of organisational consistency (i.e. perceived correspondence between the creation of economic and social value) was acknowledged in six interviews. Sponsor213 revealed that its collaboration with a sport property enabled strategic adaptation in response to 'legislative restrictions' related to its products, influencing the implementation of a long-term, mission-driven approach focused on contributing towards the local community. In this case, the sponsor was able to utilise its association with both the men's and women's format of the MSE to help initiate and grow a gender summit related to the event, which 'definitely sits outside the normal boundaries of sponsorship - we want to celebrate diversity, inclusion and equality' (Sponsor213).

Similarly, Sponsor227 asserted it's 'diversity values and investment in future leadership' were heightened by a long-standing and successful relationship with an MSE. In this case, societal principles were integrated into business strategies as a 'by-product' of the allegiance that 'financially makes sense' rather than being the primary motivator in forming the relationship. Alternatively, MSE215 acknowledged the need for 'partners and dare I say it some people this end at times to think slightly more commercially' and a willingness to 'provide additional mutual value for […] essentially getting things outside the contract […] which also helps with renewal when we want a longer-term deal.'

MSE216 discussed how its partnership with a car manufacturer sponsor allowed the sponsor to 'find the perfect expression' to 'reposition itself as a mobility provider' through the platform of the MSE:

> For them, working with the [MSE] has an extraordinarily natural fit because individuals are looking to express themselves through sport and express the fact that they've got no boundaries and, therefore, it's

a perfect complement to the brand position which is; we have a really strong feeling that human beings have a need for mobility and mobility is freedom, mobility is expression and what better way of doing that than the [MSE]. (MSE216)

MSE223 provided a further illustration of how an effective sponsor-sponsee relationship can help to optimise consistency. They conceded that although 'it wasn't the most innovative partnership', it helped both to get 'their brand out there' via '15 hours of live television on the BBC' and allowed the sponsor to fundraise for social causes. Furthermore, the sponsor:

Thought it was right because what we do enables people to get fit and active and change their lifestyle and 30% of our runners every year are new to running and so, genuinely, the events that we deliver actually save lives because they get people into living a healthier lifestyle and that's what [Sponsor] were all about. (MSE223)

MSE223 also referenced an example of another sponsor, which invests 'millions to put on kids running events in schools' but 'doesn't brand it […] as his organisation is very unpopular and we probably wouldn't want his logo on top of our event but we're happy to worth with him on more silent projects.'

Level of involvement. Four participants identified the level of involvement in the marketing strategy of respective partners as a precursor to the development of a symbiotic relationship. Sponsor213 explained that it 'likes to be involved in events so we can make a difference.' This level of sponsor involvement in the MSE extended to aspects such as selecting charitable activities, shaping player fields and being 'involved in all the details […] to be proud of what we're associated with and what makes a difference.'

From MSE223's perspective, it is important to distinguish between title partners, which contribute 'such a significant amount of money we want our business to almost be part of them' and lower revenue-generating category partners. For title partners, this MSE will offer 'however much they want to do' in terms of involvement, such as allocating key staff members to work within the sponsor's head office, to the extent of 'we are literally, "how high?" when they say "jump"'. This participant did however acknowledge the 'challenge of relying on commercial income' but 'that's just life.' However, MSE201 felt that in reality, collaborative working 'gets very tricky and very complicated, you are still working for two distinct organisations with different objectives and therefore corporate sensitivities around who can see and share what information'.

Other respondents recognised the value of involvement between sponsor partners and its inherent challenges. Sponsor226 felt that some MSE properties 'are used to sitting back and delivering on the basics' but need to adopt a fresh perspective, to 'help their partners grow their business' rather than simply 'cashing in the money and saying thank you very much'. In this regard, MSE201 explained the importance of tailoring its involvement with sponsors according to their individual needs and circumstances:

> We don't have a cookie cutter formula for our partnerships, it's not a case of you come in and this is what you get, this is what you buy. We turn it back to the brand and say, "okay, this is who we are, and this is what we can offer you, what do you want? (MSE201)

Mutual benefits. A total of 12 participants made reference to mutual benefits as being an important element of a positive symbiosis between partners. MSE201 articulated the importance of 'mutually beneficial partnerships' with MSE214 describing 'a fantastic partnership that has nothing to do with putting a logo up (but) needing something from each other. We could only achieve what we want, by working together'. This implies equal status afforded to each party. MSE216 further described 'the need for both parties to set clear expectations from the outset to increase the possibility for improvements in any agreed parameter, such as diversity and inclusion in recruitment', implying a re-conception of products and markets by identifying and reframing unmet social needs leading to shared value.

Sponsor205, Sponsor207, and MSE222 held mixed views regarding the importance and meaning of terminology used to articulate the mutual benefits of sponsorship relationships. Sponsor205 was 'a very keen advocate of not using the word, "sponsorship". I don't like it, I try to always refer to it as "partnerships" rather than "sponsorships" because it has to be mutually beneficial.' Likewise, Sponsor207 likened sponsorship to being 'a one-way badging exercise' whereas partnerships were felt to be more akin to 'working together […] to benefit each other'. Conversely, MSE222 argued that whilst the sentiment of meaningful, mutually beneficial collaborations was important, the nuances of the terminology itself were less so:

> Some people make a difference between sponsorship and partnership or collaboration. I think it's bullshit, I think it's different names for the same thing. You've got corporate identity like collaboration with the rights holders that give access to the community. And the way you contractually name it or you communicate around the collaboration doesn't matter. It's basically that the brands are not bothering with the property just for the sake of it. (MSE222)

Other participants referred to specific features which contribute to a mutually beneficial relationship. In Sponsor208's view, a mind-set of 'openness to try(ing) new things' is crucial, as is both parties 'needing something from each other' (MSE214). Similar to Sponsor106 in the pilot study, MSE215 also mentioned the importance of partners' each having 'skin in the game' to help ensure that mutually beneficial KPIs are achieved as the relationship progresses. In the absence of such reciprocally significant foundations, Sponsor227 cited an example of a particular relationship that was damaged irretrievably:

> We're not working with the [MSE] anymore because their attitude was one very clearly of: "That's what you've got, that's what you've got" and so, in that case in the end it was like, "well guys, it's been a great partnership but let's move on." Now, if we'd had this fantastic relationship we might not have been so clear-cut at the end of it. (Sponsor227)

This assessment was supported by Sponsor208, who explained that 'off-the-peg rights won't be tailored to any sort of business objectives that you have' and as a result, 'you're leaving value on the table' by overpaying for rights that may be of little use to the sponsor, whilst missing on other aspects that may have been more valuable.

Shared philosophy. During the interviews, 10 participants of the sample acknowledged a shared philosophy as being critical to the development of a symbiotic relationship. MSE204 rationalises this as finding a 'niche' and a 'synergy' which helps to 'drive the attention' of a counterpart. For MSE212, this should be established 'early on' in the relationship, where the values 'have to click'. MSE206 advised that 'you need to be sure that your core brand is clearly defined in order to be sure the partner can add their own platform but is consistent with who you are.'

According to Sponsor213, their company was 'not comfortable asking somebody or having an event to promote our brand if they don't align and share our values.' Furthermore, Sponsor227 underlined the need for partners to be aligned culturally:

> We looked at our core values and we looked at what [MSE's] core values were. On one wall we put up all those values, and we challenged people – which are the [MSE] values and which are the [Sponsor] values? And no one could ever get them all right because there was this shared value from that perspective. So our core values of teamwork, innovation, ethics and integrity, winning spirit and innovation. And then when you looked at the [MSE] values, you'd struggle to know which was which, so not only was it about the brands but it was what the brands reflected. And I still use that example when I talk to people. (Sponsor227)

Other respondents made reference to a lack of a shared philosophy which harmed the development of an interdependent relationship, such as Sponsor205, who felt that some sponsorships were 'self-centred […] all about what you can get out of it, like how much can you effectively drive your own agenda as much as possible.' MSE223 offered a further example, citing a sponsor that regarded their organisation to be 'more like a supplier than a partner':

> For years we did a fantastic schools programme with [Sponsor] where they used to put in money to help us deliver going into schools and running events for them but they treated us like a supplier. They would tell us about two months prior to the end of one year if they were going to fund it for the following year so you could never tell the kids whether they were going to have a running event or not. (MSE223)

Ultimately, a shared philosophy requires a partner to 'buy into the vision of the [other] organisation' (MSE216). This particular MSE discusses with potential partners from the beginning 'their own diversity and inclusivity policies, what they do to increase diversity and inclusivity in recruitment, the workplace, every element where there is some possibility of increasing and improving the opportunities for disabled people'. This approach is intended to help ensure that both parties are united philosophically, which in turn may likely strengthen the foundations of the relationship and provide a more generative basis for shared value creation.

Cultivation

Cultivation (i.e., value cultivated by other parties in addition to the sponsor and MSE) is apparent with 16 interviewees referencing examples of collaboration with different organisations, which positively influenced the creation of shared value. A selection of these are included in Table 5.6. These findings offer further support to the pilot study to indicate that cultivation is a process which can augment the effectiveness of MSE and sponsor capabilities and consistency in creating shared value. This was analogised by MSE220 as being:

> Almost like Russian dolls going outwardly. The [MSE] is your smallest doll at the centre of everything and you could motivate people to get involved with the event, persuade people to buy tickets, become volunteers then that starts the wave. If you then encourage the local county council or town council, suddenly that's the next Russian doll and then you go a bigger step and bigger step until you're talking to government. The final Russian doll is really your title sponsor, who want it to land on a global scale. (MSE220)

Three principal aspects of cultivation were evident from the main study interviews; other commercial organisations with a direct or indirect association to the MSE or sponsor (e.g., agencies, associated sponsors [sponsor-to-sponsor], and MSEs and other sport properties [MSE-to-sport property]); the media; and NGOs.

Table 5.6. Examples of participant responses about cultivation.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Media	The main channels of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the internet)	"Broadcasters are enormously important, because a lot of brands are into sponsorship because of media or exposure. And so even if you're the most amazing sport, you can do a lot of things internally. But if you are after exposure in particular, which I guess is the most popular factor, you need to have broadcasters on your side. So, I think that's an important one. And when you go to most of these conferences, usually you have these sort of, they call it triangle discussions - where it's the broadcaster, the federation and the brand. And that's kind of considered the 'golden triangle' of sponsorship." (Sponsor218)
		"I do think the media is enormously important. If the media aren't buying into the product being promoted and sold you've got a problem on your hands and that can affect both the event and the sponsor. It can actually affect all stakeholders because if the media decides to slam something, then suddenly we could be in a situation where some of the [players] might not want to show up, some sponsors might want to pull out, some fans mightn't want to attend and I think the likes of Saudi Arabia is a good example of that - where when you've got a significant event in a country with a bad name, suddenly the media turns its attention to it." (MSE220)
NGOs	Non-profit organisations that operate independently of any government, which typically	"We support the School of Hard Knocks and the Wooden Spoons, for young kids, teenagers, […] trying to get them into work. There's all various reasons why they struggle to get them trained - they mightn't be on time or whatever, falling on bad times. The School of Hard Knocks, that's why we supported their charity dinners and giving

	exist for the purpose of addressing a social or political issue	prizes for places at a Champions League game and so forth. That's where all our staff get involved." (Sponsor209) "UK Sport, Sport England, Sport and Recreation Alliance, the National Lottery. We worked with all of those essentially for the greater good of making sure we got more people to get out and play sport." (MSE214)
Other commercial organisations	Agencies, associated sponsors (sponsor-to-sponsor), and MSEs and other sport properties (MSE-to-sport property)	"They need to be partners from within the [MSE] stable because of IP issues. I have a regular catch up with [Sponsor], who are the makers of prosthetics, who are a partner of [MSE]. We speak regularly, we're going to see if they can help us on any projects, we'll see if we can help them. I think there are lots of opportunities for shared working. It's probably something that you don't see a huge amount of in sponsorships because of the challenges of working with other brands contractually. There's so much red tape that it often becomes too difficult to do something but they are conversations that we have and the [MSE] has partner workshops every three months, so we go along, see what other brands are doing, speak to other brands. So, the opportunity is always there, it's just finding that project which would benefit from both parties being involved." (Sponsor208)
		"We had sponsor meetings continuously and I was always involved, I always had a speaking slot. In these workshops they could get together and find connecting points. For example, we had the local energy company. They hooked up with [car manufacturer], which had just launched a hybrid electric car. So, [energy sponsor] could start up a showcase, a charging station, and then put it together with a [sponsor] car outside the arena. So, the sponsors got together to do things." (MSE212)

Other commercial organisations. Nine participants revealed the prominence and function of other commercial organisations involved in the cultivation process. As in the pilot study, there was some discussion relating to the role of agencies. Sponsor226 suggested that creative agencies are particularly important in helping to facilitate a conducive platform for CSV 'in terms of digital activation', and being 'social media savvy'. Sponsor218 considered the agencies they worked with as 'basically part of my team, like an extended arm […] we're very close; I actually work from their offices three days a week.' Likewise, Sponsor227 referenced the need for support from external specialists, when the requisite capabilities may not exist internally: 'There are other innovations, there's things happening that you need help with, you don't know everything, you do need that extra knowledge.' Conversely, MSE223 admitted that a sponsor's agency did not possess suitable knowledge of the event to be able to add value:

> My biggest frustration is all the agencies on the outskirts of the industry that try and make money. So, what happens a lot is you'll get a sponsor which hires an agency - charging fees to come up with ideas and they don't tend to understand our industry, they come up with mad ideas that aren't possible. What was it the other day? They wanted everyone to run an extra mile at the end [of the race]. They clearly have been paid a lot of money by the client to have that idea and you just think why didn't they just come to us and ask would it be possible? It's very easy as a consultant or a creative agency to come up with wacky ideas but then to actually deliver them is…and then you end up with a disappointed sponsor. (MSE223)

A number of participants also referenced sponsor-to-sponsor cultivation. MSE215 emphasised a need to 'drive better working between our partners so they get more of an upside.' MSE212 noted the role of its event in enabling cluster development by initiating co-sponsor forums, resulting in a productive alliance between an energy company and electronic vehicle manufacturer to share technology transfer and 'showcase vehicles and charging stations at the event.' Sponsor 'matchmaking" can also nurture 'collaboration around sustainability issues that make a difference, where you get possibilities to find shared values. Sponsors suddenly thought, oh wow, do you know what, we can be doing X, Y, and Z together!' (MSE212). Furthermore, Sponsor208 felt that although 'IP issues' and contractual 'red tape' posed challenges to sponsor-to-sponsor cultivation, they highlighted a collaboration with a prosthetics manufacturer, as a project which benefitted from both parties being involved.

Another respondent, MSE204, discussed the transfer of technological expertise arising from cultivation between sponsors. They referred to a flooring company that, because of their sponsorship, are 'working with [logistics sponsor – a fellow sponsor] to explore how they can improve flooring installations at [logistic sponsor's] warehouse', effectively redefining productivity in the value chain:

> We host our partners' workshops. Before the events take place, we issue a list of services that the sponsors can provide between one another. We have a global partner [flooring sponsor] - people relate 'floor' to the competition field, but these people go beyond, they do the flooring for your corporation, they do safety flooring for specific plans which are necessary. So, there are other services that they provide in support and are working on this front with [logistics sponsor], to explore how they can do better flooring that require more safety procedures to [logistics sponsor's] warehouse. (MSE204)

In a similar way, MSE201 revealed the advantages of cultivation resulting from co-operation with other sport properties, such as 'activity with [foundation of a Premier League football club] where we did an anti-bullying rally for 100 kids at [Premier League club's stadium]'. The MSE 'took two of our super stars as well as a [Premier League club's] ex-player and I got a letter from the CEO the next day saying thank you'.

Media. Seven participants underlined the importance of the media in helping to cultivate shared value within the MSE ecosystem, such as increased exposure to a wider and more diverse audience. In the case of the UK's national, publically-funded broadcaster, this is significant as paid-for advertising is not permitted, but certain sponsorship arrangements are acceptable (BBC, 2021a). From an MSE perspective, delivering '15 hours of live television on the BBC […] as a brand opportunity we're quite valuable.' In this scenario, the broadcast engagement platform provided value-in-context opportunities for the MSE to improve its revenue generation, allowing greater capacity to 'engage in fundraising activities' and to unite with a particular sponsor to 'get people into living healthier lifestyles' (MSE223). As MSE220 remarked, 'the media is enormously important. If the media aren't buying into the product being promoted and sold you've got a problem on your hands and that can affect both the event and the sponsor.' Sponsor218 further observed that 'you need to have broadcasters on your side' to cultivate prospects for exposure. This participant also acknowledged the 'golden triangle' created by the addition

of media exposure to the MSEs-sponsor partnership, in the same way that a fire triangle requires oxygen in addition to heat and fuel in order for the fire to light. Ultimately, 'the fame of the event has gone if you lose the television' (MSE223).

The interviews also suggested that fruitful shared value initiatives cultivate the social component of the initiative beyond the firm's boundaries, often occurring after the application of capabilities and consistency. One demonstration is the aforementioned (within the *organisational consistency* section) co-creation of an online platform to assist disabled people, initially by the sponsor and MSE: 'We (sponsor) are developing it alongside [MSE]. It is essentially their owned asset but we are helping with the funding and development.' Whilst the sponsor is the principal partner, it is essential for other organisations to 'come on-board […] because it lives or dies by awareness and traffic going to that site, helping that community. The more people pulling in the same direction, the better.' The MSE involved (MSE216) added: 'We're in need of a media partner […] and then the [sponsor] will speak to other partners to bring in their expertise.'

NGOs. The prominence of NGOs in cultivating shared value was articulated by 12 interviewees. MSE214 discussed the development of a cultivation network between its event and a number of NGOs, harnessing the capabilities of each actor within the cluster:

> There is a reality that our brand is one of the strongest […] but also at the same time, our infrastructure is fairly small because we focus on the elite side. So again, with stakeholders there's incredible shared values. [NGO #1] are in with every national governing body and club in the country, we don't have that access but [NGO #1]'s brand doesn't mean as much to somebody as ours so we work together to say, 'Our sponsors want to talk to every sports club in the country. [NGO #1; NGO #2; NGO #3], can you help us get there and similarly, how do we get more people into sports clubs?' Our brand and athletes can help inspire those. (MSE214)

In this case, the notoriety and influence of the MSE brand was complemented operationally by the interconnectedness of NGOs with well-established links to sport governing bodies and clubs. MSE214 also provided another example whereby cultivation helped to extend the impact of a CSV initiative:

> We ran The Nation's Biggest Sports Day in 2016, we're looking at relaunching that again where we get over a million people to get active on a single day. The [NGO] for instance were a key stakeholder for that, a drive for volunteers and a talent ID programme - how do we get more people to understand that actually, they have the potential to be a sportsperson even though they might not have thought of it? (MSE214)

Other interviewees also recognised the importance of NGO actors 'for the greater good' (MSE214) of the cultivation process, such as MSE201, who divulged; 'We go out of our way to offer our platforms. We don't charge Make a Wish, we don't charge the Special Olympics, […] we talk to them and say, "how can we help you?" because it helps us ultimately.' Other respondents acknowledged the active role of the MSE or sponsor in facilitating cultivation. Sponsor209 referenced 'staff getting involved' in

supporting organisations which focus on providing training to disadvantaged young people and MSE222 felt it was important for their organisation to contribute 'physically' as well as making financial contributions to good causes, such as by 'actually going into the hospitals and installing the computers.'

Contributors also specified a range of other notable organisations in the development of cultivation. MSE212 explained how a local university contributed to a 'sustainability advisory board', which also comprised the MSE property, sponsors, sport governing bodies and stadium owners. MSE215 referenced the contribution of players associations and national charities such as Comic Relief. Sponsor213 and Sponsor218 both felt that a greater impact could be made with smaller, local charitable organisations because it tended to 'make more of a difference' (Sponsor213).

Length of sponsorship

The length of the sponsorship arrangement (i.e., how the duration of the deal can affect its success) can be crucial to the impact of the above-mentioned means of creating shared value. A total of 10 participants discussed supplementary benefits arising from a longer-term association, namely an ability to aid in the evolution of the sponsor-MSE partnership, bring about continued commitment, and in some cases, offer a greater licence for experimentation. Table 5.7 indicates some of these examples.

Table 5.7. Examples of participant responses about the length of the sponsorship arrangement.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Aiding evolution	Assists in the regular development and revitalisation of the sponsorship arrangement	"[Sponsor] signed up for three [MSEs] whilst only ever experiencing one. Now, that's based on the fact that they've derived increasing value out of the association and being able to extend our brand into a multitude of areas within their business." (MSE214) "I think there is a lot to be said for a long-standing partnership and we definitely feel that as over the past 6 years mutually we've grown." (Sponsor229)
Continued commitment	Provides security and substantiation for both parties	"We've got some fantastic partnerships that we've had with brands that have gone on. [Sponsor] for example were the sponsor of the [MSE] for 21 years and they used to sign up for five years at a time. They were an immensely supportive partner and we wouldn't exist if it wasn't for [Sponsor]." (MSE223) "We would sign a five-year contract, normally we have a three plus two or four plus one type approach. I did sign an annual contract (before) - you're leaving yourself open to one of your competitors who've got more money but not quite as smart as us coming in and doing something horrible around it. I think you have to have a clear strategy, it has to be prolonged. I describe them as bright fireworks, bang and bust, they don't work I think with sponsorship, not in B2B anyway." (Sponsor227)
Experimentation	Offers the possibility for a greater degree of inventiveness and creativity	"I've worked with people in the past where doors are closed almost before they have even tried to be opened, so we would ask a question, it would be shut down, so I think it probably doesn't allow you to be as brave with your activation." (Sponsor208)

Aiding evolution. Six participants detailed the ways in which a longer-term sponsorship association aids in the evolution of the means of creating shared value. The findings indicate that whilst a longer-term vision is an aspiration for many sponsors and MSE properties, for some agreements this is often not the case. As MSE201 affirmed: 'We'd love to enter into bigger multi-year partnerships and create shared value propositions and things like that, the reality is the nature of our business doesn't really allow us to do so as much as we would like.' This participant further explained that often CSV-related activity 'starts short-term but then evolves'. This perception was termed 'pathways to value' by Sponsor208, who rationalised:

> It's very easy to turn your nose up at some of the sponsorships that come and go. I think if there are business reasons for a brand going for a short-term deal that is perfectly acceptable. There is this purist view in sponsorship that a brand should be in it for the long-term, so they can build meaningful relationships with customers, so that they can add value to plans and audiences, so they can engage with their internal staff but actually, there are opportunities where, for example, the media value is good and it makes sense to engage with a sponsorship property just purely on that front, for that reason, because it gets eyeballs on a new brand, for example. It may be that a gambling brand actually just being associated with a football club or a league on a short-term basis just helps to boost their awareness and boost their audiences. Same goes for alcoholic beverages, where a large proportion of the value that they are getting is through pourage rights and actually, it makes sense for them to do a one or two-year deal, they make their money back from pourage rights and then maybe their business changes, their business model changes and they want to look elsewhere. (Sponsor208)

This instance suggests that shorter-term sponsorships may be more transactional in nature (i.e., focusing on driving economic value with less emphasis on societal goals). Other participants highlighted the advancement of time as a basis for 'long-standing value in terms of building affinity between the brand and your community' (MSE222). For example, Sponsor218 explained that although their sponsorship of an athletics MSE was initially 'really hard for the first two years, we winged it', the agreement of a longer-term, three-year contract: 'enables us to do a lot more long-term planning […] we have for the first time the chance to plan. I think that adds enormous value, if you can get it right.' The same interviewee went on to acknowledge that such a plan might materialise organically as opposed to being part of a more formal strategy:

> What I say to other businesses who are like, "oh yeah, we need to kind of strategize and find our strategy", is yes, you should do that, that's the textbook way of doing things but in reality, you might just find out at some point that actually it grows onto you, and that is what happened with us and [sport]. (Sponsor218)

This idea is supported by Sponsor229, who thought 'there is a lot to be said for a long-standing partnership and we definitely feel that as over the past six years, mutually we've grown.' In addition, MSE214 explained how its relationship with a supermarket sponsor had flourished over time, 'based on the fact that they've derived incredible value out of the association and being able to extend our brand into a multitude of areas within their business.

Continued commitment. Six respondents referred to the importance of continued commitment in establishing and strengthening a partnership. MSE223 explained that their event 'would not exist' but for the financial security and commitment provided by a long-term sponsor. This simultaneously allowed the MSE to reconceive its product and market as an opportunity to 'enable people to get fit and active and change their lifestyle' and ultimately 'save lives', providing a boost to its consistency-related endeavours.

Similarly, from a sponsor perspective, the assurance of a long-term affiliation with a MSE property can boost capabilities by helping to provide a more credible 'storytelling platform' as 'being able to speak to people across that journey of time is very important' (Sponsor208). This is vital, as shorter-term sponsors are more vulnerable to competitors 'coming in and doing something horrible' (Sponsor227) such as taking advantage of the previous sponsor's attribution to the property or undermining the original sponsorship. This particular sponsor felt that such 'constant engagement' was imperative within a B2B environment, where '70% of the buying cycle is complete before anybody engages with a salesperson.' As this Marketing Director's role is 'about engaging with clients at the top and middle of the chain' then 'you have to have a clear strategy, it has to be prolonged' (Sponsor227).

Other MSE participants warned of the inherent risks to CSV of a lack of commitment and stability between sponsor partners. MSE223 cautioned that 'brands are very fickle. They'll come in for a couple of years and give you quite a lot of money to do something and then if the personnel changes or the marketing objectives change they'll just pull out.' Relatedly, MSE220 was of the view that a regular churn of sponsors has a 'damaging effect' on the event and event brand:

> Deals were done by the [MSE] just to keep things going. I should probably point out that the reason I say that is because one of the KPIs that all employees work to is that there has to be a certain number of playing opportunities for the players. So, there is an element of the business KPIs actually cannibalising the potential strength of individual events and the brand that goes with them. So, you're keeping the [event] on the schedule to keep the players happy and it's costing the business a fortune and you keep changing the sponsor every year. Actually, long term that has a very damaging effect rather than say postponing it for one year, getting your ducks in a row and finding a long term sponsor. (MSE220)

In this regard, MSE214 reasoned that their event could 'absolutely improve' on building a more enduring alliance with some of its sponsors, by 'making sure they don't just talk 6 months out' but 'making sure they're activating every single day of every single week of every single year that they're

a partner.' This, they felt, would help sponsors in better 'sharing the purpose and the values of the [MSE]'.

Experimentation. Such a commitment to regular activation over a considerable period is particularly important for MSEs occurring over bi-annual or four-yearly cycles: '[Sponsor] are marketing us, putting us at the forefront of their activity and most importantly they're talking about the [MSE] every day, they're not just doing it once every four years and they're incredible marketers for us' (MSE214).

Sponsor208 further explained how the trust originating from a longer-term arrangement permitted them to be 'brave' rather than 'doing something a lot safer'. Sponsor218, who questioned why a MSE property would be open to trying 'crazy things' if they weren't sure how long the relationship was going to last, explained such experimentation in detail:

> So, now with this opportunity [of a longer-term sponsorship agreement], I'll go back to them and say, in 2020 I want to have a DJ on track, to play some music for a whole hour before the event actually starts, can we do this? And, you know, I'm a lot more likely to get a yes, so it's just small things that will make a big difference, I think. (Sponsor218)

5.3 CSV for multiple actors

Participant responses from the main study about the materialisation of CSV outcomes indicate a range of benefits associated with five principal types of actors within the MSE ecosystem, which are outlined below.

Event outcomes

A total of 14 contributors referenced perceived outcomes for the MSEs, with three elements identified in Table 5.8: commercial performance, enhanced image or reputation, and increased participation.

Table 5.8. Examples of event outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Commercial performance	Financial achievement	"UK sporting funding for the sports themselves is reliant on Olympic performance. So we have an obligation to the national governing bodies to give them the best opportunity to achieve the best they can do and reward them for their hard work by making sure we provide for them." (MSE214)
		"I think national governing bodies are realising that there's less public funding out there. They have to become more commercially savvy and therefore, they are putting a lot more time and effort into their communication because that's really how you're able to deliver value, being able to reach audiences." (Sponsor229)
Enhanced image	Improvements in the external	"People to understand a little bit more about who we are and really dispel some of those myths in terms of there's a perception issue where people think, "oh, it's really violent what we do", because they don't understand it, or they're dissuaded or deterred from it because

	perception of the event property		they think it's fake and therefore, that has a negative connotation." (MSE201)
			"Make people think, God these guys are good, you know, they're not just slapping a contract in our face saying, well this is what we do." (Sponsor207)
Increased participation	Growth or development of participation in the sport		"To grow the game of [sport] in accordance with the spirit of [sport], that's the overall objective." (MSE203)
			"So for the federation, it goes back to their grassroots programme and getting people into the sport." (Sponsor218)

Commercial performance. Six participants identified commercial performance as an important realisation for MSEs. MSE215 referenced the significance of 'commercial partners' appetite for more rights', whilst Sponsor218 highlighted the income generated by the MSE and the importance of the 'financial point of view'. MSE214 acknowledged its 'obligation to national governing bodies' to 'reward them for their hard work by making sure we provide for them'. Further, MSE216 believed that 'the more that [a CSV] approach gets widely accepted then the better that is for us as an organisation because that will be good for us commercially, it will be good for us in terms of social impact.'

Additionally, Sponsor229 recognised that 'there's less public funding out there', which means that event properties 'have to become more commercially savvy' in their approach, such as by reaching wider audiences. This was supported by MSE223: 'in the current climate local authority services have got less and less budget to put things on.' As a result, enhanced commercial performance is becoming increasingly important in order to ensure the future viability and prosperity of MSEs.

Enhanced image. Another key outcome for MSEs is improving the image or reputation of their particular sport, as referred by nine respondents. MSE204 explained an opportunity to 'develop the message of sustainability and our environment concerns' by exploring the possibility of producing equipment made from discarded fishing nets. Furthermore, MSE201 cited 'bringing a more human aspect to the brand' as being key to helping 'people to understand a little bit more about who we are' and dispelling 'some of those myths in terms of there's a perception issue'. In a similar way, MSE222 observed; 'We are fighting for a world where [sport] would be a life pursuit people could be proud of. Parents would put on their fridge that their son passed gold in [sport] the same way they would for fencing.' Such 'validation' is important not only in terms of being seen by fans as a more 'serious sport', but also that 'big brands are considering our sport system like any other platform' (MSE222). Sponsor207 acknowledged the importance of MSEs 'not just slapping a contract in our face' but doing something to 'make people think, God these guys are good.' This was also supported by MSE228, who wanted to 'improve the perception of [sport] around the world in markets where it hasn't traditionally been.'

Two respondents discussed an improved focus on women's sport. MSE215 explained that '10 to 12 [sponsors] have now got women's rights and are actively using them, which is great, a couple of years

ago it was less than four or five.' Sponsor229 admitted that although 'audience size' meant that it remained unviable to activate at every women's event, small steps were being made such as adding coverage of the women's events to the official programmes of the men's events.

Increased participation. As in the pilot study, another key event outcome referenced by five respondents was increasing sport participation. MSE203 cited the growth of the sport as being its 'overall objective', analogously to MSE228, who phrased this as 'international growth'. Sponsor218 said that ultimately, 'it goes back to their grassroots programme and getting people into the sport', reflecting this view from a sponsor perspective. As MSE204 commented, 'if people don't play [sport], it doesn't become relevant' and therefore it is important CSV helps 'safeguard the long-term equity of the competitions that sit within [MSE's] control' (Sponsor210). Therefore, greater participation represents the lifeblood of any sport, and thus the sustainability of MSEs.

Sponsor outcomes

Regarding sponsor outcomes, responses from 13 participants suggest that creation of value for sponsors is related to aspects including brand equity, repositioning, and tangible benefits, which are summarised in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9. Examples of sponsor outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Brand equity	Development of brand equity-related elements such as increased brand awareness or image	"It positions us as a brand that is doing the right thing, investing in good and making movement better and easier for everyone, which is part of our brand story." (Sponsor208)
		"[Sponsor] who we recently renewed with, it's about them being able to have a tangible link to delivering 'excellence' for [MSE] and help us digitally transform how we do things - from apps, to a new website, to our CRM database, so they can actually say, 'we're a proud sponsor and we're not just badging it, we're actually helping deliver X, Y and Z' and with that they can tell a truly compelling, integrated story." (MSE215)
Repositioning	Modification of a brand's status in the marketplace	"[Sponsor] is aiming to move ahead, showing that they are actually considered a B2C corporation [...] they are trying now to make this more humane to consumers." (MSE204)
		"Take [Sponsor], for example, one of the most important elements for them in this partnership is about recruitment and to secure really good quality graduate talent. That's on two levels; one is practically to be seen to be recruiting or encouraging recruitment from the disabled community and secondly, to be shown to be an organisation with greater purpose." (MSE216)
Tangible benefits	Realisation of material gains	"Reducing your staff turnover, there is a value in that because you don't have to go back to market and look to employ new people, which is expensive." (Sponsor208)
		"£1.5m worth of sales leads through the doors of [Sponsor] gyms from a six week campaign period just by playing on the fact that people wanted to inquisitively know whether or not they could be an

Brand equity. Five participants detailed brand-equity related sponsor advantages arising from CSV. Both Sponsor213 and Sponsor229 were responsible for overseeing and establishing relatively young brands within their respective markets and hence 'raising brand presence' (Sponsor213) and driving 'prompted brand awareness' (Sponsor229) were primary objectives. For more mature brands, 'storytelling' (Sponsor208) was essential in strengthening brand image, such as being seen as 'doing the right thing' by 'investing in good […] making movement better for everyone, making movement easier for everyone' (Sponsor208). MSE215 believed that it was important for one of their key sponsors to demonstrate 'delivering excellence' by not just 'badging' but instead conveying an 'integrated story'. In a similar fashion, Sponsor227 felt that encouraging females into science, technology and engineering roles is a problem for most organisations, and thus sponsoring the female edition of a MSE can start to help 'address the gender balance' and contribute to developing a positive brand image.

Repositioning. Another sponsor outcome, mentioned by seven respondents, related to repositioning attitudes towards the brand. For example, evolving from being regarded purely as a B2B organisation by being 'more humane to consumers' (MSE204) or 'encouraging recruitment from the disabled community […] to be an organisation with greater purpose' (MSE216). In a similar vein, Sponsor208 believed that their work around mobility helped 'communicate our shift as a business' in terms of 'being seen to be more human'. Other participants discussed 'relaunching' and 'communicating a shift in how they operate' (Sponsor210), 'reinventing' (Sponsor221), and 'differentiating' the brand (Sponsor213). In the case of Sponsor221, CSV activity helped position the brand as an 'energy company rather than oil and gas'. For Sponsor218, other stakeholders being able to 'see the value that you add and to increase the overall perception of the brand' was crucial to advancing the sentiment held towards the brand by consumers.

Tangible benefits. The other key perceived sponsor outcome concerned more tangible benefits, as referenced by eight interviewees. MSE214 referred to £1.5m worth of sales leads generated by a gym sponsor by 'playing on the fact that people wanted to inquisitively know whether or not they could be an [athlete] or not'. In a similar vein, a sponsor's on-pack promotion related to a CSV initiative where consumers were offered the opportunity to win £2,000 worth of sports equipment and an athlete visit for the winners' chosen schools. This helped the product return to growth, arresting a seven-year sales decline and becoming the 'biggest brand' of its type in the UK, based on sales data (Sponsor218).

Media value was mentioned as a 'tangible number you can hang your hat on' (Sponsor207) and the 'number one driver' for Sponsor208 in its decision to embark on a sponsorship arrangement. Sponsor213 discussed a more specific employee outcome regarding helping the business to 'integrate people, policies, values and beliefs' after a merger: 'The [other business] operated in quite a different way and sponsorship helps bridge that gap.' Gaining valuable data was another key advantage for

sponsors arising from a CSV-orientated approach: 'There is a tangible value for us in gathering data, particularly post-GDPR, where our database was shrunken in size quite significantly. Engaging people around their passion is a very good way of gathering more data' and increases the connection points with consumers (Sponsor208).

Sponsor208 also highlighted greater workforce engagement resulting in 'reducing your staff turnover'. In this regard, another participant revealed:

> All our activations are actually run by our volunteers, so all the activations at the events, we don't hire an agency to do them, so actually open it out to all employees in the business. They can apply for it and they can basically join us as a [Brand] Ambassador, and it just adds so much more value, because people genuinely care about the brand. At the same time, it's an amazing experience for them, because it might seem we [involved in sponsorship] are quite fortunate. We speak with consumers all the time, but if you work in procurement or finance, or on the production lines in the factories, you don't really have that engagement. (Sponsor218)

Sponsor227 felt that their 'strong sponsorship strategy' was built on making 'employees feel proud of the company they work for […] there is absolutely an employee engagement element where people go "yeah, I feel proud of that"'. Sponsor207 echoed this: 'It's kind of energised people just in terms of their daily work, that's really cool, you know, it's created a bit of a buzz in the company.' According to MSE216, a job with 'meaning' is becoming increasingly important for millennial graduates 'looking for a lot more in their work/life than just the size of their pay-packet or their bonuses.' MSE223 explained that their event also utilised the employees of sponsoring companies as event volunteers 'as an additional added value benefit', albeit sometimes this arrangement can be 'a massive pain in the arse because their staff are not real volunteers and they want to do the nice jobs.' Despite this, the MSE 'make it happen because it's important for the partnership but what you really want is real genuine volunteers and people who want to help.'

Host citizen outcomes

It was signalled by 10 participants that CSV generates positive host citizen positive outcomes, with acknowledgement that MSEs can help improve health and/or rehabilitation, support the local economy, and facilitate empowerment through inspiration. Some supporting example quotes are included in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10. Examples of host citizen outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Health and/or rehabilitation	Contributing towards healthier and more active lifestyles	"The National Health Service will be a massive beneficiary of more people being inspired to do more things, to get up and move. A million people moving one day - whether it's off the couch to go and watch something or they go to the gym for the first time or breaking a PB for the 1500 meters, those can have a positive impact on people's health or people's mental well-being which no doubt, has a

		huge effect on the National Health Service and the strain that that has on there." (MSE214)
		"Help encourage disabled people to at least become a little bit more active and that is an expression of mobility, that is an expression of the kind of freedom and openness that they are trying to create." (MSE216)
Empowerment through inspiration	Encouragement for the betterment of people's welfare	"When you've got a 6ft 5in, 300lbs superstar standing in front of you admitting that they were bullied when they were small, that strikes a chord, that becomes something really memorable for a child, so that's where we use the power of our brand for positive good." (MSE201)
		"Our global value proposition is around empowering digital workplaces, which is brilliant because it's got a people aspect to it because you don't empower the workplace; you empower the people that work there." (Sponsor227)
Supporting the local economy	Specific strategies which seek to ensure that local economies are supported	"Position [City] as an innovating and sustainable destination." (MSE212)
		"It will have a huge impact on the economy if people are happier and more fulfilled because they feel part of a nation that they're proud of, they're going to invest in. […] That can sometimes have massive economic impact for people and for the nation. I might be over-egging it a bit, but I genuinely think it does have a massive impact." (MSE214)

Health and/or rehabilitation. Although Sponsor208 was of the opinion that the 'actual tangible benefit' for host locations and citizens is 'extremely difficult to measure', five interviewees referred to health and rehabilitation related benefits, such as alleviating some of the pressures facing local communities in helping to reconceive the scope of the organisation's products and markets. For instance, 'the National Health Service will be a massive beneficiary of more people being inspired to get up and move […] a positive impact on people's health or mental well-being' (MSE214). This was supported by both MSE204 ('we support society through our event […] we encourage people to move, use their arms, body, feet – to stay healthy'), MSE216 ('help encourage disabled people to at least become a little bit more active and that is an expression of mobility'), and Sponsor218 ('getting people active through fun'). Furthermore, MSE22 revealed an alliance with a national blood bank in a European country, where recreational eSport players were encouraged to donate blood by an in-game incentive linked to a corresponding stage of the game. This generated 7,000 new blood donors, and subsequently developed into a more enduring association.

Empowerment through inspiration. Seven contributors referred to empowerment and inspiration-related benefits for host regions and their citizens. MSE214 alluded to local cluster development to 'inspire people in the community'. One way in which this can happen is by creating 'something really memorable for a child, such as a 'superstar standing in front of you admitting they were bullied when they were small' (MSE201). This sentiment was echoed by MSE214, whose organisation were concerned with 'promoting and uniting and inspiring people in the community' via sponsor funding and athlete visits as part of its sponsorship. Related to this, MSE222 felt that it was important to create 'a

situation to allow anyone regardless of gender, age or culture to be empowered […] to participate in the community and express themselves.'

Sponsor208 remarked on the importance of 'removing barriers to getting active', such as 'not knowing what activities are available […], needing more inspiration […] and making people feel more comfortable.' MSE212 recollected the merit of locating elements of the MSE in public areas, outside the stadium, enabling citizens 'to get the ambience of the event and the experience, […] they are part of this big thing without having to buy a ticket.' Finally, Sponsor227 discussed their organisation's role in 'empowering digital workplaces' via its activation related to the business of rugby.

Supporting the local economy. Additionally, two participants cited the advantages for the local economy. MSE12 explained how its host city was better positioned 'as an innovating and sustainable destination' as a result of its shared value initiatives with its group of sponsors. That is, enhancements to the city's brand positioning as value derived from working with its sponsors rendered the area to be a more attractive proposition for sponsorship investment. Further MSE214 commented that 'if people feel more trust in institutions, in the country, and more advocacy for it - that will make them hopefully work harder, be less reticent to pay their taxes and so forth.'

Athlete outcomes

Athletes represent a central component of any MSE, and the creation of value for professional athletes was mentioned by four participants, as illustrated by Table 5.11.

Table 5.11. Examples of athlete outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Earnings	Increased athlete remuneration	"We pay £15m a year in prize money so it's a good number, it's showing that players can earn a living from playing [sport] and also, it shows the growth that we've had because 10 years or so ago it was a fraction of that." (MSE228)
Profile development	More established public persona, increased recognition	"We got the [MSE] to let us have the qualifications in this Market Square. This meant the public could have a piece of the action not having to buy a ticket for the event. The athletes had never had such a big audience for the qualification before, they were really happy." (MSE12)
Training advancements	Beneficial technical developments	"Learning what's important for an athlete to sleep and we want to learn […] what are the product innovations that we could potentially use going forward? What are the hotel beds like? If an athlete gets a bad night's sleep because the mattress at home is different to the mattress while they're away that will have huge performance disadvantages." (MSE14)

Earnings. Two respondents touched upon the enhanced earning potential derived from shared value creation. According to MSE222, there is 'a responsibility for the sustainability of the league that we generate enough revenues for the team owners to be profitable so that they can pay the players'.

Athletes can also benefit from increased earnings arising from CSV; 'We pay £15m a year in prize money. It's a good number, showing that players can earn a living from playing [sport]' (MSE228).

Profile development. Three interviewees discussed benefits related to the development of athlete's profiles. MSE214 referred to a key sponsor which 'supports athletes by getting them to open stores, by giving them food vouchers' and MSE222 pointed out that 'players will be recognised and even more engaged' as a result of a sponsorship campaign linked to healthy-lifestyles (i.e., actor engagement also being important for shared value creation). In addition, MSE222 mentioned 'athletes had never had such a big audience for the qualification before, they were really happy' because of hosting the qualifying competition free of charge in a prominent public space.

Training advancements. Another benefit for athletes is advancements associated with training. MSE214 reflected that an alliance with a 'sleep partner' resulted in 'product innovations that we could use going forward'. Such improvements may have an incremental effect in athlete performance because 'if an athlete gets a bad night's sleep because the mattress at home is different to the mattress while they're away that will have huge performance disadvantages.'

Consumer outcomes

CSV outcomes for consumers were noted by 10 participants and centred on educational and consumer experience enhancing aspects. Some supporting example quotes are illustrated in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12. Examples of consumer outcomes.

Sub-code	Definition	Supporting quote(s)
Education	Acquired product-related learning as a result of engagement with the sponsorship	"We used [ex racing drivers] to speak to councils and governments about [non-alcohol beer] in some parts of the world. They're doing a, sort of, educational thing on when you drive don't drink. You're using these figureheads of the world of [MSE], you know, promoting the idea of don't drink and drive, and there's an alternative to it as a 0.0, a non-alcohol beer." (Sponsor209)
		"Teach people about fresh produce and food, it's a good societal impact." (MSE214)
Enhancing consumer experience	Advancements to consumer experience elements, such as the *servicescape*	"When fans arrive, thousands of volunteers in and around the city help them get to and from a stadium and move about somewhere which is unfamiliar to them. [The volunteers] managed to imbue the sort of enthusiasm within their staff that was infectious and it rubbed off on the spectators and they provided a very genuine benefit to the people visiting the [MSE]." (Sponsor210)
		"Enhanced for the fans that are actually on site in terms of better facilities, better food and beverage offerings etc." (MSE20)

Education. Education-related consumer outcomes were perceived by five participants. MSE214 stressed the importance of coaching 'people about fresh produce and food' as a consequence of a sponsored programme 'where educational materials are provided in order to inspire kids to learn about

fresh fruit and veg', resulting in a 'good societal impact'. MSE222 talked about the impact of 'educational content' in helping fans to become the players of the future. For Sponsor213, education took the form of 'keeping the conversation going' and trying to 'remove the stigma from this kind of division' in terms of helping to shift attitudes around race and gender. Likewise, Sponsor227 referenced an educational programme for fans which focused on 'nutrition and training'. In another interviewee example, consumers were educated about drink driving via a sponsor's activation around a zero alcohol beer, using prominent former racing drivers. As a result, 'people are coming to the bars and saying, "I'll have one of those"' (Sponsor209).

Enhancing consumer experience. In a similar way to the pilot study, six respondents discussed enhancements to the consumer experience. Sponsor213 felt that their target audience were given 'some level of comfort […] that their investments are in safe hands' due to its sponsorship. Sponsor221 asserted how evolving consumer tastes and demographics might require businesses to focus more on CSV to better appeal to their target markets:

> Gen Z will represent one-third of the planet's purchasing power by 2030. […] they want to deal in a world where companies and brands have purpose. If you don't have a purpose that they can understand and relate to, they won't buy into you conceptually and won't buy your products and services.

MSE220 concurred: 'It's no longer sufficient to just provide one thing at an event. It gets more difficult when you have to keep people entertained for a longer period.' Ultimately, 'you need to create a partnership that engages and inspires spectators' (Sponsor218). For event attendees, MSE223 stressed the importance of putting on a 'really good event experience'. This may take the form of 'better facilities' or 'better food and beverage offerings' (MSE220) or using volunteers to 'imbue the sort of enthusiasm within their staff that was infectious and it rubbed off on the spectators', providing a 'genuine benefit to the people visiting' (Sponsor210). For consumers not in attendance, Sponsor218 explained that 'we do on-pack promotions where people can win vouchers, like sports equipment vouchers for schools, local communities.'

5.4 Main study participant interpretations of CSV

17 of the main study participants, as shown in Table 5.13, offered their interpretations of CSV.

Table 5.13. Examples of main study participant interpretations of CSV.

Participant	Example quote
MSE201	"I've taken part in a few focus groups and research groups, I've heard of similar definitions, should I say, or similar concepts. I've heard of it in theory, I've not often seen it in practice."
MSE201	"Mutual buy-in, joint KPIs, Getting both parties - the sponsor and the rights holder - to buy into something together."
Sponsor205	"Making sure that it's not a transactional experience for a sponsor."
MSE206	"I think the way I would frame [CSV] is what I call a 'purpose-driven organisation' based on the combination between sport, entertainment and social purpose. The way you are defining [CSV] is interesting, that is more the academic way. When you are more on the

	corporate side you are viewing a lot of this notion of purpose-driven organisation as a way to explain that organisations in the 21st century need to have what I call a 'clear higher purpose' that could resonate and be consistent with what the customer or the fan would need and what is ready made for them in their own life and how you can find this space where your organisation could fill an emotional space or a need that someone in the society could have. And I genuinely believe that will be the future of brands - this purpose to be sure that people can connect authentically with what the brand is delivering. It's going to be a huge difficultly for any organisation to be consistent with that. So, I never heard the way you framed it but that's exactly what each CEO in most organisations are facing; what is your higher purpose, how you can define it and how you can deliver it in a consistent way?"
Sponsor207	"It's not supposed to be a one-way badging exercise anymore. Yes, [sponsors] pay money for the right to get certain IP and certain rights but we should be working together as a partnership to benefit each other. A 'partnership approach', that's the main jargon that comes out a lot, we're not rights holders and sponsors, we're partners together and want to make it work as well as we can for [the other party], and we realise that we get some benefits as well."
Sponsor208	"How you can add value to your own audiences and how you can add value to that shared audience that you have between you, as a brand, and the asset that you're sponsoring. We often talk about 'win/win' sponsorships and I've heard of 'win-win-win' as well; where it is a benefit for the brand, a benefit for the right-holder and then benefit for the audience that is consuming it as well."
Sponsor210	"Quite a lot of time we talk about mutual benefit with partners and trying to create that situation which is a win-win."
MSE212	"I've heard about creating shared value, and is it Porter or Kotler or one of the marketing gurus? We use creating shared value but not in the more academic sense. That's, sort of, the core, when we work with sponsors to really create shared value because we know that's the selling point in a way. So, we use the words, but not exactly defined, or as defined as you have defined it here. In a way, it's about finding not the obvious values, but digging deeper to find values between the event and the sponsors and even between sponsors."
MSE214	"Shared purpose does interlink to shared value to ensure that a statement is made or there is a central purpose. Ultimately then it underpins everything that we do - is everything that we do linking back to our shared purpose and is it offering shared value, is it why this partnership exists?"
MSE215	"We often use 'mutual value', sort of exchanging of value."
Sponsor218	"We don't use the term [CSV] but I think we do work towards the same sort of principles. It would actually be better for us to use it more, to actually give it a name to make it a little more tangible."
MSE219	"I've come across the term [CSV] and I'm pretty familiar with it. There's a phrase I've used a couple of times in conversation as a way of boiling that down as 'white knight' sponsorship. It's not something that I think anyone else really uses, it's more my own term. But the idea of a sponsor that's being seen to do something to benefit the wider supporter group to which they're trying to pitch their market."
Sponsor221	"Two partners going above and beyond purely just getting what they had agreed to exchange as a mutual service. Either way, cash for a sort of service would be the basis of the contractual relationship but effectively, the shared value comes in as an incremental benefit that would spark that intensification of the relationship that would lead to additional opportunities in that specific case that would be shared."
MSE222	"We use things like the 'win-win-win', so is probably the equivalent [to CSV] in marketing terms. So, basically the brand achieving marketing goals through the sponsorship. It could be awareness, brand preference, transactional drivers, retention, employer satisfaction, or motivation. So, that's more like corporate goals. The properties of the rights holders is generating revenues. And then the players, the fans, the end consumer is receiving value. If you are just taking from them they will reject it but if you do something special and earn your sponsorship they'll say, 'oh, that's cool, I didn't know this brand could give me this.' So, only when you achieve that then the equation is working. If you come and say, 'hey, I know you come to watch the game so please watch my banner', the result

	will be pretty negative. If you come to the game and say, 'wow, that's surprising, I know why they're here, but I think it's cool.'"
MSE223	"I've got an MBA and it's a very MBA word. So, I am familiar with what you are talking about in terms of shared value and enterprise value and that type of thing but more from my studies. It's not something we talk about."
MSE223	"I guess it's an idea that two plus two adds up to more than four, isn't it?"
MSE223	"I wouldn't use it internally but when I'm out in my market selling my sponsorship I would talk a lot about the 'enterprise value' for the partner. For example, when I was doing the partnership with [Sponsor], my sales pitch would be, "in order to become a title partner of the [MSE] it's going to cost you X million pounds and for that you're going to get £10 million worth of media exposure. If [Sponsor] were to buy that in traditional media value - all the exposure they get online, the emails, all the branding they get off the television and the event that would be worth £10 million. So, I would say to [Sponsor], "okay, you're going to put in £2 million to sponsor our event and I'm going to deliver you £10 million worth of media value for your brand." If you sponsor a football match that's all you get. You put in your money and it's a traditional media transaction, you buy your sponsorship and you get your association with your shirts or your boards round the outside. With our sponsorship asset, you get more than that, you also get to nominate the official charity and that charity can raise about a million pounds so that's an intangible benefit and you're getting all those extra people getting fit and healthy that wouldn't normally have done, so you've got that intangible value. You've also got all the positive economic impact that the events bring to the cities, so we know that all the [series of MSEs] around the UK, there's £45 million worth of positive economic impact delivered from those events."
MSE223	"There's all these different by-products which come associated with [sponsorship]. That's how I would explain shared value. All the different stakeholder groups can get involved whereas I could have sold [sponsor] £2 million worth of TV advertising and it would just be gone in one go; you've got X million people are now aware of your logo because they've seen it on TV but what we do is we give you that but also we give you all this extra benefit. So, that's exactly how we trade, and we sell it but it's a very concept type of sell. Not transactional at all."
Sponsor227	"I've come across the term shared-value, not necessarily as described by you there. I think it's something we've striven to do across a number of areas. I don't necessarily say marketing and sponsorship in particular, I wouldn't say we'd be particularly successful at it. It's something that we probably do more from an employee value proposition perspective."
Sponsor228	"Sponsorship has evolved to a point where benefitting multiple stakeholders is now necessary, I would say, rather than just nice. I think when you look at it from a rights holder perspective, you think about how a sponsor can benefit you as much as how you can benefit them. I think the days of just someone putting their name in big letters are going and they're being replaced by added value and credibility, CSR and all of those things, as well as a return on investment, either tangible or intangible."
Sponsor229	"We refer to it as more strategic alignment in sponsorship. The value is the prompted brand awareness element of sponsorships, getting your name out there through broadcast fields, sponsorship on game shirts, but then as you progress in a long-standing partnership, you look at how you can strategically align as partners for the mutual benefit of both organisations."

Several respondents provided an articulation of CSV. Phrases such as 'mutual buy-in' (MSE201); being a 'purpose-driven organisation' (MSE206); 'win/win/win' (Sponsor208; MSE222); 'shared purpose' (MSE214); 'mutual value' (MSE215); 'strategic alignment' (Sponsor229) and 'an idea that two plus two adds up to more than four' (MSE223) were used to explain the concept.

Three of the interviewees were of the view that CSV was predominantly an academic term. MSE223 was familiar with the concept from their studies; 'it's a very MBA word', and MSE201 asserted, 'I've

heard of it in theory, I've not often seen it in practice.' Similarly, MSE212 asked, 'Is it Porter or Kotler or one of the marketing gurus?' However, MSE212 did also acknowledge, 'we use creating shared value but not in the more academic sense', explaining that in their view, CSV is about 'digging deeper to find values between the event and the sponsors and even between sponsors.' Other respondents also recognised the practical benefits of CSV, such as Sponsor221, who considered CSV as 'two partners going above and beyond purely just getting what they had agreed to exchange as a mutual service [...] an incremental benefit that would spark that intensification of the relationship that would lead to additional opportunities.' Both MSE223 and Sponsor228 referred to the wider benefits for multiple stakeholder groups and Sponsor218 believed that 'it would actually be better for us to use ['CSV'] more, to actually give it a name to make it a little more tangible.' As MSE206 surmised, 'I genuinely believe that will be the future of brands - this purpose to be sure that people can connect authentically with what the brand is delivering.'

5.5 Summary of results

The main study stage aimed to broaden and develop the investigation into the relationship between sponsor organisations and MSE properties and their roles in creating shared value within the sport environment. Four key research objectives were considered: exploring the necessity for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations; investigating the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for the creation of shared value with other actors; identifying tangible examples of CSV and provide guidance for practitioners on how CSV can be achieved; and examining CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective. It was also envisioned that this phase would aid in developing the previously proposed conceptual model (Figure 2.1) via the attainment of senior executive perceptions and examples of CSV from these interviews (Figure 5.1). Accordingly, and having taken into consideration the reflections from the pilot study, the viewpoints collected within this phase of the research indicated the need for some refinements to be made to the model. These will be explained further in the following discussion chapter.

Organisational capabilities were discussed by almost the entire sample as an important precursor to the creation of shared value. More evidence was uncovered to emphasise the importance of expertise and scale, as identified in the pilot study. Additional characteristics relating to adaptability, credibility and integrity, family values, fun, and innovation were all underlined in this regard. Similarly, organisational consistency was referred as another key source of shared value by almost three-quarters of the expert panel, which added aspects related to authenticity and strategic alignment to the additional support provided for actions aimed at striking a balance between economics-first and mission-driven approaches and a focus on measurability, as acknowledged in the pilot study.

The significance of the symbiosis between sponsor and MSE was reinforced by contributions from more than three quarters of the main study interviewees. These indicated several further facets of such a

relationship, in addition to the need for mutual benefits, which it could be argued are the fundamental driver of any sponsorship arrangement. Clear, regular, and direct communication between sponsor and MSE is essential in engendering trust and an open dialogue that can help drive improvements and overcome challenges. By having a certain level of involvement in the business strategy of their counterparts, the respective partners are likely to find themselves in a position to better understand each other's specific nuances and unique needs and thus adopt a more customised approach in their interactions. Equally, it is apparent that a shared philosophy between sponsor partners, such as a close cultural alignment, can help foster an equitable affiliation for driving CSV initiatives. Furthermore, a symbiotic relationship can expand the influence of organisational capabilities and consistency. For instance, enhancements to marketing knowledge, technological abilities, and workforce upskilling can boost the capabilities of an individual party. Augmentations in consistency can lead to improvements in diversity values and an instillation of greater meaning and purpose in employees.

As discussed previously within the pilot study, responses from more than half of respondents in the main study related to cultivation involving NGOs and other commercial organisations, in addition to the media, which emerged as an additional key element of the cultivation process. The refined conceptual framework highlights cultivation of value by other entities beyond the sponsor and MSE organisations for CSV optimisation. For example, the realisation of cluster development between fellow sponsors, the ability of NGOs to expand and proliferate social initiatives, and the power of the media to amplify and magnify the CSV-related efforts of different actors. Responses signalled that irrespective of how effectively sponsors and sport properties may work in unison, the cultivation of relationships with other actors is essential for the true potential of CSV to be realised. A purely dual (sponsor-MSE) implementation of capabilities and consistency discounts the means of other actors to contribute towards the creation of shared value within the ecosystem, potentially constraining its scope. Consequently, cultivation is a key element for the creation of shared value.

The length of MSE-sponsor relationships can also influence the success of CSV. Sponsorships of lengthier periods can offer increased possibilities for either party to more greatly appreciate one another's means of creating shared value. Several participants expressed how sponsorships progress over time and can lead to increased commitment between partners, a more stable platform to work from, and a greater possibility for experimentation. The interview findings suggest that many ultimately durable and successful relationships evolve organically over time from an initial contract or a number of short-term agreements, without having a particularly long-term strategy in place from the outset. In essence, the plan emerges over time. This also highlighted that shorter-term sponsorships may be characteristically more transactional in being focused predominantly on driving financial value rather than social value.

In terms of the outcomes of CSV, 'Shared Value' cannot be captured as an individual, abstract concept which leads to benefits derived for different beneficiaries, as in the initial model, but instead, the outcomes for these actors are realised in terms of CSV being perceived to be attained. For MSE

properties, facets such as improved commercial performance, increases in participation, and an enhanced image are all important derivatives of value. Likewise, for sponsors, upturns in brand equity, brand repositioning, and the realisation of more tangible benefits such as greater employee engagement, media value and obtaining data were illustrations provided by the participants. For consumers, the role of education was an important emergent theme in contributing towards the betterment of society. In addition, evolving consumer tastes necessitate a transition by firms to a more CSV-orientated mind-set, such as by integrating greater purpose into their way of working.

The results also reveal that elite athletes are a key recipient of CSV outcomes, particularly in relation to their earning potential, the development of public profiles and training and performance advancements. In addition, the close association between host locations and their citizens is apparent, to the extent that it becomes difficult and counter-productive to attempt to categorise them as separate entities. Therefore, host citizens can benefit from improved health and/or rehabilitation, boosts to the local economy, and greater levels of empowerment through inspiration within the population. These findings highlight the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for the creation of shared value with other actors, helping to address objective two of this thesis. In addition, the unearthing of a range of sub-codes for each of the ten components of the conceptual framework addresses the need for theoretical and empirical examination of CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective, aligned with objective four of the study.

A number of participants offered their own interpretations of CSV. A minority considered it an abstract idea largely confined to educational courses and academic textbooks. This suggests that some do not fully understand the concept and its real world potential, although others did recognise the practical benefits of CSV – both to their own organisations and a broader range of actors. A sponsor respondent, who suggested that using the term more regularly would make it more palpable, encapsulated this. In line with objective one, these findings allow to provide a better understanding why sponsors and MSEs should incorporate greater CSV considerations.

As per the third objective of the thesis (i.e., to provide guidance for practitioners on how CSV can be achieved), demonstrating tangible examples arising from CSV can assist sponsors and MSE properties in meeting growing societal obligations. These results contribute to an improved understanding of the constituent, operational components of CSV, and their significance within the context of MSEs, whilst adding palpability to the concept of CSV and demonstrating its growing importance to practitioners and society.

6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This study considers how business organisations can concurrently improve their competitive market positioning whilst co-creating societal value, in the context of the sponsorship of MSEs. Purposely, it centres on addressing four central objectives: exploring the necessity for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations; investigating the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for the creation of shared value with other actors; identifying tangible examples of CSV which can provide guidance for practitioners on how CSV can be achieved; and examining CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective.

The previous chapters presented the results from the pilot and main study stages of the research and these findings help to advance the understanding of the connection between sponsors and MSE properties, and their roles in creating shared value within the sport ecosystem. They also enabled the development of a conceptual framework for understanding the components of CSV and the shared value generated with associated key actors.

Consequently, the current chapter interprets the findings and discusses them within the context of the research objectives and related literature. It begins by appraising the evolution of the study, which incorporates a summary of the results of the pilot and main study interviews (**Section 6.2**). This is proceeded by an evaluation of the development of the conceptual framework (**Section 6.3**), which is followed by a discussion of how the expansion of identified themes in the pilot study and subsequent main study contribute to existent literature on the creation of shared value (**Section 6.4**). Next, the tangible elements of CSV are demonstrated and evaluated (**Section 6.5**) and the chapter concludes with a summary of the key ideas discussed herein and how these address the study's objectives (**Section 6.6**).

6.2 Evolution of the study

The study has evolved through a number of key phases. From the outset, the literature review accentuated a number of headline findings which led to the proposal of an initial conceptual framework and informed the course of the research. Factors such as increasing globalisation, commercialisation and digitalisation, as well as heightened disapproval of the way many firms operate, have necessitated the need for businesses to re-appraise their societal impact. CSV offers the potential to create 'win-win' solutions which can expand the total pool of commercial and social value, rather than merely redistribute it and constrain profitability. As it is challenging for individual entities to create or deliver value independently, firms are best placed to create shared value by utilising capabilities, consistency,

and cultivation – however, theoretical and empirical advancement of the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of CSV is necessary in order to better understand the concept.

Furthermore, the growth and rise to prominence of MSEs provides unique and appealing spectacles to help facilitate positive impacts, such as: endorsing and educating about good causes; generating economic benefits; encouraging wide-scale stakeholder involvement and creating a positive 'feel –good factor'. They also allow brands to leverage relationship and network-focused sponsorships, with further research required to explore the potential of the dyadic relationship between sponsor and MSE in creating value for both parties and with other actors involved in wider sport networks and ecosystems. The paradoxical nature of MSEs (i.e., that they can mirror many of the conflicting positive and negative tendencies of modern life, Müller, 2017) means that they can cause financial problems for hosts; fail to live up to promises and attract controversy, and thus, CSV offers a way for these events to become more authentic, impactful and meaningful.

The need to discover and comprehend the perceptions of key decision-makers involved in the process of sponsorship of MSEs informed the study's methodological approach. This is supported by an anti-foundationalist ontology (i.e., reality is socially and broadly constructed by social actors), aligned with an interpretivist epistemology (i.e., understanding and interpreting the diverse perspectives of senior managers regarding the creation of shared value in the sport ecosystem) and acknowledges the researcher's intrinsic association with the research in endeavouring to reach conclusions by eliciting the lived experiences and collected accounts of respondents.

The pilot stage involved the preliminary analysis and subsequent development of the proposed, literature-based conceptual model introduced in the literature review. Evaluation of these results indicated that capabilities and consistency are important drivers of CSV, both from a sponsor and MSE perspective. Hence, the interview discussion guide for the main study was honed to contain 'organisational capabilities' and 'organisational consistency' to denote the potential contribution from MSE properties in addition to sponsors. Based on the pilot responses, further interrogation of these variables and understanding of their relationship was required, to uncover more specific examples and achieve a deeper construal of the participants' beliefs and feelings. In addition, discussions regarding sponsor brand cultivation tended to relate to a process of CSV involving additional, external actors with the possibility to boost the impact of capabilities and consistency. And so, 'sponsor brand cultivation' was relabelled as 'cultivation' with its role in the originally proposed model re-evaluated. Few participants spontaneously discussed this process so further discussion topics relating to the contribution of other actors to the sponsorship were included, in addition to further probing of the sponsor-sponsee relationship, potential beneficiaries of CSV, and a more succinct rationalisation of CSV, in order to help participants understand its distinction from CSR, and help them to further expand on their ideas. The main study, therefore, centred on MSE sponsors and MSE properties in order to help further refine the model and gain a deeper understanding of the process of creating shared value and the associated

outcomes for the actors involved. As a result, some improvements were made to the conceptual framework, as detailed in the following section, 6.3.

In line with the study's second objective, by exploring viewpoints of how sponsors and MSEs can utilise the event engagement platform to create shared value, the results and associated conceptual framework extend extant sponsorship literature and can assist industry specialists by providing a blueprint to better understand the actions and activities they should focus on to facilitate beneficial outcomes for different actors within the sport ecosystem. The concepts, and the associated sub-codes and their respective definitions that emerged from the pilot and main study stages are summarised in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. Summary results of the pilot and main study interviews.

Concept	Concept definition	Sub-code	Sub-code definition
Sponsor brand capabilities/ **Organisational capabilities**	Unique competences held by the sponsor brand/**organisation**	**Adaptability**	**An ability to develop via a flexible approach to change**
		Credibility and trustworthiness	**Exhibiting values of integrity and sincerity**
		Expertise*	Core competences of the sponsor/**organisation**
		Facilitating growth	Sponsor helps to enable opportunities for the MSE to connect with target audiences
		Family values	**Applying a family-orientated outlook to business decisions**
		Fun	**Instilling an undercurrent of fun into organisational strategy and/or related activations**
		Innovation	**Creative and novel advancements to marketing strategy**
		Large-scale*	Broad scope of the sponsor's/**organisation's** operations and resources
		Technology	Technological proficiencies
Sponsor brand consistency/ **Organisational consistency**	**Perceived congruence between shareholder and social value***	**Authenticity**	**Demonstrating a genuine desire to create financial value and societal value**
		Community	Business strategies with a community focus
		Economics-first vs. mission-driven*	The tension between adopting business strategies which aim to create shareholder value and social value
		Measurability*	Measurement of the balance between the creation of shareholder value and social value
		Not strategic	Lack of strategic direction in seeking to achieve a balance between economics-first and mission-driven approaches
		Reputational concern	Concern expressed related to external perception of economics-first and mission-driven approaches
		Strategic alignment	**Alignment between the organisational marketing strategy and consistency-related activity**
Symbiosis (sponsor-sport property)/ **Sponsor-event symbiosis**	A shared association of two or more mutually dependent organisations, which aim to achieve a joint strategic goal	**Communication**	**Clear, regular, and/or open dialogue between sponsor and MSE property**
		Contractual formalities	Legal commitments made by each party which enters into a formal sponsorship agreement
		Developing a relationship	Actions taken over a period of time to grow and strengthen a relationship between both parties
		Enhancement of capabilities	**The capabilities of the sponsor or MSE property are boosted via a symbiosis with the respective partner**
		Enhancement of consistency	**The consistency of the sponsor or MSE property is boosted via a symbiosis with the respective partner**
		Level of involvement	**The connection between sponsor and MSE in assisting the delivery of each other's objectives and strategy**
		Mutual benefits*	Benefits jointly accrued by both parties
		Shared philosophy	**Synergetic organisational values, beliefs and ideas**
		Sharing resources	The division or allocation of resources between parties
Sponsor brand cultivation/ **Cultivation**	The realisation of mutually beneficial collaborative strategies **boosted by capabilities and consistency** via an integration of resources between the sponsor/MSE and other actors	Agencies	Third-party businesses which provide marketing-related services to sponsor clients
		Local authorities	Administrative bodies within local government
		Media	**The main channels of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the internet)**
		NGOs*	Non-profit organisations which typically exist for the purpose of addressing a social or political issue

		Other commercial organisations	**Agencies, associated sponsors (sponsor-to-sponsor), MSEs and sport properties (MSE-to-sport property)**
		Other sponsors/businesses	Sponsor or other commercial organisations
		Other sport properties	Sport organisations such as governing bodies or other MSEs
Length of sponsorship	How the duration of the sponsorship agreement can affect its success in creating shared value	**Aiding evolution**	**Assists in the regular development and revitalisation of the sponsorship arrangement**
		Continued commitment	**Provides security and substantiation for both parties**
		Experimentation	**Offers the possibility for a greater degree of inventiveness and creativity**
Sport property outcomes/ **Event outcomes**	CSV-related outcomes for sport properties/**MSEs**	**Commercial performance**	**Financial achievement**
		Enhanced image	**Improvements in the external perception of the event property**
		Goodwill	The generation of positive feelings towards the sport property
		Increased participation*	Growth or development of participation in the sport
		Increasing audience	Growth or development of market
		Recognition	Acknowledgement of achievement
		Reinvestment	Capital and other resources reinvested into the sport and/or sport property for the benefit of the sport
Sponsor brand outcomes/ **Sponsor outcomes**	CSV-related outcomes for sponsors	**Brand equity***	Development of brand equity-related elements such as increased brand awareness or image
		Employee engagement	Internal marketing-related benefits
		Extending reach	Gain access to a broader target market
		Repositioning	**Modification of a brand's status in the marketplace**
		Tangible benefits	**Realisation of material gains**
Host city/region outcomes/ Citizen outcomes/ **Host citizen outcomes**	CSV-related outcomes for host cities/regions/citizens/**host citizens**	**Empowerment through inspiration**	**Encouragement for the betterment of people's welfare**
		Health and/or rehabilitation*	Contributing towards healthier and more active lifestyles
		Inspiring future generations	Encouraging future generations to form a bond with the sport
		Local pride	A sense of honour and satisfaction in representing the local area
		Social programmes	Tailored strategies for improving the lives of citizens
		Supporting the local economy*	Specific strategies which seek to ensure that local economies are supported
Athlete outcomes	**CSV-related outcomes for professional athletes**	**Earnings**	**Increased athlete remuneration**
		Profile development	**More established public persona, increased recognition**
		Training advancements	**Beneficial technical developments**
Consumer outcomes*	**CSV-related outcomes for sport consumers***	**Education***	**Acquired product-related learning as a result of engagement with the sponsorship**
		Enhancing consumer experience*	Advancements to elements within the consumer *servicescape*, such as facilities
		Improving products and services	Increased efficiency in the development of products and services

*Note: Standard font denotes results from pilot study; bold font denotes results from main study; bold font with * denotes results from both studies.*

6.3 Development of the conceptual framework

In seeking to clarify the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of the outcomes of shared value (Dembek et al., 2016), these results elaborate on the role of three interconnected 'Cs' (capabilities, consistency, and cultivation); a symbiotic relationship; and the length of the sponsorship relationship in driving CSV. Organisational capabilities are important drivers of shared value creation and can directly lead to outcomes for a range of beneficiaries. Previous literature suggests that firm-specific organisational capabilities are important to promote positive changes in societies (Hart & Dowell, 2011), and the findings of the current study provide empirical support for this. For instance, in bringing 'new (hybrid) mobility technologies to market', Sponsor208 illustrates their automotive employer's 'strong innovation credentials.' This adds support to the findings of Corazza et al., (2017), who determined that eco-innovations (i.e., novel methods which help to reduce negative impacts of resource use; Díaz-García et al., 2015) contribute to positive societal and environmental-related CSV outcomes.

Similarly, organisational consistency can directly contribute to CSV outcomes, such as an educational business programme aimed to reinforce a sponsor's 'diversity values and investment in future leadership' whilst also imparting 'insight into professional [sport] that the average fan wouldn't necessarily see' by coaching them on aspects such as 'nutrition and training' (Sponsor227). By implementing the concepts into their daily lives, better education of sport fans about the importance of sustainable development and socially responsible behaviour can increase their level of involvement in society (Melovic et al., 2019). The notion of capabilities and consistency links with the firm-level internal factors (i.e., emergent organisational strategy, visionary leadership, and cognitive capabilities of employees) influencing CSV strategy identified by Menghwar and Daood (2021).

Furthermore, capabilities and consistency are also essential for the attainment of cultivation, which in turn can help engender CSV-related outcomes. By incorporating knowledge from multiple sources, firms can improve their value propositions (Ratten & Jones, 2020). MSE01 particularised its organisation's capability to 'deliver excitement, anticipation, surprise' as part of a 'story-telling component'. This aids the MSE to be a 'positive force for good' in cultivating value, via building associations with other sport properties to deliver social benefits, such as dual-branded anti-bullying campaigns. Collaboration between sport entities is a key aspect of sport entrepreneurship (Ratten & Jones, 2020) and can open up new opportunities to create value for a variety of actors within the sport ecosystem (Ratten, 2011).

This idea is also in evidence from a consistency perspective. MSE223 considered their organisation a 'social enterprise because we are not completely dictated by profit', and thus focused on delivering innovative solutions to social problems facing different stakeholders (Reid, 2017). This particular commercial director also stressed, 'we are a commercial operator and proud to be. We are not a charity, but we do help lots of other charities raise money.' In this sense, the MSE not only directly generates

CSV-related value propositions for beneficiaries, but also contributes to a cultivation process where the event supports NGOs in their capacity to deliver social impacts to citizens and communities (Inoue et al., 2018). Cultivation, therefore, is a process which represents the achievement of collaborative strategies between the sponsor and/or MSE property and other actors within the sport ecosystem, activated by capabilities and consistency via an integration of resources and actions. The respective arrows added to the refined conceptual framework (Figure 5.1) illustrate these principles.

Capabilities and consistency can also be enhanced by a symbiotic relationship between sponsor and MSE (as also shown by the additional arrows in Figure 5.1). This being the outcome of the joint effort of the components (i.e., capabilities and symbiosis, consistency and symbiosis, or capabilities, consistency and symbiosis) is greater than the contribution of a singular component (Lawford, 2003). Several such supporting examples became apparent in the main stage interviews. From a capabilities standpoint, aspects such as sponsors becoming braver and more innovative with their activations (Sponsor208), MSEs gaining 'partners who become our marketers (MSE214), and counterparts sharing best practice and learning from each other (MSE215) all highlight the role of symbiosis in augmenting the potency of capabilities for CSV.

This offers empirical support to Stephan et al. (2016, p. 1252), who define positive social change (PSC) as the "process of transforming patterns of thought, behavior, social relationships, institutions, and social structure to generate beneficial outcomes for individuals, communities, organizations, society, and/or the environment beyond the benefits for the instigators of such transformations." The same authors suggest that embedding capabilities contributes to connective leadership, which in turn helps develop connections with diverse stakeholders, enabling the effective execution of a broader scale and reach of PSC outcomes. This illustrates that social change should not be expected to happen organically or to be positive simply because it may have been originally planned. According to Misener et al. (2021) the underlying theoretical presumptions about social change are poorly articulated and the notion that sport will inevitably lead to better, more equitable societies has been disputed (Adams et al., 2018). Thus, in accordance with the first objective of the study, it is important for sponsors and MSEs to work on PSC at different stages of the event to ensure it happens as planned and that the effects are not contrary to expectation.

The same principle was apparent for consistency. For instance, a sponsor utilising its association with the men's and women's format of an MSE to help initiate and grow a gender summit related to the event sat 'outside the normal boundaries of sponsorship' and enabled the sponsor to better champion 'diversity, inclusion and equality' (Sponsor213). Comparably, an MSE's partnership with a car manufacturer sponsor assisted the sponsor to better 'reposition itself as a mobility provider' through the platform of the event (MSE216). These findings extend the concept of the resource-based view (Barney, 2001) by suggesting that sponsors and MSEs can succeed in creating shared value by building on these three, interconnected 'Cs'. They also expand the work of Maltz and Schein (2012), who call for further development of measures of capability, consistency and cultivation, in addition to demonstrating how

these concepts take place. Sub-section 6.4.1 will further detail the advancement of these themes. Accordingly, a symbiosis represents a strategic alliance (van Rijn et al., 2019) which enhances capabilities and consistency, and thus the effect of these two elements in driving cultivation, and directly influencing CSV-related outcomes. The formation of these linkages are subject to internal and external constraints (Lin et al., 2007) and thus, affiliations with external actors (i.e. the connection between sponsors and MSEs) denote intangible, peripheral assets (Ivens et al., 2009). These findings also add to the work of Menghwar and Daood (2021), who identified external factors (i.e., state institutions, competitors' approaches, and customers' behaviour) as being instrumental in influencing CSV.

The length of the sponsorship relationship also emerged during the main study interviews as an important contributor to the overall effect of capabilities, consistency, symbiosis and cultivation. The duration of MSE-sponsor relationships can influence success (Crompton, 2014b; Kwon & Shin, 2019), and in aiding evolution, commitment and stability, and experimentation, the results indicate that the period of the sponsorship relationship is essential for generating regular exposure and leveraging activities through time. Longer duration partnerships may provide increased possibilities between counterparts to better understand each other's abilities, which, in turn, may lead to both sides learning ways in which the relationship can be enhanced (Jensen & Cornwell, 2017). If a sponsoring firm engages a property that helps the firm achieve a competitive advantage, the firm still must therefore employ a long-term approach to the sponsorship if the advantage is to be sustainable (Jensen et al., 2016). The large arrow located at the base of the refined model represents these ideas.

The depiction of shared value within the conceptual framework also evolved during the analysis of the findings throughout the pilot and main study stages. For the initial, literature-based model, 'shared value' represented an abstract form of CSV (Wójcik, 2016), in line with the desire for further theoretical and empirical advancement to better substantiate the concept (Corazza et al., 2017; Dembek et al., 2016). Accordingly, the interviews not only contributed to a better understanding of the '3C's', length of sponsorship and a symbiosis between parties, but also revealed several examples of CSV outcomes, realised with a range of beneficiaries (events, sponsors, host citizens, athletes and consumers) which allow for the 'shared value' box to be amalgamated into the respective boxes towards the right-hand side of the framework. These developments contribute to current knowledge of CSV, addressing appeals in the literature to further explore the internal and external factors influencing CSV (e.g., Menghwar & Daood, 2021; Wójcik, 2016) and how value is created and distributed among actors (e.g., Dembek et al., 2016; Menghwar & Daood, 2021). The expansion of these outcomes is further discussed in the following section.

6.4 Expansion of identified themes

The identified themes have been advanced by the pilot study, and subsequently further extended by the main study. Within the themes, a total of 59 sub-codes were identified; 34 from the pilot stage (of which 12 were maintained by the findings of the main study) with an additional 25 sub-codes emerging from

the main study stage (see Table 6.1). The identification of these sub-codes answers calls in the literature to clarify the intricacies and undercurrents of CSV (e.g., Dembek et al., 2016; Kelley et al., 2019; Voltan et al., 2017) and contributes to extant literature on the creation of shared value by identifying ways in which businesses can facilitate societal benefits via the sponsorship of MSEs. Based on the findings and building on extant CSV literature (e.g., Porter & Kramer, 2011; Menghwar & Daood, 2021) and sponsorship literature (e.g., Cornwell, 2014; Meenaghan, 1991), the creation of shared value through sponsorship is defined as *a strategic process through which a sponsor and sponsee work together to optimise their profits whilst simultaneously contributing to positive social change.* These contributions attend to the fourth research objective of the study by helping to examine CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective.

6.4.1 Means of creating shared value

Within an MSE ecosystem, it is important to consider capabilities and consistency at an organisational level (i.e., from the perspective of both sponsors and MSE properties) rather than purely in relation to the sponsor, as was the case in the pilot study. In addition to their inherent value (e.g., inspiring civic pride and social camaraderie; Inoue & Havard, 2014), MSEs can serve as platforms and provide resources that actor-networks integrate to co-create value (Grohs et al., 2020).

Organisational capabilities

A range of nine types of organisational capabilities were highlighted within the two rounds of interviews as being important operant resources for value creation. Within these, *expertise* and *large-scale* are central components which feature prominently in both stages. General marketing expertise is a 'doing' capability (Hall, 1997) that incorporates both individual employee and functional team knowledge of the environment and business practices related to the development and implementation of marketing strategy (Capron & Hulland, 1999).

Within the current study, the competency (e.g., being effective at execution) and skillsets of staff (e.g., incorporating their understanding of diversity and inclusivity), brand image attributes (e.g., honesty, forward-thinking, story-telling, surprising), and a clear and focused managerial approach were important contributors to shared-value engendering capabilities. Therefore, organisations which lack expertise are likely to be limited in their ability to create shared value (Huber, 1999). Likewise, the larger the scale of the sponsor or MSE, the greater the potential for impacting shared value. This idea corresponds with Holcomb et al. (2006), who suggest that structuring a portfolio of resources through strategic actions can enable the achievement of scale and scope related benefits.

Other types of capabilities to emerge from the main study were *adaptability*, *credibility and trustworthiness, family values, fun,* and *innovation*. Design thinking was identified as a valuable component for activating adaptability, which offers support to Joachim et al. (2020), who found that design thinking indicators such as futuristic problem framing can drive social development through

sport. According to Carlgren et al. (2016), design thinking also positively enhances organisational innovation. In the current study, two contrasting perspectives on generating sponsorship innovation emerged. On one hand, Sponsor218 referred to a newness to sponsorship which was 'extremely freeing' and allowed the company to 'do it differently'. Although sponsorship spend was increasing steadily ahead of the COVID-19 pandemic (WARC, 2020a), literature which considers instances of new sponsors is sparse. Carrillat and Grohs (2019) explore consumer responses to sponsorship change but it should be noted that little research exists which concentrates on firms which are themselves new to sponsorship. Contrastingly, Sponsor208 cited the importance of a track record of 'innovation credentials'. In this case, the sponsorship provides the company with an effective means of testing innovative ideas and pinpointing social problems that can be served through their products and services (Miragaia et al., 2017) and likely contribute to promoting positive social change (Stephan et al., 2016).

Organisational consistency

In terms of organisational consistency, seven aspects came to light. Of these, *economics-first versus mission-driven* and *measurability* were discussed in both rounds of the research, with *authenticity* and *strategic alignment* also emerging from the main study. Each of these elements are interlinked. In order for organisations to successfully balance generating shareholder value and social value, an economics-first versus mission-driven approach requires a genuine organisational desire to do so, a clear alignment with organisational marketing strategy, and successful measurement of such approaches. Consistency is important for achieving 'wider impact' (MSE216), with a distinction made between 'optimising' and 'maximising' revenue (Sponsor207). Pursuing maximisation strategies that also preserve the health of the wider ecosystem is becoming increasingly difficult, and instead optimisation seeks to achieve the best possible outcome under a given set of constraints by maximising desired factors and minimising undesired ones (Gössling et al., 2016). This is particularly important in light of the challenges facing businesses and society as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst such courses of action ally with Porter and Kramer's (2011) assertion that profits involving a social purpose can enable society to advance more rapidly while allowing companies to grow, they also challenge their view that CSV is integral to profit maximisation. Instead, *profit optimisation* may be a more appropriate term where shared value creation is concerned, as a focal firm needs to balance its own interests with those of its partners in the wider ecosystem (Chesbrough et al., 2018). This idea also adds further support to the importance of consistency in expediting social enterprise (Smith et al., 2012).

Some of the interviewees held reservations about the authenticity of partners' (and in some cases, even their own organisation's) motivations for creating social value by paying 'lip service' to society. This perception is more in-line with traditional CSR (Lee et al., 2014), whereas other viewpoints were able to recognise 'a bigger halo and long-term effect when you genuinely do involve society' (MSE220), which is more correspondent to CSV. Sponsor213's instigation and development of an MSE-related gender summit embodies their desire to 'celebrate diversity, inclusion and equality' and demonstrates

an authentic approach to sponsorship. Authenticity provides a foundation for sponsorship engagement because of the importance that target audiences place on sponsor motives and their identification with the sponsorship (Kim et al. 2015; Charlton & Cornwell, 2019). Organisations that can integrate authenticity into everyday business activities are likely to unearth 'relatable factors' (Sponsor229) which can help establish competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2011). As noted by MSE228, 'unwritten rules' as opposed to 'defined policy' can be effective in this regard. MSE206 suggested that younger firms may find it easier to instigate such strategies than more mature organisations, due to the challenges of 'history', 'legacy' and 'complexity'. Research suggests that whilst older firms outperform younger ones in applying mature knowledge, younger firms are more able to exploit emerging and middle-aged knowledge (Petruzzelli et al., 2018). Therefore, more mature sponsors and established MSE properties may need to redouble their efforts to align consistency within organisational strategy.

Sponsor208 allied the importance of strategic alignment with effective measurement. The measurement aspect of sponsorship is complicated (Farrelly et al., 2006) and as such, has been criticised for overlooking sponsorship's complexities, interconnectedness, and engagement potential (Cornwell, 2019). A disconnect between CSV principles and sponsorship evaluation was apparent in several discussions. MSE212 referred to this as a 'weak spot', particularly for one-off events which are less owned by host communities (McCartney, 2005), indicating a measurement deficit in sponsorship metrics as noted in the literature (e.g., Meenaghan & O'Sullivan, 2013). Within the interviews, a number of suggestions of refined business KPIs were made, which could help better reflect the importance of shared value creation. These included assessing more people engaging with community-based platforms and evaluating workplace happiness and wellbeing. These ideas support the work of Cornwell et al. (2018), who emphasise the importance of organisational identification for employee self-fulfilment.

Sponsor-event symbiosis

The findings also address requests for further exploration into the relationship between sponsors and sport events, by considering the perspective of sponsees (e.g., Jensen & Cornwell, 2017; Morgan et al., 2020; van Rijn et al., 2019). The importance of a sponsor-event symbiosis can be understood through the emergence of nine dimensions: *mutual benefits*, which carried through from the pilot to main study; *communication, enhancement of capabilities/consistency* (as examined in section 6.3)*, level of involvement*, and a *shared philosophy* were all discussed during the main study. Central to the symbiosis is the idea that each party benefits reciprocally from the relationship (Farrelly, 2010). A prime example is where partners worked together to improve the diversity and inclusivity of their recruitment processes (see Table 5.5), contributing to a reappraisal of their existing activities by identifying and reframing unmet social needs leading to shared value (Maltz & Schein, 2012).

The advantages of regular and open formal and informal communication between partners were also acknowledged as a key driver of a symbiotic relationship. This finding corroborates those of van Rijn et al. (2019), who amongst their identification of ten 'sponsorship disruptors' across four categories of

sponsorship dissolution, found that personal relationships were a key factor impacting sponsorship discontinuation. Benefits of communication include being able to adapt to counterparts as a result of listening and understanding each other; the development of trust which can foster constructive conflict; and in the most effective cases, partners becoming an extension of the sponsor's or MSE's own team. Regarding this latter benefit, MSEs are likely to concentrate their efforts towards higher fee-paying main sponsors than less prominent sponsors which generate lower revenue, 'as that's just life' (MSE223). Whilst this mindset is understandable, particularly within smaller MSE's which 'have to see where (they're) commercially valuable' (MSE228), it suggests that the level of partner involvement is inextricably linked to who pays the most.

It may also be likely that this idea can be inversed. For instance, sponsors may prioritise their efforts according to the size or scope of particular sponsored properties. A sponsor portfolio is a collection of arrangements with different entities utilised to engage with various audiences, which exert influence on one another to create an overarching effect on the evaluations of brand meaning and personality connected with the sponsor (Chien et al., 2011). By adopting forward-thinking perspectives and applying learning gained from other sponsorships to help partners grow their organisation rather than merely 'cashing in the money and saying thank you very much' (Sponsor226), both sides are likely to be better placed to create shared value. Therefore, sponsorship portfolios should be leveraged carefully in order to make the most effective use of the collective attributes of respective partners, whilst taking care to maintain the quality of each relationship within the portfolio (Morgan et al., 2014). Furthermore, sponsors should aim to be perceived to take responsibility as sponsee 'guardians', such as by holding rights holders to account (Dickenson & Souchon, 2020). For example, Adidas withdrew its sponsorship of the IAAF and the T-Mobile cycling team on grounds of morality as a result of corruption and doping scandals (Bold, 2016).

A shared philosophy can allow respective parties to find a 'niche' or 'synergy' (MSE204) that can overcome self-centredness and the conception that certain partners may be regarded 'more like a supplier than a partner' (MSE223). These highlighted issues lend further support to van Rijn et al. (2019), in that some sponsorship relations can be fragile, particularly where the stakeholders consider the sponsorship as a short-term, transactional exchange process. Furthermore, Rifon et al. (2004) found that sponsor-event incongruence can detract from perceptions of altruistic motives, credibility, and positive attitudes of the sponsorship. In this eventuality, articulation strategies (additional communication that explains the sponsorship to the market; Cornwell et al., 2006) can help the target audience create an associative link between event and brand schemas (Coppetti et al., 2009). Such strategies should be communicated implicitly rather than explicitly so as not to impede a positive impact on the articulated brand image dimension and generation of altruistic motive attribution (Skard & Thorbjørnsen, 2017).

By seeking to align culturally (e.g., Sponsor227), sponsors and MSE properties are also likely to be better placed to buy into the vision of the partner organisation (MSE216). Whilst research on a shared culture between sponsor partners is sparse, Nufer and Bühler (2010) advocate that sponsor relations can be developed by aspects including communication, cooperation, a long-term perspective, mutual understanding, and trust. Furthermore, Keshkar et al. (2019) stress that collaboration, teamwork and personal camaraderie are also important in this regard. The findings of the current study also build on the work of Farrelly et al., (2006), who found that the investment of time, effort and resources by sponsor partners into developing their relationship is a 'double-edged sword'. This being, commitment, marketing skills and a readiness to collaborate can act as strong reinforcing agents, but a lack of reciprocity can seriously damage the relationship and impede shared value creation. This idea also aligns with Morgan et al. (2020), who posit that cultural aspects can contribute to relational effectiveness between sponsors and MSEs.

Cultivation

Notwithstanding how well sponsors and sport properties work together, the findings indicate that the cultivation of relationships with other actors is paramount (Parent et al., 2012). Insights into the process of cultivation intimated seven actor types which can impact CSV. One of these (*NGOs*) was discussed during both research phases and both the *media* and *other commercial organisations* were discussed in the main study (note: *agencies, other sponsors/businesses* and *other sport properties* were conferred during the pilot stage and subsequently combined to form the category of 'other commercial organisations'). An organisation's relational ties to other organisational actors epitomise potential channels for the flow of tangible or intangible resources (Turnbull et al., 1996). The results give credence to the significance of cluster formations (e.g., Alberti & Belfanti, 2019; Gerke et al., 2015) whereby actor networks forged with varying degrees of formality can help harness the contributions of each actor within the cluster. This type of 'open innovation' commands collaboration among distributed but interdependent actors who rely on each other's capabilities for value creation and capture (Chesbrough et al., 2018).

For MSEs and sponsors, NGOs and media outlets are types of actors that require 'nonmarket' strategies in order to successfully convert perceived non-business issues into strategic opportunities to cultivate value (Bach & Allen, 2010). In the case of NGOs, participants discussed several facets of their usefulness in driving cultivation. Examples included leveraging links with other sport bodies to extend the impact of a CSV initiative (MSE214), a local university contributing to MSE sustainability initiatives (MSE212), and sponsor staff supporting specialist organisations which deliver training to disadvantaged young people (Sponsor209). Another notable finding concerned the potential impact of smaller, local charitable organisations which tended to 'make more of a difference' (Sponsor213). Hall et al. (2013) suggest that attitudes tend to be more favourable towards these types of organisations as they are thought to more effectively generate positive impacts such as social connectedness. Therefore,

this provides a potential advantage to NGOs which successfully engage local stakeholders in achieving discreet outcomes.

Participant discussions also made evident the boosting effect of the media in cultivating shared value, suggesting that a sport-media-business alliance (e.g., Crompton, 2014b; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006) is important not only for the success of MSEs and sponsors, but also for shared value to be created with other actors in the ecosystem. Girginov and Hills (2008) underlined the importance of affiliations between large-scale events and the media to engage the public but as Bach and Allen (2010) observe, nonmarkets can de diverse and unpredictable. For instance, the way the media responds to a story in one context can differ greatly from the response in another. In this regard, MSE220 felt that 'you've got a problem on your hands' without the support of the media and Sponsor218 asserted the importance of having 'broadcasters on your side'. Sponsor218 also referred to a 'golden triangle' formed when media exposure complements the MSE-sponsor partnership. Exposure-related issues affect many sports, such as cricket, where despite a hastily arranged agreement for the host nation, England's, appearance in the final to be shown on terrestrial British television, the 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup took place behind a 'paywall' and thus missed potential opportunities for CSV (New Statesman, 2019). Nevertheless, event outcomes depend on how an event is leveraged and other related resources are exploited to broaden the value for different actors (O'Brien & Chalip, 2007). Enforced COVID-19 lockdowns have fortified the role of non-live content via social media and streaming platforms as marketing channels with the ability to deliver supplementary content for sport properties and sponsors (Nielsen, 2021). For instance, the 2020 Netflix documentary about the Paralympics, Rising Phoenix, was critically well received (IMDb, 2021) and challenges stereotypes by subverting the idea of disability as weakness (Timms, 2020). This helps to create shared value by generating concurrent benefits for Netflix (e.g., enhancing its reputation for showing original and pioneering content); the Paralympics (e.g., showcasing the merits of the event to an expanded audience) and society (e.g., raising awareness of disability amongst the wider public).

Other commercial organisations can play an important role in cultivating value. According to Cornwell (2020), contemporary practices have given forth to a range of auxiliary actors engaged in the sponsorship process, ranging from large scale media agencies such as IEG, Nielsen, and Octagon, to smaller, inventive 'void-filling' operations which offer support with experiential programmes and activation. However, the relationship between sponsees and agencies remains poorly understood (Dietl et al., 2017). Participant viewpoints contrasted about the worth of such external specialists. In one respect, these entities can add value in areas such as innovation (Sponsor227), which reinforces the work of Jensen and White (2018), who suggest agencies contribute an alternative perspective, industry best practices and objectivity in evaluation. Alternatively, some agencies may lack contextual understanding and remove wealth from the sport ecosystem in return for poorly-conceived creative ideas (MSE223), thus supporting the notion that value can be co-destructed if relationships do not generate value creating outcomes, or result in negative outcomes (Stieler et al,, 2014). In this case, the

agency's 'inability to serve' their client adequately and the subsequent 'blaming' of the agency by the client may represent dimensions of value co-destruction (Järvi et al., 2018). Creativity can represent a delicate balance for agencies as clients such as sponsor firms typically demand increasingly creative solutions, particularly in challenging business circumstances (Sasser et al., 2013). If sponsors were to involve sponsees more in their hiring and ongoing dialogue with agencies, then there may be opportunities to further enhance CSV.

In addition, forums and workshops offer potential for more productive collaboration between co-sponsors, such as the sharing of best practices relating to sustainability initiatives (MSE212), specialist knowledge (Sponsor208), and technological proficiencies (MSE204). It was also found that joint activity between different sport properties, such as in the case of an anti-bullying rally for children, can help cultivate CSV (MSE201). As a consequence, the sport properties and sponsors can expect to benefit from a positive effect on brand attitudes resulting from alignment with a social cause (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 2005), whilst the adverse effects of bullying on human capital attainment can be alleviated (Brown & Taylor, 2008). These insights expand the work of Cobbs (2011), who found that sponsor summits arranged by a professional sport team represent a focal exchange of resources between collective actors – in this case, corporate partners which are united in their common affiliation with the sport property. According to Cobbs (2011), a sponsored enterprise can amass social capital by enacting the role of a broker that fills 'structural holes' (unrealised exchange relationships between unconnected partners; Burt, 1997). In turn, this can enhance the interdependence of sponsor network members, increasing their power and relationship-building benefits, and thus demonstrates the boosting effect of cultivation. Furthermore, the findings also lend support to Wagner et al. (2017), who via an investigation of firms' motives for becoming sponsors, assert that sport organisations fulfil an important role in local society beyond being purely entertainment industries, by orchestrating a network which facilitates B2B relations. Also, these findings address calls from Grohs (2020) to further understand *how* actors and their networks interact and collectively create value. That is, they help explain how value is created as a result of a collaborative process between various actors, thus addressing FP5 of the SVF (i.e., sport firms create value propositions mainly in the configuration of a value network; Woratschek et al., 2014a).

Length of sponsorship

The length of the sponsorship arrangement emerged as being important for *commitment and stability, aiding evolution*, and *experimentation*. The longer a sponsorship endures, the higher the possibility that it will be enhanced, as both partners have increased opportunity to benefit from each other's abilities (Herrmann et al., 2016). Morgan and Hunt (1994) stressed the fundamentality of commitment between partners in fostering long-term inter-organisational relationships but there is limited research that focuses on the duration of sponsorships (Jensen & Cornwell, 2017). The current study illustrates that commitment and stability provide a foundation for CSV, principally in terms of financial security for

MSEs (e.g., MSE223) and the provision of a constant and established engagement platform for sponsors (e.g., Sponsor208). Whilst external economic conditions can threaten a long-term sponsor-sponsee association (Jensen & Cornwell, 2017), relationships that are able to adapt and prevail amid crisis situations are likely to be strengthened as a result (Parnell et al., 2020; Ratten, 2020). Whilst a regular churn of sponsors can have a damaging effect (e.g., MSE220), the enablement of a credible story-telling stage which permits regular activation over a sustained period can strategically maximise sponsorship leveraging (Cornwell, 2014) and raise brand perceptions, which is particularly important for international sponsors that are susceptible to adverse origin perceptions (Woisetschläger et al., 2017). By implementing a framework built on a long-term, strategic alliance perspective, shared value creation is likely to be more prolific (van Rijn et al., 2019).

Although many interviewees articulated how their sponsorships evolved over time and led to greater levels of trust and experimentation between partners, many firms will not be able to make a long term sponsorship commitment in the wake of the recent pandemic (Carp, 2021). Faced with such circumstances, a more organic, entrepreneurial approach may be more viable. According to O'Reilly and Abeza (2020), COVID-19 is expected to more severely impact sponsorship activation than investment in rights fees, which tend to have a higher degree of contractual obligation. Sponsor218 recognised a 'textbook way of doing things' but acknowledged than 'in reality, you might just find out at some point that actually it grows onto you'. Furthermore, this participant argued that 'crazy' activations such as helping people become more active through fun activities have arguably never been so important, particularly given the closure of fitness centres and public spaces. As O'Reilly and Abeza (2020) further observe, mental health, food insecurity, social impacts of isolation, and financial health represent timely areas of sponsorship opportunity to create shared value. The findings of the current study also lend further support to Stephan et al. (2016), who intimate that deep-level PSC transformational outcomes (i.e., intrinsic and empowering changes in behaviour that are based on altered beliefs, attitudes, and meanings) are more embedded and last over a longer time span than surface level PSC transformational outcomes (i.e., extrinsic changes in behaviour that can be observed more directly and immediately and are more temporary in nature). Thus, the current study contributes in this area by indicating that longer, more effective relationships can develop deep level PSC. As Menghwar and Daood (2021, p. 8) note, "the targeted societal problem must be closely related to the core value chain". In the same way that sponsors should carefully consider their choice of sponsee, both parties should adopt a calculated and focused approach towards the social causes to address, which should be aligned with the strategy to create shared value through sponsorship.

6.4.2 CSV for multiple actors

The current study also provides insight into the nature of value created with a number of hitherto identified CSV beneficiaries within the sport ecosystem: events, sponsors, host citizens, and consumers; supplemented by the addition of another key type of actor, athletes. Therefore, the findings add to event

leverage literature (e.g., Chalip, 2004) by helping to extend opportunities to a broader range of related actors within the ecosystem.

Event outcomes

Of the seven types of event value creation outcome to emerge, responses relating to *increased participation* carried through from the pilot to the main study, and *commercial performance* and *enhanced image* emerged in the main phase of the research. For MSE rights holders, the sustained growth and development of the sport is imperative for maintaining its relevance (MSE204) and in turn, helping to securing its future (MSE203). Sport participation is a derivative of social impact (Taks et al., 2015) but active strategies and tactics need to be developed before, during, and after an event in order to help stimulate participation, as by itself, the event taking place tends to have a limited impact (Chalip et al., 2017; Taks et al., 2014). This corresponds to the strategic components outlined within organisational consistency, sponsor-MSE symbiosis and the length of the sponsorship duration. Sponsors and sponsees can and should co-develop these strategies, thus creating shared value.

A sport event brand should influence the respective brands within its sponsor portfolio and elicit fan behavioural responses toward these firms (Kunkel & Biscaia, 2020). However, from a CSV perspective, this span of influence is broader, and connects with other actors within the ecosystem. For instance, Müller (2017) contends that by conceptualising events as projects, MSEs are constrained by their isolation from surrounding cities and societies. By taking a broader view that focuses not so much on the necessities of the event, but its wider embeddedness in society, Müller advocates that 'reframing' is an important strategy for event organisers, as it permits stepping outside one's dominant frame of reference. Further, McGillivray et al. (2019) argue that MSEs should implement good governance, incorporate the democratic participation of stakeholders, formalise human rights agendas and treat urban development sensitively in order to contribute towards progressive social outcomes. An enhanced event brand image was cited as an important consequence for MSEs in bringing a more human aspect to their brand (MSE201), placing environmental and sustainability issues in the limelight (MSE204), improving the perception of the sport in markets where it hasn't traditionally been strong (MSE228), and increasing focus on women's sport (MSE215). Simultaneously, a strong commercial performance was recognised as an essential outcome for MSEs, which corresponds to the need to balance social and economic value (Menghwar & Daood, 2021; Porter & Kramer, 2011). It is of increasing importance for MSEs to become more commercially savvy (MSE223; Sponsor229) and of particular urgency for niche sports with lower levels of participation and mainstream media recognition (Turner, 2013) due to a widespread reduction in governmental funding of sport bodies (Berry & Manoli, 2018; Parnell et al., 2019).

Sponsor outcomes

Sponsor-related outcomes were apportioned to five aspects, of which *brand equity* emerged in both stages of the research, and *repositioning* and *tangible benefits* came to light in the main study. Previous studies (e.g., Cornwell et al., 2001; Henseler et al., 2011) underline a strong relationship between sponsorship and components of brand equity: awareness, associations, loyalty, and perceived quality (Aaker, 1991). In a MSE sponsorship context, Donlan (2014) reasons that awareness can facilitate the formation of a strong sponsor-event link, which in turn creates a foundation for associations to be developed through integrated activation programmes. The results of the current study indicate different aspirations for emerging brands (e.g., driving prompted awareness; Sponsor229 and raising brand presence; Sponsor213) and mature brands (e.g., strengthening brand image via telling an integrated story; Sponsor208 or addressing a gender balance; Sponsor227). Furthermore, a number of sponsors were able to reposition their brand as a result of CSV activities. For Sponsor208 and Sponsor221, this entailed a shift from a product-based image (manufacturers of motor vehicles and suppliers of oil and gas respectively) to one where the societal contribution is more apparent (mobility enablers and energy providers). Furthermore, MSE204 cited how a key sponsor's image became 'more humane', which helped its transition to become more B2C orientated.

Donlan (2014) further asserts that firms seeking to nurture loyalty through event sponsorship should integrate the campaign beyond the MSE at other levels of the sport and the local community, which demonstrates a wider commitment and the relevance and contribution of the sponsorship. Sponsor208 discussed 'investing in good' in relation to their development of an online disability platform and MSE216 referred to a 'greater purpose' achieved through a sponsor increasing its recruitment from the disabled community. As Sponsor218 remarked, this allows other stakeholders to 'see the value that you add and to increase the overall perception of the brand'. Regarding perceived quality, Donlan (2014) emphasises the need for sponsors to avoid clutter (i.e., a high level of conflicting communications, which has been found to adversely impact on sponsorship effectiveness; Cornwell et al., 2005). In this regard 'not just badging it' (MSE215) allowed a particular sponsor to build high perceived levels of quality by helping the MSE to 'digitally transform how we do things […] from apps, to a new website, to our CRM database'.

Linked to the aforementioned advancements in branding were benefits that added tangible value to sponsors' businesses. These include making incremental sales, generating media value, helping a firm to integrate after a merger, gaining access to data and reducing staff turnover due to increased levels of employee pride and engagement. Sponsorship offers potential for enhancing employee morale (Crompton, 2014b) and several respondents identified employee-related advantages, such as feeling 'proud of the company they work for' (Sponsor227) and creating ' a bit of a buzz in the company' (Sponsor207). Cornwell et al. (2018) develop this idea further, advocating that sponsorships can influence the commitments, meanings, and associations that employees perceive as pivotal to their level of identification with their employer, to the extent that organisational identification occurs within an ecosystem of organisations. This aligned with MSE216, who was of the view that for one of its

particular sponsors, partnering with its event provides the firm with a point of difference when seeking to attract graduates looking for greater 'meaning' in their role. However, sometimes employees can also impede shared value creation. MSE223 referred to an example where sponsor staff volunteering at an event were 'not real volunteers and they want to do the nice jobs'. Such a scenario may result in the alienation of staff and negative identification outcomes (Ashforth et al., 2000) as well as making it more difficult to create shared value.

Host citizen outcomes

Citizens have tended to be overlooked in the literature concerning MSEs, despite their importance to the value creation process (Vibber & Lovari, 2021). The close association between host locations and their citizens became further apparent in the main study with additional benefits identified relating to improved *health and/or rehabilitation* and boosts to *supporting the local economy*. Moreover, greater levels of *empowerment through inspiration* facilitated by MSEs and sponsors were also found in the main study. Therefore, it becomes counter-productive to attempt to categorise these actors as separate entities and as such, 'host location outcomes' were reclassified as 'host citizen outcomes'.

As health service provider financial constraints will likely increase in future (Robertson et al., 2017), shared value creation involving new and enhanced forms of collaboration that straddle profit/non-profit and private/public boundaries can help alleviate these effects. The sport industry features many public/private partnerships so these kinds of collaborative agreements can be entrepreneurial in nature (Ratten & Jones, 2020). This was apparent in the collaboration between an MSE and a blood bank (MSE222) and activities that positively impact on mental and physical citizen wellbeing (MSE214; MSE216; Sponsor218). In addition, a host location being able to enhance its credentials for innovation and sustainability (MSE212) offers support for CSV's potential to contribute towards destination image (Camilleri, 2017). Local support is an important part of destination branding (Yao & Schwarz, 2018) and in this case, the local region to the MSE corresponded to Pfitzer et al.'s (2013) view, who affirm five elements for shared value: social purpose (an identified focus on family, technology, and sustainability); a defined need (to be one of the 'most sustainable events ever'); measurement (the local university were involved in conducting evaluations), the right innovation structure (an 'advisory board' consisting of sponsors, the local university, the city's Department of Environment, the MSE project team, national and regional sport governing bodies, and the stadium owner); and co-creation (such as sponsor workshops and qualifying events held in the city centre and made freely accessible to spectators).

Another perceived host citizen outcome is related to bringing people together to increase public trust in institutions. Transparency initiatives which disseminate information are likely to enhance public knowledge of the central actors involved in developing sport events, which can in turn foster trust (Nunkoo et al., 2018). MSE214 felt that this could have knock-on effects such as a greater appreciation of the need to pay taxes. Empowerment through inspiration may take the form of creating memorable

experiences for younger generations, and removing barriers (such as gender, age or culture) to citizens becoming more physically and digitally active (Malchrowicz-Mośko et al., 2019; McGillivray, 2014).

Athlete outcomes

Although only four participants within the main study referred to athlete outcomes, these are included because of the importance of elite athletes for MSEs and many other actors within the sport ecosystem, such as fans and the media (e.g., Leng & Phua, 2020; Su et al., 2020). For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of international athletes shared creative ways to stay active on social media during the enforced closure of fitness facilities (Middlebrook, 2020). Star athletes also tend to become celebrities, contributing to the overall popularity of their respective sports (Greenhalgh et al. 2011) and attracting sponsors (McGhee, 2012). As such, looking at the value generated to the athletes is pivotal. The findings reveal that *earnings*, *training enhancements,* and *profile development* are three such sources of value for athletes.

Athletes are human brands (Arai et al., 2013) which incorporate on- and off-field aspects of an athlete's life (Hasaan et al. 2016). Consequently, athlete brands can be precarious due to an inherent risk of injury, fluctuations in performance and a lack of longevity (Arai et al., 2014), resulting in a potentially short lifespan (Green, 2016; Hasaan et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important for athletes to optimise their athletic performance by incorporating innovations that can lead to improved results (Ratten, 2016). In this regard, MSE214 referred to a 'sleep partner' sponsor which provided superior quality mattresses for athletes in order to aid their recovery, which in turn offered incremental athletic performance advantages (Arai et al., 2013). Given the fragile nature of athlete brands and the limited timeframe of elite playing careers, it is also important for athletes to maximise their earning potential (Fox et al., 2012). MSE228 felt that its events' total prize money had increased exponentially over the past decade because of its ability to demonstrate integrity and build the confidence of stakeholders, meaning that players can now earn a successful living from the sport which had been less feasible previously.

The success of an athlete brand is also dependent on the high visibility of the athlete (Summers & Morgan, 2008) and the conveyance and maintenance of a positive image over time (Hodge & Walker, 2015). Thus, increased recognition arising from involvement in healthy eating campaigns (MSE214) and competing in front of enlarged audiences in public spaces (MSE212) can help contribute towards athlete brand equity. For instance, enhancing dimensions of appearance attractiveness and marketable lifestyles (Arai et al., 2013) that may even contribute to athletes' post-retirement career reinvention (Hasaan et al., 2021). Similar examples of CSV are increasingly being reported in the media. For instance, the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) recently announced a long-term partnership with AMC, the sportswear brand created by Andy Murray and clothing manufacturer, Castore. According to the LTA, "the new deal forms part of (our) commercial strategy to create value across every aspect of tennis, through development of strategic partnerships with high profile brands." (LTA, 2020). As part of the agreement, the sport property (LTA) receives in-kind benefits such as "performance tennis

clothing" for athletes and sales of "co-branded apparel" via its own events and the sponsors' retail channels; the sponsors receive "extensive branding rights" across several MSE platforms; and for society, "a significant amount" of the revenue will be utilised "to open up tennis to many more people" (LTA, 2020). In addition, Murray himself is likely to realise financial, image, and lifestyle-related benefits as his playing career heads towards its conclusion (Craven, 2019).

Consumer outcomes

Sport offers a high-profile, appealing platform for the education of various social causes (Casper et al., 2014; Trail & McCullough, 2020). Although the education of fans has been studied from an environmental perspective (e.g., Chalip, 2006; Inoue & Kent, 2012), the findings demonstrate consumers can benefit from *education* in other aspects arising from engagement with sponsorship, whilst simultaneously enabling sponsors to successfully leverage their agreements. Examples included educating consumers about the benefits of eating healthy, fresh produce (MSE214); the importance of nutrition and training (Sponsor227); race and gender (Sponsor213); and the dangers of drink-driving (Sponsor209). In the latter case, the sponsor attained unprecedented growth for its product in the zero alcohol sector of the market. These insights substantiate the idea that MSEs are valuable, strategic tools which can facilitate social value for consumers and other actors as part of a broader campaign (Taks et al., 2014) and align with recent demands to explore the educational benefits of sport events (Ribeiro et al., 2020).

The findings also illustrate an *enhanced consumer experience* as a consequence of improvements made within the consumer servicescape (i.e., physical surroundings that comprise ambient conditions; spatial layout and functionality; and signs, symbols, and artefacts that can impact consumers; Bitner, 1992) and the facilitation of C2C interaction, which is important for increasing satisfaction with the event (Koenig-Lewis et al., 2018) as well as serving as a potential factor for value co-creation (Rihova et al., 2018). For instance, well-trained and enthusiastic volunteers (Sponsor210) can contribute to a positive event image, enhance the event experience for spectators, and help develop transferable skills and employability amongst the volunteers. Likewise, improved facilities and food and drink options (MSE220) provide better choice and increased satisfaction for consumers, broaden the appeal of the event, and help companies to diversify.

Consumers have increased expectations in terms of the quality and delivery of the sport product (Robinson, 2006), for instance in terms of its engagement level and technological embeddedness (Kunz & Santomier, 2020). In addition, many consumers are likely to register a greater sense of reassurance as a result of shared value initiatives that demonstrate purpose (Sponsor221). Ultimately, an enhanced consumer experience generated via activities which are tangibly purposeful towards society can also help sponsors and MSEs to better appeal to their target markets. Activations that support these principles are likely to become increasingly important for CSV.

6.5 Demonstrating the tangible element of CSV

The findings also demonstrate the tangible aspect of CSV. As per the third objective of the study, providing academics and practitioners with demonstrable examples to help guide how shared value may be created for various actors involved in the ecosystem represents an important contribution. Participant interpretations of CSV (as illustrated previously in Table 4.11 and Table 5.13) exhibited misconception of the concept by some practitioners. For instance, in expressing: 'there still has to be economic benefit for a brand to be able to do [CSV], because if it's not generating cash as a result, it makes no sense' (Sponsor106), this respondent may not realise the full potential of CSV or its distinction from CSR. Whereas CSR necessitates expenditure to the detriment of profitability and a restructuring of value (Reinhardt et al., 2008), CSV designates that positive societal outcomes must concurrently be economically advantageous for businesses and hence create additional value (Wójcik, 2016). PST108's assertion that 'sponsorship is a donation' also discounts this principle, as well as aligning to an outmoded, primarily philanthropic approach to sponsorship (Ryan & Fahy, 2012) which is no longer prevalent in contemporary sport ecosystems (Chadwick et al., 2020). This underlines the importance of the first objective of the thesis, demonstrating why it is important for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations.

The interviews also indicate that although CSV had previously been considered by some to be an abstract concept, it is starting to resonate amongst practitioners. For instance, MSE212 'use(s) shared value but not in the more academic sense' and although MSE218 does not use the term, they 'think (they) work towards the same sort of principles'. Similarly, Sponsor227 confirmed they were familiar with the terminology but were using it in a more practical way. Based on the findings, CSV can be classified into five categories: *Developing, Educating, Incentivising, Recruiting, and Showcasing*. The CSV examples included in Table 6.2 illustrate long-term sponsor-sponsee strategies that can build and extend over time and drive both economic benefits and positive social change.

In each of these categories, it is apparent that a socially-beneficial initiative generates a simultaneous financial advantage. For instance, in terms of *Developing*, an NGO co-developed product helped surpass all business KPIs. With regards to *Educating*, the sponsor benefitted commercially by championing the eSport community. For *Incentivising*, a socially-beneficial on-pack promotion helped to not only reverse the sales decline of the product but put it back into growth. Regarding *Recruiting*, increasing recruitment from the disabled community helped to fortify the firm's competitive position. Also, *Showcasing* allowed a MSE and the wider city to benefit economically by adding extra focus to a previously less well-attended competition. These instances indicate the notion of CSV is more substantial than merely a managerial buzzword (Dembek et al., 2016). Rather, it adds further weight to the argument that CSV is a meaningful, evolutionary concept which provides an important incremental addition to the extant literature (Menghwar & Daood, 2021), helping further to provide guidance to managers on how CSV can be achieved.

Table 6.2. Examples of CSV emerging from the interviews.

Type of CSV	Example	Quote
Developing	Product co-development	"We worked with [NGO] on a [product's development]. We produced a one-off [product], for every pack sold there was a donation to the organisation. And when I say we produced with them, it was around getting some of the troops, some of the service personnel who they worked with to come in and [help with production]. So there was full involvement from them, it was what they wanted. They were involved in the product itself, the branding and the campaign. We did then leverage our sponsorship of [sport property] and ran a charity match which involved [NGO] and also some current and ex-professional players. And utilised our sponsorship opportunity to have access to the ground and to those people to do so." (Sponsor107)
		"It's definitely something that we would look to do again. We would qualify it as a success because of the impact it had from a PR perspective, which is always an important element of sponsorship. It's about the opinion and relationship of our business and our brands, and that went a great way to helping. The coverage against all of our KPIs surpassed expectation, and also we would say it's a success based on the performance of the [product]. We think that publicity and association did help drive awareness of the good work that we were already doing. (Sponsor107)
	Recycling waste to produce sport equipment	"We are designing an opportunity (with sport equipment sponsor) to use fishing nets polluting the oceans, which are not reusable because the fishermen don't recycle. We want to see if we can make those fish nets into nets for [sport]. If this works, and there are many factors because we don't know yet and we need to try and test more components - once the net hits the saltwater with all of the chemicals that are already there, if the net is still supportive for a game, if there is less strength or if there is resistance. In case this works, the [MSE] will develop the message of sustainability and our environmental concerns by using recycled products that we can find from the ocean. And we will address those messages of course related to the beach concepts that we have related to [sport]." (MSE204)
	Creation of an online platform to help access to disability sport activities	"Essentially it's a hub which hopefully will become the go-to place for grassroots disability sport. At it's heart, it is the largest database in the UK of accessible opportunities to play sports or activities - but we are also trying to turn it into a community where people can go and find content. They can find sports guides, parents can find support and hints and tips. We really want to make it into a community of like-minded people. The reason that we've done it is because there is a societal challenge within the disabled community of inactivity. Anywhere up to 50% of disabled people are considered inactive, which is less than 30 minutes of activity per week. That's double the general population. We know that there is a societal challenge there that we can have a real impact on. We know that through [sport] athletes there is the inspiration but somewhere there is a bottleneck and barriers stopping people getting involved. The way we've come at the activation is to try and remove some

		of those barriers to getting active. One is simply not knowing what activities are available, either in your local area or to somebody with your impairment or somebody of your age, so that's where that database comes in. There is then, I think, just needing more inspiration or needing more information to find out more, so you feel comfortable when you get into that first session. Quite a lot (of communities) just don't have the funding to be able to put on more accessible sessions, so we are looking at setting up a community fund for small grants to be able to put on either more or better quality sessions. We're taking a holistic view on it. Yes, it will be focussed at a disabled audience and their support networks but also from a wider storytelling point of view, it positions us as a brand that is doing the right thing, investing in good and is making movement better and easier for everyone, which is part of our brand story." (Sponsor208)
Educating	Heathy eating campaign	"There's a programme where educational materials are provided in order to inspire kids to learn about fresh fruit and veg, and wrap it up in the guise of the [MSE] and that works for both parties. It shows [Sponsor] is leading the way in education which is great for both the kids and the parents and families in the community, it also works for us two-fold; indirectly getting kids to think about eating healthily, playing sport and hopefully getting to the pathway of an [elite sportsperson] but it also talks about our brand every single day in every single school up and down the country." (MSE214)
	Simultaneous repositioning of a sponsor and athlete brands	"We just announced a partnership with [kitchenware brand]. It's a very interesting brand because they are doing fridges and blenders and things like that and they're like okay, on one side there's like these luxury European brands and we can't compete with them in the quality perception. And on the other side there are these Chinese brands that are so cheap and they're like, 'Oh, we are in the middle. We're not going to win that functional battle. The price quality perception thing, we're going to lose there, we need to find something else.' So they went all-in on the emotional side and said, 'hey, we're going to talk about a vision of healthy living and a kitchen is a place where you can have healthy food', and focused heavily on that. I was like, how interesting, because does everybody expect that our gamers are eating pizza and burgers and doing video games from the couch? Actually, in our league the pros are so prepared to be performing on stage to be the best of their game that they actually have fitness coaches, diet, and are prepared like machines to perform mentally. So if you could be the brand that would bring this story to life, the community will love you because they will finally have someone championing them, but at the same time, you could have some attention from the press because you are going to tell a story that is not expected. So, [Brand] will have pro gamers telling their story about how each has a chef and is super healthy because they need to be to play six hours on a stage." (MSE222)
Incentivising	On-pack product promotion linked to societal benefit	"So [product] did this on-pack promotion where you could win £2,000 worth of sports equipment and an athlete to come to your school. And it might not sound that much, £2,000, but in the current austerity climate, funding is cut. Most schools actually only get about £100 per year to buy new sports equipment. So, you can imagine, £2,000 would buy a lot. And this on-pack promotion, one of our

		best on-pack promotions that we've ever had on [Brand], and that says a lot because we've had a lot of on-pack promotions. [Product] has had a slight decline in the last seven years because of other trends, but since last quarter when we did that on-pack promotion, for the first time in seven years we have stabilised and we're growing and now it's the UK's biggest [category] brand and our biggest brand. It might not be the only exciting factor, but it has contributed a big role in numbers, in money." (Sponsor218)
	Encouraging blood donation	"We have a segment of the [eSport] game where you take the competitive advantage on the other team for a few seconds, it's called the 'First Blood' and what we did is we associated [blood bank] to this moment and said 'hey, give blood to save lives'. It's bad to have the first blood but it's actually a good thing if you give it for saving lives and what we did is that we said if you give it now for the next month during the finals you're actually going to get a [digital incentive linked to this phase of the game], it's actually unexpected because nobody wants to be associated to First Blood usually. It's generated 7,000 people to give their blood in a month which for a small country is such a big commitment, you have to give blood. This is the biggest campaign [blood bank] had in the last five years." (MSE222)
Recruiting	Increasing recruitment from the disabled community and providing employees with greater self-fulfilment	"If I take [Sponsor], one of the most important elements for them in having this partnership is about recruitment and their offer to secure good quality graduate talent and that's on two levels. One is practically, to be seen to be recruiting or encouraging recruitment from the disabled community and secondly, to be shown to be an organisation with greater purpose. The classic story is of millennials looking for a lot more in their work/life than just the size of their pay-packet or their bonuses. What is it that their job has meaning? So, in terms of the offer there, you can see how partnering with [MSE] makes [Sponsor] stand out, when it comes to giving some tangible examples to new graduates about how they are living a greater set of values than another organisation which doesn't have that partnership. So, they can trust that they are really genuine about their statements and they have greater interest in other things as well." (MSE216)
Showcasing	Staging qualifying event in a public location	"The weather isn't that great (in the winter) to have an event outside in [City]. So, we sort of swapped, and put the city into the event. So, we had the sporting event in [Arena], and then we could have the Market Square for the public, which made it possible for the sponsors to showcase what they wanted to show to the audience. Then we got the [Sport Association] to let us have the qualification of [event] in this Market Square. So, this meant the public could have a piece of the action, not having to buy a ticket for the event. The athletes had never had such a big audience for the qualification before, they were really happy. And when we had qualification in the Market Square, we could also add another day to the event, which [helped] the event economically." (MSE212)

The majority of respondents in the main study (17 of 25) provided some articulation of CSV, discussing a range of ideas relating to the role of businesses in addressing societal challenges (Table 5.13). One respondent (MSE206) cited the need to be a 'purpose-driven organisation', a philosophy which closely aligns with emergent research focused on the growing importance of market-based organisations as purposeful and proactive contributors to addressing social challenges (e.g., George et al., 2016; Hollensbe et al., 2014; Kullak et al., 2021). Stephan et al. (2016) posit that PSC arises through companies stimulating transformational processes to advance societal wellbeing. Such firms can be referred to as social purpose organisations (SPOs; Kullak et al., 2021). According to MSE206, 'a clear higher purpose' could simultaneously 'better resonate with consumers and fans', as well as enabling the organisation to 'fill an emotional space that someone in society could have'. This in turn, they believed, was 'the future of brands - this purpose to be sure that people can connect authentically'.

As Hollensbe et al. (2014) observe, *purpose* may allow companies to redefine their relationship with society and re-evaluate the remit and scope of their activities. For instance, considering shareholder value as an acceptable expectation of one segment of society, in tandem with achieving broader objectives such as improving lives or reducing harm. Brand authenticity is interpreted by the recipient and can be characterised by perceptions of being genuine, natural, honest, and real (Napoli et al., 2014). From a sponsorship standpoint, MSE223 explained, 'there's all these different by-products which come associated […]. That's how I would explain shared value. All the different stakeholder groups can get involved'. When transmitted to the relationship between sponsor and MSE, authenticity depends on continuity, credibility, integrity and symbolism (Charlton & Cornwell, 2019; Morhart et al., 2015). Therefore, sponsor partners should select elements of authenticity that are shared or could be developed via the partnership (Cornwell, 2019). For instance, one sponsor's strategy to increase recruitment from the disabled community also helped to concurrently empower and motivate existing employees, and provided a source of competitive advantage in the company's recruitment of graduate talent (MSE216). Consistent with Menghwar and Daood (2021), it is a strategic process that can solve a societal problem (lack of employment opportunities for disabled people) and enhance profits for the company (by reducing its recruiting costs and staff turnover).

Two interviewees referred to the notion of 'win-win-win' in articulating shared value creation. Sponsor208 described this as 'a benefit for the brand, a benefit for the right(s)-holder and then benefit for the audience that is consuming it as well.' MSE222 explained potential win-win-win benefits in further depth. For sponsors, 'achieving marketing goals' such as 'awareness, brand preference, transactional drivers, retention, employer satisfaction, or motivation'; for rights holders, 'generating revenues'; and for other actors (such as 'players', 'fans' and 'end consumers'), 'if you do something special and earn your sponsorship they'll say, "oh, that's cool, I didn't know this brand could give me this." So, only when you achieve that then the equation is working'. As Sponsor228 explained, 'sponsorship has evolved to a point where benefitting multiple stakeholders is now necessary'.

Considering this broader group of actors is important for understanding behaviour and reactions to various types of sponsorships; categorising and prioritising sponsorship goals; and better evaluating sponsorship effectiveness (Tsiotsou, 2011); making sponsorship deals an opportunity for positive social change. For instance, in 'taking a holistic view' (Sponsor208), the shared value creation between a sponsor and MSE of an online platform to assist disabled people demonstrates evidence of *reconceiving products and markets* (an unmet social need for disabled people becoming more active); *redefining productivity in the value chain* (strengthening relationships with disabled communities and optimising efficiency by pursuing other organisations with the expertise to join the project); and *enabling cluster development* (e.g., the addition of a media partner, TV broadcaster, and other sponsors). This enabled the sponsor and MSE to work together to positively impact a societal challenge.

Rather than the traditional view of a win-win situation that creates economic and social value (Porter & Kramer, 2011), a win-win-win outlook of CSV indicates the need to focus on a third element, this being other actors within the ecosystem (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). Crane et al. (2014) suggest win-win outcomes may oversimplify the intricacy of societal issues, encouraging an emphasis on addressing 'easy' problems rather than solving broader societal issues (Maak et al., 2016). In this sense, in accordance with the second objective of the research, the findings empirically align with the foundational premises of the SVF (Woratschek et al., 2014a), and extend FP10 (i.e., firms, customers and other stakeholders can integrate their network resources to co-create value) by illustrating that actors from other sectors can play pivotal roles in creating shared value in a sport context. For instance, in the blood bank example (MSE222), recreational eSport players were incentivised to donate blood by receiving an in-game incentive linked to a congruent phase of the game. This generated 7,000 new blood donors within a month, and subsequently developed into a more enduring association.

Furthermore, the vast economic and societal cost arising from widespread COVID-19-related restrictions during 2020 and 2021 has brought the role of business in society even more sharply into focus, with win-win-win strategies urgently needed to help enterprises recover profitability, and aid citizens and communities (Sheth, 2020). For instance, food delivery courier Deliveroo introduced non-contact delivery options to comply with social distancing rules, with many small restaurants able to continue operating as a result, saving jobs and maintaining local services. Consequently, Deliveroo's level of brand consideration rose sharply (Shakespeare, 2020). This draws the study's first objective; to explore the necessity for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations, sharply into focus. In the current study, a sponsor's successful healthy eating campaign allowed the brand to harness the MSE platform to drive its sales and enhance the brand perceptions of both parties (see Table 6.2). In addition, families were better educated about nutrition, which in turn can benefit societal 'health literacy' (Nutbeam, 2000). Such programmes can also contribute towards a sport-for-health-model (SFHM), whereby sport facilitates an explicit focus on healthy lifestyle behaviour, including healthy eating practices, to the benefit of the wider community (Schulenkorf & Siefken, 2019). SFHM initiatives are likely to become increasingly important in helping to tackle the adverse mental and

physical impacts of widespread citizen inactivity as a consequence of COVID-19 (Burtscher et al., 2020).

In such precarious and unpredictable circumstances, addressing the fourth objective of this research (i.e., to explore CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective), is particularly pertinent. Firms can also embrace social purpose organisation business model innovation (SPO-BMI) to enhance social and economic value creation (Dobson et al., 2018; Kullak et al., 2021). In modifying their business models, firms can better focus on value propositions (e.g., products, services, market positioning), value creation (e.g., core activities and processes), and value capture mechanisms (e.g., revenue expansion, operational efficiencies; Weerawardena et al. (2021), thus enabling development of the wider ecosystem (Kullak at al., 2021). Therefore, these innovations can help determine in what manner such stages may boost resource interchange amongst actors (Breidbach et al., 2014). As MSE223 put it, 'I guess it's an idea that two plus two adds up to more than four, isn't it?'

6.6 Summary

The main study stage of the research focused on a more targeted sponsor and MSE sample in order to further expand the investigation into the dyadic relationship between the two respective parties (Cobbs et al., 2017; Cornwell & Kwon, 2020; Woratschek et al., 2014a), and to address the need to better understand the means, outcomes and beneficiaries of CSV (Dembek et al., 2016). In doing so, the results contribute to addressing the need for empirical exploration of multiple actor perspectives regarding shared value creation in business relationships (Morgan et al., 2014). The importance of organisational capabilities, organisational consistency, and cultivation in the creation of shared value was also identified. In addition, a symbiotic relationship and the length of the sponsorship relationship were recognised as playing a role in driving CSV with several important actors. The discussion of the findings within the context of extant literature in this chapter demonstrates the added value of the study to theory in the form of several important contributions to knowledge: Developing the conceptual framework for understanding CSV in MSEs; providing a clarification of CSV through sponsorship; and evaluating and classifying tangible examples of CSV.

- *Developing the conceptual framework for understanding CSV in MSEs*

Capabilities and consistency can directly contribute value propositions for the realisation of CSV and are also fundamental to the attainment of cultivation, which in turn can also help stimulate CSV. For that reason, cultivation, is a process which represents the achievement of collaborative strategies between the sponsor and/or MSE property and other actors within the sport ecosystem, activated by capabilities and consistency via an integration of resources and actions. The respective arrows added to the refined conceptual framework (Figure 5.1) illustrate these principles. A sponsor-MSE symbiosis is a strategic alliance (van Rijn et al., 2019) which enhances capabilities and consistency, and

consequently the effect of these elements in driving cultivation, directly influencing CSV-related outcomes. This is as also represented by the additional arrows in the refined model. The length of the sponsorship relationship is also an important contributor to the overall effect of capabilities, consistency, symbiosis and cultivation. The duration of MSE-sponsor relationships is essential for generating regular exposure and leveraging activities through time. The large arrow located at the base of the model represents these ideas. The depiction of shared value within the conceptual framework also evolved during the analysis of the findings, revealing several examples of CSV outcomes, realised with a range of actor beneficiaries (events, sponsors, host citizens, athletes and consumers). This allows for the 'shared value' box to be amalgamated into the respective boxes towards the right-hand side of the framework. This conceptualisation contributes to current knowledge of CSV, addressing the first two objectives of the study by responding to invitations in the literature to capture the importance of business relationships in the value creation process (Reypens et al., 2016), the true nature of sponsorship (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020), CSV (Wójcik, 2016), value co-creation within a sport ecosystem (Woratschek et al., 2014a) and to further explore the internal and external factors influencing CSV and how value is created and distributed amongst associated actors (Menghwar & Daood, 2021).

- *Clarifying the meaning of CSV through sponsorship*

The identification of 59 sub-codes answers calls to clarify the complexities and nuances of CSV (Grohs et al., 2020; Kelley et al., 2019), helping to address the study's fourth objective by illuminating *how* actors and their networks interact and collectively create value. The study contributes to CSV scholarship by identifying ways in which businesses can contribute towards PSC (Stephan et al., 2016) by facilitating societal benefits via the sponsorship of MSEs. Based on the findings and prior explanations of CSV (e.g., Porter & Kramer, 2011; Menghwar & Daood, 2021), *the creation of shared value through sponsorship is defined as a strategic process through which a sponsor and sponsee work together to optimise their profits whilst simultaneously contributing to positive social change.*

- *Evaluating and classifying tangible examples of CSV*

Another important contribution of the study relates to providing academics and practitioners with palpable illustrations to help guide how shared value can be created for various actors involved in the ecosystem, which is aligned to the third objective of the study. By demonstrating the tangible aspect of CSV, the examples can be classified into five categories: *Developing* (i.e., co-creation of assets), *Educating (*i.e., advancing knowledge), *Incentivising* (i.e., financial enticement positioned towards improving society), *Recruiting* (i.e., employment which can help alleviate societal issues), and *Showcasing* (i.e., an accessible stage to highlight CSV). This demonstrates the significance of CSV as a meaningful, evolutionary concept which represents an important incremental addition to the extant literature (Menghwar & Daood, 2021).

7.   Conclusions

Building on the growing necessity for organisations to generate both economic and social value, this study explored the creation of shared value by major sport events (MSEs) and their sponsors, and its outcomes and beneficiaries. In order to do so, four objectives underpinned the study, namely: to explore the merits of sponsors and MSEs incorporating greater CSV considerations; investigate the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for the creation of shared value with other actors; identify tangible examples of CSV to provide guidance on how CSV can be achieved; and examine CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective.

In view of this, a two-stage procedure of semi-structured interviews was conducted with multinational, senior industry practitioners with a sponsorship remit. Thematic analysis was employed to inform a conceptual framework that extends prior literature about shared value creation. The results indicate that sponsors and MSEs can utilise organisational capabilities, organisational consistency and a process of cultivation to create shared value. These activities are augmented by a symbiotic relationship between MSEs and sponsors. The length of sponsorship also affects productive outcomes arising from CSV for a number of supplementary actors within the ecosystem in addition to sponsors and MSEs, including host citizens, athletes, and consumers.

By positing a model that advances the concept of CSV and its application within the context of MSEs, the study contributes to nurturing durable sponsor-MSE relationships targeted at creating lasting effects with a range of actors within their ecosystem. Further, the study provides extensive insights for practitioners and academics about the importance of CSV and how businesses can work together for their benefit and that of society.

7.1 Summary of research findings

Given the need for more research focusing on: the conceptualisation of CSV; criticism of the claimed and perceived benefits of MSEs; value-in-context at different levels of the sport ecosystem; and the management of the sponsorship process, this thesis set out to investigate how business organisations can jointly strengthen their respective competitive and economic position whilst creating value for society via an actor engagement platform. Specifically in the context of MSEs, the study aimed to explore the degree to which sponsors and MSE properties can create shared value with a range of other actors to produce mutually beneficial outcomes, which may have a continuing effect within the wider ecosystem. In order to do so, perceptions of senior sponsor and sport property decision-makers were sought. The research addressed four key objectives, as summarised below:

Explore the necessity for sponsors and MSEs to incorporate greater CSV considerations

Despite the actions of governments, academics, and campaign groups, hard-nosed corporate practices for making profits have been apparent in a series of recent scandals (e.g., Ambrose, 2021; BBC, 2021b; Osborne, 2021). In the sport ecosystem, as Euro 2020 recently drew to a close against a disturbing backdrop of hooliganism and racism (Scott, 2021), the need for greater exploration of the merits of CSV in helping to address criticism of the professed benefits of MSEs has also once again been clearly highlighted. In this regard, several important findings materialised. Based on their interpretations, it is apparent that managers can be classified into three broad categories relating to their awareness and comprehension of, and their organisation's commitment to, CSV: managers who understand the concept and strive to embody its principles; managers who understand the concept but acknowledge their organisation could be more engaged in it; and managers who don't fully understand the concept, and as such are predominantly concerned with profitability rather than generating mutual economic and social value. Table 7.1 demonstrates an example supporting quote representing each of these groups.

Table 7.1. Example supporting quote of each of the manager groups' interpretations of CSV.

Manager group	Supporting quote
Understand the concept and strive to embody its principles	"How you can add value to your own audiences and how you can add value to that shared audience that you have between you, as a brand, and the asset that you're sponsoring. We often talk about 'win/win' sponsorships and I've heard of 'win-win-win' as well; where it is a benefit for the brand, a benefit for the right-holder and then benefit for the audience that is consuming it as well." (Sponsor208)
Understand the concept but acknowledge their organisation could be more engaged in it	"We don't use the term (CSV) but I think we do work towards the same sort of principles. It would actually be better for us to use it more, to actually give it a name to make it a little more tangible." (Sponsor218)
Don't fully understand the concept	"I've got to be really honest and say I'm a little bit cynical around (CSV) as an example. So fundamentally, my gut feel would be that there still has to be economic benefit for a brand to be able to do [CSV], because if it's not generating cash as a result, it makes no sense. So as things stand within [industry], the competitiveness, the low costs…I don't see a place at the moment where you can squeeze extra value out to deliver this CSV, to the benefit of all people. I struggle to see a place in the near future where we can move to this CSV model, because I just don't see there being enough cash in the profit pool to allow us to do that." (Sponsor106)

For certain decision-makers (e.g., MSE212; MSE223 – see Table 5.13) CSV remains a more abstract conception largely restricted to academia. This indicates that more needs to be done for some to achieve a greater appreciation of the concept and its real-world potential. Others, such as PST101 and Sponsor106, did indirectly recognise and articulate the practical benefits of CSV although indicated some misinterpretation of its principles. This illustrates a misconception of CSV and some confusion with CSR. For professionals such as these, making CSV more palpable is paramount. The provision of tangible examples such as those depicted within this study can help to explicate the benefits of CSV, whilst helping to improve the image of sponsors and MSEs, and alleviate concerns amongst the wider population. By communicating these ideas clearly and succinctly in order to demonstrate the potential of CSV, academia has an important role to play in helping to better educate business decision makers.

Investigate the potential of MSEs as engagement platforms for the creation of shared value with other actors

The study's findings provide empirical support of the importance of MSEs as engagement platforms for CSV, aiding in resource integration and the realisation of value. In helping to refine the conceptual model, the interviews show that organisational capabilities (i.e., unique competences held by the organisation) and consistency (i.e., perceived congruence between shareholder and social value) contribute value propositions for the achievement of CSV and are important for the development of cultivation, which in turn can help promote CSV. Because of this, cultivation is a process which represents the achievement of collective approaches between the sponsor and MSE property and other actors within the sport ecosystem (e.g., the media; NGOs; other commercial organisations) actuated by capabilities and consistency.

A sponsor-MSE symbiosis is a strategic alliance which augments capabilities and consistency, and the force of these elements in driving cultivation, directly influencing CSV-related outcomes. The length of the sponsorship relationship is also a significant factor in driving the overall effect of capabilities, consistency, symbiosis and cultivation. The duration of MSE-sponsor associations is vital for affecting regular exposure and leveraging activities over time. Longer relationships can help develop PSC as the respective partners have greater opportunity to gain from each other's abilities. The representation of shared value within the conceptual framework also advanced during the analysis, illuminating how value creation with other actors, such as events, sponsors, host citizens, athletes and consumers, can take place.

This conceptualisation contributes to current knowledge of CSV, capturing the importance of business relationships in the value creation process, the nature of CSV, sponsorship, and value co-creation within a sport ecosystem, and adds evidential support to the internal and external factors influencing CSV and how value is created and distributed between connected actors.

Identify tangible examples of CSV and provide guidance for practitioners on how CSV can be achieved

The study identified several material examples of how CSV can be operationalised. By providing scholars and professionals with demonstrable instances of CSV in action, activities which engender CSV should become more replicable in future, helping to build trust and credibility of the concept, and in turn, more meaningful results for actors. The five identified classifications reveal that CSV can take the form of *Developing* (i.e., collaborative conception of physical and virtual properties), *Educating* (i.e., furthering skills and learning), *Incentivising* (i.e., incentives aimed towards improving society), *Recruiting* (i.e., creating and filling job roles which can help relieve societal issues), *and Showcasing* (i.e., a platform to demonstrate CSV). These categorisations give credence to CSV as a meaningful,

evolutionary concept that can help make a positive difference to business and society, and represent another important contribution of the study.

Examine CSV through sponsorship from a managerial perspective

The discovery of 59 CSV sub-codes (see Table 6.1) helps to pinpoint the intricacies of the concept and provides managers with a toolkit to help make best use of capabilities, consistency, symbiosis, cultivation, the length of the sponsorship, and to maximise the associated benefits for events, sponsors, host citizens, athletes, and consumers. In addition, the creation of shared value through sponsorship can be defined as: *a strategic process through which a sponsor and sponsee work together to optimise their profits whilst simultaneously contributing to positive social change.*

Through the realisation of these objectives, the study builds on present academic knowledge by extending CSV theory and proposing a conceptualisation that can be applied within the sport ecosystem. Further, this research contributes to the creation of a blueprint for practitioners in their strategic decision-making.

7.2 Theoretical implications

The contributions of this study set forth several significant theoretical implications. Principally, the refined conceptual framework presented (Figure 5.1, as restated below) offers empirical support for the means, outcomes, and beneficiaries of CSV. By identifying and highlighting the concepts and the linkages between them, the model also assists in comprehending the components of CSV and the shared value created with different actors.
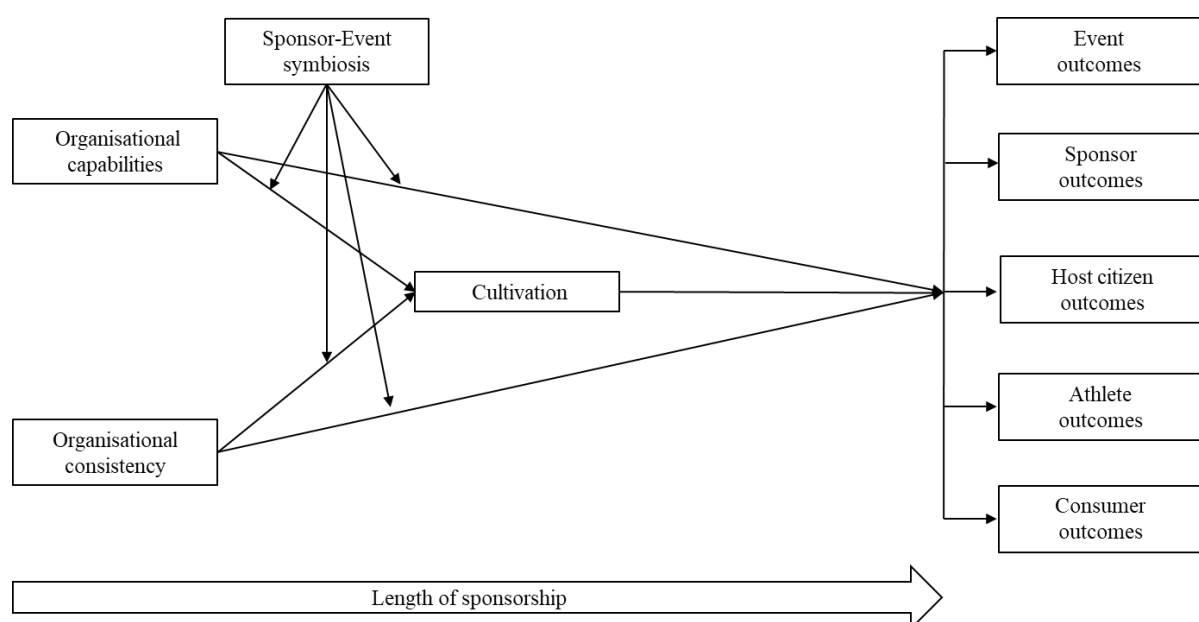
Figure 5.1. Framework for understanding CSV in MSEs.

Organisational capabilities (e.g., adaptability, expertise, innovation) and organisational consistency (e.g., authenticity, measurability, and strategic alignment) are drivers of shared value creation and can directly lead to outcomes for different recipients. For instance, Sponsor208's capability of innovation credentials allowed their firm to contribute towards the development of an online platform to assist disabled people in living more active, sociable lifestyles. Likewise, MSE206's clearly-defined brand platform allows for alignment between the organisation's marketing strategy and consistency-related activity intended to generate mutual economic and social benefits. In this sense, the results of the study build on Menghwar and Daood (2021) by illustrating the operation and impact of firm-level factors for CSV and empirically showing how actors can co-operate with the ecosystem.

Moreover, organisational capabilities and organisational consistency are fundamental to the fulfilment of a cultivation process, whereby mutually beneficial collaborative strategies are realised as a result of collaboration with other parties such as the media, NGOs and other commercial organisations. This, in turn, helps firms to enhance their value propositions, stimulating the effect of capabilities and consistency on achieving CSV outcomes. For example, dual-branded anti-bullying campaigns between MSEs and other sport properties and MSEs supporting NGOs in their capacity to deliver social impacts to citizens and communities. These findings attend to an appeal from Grohs et al. (2020) to further understand how actors and their networks co-operatively create value, thus addressing one of the propositions of the Sport Value Framework (SVF; i.e., sport firms create value propositions mainly in the configuration of a value network; Woratschek et al., 2014a). That is, shared value can be created not only as the result of one actor's strategic processes (Menghwar & Daood, 2021), but also as a collaborative process between different actors.

Organisational capabilities and organisational consistency can also be augmented by a symbiotic relationship between sponsor and MSE. The findings indicate that the symbiosis (i.e., fit between partners) suggested in the literature to heighten the benefits for both sponsor and sponsee (e.g., Biscaia et al., 2013) is also crucial throughout the sponsorship agreement in order to extend the value to other actors in the ecosystem. The outcome of the joint effort of the components (i.e., capabilities and symbiosis, consistency and symbiosis, or capabilities, consistency and symbiosis) is greater than the contribution of a singular component. Regarding capabilities, such illustrations included sponsors becoming braver and more innovative with their activations (Sponsor208), MSEs gaining partners who become their marketers (MSE214), and counterparts sharing best practice and learning from each other (MSE215). This complements the concept of positive social change (PSC; the process of transforming patterns of thought, behaviour, social relationships, institutions, and social structure to generate beneficial outcomes for individuals, communities, organisations, society, and/or the environment beyond the benefits for the instigators of such transformations; Stephan et al., 2016). By developing

connections with diverse stakeholders, a broader scale and reach of PSC outcomes can be achieved. The same tenet was apparent for consistency. For instance, a sponsor applying its association with both the male and female formats of a MSE to help instigate and develop a gender summit related to the event assisted the sponsor to advocate diversity, inclusion and equality (Sponsor213).

Such findings also extend the concept of the resource-based view (e.g., Barney, 2001) by evoking that sponsors and MSEs can create shared value by building on three, interrelated 'Cs' of capabilities, consistency, and cultivation. They also advance the work of Maltz and Schein (2012), who invited further development of measures of capability, consistency and cultivation, in addition to establishing how these concepts can take place. Therefore, building on van Rijn et al. (2019), a symbiosis is a strategic alliance, which enriches capabilities and consistency, and thus the effect of these two elements in driving cultivation, and directly influencing CSV-related outcomes. The findings also lend support to and further extend the work of Menghwar and Daood (2021), who pinpointed external factors (i.e., state institutions, competitors' approaches, and customers' behaviour) as influencing CSV.

The length of the sponsorship relationship also transpired as an important effector to the overall bearing of capabilities, consistency, symbiosis and cultivation. In aiding evolution, commitment and stability, and experimentation, the results contribute to sponsorship literature (e.g., Jensen & Cornwell, 2017; Kwon & Shin, 2019) by indicating that the period of the sponsorship relationship is essential for generating regular exposure and leveraging activities over time, and learning ways in which to improve and strengthen the partnership.

The depiction of shared value within the model also evolved from an abstract form of CSV to a clearer and more detailed understanding of the constituent concepts, and the realisation of specific outcomes with actors such as events, sponsors, host citizens, athletes and consumers. In this sense, the study contributes theoretically to improved knowledge of the CSV concept, in-line with such calls within the literature (e.g., Corazza et al., 2017; Dembek et al., 2016; Menghwar & Daood, 2021).

Furthermore, the conception and provision of an empirically based definition of 'CSV through sponsorship' represents another important contribution to the literature. Established interpretations of the sponsorship concept overlook its promise as an authentic partnership (Charlton & Cornwell, 2019) as well as the potential of sponsorship ecosystems (Cornwell, 2019). CSV comprises several core aspects, namely a *strategic process*, which builds on the variables of consistency and cultivation; entities *working together* (building on the notion of a symbiotic relationship); simultaneously *optimising profits* as opposed to maximising them (challenging the view of Porter & Kramer that CSV is integral to profit maximisation as a central firm needs to balance its own affairs with those of its allies in the ecosystem) and *contributing to positive social change* (extending the work of Stephan et al., 2016, by showing that sponsorship arrangements are a veritable opportunity for PSC). In the absence of a commonly accepted definition or typology of large-scale sport events, the study also puts forward operational, literature-based criteria of MSEs. These comprise being overseen by an international or

national governing body; featuring elite/professional athletes; occurring on either a one-off or recurrent basis at fixed or rotating locations; sponsored by companies of international and/or national profile; and broadcasted via television and/or online platforms.

In addition, the discovery of a range of sub-codes for each of the ten components of the conceptual framework addresses the need for theoretical and empirical advancement to better understand how CSV can help address organisational and societal challenges (e.g., Dembek et al., 2016; Wójcik, 2016). As well as adding greater depth and context to the model, the sub-codes provide an opportunity to develop an empirical scale to objectively assess the impacts of CSV amongst different actors. In this regard, Table 7.2 provides an overview of potential measures of model constructs.

Table 7.2. Potential measures of model constructs.

Concept	Definition	Example measure type	Indicative authors
Organisational capabilities	Unique competences held by an organisation	Expertise Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *The organisation has the requisite expertise to successfully plan and execute their activity*)	Holcomb et al. (2006); Huber (1999)
Organisational consistency	Perceived congruence between shareholder and social value	Measurability Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *The organisation measures its balance between the creation of shareholder value and social value*)	Cornwell (2019); Meenaghan & O'Sullivan (2013)
Sponsor-event symbiosis	A shared association of two or more mutually dependent organisations, which aim to achieve a joint strategic goal	Communication Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *The sponsorship partner engages in clear and frequent dialogue*)	Morgan et al. (2014); van Rijn et al. (2019)
Cultivation	The realisation of mutually beneficial collaborative strategies boosted by capabilities and consistency via an integration of resources between the sponsor/MSE and other actors	Media partner(s) Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *The extent of collaboration with different media outlets*)	Cornwell (2020); Horne & Manzenreiter (2006)
Length of sponsorship	How the duration of the sponsorship agreement can affect its success in creating shared value	Experimentation Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *The duration of the relationship with the sponsor partner offers the possibility for greater inventiveness and creativity*)	Cobbs (2011); Jensen & Cornwell (2017)
Event outcomes	CSV-related outcomes for MSEs	Increased participation Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *Participation in the sport has grown*)	Chalip et al. (2017); Taks et al. (2015)
Sponsor outcomes	CSV-related outcomes for sponsors	Brand equity Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *Sponsors gain increased brand awareness*)	Donlan (2014); Henseler et al. (2011)
Host citizen outcomes	CSV-related outcomes for host citizens	Empowerment through inspiration Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *Citizens are inspired to take greater ownership of their health and wellbeing*)	Malchrowicz-Mośko et al. (2019); McGillivray (2014)
Athlete outcomes	CSV-related outcomes for professional athletes	Profile development Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *Athletes have a more established public persona*)	Arai et al. (2013); Hasaan et al. (2021)
Consumer outcomes	CSV-related outcomes for sport consumers	Education Likert-type multi-item scale (e.g., *Engagement with the sponsorship helps consumers acquire product-related learning*)	Inoue & Kent (2012); Trail & McCullough (2020)

Lastly, the emergence of five categorisations of CSV (Table 6.2) indicates that shared value creation can be enacted in several different ways. This challenges the view of CSV as being unoriginal (e.g., Beschorner, 2014; Crane et al., 2014), addresses criticism of CSV as a managerial buzzword in need of further development (Dembek et al., 2016) and aligns with Menghwar and Daood (2021) in that CSV is a significant, evolutionary concept which supplements extant literature. Further reflections on these categorisations are included in the following managerial implications section.

7.3 Managerial implications

The study's findings also shed light on managerial interpretations (see Tables 5.13 and 7.1) and tangible illustrations (see Table 6.2) of CSV, which can assist business leaders in their strategic decision-making. As Tables 5.13 and Table 7.1 highlighted, although several industry specialists understand the concept and strive to embody its principles, others indicated that their organisation could be more engaged in CSV, whilst some expressed misinterpretations of its core principles. A misalignment in the particular attitudes of senior executives with overall strategic responsibility and more junior managers was also apparent, with the latter group, making more of the day-to-day operational decisions, perhaps less empowered to take a CSV approach. By providing a roadmap for practitioners to better understand the actions they should focus on to create shared value, the framework and associated findings can assist such managers in reaching strategic decisions, whilst helping to address and facilitate societal change.

Managers can focus on several different cues to help stimulate CSV. For instance, an opportunity lies in facilitating greater *social purpose organisations* (Kullak, 2021) by way of firms instigating transformational processes to advance societal wellbeing. MSE216's example of *Recruiting*, where a strategy to increase levels of staffing from the disabled community also assisted to synchronously empower and motivate current employees, and provided a source of competitive advantage in the company's recruitment of graduate talent, is a clear illustration of such an approach. By helping to improve employability for disabled people whilst optimising the firm's recruitment process, these actions help to address a societal problem whilst strengthening the organisation's competitive market position. In a similar way, sponsors and MSEs could also play a central role in *identifying and reframing* other unmet social needs, such as helping workers to re-skill and secure employment in growth industries which are expected to become increasingly significant for society in the future (e.g., health and social care, logistics, renewable energy). This may also help to boost employees' organisational identification for self-fulfilment, which is likely to become progressively more important for workers. Indeed, *improved KPIs that better appraise CSV*, such as simultaneously assessing staff engagement with CSV and evaluating workplace happiness, represent an important and necessary advancement in this respect.

Furthermore, practitioners should aim for *win-win-win* scenarios, which provide benefits for a third party or a number of third parties in addition to sponsors and MSEs (or other types of firms). As Sponsor228 recognised, this requires strategies that consider benefitting multiple stakeholder beneficiaries as being essential rather than merely advantageous. For instance, the *Developing* categorisation indicates that CSV can take the form of co-creation of either physical or virtual assets. Examples of an online platform to assist disabled people and the recycling of waste material to produce sport equipment highlight this, and add further weight to studies such as Maltz and Schein (2012), by specifically emphasising how CSV can be created and how it can evoke different benefits for other actors within the ecosystem. By becoming *brokers of CSV*, sponsor and MSE managers can help to share best practices between organisations and amass social capital.

In this regard, the study's results are allied with the foundational premises of the SVF (Woratschek et al., 2014a), and in particular, broaden FP10 (i.e., firms, customers and other stakeholders can integrate their network resources to co-create value) by showing that non-sport actors can also assume key roles in creating shared value within a sport setting. By *Incentivising*, an MSE property was able to encourage recreational players to donate blood by offering an attractive in-game bonus to those who took part – and developed into a longer-term arrangement. Further opportunities abound in this area - for instance, schemes that could encourage the general population to contribute time and effort to worthwhile social causes such as providing companionship to isolated people or improving community facilities through the offer of tickets for lesser-attended events that may otherwise not reach full capacity. Sponsors that involve sponsees and other actors in regular dialogue (and vice versa) are liable to have an increased chance of success in such endeavours. Whilst *forging, developing, and maintaining effective personal relationships* in an age of digitalisation may be challenging, managers who are able to do so can lay the foundations for CSV with other valued actors within the ecosystem.

In addition, *Educating* demonstrates a clear linkage to improving the population's health, and in turn, a sport-for-health model (SFHM), such as a sponsor's co-branded healthy eating programme which harnessed the platform of a well-established MSE to help land its message. This has arguably never been more essential in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, *Showcasing* emphasises the importance of an accessible outlet for value to be shared and created, adding further credence to the importance of MSEs as *engagement platforms* (e.g., Grohs et al., 2020; Woratschek et al., 2014a). Progressive and forward-thinking approaches which focus on societal contributions and place these at the heart of activations, such as MSE212's hosting of certain events in novel and municipal locations, offer a way forward for CSV to be bolstered further. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube have proven to be particularly successful in helping to deliver content and engage audiences, such as the exercise classes provided by the British fitness coach, Joe Wicks. Sponsors and MSEs that can effectively harness these platforms are likely to be well-placed to educate and showcase key messages on a wide-scale.

7.4 Limitations and future research avenues

This study has limitations that invite further research. Firstly, although the proposed framework may apply to secondary and tertiary events such as the Commonwealth Games or Copa América, due to the wide selection of MSEs and their cross-cultural nature (Taks, 2015), it may require adjustment in future research in order to accommodate the specific characteristics and diversity of each particular event. For example, recurring events at a fixed location (e.g., The Grand National; Wimbledon) may have greater potential to build continuous relationships with local sponsors or media partners than events that take place at a location on a one-off basis (e.g., the Rugby World Cup: England 2015; Japan 2019; France 2023). Therefore, further studies could take place in and compare different MSE contexts (e.g., events of differing periodicity; events hosted at one-off locations, rotating locations; and/or fixed locations) and indeed in non-MSE contexts. For instance, the Scottish brewery and pub chain, Brewdog, recently announced itself as the world's first international beer business to become carbon negative following a series of unprecedented initiatives to remove carbon from the atmosphere and thus help tackle climate change (Barbiroglio, 2020). It would be interesting to assess the impact of such CSV examples on different actors. For instance, how does the carbon-free beer positively affect the brand, consumer and the environment? If a brand such as this were to sponsor a MSE, it would be useful to understand how an emotional connection to the sport or event would allow different actors to align with these brand philosophies.

Secondly, external perceptions of sponsors and sport properties were not considered. Public opinion often impacts how brands are understood by stakeholders (Bies & Greenberg, 2017), and several participants expressed concern regarding how their organisation might be perceived regarding CSV-related matters. Whilst this study focuses on the perceptions of two central types of actors, there are multiple stakeholders in the ecosystem and future studies could not only explore the perception of sponsors and MSEs by external parties, but CSV perspectives of actors such as tourism boards, professional athletes, consumers, and the media could be considered.

Thirdly, additional research opportunities relate to the potential misinterpretation of practitioners regarding CSV. For instance, one participant mentioned there was not "enough cash in the profit pool to allow us to do that" (Sponsor106). There remains a need for specialists to become better informed about CSV, and for a more coherent narrative to be constructed by the academic community (Dembek et al., 2016). A recent survey indicated that industry executives feel sponsorship needs to evolve in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, identifying five aspects they believe will be most important to the industry moving forwards: data and analytics, innovation, measurement, content marketing, and creativity (Carp, 2020).

CSV can provide a vehicle to facilitate developments in each of these areas and this study represents a starting point in this endeavour. For example, in terms of data and analytics, gaining valuable data was

highlighted as an important outcome realised for sponsors arising from a CSV-orientated approach. Innovation came through as an essential component of an organisation's capabilities, and measurability was identified as being crucial to organisational consistency, enabling firms to align CSV with core business strategies. This is particularly important as there is an increasing societal pressure for sponsors to be authentic and invest in things that also benefit society (Charlton & Cornwell, 2019). Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience - and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action (Content Marketing Institute, 2021). The findings of the current study suggest that CSV through effective content marketing can help businesses to develop brand equity, reposition their status within the marketplace, and even realise several material gains, such as reducing staff turnover. Enhanced creativity also emerged within the research as a consequence of a greater degree of experimentation arising from the development of durable relationships between sponsors and MSEs.

The study also identified five types of CSV which emerged from the interviews and further research could explore the notions of *developing, educating, incentivising, recruiting,* and *showcasing* in more depth. For instance, it would be advantageous to understand how specific programmes such as the educational healthy eating campaigns explained by MSE214 and MSE222 impact on both the companies and society. Whilst the current study assesses implementation and outcome aspects of CSV, future studies can tackle its processual dimensions by focusing on the relationships between the components of the conceptual framework. Longitudinal studies focusing on specific CSV examples could be useful in allowing the process of CSV to be monitored and evaluated. This could also create learning opportunities for other sponsors and MSEs on how to undertake such aspects in future.

Finally, subsequent empirical examinations of the proposed conceptual model conducted with different actors involved in the MSE ecosystem may prove to be important. Building on Table 7.2, developing an empirical scale that can successfully measure the shared value created, in terms of both economic and social value, will be of major importance (Menghwar & Daood, 2021). Therefore, the creation of an instrument based on the refined conceptual framework to objectively measure impacts of CSV with a wider sample of actors also signifies an important next step to solidify our understanding and application of CSV.

7.5 Reflection on my journey

Having graduated with a BA Honours in Business Studies in 2008, followed by an MSc in Marketing Management in 2009, I was keen to gain some practical experience and spent the following four and a half years working in two industry positions - with both having a research focus. I gained valuable experience and proficiency in the key principles of research at a leading market research agency, followed by an interesting position within the research and innovation team at a global brewing company. Within this role, I worked alongside extremely knowledgeable and supportive colleagues and

gained a passion for generating meaningful insights. Although I enjoyed what I was doing, I gradually started to contemplate a future career in lecturing within an academic institution. This was something I had considered a possibility since my own undergraduate and postgraduate study and in the summer of 2013, I was pleased to be appointed as an Assistant Lecturer at Coventry University.

It quickly became apparent that developing a research profile is an important component of any efficacious lecturer's repertoire. Having spent a few years outside of academia, I wanted to develop my academic research expertise so started by participating in some small projects that helped to build my capabilities. These included contributing a book chapter to an editorially-reviewed international sport marketing textbook, based on the topic of my Masters thesis, sport franchising, and co-written with a more practised colleague within the business school. This was an important milestone as working alongside a more experienced researcher and achieving a first published research output helped me to gain confidence, and broaden my research capacity.

My desire to further my skills in academic research led me to become involved in a project called 'CARNIVAL'. This was a European Union Framework 7 Marie Curie International Research Staff Exchange Scheme Programme involving Coventry University and partner academic institutions located in Brazil, Germany, South Africa, and the USA. The project aimed to examine what factors impact upon the planned and unplanned legacy outcomes of mega events and their implications for stakeholders (for further information please see: https://www.coventry.ac.uk/research/research-directories/current-projects/2014/carnival/). As part of the scheme, I undertook two 'research mobilities', collaborating with colleagues from the other partner institutions. The first mobility involved travelling to South Africa in 2014, to help investigate the legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, by interviewing a number of senior decision makers involved in the bidding and hosting of the event. This was an extremely valuable experience, which provided stimulus to embark on a part-time PhD alongside my full-time lecturer role in October 2015 by exploring the working title, 'The Cultural Legacy of Mega Event Brands'. This topic related to some of the thoughts and impressions I'd started to develop in South Africa and aligned to the scope of CARNIVAL.

The second research mobility really helped me to shape and refine my original ideas. This involved a trip to the USA, where I contributed towards a research project exploring the impacts of the 2016 Invictus Games in Orlando, Florida on a range of stakeholders such as the participating athletes and their friends and families. In addition to conducting surveys for the CARNIVAL project, I was permitted by the university, CARNIVAL project leaders, and the event holder to undertake a preliminary study of 20 event attendees, which involved short, semi-structured interviews exploring perceptions of sponsor brand meanings at the event. Upon thematically analysing the interview data, four themes emerged: 'Enabling' (sponsor perceived as an enabler of the event; i.e., it's presence and actions make a key operational contribution); 'Immersing' (sponsor perceived as being an intrinsic part of the event); 'Aligning' (sponsor values perceived as matching with the respective values of the event); and 'Caring' (sponsor perceived as having a social conscience).

These initial findings were used to help develop the first peer-reviewed, accepted conference paper related to the thesis, which was presented at the 'Sport & EU' conference in Madrid in June 2016 (please see the 'statement of original authorship' at the beginning of the thesis for full details of the peer-reviewed journal article and conference outputs that have been published related to this study). Presenting ideas related to my PhD for the first time was a daunting experience, especially as the delegation comprised many experienced academics from a range of European universities. Also, being a British citizen presenting at an EU conference at that particular moment in time felt a bit awkward (the UK had voted to leave the European Union four days previously!), and this was an issue that inevitably dominated much of the conference discussion. That said, it was another worthwhile experience, as although I found it challenging to provide clear and eloquent responses to every question received, this questioning helped me to understand the importance of being able to succinctly articulate and explain ideas and, where necessary, defend my research position.

The second year of study, 2016/2017, proved to be more difficult. My supervisory team and I were both of the view that the social value theme previously identified in the preliminary study could provide a novel and productive focal point in helping to refine and firmly establish the study's research objectives and potential contribution to knowledge. Thus, in further developing the literature review to incorporate topics such as brands as intentional agents and scepticism of CSR, the topic evolved to explore 'The Socio-Cultural Legacy of Sports Mega Event Brands'.

In principle, the idea at this time to develop a book chapter incorporating some of these ideas seemed a 'win-win': aiding me to advance my PhD topic area whilst attaining another editorially reviewed output. However, this ultimately proved to be a mistake. After receiving multiple constructive and positive reviews of the draft, the chapter was unexpectedly reviewed again by the same reviewers alongside one additional reviewer, with wholesale changes requested and little time remaining before the deadline to action them. This was disappointing, as significant time and effort had been invested in this endeavour, which in hindsight led to some loss of focus on the thesis itself. I felt let down by the reviewers, not so much by their sudden requirement for substantial changes, but by how late this request was made, particularly as they had already reviewed it previously, suggesting only minor changes. Towards the end of the year, I also learned that one of my supervisors was to leave the university and would not be continuing with their supervision, and another supervisor wished to step down from their role.

Thankfully, this situation became a catalyst for change and ultimately a key turning point of the PhD. I was extremely fortunate to gain such an erudite and adept Director of Studies, Dr Rui Biscaia. As the literature review continued to develop, it became apparent that event legacy has become an increasingly researched area, "demonstrating that a small group of academics concentrated in particular countries are driving the publication of studies on sport event legacy in predominately specialised sport and event journals" (Thomson et al., 2019). I had identified the potential of CSV as a more relevant, focal area for the study during the development of the literature review in 2017 and presented these ideas at the second annual PRP. Dr Biscaia seemed to share my views and interest in CSV, and with his considerable

support, and that of my second supervisor, Dr Karolos Papadas, and third supervisor, Professor Lyndon Simkin, I set about repurposing and refocusing the research.

Consequently, during the third year of study the title evolved to its present iteration, 'Sponsorship of Major Sport Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach'. As the project's theoretical contribution to address identified gaps in the literature became more clearly articulated, a literature-based, proposed conceptual framework was developed and a pilot study of semi-structured interviews with sponsorship practitioners was completed. The development of an accepted paper presented at the 2018 European Association for Sport Management (EASM) conference gave me further belief and encouragement that the research was heading in a positive direction. Furthermore, a subsequent submission to a European Sport Management Quarterly (ESMQ) journal special issue ('exploring new routes within brand research in sport management'), whilst rejected, provided valuable feedback for progressing a new iteration of the paper, as well as helping to advance the thesis. Table 7.3 provides a synopsis of the key reviewer feedback comments received and the actions taken as a result.

Table 7.3. Utilising feedback from the ESMQ special issue submission.

Key reviewer comments	Actions taken
Better explain the specific questions for each of the CSV drivers.	Emphasised the need to develop and refine the interview discussion guide (which had already been actioned before receiving the review).
Consider a greater degree of application of Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) theory to your work.	This was implemented within a newly written paper submitted to the ESMQ main journal, and some related ideas, such as service ecosystems and actor engagement used more extensively within the thesis.
Include more experts from sponsoring companies in your sample.	This was reflected in the more selective sampling criteria used in the main study data collection.
Discussion of the relationship between sponsor and sport property requires more depth. E.g., how the relationship works, who integrates what kind of resources and why, and the extent of exchange between partners.	The main study stage of data collection took care to discuss these aspects with respondents.
Please elaborate clear and precise managerial implications from your results. If you compare CSV to CSR in the beginning, please elaborate on the differences for managers and give concise recommendations on what they should do to create shared value with a sponsorship.	Specific examples emanating from the interviews were included in the re-written paper, in order to help add greater tangibility to the concept of CSV for both practitioners and academics. These, and additional examples were also included in the thesis results and discussion chapters.

On reflection, the strong foundations laid in year three were fundamental to the study's evolution during years four and five, and into year six. During this period, data collection was completed using a more advanced interview discussion guide and thematic analysis of the interview data helped inform a refined conceptual framework for CSV. Developing and gaining acceptance of a more polished conference paper presented at the 2020 North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) conference was a great opportunity to communicate my developing ideas to a conversant audience. The outbreak of COVID-19 dictated this was held virtually, with the pandemic providing other challenges to the study's write-up phase. These included an increased workload in my full-time role, necessitated by a move to

prepare and deliver online teaching and student support, and a need to acknowledge the impact of such an unprecedented turn of events within the thesis itself.

In May 2021, I was delighted to receive confirmation of the acceptance of a paper to be published in ESMQ, titled 'The Creation of Shared Value in the Major Sport Event Ecosystem: Understanding the role of Sponsors and Hosts'. This represented another key milestone in the PhD journey, and some recognition of the efforts which started during year three. The process of submitting, revising, and ultimately, publishing in an ABS-ranked 3* journal helped me to greatly develop my academic writing skills, particularly in terms of applying greater structure and precision (hopefully the evidence of which can be found within this thesis!).

As I finalise the write-up of the final document and reflect on the PhD experience as whole, there have been times which have been particularly testing and unenjoyable. The part time route presents its own challenges – particularly around building and sustaining momentum, and sacrificing a significant amount of personal time. On the positive side, it has undoubtedly helped me to build resilience and mental strength, as well as research skills and the ability to think critically – to be inquisitive whilst leaving no stone unturned in pursuit of addressing the research problem.

Finally, to CSV. When this study commenced in late 2015, it was very apparent that a greater confluence between businesses and society was necessary for firms to gain new sources of competitive advantage, whilst more readily addressing social issues. As societies seek to rebuild in the aftermath of the pandemic, CSV seems to be more important than ever.

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9. Appendices

Appendix A: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

1. No poverty
2. Zero hunger
3. Good health and well-being
4. Quality education
5. Gender equality
6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Partnerships for the goals

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Sponsorship of Sport Mega Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

You are being invited to take part in research on the above topic. David Cook, a PhD student at Coventry University, is leading this research. Before you decide to take part it is important you understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?
This study aims to explore whether sponsor brands and sport event properties can utilise the event to create shared value for a range of stakeholders, and if so, how?

Why have I been chosen?
You are invited to participate in this study because you are involved with sponsorship of a sport mega event.

Will my information be kept secure, confidential and anonymous?
Yes. Information collected about you during the research will be kept strictly confidential and the information you provide will be made anonymous. Data collected from participants will be referred to by a unique participant number rather than by name. If you consent to having the discussion recorded, all recordings will be destroyed once they have been transcribed. Transcripts from the research will only be viewed by the researcher and will be stored on a password-protected computer file. Your consent information will be kept separately from your responses in order to minimise risks in the event of a security breach. All data collected for the research will be destroyed on or before 31/08/2021.

Do I have to take part?
No – it is entirely up to you. If you do decide to take part, please keep this Information Sheet and complete the informed consent form at the start of the interview, to show that you understand your rights in relation to this research, and are happy to participate. Please note down your participant number (which is on the Consent Form) and provide this to the lead researcher if you seek to withdraw from the study at a later date. You are free to withdraw the information you provide by contacting the lead researcher (contact details are provided below) by **31/08/2018** without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw, or not to take part, will not affect you in any way.

What will happen if I take part?
If you would like to take part in the research, you will be asked a number of questions regarding the sponsorship of a sport mega event. The interview will take place in a safe environment at a time that is convenient to you. Ideally, we would like to audio record your responses (and will need your explicit consent for this), and so any location should be in a reasonably quiet area.

What are the benefits of taking part?

By sharing your experiences with us, you will be helping David Cook and Coventry University to better understand whether sponsor brands and sport event properties can utilise the event to create shared value for a range of stakeholders, and if so, how?

What will happen with the results of this study?
Transcripts of all discussions will be retained until 31/08/2021. Quotes or key findings will always be made anonymous in any published article, report or presentation, unless we have your prior and explicit written permission to attribute any data to you by name.

Making a Complaint
If you are unhappy with any aspect of this research, first contact the lead researcher, David Cook (cookd3@coventry.ac.uk). If you still have concerns and wish to make a formal complaint, please contact:

Dr Rui Biscaia
Senior Lecturer in Sport Marketing
Coventry University
Coventry CV1 5FB
Email: rui.biscaia@coventry.ac.uk

Please provide information about the research project, specify the name of the researcher and detail the nature of your complaint.

Who has reviewed the study?
This study was reviewed and authorised through Coventry University's formal research ethics procedure.

Who do I contact for more information?
If you have any questions, please contact the lead researcher David Cook, Coventry University, cookd3@coventry.ac.uk.

Appendix C: Informed consent form: pilot study

INFORMED CONSENT FORM:
Sponsorship of Sport Mega Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach

You are invited to take part in this research study for the purpose of collecting data for my PhD thesis.

Before you decide to take part, you must **read the accompanying Participant Information Sheet.**

If you consent to having the interview audio recorded, all recordings will be destroyed once they have been transcribed. Transcripts from the research will only be viewed by the researcher and will be stored in a password protected computer file until they are destroyed on 31/08/2021.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information about any aspect of this research. It is important that you feel able to take the necessary time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Should you require any further information about this research, please contact:
David Cook, Coventry University, cookd3@coventry.ac.uk

1	**I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions**	**YES**	**NO**
2	**I understand my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my data from the study until 31/08/2018, without providing a reason**	**YES**	**NO**
3	**I have noted down my participant number (top left of this Consent Form) which may be required by the lead researcher if I wish to withdraw from the study**	**YES**	**NO**
4	**I understand that all the information I provide will be anonymised and treated confidentially**	**YES**	**NO**
5	**I am happy for the information I provide to be used (anonymously) in academic papers and other formal research outputs**	**YES**	**NO**
6	**I am happy for the interview to be audio recorded**	**YES**	**NO**
7	**I agree to take part in the above study**	**YES**	**NO**

Participant's Name	Date	Signature

Researcher	Date	Signature
David Cook		

Appendix D: Example of written field notes recorded for each interview: pilot study
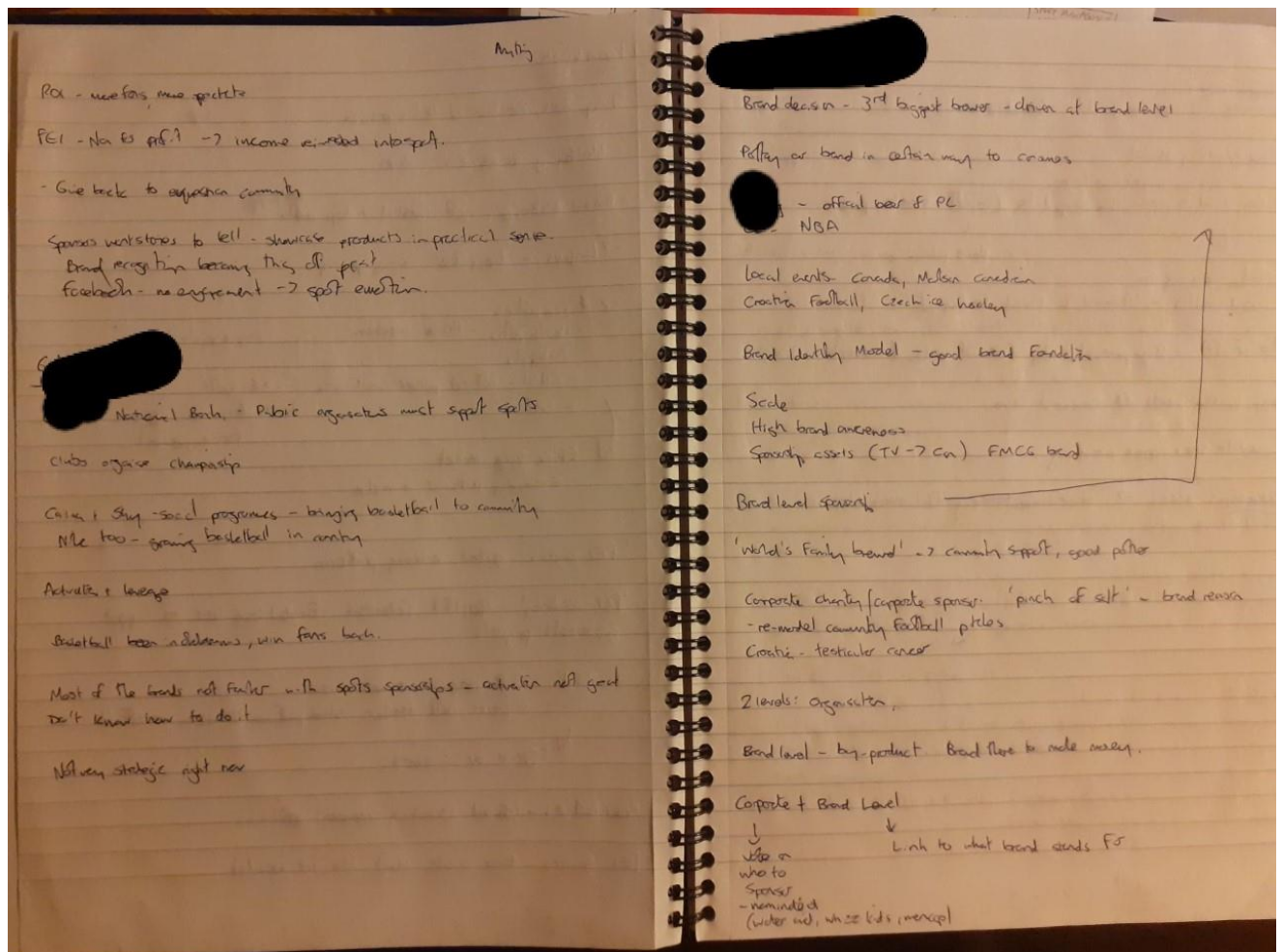
Appendix E: Example of written field notes recorded for each interview: main study

Figure 1. Proposed model for understanding CSV in major sport events.
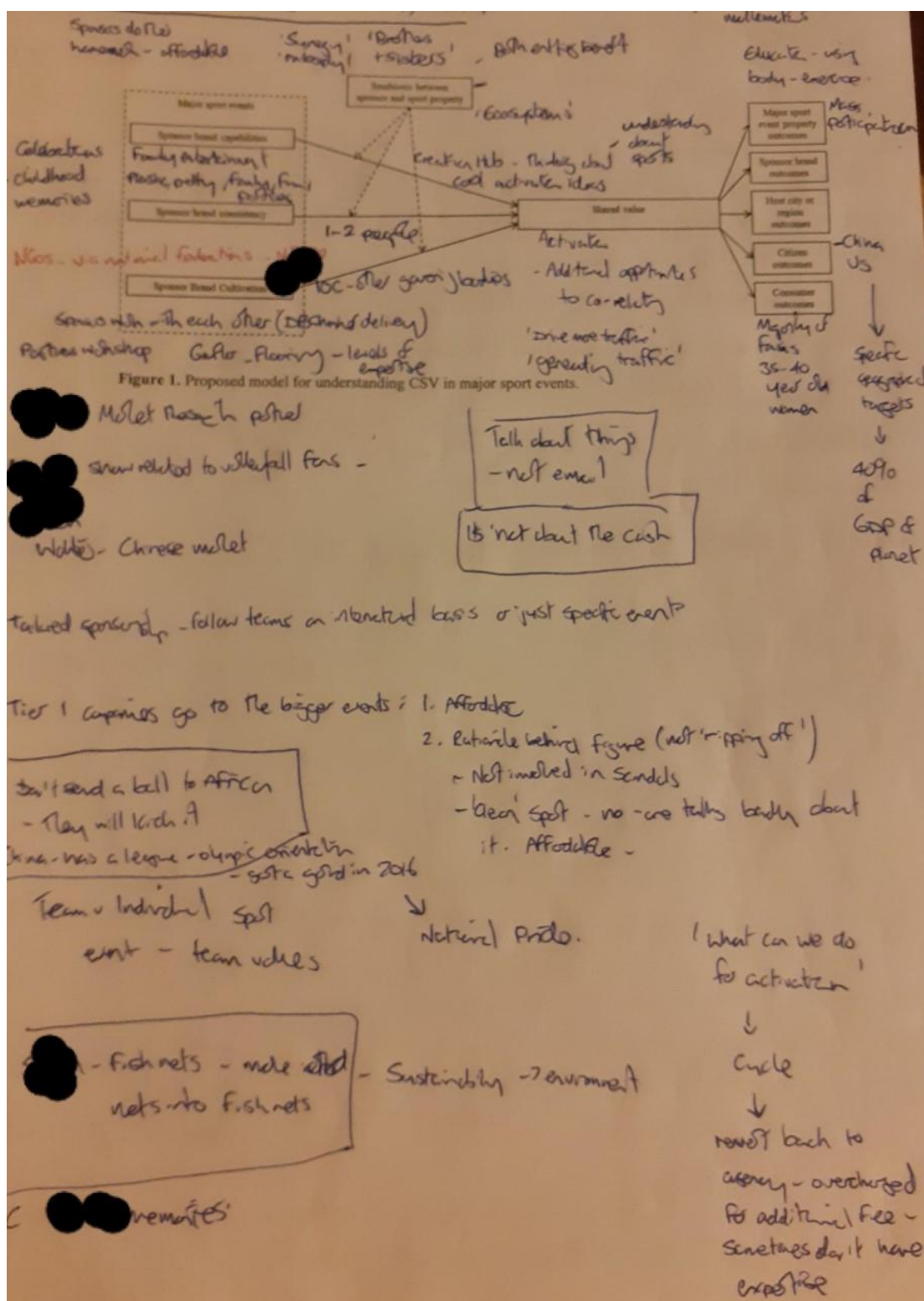
File name:	**Participant 107**
Audio length:	**0:31:21**
Date of audio:	**09 June 2018**
Date transcribed:	**05 July 2018**

Interviewer: Ok, thanks very much for speaking to me. The first question regarding sponsorship is broadly speaking, why did you organisation make the decision to sponsor the events or the sport properties that you sponsor, and not others? Would this rationale be the same for other sports properties or other sports events?

Respondent: It's a fairly consistent process, around demographic of the audience of the sport, attitudinal approach from the spectators and the people involved with it. It's also about the reach of the sport, how that co-ordinates with our brands, and with the model that we operate, it's about building the, sort of, corporate element of our brand; so the bond element, so the trust from the City, other institutions, and the consumer element from our beer brands.

So, two examples here are the [sport governing body], and [sport governing body]. So it we start with [MSE]; that was very much around the audience being directly parallel with an ale-drinking audience. But it was also about properties such as [sport venue], for hosting institutional bodies and people from the City, so it's a competition of those two things. The other big advantage of that sponsorship is our model is around engaging with local communities and adding value. [Sport] is a sport that goes across the country, so a big event like [MSE] isn't centred on one venue, it's several, and our model enables us to take advantage and to differentiate our approach around each of those stadiums, and around each of those places. So for example, we would use some of our midlands brands at [PST], and at [PST], we're able to engage with the [brewery].

Interviewer: Ok, thanks for that. Second question; in your view, what are the unique capabilities of your organisation, particularly when entering into sponsorship agreements, is there anything that your company can provide to a sponsee, particularly?

Respondent: Yeah, I think probably I just alluded to some of that in the previous answer actually. In comparison with our competitors, we're in an industry where acquisition and merger is relatively normal. Our approach to that dictates that we acquire smaller, regional businesses, but we keep their production facilities, distribution networks, routes to market - within the local community. From a

consumer perspective, we brand them entirely separately so there's nothing hidden about it but it's very much [sponsor brand] own [different breweries], but they are still run as independent entities. So when we are engaging with an event or institution, it enables us to operate nationally but activate locally, and that's something that nobody else within our industry is able to offer.

Interviewer: Great, okay. We'll move on to the next area that I was going to ask you about. In terms of your organisation's approach towards contributing to society, have you got a, kind of, opinion or view on how your organisation looks to contribute towards society?

Respondent: Yeah the most directly relevant element of our strategy in regards to sponsorship is very much around celebrating our local communities. So within this regard we obviously supply a lot of pubs, bars, restaurants etcetera within an area. It's about providing jobs within that area and it's about encouraging the local economy through local suppliers. So when looking at a sponsorship opportunity that is really part of the consideration and how we can bring that to life.

The other area is around our customers; so for example, engaging with the [MSE property] and one of the grounds in the build-up to a match. It would be around working with them to offer transportation to and from matches, enabling them to advertise within our customers, and that mutual and reciprocal support.

Interviewer: And building on that, you've talked a little bit so far about entering into these sponsorship deals. To what extent would you say that your organisation's approach to contributing towards society is a factor in your motivation for some of the sponsorship deals you enter into?

Respondent: It's a factor. Actually, it's a differentiation from advertising with sponsorship. So when we're looking at sponsorship it's about that long-term approach. It's about building that mental availability of our company and our brands over time. It's about reaching and nudging that along rather than big spikes and huge lulls that you sometimes get with advertising. But actually, as I say, in comparison with advertising campaigns it's about increasing that resonance, it's about building those assets over time, and it's about that engagement with the local community. So that building value locally is a key pillar of our approach to sponsorship, while of course the overall goal is around brand awareness and building equity and loyalty there. We think that this shared value offers us a way of doing that more effectively than something like advertising, which could cost an equivalent amount of money.

Interviewer: And how do you decide which, if any, societal issues to attempt to address? So, are any given priority over others? How does that work, if at all?

Respondent:	With working in the alcohol industry, inevitably we're subject to legislative or even political restrictions on the kind of thing it would make sense for us to be associated with, and the kind of thing that would drive volume for us from that association. So, for example, we can't get involved with increasing participation amongst children, we can't activate through schools, we struggle on a health agenda, but what we can do is really engage with the communities. So for example, we are heavily associated with [NGO], which is about bringing communities together and our sponsorships enable us to add another pillar to that.
Interviewer:	How does that work, if you don't mind me asking?
Respondent:	So if we consider some of the assets that we get from these sponsorships, so for example, in the case of the [MSE] that would be signed merchandise. We would go out to our customer base and ask for good causes and we would operate charity raffles within pubs, or via their social media accounts. And we would petition for involvement, so one of the competitions we ran was with [athlete]– the opportunity for [sport] clubs to win two days with him, training, coaching, engagement, involvement. And that really helped the [MSE] in their stated aim of taking some of the top-line and the elite [sport] money into grassroots [sport]. So we were able to activate participation amongst adults, we were able to encourage health through that mean, and we were also able to increase the [sport governing body's] reach into their local communities and local clubs.
Interviewer:	So, engaging with the local community seems to be the main issue. Would you say there were any other issues?
Respondent:	I think that's certainly the main one from a shared value perspective.
Interviewer:	And in terms of some of the systems or processes that are in place to evaluate the impacts of your approach to these societal issues on financial performance? Is there anything in place? I mean, I'm guessing you would have, kind of, KPIs, but is there anything specifically around societal issues that you measure or evaluate somehow?
Respondent:	Inevitably it's fairly challenging, it's a longer-term activation opportunity. It isn't around increasing sales straightaway. We will utilise social media from an engagement perspective. We will have KPIs around numbers, if we run a promotion for the activation. We will have KPIs around donations to causes, amount of money raised, number of participants, but generally, over a longer period of time we will track that engagement and we will also track the physical availability of our brands. So if by doing this activity, it enables our sales force to open new distribution opportunities. So for example, I previously referred to

the [sport] clubs. Well actually that promotion enabled us to gain supply to a lot of [sport] clubs that we hadn't previously reached out to. And there are of course KPIs and monitoring against that.

Interviewer: So do you think there's any way to measure the link between addressing societal issues and financial performance then?

Respondent: Yes, depending on the activity. It's not a linear equation, it is more difficult, it is more subtle, but you could make that argument for much of marketing. So I think it is very much around engagement. It's around involvement numbers. It's around reach, but if you combine the reach and engagement you can get some useful KPIs from that. It's almost akin to tracking goodwill – it's tough. You can put things in place around equity measures of your brand, perception of your brand – but I think that ultimately, for us, in our previous roles and engagement, it's around ensuring that the body or sport that we sponsor are happy - looking at their measures, making sure that our KPIs are still mutual. And then it's around tracing back that impact on what we do and how we leverage in the future.

Interviewer: Alright thanks. Moving on to the next area that I want to talk about; with the exception of the sport event property, do other organisations combine in some way with your organisation to contribute towards the fulfilment of the sponsorships? If so, what are these organisations and how does this tend to happen?

Respondent: So that would be organisations outside of ourselves and the properties that we sponsor?

Interviewer: Yeah, so any kind of…any different types of organisations that may be involved, that you may work with as part of the sponsorship?

Respondent: To be honest, no. Primarily we tend to do it directly with the sponsor. The only other people who we would engage with and would engage in that process would be our customers. So other retail groups do get involved and help to push that. So one example would be we ran joint activity with [retailer], who were also a sponsor, because it just made good sense for us both to leverage our sponsorship of the [MSE]at the same time. So again, some of the grassroots initiatives that they were looking at in some of the [sport] clubs who we were supplying.

Interviewer: Would there be any involvement at all from any, for example, Non-Government Organisations, at any level? Would they have any role to play?

Respondent:	It isn't something that we've had an involvement in, it's not to say that we wouldn't. But again, I think that sometimes the nature of our business and the industry we're involved in is perhaps a bit prohibitive in that regard.
Interviewer:	One thing I had noticed, and perhaps I'm kind of mistaken here but there was [NGO]…was involved on some level with [interviewee's organisation]? I don't know if that's still an ongoing thing or whether that's in the past or…I'm not sure whether there was any involvement from those or not on a sponsorship level…or was it more just a kind of, product level?
Respondent:	So actually [NGO] is a really good example. We worked with them on a [product's development]; so we produced a one-off [product], which for every pack sold there was a donation to the organisation. And when I say we produced with them, it was around getting some of the troops, some of the service personnel who they worked with to come in and [help with production]. So there was full involvement from them, it was what they wanted it to be. They were involved in the product itself, the branding and the campaign. And actually we did then leverage our sponsorship of [sport property] to get involved, and ran a charity match which involved [NGO] and also some current and ex-professional players. And utilised our sponsorship opportunity to have access to the ground and to those people to do so.
Interviewer:	And would you say that was a success? Would it be something you would try again or was it more something that, you know, it was nice to do at the time but it's, kind of, you've been there and done that now, and you move on from that in the future?
Respondent:	I think it's definitely something that we would look to do again. We would qualify it as a success because of the impact it had from a PR perspective, which is always an important element of sponsorship. It's about the opinion and relationship of our business and our brands, and that went a great way to helping. The coverage against all of our KPIs surpassed expectation, and also we would say it's a success based on the performance of the [product] that we did. So we think that that publicity and association did help drive awareness of the good work that we were already doing. So I think it's on that stream that we would look to do something in the future.
Interviewer:	Alright, lovely, thanks for that. Next area to discuss is around your relationship with these different sport event properties. So you've talked predominantly about [MSE] and [MSE]. I think they were the two main properties you spoke about. In terms of your partnership with them, how would you describe it, regarding the sponsorship?

Respondent:	In both of those cases it's an interesting relationship because we strike a relationship, as I said before, at a national level, and there's parallels in both of those sports in that they operate the [venues] independently. So if we take the example of [MSE], we have an agreement but then we forge separate arrangements with [PSTs]. So we get the top-level support nationally but then we drive it locally. It works for our business model but it does mean that it's not as instantaneous or simple to roll activity out.
Interviewer:	And what is their involvement in the activation or the leveraging strategies? So is this something they will, in layman's terms let you get on with or is this something that's very collaborative and you, kind of, sit down and have this joint plan. How would you describe that?
Respondent:	It's collaborative, so we're very much a business and they're very much institutions who believe that you sign a contract or agreement and then you put it in the draw and you talk about activation. So no sooner is the agreement signed than we will talk about mutual plans. One of the things that's appraised on both sides, when a sponsorship comes together, isn't just the money from their perspective or the awareness from our perspective but it's the ability to leverage and drive that relationship.
	So the mutual planning process is absolutely crucial and it's a really important part of our decision-making, so we were a long-standing sponsor of the [MSE] because we knew that we could work with them and we knew that we could activate collectively. And we knew that the things that we were looking to achieve were, there was a mutual benefit there. So for example, from their perspective it was about increasing attendance across the country. From our perspective it was about our, as I've said, local community and customers, bringing those two things together simplistically, could be, as I say, transportation from remote areas or as an example, when the [MSE] took international [sport] to [region] for the first time. It was about engaging the local community behind something that hadn't happened before.
Interviewer:	And just kind of on that as well, would you say that you share any resources? So you said that you, sort of, collaborate. Do you share any kind of resources?
Respondent:	So we've shared agencies that the respective partners have had on retainers. So when we've run mutual activity rather than just sharing assets, we've actually utilised the agency to bring a mutual campaign together, which has been really effective. It's saved both time and duplicated cost of resource. We've shared back-office systems and staff.

Interviewer:	And how would that work in terms of staff? Would they, kind of, spend time working in both locations or is it a very flexible thing and, you know, on a case-by-case basis?
Respondent:	It's flexible. There's no fixed arrangement but in terms of tangible examples we've had staff from the [sport governing body] working out of our offices, and we've had some of our marketing team working with them on campaigns. It just helps to breed that familiarity and that comfort, and that trust and responsibility. And it saves time in the future, so we're not having to check everything 100% of the time. We are aware of where we want to be pushing and we're also aware of any restrictions, in terms of use of each other's brand assets. So it can be a really good benefit in terms of smoothing the process out.
Interviewer:	And you mentioned a really interesting word there, in terms of relationships. So would you describe the relationship with each of these sport event properties as a similar relationship? Or would you say you've got different relationships with both of these properties?
Respondent:	It's broadly similar. We…as I say we were a long-standing partner of the [MSE], so we renewed on four occasions. That was based on a firm belief that the return on investment of sponsorship takes time to become established. The association takes time to resonate in the mind of the consumer, and also if you've selected your partner properly, there should be a wide market to aim for, a lot of reach to be gained. And there should be a lot of activity that can help go into that.
	However, you do come to a point where you reach that law of diminishing returns. You're looking at doing activity you've already done and the association is embedded. But the relationship is crucial - because we know that it's a longer-term return on investment, we want to make sure that the partners that we're working with are going to be someone that we can work with over a long period of time to activate that. And that's broadly similar, well, that is very similar and very important about anyone that we'd be involved with. It's not about the pure commercial money invested, versus eyeballs – seeing any activation is very much about the relationship and how we can leverage things over time.
	And as I say, it's very important to us, it sounds a bit clichéd but that when we strike an agreement, we have the contract but that just goes into a draw until it becomes time for it to be renegotiated again. It's all about then, the activation and what we can do with it. And that works for the people who are looking for sponsorships as well, because they want that security and trust, and they want that smooth way of working.

Interviewer:	Alright. Moving on to the latter part now, of the interview. So in terms of outcomes from sponsorship, are there any specific societal issues that some of these sponsorships have attempted to address? And if so, what are these?
Respondent:	I think we've covered some of it previously in the interview, in that it is tough within our industry. But the example that we spoke around, [NGO], was a big one for us. It is that support for our forces, the people that are coming back and needing rehabilitation, and providing some exposure, some awareness of that, also some support. And again that – working with our local communities and our customers – that is something that they have been incredibly keen to get involved in. It fits the profile of what they do and the things they are interested in, so that has been one tangible example of a sponsorship that we've engaged in in that way. But it flows through the interview, so I'm sure you can see that the main thing we do look at is the local communities and the local economy, and that's always incredibly important to us for a sponsorship.
	What we're not looking for is…just a bit national presence. It's not the way that we operate. It's not the way that our marketing strategy is formed. We're looking for something that we can activate nationally but act locally, and in all of the partners that we engage with, that is to the fore. So there's no issue in terms of requiring a charity or support, but there is societal thing about supporting the local community and supporting the local economy and infrastructure, which we think is really important, much more so than something that is nationally driven down.
	So an example of that would be we own [production facility] in the Lake District. It's actually flooded twice, but we've repaired it twice, which if we were operating in a different model, we wouldn't do. Because if you looked at it as pure numbers, the return on that investment wouldn't be there. But we think that it's really important to have that in the community to keep those jobs in that area and to keep that link.
Interviewer:	So it wasn't actually commercially viable to repair…it would have made more business sense to close it?
Respondent:	Yes, on a pure cost-based analysis. Equally, if you think about it from a FMCG production perspective, having six production sites across the country, all operating differently, when we do have the land where you could accommodate that across a couple of sites, isn't an efficient production method of operating. But it is based on that strategic belief that the local economies are where our customers are based, they're where our consumers are based, and that's what's going to drive our growth and profit moving forward and is also our differentiation from our competitors. So it's really important that in the

sponsorships that we have, that's reflected. Hence why [MSE], with grounds across the country; [MSE] with fifteen [venues] in local areas, is such a good match for us.

Interviewer: And just going back to the…probably for the last time now, the [NGO] example. Just thinking specifically about some of the beneficiaries here, so who is going to directly benefit in your view, from this agreement – the stakeholder groups? And how do you think they may have benefitted from it?

Respondent: So, the stakeholder groups for us in that example would be, inevitably, the [NGO] itself. The benefit for them is increased awareness, with a group who they would be targeting – of consumers and of our customers. And of course, the benefit of the profit that was driven from the [product].

There's a benefit for us as a business in terms of the awareness for our brand. Although in that instance the brand was very much [NGO] as the dominant look and feel. The [NGO], when feeding back to us, said that they felt that they benefited from that association of trust with a reputable company, with someone that did believe in the localness that we've been speaking about.

Other stakeholders would be our [retail customers]. Again, the benefit for them is it's something that their [consumer] are really engaged and involved with and happy to donate to, so actually the profit that we made from the [product] was great. But there was as least as much, if not more, donated as an association with the [NGO]…which the [retailer] feedback was their customer base was really engaged and obviously again for the [NGO], it's another revenue stream for them.

And there was a major retailer who were really on-board with it, so another stakeholder there. They spoke with [NGO] at an awards function and suggested us as a partner to bring it to life and provided us with the route to market, so it was a very nice line-up and association there for all people concerned really. So they got some good PR from it, we got some good PR from it and the [NGO] drove that increased awareness and got a real benefit out of both.

Interviewer: Great, okay, thank you ever so much for that. The last thing that I just wanted to talk about is here is this concept of Creating Shared Value, so you'll notice there's a definition of the concept and there's a graphic that compares it with some of the elements of CSR.

So firstly, have you heard of this term before?

Respondent: Yes, yes I have.

Interviewer:	And where have you heard of this term? Have you come across it in your role? Or maybe in the industry press?
Respondent:	It's both. We've spoken around it internally, in terms of some of our decision-making, and I've also seen it in some of the industry and marketing press and sort of, online conversations.
Interviewer:	Okay. And in terms of your sponsorship of these different properties, do you think that they're important for creating shared value specifically, and if so, how?
Respondent:	Yes I do think that it's important; so we look at that creation of shared value as something that can benefit our customers because we think it's really important that as a supplier to them in a really competitive market, we can add something to them that isn't just around prices and it's just around the supply of [product]. All of our competitors will also have good [products]. It is about something that they can help engage with their customer base and our sponsorships enable us to do that. And it does, as I've mentioned throughout – probably to the point of boredom! It does enable us again to further build on our differentiation from competitors. So where you've got here on your model, 'integral to competing' and 'integral to profit maximisation', it's definitely a driver for us, bringing our different operating model to the fore.
Interviewer:	And just out of interest, within the business, would you say that CSR is predominantly used as a term? Would you say CSV is used at all? How do those conversations tend to go?
Respondent:	CSR or corporate responsibility would be the predominant term. Looking at our annual report here and that's still how we're reporting. But I think shared value is increasing in, sort of, common parlance within the business. And actually I would argue that some of our five corporate social or corporate social responsibility priorities are akin to shared value, within your model. And so, particularly where we're talking about…we use the term, "caring about customers' wellbeing and celebrating local communities", actually the tactical approach that underpins that strategy would fit within the creation of shared value.
Interviewer:	And have you got a dedicated CSR function within the business? And if so, have you got an idea of how many people would work in that? Or is it more a part of, say for example, the marketing team's remit?
Respondent:	It doesn't sit within the marketing remit. It's very much around different divisions within the business, so we will have a group of people – at various times it's around 12-20, with representatives from each of the departments within the

business. And they meet several times a year to discuss our strategic framework and inform each other on progress made. It's very much about being truly representative of that importance – of corporate responsibility across the business. They will also present the strategy, talk about aligning our priorities to the Group's strategic objectives, and actually it's there that some of this language from those stakeholders around creating shared value, is starting to come more and more into it. For example, they will take nominations from across the business of events that we should get involved in, sponsorship opportunities, and then appraise those based on how they link back to our committed CSR priorities.

Interviewer: So within the organisation there seems…there's a lot of collaboration with this team specifically. And who would you say, predominantly, who would initiate these kind of initiatives? Would it be them coming to you most of the time, because that's their main function, or how does it tend to work? Would you pass on stuff to them, for them to follow up?

Respondent: Yes, so it would be a two-way conversation. So for example we would make sure that they had an awareness of sponsorships that we're engaged or involved in. Assets and opportunities associated with that sponsorship, and they would make sure that we're aware of their priorities, what they're looking for as a business to be able to help drive, and it would be about bringing those two things together.

Interviewer: Alright, thank you very much for your time.

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Appendix G: Example of interview transcript: main study

File name: **Participant 208**
Audio length: **0:43:54**
Date of audio: **31 January 2019**
Date transcribed: **03 May 2019**

Interviewer: Essentially, what I'd like to speak to you about is sports sponsorship, so basically understanding how sponsors and sports event properties can work together to create a range of benefits for different stakeholders. The first thing I'd like to speak to you about, please, is this idea of creating shared value. I've got a quick definition to give you; it's defined as "policies and practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company, while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates. Creating shared value can benefit multiple stakeholders". The first question was had you heard of this term before?

Respondent: Yes, I have. I think it's one that we always discuss, whether that directly or something similar, when you're looking at new partnerships, how you can add value to your own audiences and how you can add value to that shared audience that you have between, as a brand and the asset that you're sponsoring.

Interviewer: Great, and you said you'd heard of maybe this and some other potential descriptions or definitions, is there any that spring to mind?

Respondent: Yes, we often talk about 'win/win' sponsorship partnerships and then I've heard of 'win/win/win' as well, where it is a benefit for the brand, a benefit for the rights-holder and then of benefit for the audience that is consuming it as well. Those are more the ones that jump to mind.

Interviewer: Great. In terms of, if we started to move towards specifically sports sponsorship now, say, whether it's an event or events, obviously we can talk a little bit about that later but in terms of your activity that you've been involved with, do you think this is important for creating shared value and if so, how?

Respondent: Do I think what's important, sorry, for creating shared value?

Interviewer: Your sponsorship, so whichever sponsorships you may have been involved with at [organisation] and specifically, sports sponsorship, do you think that's important for creating shared value?

Respondent: Yes, I think it's massively important, I think it's probably the primary reason that we will do our sponsorships within sport, is to provide that added value to our

audiences. The reason that we buy into sports property is because we see an overlap in the audiences either that we have or that we're looking to communicate with and sponsorship, by its definition, is engaging people around things that they're passionate about, so it's a more fertile ground, I guess, to add value to people's lives. If you are a… quite a functional brand that sells white goods, for example, actually, investing in that idea allows you to give people, your customers, added value around things that they're passionate about, whereas your day-to-day business is probably not something that people are hugely engaged in, so white goods is a really good example of that. We did some work, when I was at the last agency, with Beko, who sponsored Barcelona, so there was a shared value between them. The way that they framed it was they take all the stress out of your life so you can go and have time to play and enjoy yourself and Barcelona are that club of 'play', so it was how they could use that relationship to add value into family life, particularly.

Interviewer: That's really interesting. Just moving forward slightly on that, you're currently at [sponsor], so what is the ownership model? I'm trying to ascertain a little bit more about how these organisations are owned and operated.

Respondent: Sure. We operate into Brussels and then I guess more to a local level, our dealer network, we have 180 of them across the UK, they are actually franchises, so none of those are directly owned by [sponsor].

Interviewer: Moving forward now to talking about some specific sponsorships, I don't know which ones you might want to talk about, happy to talk about a range or just one specific, whatever's best for you, really, but in terms of the brand, why did it make the decision to sponsor a particular event or events that you have been involved in?

Respondent: Sure. [MSE] is our sole focus at the moment. The reason for that is quite central to what we're doing as a business. Our business model is fundamentally changing, so whilst now we are purely an automotive manufacturer, in the future, in the next ten, fifteen years, we will be more known as a mobility solutions provider. By mobility we mean anything really that involves human movement, so that might be wheelchairs, it might be ride-sharing apps, it might be city planning, it might be autonomous driving, it might be AI, it might be prosthetics, really anything that helps people get from A to B more effectively. I guess because it's all focussed on human movement, the [MSE] was a really natural place for us to announce that to the world and demonstrate how we are doing that. So, that is why we are doing it and the reason that we are doing it at such scale is because it is such a huge transition for us, it gives us the platform to be able to tell that story.

Interviewer: That's interesting because I'm guessing from what you're saying there that the rationale for that specific event is actually very different to other events that you have been involved with?

Respondent: Yes, I think as a good example of that, we came out of our [previous] sponsorship in about March-time last year, that was very much a case of a shared audience, less of storytelling angle to that, more … there was a little bit of story-telling but less central to us as a business. It was more about engaging with an audience with a shared audience, so work was done to see the overlap between our audience and their audience and then through content, through access, through tickets, working on how we could add value to that wider [sport] audience. We knew that there was a big conquest audience, so for us a conquest is non-[sponsor brand] owners, people who potentially could be [sponsor brand] owners. So, again, work is done with that to work out what sort of numbers we are looking at, people we can talk about who would be in market for [car] and then trying to add value in that way through access tickets, contacts, but a lot of data capture as well is involved in that.

That, as much as anything, was a pure media play. If I'm honest, I was at an agency for seven years before this, so that actually predated me, I joined to support the staff last year. I guess, coming from the outside, strategically, I can see why they did it. I'm not sure. I think, as far as I can tell internally, they feel like they got good value from that relationship, in terms of data capture and in terms of engagement with their everyday audience.

Interviewer: Yes, that's interesting you talked about that because that's kind of covered what I was about to ask, around things that you may have been satisfied with and things that you may look to change or improve somehow in future. In terms of some of the ones that you've worked on since you've been there, you've mentioned obviously [MSE] - that could be an interesting one to talk about. Going forward, are there key things that you would like to build on and think have worked really well? By the same token, things that actually might need to be adjusted somehow?

Respondent: Yes, I can talk you through some of our overall strategy through [MSE] in the UK.

Interviewer: Great.

Respondent: Again, probably comes slightly down from our model that we have with [parent company] in Japan and in Europe, they actually will give us some advertising assets.

So, those are fantastic assets and they help to tell that very human story of 'you're possible to make things happen', which is where we're going as a business, so there is an inspirational element to it. Then there is an evidence element which will come through as well, of what the products we're bringing to market are. There'll be an advert that launches in a few weeks' time that mentions that or references that about the car that we produce which omits only hydrogen. Our strategy for the UK was that we need to go beyond just advertising in order to communicate what mobility means to people, we need to make a tangible impact on people's lives. It's very easy to go out with relatively standardised, big, creative, emotional assets but actually, we need to be seen as an active facilitator and be shown to have a positive impact in the societies or the communities that we operate. It's come from quite a Japanese perspective on it, which is something which works for your business and your brand but also leaves quite a positive legacy for our investment. We've invested in two platforms to help us do that: one on the [MSE #1] side and one on the [MSE #2] side.

The [MSE #1] one, we will launch at the start of March, is essentially a hub which, hopefully, will become the go-to place for grassroots disability sport. So at it's heart, it is the largest database in the UK of accessible opportunities to play sport or activity but we are also trying to turn it into a community where people can go and find content and they can find sports guides, parents can find support and hints and tips. We really want to make it into a bit of a community of like-minded people. The reason that we've done it is because there is a societal challenge within the disabled community of inactivity. Anywhere up to 50% of disabled people are considered inactive, which is less than 30 minutes of activity per week. That's double the general populations. We know that there is a societal challenge there that we can have a real impact on. We know that through [MSE] athletes there is the inspiration there but somewhere there is a bottleneck and there are barriers to stopping people getting involved. The way we've come at the activation of this is to try and remove some of those barriers to getting active. One of them is simply not knowing what activities are available, either in your local area or to somebody with your impairment or somebody of your age, so that's where that database comes in. There is then, I think, just needing more inspiration or needing more information to find out more, so you feel comfortable when you get into that first session. There's funding elements to it, there's quite a lot that just don't have the funding to be able to put on more accessible sessions, so we are looking at setting up a community fund, where clubs can apply for small grants to be able to put on either more or better quality sessions.

We're taking a holistic view on it. The audience targeting of that is, yes, it will be focussed at a disabled audience and their support networks but also we feel like, from a wider storytelling point of view, it very much positions us as a brand that is doing the right thing, that is investing in good and is making movement better for everyone, making movement easier for everyone, which is part of our brand story.

Interviewer: You mentioned earlier that you're moving from, I think you said, a human movement provider to…sorry, you're moving from an automotive provider to a human movement provider, was that right?

Respondent: Yes, it's from automotive to mobility.

Interviewer: In terms of people's involvement with that, are there other organisations that will somehow work with yourselves and potentially the [MSE] property to help bring that to life, or is that more of very much you are developing it and it's very much all under your control?

Respondent: We are developing it alongside the [MSE]. It is essentially their owned asset but we are helping with the funding and development and direction of it, so we are the presenting partner of that, which will launch around 12th March. Other organisations we're looking to get involved because whilst we will be a lead partner, we're certainly open to other partners coming on board. I think because of the nature of this as a project and it really lives or dies by awareness of it and then traffic going to that site really, helping that community, the more people that we have pulling in the same direction really, the better. We're in discussions with people to become a media partner, which I think would be a huge coup for us, a television broadcaster hopefully will be able to get on board in the coming weeks and months to help us with that and then the [MSE] will speak to other partners that they have, in order to offer out them as lower tier partners, as you would really with any kind of sporting event or property.

Interviewer: Yes, that sounds really good.

Respondent: As I say, it's a long term commitment for us, being seen to be a facilitator in this space for us, it's important that this doesn't look like a badging exercise. We don't want it to feel like it's greenwashing, and we're doing it for the sake of doing it, so we've signed up as a long term partner of this and we see this as a long term platform for us.

Interviewer: What sort of specific brand strengths would you say is playing a key driver behind this? If you think about the [sponsor] brand, what would you say are the real key strengths of the brand that allows you to do this?

Respondent:	Firstly, I think it comes from a grounding that we already have on being seen to be honest, being seen to be forward thinking, being seen to be progressive, but I think it really feels like a natural relationship. I think [MSEs] in general feels like a very natural place for us to play because we have that brand understanding already in the market. We will use [MSEs] to develop our innovation credentials, so when we are bringing these new mobility technologies to market, I don't think it would feel too much of a surprise, since we already have, particularly through the hybrid stuff that we have throughout our range, we still do have quite strong innovation credentials. I think our research and development spend is about $10billion per year, so I think it's north of $2billion more than Facebook spends on R&D, so it is something, [sponsor] is a company that it is always trying to push the boundaries. I think with this one, being seen to be more human, I think, is crucial to us and being seen to be a company that is doing the right thing.
Interviewer:	That's interesting because, in terms of doing the right thing, we hear a lot about that, don't we, in the media, various companies talking about it and I remember your point before about, where you said, "this isn't simply just a badging exercise", you're not just sticking your name on it, you're trying to do something meaningful. Are you planning to create or develop any kinds of systems or processes that would monitor and evaluate these priorities somehow?
Respondent:	Yes, they're priorities that we already monitor as part of our wider brand tracking, so these will just simply feed into that. I think it's a point of sponsorship I feel quite strongly about, is that you should only go into any sponsorship to help you with your wider brand objectives, it shouldn't be seen as something which is leftfield. Everything that we're measuring already as a brand and everything that we're trying to progress as a brand, a sponsorship should simply help us to do that, it shouldn't be something which sits on its own, have its own success metrics. What we need to do is really isolate the impact the sponsorship is having on our overall brand, not what impact sponsorship is just having in general.
Interviewer:	Yes, so it's inherent within your overall marketing strategy, essentially?
Respondent:	Yes, exactly that, so that's where we drew out our sponsorship strategy from. We looked at our overall business objectives, that is, developing into a mobility company is a huge one and then we looked at our overall brand objectives and we looked at our corporate objectives as well. Corporate objectives is about being a good corporate citizen and then we isolated where were the areas that we thought this sponsorship could have an impact and then designed the activation programme off the back of that.

Interviewer: Just moving it a step further forward from this sponsorship being inherent within the overall strategy, do you think a balanced approach between financial performance and societal contribution is important?

Respondent: Yes, absolutely. I think this one is slightly, I guess, in my experience of sponsorship, is a slight anomaly because there are no direct revenue streams really tied to it. Our focus…you will see in all our advertising there will be no vehicles, no current vehicles or no priority current vehicles that will be shown alongside it. This is very much a storytelling exercise for us, to help communicate our shift as a business so that, when these products do come to market, that stage is set and it feels very natural and people associate us with that world. I would say with other sponsorships I've worked on…I've worked on everything from RBS Six Nations to Martini's sponsorship of Williams Formula One, to SSE's sponsorship of Women's FA Cup, quite a broad range. I think it largely depends on the business. I think there are opportunities within sports sponsorship to find something which makes a positive impact on society and does some social good but of course there are sponsorships out there which are very much just bottom line. I guess it really depends what that sponsorship is and what the business already has in place to be able to deliver on their corporate objectives to be a good corporate citizen.

Interviewer: If we focus on, as you were saying there, the storytelling aspect of this particular sponsorship, ultimately in terms of brand performance then, are we talking more about your overall brand metrics or is there anything more specific than that, really?

Respondent: The return for our business very much aligns to brand metrics. We do track things like consideration as well, which I guess is slightly closer to a more product funnel. Then there's other audiences for us, like our internal audiences here, which are crucial, so we track on engagement with the sponsorship amongst them and their sentiment towards it, we'll do that also as we go through towards 2020. We have a dealer network, so we track their engagement with it and then data capture as well. There is a tangible value for us in gathering data, particularly post-GDPR, where our database was shrunk in size quite significantly. Engaging people around their passion is a very good way of gathering more data and then being able to tell that story of our progression as a business over the next six months, twelve months, eighteen months, two years. We have a contract with [MSE] (for five more years), so it's very much a longer term, storytelling platform for us and being able to speak to people across that journey of time is very important.

Interviewer: Yes and like you say, the long term aspect of it, I guess it gives you that license to actually build something over time instead of just, with regard to some of

these other sponsorships, they tend to come and go a little bit more, potentially?

Respondent: Yes, I think it's very easy to turn your nose up at some of the sponsorships that come and go. I think if there are business reasons for a brand going into it for a short-term deal, I think that is perfectly acceptable. There is this purist view in sponsorship that a brand should be in it for the long term, so they can build meaningful relationships with customers, so that they can add value to plans and audiences, so they can engage with their internal staff but actually, there are opportunities where, for example, the media value is good and it makes sense to engage with a sponsorship property just purely on that front, for that reason, because it gets eyeballs on a new brand, for example. It may be that a gambling brand actually just being associated with a football club or a league on a short-term basis just helps to boost their awareness and boost their audiences. Same goes for alcoholic beverages, where a large proportion of the value that they are getting is through pourage rights and actually, it makes sense for them to do a one or two-year deal, they make their money back from pourage rights and then maybe their business changes, their business model changes and they want to look elsewhere.

Interviewer: What you say, again, it goes back to that earlier discussion we were having, weren't we, about overall marketing strategy, it all depends on what is it you're trying to get out of it? If it's a short term revenue boost or if it's other things, like what you say, that you would get from something like a gambling sponsorship, then it all depends on the needs of the brand, doesn't it, or the needs of the sport property, I guess?

Respondent: Yes, the first thing, when I'm writing a sponsorship strategy, that I will look at, is, again, in the last agency we called them 'Pathways to Value', what are the ways within my business I think that I can gain value from an association with this property or with this sponsorship? That can be anything from inviting B2B clients, so it is a great networking opportunity to take people to something that they are passionate about and have those business conversations in an environment which is not an office space and helps you to build a long-term relationship with that person. So whilst that's difficult to measure, actually there is a value in that and if there wasn't a value in it, you wouldn't take people along to it. So even if that only, you could say, accounts for, let's say 0.5% or 0.05% of a deal, there is still a value in that. There are obviously other pathways to value: there is overall brand awareness and perception, which we've discussed, there's corporate reputation, there's opportunities to showcase your products, so again, things like sampling and things like having physical products like vehicles…

We used to do, with BMW at the rugby, having 80,000 people walk past a product, there is a value in having that. B2B hospitality and engagement we discussed, CRM and data capture is another way of generating value, there's staff engagement, there's really a myriad of ways in which you can use sponsorship to add value to your business. I think too often we get caught up in a "it needs to be…it's all about adding value to your brand, that's the only way that we'll look at how this adds value to our business" but actually…and that's where some of the criticism levelled at sponsorship comes out, is that you say, "it's really hard to measure what the uplift is on your bottom line because there's so many touchpoints that it's involved in. It's moved the brand metrics a little bit but I'm paying £10million a year, £5million a year, whatever that is, how are we going to make that back?" But actually, when you start to look at…I've taken 200 high value guests to Wimbledon this year because I'm a Wimbledon sponsor, that has resulted in however much million pounds business, yes, we're not going to claim that all of that is because of the sponsorship but I think it is fair to say that it is a small percentage of that, so that is a little bit of incremental value.

Reducing your staff turnover or staff productivity, there is a value in that because you don't have to go back to market and look to employ new people, which is expensive. There is a value in getting data because you can very easily model that and say, "if I put more people in the top of the email that I've sent out, more people are going to come out at the bottom". There's loads of ways that sponsorship can add value and I think too often we look at it too narrowly and just look at the brand.

Interviewer: That's really useful in terms of something that I'm going to come onto just before we finish, in terms of outcomes, but just to take one step back, before I get onto that, in terms of the specific relationship between yourselves and sport property, so in this case if we go back to possibly [MSE], how would you describe the [sponsor] brand's partnership with the [MSE]?   In terms of achieving desired outcomes, in terms of your collaboration with them, sharing resources?

Respondent: I'd say the best one to look at is probably…we have obviously our top tier sponsorships with the [MSE] and the [MSE], the [sport governing body] and the [sport governing body]. We actually have local market deals with the [sport properties], so that's really where a lot of the value from our relationships come from. We have an extremely collaborative relationship with them, there wouldn't be any days really that I don't speak to them. I feel we have obviously dedicated account support over there, we feel like we're very much pulling in the same direction, I think, we appreciate the value that they provide to us and they appreciate the value that we provide to them. We see it almost as an

extension of our team, they're a hugely valuable partner. I've worked with…obviously I won't name any names but I've worked with a lot of rights holders in the past and it's a pretty broad spectrum of how good they are but I would say the [sport governing bodies] are really up there with openness to try new things and to be collaborative and to help us achieve our objectives.

Interviewer: Judging from what you're saying, let's hypothetically, if we were to say [sponsor], for example if you didn't have such a good collaborative relationship with these associations, in terms of trying to achieve what you are achieving, do you still think you could have achieved most of it anyway, or 50% of it?

Respondent: I think it would make it much more difficult and I think, again, I've worked with people in the past where doors are closed almost before they have even tried to be opened, so we would ask a question, it would be shut down, so I think it probably doesn't allow you to be as brave with your activation. Obviously with the [online platform] one, we're building it from the ground up alongside them…we didn't mention it earlier but we're doing a very similar thing with [MSE], which is the nation's biggest sports day, which will take place in August but we wouldn't be able to do something so brave and, I don't think, on any sort of scale like that without their collaboration. I think what we'd probably end up doing is something a lot more safe, something which probably didn't deliver for us at the level that we wanted to deliver for us and it would be much more labour-intensive again on our part to be able to do anything half the scale that we're planning to do over the next eighteen months or so.

Interviewer: Is there anything in the partnership that you would like to improve and if so, what might that be?

Respondent: That's a good question actually…I think I would like the sponsorship partners, what we would call rights holders, to have a really deep understanding of our business and then have solutions to be able to help us with it. From an activation perspective, knowing our business and coming to us with propositions of, I guess, new assets within their asset. As [MSE] is, we went to them and asked them, "is there anything that you have which might help us to address this objective that we have? What do we need to get involved in mass participation and grassroots sport? There is a lot of rights holders who will sell off-the-peg rights, they wont be tailored to any sort of business objectives that you have, you'll end up not using all of the rights, so you're leaving value on the table, you're overpaying for the rights that you need and you're not getting some of the other rights that you might need. So, really just an understanding of what rights they should be looking to sell to address an individual business' objectives, I think, would be great but again, it's not one we've really faced too much with [MSE].

Interviewer: I guess the last few questions now, it's around the outcomes of these sponsorships and these relationships that we've talked about. We've spent quite a lot of time already speaking about the benefits for yourselves as the sponsoring brand, in terms of some of these other stakeholders, so in terms of stakeholder mapping, I don't know how far you go in terms of that, do you undertake regular stakeholder mapping exercises or that kind of stuff?

Respondent: Not too much. We have a good understanding of who the [MSE]'s audiences are. We have a very good understanding of the audiences that we are trying to target, we have three priority B2C brand segments that we try to target through this. They are of a certain age and demographic and have a forward-looking, progressive mindset, they are a bit younger than the traditional [sponsor] customers. We have our B2B fleet audience as well, so obviously we have companies like car rental companies or big organisations that have big fleetage who are big customers of ours, they are an audience that we like to use this to speak to and then we have our internal audiences. Beyond that there isn't really too much what you would call stakeholder mapping, I don't think.

Interviewer: Okay, that makes sense. In terms of citizens, cities or regions, is there anything in those areas that you are specifically looking to achieve?

Respondent: Not significantly, no, I think the one where that really springs to mind is when I worked with SSE to do women's football. They obviously have a massive network of engineers, of actual hardware out there that helps to deliver gas and electric and broadband and everything else that they do, so actually being seen to be a positive impact on the communities that they worked in was hugely important for them. The reason they got into women's football in the first place is because they identified a challenge in their own business around diversity, it is an organisation which is largely built on engineers and accountants, most of whom were male. They noticed there that was a problem for them and they decided to tackle it head on but actually, in terms of corporate stakeholders, that was a hugely important part, that the corporate audience was probably as important as the B2C audience. The challenge that you have with that is it's extremely difficult to measure that, what a local city's or a local council's view towards you is and what the actual tangible benefit of that more positive working relationship is. There are a few bespoke surveys out there for corporate stakeholders but traditionally, it's been a really difficult audience to map and to really understand what benefit that you are having on them is.

Interviewer: That's understandable, yes, it's interesting that you said that. Just going back to when we first started speaking, you mentioned the language that you tend to use at [sponsor], so I think you mentioned "win/win" and even "win/win/win".

Just out of interest, do you have a dedicated…now, I was going to call it CSR but interestingly, you've not mentioned that, I think, the whole time we've been speaking but do you have…I don't know how you might term it there or whether you have a department or dedicated team, a function that's focussed on, however we term it, these societal kind of issues?

Respondent: Yes, we have a CSR team, so our corporate relations team are heavily involved in this partnership as well, so they will be working with me, hopefully, on the rollout of this community fund. They already have assignments that they work on. This would be creating a new fund just to sit alongside that, which they help with. They have another charity relationship with guide dogs, they do a lot of work through that, so they have obviously a better understanding of that corporate stakeholder landscape than I do and how they measure that but certainly, they are involved in this sponsorship. We have a working group that they attend once a month, come along and then these stories, I think, are fed out, then, to their corporate stakeholders as well but certainly they play quite an active role in it, particularly with this sponsorship project.

Interviewer: In terms of the project itself, would you have internal meetings with them and then you would mainly, or your team or your direct colleagues deal with the associations, or would they also join you in this relationship with the likes of the [MSE]?

Respondent: I try to, I guess because of the number of contacts that would end up coming into the [MSE], I try and be the filter, myself or a member of our sports marketing agency, so I tend to have it that way. There have been times where I get everybody in and we get somebody from the [MSE] to come in and share things with us because I think it's useful to have another voice, a more knowledgeable voice about their own organisation, their own priorities. So, I guess it's a mix of the two but I think day-to-day contact certainly is through myself and then as and when there's a strategic need or a line in the sand that we want to do something bigger, we get them to come in and present to that working group, which is really a cross-section of our business, so again, coming back to those pathways to value, all of those places across our business where we think that we can add value using our sponsorship, there's a representative from that, from our dealer marketing team, from our CRM team, from our CSR team, from our PR team, from our social team, so it's a pretty broad cross-section of the business.

Interviewer: That's great, thanks. Just to go back a couple of steps, I've been scribbling a few notes as we go down, the last question was really in terms of where you talked about working with the TV broadcaster, were there any other entities or

organisations that you would also be involved with there? If we talk about the platform that you're creating with the associations?

Respondent: Yes, we're always open to speaking to other partners to see how we can collaborate, nothing so far has come to fruition. They need to be partners from within the [MSE] stable because of IP issues but there is a group of brands out there that I am sure, either in the UK or in other markets, we will end up working with. For example, I have a regular catch up with [fellow sponsor of MSE]. We speak regularly, we're going to see if they can help us on any projects, we'll see if we can help them on any projects. I think because there is a lot of brands out there, all with similar objectives in mind, and all under this stable, I think there is lots of opportunities for shared working. It's probably something that you don't see a huge amount of in sponsorships and probably you don't see enough of because of the challenges of working with other brands, contractually. It often becomes there's so much red tape that it often becomes too difficult to do something but they are conversations that we have and the [MSEs] have partner workshops once every three months, so we go along, see what other brands are doing, speak to other brands. So, the opportunity is always there, it's just, I think, finding that project which feels like it would benefit from both parties being involved.

Interviewer: I'll leave it there, because I know you're busy but thanks again and if it would be possible to maybe speak again at some point, if there is anything I need to follow up on, I would be really grateful.

Respondent: Yes, I would say that would be absolutely fine.

Interviewer: Great, thanks again for your help and all the best.

Respondent: Lovely, good afternoon, cheers.

Interviewer: Take care, bye.

Respondent: Bye.

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Sponsorship of Major Sport Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

You are being invited to take part in research on the above topic. David Cook, a PhD student at Coventry University, is leading this research. Before you decide to take part, it is important you understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?
This study aims to explore whether sponsor brands and sport event properties can utilise the event to create shared value for a range of stakeholders, and if so, how?

Why have I been chosen?
You are invited to participate in this study because you are involved with sponsorship of a major sport event.

Will my information be kept secure, confidential and anonymous?
Yes. Information collected about you during the research will be kept strictly confidential and the information you provide will be made anonymous. Data collected from participants will be referred to by a unique participant number rather than by name. If you consent to having the discussion recorded, all recordings will be destroyed once they have been transcribed. Transcripts from the research will only be viewed by the researcher and will be stored on a password-protected computer file. Your consent information will be kept separately from your responses in order to minimise risks in the event of a security breach. All data collected for the research will be destroyed on or before 31/08/2021.

Do I have to take part?
No – it is entirely up to you. If you do decide to take part, please keep this Information Sheet and complete the informed consent form at the start of the interview, to show that you understand your rights in relation to this research, and are happy to participate. Please note down your participant number (which is on the Consent Form) and provide this to the lead researcher if you seek to withdraw from the study at a later date. You are free to withdraw the information you provide by contacting the lead researcher (contact details are provided below) by **31/05/2019** without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw, or not to take part, will not affect you in any way.

What will happen if I take part?
If you would like to take part in the research, you will be asked a number of questions regarding the sponsorship of a major sport event. The interview will take place in a safe environment at a time that is convenient to you. Ideally, we would like to audio record your responses (and will need your explicit consent for this), and so any location should be in a reasonably quiet area.

What are the benefits of taking part?

By sharing your experiences with us, you will be helping David Cook and Coventry University to better understand whether sponsor brands and sport event properties can utilise the event to create shared value for a range of stakeholders, and if so, how?

What will happen with the results of this study?
Transcripts of all discussions will be retained until 31/08/2021. Quotes or key findings will always be made anonymous in any published article, report or presentation, unless we have your prior and explicit written permission to attribute any data to you by name.

Making a Complaint
If you are unhappy with any aspect of this research, first contact the lead researcher, David Cook (cookd3@coventry.ac.uk). If you still have concerns and wish to make a formal complaint, please contact:

Dr Rui Biscaia
Senior Lecturer in Sport Marketing
Coventry University
Coventry CV1 5FB
Email: rui.biscaia@coventry.ac.uk

Please provide information about the research project, specify the name of the researcher and detail the nature of your complaint.

Who has reviewed the study?
This study was reviewed and authorised through Coventry University's formal research ethics procedure.

Who do I contact for more information?
If you have any questions, please contact the lead researcher David Cook, Coventry University, cookd3@coventry.ac.uk.

Appendix I: Informed consent form: main study

INFORMED CONSENT FORM:
Sponsorship of Major Sport Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach

You are invited to take part in this research study for the purpose of collecting data for my PhD thesis.

Before you decide to take part, you must **read the accompanying Participant Information Sheet.**

If you consent to having the interview audio recorded, all recordings will be destroyed once they have been transcribed. Transcripts from the research will only be viewed by the researcher and will be stored in a password protected computer file until they are destroyed on 31/08/2021.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information about any aspect of this research. It is important that you feel able to take the necessary time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Should you require any further information about this research, please contact:
David Cook, Coventry University, cookd3@coventry.ac.uk

1	I confirm that I have read and understood the <u>Participant Information Sheet</u> for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions	YES	NO
2	I understand my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my data from the study until 31/05/2019, without providing a reason	YES	NO
3	I have noted down my participant number (top left of this Consent Form) which may be required by the lead researcher if I wish to withdraw from the study	YES	NO
4	I understand that all the information I provide will be anonymised and treated confidentially	YES	NO
5	I am happy for the information I provide to be used (anonymously) in academic papers and other formal research outputs	YES	NO
6	I am happy for the interview to be <u>audio recorded</u>	YES	NO
7	I agree to take part in the above study	YES	NO

Participant's Name	Date	Signature
Researcher	**Date**	**Signature**
David Cook		

Appendix J: Ethical application P68255

Sponsorship of Sport Mega Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach

Project Information	
Project ref	**P68255**
Full name	David Cook
Faculty	[FBL] Faculty of Business and Law
School/FRC	[SMM] School of Marketing and Management
Module Code	FBL-PHD
Project Title	Sponsorship of Sport Mega Events: A Creating Shared Value Approach
Project Dates	01/03/2018 - 31/10/2021
Date Created	16/02/2018 13:59
Project Summary	*This study aims to explore whether sponsor brands and sport event properties can utilise the event to create shared value (e.g Porter and Kramer, 2006, 2011) for a range of stakeholders, and if so, how?*
	The study will be developed in three steps. The objective of step 1 is to refine a proposed conceptual model created following a review of the bodies of literature concerning the concepts of sports mega events, sponsorship, and creating shared value, by conducting a series of semi-structured interviews with two types of stakeholders; sponsorship managers and sport event property managers.
	Step 2 aims to identify different types of brands based on Kervyn et al's (2012) classification and could be subject to refinements targeting a publication.
	Step 3 aims to include an instrument/set of scale measures as an outcome of the PhD thesis, with the intention of using as an initial step for future research projects.
Names of Co-Investigators (CIs) and their organisational affilation (place of study/employer):	*Dr Rui Biscaia (Coventry University); Dr Karolos Papadas (Coventry University); Prof Lyndon Simkin (Coventry University).*
Is the project self-funded?	Yes
Are you required to use a Professional Code of Ethical Practice appropriate to your discipline?	Yes
Have you read the code?	Yes

Project Details	
1	What is the purpose of the project? *The primary purspose is to understand how sponsor brands and sport mega event properties work together to create shared value.*
	Step 1: Exploratory study to refine proposed conceptual model.
	Step 2: Classify brands according to Kervyn et al's (2012) Brands as Intentional Agents Framework (BIAF).
	Step 3: Develop an instrument to further explore how the conceptual model applies to consumers.
2	What are the planned or desired outcomes? *Step 1: Develop conceptual model on creation of shared value. This model is to be used in PhD thesis.*
	Step 2: Identify different types of brands based on Kervyn et al. (2012) classification, which could

be subject to refinements targeting a publication.

Step 3: Include the instrument as an outcome of the PhD thesis - plan to use as initial step for future research project.

3   Explain your research design *Step 1: The research will take the form of a series of semi structured interviews, which will be conducted with both managers of sponsors related to sport mega event properties and managers of sport event properties. The discussion guides have been agreed with the supervisory team. Interviews based on conceptual model and seminal studies including Porter and Krammer (2011), Maltz and Schein (2012) and Dembek et al. (2016).*

Step 2: Desk-based research based on analysis of secondary data and literature review.

Step 3: Desk-based research to prepare research instrument. Online data may be collected in order to gain consumer views - if required, then a new ethics application will be submitted for this particular study.

3

4   Outline the principal methods you will use *Step 1: Semi structured interviews (please see discussion guide attached) conducted via Skype.*

Step 2: Secondary data related to sport mega events, sources will include official websites of these events.

Step 3: Findings from steps 1 and 2 will be used. If required, online data will be collected as per above.

5   Are you proposing to use an external research instrument, validated scale or research method? (e.g. a measurement scale, questionnaire, interview schedule, observation protocol for ethnographic work or in the case of unstructured data collection, or a topic list)   **Yes**

If yes, specify instruments, title and appropriate references Discussion guide created based on Porter and Kramer (2011), Maltz and Schein (2012), Muller (2015), Dembek et al. (2016) and meeting with supervisory team.

6   Are you intending to undertake research which will investigate activist, religious or political groups directly or indirectly involved in armed struggles, terrorism or a form of extremism that lies outside the commonly-accepted norms of British Society?   **No**

7   Are you dealing with Secondary Data? (e.g. sourcing info from websites, historical documents)   **Yes**

8   Are you dealing with Primary Data involving people? (e.g. interviews, questionnaires, observations)   **Yes**

9   Are you dealing with Personal or Sensitive data?   **No**

11   Are there any other ethical issues or risks of harm raised by the study that have not been covered by previous questions?   **No**

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1. DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) formerly CRB (Criminal Records Bureau)

1   Does the study require DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks? (i.e. is a check required or been stipulated, to access any source of data required for the Study? - if unsure, please check here)   **No**

2   Does the study involve direct contact by any member of the research team:

a) with children or young people under 18 years of age?   **No**

b) with adults who have learning difficulties, brain injury, dementia, degenerative neurological disorders?   **No**

c) with adults who are frail or physically disabled?   **No**

1. DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) formerly CRB (Criminal Records Bureau)

	d) with adults who are living in residential care, social care, nursing homes, re-ablement centres, hospitals or hospices?	No
	e) with adults who are in prison, remanded on bail or in custody?	No

2. External Ethical Review

1	Will this study be submitted for ethical review to an external organisation? (e.g. Another University, Social Care, National Health Service, Ministry of Defence, Police Service and Probation Office)	No

3. Confidentiality, security and retention of research data

1	Are there any reasons why you cannot guarantee the full security and confidentiality of any personal or confidential data collected for the study?	No
2	Is there a significant possibility that any of your participants, and associated persons, could be directly or indirectly identified in the outputs or findings from this study?	No
3	Is there a significant possibility that a specific organisation or agency or participants could have confidential information identified, as a result of the way you write up the results of the study?	No
4	Will any members of the research team retain any personal of confidential data at the end of the project, other than in fully anonymised form?	No
5	Will you or any member of the team intend to make use of any confidential information, knowledge, trade secrets obtained for any other purpose than the research project?	No
6	Will you be responsible for destroying the data after study completion?	Yes

4. Participant Information and Informed Consent

1	Will all the participants be fully informed BEFORE the project begins why the study is being conducted and what their participation will involve?	Yes
2	Will every participant be asked to give written consent to participating in the study, before it begins?	Yes
3	Will all participants be fully informed about what data will be collected, and what will be done with this data during and after the study? (consider: who retains it, where and for how long)	Yes
4	Will there be audio, video or photographic recording of participants?	Yes
	Will explicit consent be sought for recording of participants?	Yes
5	Will every participant understand that they have the right not to take part at any time, and/or withdraw themselves and their data from the study if they wish?	Yes
6	Will every participant understand that there will be no reasons required or repercussions if they withdraw or remove their data from the study?	Yes
7	Does the study involve deceiving, or covert observation of, participants?	No

5. Risk of harm, potential harm and disclosure of harm

1	Is there any significant risk that the study may lead to physical harm to participants or researchers?	No
2	Is there any significant risk that the study may lead to psychological or emotional distress to participants?	No
3	Is there any risk that the study may lead to psychological or emotional distress to researchers?	No
4	Is there any risk that your study may lead or result in harm to the reputation of participants, researchers, or their employees, or any associated persons or organisations?	No

5. Risk of harm, potential harm and disclosure of harm

5	Is there a risk that the study will lead to participants to disclose evidence of previous criminal offences, or their intention to commit criminal offences?	No
6	Is there a risk that the study will lead participants to disclose evidence that children or vulnerable adults are being harmed, or at risk or harm?	No
7	Is there a risk that the study will lead participants to disclose evidence of serious risk of other types of harm?	No
8	Are you aware of the CU Disclosure protocol?	Yes

6. Payments to participants

1	Do you intend to offer participants cash payments or any kind of inducements, or reward for taking part in your study?	No

7. Capacity to give valid consent

1	Do you propose to recruit any participants who are:	
	a) children or young people under 18 years of age?	No
	b) adults who have learning difficulties, mental health condition, brain injury, advanced dementia, degenerative neurological disorders?	No
	c) adults who are physically disabled?	No
	d) adults who are living in residential care, social care, nursing homes, re-ablement centres, hospitals or hospices?	No
	e) adults who are in prison, remanded on bail or in custody?	No
2	Do you propose to recruit any participants with possible communication difficulties, including difficulties arising from limited use of knowledge of the English language?	No
3	Do you propose to recruit any participants who may not be able to understand fully the nature of the study, research and the implications for them of participating in it or cannot provide consent themselves?	No

8. Recruiting Participants

1	Do you propose to recruit any participant who are:	
	a) students or employees of Coventry University or partnering organisation(s)?	No
	b) employees/staff recruited through other businesses, voluntary or public sector organisations?	No
	c) pupils or students recruited through educational institutions (e.g. primary schools, secondary schools, colleges)?	No
	d) clients/volunteers/service users recruited through voluntary public services?	No
	e) participants living in residential care, social care, nursing homes, re-ablement centres hospitals or hospices?	No
	f) recruited by virtue of their employment in the police or armed forces?	No
	g) adults who are in prison, remanded on bail or in custody?	No
	h) who may not be able to refuse to participate in the research?	No

9. Online and Internet Research

1	Will any part of your study involve collecting data by means of electronic media (e.g. the Internet, e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, online forums, etc)?	No
2	Is there a possibility that the study will encourage children under 18 to access inappropriate websites, or correspond with people who pose risk of harm?	No

9. Online and Internet Research

3	Will the study incur any other risks that arise specifically from the use of electronic media?	No
4	Will you be using survey collection software (e.g. BoS, Filemaker)?	No
5	Have you taken necessary precautions for secure data management, in accordance with data protection and CU Policy?	Yes

Specify location where data will be stored
This is intended to form part of the researchers PhD data collection and therefore the data will be stored until the PhD finishes.

Data will be stored on a secure, password-protected, university-approved cloud-based storage facility (Microsoft OneDrive)

All audio recordings will be transferred to OneDrive and then immediately deleted from the recording device.

Planned disposal date *31/08/2021*

10. Languages

1	Are all or some of the consent forms, information leaflets and research instruments associated with this project likely to be used in languages other than English?	No

11. Laboratory/Workshops

1	Does any part of the project involve work in a laboratory or workshop which could pose risks to you, researchers or others?	No

12. Research with non-human vertebrates

1	Will any part of the project involve animal habitats or tissues or non-human vertebrates?	No

13. Blood Sampling / Human Tissue Analysis

1	Does your study involve collecting or use of human tissues or fluids? (e.g. collecting urine, saliva, blood or use of cell lines, 'dead' blood)	No

14. Travel

1	Does any part of the project require data collection off campus? (e.g. work in the field or community)	No

THEN APPEND YOUR:

- PARTICIPATION INFORMATION LEAFLET
- INFORMED CONSENT FORM
- INTERVIEW GUIDE v4

COMMENTS

Evaluation of the ethics of the proposal:

Medium-risk PhD research examining the extent to which sponsor brands and sport event properties can use events to create shared value for a range of stakeholders. Principal data collection/analysis methods include analysis of secondary data and interviews with relevant stakeholders conducted via skype. Slightly tighter

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assurances needed concerning data management and security. Subsequent application might be made to cover an online survey that may follow this phase.

Philip Dunham - 28 Mar 2018 10:25 AM

Evaluation of the participant information sheet and consent form:

Interview Guide is fine.

PI Sheet and IC form need amendment to comply with new GDPR templates.

Philip Dunham - 28 Mar 2018 10:25 AM

Conditions or reasons that support your recommendation:

You made your application just before I could issue the new PI Sheet and IC form templates David. Sorry for that but I could not release them until they were approved by IPU.

Please make the following amendments and resubmit for approval:

1) Provide a bit more detail on data security/storage - will files be on the network? or saved to a harddrive? will computer be on campus or is it a laptop etc etc?

2) Rework PI sheet and IC form to comply with new templates as per my message to all staff today.

Philip Dunham - 28 Mar 2018 10:25 AM

Hi Phil, thanks for the feedback on the initial application. PIS and IC now both updated as per the new templates, and more detail added with regards to data storage (using password-protected, cloud-based, university approved Microsoft OneDrive).

David Cook - 28 Mar 2018 08:37 PM

Conditions or reasons that support your recommendation:

Required amendments made. Very best wishes for the research.

Philip Dunham - 03 Apr 2018 04:03 PM