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## Exploring Shared Leadership and Multi-Organizational Collaboration in Sport for Development and Peace

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# **EXPLORING SHARED LEADERSHIP AND MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION IN SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
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in

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## **ABSTRACT**

Although multi-organizational collaborations have become a trend in the Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) sector, existing research remains limited to collaborations between two organizations. Further, researchers continue to report managerial challenges of the multi-organizational collaborations and emphasize leadership as a key component for achieving desired outcomes in SDP collaborations. Thus, the purpose of this research was to explore the role of shared leadership in multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. Three research questions guided this study to explore the role of shared leadership through the lived experiences of SDP practitioners: (a) How is leadership shared between members in multi-organizational SDP collaboratives?, (b) What potential benefits do SDP practitioners perceive shared leadership may have for the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives?, and (c) What challenges may limit the development of shared leadership? Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of 30 representatives involved in citywide multi-organizational collaboratives (i.e., Laureus Sport for Good Coalitions). Publicly available organizational documents were also examined as supplemental data source.

Four themes emerged in response to RQ1: (a) strategic planning, (b) support from vertical leaders, (c) shared events, and (d) personal characteristics. Further, five elements were identified addressing RQ2: (a) collective impact, (b) capacity building, (c) organizational learning, (d) cohesion, and (e) shared responsibilities. Four elements also emerged concerning RQ3: (a) leadership dynamics, (b) level of information sharing, (c) level of understanding about shared leadership, and (d) quality of engagement. Theoretically, these findings lead to a deeper understanding of development, benefits, and challenges of shared leadership as well as multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. In addition, the findings from this study have important

practical implications. A set of specific strategies were identified based on the findings of this study to help guide SDP leaders and practitioners to fully leverage the potential of shared leadership in multi-organizational collaboratives. Overall, findings from this study help practitioners understand that employing shared leadership takes time and leaders need to be mindful of common challenges while being intentional about their actions. A number of ready-now strategies are presented, which SDP organizations and leaders can utilize to develop and support the use of shared leadership.

## **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) generally refers to the use of sport and/or physical activities as a tool to generate positive social change outcomes. According to Lyras and Welty Peachey (2011), SDP is defined as “the use of sport to exert a positive influence on public health, the socialization of children, youths and adults, the social inclusion of the disadvantaged, the economic development of regions and states, and on fostering intercultural exchange and conflict resolution” (p. 311). The field of SDP has grown substantially over the last decade. Today, a growing number of nonprofits, governments, researchers, and private corporations are actively involved in this field to achieve development and peace-building goals (Schulenkorf, Sherry, & Rowe, 2016). While only handful of organizations implemented sport-based social change programs during the 1980s and early 1990s, the field has undergone tremendous growth since with a significant increase in the number of organizations involved and collaborative networks (Whitley et al., 2019b). Existing online SDP platforms now include thousands of organizations including hundreds of grassroots organizations operating in low-and-middle-income countries, as well as several hundred operating in underserved areas in high-income countries (Giulianotti, Hognestad, & Spaaij, 2016; Sugden, Schulenkorf, Adair, & Frawley, 2019; Svensson & Woods, 2017; Whitley, Farrell, Wolff, & Hillyer, 2019).

The United Nations’ (UN) formal recognition of sport for achieving development goals helped build the momentum of the SDP movement around the world (Lemke, 2016; Schulenkorf, 2017). In 2001, the UN created the Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) and appointed the first Special Advisor on SDP to coordinate sport-based development agenda. Two years later, members of the UN adopted Resolution 58/5 entitled, “sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace.” This resolution formally recognized the role of sport

for contributing to the achievement of development and peace-building goals. The resolution also identified 2005 as the International Year of Sport and Physical Education, which helped fuel the growth of the SDP field (Beutler, 2008). The UNOSDP closed in 2017 as SDP efforts were integrated into the Department of Economic and Social Affairs' (DESA) Division of Inclusive Social Development (DISD). Historically, SDP organizations aligned their work with the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) an international development agenda developed in 2000. The MDGs consisted of eight specific goals agreed upon by members of the UN to address global issues including poverty, illiteracy, gender discrimination, child mortality, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, and environmental degradation to encourage global partnership for development (UN, 2015). The MDGs were superseded in 2015 by the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. Among the 17 SDGs, an inter-governmental agency highlighted several key areas where SDP can contribute to SDGs such as well-being, quality education, gender equality, economic growth, sustainable community development, and peacebuilding (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2015).

As such, the recent proliferation of SDP movement represents a new type of sport organizations, beyond traditional sport agencies (e.g., elite sport development), seeking to contribute to the broader society (Schulenkorf, 2017). As a result, SDP has attracted growing attention from across a broad range of disciplines including anthropology, criminology, sociology, psychology, geography, international development, communication, education, and sport management for the last 10 to 15 years (e.g., Collison, Darnell, Giulianotti, & Howe, 2019; Farrington, 2000; Nichols, 2007; Harrison & Boehmer, 2019; Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013; Svensson, Mahoney, & Hambrick, 2015; Tiessen, 2011; Young, 2019). Sport management researchers have examined SDP from a management perspective to identify better managerial practices for



advancing the field. For instance, past research examined staff and volunteer motivations (Welty Peachey, Lyras, Cohen, Bruening, & Cunningham, 2014; Welty Peachey, Musser, Shin, & Cohen, 2017), leadership (Jones, Wegner, Bunds, Edwards, & Bocarro, 2018; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2017), different organizational structures and hybridity (Svensson, 2017; Svensson & Seifried, 2017), organizational capacity and life stages (Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Svensson, Andersson, & Faulk, 2018; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016), and social entrepreneurship (Cohen & Welty Peachey, 2015; Hayhurst, 2014; Svensson, Andersson, & Faulk, 2020). Reviewing such research efforts, Welty Peachey (2019) recently highlighted the role of sport management discipline to advance the field of SDP. In particular, he identified three key areas: (a) inter-organizational relationships, (b) organizational capacity, and (c) leadership where sport management scholars can best contribute to the SDP field.

SDP programs are typically implemented by nonprofit organizations. Prior literature reported that these organizations struggle with organizational challenges (Welty Peachey, Burton, Wells, & Chung, 2018). Specifically, an unstable funding climate and limited capacity of SDP organizations continue to be common challenges in the SDP field (Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Jones, Edwards, Bocarro, Bunds, & Smith, 2017; Svensson & Hambrick, 2018). In addition, the broad and complex nature of the social issues (i.e., the UN SDGs) that SDP organizations aim to address, go beyond any one individual organization's capability (Svensson & Hambrick, 2018; Sugden, 2010; Weerawardena, McDonald, & Mort, 2010). For example, SDP practitioners are often required to perform multiple roles including as sport coaches, social workers, project managers, educators, and local experts for achieving their social change missions (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2012; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Thorpe & Chawansky, 2017).

As a result, many SDP organizations try to overcome existing challenges by engaging in collaborative partnerships. These partnerships include relationships with external stakeholders from different sectors such as sport organizations, private corporations, nonprofits, and governmental/intergovernmental agencies. In their policy document related to SDP, the Commonwealth Secretariat (2015) emphasized the importance of multi-sectoral partnerships as a critical component for successful SDP practice considering the complex nature of the SDGs. SDP researchers have also indicated that these multi-organizational collaborations can help SDP organizations to overcome capacity challenges for accomplishing their social change goals (Giulianotti et al., 2016; Hambrick, Svensson, & Kang, 2019; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Prior literature associated with SDP partnerships explored partnerships motivations (Giulianotti et al., 2016; Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018), partnership benefits (Holmes, Banda, & Chawansky, 2016; Schulenkorf & Siefken, 2019; Svensson, Hancock, & Hums, 2016), partnership challenges (Burnett 2015; Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Straume & Hasselgård, 2014; Svensson & Hambrick, 2018), and strategies for building and maintaining partnerships (Welty Peachey et al., 2018).

Although the previous studies investigated collaborative relationships in SDP, most of these studies focused on inter-organizational partnerships between two organizations. While SDP organizations are actively partnering with other organizations from different fields, collaborations within SDP have been less common (Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Svensson & Hambrick, 2018). However, funders and larger SDP organizations are increasingly trying to facilitate multi-organizational collaborations through the creation of different collaborative networks. For example, Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, a funding agency, has developed

their Model City initiative to facilitate citywide collaborations within SDP in select locations around the world. Laureus helps create local collaborative coalitions and aims to provide backbone support for achieving long-term goals through multi-year funding and capacity building opportunities. Indeed, their Model City initiative has implemented several cities in the United States as well as major cities in England and South Africa. By doing so, the goal is for their member organizations to achieve collective impact in the city via sport-based development programs.

Several larger and more established SDP organizations (e.g., Coaches across Continents, Fight for Peace, Waves for Change, Magic Bus) have also taken it upon themselves to develop supportive SDP networks and/or alliances to share knowledge, expertise, and resources for generating sustainable SDP outcomes. For example, Fight for Peace, an SDP organization using boxing and martial arts, has created a global network to share methodology and expertise with local SDP organizations working with young people affected by crime, violence, and social exclusion (Fight for Peace, 2017). Wave for Change's Action Impact Network consisting of eight SDP organizations was also created to establish a collective approach to address social issues associated with well-being and gender equality through sport and physical activities. In addition, there are also network organizations designed to encourage information and knowledge exchange among SDP organizations (e.g., Beyond Sport, streetfootballworld). As such, multi-organizational collaboration has become a key priority and current trend in the SDP sector.

### **Problem Statement and Purpose of Study**

While a number of researchers have examined partnerships in SDP, such studies remain limited to partnerships between two organizations (i.e., inter-organizational partnerships). In the broader nonprofit literature on partnerships, scholars identified several potential benefits of such

partnerships, including resource acquisition and capacity building (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b; Sowa, 2009; Gazley & Brudney, 2007). At the same time, however, prior literature has indicated the difficulty of building and sustaining partnerships with external stakeholders (Cornforth, Hayes, & Vangen, 2015; McGuire & Agranoff, 2011; Proulx, Hager, & Klein, 2014). Similarly, prior SDP literature has also revealed managerial challenges in partnerships such as power imbalances (e.g., Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Straume & Hasselgård, 2014; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018), value incongruity (e.g., Hambrick & Svensson, 2015; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Svensson & Hambrick, 2018; Welty Peachey et al., 2018), and competitions for potential resources (e.g., Coalter, 2013; Hambrick et al., 2019; Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Jones et al., 2017; Welty Peachey et al., 2018).

Collectively, the findings of previous studies indicate the need for developing a better understanding of collaborations in SDP (Hambrick et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2018; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Specifically, since funders and larger SDP organizations are increasingly investing considerable resources into multi-organizational collaboration initiatives, it is imperative to advance our understanding of these types of partnerships in order to identify how they can be improved and sustained over time. While there is a consensus among scholars about the importance of leadership as a key component for partnership success, little investigation has been undertaken to explore how leadership is manifested in multi-organizational partnerships within the SDP field (Jones et al., 2018; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Schulenkorf, 2017; Welty Peachey, 2019; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Recent studies in sport management have focused on the potential role of alternative leadership approaches such as shared leadership (Ferkins, Skinner, & Swanson, 2018; Jones et al., 2018; Kang & Svensson, 2019). However, few studies have explored how leadership is shared among member organizations within multi-

organizational partnerships. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the role of shared leadership within multi-organizational SDP collaboratives.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions addressed the research purpose:

RQ 1: How is leadership shared between members in the multi-organizational SDP collaborative?

RQ 2: What potential benefits do SDP practitioners perceive shared leadership may have for the multi-organizational SDP collaborative?

RQ 3: What challenges may limit the development of shared leadership between partnership actors?

## **Significance of Study**

This study has several theoretical and practical implications for sport management and SDP. Theoretically, the current study contributes to expanding our knowledge about the role of shared leadership in SDP. Although several scholars have highlighted the potential role of collective or shared leadership in SDP (Jones et al., 2018; Kang & Svensson, 2019), very few studies exist and we know little about the nature of shared leadership in the SDP field. One exception was Jones and colleagues' (2018) recent case study on the influence of environmental characteristics on shared leadership in SDP. However, they only examined a single SDP organization. No prior SDP research has investigated *how* leadership is shared among partnership actors in multi-organizational collaborations. In addition, this study also contributes to the sport management literature as one of the first studies exploring leadership in multi-

organizational collaboratives. Thus, findings of this study extend sport management and SDP scholarship by providing the meaning of multi-organizational collaborations among partnership actors.

Practically, the findings of this study provide valuable insight for SDP leaders and practitioners about leadership in multi-organizational collaborations. As stated earlier, networks and/or collaborative partnerships are a major current trend in the SDP field to overcome several challenges including resource scarcity, limited capacity, and the broad and complex social issues to be achieved. While many potential benefits of the multi-organizational collaborations have been identified (Giulianotti et al., 2016; Holmes et al., 2016; Svensson et al., 2016), practitioners often report challenges in terms of establishing and maintaining partnerships with different organizations in SDP (Hambrick et al., 2019; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Svensson & Hambrick, 2018; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Thus, findings from this exploratory study on the role of shared leadership can help identify ways that SDP leaders and/or practitioners may be able to sustain and fully leverage the potential of multi-organizational collaborations for accomplishing collective impact in SDP.

## **Overview of Research Design**

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of shared leadership within multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. To achieve the research purpose, the researcher utilized a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is appropriate when the purpose of the study is to explore an issue in a certain context to answer *why* and *how* questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thus, the qualitative research approach can help the researcher understand how SDP practitioners construct their experiences from the multi-organizational SDP collaborative (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Research paradigm refers to a philosophical orientation that guides the practice of research (Creswell, 2014; Crotty, 1998; Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). Scholars have emphasized the importance of identifying the researcher's position in terms of research paradigm since it demonstrates how the researcher makes sense of the nature of truth in the research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Crotty (1998) suggested two different epistemological stances such as positivism and social constructivism. The former views the truth is objective while the latter considers the truth is subjective based on how one perceives it. This study was guided by constructivism that focuses on exploring subjective truth constructed by human beings in a particular social context. As such, the constructivist viewpoint helped the researcher understand subjective meanings of a phenomenon (i.e., shared leadership) constructed by partnership actors in the collaborative SDP network (Charmaz, 2006; Lincoln et al., 2011).

A research design refers to a plan for how the research will be conducted (Berg, 2001). In this study, basic qualitative research methodology was used. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the basic qualitative research is the most common form across disciplines and has its purpose to examine how people make sense of their experiences. As such, the researcher found basic qualitative research as appropriate for the current research since it aligned with the constructivist paradigm. In this study, the researcher purposefully selected multi-organizational collaboratives in the SDP sector since they would best help the researcher understand the subjective meaning of a phenomenon. Also, the purposeful sampling was carried out according to the criterion-based selection to identify the most appropriate context for this research (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). More details about the specific research methodology are provided in Chapter 3.

## Definition of Terms

The following table (Table 1) provides definitions of major terminologies used in this study. The definitions draw from relevant literature.

Table 1. Definitions of Terms

Terms	Definitions
Sport for Development and Peace (SDP)	The use of sport to contribute to development and peacebuilding as well as to address various social issues (Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011).
Multi-organizational partnerships	Joint efforts engaging multiple agencies to address problems through resource sharing, collective decision-making, and corporate responsibility of outputs from the collaboration (Guo & Acar, 2005).
External stakeholders	Entities that are out of managerial hierarchy in a particular organization but influencing organizational activities (Harrison & John, 1996).
Organizational capacity	“The ability of an organization to harness its internal and external resources to achieve its goals” (Misener & Doherty, 2013, p. 136).
Vertical leadership	Hierarchical and/or top-down leadership influences from a formally appointed leader (Hoch, 2013).
Collaboratives	Group of organizations consisting of multi-sector entities encompassing nonprofits, for-profits, public agencies, and community groups (Nowell & Foster-Fishman, 2011).
Inter-organizational collaborations	Involvement of multiple organizations to seek mutually determined solutions for problems that cannot be solved by a single organization (Sink, 1998).

(Table 1 continued)



Terms	Definitions
Philanthropic collaborations	A type of partnership characterized as unilateral relationships between partners including monetary level resource exchange and lack of active engagement (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a).
Transactional collaborations	A type of partnership characterized as a basic level of bilateral relationships among partners. This type of partnership shows enhanced level of engagement, resource sharing, and interaction between partners compared to the transactional collaboration (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a).
Integrative collaborations	A type of partnership characterized as a high level of fit between partnership actors in terms of missions, values, strategies, and trust (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a).
Transformational collaborations	A type of partnership characterized as the highest level of engagement, resource sharing, mission congruency, trust, interactions, value co-creation, synergistic value, and innovation (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a).
Shared leadership	“A dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both. This influence process often involves peer, or lateral, influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence” (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p.1).
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	Eight global goals were set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000 for the year 2015 (UN, 2015).
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	17 global goals were set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 for the year 2030 (UN, 2015).
Distal outcomes	Direct organizational outcomes of shared leadership related to organizational effectiveness and performance (Zhu, Lio, Yam, & Johnson, 2018).

(Table 1 continued)

Terms	Definitions
Proximal outcomes	Indirect organizational outcomes of shared leadership (Zhu et al., 2018).
Associational value	Benefits characterized as increased visibility and reputation due to the partnership engagement (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b).
Transferred value	Benefits characterized as tangible and intangible resources an organization obtains due to the partnership engagement (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a).
Interaction value	Benefits earned through social interactions between partnership actors (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b).
Synergistic value	Collective benefits achieved across entire partnerships, which is bigger than a simple exchange and sum of resources among individual organizations (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a).
Research paradigm	It refers to a set of beliefs the researcher brings to the study. In other words, the research paradigm is related to how the researcher makes sense of the nature of truth and knowledge in the research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

## **CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter is broadly divided into two parts: (a) multi-organizational collaborations in the nonprofit sector and (b) shared leadership. The first part of this chapter reviews a body of literature related to multi-organizational collaborations in the nonprofit sector. First, it begins by providing an overview of the unique characteristics of nonprofit organizations. Second, definitions and different types of multi-organizational collaborations in the nonprofit sector are discussed. Third, motives toward the multi-organizational collaborations as well as outcomes encompassing benefits and challenges of the collaborations are also reviewed. The later part of this chapter includes a comprehensive review of shared leadership to discuss why it is meaningful in the context of multi-organizational collaborations. Specifically, the second part of this chapter begins by outlining the concept of shared leadership with a historical overview. These reviews are followed by a review of similar concepts of collaborative leadership styles. Then, this chapter concludes with a review of literature related to outcomes and antecedents of shared leadership.

### **Unique Characteristics of Nonprofit Organizations**

Scholars highlighted the importance of understanding the unique nature of the nonprofit sector and/or organizations compared to other sector agencies such as for-profit businesses (Beck, Lengnick-Hall, & Lengnick-Hall, 2008). Previous research documented structural differences between nonprofit and for-profit organizations (e.g., De Cooman, De Gieter, Pepermans, & Jegers, 2011; Gugelev & Stern, 2015; Karl, Peluchette, Hall, & Harland, 2005). Specifically, an orientation for values-focused missions, non-distribution constraint, and nonalignment between a funding provider and service users were typical factors differentiating the nonprofit sector from the private sector. First, nonprofit organizations commit themselves to

achieve value-based missions rather than financial motives of profit maximization. The reason for the existence of nonprofits is concentrated on the social values they pursue, which is different from the profit maximization motive of for-profits (Beck et al., 2008; De Cooman et al., 2011; Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, & Dowell, 2006). In this respect, Moore (2000) indicated that the value-based nature of nonprofits influences the way of measuring nonprofit performance compared to their private sector counterparts. While a typical way of measuring the performance of private for-profit entities is equity value, nonprofits are evaluated by how efficiently and effectively they achieve their missions. Thus, the mission and goals of nonprofit organizations directly influence their decisions on organizational activities (Galaskiewicz et al., 2006; James, 1983). The differentiated value orientation of nonprofits also influences their view on financial resources management in comparison to for-profit businesses. While for-profit organizations pay attention to minimizing production costs to maximize profits and/or surplus, nonprofits are willing to re-invest almost all revenues to develop programs and/or services for better accomplishing desired social missions (Galaskiewicz et al., 2006; Lecy & Searing, 2015; Mitchell, 2017). For example, nonprofit organizations tend to spend most of the assets on program implementation as well as operational expenses rather than reserve surplus funds.

Second, another unique characteristic of nonprofit organizations is that revenues earned by nonprofits cannot be distributed to their employees and shareholders (Galaskiewicz et al., 2006). Previous research demonstrated employees engaged in nonprofit sectors therefore have less financial incentives as well as limited career advancement opportunities than for-profit employees (De Cooman et al., 2011). As a result, nonprofit employees are influenced by different motives compared to the private sector counterparts. For instance, scholars emphasized that nonprofit employees are more intrinsically (e.g., values of social change missions) rather

than externally motivated (e.g., financial reward and recognition) (e.g., Karl et al., 2005; Stride & Higgs, 2014; Stukas, Hoye, Nicholson, Brown, & Aisbett, 2016).

Third, the nonprofit sector is also characterized as the nonalignment between funders and products and/or service users. In other words, unlike the for-profit sector, products and/or service users are not always correspondent with funding providers in the nonprofit sector (Gugelev & Stern, 2015). As an example, while a movie production company releases a movie to the box-office and earns revenues from film viewers, nonprofit agencies serving homeless people through vocational training cannot obtain revenues from their service users (i.e., the homeless). Instead, many nonprofits rely on donations and grants from individuals, corporations, government agencies, and other nonprofit foundations. However, some nonprofit organizations rely on service fees as revenues streams (Wicker, Feiler, & Breuer, 2013). For example, sport management scholars have identified membership fees as a critical revenue source for nonprofit sports clubs (Wicker, Longley, & Breuer, 2015).

### **Multi-organizational Collaborations in the Nonprofit Sector**

The nonprofit sector is well known for its complex and changing environment requiring nonprofit agencies to respond in several ways through appropriate programs design, services delivery, and organizational structures. For example, past studies indicated that nonprofits face environmental challenges including reduced government funding, increased competitions with other nonprofits, complex program delivery, and difficulty of managing relationships with external stakeholders (Ferris & Graddy, 1999; Helmig, Ingerfurth, & Pinz, 2014; Helmig, Jegers, & Lapsley, 2004). Meanwhile, nonprofit agencies serve broad social change missions that are not adequately satisfied by the efforts of private and public sectors (McDonald, 2007; Weerawardena et al., 2010). At the same time, however, nonprofit agencies have inherent challenges to achieve

such broad and complex social change missions that are usually beyond the capacity of an individual nonprofit's efforts (Head & Alford, 2015; Woodland & Hutton, 2012). Researchers, therefore, have underlined the importance of collective solutions generated by multi-sector collaborations to address the broad and complex social issues that nonprofits focus on (Chandler, 2017; Snavely & Tracy, 2002; O'Leary & Bingham, 2009).

Collectively, the resource challenges and complex nature of social issues surrounding nonprofit agencies demand the involvement of multiple stakeholders in the nonprofit sector as a strategic approach to overcome their limited capacity to achieve their social change missions (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2018; Isett, Mergel, LeRoux, Mischen, & Rethemeyer, 2011; Provan & Milward, 1995). In the following sections, literature on definitions of collaborations in the nonprofit sector are first discussed. Subsequently, different types of the multi-organizational collaborations are highlighted. Further, antecedents and outcomes of the nonprofit collaborations are also reviewed. This section concludes with discussion of the role of partnership management in the nonprofit context.

### **Definition of Nonprofit Collaboration**

The term 'collaboration' in the nonprofit literature has been used to refer to collaborative efforts of multiple organizations from either the same or different sectors to achieve social development goals. Nonprofit collaborations have been labeled by various names including inter-organizational collaborations, cross-sector partnerships, networks, coalitions, joint ventures, consortia, alliances, partnerships, and cooperation. According to Sink (1998), inter-organizational collaborations are generally defined as the "process by which organizations with a stake in a problem seek a mutually determined solution [pursuing] objectives they could not achieve working alone" (p. 1188). This concept focused on the problem-solving nature of inter-

organizational collaboration. Later, scholars focused on encompassing processes and efforts involved in collaborations among different organizations for better conceptualization. For example, Tsasis (2009) defined inter-organizational collaborations as efforts to “address mutual benefits or common interests among organizations through a process of information exchange and resource sharing” (p. 8). Further, Guo and Acar (2005) defined nonprofit collaboration as joint efforts engaging multiple agencies to address problems through resource sharing, collective decision-making, and corporate responsibility of outputs from the collaboration. Taken together, the following definition guided the current study: the multi-organizational collaborations can be conceptualized as a notion of an organizational engagement embracing social interactions, connectedness, joint efforts, resource and information sharing, and collective decision-making and responsibility of program and/or services to achieve common interests (Bryson, Crosby, Stone, 2015; Droppa & Giunta, 2015; Provan, Fish, & Sydow, 2007).

A recent comprehensive review of the literature about nonprofit collaborations pointed out the lack of scholarly attention on examining the similarities and differences between forms (or types) of nonprofit collaborations (Gazley & Guo, 2015). In particular, the authors indicated the tendency of using general terms in existing studies examining different types of nonprofit collaborations. Indeed, in their review study, Bryson and colleagues (2015) interchangeably used the terms collaboration and partnership, suggesting those are representative concepts encompassing a variety of inter-organizational relationships. In addition, a recent study investigating the multi-organizational relationships in sport management considered interorganizational relationships as an encompassing term including various dyadic and multi-actor collaborations (Babiak, Thibault, & Willem, 2017). Although some scholars considered these inter- and/or multi-organizational collaborations to be conceptually similar (e.g., AbouAssi,

Makhlouf, & Whalen, 2016; Babiak et al., 2017; Bryson et al., 2015; Hardy, Phillips, & Lawrence, 2003), other researchers have emphasized the importance of the careful selection of the terms indicating different types of collaborations due to their nuanced differences (Intindola, Weisinger, & Gomez, 2016; Parmigiani & Rivera-Santos, 2011; Proulx et al., 2014; Suárez & Hwang, 2013). Accordingly, some scholars clarified different forms of inter-organizational collaborations according to the number and/or composition of organizations involved in the collaborations. For example, Intindola and colleagues (2016) described that inter-organizational collaborations are collaborations between two entities either in the same or different sector. These relationships generally include two organizations in one representative sector. Also, cross-sector collaborations encompass inter-organizational (two) and multi-organizational (more than two) engagements those who from different sectors (e.g., public, private, nonprofit). Even so, prior literature on nonprofit collaborations discussed in this section indicates that there is still no consensus among scholars about the terminology. Therefore, throughout the remainder of this paper, the terms ‘collaborations’ and ‘partnerships’ were used interchangeably to describe nonprofit collaborations.

## **Types of Collaborations**

A growing number of academics and/or experts have developed different typologies of nonprofit collaborations. In particular, scholars have analyzed various forms of the collaborative ties in the nonprofit context through different typological perspectives. This section reviews representative typologies categorizing different forms of collaborations in the nonprofit sector.

**The collaboration continuum.** Some scholars used the concept of a collaboration continuum as an effective framework to describe different forms of the multi-organizational linkages (Arsenault, 1998; Austin, 2000; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a; Guo & Acar, 2005; Murray,



1998; Zajac & D'Aunno, 1994). In the collaboration continuum, the right end of the continuum represents the highest level of intensity of a certain typological standard while the left end of the continuum describes the lowest level of the intensity. Thus, the collaboration continuum enables researchers to locate different types of the nonprofit collaborations based on their relative intensity of selected standard(s). Figure 1 presents a visual illustration of the collaboration continuum.

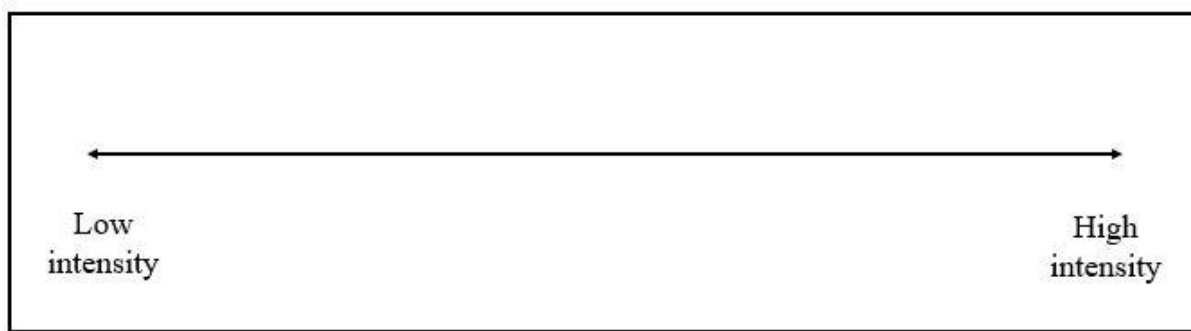


Figure 1. The Collaboration Continuum.

Building on Austin's (2000) seminal conceptual framework of inter-organizational collaborations in the nonprofit sector, Austin and Seitanidi (2012a) presented a more advanced conceptual model by adding a highest collaborative stage that was not introduced in the earlier framework. Drawing the collaboration continuum, the framework included four collaboration stages: (a) philanthropic, (b) transactional, (c) integrative, and (d) transformational collaborations according to the degree of relationship between partnership actors (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a). The authors argued that the framework enables one to categorize different types of collaborations as well as to understand possible development of the collaborations over time.

***Philanthropic collaborations.*** In Austin and Seitanidi's (2012a) collaboration continuum model, philanthropic collaboration (i.e., stage 1) is located to the left; followed by transactional

collaboration (i.e., stage 2); integrative collaboration (i.e., stage 3); and transformational collaboration (i.e., stage 4). The philanthropic stage represents a unilateral relationship due to different levels of engagement between partnership actors. In particular, the unilateral relationship can be built because the partnerships are centered around one-way provision of resources from a primary funding organization having a relatively low level of direct engagement. Therefore, the philanthropic collaboration is characterized by an infrequent level of interactions, monetary level of resource exchange, and one-directional value creation between the partnership actors. For example, while organizations characterized as active partnership actors focus on delivering social service through funds from other partners, the partners do not actively engage in practical partnership actions, which can limit value co-creation. Even so, researchers maintained that these characteristics of the philanthropic partnerships do not necessarily relate to low level of partnership success. Instead, the researchers highlighted that philanthropic partnerships allow the partnership actors to establish purposeful relationships (e.g., nonprofits as implementers of programs and funders and/or other agencies as monetary supporters) (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a). This type of collaboration can evolve to the next level of collaboration.

***Transactional collaborations.*** In the transactional stage, the relationship between collaborating organizations become more explicit compared to the philanthropic collaborations. While the unilateral relationship exists in the philanthropic collaborations, there are bilateral relationships and reciprocal resource exchange flows in transactional collaborations. Austin (2000) asserted that the transactional stage shows higher partnership intensity encompassing enhanced level of engagement, resource sharing, and interactions between partnering organizations than the philanthropic collaborations. As a result, partnership actors search for

achieving mutual values via collaborations. In particular, nonmonetary engagement including mutual program development and skill transfer between partners is highly structured with clear objectives. As such, the nonmonetary transaction helps develop enhanced relationships between partners compared to simple financial donations so that partnership actors can co-create value through the collaboration. Further, each partnership actor can incorporate the nonmonetary resources shared by partners with their individual resources to improve organizational capabilities. Even though transactional collaborations are characterized by increased levels of partner engagement, interactions, and interchanging of resources compared to philanthropic partnerships, some researchers are concerned about the possible emergence of more commercialized projects rather than social purpose programs in the transactional partnerships (Galaskiewicz & Colman, 2006; Porter & Kramer, 2006).

***Integrative collaborations.*** In the integrative collaborations, the relationships between partnerships actors are fundamentally changed compared to philanthropic and transactional collaborations. In the integrative stage, partnering organizations show a higher level of organizational fit representing mission statement, desired values, relevant strategies, and trust. According to Austin and Seitanidi (2012a), partnership actors need much time and efforts (i.e., partnership commitment, managerial and leadership efforts) to achieve the integrative stage of collaborations by reconciling different values among partners. Another characteristic of integrative collaborations is that partners perceive the collective achievement of social values as a primary focus. As a result, increased level of interactions, partner engagement, perceived importance of social missions, and resource sharing are key characteristics of integrative collaborations. In addition, intangible assets such as trust, learning, knowledge, conflict

management skills, transparent communication, and social capital can be created, which in turn may positively influence value co-creation among partners.

***Transformational collaborations.*** According to Austin and Seitanidi (2012a), transformational collaboration is the most advanced stage of partnerships. Specifically, transformational collaborations are characterized by the highest level of engagement, resource sharing, importance of mission, interactions, trust, value co-creation, synergistic value, and innovation in the collaboration continuum. Among these characteristics, the most distinct characteristic of transformational collaborations is that partners have a unified view on the importance of social change missions and relevant roles required across all partnership actors for social transformation to be achieved. Scholars underlined that transformational collaborations focus on collective value creation to deliver transformational benefits for the broader society and social entrepreneurship is one of representative field pursuing these values (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b; Martin & Osberg, 2007). As a result, transformational collaborations can generate innovative solutions to address broad and complex social issues based on close interdependence and collective actions. Even if Austin and Seitanidi's (2012a) framework helps us understand the current stage of a partnerships, this framework does not provide a normative model suggesting certain types and/or stages of collaborations are better than others. Instead, the framework demonstrates that a particular type of the partnership is a result of a deliberate decision by participating organizations considering a suitable type or level of collaboration depending on their situation, purpose, and strategies.

Similarly, Murray (1998) emphasized the importance of the degree of interdependence (or the degree of autonomy) among collaborative partners to understand different types of collaborative efforts through the continuum. For instance, while one end of the continuum

indicates a high degree of the interdependence (autonomy) describing the one-time transactions and/or exchanges among organizations, the other end of the continuum stands for the complete legal merger of organizations. By doing so, multiple types of organizational linkages can be labeled on the collaboration continuum. In fact, Murray (1998) categorized five different types of organizational ties ranging from sharing information to full partnerships and mergers through the continuum. Zajac and D'Aunno (1994) also classified multiple types of collaborations in the health care area drawing the collaboration continuum ranging from hospital associations to mergers and acquisitions based on different levels of autonomy among organizations.

**Bi-dimensional model of collaborations.** Compared with studies that described different forms of the collaborations on the collaboration continuum (e.g., Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a), the seminal work by Barringer and Harrison (2000) identified six forms of inter-organizational collaborations: (a) joint ventures, (b) networks, (c) consortia, (d) alliances, (e) trade associations, and (f) interlocking directorates. In their typology, the six collaboration forms are collapse into two broad categories. Strongly linked forms of collaborations such as joint ventures, networks, and consortia consist of partnership entities who are tightly coupled via formal structures along with joint ownership. Conversely, loosely linked forms of collaborations such as alliances, trade associations, and interlocking directorates have relatively less formalized structures and joint ownership. While Barringer and Harrison's (2000) classification has some similarities with Austin and Seitanidi's (2012a) collaboration continuum in that both of them classify types of multi-organizational collaborations via the degree of engagement (e.g., link in Barringer and Harrison's framework) among partnership actors, these frameworks have a distinct difference because Barringer and Harrison's (2000) model specifically focused on different structures of collaborative partnerships.

A joint venture is a jointly-owned collaborative entity created by multiple organizations. This is created by the investment of resources from multiple partners expecting the achievement of desired objectives. For example, joint ventures can be created by business-nonprofit partnerships to achieve shared purposes (Suárez & Hwang, 2013; Wymer & Samu, 2003). Major League Soccer (MLS) is a great example of the joint venture since team owners not only have individual teams but also jointly own a financial stake in the league (Lenihan, 2013). Similarly, a joint venture can be established through joint investment of multiple organizations including governmental agencies, nonprofits, sport governing bodies, and private businesses to achieve mutual goals in the SDP sector.

Networks are linkages of multiple organizations that are mostly established by social relationships based on trust rather than legal contracts. The networks allow each participating organization to stay focused on its specialized areas, but the organizations are interdependent to provide products and/or services organized by administrative hub organization(s). Engaging in a network structure enables each participating organization to have a powerful competitive force against non-network organizations. Habitat for Humanity International is a typical example of nonprofit networks consisting of many nonprofits all around the world under the umbrella of the broader network structure. Global SDP networks such as the streetfootballworld and the Action Sport for Development and Peace (ASDP) networks offer additional examples in the SDP field. Each organization independently serves in different communities and represents the whole network.

Consortia represent specialized joint ventures created by organizations with a similar sense of purpose to satisfy their needs for survival. In the nonprofit context, the consortia can be established through multi-sector cooperation encompassing for-profit, government, and nonprofit

organizations. As an example, SDP program evaluation consortia (i.e., research centers) can be created by pooling resources and expertise from SDP practitioners, scholars, public, and private sector experts. Alliances are generally informal and do not require the creation of a new organization that plays a role as a hub to coordinate the entire inter-organizational linkages. Even if no formal and legal structure are required, most alliances are governed by industry and social norms between participating organizations. Cost sharing, mutual products and/or service development, enhanced access to target areas, and shared learning are benefits of the alliances. Svensson and Hambrick (2018) demonstrated SDP organizations strategically build and/or engage in non-financial partnership with external stakeholders to jointly create improved ways of SDP intervention as well as share burden of value co-creation process across the partnerships. Trade associations are typically formed by the same sector organizations to share needed information such as legal and technical advice as well as to do collective lobby. Interlocking directorates are organizations consisting of executives from other organizations serving as board members. Serving on other organizations, the interlocking structure enables executives to bring resources and/or innovative ideas to their original or serving organizations. To date, a growing number of nonprofits including SDP organizations have appointed board members from external agencies (Jenkins, 2015).

Similarly, Kohm, La Piana, and Gowdy (2000) conceptualized nonprofit collaborations into three categories (i.e., collaborations, alliances, and integrations) according to the relatively changing level of autonomy and formality: if autonomy decrease, formality is increased. In Kohm and colleagues' (2000) model, collaborations refer to the status of multi-organizational ties with a high level of autonomy encompassing information sharing, program coordination, and joint planning, but low level of formality. Alliances, as an intermediate level of both of the

standards (i.e., autonomy, formality), includes certain types of partnerships like administrative consolidation and joint programming. Integrations are fully formalized types of the partnerships with a low level of autonomy and high level of formality encompassing particular forms of collaborations such as management service organization (MSO), parent-subsidary, joint venture, and merger. Based on Kohm and colleagues' (2000) typology, Guo and Acar (2005) further simplified the three categories of collaborations into two broad forms of collaborations: informal (i.e., information sharing, referral of clients, sharing of office spaces, and MSO), and formal collaborations (i.e., joint programs, parent subsidiary, joint venture, and merger). They suggested organizations generally have independent decision-making authority and do not have high intention of long-term commitment for maintaining collaborative relationships in informal collaboration. On the other hand, formal collaborations encourage continuous interactions among partners. Together, Figure 2 summarizes the bi-dimensional categorization of multi-organizational collaborations.

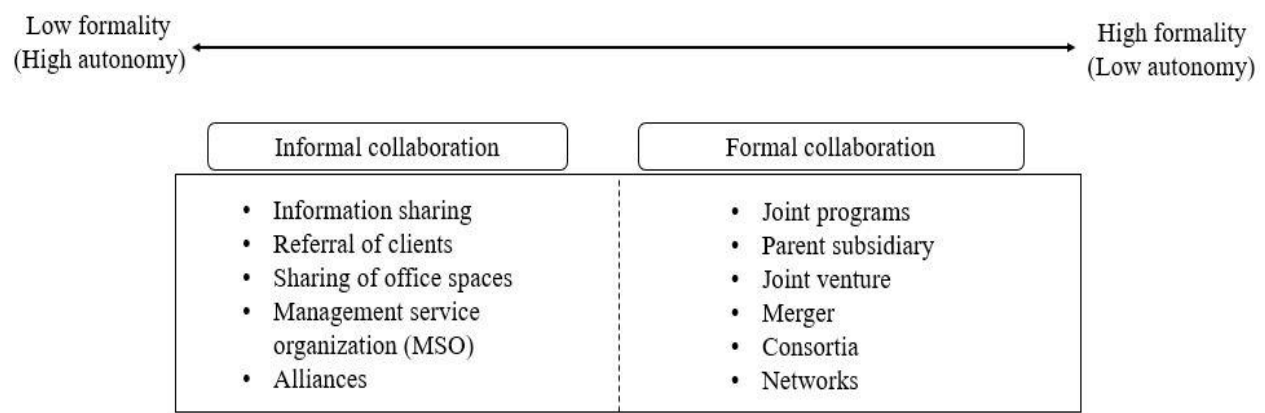


Figure 2. A Summary of Bi-dimensional Categorization of Collaborations.

**Four arenas model.** Selsky and Parker (2005) categorized multi-organizational collaborations into four arenas based on organizational types of partnership actors. Specifically,



the authors conceptualized the four arenas as business-nonprofit, business-government, government-nonprofit, and multi-sector collaborations. According to this model, *arena one* represents collaborative ties between nonprofit institutions and for-profit businesses engaging in partnerships for addressing particular social issues (e.g., environment, economic development, health, education, and equality issues) that both of the organizations are mutually interested in. *Arena two* represents partnerships between government agencies and businesses (i.e., public-private partnerships). This form of collaborations mainly focuses on expanding social overhead capital such as infrastructure and public service development instead of directly involve in addressing a particular social issue. *Arena three* represents partnerships between government agencies and nonprofits. This public-nonprofit partnership is formed through contracting out of public services from public entities to nonprofits. The main focus of this type of collaboration form is mostly welfare issues. *Arena four* represents multi-sector collaborations rather than dyadic collaborations. Main areas of this form of partnerships are national or international multi-sector projects related to economic and community development, social services, and environmental and health issues. In summary, this section provided a review of literature relating to forms of multi-organizational partnerships. In particular, different typologies of such collaborations were explained through analytical frameworks including the collaboration continuum, bi-dimensional model, and four arenas model. In the next section, the motivations of nonprofit collaborations are described.

### **Motivations of Multi-organizational Collaborations**

This section reviews why nonprofit organizations including SDP entities enter into collaborative partnerships. In particular, four motives driving multi-organizational collaborations

such as (a) resource acquisition, (b) institutional pressure and legitimacy, (c) partners' characteristics, and (d) improvement of program and service are discussed.

**Resource acquisition.** Environmental and/or contextual factors of the nonprofit sector can be a driving force of nonprofit entities to engage in collaborative linkages. One of the well documented theories of motivations describing collaborative partnerships in the nonprofit area is resource dependence theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Resource dependence theory (RDT) suggests organizations tend to collaborate with other entities to cope with environmental uncertainty including resource acquisition that influences mission accomplishment as well as organizational survival (Bunger, 2013; Guo & Acar, 2005; Hillman, Withers, & Collins, 2009; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003; Provan et al., 2007; Sowa, 2009). Specifically, the environmental uncertainty in the nonprofit sector is driven by a changing funding landscape and increased competitions with other organizations for limited resources (AbouAssi et al., 2016; Helmig et al., 2004). As such, organizations have a desire for immediate acquisition of resources by engaging in collaborations. Along this line, a prior study examining collaborative partnerships in early childhood education indicated that organizations in conditions of unstable resources are more likely to engage in multi-organizational collaborations than organizations having relatively stable resource base to ensure their basic organizational needs (Sowa, 2009). Similar to the mainstream nonprofit agencies, a number of nonprofit sport organizations have engaged in multi-organizational partnerships cooperating with multiple entities as a strategy to overcome internal capacity challenges (Doherty, Misener, & Cuskelly, 2014; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Wicker & Breuer, 2013). Wicker and Breuer (2013) investigated whether sport clubs having resource problems are more likely to involve in inter-organizational relationships. The study revealed that resource scarcity is a driver of external partnerships in European sport clubs (i.e., Germany and

Belgium). In their study of Canadian community sport clubs, Misener and Doherty (2013) also noted that resource acquisition (i.e., facilities, equipment, grants, in-kind donations, human resources, information, accreditations, local connections) was the primary purpose of inter-organizational collaborative efforts between Canadian community sport organizations to address the abovementioned challenges. SDP scholars also reported that the resource scarcity nature of SDP organizations often motivate them to collaborate with multi-sector partners such as sport federations, national/international governmental agencies, and private businesses (e.g., Giulianotti et al., 2016; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Hambrick et al., 2019).

Although nonprofit organizations are motivated to enter into collaborations for obtaining tangible resources including funding and human resources for survival, scholars pointed out that nonprofits also seek to acquire intangible resources such as knowledge, increased reputation, and legitimacy from other organizations for long-term success (Proulx et al., 2014). Consequently, organizations successfully acquiring intangible resources such as knowledge, visibility, and legitimacy through multi-organizational collaborations can be in better positions to have tangible resources. For example, nonprofits engaging in partnerships may have more potential opportunities to obtain donations and a large-scale grant funding since the collaborative partnerships can increase the reputation and/or legitimacy of nonprofit organizations. Further, the increased level of awareness through collaboration engagement can provide opportunities with nonprofits for accessing potential resources (e.g., Bunker, 2013; Nowell & Foster-Fishman, 2011). Indeed, Nowell and Foster-Fishman (2011) found engagement of multi-sector community collaboratives helps increase the reputation of partnership actors among community agencies as well as strengthen their capacity to access to or obtain grants.

**Institutional pressure and legitimacy.** Another reason why nonprofit organizations engage in multi-organizational linkages is institutional pressure requiring them to join collaborative partnerships for achieving legitimized status in a given field. Institutional theory helps explain decisions of partnership engagement and relevant activities among nonprofit organizations. Drawing institutional theory, Lawrence, Hardy, and Phillips (2002) suggested that certain patterns of social actions such as collaborative partnerships can be reproduced if those are diffused and recognized as a desired norm in a particular field. In this sense, scholars asserted that these external demands influence organizations to have similar organizational structure (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Svensson, 2017). Indeed, organizations are imposed pressures by external stakeholders asking them to justify their activities to be accepted in their social environment (Bitektine, 2011; Oliver, 1990). Guo and Acar (2005) emphasized the role of the institutional pressure in that it motivates nonprofit organizations to achieve their legitimacy by conforming desired norms, regulatory, and social expectations. According to Chen and Graddy (2010), legitimacy is defined “as actions and behaviors of a network or an organization that are perceived as desirable and appropriate by key external and internal stakeholders (p. 408). As Suchman (1995) highlighted, organizations are willing to acquire legitimacy to convince external stakeholders to provide tangible and intangible supports. Along these lines, scholars maintained that nonprofit organizations enter into the collaborations to increase their legitimacy for organizational survival and values presented in their mission statements (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2006; Guo & Acar, 2005; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Oliver, 1990; Zaheer, Gözübüyük, & Milanov, 2010). Sport management researchers have also found support for the role of institutional pressures influencing different types of sport organizations (e.g., Cunningham &

Ashley, 2001; O'Brien & Slack, 2004; Skirstad & Chelladuria, 2011; Slack & Hinings, 1994; Svensson, 2017).

Similarly, nonprofit organizations also expect associational advantages from their involvement in inter-organizational linkages (Chen & Graddy, 2010; Guo & Acar, 2005; Provan, Kenis, & Human, 2008; Sowa, 2009). Chen and Graddy (2010) conceptualized that nonprofits seek legitimacy from organizational partnerships in three motives: (a) to meet expectations of external stakeholders, (b) enhance organizational reputation, and (c) build future relationships. Nonprofits are willing to obtain the legitimacy via collaborations in order to satisfy expectations of relevant stakeholders including funding agencies, donors, and community members. This view is supported by other scholars who argued collaborative relationships are generally advocated by higher authorities including government agencies, legislation, or regulations in certain industry rather than voluntarily established by nonprofit entities (Bryson et al., 2006; Guo & Acar, 2005; Oliver, 1990; Provan et al., 2008). Although joining a formally established collaborations is not a mandatory requirement for nonprofit agencies, government funders increasingly place a high value on formal partnerships to grant recipients. As a result, nonprofit actors find it difficult to refuse formal collaborations.

In her study in the nonprofit sport context, Babiak (2007) demonstrated government agencies and funding policies influence nonprofit sport organizations on involving in interorganizational relationships to avoid repercussions of noncompliance. Specifically, this study revealed that leaders of nonprofit sport organizations felt partnership formation as a pressure from the federal government because they expected reduced funding and other potential disadvantages from the government agencies if they do not form or engage in the partnerships. Further, a recent case study exploring cross-sector partnerships in two sailing clusters in France

and New Zealand showed that partners reported institutional pressures to create or join inter-organizational linkages from public authorities because they offered funding only to organizations having collaborative organizational structures (Gerke, Babiak, Dickson, & Desbordes, 2017). In addition, a previous study suggested that the number of organizations in given collaborative linkages can result in building dominant discourses associated with forming collaborative linkages in a given industry (Proulx et al., 2014). If a large number of organizations join and work together in collaborative networks, the collaborative networks can be considered as an appropriate way of a norm in a particular field as well as to the public. These prevailing expectations of peer agencies and the general public may make organizations feel pressured to enter into the partnerships.

Furthermore, nonprofits are willing to join collaborative networks to be associated with the legitimized status or reputation of an entire network. For example, sport management scholars indicated that joining collaborative networks may represent the fulfillment of professional standards and values established by an institutional field (e.g., NCAA certificate for bowl games) (Seifried, Soebbing, & Agyemang, 2018). Therefore, the organization can satisfy the expectations of donors and community stakeholders regarding the program and/or service quality through legitimized status and positive image in the collaborative networks. In this regard, past studies revealed that donors want to be associated with prestigious nonprofit institutions because they think supporting high-profile networks represents their social status (Galaskiewicz et al., 2006). Additionally, nonprofits are also motivated to engage in collaborative networks to build potential relationships with others. A recent study examining a citywide SDP coalition via social network analysis (SNA) articulated this aspect by demonstrating the SDP coalition plays a role as a vehicle for networking opportunities with peer

organizations (Hambrick et al., 2019). As such, nonprofit SDP agencies enter into collaborative partnerships to build future relationships with other partnership actors (Welty Peachey et al., 2018).

**Partners' characteristics.** Partners' characteristics are also an important determinant influencing the decision of nonprofits to engage in collaborative relationships. Transaction cost theory helps understand why nonprofit organizations consider the characteristics of their potential counterparts for inter-agency collaborations. Generally, partnerships are risky actions that might result in unexpected consequences associated with the commitment of counterparts. This potential risk can be mitigated by the selection of reliable partners. Prior research has emphasized the importance of thorough analysis and understanding about characteristics of potential partners before entering into the partnerships. As such, Chen (2010) suggested two critical partnership selection criteria used among nonprofits including shared visions and positive prior working relationships. Utilizing these standards for partnership selection processes helps nonprofits minimize transaction costs. In other words, nonprofits can save time searching for potential partners as well as unnecessary coordinating efforts (Chen, 2010; Chen & Graddy, 2010; Guo & Acar, 2005; Gulati, 1998; Williamson, 1985).

Indeed, organizations prefer to cooperate with other institutions having a similar vision (Behn, 2010; Li, 2005). Otherwise, cooperating with others can make collaborative relationships difficult to maintain. This is because partnerships consisting of disparate organizations in terms of vision can bring about unexpected conflicts among participating organizations (Chen, 2010). As an example, a prior research indicated that competing or unclear vision is a significant discouragement leading the failure of multi-organizational collaborations (Droppa & Giunta, 2015). Further, a qualitative research regarding a non-governmental organization (NGO)

consortium in Hong Kong revealed that previous collaboration experiences and shared goals among consortium participants were key success factors in partnerships (Leung, 2013). Also, Chen and Graddy (2010) found the influences of shared vision and successful prior partnership experiences of external collaborators on organizational learning in a social service area. The literature emphasized that institutional efforts looking for complementary partners for partnership formation pay off in the long run (Gazley, 2017; Gazley & Brudney, 2007; Selden, Sowa, & Sandfort, 2006). The importance of value and/or vision alignment was also underscored as one of the key factors influencing partnership decisions in the SDP context (Parent & Harvey, 2009; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Sport management scholars reported conflicts between partnership actors if their desired values or purposes do not fit together in the context of nonprofit sport partnerships (Babiak, 2009; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Holmes et al., 2016).

Pre-existing relationships and the performance history of partnering organizations allow a nonprofit organization to reduce search costs of finding partners (Gulati, 1998; Guo & Acar, 2005). Notably, past history of collaborations and interactions with other institutions is an important determinant of an organization for partnership development (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b; Leung, 2013; Proulx et al., 2014; Sowa, 2009). This emphasizes the importance of the social network among nonprofit agencies influencing their decision-making toward partnership engagement. Concerning the social network, prior research suggested interpersonal networks of key members in organizations may play a significant role in building a collaborative network with other institutions (Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999). Specifically, they elaborated that decision-makers prefer to interact with reliable individuals they had previously worked with. Similarly, Guo and Acar (2005) examined the role of board members' personal network in terms of forming a more formalized inter-organizational connections in the urban charitable setting. As a



result, they identified that the board members are important actors who take the lead of building collaborations. Furthermore, a case study investigating cross-sector partnerships in Canadian sport context revealed that key internal stakeholders' social networks and previous experiences are important catalysts for partnerships formation (Babiak, 2007). She also highlighted pre-existing interpersonal relationships can enable trust-building and knowledge sharing so that they can result in partnership formation.

At the same time, another researcher maintained that “partnering organizations also pay much attention to the past performance of their counterparts before committing to partnership agreements” (Chen, 2010, p. 385). In fact, organizations take advantage of information related to past performance of potential partners along with their reputation. Sport management literature also indicated the role of performance history about partners to gain legitimacy (e.g., Babiak, 2003; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). Hayhurst and Frisby (2010) identified that the willingness of SDP organizations to partner with a high-performance sport entity was determined by their established history. Therefore, a helpful reference of potential partners plays a significant role as a barometer for nonprofit organizations to internally evaluate the potential fit between partnership actors (Hardy, Lawrence, & Phillips, 2006).

**Improvement of program and services.** Nonprofit organizations are also motivated to get involved in multi-organizational collaborations to improve or expand their programs and service coverage. Oliver's (1990) analytical framework of partnership motives helps understand program and service improvement motivation among nonprofits toward partnership engagement. According to Oliver (1990), organizations have an internal orientation seeking a way to enhance organizational efficiency, which is distinct from external motives such as resource acquisition and institutional pressures. In this sense, prior literature indicated collaboration is a strategic

organizational decision, which enables a nonprofit to improve their programs or services (Hill & Lynn, 2003; Sowa, 2009). Building on Oliver's (1990) conceptual framework, Babiak (2007) identified underlying factors leading a Canadian sport center to multi-sector partnerships consisting of nonprofit, public, and private organizations. Findings revealed that there was an evident reason associated with achievement of efficiency in the Canadian sport center by forming partnerships. In particular, the results showed the strategic decision of the sport club to attain economies of scale through the partnerships by reducing costs in partnership structures. Similarly, Jones and colleagues (2017) investigated inter-organizational relationships between youth sport nonprofits and emphasized the importance of transactional cost economics (TCE) to understand partnership motivations of nonprofit agencies. Nonprofit sport organizations expected to reduce transactional costs including direct (e.g., human, financial, infrastructural resources) and indirect costs (e.g., planning, implementing, and monitoring) via partnership engagement, thus partnerships were strategically selected as a mean to focus on value-related program activities by sharing resources and subsidiary operational duties.

Nonprofit agencies also engage in partnerships to enhance service quality. For example, researchers highlighted that nonprofit organizations perceive partnerships as a way to enhance service and/or program quality for recipients (Proulx et al., 2014; Sowa, 2009). In the SDP literature, several studies highlighted that SDP organizations collaborate with external partners to improve service and/or program quality as well as to implement joint programs (Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016). Misener and Doherty (2013) also demonstrated that nonprofit sport organizations enter into partnerships to enhance their program and service quality through high quality equipment, facilities, and other types of supports from external partners. Also, a previous study examining a partnership approach of SDP

organizations in Zambia showed that the SDP agency partnered with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focusing on HIV/AIDS for joint program delivery by combining expertise of sport and health-based NGOs (Lindsey & Banda, 2011).

### **Outcomes of Collaborations**

The existing literature on multi-organizational collaborations has revealed several potential benefits and challenges of nonprofit collaboration. The first part of this chapter describes the benefits of the collaborations drawing Austin and Seitanidi's (2012b) often-cited value creation model. Austin and Seitanidi (2012b) categorized partnership benefits into four components including (a) associational value (b) transferred value, (c) interaction value, and (d) synergistic value. The second part of this section continues to discuss challenges of nonprofit collaborations such as (a) power imbalance, (b) value incongruity, and (c) competitions for potential resources by synthesizing relevant literature.

**Benefits of collaborations.** The literature showed nonprofits gain benefits from multi-organizational collaborations and these benefits are aligned with partnership motivations. This section discusses several benefits of the collaborations reviewing relevant studies.

***Associational value.*** According to Austin and Seitanidi (2012b), associational value refers to positive visibility of partnering agencies and social issues nonprofits are willing to address. In this regard, increased associational value is one of the desired benefits for organizations engaging in multi-organizational linkages. Researchers indicated teaming up with respected organizations bring enhanced exposure and trustworthiness of nonprofit agencies (Galaskiewicz et al., 2006; Gourville & Rangan, 2004; Nowell & Foster-Fishman, 2011; Selsky & Parker, 2005). The enhanced visibility and/or reputation of organizations gained through

partnership engagement can result in goal accomplishment. For instance, Sowa (2009) suggested that increased visibility from working with well-regarded partners enable nonprofits to better serve their social missions. Chen (2010) supported this argument by demonstrating that inter-organizational partnerships can result in increased levels of goal achievement. The result indicated that collaborating with a reputable partner may not only have a spillover effect across partner organizations but can also facilitate goal accomplishment.

In sport management, Seifried and colleagues (2018) demonstrated how college football bowl games gained benefits such as improved market value and awareness through interorganizational relationship working with host communities, conferences, television networks, and sponsors. In the nonprofit sport sector, Babiak (2003) found interorganizational relationships consisting of a national sport center, Canadian sport committee, corporate partners, university partners, and local government helped increase the visibility of partner organizations. Misener and Doherty (2013) investigated the impact of interorganizational relationships in a nonprofit community sport context. They found that nonprofit sport clubs gained enhanced level of awareness in the community through collaborations with the local government and media. Specifically, partnering with media agencies allowed nonprofit sport clubs to expose club name and logos through the media outlet, which resulted in increased club visibility. Partnerships are also beneficial for nonprofit organizations to bring more attentions to particular issues (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b). In fact, many SDP agencies aim to generate increased public attention on various social issues through partnership engagement. As an example, a recent study showed that a sport-for-health program in Vanuatu cooperated with other organizations to increase awareness of healthy lifestyles (Schulenkorf & Siefken, 2019).

***Transferred value.*** Transferred value refers to benefits (e.g., resources) obtained by an organization from other partners. Specifically, the transferred value consists of tangible and intangible resources. While the former includes material supports including financial, human, and physical resources (e.g., product, equipment, facilities), the latter contains capacity building opportunities such as skills and knowledge learned from other partners (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a). Existing literature has reported multi-organizational linkages are sources of such tangible and intangible resources for participating agencies (e.g., Alexander, Thibault, & Frisby, 2008; Balser & McClusky, 2005; Gazley & Brudney, 2007). For example, previous research investigating business-nonprofit partnerships documented that for-profit businesses often provide human resource support (e.g., volunteers) with their nonprofit partners (Vock, van Dolen, & Kolk, 2014). As a result, these transferred values via collaborative partnerships can lead to organizational survival (Sowa, 2009).

Previous studies on inter-organizational collaborations in youth sport have shown the role of transferred values as a desired benefit of partnerships. For instance, Casey, Payne, and Eime (2009) found cross-sector partnership enabled member organizations to access needed equipment, facilities, transportation, and human resources through other partners within community and recreation sector. Similarly, a past study identified four deliverable components from inter-organizational partnerships in nonprofit community sport (Misener & Doherty, 2013). In particular, they were: (a) physical resources including facilities, equipment, uniforms, and website exposure, (b) financial resources including cash and/or grants, cost savings, and donations, (c) human resources such as coaches, officials, and volunteers, and (d) accreditation with local/national sport governing bodies including infrastructure, operating guidelines, governing rules, insurance, tournament participation, and training manuals and courses. There is

also a consensus among SDP scholars that multi-organizational collaborations can help organizations overcome resource scarcity and limited capacity (Giulianotti et al., 2016; Holmes et al., 2016; Jones et al., 2017). A prior study examining a nonprofit SDP coalition, for example, identified that coalition members perceived financial and non-financial resource (e.g., new knowledge skills, enhanced public profile, building new relationships etc.) acquisition as benefits of collaborating with other peer organizations (Hambrick et al., 2019). Holmes et al. (2016) also found that the provision of essential sport equipment and relevant materials from external partners are critical aspects of multi-organizational collaborations in the SDP sector. In addition, some researchers identified that partnerships allow SDP organizations to access to spaces and facilities for program delivery (Svensson et al., 2016).

***Interaction value.*** Beside monetary and physical resources transferred to partners, partnerships can also generate other values formed through social interactions between member organizations (London, Rondinelli, & O'Neill, 2005; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b). As Austin (2000) noted, partnerships allow each partner to engage in continual learning. The continual learning includes how to collaborate with other organizations (i.e., partnering process, coordination of opinions, collaboration ethics) and how to create collective values. As such, he described cooperative relationships play a role as a learning laboratory for partnership actors to accumulate knowledge and experience. Similarly, Agranoff (2006) described partners as “co-conveners, co-strategists, co-action formulators, co-programmers, and so on” (p.59) to highlight the benefits of mutual learning from partnerships. Other scholars indicated multi-organizational collaborations can increase the capacity of partnering agencies through the partnership mechanism requiring continuous interactions between partners (Chen, 2010; Chen & Graddy, 2010).

Meanwhile, enhanced interorganizational learning opportunities in partnership structure can contribute to creating new knowledge (Hardy et al., 2003). Knowledge creation can be associated with increased access to nonmonetary assets of other partners. A recent study conducted by Svensson and Hambrick (2018) demonstrated the critical role of interorganizational networks allowing SDP entities to get access to expertise (e.g., education, gender, health, business, policy etc.) of external agencies from different sectors. In doing so, SDP organizations can internalize knowledge and skills from external partners for organizational development. In addition, they identified partnering with external agencies can create a collective learning space where partnership stakeholders gather together and share new and/or different perspectives with others for social change programs. Moreover, other scholars reported that multi-organizational collaborations can contribute to developing individual level value creation (i.e., friendship with employees in partnering organizations) (Misener & Doherty, 2012).

***Synergistic value.*** Successful multi-organizational collaborations can also lead to synergistic values across entire partnerships, which are associated with the transformational collaboration stage of Austin and Seitanidi's (2012a) collaboration continuum. Synergy is defined as "the power to combine the perspectives, resources, and skills of a group of people and organizations" (Lasker, Weiss, & Miller, 2001, p.183). Austin and Seitanidi (2012a) indicated "synergistic value arises from the underlying premise of all collaborations that combining partners' resources enables them to accomplish more together than they could have separately" (p. 731). Past studies underscored that the synergy is greater than simple exchange and/or sum of resources among individual organizations (Lasker et al., 2001; Weiss, Anderson, & Lasker, 2002). Instead, Austin and Seitanidi (2012a) highlighted the role of innovation (creation of new approach to existing practices) facilitating synergistic values within collaborative partnerships. In

this respect, Selesky and Parker (2005) maintained cross-sector partnerships help develop innovative approaches in terms of problem recognition and problem-solving. In their conceptual study about corporate and nonprofit collaborations, Holmes and Moir (2007) documented inter-organizational collaborations can lead to three types of innovation regarding product, service, and operation process. In the SDP sector, there is a consensus among SDP researchers about the need to focus on the collective impact of SDP initiatives by leveraging advantages of partnerships with external stakeholders (Darnell & Black, 2011; Giulianotti et al., 2016; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Svensson & Loat, 2019). To achieve collective impact via SDP interventions, a recent study emphasized that SDP organizations paid attention to collective learning and interactive processes of creating improved SDP approaches for positive social change through relationships with external stakeholders (Svensson & Hambrick, 2019). Specifically, the collective learning processes not only help facilitate knowledge and ideas from other sectors, but also value insight from the local community. Hambrick and colleagues' (2019) recent work of an SDP coalition consisting of local SDP agencies further showed that multi-organizational linkages allowed the local SDP agencies to generate synergistic value for addressing local issues via innovative solutions.

**Challenges of collaborations.** While partnerships can help generate value for nonprofits, collaborating with external stakeholders requires nonprofit agencies to contribute their time, resources, and efforts for managing partnership processes. Indeed, a considerable number of researchers reported partnership challenges in the nonprofit sector (Agranoff, 2006; Ashman & Sugawara, 2013; Bryson et al., 2006; Guo & Acar, 2005). This section discusses several challenges in multi-organizational collaborations by reviewing relevant research.



***Power imbalance.*** In theory, it is assumed that organizations voluntarily collaborate with other agencies sharing common goals and equivalent power within collaborative partnerships (e.g., Hardy & Phillips, 2003). In prior research, however, conflicts associated with the power imbalance among member organizations have been a recurring issue (Agranoff, 2006; Huxham & Vangen, 2004; Lucidarme, Cardon, & Willem, 2016; McGuire & Agranoff, 2011; Nijhof, de Bruijn, & Honders, 2008; Provan & Kenis, 2008; Seitanidi & Crane, 2009; Shier & Handy, 2016). A past study investigating cross-sector partnerships in the nonprofit sector indicated that partnerships are not always beneficial for nonprofits since hierarchical power relationships can exist between the partners (Shier & Handy, 2016).

In particular, Lie (2015) mentioned that a structural condition characterized as a donor-recipient relationship plays a role in solidifying the inevitable power imbalance between partnership actors. Similarly, scholars have also pointed out that unequal power dynamics associated with funding relations among partnership actors is a salient challenge in the SDP sector (Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Particularly, the power imbalance is relatively more remarkable in SDP partnerships in low- and middle-income countries than those in high-income countries. As Proulx and colleagues (2014) claimed, the unequal relationships between partnership actors due to power imbalance can create issues when power is centralized in one or a few organizations and they dominate the whole collaboration. Scholars have expressed concerns about a unilateral influence of a single partner acting as a leading organization since they may represent their interests rather than voice of entire collaborations (Provan & Kenis, 2008; Proulx et al., 2014; Snaveley & Tracy, 2002). As Selsky and Parker (2005) highlighted, “large power imbalances are viewed as problematic because they may lead partners into political or opportunistic behavior that can serve one or both partners’ interests at the expense of

partnership performance” (p, 858). Along this line, previous research investigating the governance in interorganizational network revealed that major activities and decisions of a network were coordinated by a single powerful organization (Provan & Kenis, 2008). Furthermore, they found those activities and decisions were highly aligned with goals of the leading organization. Agranoff and McGuire (2001) pointed out that power asymmetries between partnership actors not only lead to concentrated power to a few entities but also can result in the inevitable dependence of less powerful organizations toward more powerful entities. Moreover, McGuire and Agranoff (2011) described powerful organizations may use their influences to control other agencies by withholding a particular agenda from the decision-making board and limiting resource support. As a result, conflicts caused by the power imbalance can decrease trust among partners (Proulx et al., 2014).

Sport management scholars examining collaborative partnerships have also reported power imbalance as a major challenge for achieving partnership goals (e.g., Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Babiak et al., 2017; Kihl, Tainsky, Babiak, & Bang, 2014; MacLean, Cousens, & Barnes, 2011; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Parent & Harvey, 2017). In their study investigating challenges of cross-sector partnership in a nonprofit sport context, Babiak and Thibault (2009) found power imbalance as a partnership challenge due to unequal resource distribution and political support between partnership actors. They also highlighted that the unequally distributed power along with resource supports between partners can result in difficulty of building trust due to feeling of uncertainty about the partnership. In their qualitative study examining capacity through interorganizational relationships in community sport, Misener and Doherty (2013) also reported imbalanced relationships among partners characterized as power asymmetries and unclear distribution of and/or access to resources. Specifically, some organizations described mutually

owned equipment or shared facilities were heavily used by only a few sport clubs although all member organizations invested money for them. Further, authors found member organizations perceived that paid coaches spent more time for particular clubs although they were hired for entire member organizations. Similarly, other scholars identified unbalanced power and dependent relationships as recurring themes in their case study investigating a community basketball network consisting of multiple agencies such as local basketball clubs, local universities, national basketball governing bodies, local nonprofit recreational organizations (MacLean et al., 2011). For instance, local basketball providers leading the network reported that key stakeholders including national sport organizations and local recreational organizations providing basketball facilities controlled the club's program contents and relevant decision-making.

In the SDP literature, a growing number of scholars have highlighted partnership challenges related to power imbalance (Burnett, 2015; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Lindsey & Banda, 2011; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018) as a considerable number of SDP partnerships involve actors from both low and middle-income countries and high-income countries (Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Accordingly, some external SDP partners instill certain program agenda and such practice can result in resource dependency (Lindsey & Banda, 2011). For example, examining characteristics of collaborations involved in HIV/AIDS prevention in Zambia, Lindsey and Banda (2010) identified organizations from the Global North used funding as a way to carry through their own agendas to SDP programs. Moreover, prior studies examining characteristics of partnerships between the Norwegian Confederation of Sports (NIF) and SDP organizations in African countries such as Tanzania and Zimbabwe showed that the funder tried to apply a Norwegian

model of sport in African contexts, which indicates unequal power relations between partnership actors (Straume & Hasselgård, 2014; Straume & Steen-Johnsen, 2012).

Hayhurst and Frisby (2010) examined tensions in the collaboration between a Canadian SDP agency and high-performance sport organization. They found unbalanced power relations between two entities made SDP organization become a passive partner relying on high-performance sport organizations for resources. This evident power asymmetry existed due to the inevitable funder-recipient relationship embedded in the partnership structure. As a result, the SDP organization expressed a feeling of pressure to live up to the funder's (i.e., high-performance sport organization) expectations as well as concern about losing funding. Harris and Adams (2016) argued powerful actors such as governments and funding agencies are likely to establish a particular discourse that influences building preferred program approaches and evaluation in SDP. Along these lines, a prior study also indicated unequal power relations as a partnership challenge and described the practical difficulty to overcome such challenge due to the legitimized position of funding organizations within the partnership (Nicholls, Giles, & Sethna, 2011).

***Value incongruity.*** Another challenge of collaborative partnership is value incongruity among member organizations. In theory, sharing a similar philosophical viewpoint regarding targeted issues has a positive relationship with consistent problem-solving approaches and collaborative effectiveness (Nowell, 2009). In practice, however, tensions between partnership actors have been reported due to different expectations and goals (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Cornforth et al., 2015; Vangen & Huxham, 2012; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). As Vangen and Huxham (2012) emphasized, it is difficult to achieve partnership outcomes if partnerships consist of organizations having different goals and ways of operation. Indeed, in a case study

investigating nonprofit-public collaborations, Cornforth and colleagues (2015) found different views among member organizations in terms of values of neighborhood regeneration plans created challenges. While some organizations perceived the importance of the neighborhood regeneration project for helping deprived populations, other partners viewed the project as a one-off event addressing a short-term issue. As such, the different values regarding partnership goals and activities between partnership stakeholders can undermine partnership effectiveness (Cornforth et al., 2015). Shier and Handy (2016) also identified discordance of goals among partners as a challenge of cross-sector partnership in the nonprofit sector. The authors, therefore, highlighted the importance of coordination processes between partners to agree on desired goals. Similarly, Woodland and Hutton (2012) underscored the importance of clarifying collaboration goals and relevant activities across partners as a collaboration strategy to prevent potential conflicts.

In a sport context, Hayhurst and Frisby (2010) suggested that conflicts existed in interorganizational collaborations due to competing values embedded in partner organizations (i.e., SDP organizations, elite sport agencies). Specifically, they demonstrated that while the SDP organization viewed sport as a medium to achieve social change goals, the high-performance sport organization pursued promotion of sport and development of elite athletes. Moreover, the authors described different approaches between partnership actors regarding program delivery. For example, the SDP agency had a decentralized program approach where program recipients helped co-create program outcomes compared to the top-down approach of its partner (i.e., elite sport organization). In their qualitative study examining partnership challenges and strategies, Welty Peachey and colleagues (2018) indicated misaligned and/or changing goals are common challenges restricting the sustainability of partnerships in SDP field. In their study, SDP

practitioners mainly reported misaligned goals with funding partners and how these divergent goals between partners hinder both entities to fully achieve partnership outcomes. Further, findings revealed that SDP agencies are often in a difficult situation requiring them to potentially change their initial goals and missions to appeal to the expectations of funding partners. Due to the skepticism from partners about the role of sport in development (Hambrick & Svensson, 2015; Svensson & Hambrick, 2018; Welty Peachey et al., 2018), authors have highlighted misaligned and changing goals may be more challengeable for SDP collaborations than partnerships in other sport contexts.

***Competitions for potential resources.*** Although a basic assumption behind multi-organizational partnerships is to fully leverage collaborative advantages, there are inevitable situations limiting such expectation among partners within a collaborative partnership structure. Given that nonprofit organizations are known for their resource scarcity and limited capacity, competitions can emerge between partners serving in the same sector to acquire limited resources from funding agencies. A past study described this aspect of multi-organizational partnerships in the nonprofit sector by illustrating the concept of cooperative-competitive dynamics among nonprofits in human service delivery (Bunger, 2013). Other researchers have maintained this phenomenon can disperse concentration of partnership actors on collaborations, which in turn become a challenge restricting collaboration effectiveness (Proulx et al., 2014). In the broad management literature, this simultaneous cooperative and competitive behaviors within multi-organizational partnerships are defined as coopetition and knowledge sharing among competing organizations is a common type of the coopetition (Tsai, 2002). Although, as noted above, some research documented the coopetition is a challenge of partnerships, other prior studies showed that nonprofit sport organizations strategically take advantage of cooperative

environments to acquire outside knowledge from competing organizations serving in the same sector through the partnerships (Wemmer, Emrich, & Koenigstorfer, 2016; Wemmer & Koenigstorfer, 2016). In particular, Wemmer et al. (2016) showed empirical evidence demonstrating the potential positive influence of coopetition on organizational performance because nonprofit sport clubs adopt outside knowledge, new service, and business models through collaborations with competitors. Together, these studies highlighted the importance of a strategic approach toward competitions embedded in nonprofit collaborations if possible outcomes are to be fully achieved.

Even so, there is a consensus among sport scholars considering competitions for limited resources as a challenge within collaborative partnerships (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Coalter, 2013; Hambrick et al., 2019; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Jones et al., 2017; Lindsey & Banda, 2011; MacLean et al., 2011; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). A study by Babiak and Thibault (2009) illustrated that nonprofit sport organizations compete with one another to obtain resources and power in cross-sector partnerships, which can result in distrust and tensions between partners. In community sport, other scholars also identified tensions between local basketball providers due to the phenomenon of cooperation and competition in a collaborative network. Local basketball clubs reported that they compete with other local basketball agencies belonging to the same network for finite resources such as program participants, facilities, and sponsors. In a similar vein, Lindsey and Banda (2011) demonstrated competitions between the same sector partners (i.e., SDP entities) involved in the collaborative network for the limited resource in Zambia. Examining SDP partnerships across different geographical locations, other researchers emphasized that some SDP practitioners remain skeptical towards working with other SDP organizations (Svensson & Hambrick, 2019; Welty

Peachey et al., 2018). Along this line, Jones and colleagues (2017) insisted that the competitions between SDP entities are due to the resource scarce conditions in the SDP field. To overcome this phenomenon, scholars have argued for the importance of a mindset seeing the entire forest (collective impact) rather than the trees (immediate, individual gains) toward collaborations in SDP.

### **Shared Leadership**

Leadership has primarily been examined to identify characteristics of individuals having leadership authority. However, more recent attention has been given to explore leadership as a collective phenomenon (Denis, Langley, & Sergi, 2012; Morgeson, DeRue, & Karam, 2010; Nicolaides et al., 2014; Pearce & Manz, 2005; Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2014; Zhu et al., 2018). Shared leadership has received a growing attention over the past two decades. While traditional leadership studies have been concerned with leadership influences from appointed leaders, shared leadership highlights the emergence of leadership both on an individual and collective level in organizations. In prior literature, scholars described leaders are increasingly overwhelmed with their responsibilities (Yammarino, Salas, Serban, Shirreffs, & Shuffler, 2012). As a result, researchers have focused on more collaborative leadership approaches encompassing multiple individuals (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007; Hoch, 2013; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Pearce, Conger, & Locke, 2008; Pearce, 2015).

Conceptually, shared leadership is viewed as a type of leadership characterized by distribution of leadership functions across multiple individuals in an organization. For example, Pearce and Sims (2002) defined shared leadership as an alternative leadership approach indicating the leadership is emerged not only from the appointed leader but also from team members. Similarly, Carson et al., (2007) argued shared leadership is an “emergent team



property that results from the distribution of leadership influence across multiple team members” (p. 1218). Scholars have indicated that shared leadership research is still in infancy regardless of disciplines since multiple definitions exist (Nicolaidis et al., 2014; Scott-Young, Georgy, & Grisinger, 2019). Although the abovementioned definitions represented leadership distribution and peer influences in an organization, those definitions did not necessarily reflect a dynamic vertical and lateral flow of influences within existing organizational structures. In their seminal research, Pearce and Conger (2003) provided more detailed definition of shared leadership:

Shared leadership is a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both. This influence process often involves peer, or lateral, influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p.1).

Consequently, the overarching role of shared leadership is to generate collective leadership through a dynamic flow of leadership influences across multiple individuals in organizations instead of overreliance on a single designated leader (see Figure 3). For the purpose of the current study, the author draws Pearce and Conger’s (2003) definition of shared leadership.

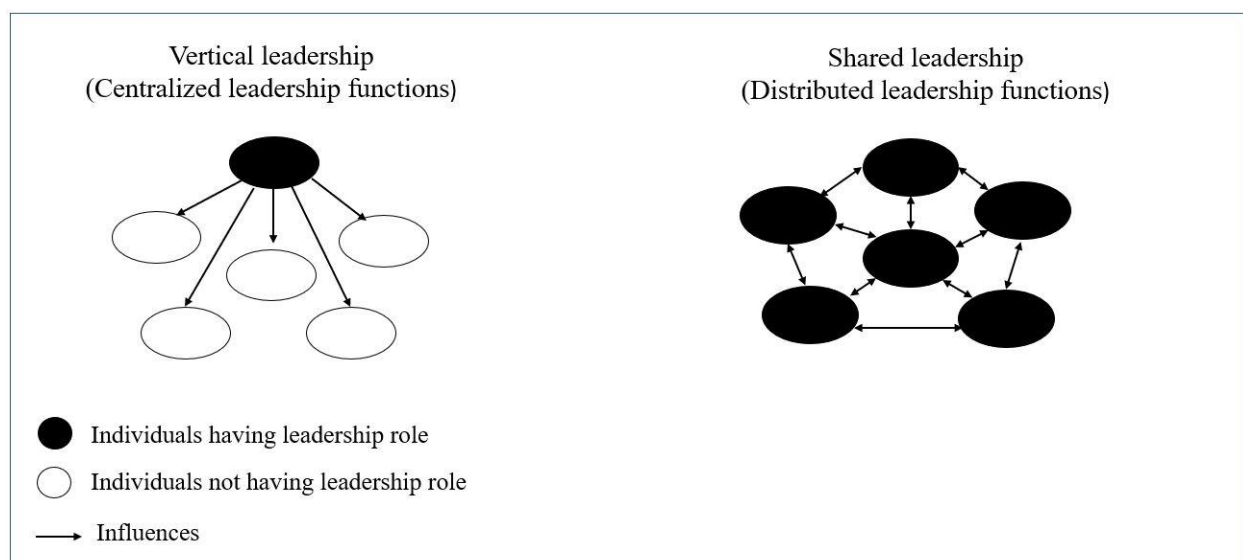


Figure 3. Characteristics of Shared Leadership

Over the past decade, considerable research efforts have been given on studying shared leadership as an alternative leadership approach to address issues and/or challenges reported in a hierarchical leadership system (see Carson et al., 2007; Contractor, DeChurch, Carson, Carter, & Keegan, 2012; Denis et al., 2012; Ensley, Hmieleski, & Pearce, 2006; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Pearce et al., 2008). Although most of those research efforts are concentrated on during the last ten to fifteen years, the scholarly interest on shared leadership can be traced back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The next section provides a historical base about the concept of shared leadership to describe a process of conceptual advancement by reviewing literature in relevant disciplines as well as sport management studies.

### **Relationships with Similar Concepts**

A new paradigm of research streams in leadership have focused on ‘leadership’ created by members and groups within organizations rather than ‘leaders’ to understand various leadership phenomena (Contractor et al., 2012). As a result, a growing body of literature has explored leadership as a decentralized and collective concept. In prior literature, “a number of related terms parallel the concepts and intents of shared leadership” (Routhieaux, 2015, p. 140). This section provides an overview regarding the relationships between shared leadership and similar concepts.

**Collective leadership.** According to scholars, collective leadership is defined as “a process of influence in which multiple members of an organization simultaneously perform leadership behaviors” (Drescher & Garbers, 2016, p.201). Collective leadership is one of the similar ideas viewing leadership as joint efforts of multiple individuals in an organization. Some argue a subtle difference lies in that collective leadership emerges according to fit and situational demands compared to shared leadership (Zhu et al., 2018). Researchers clarified that the basic

assumption of collective leadership is its selective emergence by organizational members (Friedrich, Vessey, Schuelke, Ruark, & Mumford, 2009; Yammarino et al., 2012). In other words, individual members selectively take leadership roles whether situations and/or tasks are matched with their capabilities (e.g., skills, knowledge, expertise). The reason for the selective leadership practice is that collective leadership focuses on problem-solving through selective use of individual expertise beyond mere engagement of multiple members on leadership demonstration (Yammarino et al., 2012).

Despite the subtle nuance between collective and shared leadership, “collective leadership readily fit under the umbrella term of shared leadership” (Pearce & Wassenaar, 2015, p. 1) because collective leadership have considerable similarities with shared leadership. A recent comprehensive review of shared leadership articulated several commonalties between collective and shared leadership such as distributed leadership functions across multiple individuals and leadership as a collective phenomenon (Friedrich et al., 2009). Previous research supported this argument indicating both collective and shared leadership acknowledge Gibb’s (1954) work as one of theoretical bases (Contractor et al., 2012). In addition, scholars have interchangeably used the terms collective and shared leadership a lot in their studies (e.g., Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Contractor et al., 2012; D’Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2016; Drescher & Garbers, 2016; Nicolaides et al., 2014; Serban & Roberts, 2016). Although a few researchers documented subtle nuance between two concepts (e.g., Friedrich et al., 2009; Yammarino et al., 2012), there are no clear typologies indicating critical differences between collective and shared leadership in extant literature. Given shared leadership is still a growing area of interest in different disciplines, future efforts are needed to clarify similarities and differences in diverse organizational contexts.

**Distributed leadership.** Another related concept is distributed leadership. Distributed leadership views leadership as “a practice distributed over leaders, followers, and their situation” (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004, p. 11). Further, distributed leadership also highlights participative contribution of individual members to leadership practices (Harris & Spillane, 2008). The idea of distributed leadership has a similar theoretical background with shared leadership (e.g., Follett, 1924; Gibb, 1954). For example, the discussion of distributed leadership is found in prior literature such as Gibb’s (1954) dual models of leadership concerning dispersion of leadership authorities to multiple members in an organization. Distributed leadership has gained attentions from scholars, policymakers, and educational reformers to foster dispersed leadership authorities in different organizational sectors (Harris, 2009; Spillane, 2006).

A few researchers argued distributed leadership is more focused on the dispersion of leadership roles and/or leadership functions across organizations or beyond organizational boundaries rather than other collaborative leadership approach (Denis et al., 2012). However, in most prior studies, researchers have interchangeably used the terms distributed and shared leadership. Previous research supported this argument highlighting these two terms are not necessarily different theoretical frameworks, rather it may be a product of terminological preference according to location and discipline of researchers (Bolden, 2011). Bolden examined whether the interchangeable use of these terms (i.e., distributed and shared leadership) is related to terminological preference of researchers’ geographical affiliation and field of studies. Specifically, he analyzed national affiliation of first authors and subject discipline by reviewing articles used the terms such as distributed leadership and shared leadership between 1980 and 2009. The result revealed that authors from the UK preferred to use distributed leadership while the U.S researchers tended to use shared leadership. Regarding comparison about preference of

the terms between academic disciplines, 68% of distributed leadership articles were published in education journals while shared leadership articles more spread across multiple disciplines.

**Emergent leadership.** Organizations sometimes face the absence of a formal leader for some reasons such as resignation, departure of a leader, and failure of appointment of an appropriate leader in the position. In this circumstance, emergent leadership explains how a particular individual plays a role as a leader in a leaderless organization to fill the functional vacuum of leadership authorities (Kickul & Neuman, 2000; Pearce & Conger, 2003). Emergent leadership is defined as individuals exerting leadership influence over other members although they do not have formal authority (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017; Schneider & Goktepe, 1983; Yoo & Alavi, 2004). Emergent leadership is related to shared leadership because both underscore the importance of appearance and influence of informal leadership in organizations (Mitchell, 2016; Zhang, Waldman, & Wang, 2012). Previous research demonstrated some conceptual similarities of emergent leadership and shared leadership in terms of horizontal leadership influences across team members (e.g., Zhang et al., 2012).

However, emergent leadership is different from shared leadership in terms of its focus. Specifically, emergent leadership mainly focus on a handful of informal leaders to keep organizations functioning by a leadership gap. Thus, leadership is still concentrated on a few individuals in emergent leadership (Zhu et al., 2018). The primary focus of shared leadership, on the other hand, is about sharing leadership with other members to establish a multidirectional influence flows (i.e., vertical and horizontal) within an organization (Carson et al., 2007; Zhu et al., 2018). Further, while emergent leadership is concerned about the ultimate selection of formal leaders from peer employees to address a leaderless situation, shared leadership focuses on continuous emergence and reliance on multiple leaders (Pearce & Sims, 2002; Pearce & Conger,

2003). In addition, extent literature indicated that emergent leadership focuses on leadership influences from a few individuals in non-leadership positions via individual level analysis while shared leadership is concerned with how organizational members share and influence leadership across entire organization (Zhang et al., 2012; Zhu et al., 2018).

**Pooled or co-leadership.** While shared leadership emphasizes the participation of non-executive members in leadership practice, there are also organizations formally dividing leadership across multiple individuals. Pooled and /or co-leadership refers to a couple of top-level individuals co-leading an organization through formally divided power of leadership. In fact, a number of organizations formally divide leadership authorities into several areas that are in line with leaders' expertise in professionalized organizational settings. For example, arts industry is a typical area having co-leaders to represent different areas of expertise such as administration as well as the artistic part of organizations (Reid & Karambayya, 2009). Previous studies also indicated that health care organizations characterized as three-legged stools representing divided leadership among a few leaders between community, management, and medicine (Denis et al., 2012). As described earlier, a clear distinction of pooled or co-leadership from shared leadership is that the former exists in formally appointed positions while the latter does not have to be formalized positions (Sweeney, Clarke, & Higgs, 2019). Further, most pooled or co-leadership research was conducted in the context of mentor-mentee relationships such as a founder and his or her right successor will manage an organization in the future (Pearce & Conger, 2003; Rittner & Hammons, 1993).

### **Historical Overview of Shared Leadership**

Although numerous studies investigated behavioral traits of formal leaders in organizations (Bass, 1990), scholars have started to explore leadership emerging from multiple

people including organizational members (Pearce & Conger, 2003; Pearce, Yoo, & Alavi, 2004). In this section, the author reviews literature on the historical footprints of shared leadership. Mary Parker Follett's (1924) seminal concept of 'the law of the situation' is often considered as a starting point of shared leadership (D'Innocenzo et al., 2016; Hoch, 2017; Nicolaides et al., 2014; Pearce & Sims, 2000). Follett (1924) claimed that individual members do not have to rely on guidance from the formal leader to carry out a particular task but should look for leadership from somebody having the most expertise (e.g., knowledge, skills) in certain work situations. Knowledge and skills in certain circumstances, in this sense, are key factors for leadership. Her groundbreaking viewpoint of leadership indicated the possibility of displaying leadership from multiple individuals regardless of hierarchical positions in an organizational setting. Unfortunately, the value of her idea was not realized until many decades later. Although Follett's (1924) idea of leadership was not the same as shared leadership suggested by current scholars, her non-hierarchical leadership perspective provided a conceptual foundation for shared leadership (Hoch, 2017; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Pearce et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2018).

In the 1950s, research attention related to non-traditional leadership was paid to the concept of co-leadership (e.g., Solomon, Loeffer, & Frank, 1953). Co-leadership is a concept that two individuals simultaneously have leadership authority in one position. Even though co-leadership was concerned about sharing (dividing) leadership between two individuals, most co-leadership research primarily focused on co-mentor and mentee relationships as well as strategies improving co-leadership effectiveness in the mentorship context (Pearce & Sims, 2000). Even so, the cases of co-leadership studies showed some degree of advancement in research efforts exploring leadership as a shared concept. In 1954, Drucker's management by objectives (MBO)

enabled one step forward in shared leadership since it showed the leader is not the only source for determining objectives of employees but emphasized the engagement of subordinates in such decision (Pearce & Conger, 2003).

In the 1960s, Hollander (1961) introduced emergent leadership that members select a leader in leaderless situation. Although emergent leadership is mainly concerned with the selection of an appointed leader in a leaderless a circumstance, it played a role as another theoretical background for modern shared leadership theory (Pearce & Conger, 2003). These theoretical developments culminated in Bowers and Seashore's (1966) idea of mutual leadership. Mutual leadership suggests leadership functions such as support, interaction facilitation, goal emphasis, and work facilitation can be demonstrated by formal leaders as well as peer organizational members. Even so, shared leadership still received little attention, but there were a few exceptions exploring concepts related to shared leadership between the 1970s and 1990s (Pearce & Conger, 2003).

More conceptual foundations related to shared leadership emerged during the 1970s through 2000s. Vroom and Yetton (1973) conceptualized particular situations indicating when and how leaders should include organizational members in decision-making processes. Specifically, their model suggested three conditions for employee involvement in decision-making processes: (a) when organizations need for high quality decision-making, (b) when employees have better knowledge than a leader in certain areas, (c) when followers' agreement of decision is needed, and (d) when there may be low possibility of conflicts between followers related to the results of the decision. As such, this model showed particular circumstances when shared leadership may be effective.



Later, considerable research attention was directed toward empowerment and self-leadership of subordinates between the late 1980s and early 1990s (e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Manz & Sims, 1980). As such, a growing number of scholars recognized the importance of not only examining leadership among those in top hierarchical positions, but also self-leadership of individual members throughout an organization. According to Manz and Sims (1980), employees having appropriate knowledge and skills for tasks can alleviate close a supervision and direction from a designated leader in an organization. Scholars suggested individual employees' self-leadership allows us to better understand how shared leadership may be implemented at a group level (Pearce & Manz, 2005). The main issue of empowerment research was locus of power (i.e., centralized or decentralized power) in an organization.

In contrast to investigating power from the top, empowerment research was carried out to examine the de-centralized power (e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1988). The basic assumption of empowerment was that individuals who conduct a particular task on a daily basis have sufficient qualifications to make a decision about related situations because of their responsibility of the work. While empowerment research explored the impact of sharing power with members, it did not delve into how individual workers actively engage in leadership processes that is a core feature of shared leadership theory (Pearce & Sims, 2000). As a result, researchers investigated the role of empowering leadership to understand how organizational members engage in sharing power. When leaders empower employees through supportive (e.g., informing, caring, interactive nature) and democratic (e.g., encouragement of participative decision-making) behaviors, the employees develop favorable capabilities that are necessary conditions to shared leadership. For example, a previous research found leader's empowering leadership behaviors positively influence knowledge sharing in teams (Hoch, 2013; Srivastava, Bartol, & Lock, 2006).

The increasing popularity of work teams within organizations drew interests among researchers in studying how teams function and perform (Cannon-Bowers, Salas, & Converse, 1993; Pearce & Conger, 2003). Since these work teams consist of more than two people collaborating to achieve common goals, researchers were interested in exploring what makes effective team works (Cannon-Bowers & Salas, 2001). As a result, researchers investigated the concept of shared cognition that is defined as the degree to which members have shared mental models in organizations. Shared cognition contributed to providing a conceptual foundation of shared leadership because it is related to how organizational members internalize and retrieve information to consistently perform their tasks (Carson et al., 2007; Pearce & Conger, 2003). In particular, Pearce and Conger (2003) emphasized conceptual contribution of shared cognition for shared leadership in that members may not able to accurately interpret leadership influences from others within an organization without having similar mental models. Therefore, it is difficult to achieve potential benefits of shared leadership without shared cognition. Overall, the abovementioned discussions help us understand historical underpinnings of shared leadership (see Table 2).

Table 2. Historical Background of Shared Leadership

Theory or relevant concepts	Key concepts	Key Contributors
Law of situation	Let the situation, not the individual, determine the “orders.”	Follett (1924)
Co-leadership	Two individuals simultaneously share one leadership position.	Solomon et al. (1953)
Management by objectives and participative goal setting	Leaders and followers jointly set performance expectations.	Drucker (1954)
Emergent leadership	Leaders can “emerge” from a leaderless group.	Hollander (1961)
(Table 2 continued)		

Mutual leadership	Leadership can come from peers.	Bowers & Seashore (1966)
Participative decision making	Under certain circumstances, it is advisable to elicit more involvement by subordinates in the decision-making process.	Vroom & Yetton (1973)
Self-leadership	Followers have capacity to lead themselves, which alleviate the need for close supervision of formal leaders.	Manz & Sims (1980)
Empowerment	Empowering followers to share power that was reserved for a formal leader.	Conger & Kanungo (1988)
Shared cognition	Examines the extent to which team members hold similar mental models about key internal and external environmental issues.	Klimoski & Mohammed (1994), Cannon-Bowers, et al. (1993), Ensley & Pearce (2001)
Shared leadership	A dynamic, interactive influences among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to achievement of group or organizational goals or both.	Pearce & Conger (2003)

Although those conceptual and/or theoretical developments provided the conceptual foundation for shared leadership, Follett's (1924) early work was stagnant for many decades (Pearce et al., 2004). Particularly, the lack of empirical studies by other researchers during that time period was one of the major reasons her idea remained relatively unexplored for a long time (D'Innocenzo et al., 2016). In this regard, it was during the early 2000s that shared leadership began to gain increased attention again from researchers. Today, a number of scholars have argued the importance of collaborative leadership approaches including shared leadership in different organizational contexts. This argument has been strengthened through continuous

research efforts that contributed to advancing conceptual models as well as empirical findings (e.g., Carson et al., 2007; Hoch, 2013; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Pearce, Manz, & Sims, 2008).

Within the field of sport management, most prior studies have examined different types of vertical leadership (Welty Peachey, Damon, Zhou, & Burton, 2015). Sport management scholars have examined leadership to understand how leader's personal traits and behaviors influence different organizational constructs both in various sport teams and sport organizations. For instance, studies on leadership of coaches (Chelladurai, 1990), influences of transactional and transformational leadership in sport organizations (Doherty, 1997; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996), gendered leadership (Burton, 2015), and ethical leadership (DeSensi, 2014; Burton & Welty Peachey, 2014) have helped advance leadership studies in sport management. In recent years, sport management scholars have further called for a paradigm shift in viewing leadership as a multi-level approach that ranges from individual to organizational-level leadership (Ferkins et al., 2018a; Welty Peachey et al., 2015). In particular, Welty Peachey et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of the multi-level approach to understand dynamic and fluid nature of leadership in sport management research as below:

A primary constraint to studying leadership has been the restriction of analysis of leadership to a single level, and that a key to advancing leadership theory is to incorporate a multilevel perspective. (p. 578)

As a result, alternative leadership approaches including shared leadership have started to gain attention in sport management (e.g., Billsberry et al., 2018; Ferkins, Shilbury, & O'Boyle, 2018; Jones et al., 2018; Welty Peachey et al., 2015). A few studies suggested the need of applying the concept of collaborative and/or shared leadership in the context of nonprofit sport organizations (e.g., Ferkins et al., 2009; Ferkins et al., 2018b; Hoye, 2006). For example, a study

examined how to enhance the strategic capacity of board of national sport organizations in New Zealand. Findings revealed the important role of shared leadership between the board and an executive leader for increasing the strategic capacity (Ferkins et al., 2009). Subsequently, Ferkins et al. (2018b) conceptualized collective leadership among board members in a federal sport network, which was aligned with the nature of shared leadership (e.g., decentralized leadership, collaborative relationships). Although these studies did not clearly mention as well as delve into shared leadership theory, they played an important role in stimulating the interest of shared leadership within sport management.

A few recent studies have focused on exploring the potential value of shared leadership in the SDP sector. In their conceptual study, Kang and Svensson (2019) suggested the potential roles of shared leadership as an alternative leadership approach to address existing challenges in SDP. Nonprofit SDP organizations serve in a wide variety of areas including low-and middle-income countries as well as underdeveloped areas in high-income countries to address a broad range of social issues through sport-based programs (Coalter, 2013; Sherry & Schulenkorf, 2016). As such, SDP agencies have contributed to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals including youth development, peacebuilding, gender equality, health and well-being, and livelihood (Giulianotti et al., 2016; Lindsey & Darby, 2018). To serve diverse program foci, SDP practitioners need to become sport managers, coaches, social developers, marketers, educators, and community activists (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2012). In other words, SDP practitioners are expected to successfully perform multiple roles requiring more than sport-related capabilities (Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013; Thorpe & Chawansky, 2017). Recent studies pointed out that SDP organizations face capacity challenges due to limited financial resources and difficulty of recruiting and retaining staff members having in-depth understanding about sport

and social development activities (Svensson, 2017; Svensson & Seifried, 2017). Along this line, SDP leaders are required to manage organizations to achieve social change missions due to challenging funding circumstances and different demands from external stakeholders. At the same time, the complex nature of targeted social issues and conflicts related to power dynamics in multi-sector collaborations also impose additional pressures on SDP leaders (Giulianotti et al., 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Consequently, Kang and Svensson (2019) suggested the collective nature of shared leadership would be appropriate to address those challenges in SDP.

### **Outcomes of Shared Leadership**

It is a reasonable question to ask how shared leadership can help leaders, practitioners, and organizations if this new concept is proposed. Therefore, it is useful to examine prior literature on outcomes of shared leadership. A number of studies have shown that shared leadership can positively impact various organizational outcomes (D’Innocenzo et al., 2016, Nicolaides et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2014). For example, prior literature demonstrated the positive relationship between shared leadership and organizational performance (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Mehra, Smith, Dixon, & Robertson, 2006; Small & Rentsch, 2010), team effectiveness (Choi, Kim, & Kang, 2017; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Wang, Jiang, Liu, & Ma, 2017), and creativity and innovation (Alanezi, 2016; Hoch, 2013; Hooker & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Wu & Cormican, 2016). In following sections, meaningful outcomes of shared leadership are discussed by categorizing them into two interconnected outcomes such as (a) distal (direct) outcomes and (b) proximal (indirect) outcomes based on the work by Zhu et al. (2018).

**Distal outcomes.** Some prior studies have focused on examining whether shared leadership contributes to better organizational performance and/or effectiveness and have

reported that shared leadership is positively related to a number of such outcomes (e.g., Carson et al., 2007; Ensley et al., 2006; Hoch, 2013; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Mehra et al., 2006; Small & Rentsch, 2010). Pearce and Sims (2002) studied the influence of shared leadership compared to vertical leadership on team effectiveness in 71 change management teams of an automotive manufacturing company. Managers and employees of the change management teams rated their perceptions of team effectiveness related to several categories: (a) output, (b) team quality, (c) change, (d) organizing and planning, (e) interpersonal, (f) value, and (g) overall effectiveness. Findings revealed a positive relationship between shared leadership and team effectiveness and shared leadership was a better predictor of the team effectiveness than vertical leadership. In another study, Pearce and colleagues (2004) identified similar effects of shared leadership on organizational performance. They found that shared leadership was a stronger predictor than vertical leadership in terms of organizational performance in virtual teams engaged in social work projects.

Other researchers have also examined the relative influence of vertical leadership styles (e.g., directive, transactional, transformational, empowering leadership) compared to shared leadership on performance in top management teams of new ventures (Ensley et al., 2006). The results indicated that shared leadership explained more variance in new venture performance (i.e., revenue and employee growth) than vertical leadership. In their seminal article, Carson et al. (2007) identified shared leadership had a positive impact on team performance in 59 student consulting teams. Students participated in the consulting project rated leadership of their teammates and project clients and faculty evaluated the performance of the project to measure team performance. Further, Hoch and Kozlowski (2014) examined the relationship between shared leadership and organizational performance and found that shared leadership was a

stronger predictor of organizational performance (i.e., teamwork) than vertical leadership. These positive outcomes of shared leadership on organizational performance may be related to the nature of this collaborative leadership style such as collaborative decision-making, increased interactions, and shared responsibilities across multiple individuals (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch, 2014).

Leadership scholars have widely used simulations and/or experiments to investigate organizational performance and/or effectiveness of shared leadership. In this regard, Drescher and colleagues (2014) used a computer simulation game requiring teams to build a major landmark through resources acquired in the game. In doing so, the authors intended to test whether shared leadership increased team performance. They found that the more individuals engaged in shared leadership, the better they performed. Similarly, Small and Rentsch (2010) also used a computer simulation to investigate the impact of shared leadership on organizational performance and found significant effect of shared leadership on organizational performance (i.e., total score on a simulation). In addition, a recent study found that shared leadership predicted financial and strategic performance in a semester long business simulation program among 241 student teams (Karriker, Madden, & Katell, 2017).

Beyond organizational performance, several scholars have identified that shared leadership can result in increased organizational creativity and innovative work behaviors among employees (e.g., Alanezi, 2016; Hoch, 2013; Hooker & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Wu & Cormican, 2016). As Pearce and Manz (2005) highlighted, employees' active engagement of organizational processes and accompanied interactive communications led to increased creativity and innovation within organizations. In prior literature, while organizational creativity is defined as organization's capabilities creating new ideas, innovative work behaviors is a more



comprehensive concept encompassing idea generation as well as its application (Janssen, 2000). Accordingly, the information sharing process of shared leadership may allow individuals to generate creative work-related ideas as well as to implement those ideas for achieving desired organizational goals. Given the rapidly changing situations surrounding today's organizations, innovative work behaviors are crucial factors for them to adapt those challenges and shared leadership can potentially help organizations to have competitive advantage (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch, 2013).

Empirical evidence in the leadership literature support a significant relationship between shared leadership and increased creativity and innovative behaviors. Alanezi (2016) carried out an investigation about the impact of shared leadership on administrative creativity in schools in Kuwait. In this study, components of shared leadership were collective decision-making, delegation of authority, and motivation. The result revealed that shared leadership was a significant predictor of administrative creativity among school teachers. Also, other scholars found shared leadership led to higher self-ratings of creativity and the increased creativity played a role building a supportive climate for innovation. (Peter, Braun, & Frey, 2015). In addition, past research yielded similar result indicating a significant role of shared leadership predicting creativity in engineering design teams (Wu & Cormican, 2016). Collectively, these studies outlined the potential role of shared leadership for shaping organizational creativity as an initial step for innovative work behaviors. Although limited attention has been given to empirically examine the influence of shared leadership on innovative work behaviors, Hoch (2013) conducted research to examine the relationship between shared leadership and innovative work behaviors in 43 work teams of two companies. Team members rated the degree of shared leadership and innovative behaviors were rated by team leaders. Findings indicated that shared

leadership was a strong predictor of innovative work behaviors including idea generation, promotion, and realization in organizations.

**Proximal outcomes.** Previous research not only explored distal (direct) outcomes of shared leadership on organizational performance, but also investigated proximal (indirect) outcomes that facilitate the performance related outcomes. In their seminal study, Pearce and Sims (2000) proposed shared leadership may contribute to enhancing group outcomes including (a) group psyche (i.e., commitment, potency, cohesion, satisfaction), (b) group behavior (i.e., internally directed, externally directed), and (c) group effectiveness (i.e., quality, quantity). However, Pearce and Sims (2000) did not consider the mediating role of group psyche and behavior on group effectiveness. Since their initial conceptualization, researchers have explored how positive and/or collective moods built through shared leadership in an organization can lead to organizational outcomes (Robert & You, 2018). As a result, a growing body of literature suggested more advanced frameworks of shared leadership by clarifying the indirect (proximate) influence of shared leadership on organizational performance and effectiveness (e.g., Han, Lee, Beyerlein, & Kolb, 2018; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Zhu et al., 2018). For example, Cox, Pearce, and Perry (2003) proposed team responses to shared leadership play a role as proximal outcomes leading to increased team effectiveness. The team responses consist of three components such as cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses. Although scholars use different terminologies to refer to proximal outcomes of shared leadership (e.g., Cox et al., 2003; Zhu et al., 2018), employees' positive responses toward shared leadership exhibited by cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects shape more strengthened organizational process to achieve organizational purposes (Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001; Zhu et al., 2018).

A recent study documented organizational processes consisting of cognitive, motivational, and behavioral components. According to Han and colleagues (2018), cognitive processes can be demonstrated as organizational learning and knowledge sharing. Motivational processes refer to emotional status of organizations including trust, commitment, and cohesion. Lastly, behavioral processes are behaviors of members such as communication and coordination to achieve organizational purposes. Shared leadership can facilitate these organizational processes, which in turn contributes to performance related outcomes. Zhu and colleagues' (2018) recent review of shared leadership studies also emphasized that shared leadership shapes cognitive/motivational (e.g., team potency, collective efficacy, cohesion, shared mental model, collective vision, commitment, psychological safety), affective (e.g., group affective tone, emotional regulation), and behavioral (e.g., team learning, conflict management and knowledge sharing, proactivity, adaptability, role coordination) processes within an organization that can result in improved performance outcomes. Since scholars conceptualized valuable outcomes of shared leadership (e.g., Cox et al., 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Pearce et al., 2008), researchers have examined consequences of shared leadership and found the positive influences of shared leadership on cognitive, motivational, and behavioral components. For example, some researchers explored how shared leadership influences cognitive and motivational processes of employees in organizations.

Also, past research examined the effects of shared leadership on employees' perceptions. Mathieu, Kukenberger, D'Innocenzo, and Reilly (2015) examined the influence of shared leadership on perceived team cohesion among team members. Team cohesion is an indicator demonstrating how individual members perceive the degree of bonds in the team to achieve organizational goals. Mathieu and colleagues (2015) identified shared leadership contributed to

increased team cohesion and the enhanced team cohesion was positively related to improved team performance in 57 project teams. It can be expected that employees actively engage in social interactions and exert mutual influences across an organization via shared leadership. Thus, the result of this study showed the contribution of shared leadership building individuals' psychological response such team cohesion. Further, in their longitudinal study of 142 simulation game groups, Drescher and colleagues (2014) found that increased shared leadership was associated with enhanced group trust, which in turn improved performance of simulation games. Similar result was also reported from a study used a role-play negotiation to examine effects of shared leadership in 45 teams (Bergman, Rentsch, Small, Davenport, & Bergman, 2012). Findings of this study revealed that shared leadership decreased intragroup conflicts and increased consensus building, trust, and cohesion within teams compared to teams without implementation of shared leadership.

Moreover, other scholars showed that shared leadership positively affected team members' goal commitment in students project teams (Han et al., 2018). This finding indicated that shared leadership plays a role in increasing emotional attachment of members to organizational purposes and their subsequent contribution to achieving the organizational goals. Another cognitive and/or psychological outcomes of shared leadership was that shared leadership positively influences organizational performance through its effect on cognitive conflict management between members and emotional well-being (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013). This finding highlighted the role of shared leadership fostering an organizational climate acknowledging different perspectives and constructive feedback about task-related agendas. In such organizational climate, employees can feel emotional well-being that enhances organizational outcomes.

Several prior studies have also revealed the potential influence of shared leadership on behavioral processes. For example, a previous study showed that shared leadership positively influence learning behaviors on a team and individual level since shared leadership facilitates interactions and knowledge sharing among individuals (Liu, Hu, Li, Wang, & Lin, 2014). Other researchers also reported similar findings indicating the association of shared leadership and team learning behaviors in a computer-simulated strategic management game among MBA students (Wang, Han, Fisher, & Pan, 2017). Interestingly, the authors reported that shared leadership was only an effective predictor of team learning behaviors at early stages of teamwork rather than at later time periods of the simulation games. In addition, other studies showed shared leadership enhances proactive (e.g., Erkutlu, 2012) and role coordinating behaviors (e.g., Han et al., 2018). Specifically, Erkutlu (2012) investigated the effects of shared leadership on proactive work behaviors of 105 work teams in Turkish commercial banks and found shared leadership characterized as collective autonomy encouraged proactive work behaviors of teams such as proactive problem-solving, initiative, and idea generation and implementation. In addition to proactivity, Han et al. (2018) highlighted shared leadership enables individuals to coordinate works-related aspects including assigning tasks, defining responsibilities, setting deadlines, and establishing task-related procedures to better achieve desired outcomes.

Recent studies demonstrated shared leadership contributed to enhancing work-related attitude such as team and task satisfaction among employees (Drescher & Garbers, 2016; Robert & You, 2018; Serban & Roberts, 2016). In their research of 44 virtual work teams (i.e., online education program), Robert and You (2018) identified shared leadership facilitate individual and team level satisfaction in terms of their team and task. As a result, the increased team satisfaction encouraged them to contribute to achieving team goals. Also, Serban and Roberts (2016)

indicated a positive relationship between shared leadership and task satisfaction between 30 task-oriented teams. In their study, teams consisting of four members were prompted to develop a creative TV commercial in less than 2 hours. The result of this study showed that participants working under shared leadership conditions highly valued the quality of their task due to high level of social support, information sharing, and shared purpose. Overall, these findings suggest that shared leadership contributes to overall organizational processes consisting of proximal outcomes for better organizational functioning (Cox et al., 2003; Zhu et al., 2018).

### **Antecedents of Shared Leadership**

Considerable research attention has been paid to identify predictors influencing the emergence and development of shared leadership in different organizational settings. In this section, antecedents of shared leadership are discussed. Given the central role of shared leadership in this study, antecedents of shared leadership are synthesized through an extensive review of prior literature. Specifically, vertical leadership, group characteristics, task characteristics, and environmental characteristics are discussed as critical factors influencing the development of shared leadership (Barnett & Weidenfeller, 2016; Cox et al., 2003; Hoch, 2017; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Pearce & Manz, 2005; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Wu, Cormican, & Chen, 2018; Zhu et al., 2018). Table 3 provides a comprehensive overview of antecedents of shared leadership.

**Vertical leadership.** Vertical leadership refers to leadership demonstrated by a formally appointed leader in an organization (Hoch, 2013; Morgeson et al., 2010; Yukl, 2009). Scholars noted “vertical leadership usually implies top-down hierarchical leadership where the leader is positioned above the employees, who as a consequence experience low levels of discretion” (Fausang, Joensson, Lewandowski, & Bligh, 2015, p. 274). Although shared leadership seems

like a contrary concept to vertical leadership, they are not mutually exclusive concepts. As researchers noted, shared leadership should be viewed to serve as a complementary role rather than replacement of vertical leadership (Cox et al., 2003; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Hoch, 2013; Pearce et al., 2008). Bass and Avolio (1993) pointed out a tendency in leadership discipline that juxtapose existing leadership approach to highlight characteristics of a new leadership concept. However, scholars underlined the interconnectivity between the existing and new leadership approach (Zhu et al., 2018). As such, extant literature demonstrates several vertical leadership styles including transformational, empowering, and servant leadership are positively related to the development of shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Fausing et al., 2015; Hoch, 2017; Zhu et al., 2018).

As the paradigm of leadership studies changed from a trait-based approach to a behavioral approach (e.g., Ohio State and Michigan leadership studies), scholars have focused on the role of the formally appointed leader encouraging followers to actively participate in collective form of leadership in given organization (Fausing et al., 2015). Early researchers studying shared leadership proposed vertical leadership for shared leadership development (e.g., Cox et al., 2003; Pearce & Sims 2000). As an example, Pearce and Sims' (2000) conceptual framework of shared leadership firstly suggested the influence of vertical leaders on the display and form of shared leadership. This indicated that authority and/or responsibility of vertical leaders can be critical factors for enabling or inhibiting the development of shared leadership within an organization. Building on the work of Pearce and Sims (2000), Cox and colleague (2003) conceptualized four ways how vertical leadership can facilitate shared leadership. They elaborated positive roles of vertical leadership behaviors encouraging the emergence and development of shared leadership. Specifically, four roles of vertical leaders were proposed such

as (a) team formation, (b) boundary management, (c) providing as-needed leadership support, and (d) maintaining shared leadership system in an organization. Carson and colleagues (2007) showed external leader's coaching behaviors have a positive relationship with shared leadership development among student consulting teams. Other researchers identified positive leader-member relationship can help build trust between leaders and followers and subsequently facilitate the development of shared leadership within an organization. Table 2 provides a summary of antecedents of shared leadership.



Table 3. A summary about Antecedents of Shared Leadership

Key contributors	Antecedents	Research type
Pearce and Sims (2000)	Group characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability, personality, proximity, maturity, familiarity, diversity, vertical leader strategy, and group size</li> </ul> Task characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interconnectivity, creativity, complexity, criticality, and urgency</li> </ul> Environmental characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support systems, reward systems, and cultural systems</li> </ul>	Conceptual study
Cox et al. (2003)	Vertical leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team formation</li> <li>• Boundary management</li> <li>• Leadership support</li> <li>• Empowerment</li> </ul>	Conceptual study
Pearce and Manz (2005)	Vertical leadership Support systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational rewards</li> <li>• Training</li> </ul>	Conceptual study
Carson et al. (2007)	Internal team environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared purpose</li> <li>• Social support</li> <li>• Voice</li> </ul> External coaching by leaders	Empirical study
Hoch and Dulebohn (2013)	Support factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived team support</li> <li>• Information</li> <li>• Rewards</li> </ul> Vertical leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transformational and empowering leadership</li> </ul>	Conceptual study

(Table 3 continued)

Hoch and Dulebohn (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader member exchange (LMX)</li> </ul>	Conceptual study
	<p>Team member characteristics and composition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-leadership</li> <li>• Locus of control</li> <li>• Proactive personality</li> </ul> <p>Team personality composition (BIG Five)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extraversion</li> <li>• Conscientiousness</li> <li>• Agreeableness</li> <li>• Openness to experience</li> <li>• Emotional stability</li> </ul>	
Wu et al. (2018)	Internal team environment	Review study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared purpose</li> <li>• Social support</li> <li>• Voice</li> </ul> <p>Team characteristics (heterogeneity, maturity, and size)</p>	
Zhu et al. (2018)	Vertical leadership	Review study
	<p>Team characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared purpose, vision, social support, and voice</li> <li>• Team diversity</li> <li>• Team personality (BIG Five), collectivism, trust, and integrity</li> <li>• Team warmth density</li> <li>• Task cohesion</li> <li>• Self-leadership</li> </ul>	
Kang and Svensson (2018)	Vertical leadership	Conceptual study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transformational, empowering, and servant leadership</li> </ul> <p>Supportive environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared purpose, two-way communications, collective responsibilities, fair resource allocation, and rewards</li> </ul> <p>Member characteristics</p> <p>Task interdependence</p>	

Vertical leaders' initial decision of promoting shared leadership, subsequent decision regarding team composition, and recommended task performance methods (e.g., shared goal setting, collective decision-making, social interactions) can influence the development of shared leadership. Vertical leader's ongoing responsibilities related to boundary management can also facilitate shared leadership development. Boundary management refers to the responsibilities of vertical leaders to manage the relationships between an organization and external stakeholders. The purpose of the boundary management is to protect the organizations from external pressures, build positive relationships with key stakeholders, and secure necessary resources. Vertical leaders' communication and coordinating skills are also critical to achieve those purposes. Vertical leaders can contribute to developing shared leadership by satisfying two competing priorities (Morgeson et al., 2010). First, vertical leaders can manage the internal boundaries of an organization so that individual members can have enough time to get to know each other, realize other members expertise and responsibilities. Second, vertical leaders can also manage external organizational boundaries loosely so that the organization is open for knowledge exchange with external entities.

While the role of vertical leaders is gradually reduced in an organization where shared leadership is fully developed, organizations still require interventions of vertical leaders to maintain a favorable climate for shared leadership. Even so, vertical leadership interventions should be used on an 'as needed' basis to encourage members' involvement in shared leadership. Cox and colleagues (2003) indicated that continuous intervention of vertical leaders in decision-making processes resulted in dissatisfaction and abandonment of participation in collective decision-making among organizational members. As a result, Cox and colleagues (2003) emphasized the importance of support from a vertical leader for shared leadership development.

Lastly, a vertical leader's efforts for maintaining shared leadership are also important to facilitate shared leadership. A leader's active encouragement of shared leadership plays an important role by supporting and clearly making shared leadership a priority in the organization. For instance, a vertical leader can maintain shared leadership by demonstrating clear purpose, application, expectations, and performance evaluation. In addition, a vertical leader can provide proper training (e.g., coordinating skills, collective goal setting, conflict management etc.) for organizational members to ensure improvement of peer influences among employees for shared leadership maintenance. In following subsections, different types of vertical leadership approaches and how they can influence the development of shared leadership are discussed.

***Transformational leadership.*** Transformational leadership is “the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration” (Bass, 1999, p. 11). In other words, transformational leaders motivate followers to transcend lower-level needs to pursue their higher-level needs associated with self-realization (Pearce et al., 2004). As such, this leadership style includes leader's behaviors articulating vision of an organization and encouraging members to align their personal interests with organizational goals (Currie & Lockett, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Some empirical evidence exists to suggest that leader's transformational leadership behaviors serve to create a conducive environment for shared leadership development. Kouzes and Posner (2009) emphasized the role of transformational leadership behaviors in increasing shared vision among organizational members. Hoch (2013) supported this argument identifying shared vision as a key factor for shared leadership development. Other researchers found that transformational leadership behaviors contribute to building positive team processes such as self-efficacy and cohesiveness among fire rescue employees in the United States (Pillai

& Williams, 2004). Further, De Cremer and van Knippenberge (2002) identified transformational leadership helps enhance cooperative behavior characterized as organizational citizenship behaviors and a sense of belongingness among employees. Scholars also found a positive influence of transformational leadership on team reflexivity among organizational members (Schipper, Den Hartog, & van Knippenberg, 2008). Overall, these research findings indicated the role of transformational leadership creating favorable conditions for shared leadership.

***Empowering leadership.*** Empowering leadership behaviors can also encourage shared leadership development (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch, 2013; Houghton, Neck, & Manz, 2003; Pearce et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2014). Leadership scholars have defined empowering leadership as a type of leadership encouraging follower empowerment so that they can take initiative on work-related aspects (Pearce & Sims, 2002; Sims, Faraj, & Yun, 2009). Thus, empowering leaders have a willingness to transfer concentrated power and responsibility to organizational members instead of instructing and overseeing them. In this regard, Pearce and Sims (2002) indicated empowering leadership focuses on self-management or self-leadership of organizational members. Conceptually, empowerment consists of four dimensions: (a) potency, (b) autonomy, (c) meaningfulness, and (4) impact (Kirkman & Rosen, 1997). First, potency represents organizations' collective belief about their effectiveness. Second, autonomy is the degree to which organizational members perceive they can make independent decisions on their work. Third, meaningfulness represents organizational perceptions about how much they consider their task as important and worthwhile. Last, impact is the individual level of analysis about how organizational members view their task as significant to the organization. As such, vertical leaders can contribute to developing shared leadership by empowering members with

autonomy and responsibility (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013), which in turn enhance sense of empowerment characterizing the abovementioned dimensions (e.g., Andrews & Kacmar, 2001; Gomez & Rosen, 2001).

Leaders can empower employees in two level: individual and group levels. Leaders empower employees by expecting them to develop their own-self-leadership skills which, in turn, positively influences the development of entire organization (Sims et al., 2009). Scholars have also highlighted empowerment plays a key role in distributing leadership functions across organizational members (Fausing et al., 2015). This suggests the influence of individual empowerment on shared leadership development. While individual level empowerment can lead to members' self-leadership (e.g., Pearce & Manz, 2005), team level empowerment directly results in shared leadership development (Hoch, 2013). Typical cases of team level empowerment are suggesting team collaborations, working as a team, and leading the team alternately (Hoch, 2013). When a team is empowered, individuals may have increased motivation about tasks the team is involved in, which directly form shared leadership (Ensley et al., 2006).

Empowerment can also be divided into social-structural empowerment and psychological empowerment (Grille, Schulte, Kauffeld, 2015; Spreitzer, 2008). Social-structural empowerment represents structural supports of an organization facilitating empowerment for employees in lower status of organizational hierarchy. The social-structural empowerment enables employees to have information, support, resources, autonomy for decision-making, and rights to speak their opinions (Spreitzer, 2008). The work of Carson and colleagues (2007) demonstrated a positive influence of voice as a type of social-structural empowerment on shared leadership. On the other hand, psychological empowerment refers to how individual members feel their ability to control

their work and related actions (Spreitzer, 2008), which is similar with Kirkman & Rosen's (1997) four dimensions of empowerment. Houghton and colleagues (2003) maintained that psychological empowerment can serve as a key factor accelerating the development of shared leadership. Unlike the social-structural empowerment, there has been a limited research on the relationship between psychological empowerment and shared leadership (Grille et al., 2015; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013). Even so, a study conducted by Hoch and Dulebohn (2013) revealed that psychological empowerment strengthens shared leadership building. Similarly, Martin, Liao, and Campbell (2013) found empowering leadership characterized as shared power, responsibilities, and decentralized decision-making authority, facilitated proactive leadership behaviors of followers, which is a key aspect of shared leadership.

***Servant leadership.*** A recent line of research has also suggested that servant leadership is positively related to the emergence and development of shared leadership (e.g., Kang & Svensson, 2019; Zhu et al., 2018). In particular, servant leader's empowering and caring nature for follower development may positively impact shared leadership development. Servant leadership was first developed by Greenleaf (1977). The most well-known quote of servant leadership in Greenleaf's (1977) work is "the servant leader is a servant first...it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first" (p.7). Despite his seminal work introducing the concept of servant leadership, Greenleaf did not provide a clear definition. As a result, researchers inspired by this concept have developed their own definitions and conceptual frameworks (e.g., Barbuto, Gottfredson, & Searle, 2014; van Dierendonck, 2011). In particular, one of the influential frameworks by van Dierendonck (2011) clarified distinct behavioral characteristics of servant leadership including: (a) empowering and developing people, (b) humility, (c) authenticity, (d) interpersonal acceptance, (e) providing direction, and (f)

stewardship. In the SDP literature, some researchers have emphasized leader's serving nature may directly facilitate shared leadership (Jones et al., 2018; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2017). Specifically, Jones et al. (2018) argued servant leadership may help employees clearly understand organizational purpose and have sense of belonging in order to transition to shared leadership.

Although there are limited number of empirical studies, scholars have conceptualized the importance of servant leadership as a determinant of shared leadership. Particularly, the supportive, caring, and employee-focused characteristics of servant leadership can create the foundation for shared leadership within an organization. For instance, the empowering and developing nature of servant leaders can help facilitate knowledge sharing and collective decision-making (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014). Furthermore, servant leader's authentic and interpersonal nature can help close the psychological distance between leaders and followers to foster mutual trust, which is a key factor leading to shared leadership (Hoch, 2013; Small & Rentsch, 2010). While there is only limited empirical evidence of the relationship between servant and shared leadership, a recent study discovered servant leadership helps increase the intention of participating in shared leadership among employees (Wang, Jiang, Liu, & Ma, 2017). They highlighted that "team members led by servant leaders are more likely to emulate their leaders' selfless behaviors, and in turn proactively share leadership roles and influence other team members to achieve team goals" (p. 165).

**Group characteristics.** Given an organization consists of diverse group of people, group characteristics may influence the development of shared leadership within an organizational setting. In this section, individual characteristics such as the Big Five personality dimensions and the value placed on collectivism are discussed.



**Personality.** Personality can be defined as an individual's relatively stable and enduring pattern of thoughts, feelings, and actions (Barrick & Mount, 2000). Hoch (2017) argued that personal traits and capabilities of organizational members can be related to their willingness to engage in shared leadership. In a recent study, Hoch and Dulebohn (2017) proposed the relationship between Big Five personality compositions and the emergence of shared leadership. The Big Five personality dimensions are: (a) extraversion, (b) conscientiousness, (c) agreeableness, (d) openness to experience, and (e) emotional stability. The authors argued that the high-level of the Big Five personality dimensions are positively related to the development of shared leadership in organizations.

Specifically, extraversion component is associated with social interaction skills of individuals that required in shared leadership (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017; Peeters, Van Tuiji, Rutte, & Reymen, 2006). Researcher argued that individuals with a high conscientiousness are likely to engage in shared leadership employed by an organization due to their commitment and responsibility on the organization (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017). Agreeableness is indicator of how much the person to be collaborative, believing, and friendly in relationships with others (Costa & McCrae, 1992a; Judge Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999). Given organizational members lead and are led by others within an organization via shared leadership, organizations comprised of members with a high agreeableness dimension can be a favorable condition for shared leadership. Openness to experience is also a strong predictor of shared leadership because people having a high level of openness may reach out to others to extend their knowledge and/or experiences (Griffin & Hesketh, 2004; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017). Lastly, emotional stability plays a role resolving conflicts between members, which create a positive organizational climate for shared leadership. Although there is limited research examining which personality

dimensions are the most important predictors of shared leadership, Hoch and Dulebohn (2017) emphasized that moderate level of certain personality traits such as extraversion and openness may be positively associated with shared leadership. In addition to the Big Five dimensions, some researchers identified that collectivistic personality has a positive relationship with shared leadership (Small & Rentsch, 2010). In sum, prior literature demonstrated a positive connection between personality traits and shared leadership.

**Task characteristics.** The nature of a task is also an essential antecedent influencing the emergence of shared leadership. Task characteristics refers to the nature of a given task within organizations. In the following sections, the role of task interdependency and task complexity are discussed.

**Task interdependence.** Task interdependence is the degree to which individuals rely on each other to finish a given task. Past studies indicated a link between interdependent tasks and the development of shared leadership (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Manz, 2005; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Serban & Roberts, 2016). Since Pearce and Sims' (2000) earlier work conceptualized the role of task interdependence as an antecedent for shared leadership, researchers have supported such influence of shared leadership on shared leadership. As an example, scholarship has acknowledged the influence of task interdependence facilitating shared leadership because complex work demands in today's organizations increasingly require collective efforts of employees (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Serban and Roberts (2016) underlined the importance of interdependence between organizational members to avoid ambiguity of work-related conditions. As a result, individual employees are closely interdependent with others to acquire necessary information and competencies to complete assigned tasks (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017).

Interdependence is a necessary condition for the emergence of shared leadership as shared leadership requires mutual cooperation between multiple individuals. In their experimental research, Wageman and Baker (1997) investigated undergraduate students to understand how task interdependence impacts cooperative behaviors with others. In this research, the undergraduate students were asked to edit articles in pairs focusing on two types of errors such as general errors (e.g. spelling and punctuation) and APA format. By doing so, the researchers found that the students used several cooperative strategies including teaching each other, trading articles, and discussing task-solving approach with their partner. This result indicated that task interdependence had a positive impact on the level of cooperative behaviors among students. A similar finding was reported from Koster and colleagues' (2007) study demonstrating a positive influence of task interdependence on increased communication and cooperation with co-workers. Further, previous research revealed that task interdependence predicted shared leadership in an investigation of 81 work teams in Denmark (Fausing et al., 2015).

***Task complexity.*** The complexity of tasks in organizations also play a critical role in the successful implementation of shared leadership. Scholars argued task complexity is a key determinant for shared leadership demands. While complex work requires proper supervision and/or directions, unambiguous and routine tasks do not require any type of leadership (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). As scholars have noted, organizations rarely have one shared goal (Seers, Keller, & Wilkerson, 2003). Instead, organizations have multiple and complex tasks and they may facilitate shared leadership because it is difficult for any individual to address those tasks and problems on their own through their individual skill sets (Conger & Pearce, 2003; Pearce, 2004). Task complexity represents knowledge-based tasks requiring high-level of engagement from

multiple individuals. For example, an organization consisting of knowledge workers in advanced technology may need shared leadership facilitating knowledge sharing and active communication among colleagues to address complex tasks rather than organizations take on extremely routine tasks. Cox and colleagues (2003) suggested that as task complexity increases, organizations should look for proper shared leadership structures to successfully complete the tasks. Consequently, increased task complexity is associated with increased likelihood of shared leadership development.

**Environmental characteristics.** It is also important to consider environmental characteristics of an organization that may facilitate shared leadership. In the following sections, three components of the environmental characteristics are discussed: (a) support systems, (b) reward systems, and (c) cultural systems.

**Support systems.** Researchers have identified organizational support systems as a key factor for the development of shared leadership. Prior literature indicated support systems including training and development, coordination systems, and information systems help individuals work together in organizations (Pearce & Sims, 2000). Pearce and Manz (2005) found that training allows individuals to better understand and develop the necessary capabilities (e.g., conflict management, communication, conducting meetings, cooperation with colleagues) to exercise shared leadership. In addition to individual employees, Pearce (2004) suggested the need for training and development for vertical leaders so that they better understand how they can support and utilize shared leadership. In this perspective, he suggested three fundamental areas of training and development for vertical leaders and organizational members to develop shared leadership are: (a) training on how to engage in responsible and constructive leadership, (b) training on how to receive influence from others, and (c) training on basic teamwork skills.

In discussing support systems, other scholars asserted technological supports of organizations can establish a favorable environment for shared leadership (Houghton, Pearce, Manz, Courtright, & Stewart, 2015; Wassenaar, Pearce, Hoch, & Wegge, 2010). Indeed, research carried out by Cordery and colleagues (2009) revealed that social and technological infrastructure can help organizational members better communicate.

In the meantime, other researchers have delved into different internal support structures including shared purpose, social support, and voice for shared leadership processes to be most effective (Carson et al., 2007; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). Shared purpose refers to organizational members having a common sense of the primary goals of an organization. Pearce (2004) claimed that a clearly defined organizational purpose is critical for shared leadership. Previous studies indicated shared purpose plays a role in increasing motivation, commitment, and empowerment among individuals in the organization, which in turn enhance their willingness of sharing leadership responsibilities (Avolio, Jung, Murry, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Second, social support is interpersonal encouragement and recognition of contributions of other members. Organizational members' emotional and psychological support help build a favorable climate that facilitates cooperation and willingness to share responsibility for organizational outcomes (Carson et al., 2007). Lastly, voice is the degree to which individual members participate in decision-making and constructive discussion for achieving organizational goals. Shared leadership exists if organizations have inclusive communication and decision-making systems to gather insight from different individuals. There has been a great deal of discussion among SDP scholars on the importance of inclusive decision-making in SDP practice encompassing program participants, their families and local communities (e.g., Halsall & Forneris, 2016; Schulenkorf, 2017; Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016).

Researchers have emphasized that “under a high level of voice, team members should engage in shared leadership by being committed to and actively involved in achieving the team goals by strengthening a shared sense of direction and positive interpersonal support” (Serban & Roberts, 2016, p.4).

***Reward systems.*** Organizational rewards can also motivate individuals to engage in shared leadership. Employees are likely to put extra effort to contribute to their organization when they feel their efforts are recognized by the organization. There are different types of rewards such as salary increases, career development opportunities, appreciation, and involvement of decision-making (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). Along this line, prior literature suggested that organizational reward systems should be group-based incentives rather than individual-based rewards to encourage shared leadership because the group-based rewards facilitate collaborative work behaviors (Pearce & Manz, 2005; Pearce & Sims, 2000). Fair organizational reward systems play a critical role in contributing to the development of shared leadership (Grille et al., 2015; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013). A number of studies showed the association between the fair reward of organizations and shared leadership. In particular, a recent study underlined the role of fair rewards as an incentive facilitating active participation in work processes and self-directed work behaviors in organizations (Grille et al., 2015). This view is supported by other researchers who argued shared leadership is exercised through voluntary actions of individuals who feel the fairness of rewards in organizations is a reason for engaging in shared leadership roles (Carson et al., 2007; Fausing et al. 2015). Empirical findings of recent studies indicated fair organizational reward systems encourage individuals to be more engaged and committed to shared leadership (Grille et al., 2015; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017).

***Cultural systems.*** The culture of organizations can influence the display and implementation of shared leadership. Organizational culture can be defined as “the pattern of shared values and beliefs that help members of an organization understand why things happen and thus teach them the behavioral norms in the organization” (Deshpande & Webster, 1989, p. 4). Thus, organizational culture can facilitate or inhibit the development of shared leadership (Pearce & Sims, 2000; Conger & Pearce, 2003). For example, shared leadership may not be fully developed in organizations with deeply-rooted in top-down and/or hierarchical organizational systems where employees do not question such authority (Conger & Pearce, 2003; Hooker & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003). On the other hand, shared leadership can be developed if organizational members are in a culture where questioning authority is encouraged (Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Sims, 2000). Wallach (1983) conceptualized three culture dimensions such as bureaucratic, innovative, and supportive dimension to analyze organizational culture.

Erkutlu (2012) identified empirical evidence demonstrating how organizational culture influences the development of shared leadership in work teams of commercial banks based on Wallach’s (1983) typology. Findings showed that shared leadership is not fully developed with the bureaucratic culture. Erkutlu (2012) demonstrated that hierarchical norms in the bureaucratic organizations limited the development of shared leadership. Further, innovative culture showed a negative influence on shared leadership development due to its result-oriented aspect. Given Wallach’s (1983) dimensions of organizational culture were developed for business organizations under the principles of market economics, Erkutlu (2012) argued that result-oriented nature of innovative culture in research context is not related to inclusive decision-making, collaborations, and active interactions that are primary values of shared leadership. On the other hand, supportive culture had positive impact on shared leadership development because

supportive organizational culture facilitates employees to share responsibility and commit to collective goals (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). In sum, Erkutlu (2012) emphasized that the influence of organizational cultures on the development of shared leadership is related to contextual setting such as type of industry and tasks.



### CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research approach was used for this study to address the research purpose. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argued that the term qualitative “implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency” (p. 8). While quantitative research focuses on examining relationships and distribution of variables across population through numerical data, the purpose of qualitative research is to uncover the lived meanings of a phenomenon among participants (Creswell, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In particular, qualitative research can help researchers understand how people construct and interpret their experiences within the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Further, qualitative research is appropriate when a problem or issue needs to be explored in a particular context to answer *why* and *how* questions that are relatively limited in quantitative research (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). In doing so, qualitative researchers can develop in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon in real-life settings to interpret the subjective meaning of the issue or problem constructed by participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Therefore, using qualitative approach helped the researcher explore the lived experiences of SDP practitioners in multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. This chapter outlines the methodological procedures that was used to explore the meanings of shared leadership in multi-organizational SDP collaboratives among partnership actors. This chapter is organized into eight subsections: (a) research context (b) research paradigm, (c) research design, (d) selection of a case, (e) data collection, (f) data analysis, (g) researcher positionality and reflexivity, and (h) quality of findings.

## **Research Context**

The specific context of this study were two multi-organizational SDP collaborations initiated by the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation in Atlanta and Chicago. Established in 2000, the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation is a charitable organization aiming to support and strengthen the SDP sector for a better future for young people in disadvantaged communities. Laureus has established itself as one of the leading funding agencies in the global SDP field. To date, the organization has supported more than 200 SDP programs in over 40 countries. The Laureus Sport for Good Foundation currently has global offices across several continents including in North America (USA) South America (Argentina), Europe (Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and Switzerland), and Africa (South Africa).

Laureus Sport for Good Foundation USA, now known as Laureus USA, is headquartered in New York City. The organization supports domestic SDP efforts across the United States. In 2014, Laureus USA launched a new project called the Model City initiative to help unite different types of local organizations and individuals including nonprofits, for-profits, educators, coaches, and social service workers through citywide collaboratives. Specifically, the initiative aims to align stakeholders around a shared agenda and create a framework for achieving collective impact. In other words, the purpose of the model city initiatives is to work together for addressing social issues through sport in underserved communities. The first model city initiative was launched in New Orleans in 2014, followed by Atlanta in 2017 as well as New York City and Chicago in 2018. These initiatives are now known as Sport for Good Cities. The underlying model has been adopted by Laureus Global and is being implemented in communities around the world including in London, Hong Kong, and several other locations. As far as the Sport for Good cities, Laureus USA provides the backbone support through a local program

officer and they also provide resources (e.g., grant funding and capacity development opportunities) to help local SDP stakeholders. However, their main goal is to facilitate collaborations among local organizations and to do so they have initiated local citywide collaboratives where local organizations create their own agendas, leadership councils, and shared goals to achieve desired outcomes of SDP programs.

In this study, the Laureus Sport for Good Atlanta and Chicago initiatives were used as the research contexts. The Sport for Good Coalition in Atlanta serves the Westside communities of Atlanta. Local stakeholders (i.e., nonprofits, for-profits, government agencies, and educational agencies) from these communities collaborate to use sport for addressing local issues. At the time of this study, a total of 20 members representing 16 organizations have been involved in Sport for Good Atlanta, which combines to serve approximately 30,000 children. Likewise, Sport for Good Chicago involves organizations serving youth in underserved communities of the city. So far, more than 200 members representing 53 organizations have been involved with the initiative to improve the lives of children through sport-based social change programs.

Structurally, the Sport for Good Cities in Atlanta and Chicago are multi-organizational collaboratives. The structural characteristics of these multi-organizational collaboratives encompass (a) program directors of Laureus, (b) leadership council consisting of approximately five to ten individuals (c) working groups (taskforces working on specific agendas), and (d) non-leadership council members. Figure 4 provides a visual overview of the structure of Sport for Good cities.

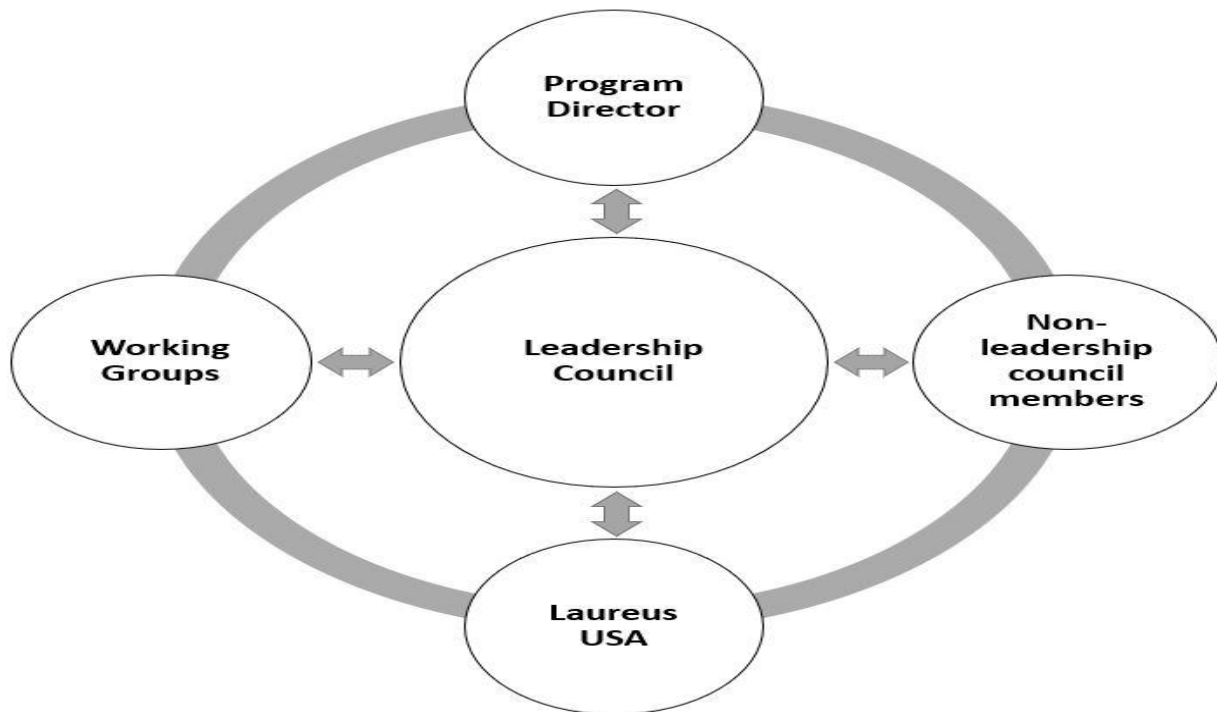


Figure 4. Structural Characteristics of Sport for Good Coalitions

### Research Paradigm

It is important to acknowledge what research paradigm (philosophical orientation) the researcher brings to this study because it shows how the researcher makes sense of the nature of truth and knowledge (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A research paradigm refers to a “set of basic beliefs that deals with ultimates or first principles” of research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.107). This study uses the term research paradigm although it has been called by various terms between scholars such as worldview (Creswell, 2014), philosophical assumptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018), and ontologies and epistemologies (Crotty, 1998). Scholars have highlighted the importance of research paradigms since they are associated with the philosophical orientations influencing the practice of research (Creswell, 2014; Crotty, 1998; Lincoln et al., 2011). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), a research paradigm encompasses four components.

The four components have different philosophical perspectives such as axiology (the role of values in research), epistemology (what counts as knowledge and how knowledge claims are justified), ontology (the nature of reality), and methodology (the process of research).

First, axiology refers to how researchers view the role of values they may bring to the qualitative research processes. In other words, axiological assumption identifies the position of researchers and the potential influence of their values on interpretations in qualitative research (Lincoln et al., 2011). Second, epistemology is concerned about how researchers view knowledge. In qualitative research, the reality has to be explored through subjective experiences of people because the reality is constructed by those people in a particular situation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Ontology is related to researchers' perspective regarding the nature of reality such as whether he or she assumes a single or multiple reality in the research. For example, when researchers carry out qualitative research, they explore how individuals perceive their experience differently to understand the reality of a phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Methodology refers to the strategy used to collect and analyze data to address research questions. For instance, procedures of research can be experimental and manipulative to verify hypotheses as well as inductive, emerging, and experiential based on methodological perspectives. Qualitative researchers generally use an inductive research methodology to develop an understanding of a phenomena. Scholars argued that differences in each of these perspectives (i.e., axiology, epistemology, ontology, methodology) are dependent on theories or theoretical orientations (e.g., positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, postmodernism, social constructivism) (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Positivism is associated with a scientific (quantitative) approach designed to explain and predict a phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Thus, positivistic researchers assume reality is

observable and findings of research can be generalizable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Post-positivism moves beyond traditional positivistic viewpoint to encompass the relative nature of reality. Even so, post-positivism still follows the positivistic tradition of using structured data collection, analysis, and validation processes in qualitative research for scientific evidence (Patton, 2015). The critical paradigm assumes reality is altered over time by various social, political, cultural, and economic factors. As such, the underlying assumption of critical theory is that reality is shaped by power relations. Thus, researchers following a critical paradigm (e.g., feminist theory, critical race theory, postcolonial theory, etc.) attempt to challenge injustice in a certain context (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The postmodernism or participatory paradigm highlights multiple truths among diverse (e.g., gender, race, class, and other criteria) people rather than absolute truth (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln et al., 2011). “By accepting the diversity and plurality of the world, no one element is privileged or more powerful than another (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 11). Finally, the interpretive or constructivism paradigm assumes reality is socially constructed and recognizes multiple realities regarding a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). In this sense, constructivist researchers are concerned about interpreting subjective meanings of experiences described by research participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2015). The constructivism is the most appropriate research paradigm to guide the current study for the purpose of the study.

In their seminal work, Guba and Lincoln (1994) emphasized the importance of epistemological difference as a fundamental assumption influencing all variants of the research paradigm. Crotty (1998) described two different epistemological stances including positivism (investigating objective truth) and constructionism (exploring subjective truth). This study was guided by a social constructionism epistemology that highlights the truth is constructed by

human beings. It should be acknowledged that the terms constructivism and constructionism have been used interchangeably by most leading methodologists to describe the same research paradigm (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is worth noting that Crotty (1998), however, argued that constructivism focuses exclusively on “the meaning-making activity of the individual mind while constructionism is concerned with the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning” (p. 58). Kim (2001) also maintained that a subtle difference exists between the two terms. She indicated the constructivism emphasizes the roles of individuals constructing their own meaning directly from the reality while the constructionism focuses on the importance of social interactions constructing the reality in a broad sense rather than individual level. Even so, Patton (2015) expressed his concern over whether such distinction will ever gain widespread use among researchers due to the difficulty of distinguishing the two terms. Indeed, constructivism is still widely used by well-established scholars in qualitative research rather than the term constructionism (e.g., Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this regard, this study follows Patton’s (2015) stance considering constructivism to avoid confusion of the term. Thus, the researcher used the term constructivism for consistent use throughout the paper.

According to Crotty (1998), social constructivism is “the view that all knowledge, therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of the interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context” (p. 42). As such, the constructivist viewpoint helped the researcher understand subjective meanings toward a phenomenon constructed by partnership stakeholders in a collaborative network in SDP context (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2014; Lincoln et al., 2011). By doing so, the researcher was guided to explore subjective as well as multiple

meanings of shared leadership in a partnership setting in the SDP sector rather than narrowing down its meaning. The constructivist epistemological stance subsequently influenced a theoretical perspective that is related to specific methodological actions in this study. This study employed interpretivist lens as a theoretical perspective since the constructivism paradigm seeks to understand subjective and multiple meanings of phenomena. In Crotty's (1998) model, participants' own experiences are constructed via their social interactions with others in a given environment. In this respect, the role of the researcher was important to interpret the socially created meanings (Creswell, 2014).

## **Research Design**

According to Berg (2001), the research design is a plan about how a study will be conducted, which influences a series of important decisions related to research questions. In this study, Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) basic qualitative research methodology was utilized. They argued that the basic qualitative research is the most common type of qualitative research approach in many applied disciplines including the field of sport management. Also, the basic qualitative research well aligns with constructivism since the primary goal of the basic qualitative research methodology is to understand how meaning is constructed and/or how people make sense of world and particular phenomenon. As the most commonly used form of research design, the basic qualitative research allows for researchers to collect data from different sources including, but not limited to interviews, observations, and document analysis. By doing so, it allowed the researcher to inductively analyze the collected data to address the research questions.

While previous studies examined preconditions and outcomes of shared leadership in various organizational settings via a quantitative approach, findings from those studies give us a



limited understanding of shared leadership because these findings cannot capture lived experiences including thoughts, feelings, values, and belief embedded in real life settings (Creswell, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, the current study guided by the basic qualitative methodology allowed the researcher to explore the socially constructed meaning of the leadership within practitioner-driven SDP collaboratives among partnership actors. Once researchers determine the methodological orientation of the study, the next step is to choose a specific sampling strategy. The following section discusses the sampling strategies.

### **Sampling Strategies**

Sampling in qualitative research is fundamentally different from that of quantitative research. While quantitative sampling focuses on the representativeness of sample through random sampling, the most appropriate sampling strategy for the basic qualitative research design is a purposeful sampling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). Patton (2015) noted that “the logic and power of qualitative purposeful sampling derives from the emphasis on in-depth understating of specific cases: information-rich cases. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling” (p. 53). Accordingly, the strategical sampling approach best helps researchers understand the subjective meaning of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Given the current study was basic qualitative research, utilizing purposeful sampling helped the researcher gain insight of a phenomenon from practitioners involved in multi-organizational SDP collaboratives.

As a first step of the purposeful sampling, the researcher carried out the criterion-based selection to find a specific sample (organizations, representatives from each SDP organization)

within the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). Accordingly, the SDP collaboratives had to meet the following criteria: (a) the SDP collaboratives consisting of multiple nonprofit SDP agencies, (b) the vision and mission of the collaboratives are aligned with the United Nations' (UN) sustainable development goals (SDGs), (c) representatives of the SDP collaboratives are executive directors and non-executive members actively involved in the SDP collaboratives, and (d) the representatives have to have more than three months working experiences in their organizations. To get access to the participants, the researcher contacted executive directors of member organizations in the collaborative SDP networks via email. The research purpose and relevant information were included in the email along with the invitation to participate in the study. Follow-up emails were sent for those who expressed their intention of research participation to set up interview schedule. Once members of the SDP collaboratives expressed their interests in participating in the study, the researcher coordinated data collection with study participants.

## **Data Collection**

The semi-structured interviews and documents are widely used data collection techniques in the basic qualitative research. Semi-structured interviews are less structured and more open-ended interview technique allowing respondents to define their own meaning of phenomena with flexibility (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In qualitative research, there are multiple possible sources of data including document, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts (Creswell, 2014; Patton, 2015). The researcher employed two types of data collection methods for this research study: (a) semi-structured interviews and (b) publicly available documents. The primary purpose of interviews was to obtain special information such as behavior, feelings, perspectives of the world constructed by

people that cannot be collected by observations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015).

Therefore, interviews are used by qualitative researchers to co-create lived meanings of events and experiences with interviewees (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). In this regard, the researcher considered interviews as a social situation constructing collective reality among an interviewer, interviewees, and the research context rather than a mere strategy for collecting participant comments (Alvesson, 2003).

Once the researcher earned permission of data collection from research participants in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives, semi-structured interviews were conducted during Spring 2020. Specifically, Skype and phone interviews were conducted with staff members (i.e., executive and non-executive members) in the collaboratives given the geographical distance between an interviewer and interviewees. Further, the researcher developed an interview guide including the purpose of the study and tentative interview questions. The tentative interview questions were derived from relevant literature: nonprofit collaborations, collaborative and/or shared leadership, and collaborations in nonprofit sport and SDP sectors. Although interviews were guided by a list of questions in the interview guide, the researcher also asked follow-up and prompt questions according to interview circumstance. The interviews were recorded using digital devices (e.g., smartphone application, audio recorder) and transcribed verbatim. The interview guide was attached in Appendix A.

In addition to semi-structured interviews, the researcher also examined organizational documents related to the SDP collaboratives as well as participating organizations such as annual reports, newsletters, relevant news articles, and descriptions on organizational webpages. Bowen (2009) defined document analysis as “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material” (p.

1). As a supplementary data source, the documents allowed the researcher to potentially find new questions and/or insight to explore in the interviews (Bowen, 2009; Goldstein & Reiboldt, 2004). Since the document is ‘unobtrusive’ and ‘non-reactive’ written data resource, the use of document analysis is relatively immune to reflexivity (Bowen, 2009; Creswell, 2014).

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis refers to the process of making sense out of collected data to answer qualitative research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this study, the collection of qualitative data sources such as semi-structured interviews and organizational documents was analyzed. Scholars have emphasized the importance of describing coding procedures in data analysis to identify meaningful segments of data that can be used for answering research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2013). Specifically, Creswell (2014) described coding as “the process of organizing the data by bracketing chunks (or text or image segments) and writing a word representing a category in the margins” (p. 198). In the current study, the researcher carried out two-step coding procedures including first and second-cycle coding as suggested by Saldaña (2013). First-cycle coding is a process of assigning codes to the initial chunks of data while the second cycle coding requires researchers to categorize the results of the first cycle codes into smaller groups and/or themes.

Open, In Vivo, process and descriptive coding methods were employed in the first-cycle coding process to help the researcher identify meaningful segments of data. Open coding allowed the researcher to analyze words and/or phrases repeated by participants, came to the researcher’s mind, and conceptualized in the relevant literature (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Further, In Vivo coding also enabled the researcher to analyze actual language (words or phrases) used by interviewees, which was useful considering a constructivist approach of this study. The

researcher employed process coding by using action codes shaped by participants to capture different types of actions within a phenomenon. Also, descriptive coding enabled the researcher summarizes the words and/or phrases into basic topics of data, which helps the second-cycle coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Saldaña, 2013). Along this line, the researcher began the first-cycle coding with reading interview transcripts and organizational documentations. Second-cycle coding, on the other hand, involved analyzing and synthesizing data coded in the first-cycle for developing more coherent categories and to identify relationships and theoretical constructs (Miles et al., 2014). The pattern coding was conducted to identify emerging themes. Specifically, the pattern coding allowed the researcher to re-analyze initial codes collected from the first-cycle coding for reassembling them based on their commonality (Saldaña, 2013). Additionally, the researcher also utilized data matrices (e.g., tables, figures) to help manage data analysis process (Miles et al., 2014).

### **Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity**

Given the interpretative nature of qualitative research, the researcher needs to acknowledge that researcher's personal values, backgrounds, gender, culture, socioeconomic status, and previous experiences can influence the interpretation of research findings (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, it is important to explicitly reflect on possible assumption(s) that the author may bring to this study so that readers understand the connection between the researcher and the current study (Alvesson, Hardy, & Harley, 2008). As a doctoral student, the author's primary research interest lies in investigating the role of leadership in SDP. Further, the researcher is familiar with the practice of multi-organizational relationships in the SDP sector through his academic training, as well as previous field experiences with a different Laureus Sport for Good city. The personal background of a researcher can provide valuable insight when conducting a

qualitative study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Specifically, prior experiences with a different collaborative operated by Laureus USA enabled the researcher to better understand the context of the participants experiences and the aims of the broader Model City initiative. Even so, the researcher also consulted with other sport management researchers with expertise in SDP research to seek feedback and/or different viewpoints to remain grounded throughout the research process. This reflexive research practice was achieved via multiple ways communicating with them via email, phone, and/or meeting in person (Appleton, 2011; Hays & Singh, 2011; Probst & Berenson, 2014).

### **Quality of Findings**

It is also important for qualitative researchers to build the trustworthiness of research findings. Scholars claimed that strategies ensuring the quality of research findings in qualitative research depend on the philosophical assumptions (i.e., ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology) and/or worldviews guiding their research (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Since the current research was guided by an interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, standards ensuring the rigor of qualitative research were different from those of quantitative research. Although little consensus exists to assess the quality of findings in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), the researcher followed Guba and Lincoln's (1989) criteria for qualitative research to ensure the rigor of this study. Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggested 'trustworthiness' as an umbrella term consisting of four specific trustworthiness criteria: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability.

**Credibility.** According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), credibility is concerned with ensuring the quality of findings in qualitative research that reconstructs the subjective realities of respondents. While quantitative research is concerned about how research findings match with

an objective reality, qualitative researchers do not capture such fixed truth because investigating holistic, multi-dimensional, and changing meaning of phenomena is an underlying assumption. In this study, the researcher used triangulation, member checks, and peer debriefing to verify the credibility of research findings. Triangulation is a strategy for qualitative researchers to validate the quality of findings and it can be conducted in four ways using multiple data sources, methods, theories, and investigators (Creswell, 2014). Patton (2015) emphasized that “triangulation, in whatever form, increases credibility and quality by countering concern (or accusation) that a study’s findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator’s blinders” (p. 674). Therefore, the researcher used the triangulation by utilizing multiple sources of data including semi-structured interviews and organizational documents relevant to the phenomena of this study. By doing so, collected data from different sources allowed the researcher to better compare different perspectives among participants for answering research questions, which enhances the depth of the study (Morse, 2015).

In addition to utilizing multiple sources of data, reflecting on findings together with research participants during the data analysis can be another useful way to enhance the credibility of findings (Tracy, 2010). Member checks are a widely used strategy for ensuring the credibility of qualitative findings. As Creswell (2014) noted, member checks are not about providing the raw transcripts to interview participants for checking the accuracy of findings. Instead, qualitative researchers take back parts of polished data such as major findings and/or themes. In this sense, the researcher asked the interview participants to give their feedback on preliminary findings. This process allowed the researcher to better capture the perspectives of respondents by identifying potentially misinterpreted data. Further, the researcher can carry out follow-up interviews to obtain additional information if respondents want to further clarify

anything. In doing so, respondents assessed the overall adequacy of the interviews by confirming qualitative findings (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Although many researchers use members checks as a verification strategy, some scholars have raised concerns about the effectiveness of member checks for verifying the credibility of findings due to the subjective position of researcher, lack of proper procedures, and power relations between a researcher and participants (Smith & McGannon, 2017). Even so, member checking is still acknowledged as a useful way for ensuring the rigor of qualitative research. Carlson (2010) emphasized that qualitative researchers do not equate credibility achieved via member checks with the accuracy of transcripts. Instead, researchers need to reframe the purpose of member checking as an opportunity to *reflect* complementary views to ensure data is ethically and meticulously collected, analyzed, and reported (Carlson, 2010; Smith & McGannon, 2017). Peer debriefing was also used to minimize the bias of the researcher and to enhance the credibility of findings. To conduct peer debriefing, the researcher asked other researchers who were not related to the study context to review whether the findings align with the research questions.

**Transferability.** Unlike external validity or generalizability, qualitative researchers select case(s) or samples for developing an in-depth understanding about a certain context rather than for identifying a generalizable truth (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Guba and Lincoln (1989), therefore, emphasized that transferability is an appropriate term in qualitative research instead of external validity or generalizability because the value of qualitative research lies in the detailed understanding of phenomena. Smith (2018) supported these arguments by highlighting common misunderstandings of generalization in qualitative studies in sport-related disciplines. Specifically, he pointed out that many sport scholars mention a lack of generalizability of their



qualitative findings as a limitation and/or weakness in journal publications. As scholars highlighted, however, the purpose of qualitative research is not to establish formally generalizable findings. Rather, the role of qualitative findings is to ensure transferability so that readers can find appropriate sites to apply the findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The major strategy for increasing transferability of qualitative findings is a thick description of the research context and findings in research reports (Creswell, 2014; Smith, 2018). Therefore, the researcher provided detailed descriptive information related to the study setting (e.g., time, place, context) as well as findings including quotes from interviews and documents to promote transferability. By doing so, readers can determine whether the findings of this study can be transferred to their situations.

**Dependability and confirmability.** Dependability is concerned with consistency between collected data and findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In other words, researchers need to secure procedural justification (e.g., data collection, analysis, findings) from outsiders by asking whether their findings are dependable. “If the findings of a study are consistent with the data presented, the study can be considered dependable” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 252). As Morse (2015) highlighted, the researcher provided a clear description of research processes including data collection and analysis for establishing dependability. As described in the data collection section, an interview guide was used to conduct semi-structured interviews. A digital audio recorder was utilized to collect interview data and the recorded data was transcribed verbatim for data analysis. Furthermore, interview notes were also used to jot down prompt interpretation of the researcher during the interviews and focus groups. Additionally, the researcher adopted an audit trail using research memos to authenticate how the researcher collected, analyzed data, and identified themes. In the research memos, the researcher jotted

down reflections including personal questions, ideas, and decision-making process in relation to abovementioned research process (i.e., data collection and analysis). Confirmability is criterion demonstrating rigorousness of qualitative findings related to neutrality of researchers. It refers to ensuring findings are shaped by participants and collected data rather than bias and values of researchers. As stated earlier, the researcher admits that the researcher's interpretations and/or opinions cannot be fully removed in this study. Therefore, as Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggested, the audit trail were carried out to ensure dependability as well as confirmability.

## CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

A growing number of SDP organizations are involved in partnerships with external stakeholders to overcome capacity challenges as well as to cope with the changing environment in the nonprofit sector. However, scholarly attention has been limited to dyadic relationships between two organizations although many organizations are now getting involved in multi-organizational collaborations in the SDP sector. Thus, more research is required to better understand this type of partnership for sustainable development outcomes in SDP. As a critical component for partnership success, recent SDP scholarship has begun to focus on leadership to help advance management in the context of multi-organizational collaborations in SDP. In particular, shared leadership has received attention in sport management scholarship since the collective engagement of organizational members in decision-making and other leadership processes align with the social change-oriented nature of nonprofits. Even so, the exploration of such leadership is still in its nascent stage (see Kang & Svensson, 2019; Svensson et al., 2019). Little is known about *how* shared leadership is developed as well as *what* the benefits and challenges are from the experiences of practitioners involved in multi-organizational SDP collaborations. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the role of shared leadership within multi-organizational SDP collaboratives located in two cities in the United States. Three research questions guided the current study to address the research purpose:

RQ 1: How is leadership shared between members in the multi-organizational SDP collaborative?

RQ 2: What potential benefits do SDP practitioners perceive shared leadership may have for the multi-organizational SDP collaborative?

RQ 3: What challenges may limit the development of shared leadership between partnership actors?

As detailed in Chapter 3, the author collected data through semi-structured interviews with 30 SDP practitioners involved in the Laureus Sport for Good Cities in Atlanta and Chicago. Publicly available documents including annual reports and financial statements of participating organizations (if possible) as well as informational booklets from Laureus Sport for Good Foundation were also used as supplementary data sources. This chapter provides an analysis of such data and findings are organized according to the three research questions. Table 4 depicts themes and subthemes organized around the research questions. In addition, Table 5 provides demographic characteristics of the study participants, organizations, and their involvement in the multi-organizational collaboratives.

Table 4. Summary of Main and Sub-themes

RQ1: How is leadership shared between members in the multi-organizational SDP collaborative?
Strategic planning
- Multiple leaders
- Collective decision-making
- Leadership transition
Support from vertical leaders
Shared events
Personal characteristics
RQ 2: What potential benefits do SDP practitioners perceive shared leadership may have for the multi-organizational SDP collaborative?
Collective impact
- Diverse expertise and perspectives
- Collective advocacy
(Table 4 continued)

- Capacity building
  - Professional development
  - Networking

- Organizational Learning
  - Best practice

Cohesion

Shared responsibilities

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RQ 3: What challenges may limit the development of shared leadership between partnership actors?

- Leadership dynamics
  - Power dynamics
  - Potential competitions
  - Slow decision-making

- Level of information sharing
  - Online platform
  - Information gap

- Lack of understanding about shared leadership
  - Individual membership
  - Lack of clarification

- Quality of engagement
    - Non-leadership council members
    - Other sector partners
    - Turnover intention
- 

Table 5 presents the demographic characteristics of the 30 interviewees (Chicago N=20, Atlanta N=10) and their organizations in the multi-organizational collaboratives. The role of the study participants in the multi-organizational collaboratives was either regular members or leadership council members. 10 participants were previously or currently involved in leadership council roles while 20 participants were regular members in the multi-organizational collaboratives. Concerning the organizational type, most participating organizations were nonprofits (N=25) while there were a few for-profit organizations (N=5). Organizational age ranged from 2 to 40

years (M=15) and the participation duration for the multi-organizational collaboration ranged from less than a year to 3 years.

Table 5. Demographic Characteristics of Participants and Organizations

No.	Pseudonym	Role in the Coalition	Type	Organizational age	Coalition Tenure
1	Jane	Member	Nonprofit	25	1
2	Tiffany	Member	Nonprofit	11	1
3	Jennifer	Member	Nonprofit	28	1 year and a half
4	Jack	Member	Nonprofit	3	2
5	Elisabeth	Leadership Council	Nonprofit	12	2
6	Katy	Member	For-profit	13	2
7	Lili	Member	Nonprofit	14	1
8	Caroline	Member	Nonprofit	12	Less than a year
9	Hannah	Leadership Council	Nonprofit	25	2
10	Heather	Member	Nonprofit	21	Less than a year
11	Macie	Member	Nonprofit	17	Less than a year
12	Jason	Member	Nonprofit	6	1
13	Justin	Member	For-profit	2	2
14	Jordan	Leadership Council	Nonprofit	12	2
15	Alex	Leadership Council	Nonprofit	11	2
16	Jacob	Member	Nonprofit	22	1 year and a half
17	Grant	Member	For-profit	N/A	2
18	Emily	Leadership Council	Nonprofit	17	2
19	Blake	Leadership Council	For-profit	2	2
20	Eddie	Leadership Council (Former)	Nonprofit	20	2
21	Eric	Leadership Council (Former)	Nonprofit	15	3
22	Carly	Member	Nonprofit	2	1
23	Tom	Member	For-profit	4	3
24	Joe	Member	Nonprofit	7	Less than a year
25	Merry	Member	Nonprofit	27	2
26	Tim	Leadership Council	Nonprofit	10	1
27	Jenny	Leadership Council (Former)	Nonprofit	40	3
28	Ashlyn	Member	Nonprofit	3	1 year and a half
29	Olivia	Member	Nonprofit	16	3
30	Chelsea	Member	Nonprofit	11	3

## **RQ 1: How Shared Leadership is Developed**

Despite the potential value of shared leadership, few attempts have been made to investigate how shared leadership is manifested in SDP. The first research question focused on exploring how leadership is shared from the experience of SDP practitioners engaged in the multi-organizational collaboratives. Four broad themes emerged: (a) strategic planning, (b) support from vertical leaders, (c) shared events, and (d) personal characteristics.

**Strategic Planning.** Participants stated that leadership is shared through several strategic approaches established in the multi-organizational collaboratives. Specifically, they claimed that the existence of multiple leaders, collective decision-making processes, and leadership transition play critical roles in sharing leadership authority among multiple individuals in the coalition. Each of these sub-themes are discussed in the following sub-sections.

***Multiple leaders.*** One of the key features of shared leadership is the distribution of leadership influence across multiple individuals (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). The overwhelming majority of participants interviewed in this study perceived the SDP collaboratives consisting of many local organizations led by multiple individuals rather than relying on a single leader. Providing a city-wide collaboration platform for local organizations from different sectors, the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives are initiated and supported by a large SDP organization (i.e., Laureus Sport for Good Foundation). The large SDP foundation plays a supportive role in engaging local organizations for collaborations in local communities as well as providing resources. Regarding the leadership structure, the collaboratives have taken unique approaches by having multiple leaders from the beginning. Carly shared her perception about leadership structure:

I would say the program officer, is definitely a leader. And they have a leadership committee, and all of them I would say were leaders. I would say one main leader, with other I would say co-leaders, or associate leaders. But, there are several leaders that are at this. The program officer is the main leader, and you have these other leaders, but they respect the program director, and lets her lead the organization.

As Carly stated, the formal leadership structure of the multi-organizational collaboratives was centered around local program directors and members of the leadership council. Specifically, there is one program officer in Chicago and Atlanta to provide backbone support for participating organizations. At the same time, the leadership council consisting of roughly five to ten individuals plays a central role as a steering committee in the collaboratives. Blake supported Carly's opinion regarding leadership demonstration from multiple individuals: "I know Bill primarily is the program officer, and then, I see the whole leadership council playing an important leadership role". Sharing and/or distributing leadership with multiple individuals is a typical characteristic of shared leadership in comparison to the traditional vertical leadership approach (Carson et al., 2007; Pearce & Conger, 2003). The strategically planned leadership format designating multiple leaders identified in this study aligns with prior literature that indicates shared leadership can be deliberately planned and implemented (D'Innocenzo et al., 2016; Klein, Ziegert, Knight, & Xiao, 2006; Pitelis & Wagner, 2019). In particular, Pitelis and Wagner (2019) labeled such approach as strategic shared leadership that a small group of strategically appointed leaders plays a central role in implementing shared leadership in the partnership context. Findings in this study suggest SDP practitioners should think about how to create an appropriate leadership structure in multi-organizational collaborations to successfully share and/or distribute leadership roles across multiple individuals.



Carly's statement also indicates that the relationship between the program director and leadership council members are not hierarchical but horizontal and collaborative. As one of the leadership council members in Sport for Good Chicago, Elisabeth demonstrated her experience of sharing leadership with others:

We have leadership council members... Those would be the main leaders. Additionally, we have one program manager from Laureus USA oversees and drives a lot of that work as well. But we very collaboratively across the leadership council work together to lead the initiative. Laureus USA has one individual who helps drive the work, and then the leadership council is comprised of roughly 10 members as well who also work together to lead and drive the work. Leadership council has broken itself into a couple of different taskforces that all have lead individual or individuals as well.

The strategic planning for sharing leadership among multiple people in the multi-organizational collaboratives allowed individuals to take the initiative in planning and implementing activities to serve the local community. This was an important approach not to entirely rely on the program officer and the larger foundation (i.e., Laureus) having limited local knowledge. The collaboratives led by local SDP leaders support prior literature highlighting the importance of local involvement in SDP (Kang & Svensson, 2019; Welty Peachey, Schulenkorf, & Hill, 2019; Whitley & Welty Peachey, 2020). Indeed, some interview participants mentioned that community's skepticism toward nonprofit organizations coming from other areas due to poor understanding of local context. Emily, a leadership council member in Chicago shared her concern before joining the multi-organizational collaborative, which was launched by an external foundation headquartered in a different city:

Our community is very skeptical of outside organizations coming into Chicago and saying, "Here's what you need to do. We're bringing this new thing to Chicago." I felt worried that Laureus Sport for Good Chicago would not... people wouldn't take it seriously because they would know that it was not a Chicago-based- so people in Chicago are like "yeah, maybe that works for New York but that's not what will work for Chicago because we're different." And I think that's good in lots of ways but also is a roadblock in some ways, and so I was very surprised and very happy that that did not end up being a challenge for the coalition.

As she mentioned her satisfaction in the last part of the statement, the collaborative overcame the concern by sharing leadership functions across multiple people. Justin described how this strategic planning allowed them to share leadership functions in the collaborative:

Bill leads it from the Laureus side and then leadership council leads it from the programming, the activities, things like that. I think the leadership council manages the group, they manage the programming. They lead the group, they organize it, they facilitate, they get us there, they give us stuff to talk about, things like that.

As Justin noted, the program officer and the Laureus Foundation manifested their leadership in relation to administrative and supportive parts while the leadership council consisting of representatives from local organizations demonstrated leadership in more practical areas in the communities. The distribution of leadership functions in the collaboratives echoed what previous studies called the existence of multiple leadership functions or roles in shared leadership (Morgeson et al., 2010; Zhu et al., 2018). In other words, a recent study indicated that shared leadership does not necessarily mean all members should engage in all aspects of leadership functions and/or roles. Instead, organizational members may selectively perform

particular leadership functions according to their skills or preferences (Zhu et al., 2018). Also, balancing leadership functions between program officer from Laurus and leadership council supports prior SDP literature on the potential role of shared leadership for overcoming hierarchical top-down program development driven by external agencies omitting local expertise (Lindsey, 2017; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Spaaij, Schulenkorf, Jeans, & Oxford, 2018).

Although program directors from Laureus and leadership council members are deemed as official leaders in the multi-organizational collaboratives, a few participants provided interesting insight that some members perceived there are unofficial leaders. For instance, Eddie who was a former leadership council member noted that he thinks himself as an informal leader regardless of designated position:

I'm no longer on the steering committee, but I guess I would still perceive myself as a leader. Other folks who I would consider to be leaders in there would be actually the folks who are on the steering committee. That's probably... outside of myself right now, it would be the folks who are on the steering committee. So, for instance, I don't have an official title anymore with Laureus Chicago. I'm not a steering committee member, but I would say my voice is always heard and what I have to contribute is always valued.

This finding aligns with prior literature on shared leadership highlighting the emergence of leadership with or without designated leaders by sharing leadership among all members (Carson et al., 2007; Contractor et al., 2012; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Lord et al., 2017; Morgeson et al., 2010; Pearce et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2018). Similar to Eddie, Blake who is a current member of the leadership council also expressed that he recognizes some non-leadership council members as informal leaders in the collaboratives as they have the expertise that leadership council members do not have: “Another person in the leadership council

who's no longer at it but was with the Chicago Cubs. And so, we look to her leadership on things around engaging professional teams". These findings echo past studies indicating when employees recognize one another as leaders, they can easily incorporate leadership efforts within an organization (Mehra et al., 2006; Zhou, 2016).

Combined, while leadership roles and/or functions are formally shared by local program directors and members of the leadership council, findings of this study contribute to the literature by demonstrating a mix of the formal and informal types of shared leadership manifested in the context of multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. In addition to formally distributed and/or shared leadership, non-designated leaders' informal leadership helps enhance information flow and subsequently increase the team's productivity (Marion, Christiansen, Klar, Schreiber, & Erdener, 2016). Therefore, SDP organizations should incorporate regular members' expertise and input into the decision-making process so that designated groups of formal leaders and informal leaders lead each other to fully utilize the potential of shared leadership in partnerships with multiple stakeholders. To do so, this study recommends leaders strategically create small groups of internal stakeholders to take ownership of different organizational tasks and projects.

***Collective decision-making.*** A total of 17 representatives who participated in this study expressed they perceive leadership is shared in the collaboratives through the involvement of in collective decision-making processes. Collective decision-making has been underscored as a critical aspect of shared leadership compared to vertical leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Pearce et al., 2008). In this regard, Tom's experience of collective decision-making demonstrates such characteristic:

If we want to bring new ideas or get things involved, we can go to steering committees or those leaders and take our ideas directly to them. And what they do is they help us carve

those out, hash those out, and they'll talk them to the program officer. You know it's a collective effort. It's not a one size fit all. We all worked together to help make the decision. I think so far, so good. I think we make decisions collectively, as a group.

Merry further stated she perceived leadership is shared when members of the collaboratives make a decision together: “As a group make decisions that we would kind of do some brainstorming and make decisions together.” Past research suggested that several organizational characteristics facilitate the emergence of shared leadership. For example, Carson et al. (2007) found members’ participation and input into a series of organizational activities facilitate the emergence of shared leadership. In particular, they demonstrated organizational members’ participation in decision-making, discussion, and debate related to goals, tasks, and any other organizational issues can enhance collective influence between members. Similarly, a recent study supports the role of collective decision-making for shared leadership through the concept of voice. According to Wu et al. (2018), “Voice is described as constructive change-oriented communication, participation in decision-making, and involvement in key processes” (p.5). Along this line, findings from this study indicate the high level of participation of organizational members toward the decision-making process can facilitate the development of shared leadership. Thus, SDP organizations should engage staff members and local stakeholders in the decision-making process to shift toward a collaborative leadership approach in practice to better achieve social change outcomes (Kang & Svensson, 2019; Schulenkorf, 2017; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016).

While the collaboratives encourage the involvement of members in decision-making, not every member make decisions. Hannah demonstrated this aspect:

Well, the leadership council meets once a month. And then, different committees, within the leadership council will have phone calls, at another point during the month. As far as the full membership, I don't think we're at a point yet where the full membership is making decisions about that. I think that, hopefully, that will happen going forward, and as we're moving into the beginning phases of putting together the plays of Chicago.

Instead of engaging all individuals in decision-making, the collaboratives took a two-folded approach to collective decision-making including committee level decisions (small) initiated by several task forces and leadership council level decisions (large). Elisabeth, for example, expressed such characteristics: “[The] leadership council has broken itself into a couple of different tasks forces that all have lead individual or individuals as well.” Eric provided a more detailed description of the composition of the committees (i.e., task forces):

There is a committee that there are what we call five strategic pillars of moving forward, the education, health and wellness, sustainability, unemployment and income and community cohesion. Those are the five tools...making sure that we address those issues in the community. You got a committee chair and committee members...They've got their sub goals and objectives, which have been identified. And that group's responsibility is to develop programming that moves that forward. They bring it to the coalition as a whole, the group as a whole.

The decision to utilize some small committees in accordance with special areas and the broader leadership council as a whole is a strategic approach for shared leadership considering challenges operating day-to-day activities between SDP practitioners (Shin, Cohen, & Welty Peachey, 2020; Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013; Thorpe & Chawansky, 2017). In addition, a recent study on strategic shared leadership showed that small cohesive groups play an important role in coordinating and enabling strategic leadership sharing (Pitelis & Wagner, 2019). For instance, Emily mentioned that collective decision-making through the current structure help reduce the burden of individual members regarding working-level responsibilities for decision-making:

When we need to, we'll ask for input from the membership body but don't want to be fully tasking members with making decisions. I think that what we do is we try to get input from them and use that to make the decisions... But we don't want to overburden our big membership body with something to solve problems.

Although not all members participate in the working level decisions, the collaboratives ensure to receive input and/or feedback from individual members for decision-making agendas. Jacob, a non-leadership council member, mentioned: “I think they're always looking for feedback and they're very good at listening to what the organizations need and they're trying to fill those needs for them.” Similarly, Alex supported the reflection of input from all members in collective decision-making:

We actually meet with the collective, gather information and information to help guide our decision making. Anybody has an open floor to present an idea to improve the work... We bring those interests to the table. We do things called town hall meetings where we invite all members and even non-members to the table to have discussions about sports-based youth development and other topics.

Several other SDP practitioners including Heather maintained that the collective decision-making in the collaboratives is valuable for shared leadership because it is more than just group participation in decision-making:

It's not just about the decision making as the process looks like, the end product seems representative of the coalition. So when I think about the trainings that are being provided or the meanings that are being done, it seems as though it's only are geared towards diverse organizations and that seems that it's fairly representative of the broader membership.

As she expressed, the essence of collective decision-making through shared leadership is to make overarching decisions representing entire collaboratives. Justin described how they make satisfactory decisions to represent many organizations involved in the multi-organizational collaboratives:

I think for the most part it's about building consensus. There haven't been any decisions so far that I feel have been hotly contested, where I think we generally have set goals collectively by talking through them, sort of collectively landing on goals. I think there's been wide agreement on solving processes for things.

Justin's statement on consensus building through collective decision-making indicates that members involved in decision-making are in search of consensus by integrating diverse

perspectives across members. This finding shows that the premise of the collective decision-making in the multi-organizational collaboratives was a consensus-based decision-making process. According to McGrath (1984), the task of decision-making does not search for a correct answer but reach a preferred alternative. In prior literature, top-down decision-making in traditional vertical leadership approach often fails to reflect the shared sense of staff members or accept alternative perspectives (Pearce et al., 2008). Further, top-down decision-making tends to demand compliance rather than consensus (Pearce et al., 2008). Bergman and colleagues (2012) found an association between consensus among members and shared leadership. They also emphasized that although consensus does not always bring the best quality of the decision, the final decision based on the consensus can benefit an organization as a whole. This finding provides underscored the importance of coordinating different demands among partnership actors.

Overall, this study provides the following practical implications for SDP leaders who are willing to employee shared leadership. Once leaders establish a structure for multiple leaders, they should ensure that shared leadership is actively practiced and not a lip service. To do so, existing leaders are required to actively engage other internal stakeholders in the organization's decision-making. The specific tactics for doing so can take the form of adding a shared leadership statement on every meeting agenda, creating a visible dashboard for all internal stakeholders to see which individuals were involved with key decisions, and add collective decision-making as a guiding principle or core value of the organization.

***Leadership transition.*** Changing composition of leadership council members emerged as an important factor for why SDP practitioners perceived leadership is shared in the collaboratives. A number of representatives in this study discussed leadership transition over



time. Alex, a leadership council member, shared his perception about how leadership is shared via leadership transitions:

The composition is organic, it changes. And that's a good thing. You don't want the same people at the top all the time, making the same decisions. You want new fresh ideas, new energy, et cetera. So, the council will change every year basically.

This finding supports Pearce and Conger's (2003) conceptualization of shared leadership emphasizing the ongoing influence of peers across an organization to lead one another. In particular, the changing composition of leadership council members over time provides opportunities for non-leadership council members to step into a formal leadership group (i.e., leadership council) to serve entire collaboratives. Elisabeth, for example, said such aspect: "The leadership council is roughly a two-year term, so that gives the opportunity for individuals to roll off and roll onto leadership councils so there are different members being represented, and it's not the same individuals year after year". Also, Emily shared her perception about the influence of leadership transition on ensuring diversity:

It changes a lot, which is good because I think that a thing that we know that we need is more diversity on the leadership council in all of the ways, so that means diversity of areas of where people work. We want people to be part of the leadership council who are not just from the organizations like us and the other small program. We want somebody from the park district. We want a teacher. We want parents. We want all different kinds of people and levels of...

The period of acting as leadership council members ranged from one-year to two-year terms depending on the availability of individual members in each city. Grant, a non-leadership council member from the private sector, spoke about this aspect:

It does change over time. There is a term... There have been some members who were leadership council initially and who have now stepped off. Sometimes that's because their role changes. They moved to a new organization and sometimes that's because I think they've just completed their participation and they choose to step off and new people are added.

In addition to the shifting composition of leadership council members, Elisabeth shared more about the leadership transition in the small committees:

Annually, we have [been] reassessing and assigning different task force. So, task force are committees to us on the leadership council where there are a specific topic or area that that group of individuals overseas making possible, and so that those can change from year to year. One change was outlining more bylaws around how long leadership council members would sit on the council, and what the process would look like to bring on new leadership council members.

Responding to the question “how leadership is shared”, a recent comprehensive review of shared leadership offered two models (see Zhu et al., 2018). The first model indicates leadership is shared when members perform tasks together at the same time and place. On the other hand, the second model acknowledges shared leadership as a time-varying construct (see Pearce & Conger, 2003) and subsequently emphasizes leaders and followers' roles shift over time (Lord et al., 2017; Pearce et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2018). Prior research defined this type of shared leadership as rotated leadership (Davis & Eisenhardt, 2011). Accordingly, it appears that the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives strategically apply elements of rotated shared leadership.

The leadership transition of shared leadership identified in the collaboratives raises a question regarding what the selection process is to become a member of the leadership council and/or small committees. Hannah who is a current leadership council member demonstrated the open application process of the leadership council: “We had an open application process where people could apply to be a part of it.” Jordan added what Hannah expressed why the open application process is important: “There are always opportunities for everybody to step up and really take the lead or the point on something. And it gives people the chance to show their talents and shine a little bit in that setting.” This open application process is important as it ensures equal opportunities for organizational members to serve in leadership role.

Findings offer a practical implication for SDP organizations on how to practice shared form of leadership in the partnership context. Given unbalanced power dynamics associated with partnerships remains a critical challenge in SDP (Jones et al., 2017; Welty Peachey et al., 2018), the current study suggests partnership actors could strategically utilize periodic leadership rotation to facilitate shared leadership development. Partnership actors should keep in mind that shared leadership takes time to develop and the progress can be lost with frequent turnover among collaborative members. Therefore, existing leaders and leadership teams need to create guiding documents and ongoing trainings for new members to educate them on the role of shared leadership and the existing structures and processes put in place.

Also, the findings from this study extend the SDP literature on leadership by demonstrating the role of leadership transition for the development of shared leadership through an in-depth exploration of partnerships with external stakeholders (Kang & Svensson, 2019; Svensson et al., 2019). At the same time, however, future research is needed to determine the most appropriate forms of leadership transition for shared leadership development. While the collaboratives determined the duration of serving in leadership roles (e.g., 1-2 years), there was no clear standard for the leadership term to fully leverage the benefits of shared leadership. What if current members of the leadership council do a great job of coordinating the collaboratives and want to stay longer in the leadership role? Future research should investigate appropriate periods for shared leadership transition corresponding to the organizational life-cycle in SDP.

**Support from Vertical Leaders.** SDP practitioners involved in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives also perceived the emergence of shared leadership when they felt support from local program directors. As described earlier, the Laureus foundation appointed program directors to help coordinate and support the citywide multi-organizational collaborations in

Atlanta and Chicago. The analysis of documents presented specific roles of the Laureus and program directors such as facilitation of collaborations, administrative and technological supports, data collection, and communications. In fact, interviewees perceived the program directors as vertical leaders since they are representatives of the Laureus USA that supports the collaboratives. While shared leadership sounds contradictory to traditional vertical leadership styles, a number of scholars have highlighted the relationship between existing vertical leadership styles and shared leadership is not mutually exclusive (Chiu, Owens, & Tesluk, 2016; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013, Pearce et al., 2008; Wang, Jiang, Liu, & Ma, 2017). Instead, shared leadership supplements vertical leadership (Fausing et al., 2015). Indeed, Emily expressed the mutual coexistence of vertical and shared leadership in the collaboratives:

I know that there's been many times during the process of being on the leadership council when we're not sure how to proceed with something, and we can't really figure out what the right thing to do and no one feels super strongly, and then we'll just all be like, "Well, [Program director]...why don't you just go ahead and make that decision." And we are fine with that.

This finding is consistent with Pearce and Manz's (2005) claiming that even organizations operationalizing shared leadership have formally designated leaders and/or leadership roles as a part of their organizational structure. Also, Emily's statement demonstrated shared leadership does not mean reaching consensus and making decisions only by a group of leadership council members. Instead, this finding aligns with prior research acknowledging vertical leaders sometimes should make a final decision depending on context although organizations practice shared leadership (Pearce et al., 2008). Given this complementary relationship between vertical and shared leadership, there is a consensus in prior scholarship on the critical role of vertical leaders supporting the establishment of shared leadership (Barnett et

al., 2016; Hoch, 2013; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Martin, et al., 2013; Wang, Jiang, Liu, & Ma, 2017; Zhu et al., 2018).

In this regard, a total of 17 SDP representatives talked about the critical role of program directors supporting shared leadership in the collaboratives. In particular, interviewees mainly discussed how program directors' personal characteristics influence building boundary conditions for shared leadership. For instance, Merry discussed the supportive role of the Laureus and a program director for the collaboratives where shared leadership is operationalized:

Laureus is not about controlling the whole thing, but really, listening to what other lead organizations have to say. And, they're really as, you know, a guide and sometimes that's hard because I talked to our program director quite a bit about that you don't want to control the whole process because part of the failing and figuring stuff out is that's part of it, you know, to have someone come in and okay, let's pick, I'm going to fix, this is not the right approach.

As she noted, this finding brings our attention to the importance of the non-hierarchical and encouraging role played by vertical leaders for the implementation of shared leadership. Researchers have previously focused on the role of formally appointed leaders encouraging followers to actively participate in a collective form of leadership (e.g., Fausing et al., 2015). The findings in this study aligns with the necessity of the specific types of vertical leadership to facilitate the development of shared leadership (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). In prior literature, several scholars have called it the paradox of shared leadership by indicating that “hierarchical leaders are charged with creating less hierarchical organizations” (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003, p. 24). The less hierarchical nature of the vertical leader identified in this study supports Pearce and Man's (2005) emphasis on leaders' role as visible models for constructing a foundation for shared leadership practice over time because staff members could internalize the virtue of shared leadership from leaders' less authoritative nature.

In addition to the less hierarchical nature, Heather emphasized how the inclusive communication style of the vertical leader allowed relationship building among members in the collaboratives:

Though there is naturally the staff member of Laureus, but his style has been I think really inclusive of and by virtue of that he's been able to build relationships with individual leaders and have that team build relationships and network. I think there's a more solid foundation of trust and relationship as opposed to somebody coming in assuming authority.

As shared leadership is enhanced by active social interactions among organizational members (Barnett et al., 2016; Carson et al., 2007; Wu et al., 2018), findings from this study suggest SDP leaders should practice inclusive communication with members to help build meaningful relationships among partnership actors. Given there is a growing number of multi-organizational collaborations/networks supported by large nonprofit foundations in the SDP sector, backbone organizations and/or leaders should create inclusive communication channels in support of relationship-building among collaboration actors. At the same time, future research should further investigate more strategies about how vertical leaders motivate members to engage in more collaborative forms of leadership. In prior management and leadership literature, for example, researchers have highlighted leaders' efforts of aligning the personal interests of staff members with organizational goals (i.e., transformational leadership) can also help the emergence of shared leadership (Hoch, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2009).

Some representatives involved in the collaboratives expressed an interesting point that the Laureus Foundation along with the program director's servant leadership behaviors help create a condition for shared leadership development in the collaboratives. For instance, Justin shared his perspective on this aspect:

I think with humility Laureus must sort of play a leadership role while walking alongside folks who are doing this work from their own perspectives. I think being a convener, building a network, playing the role that Laureus wants to play. I think it's the only way they could be successful in that strategy, is by creating a platform for shared leadership...I think it's important for people to feel like Laureus is genuine in its mission.

Considering that humility and authenticity are key elements of servant leadership (see van Dierendonck, 2011), Justin's statement centered around humility and the genuine nature of the vertical leaders such as the Laureus Foundation and program director provide meaningful insight into the influence of servant leadership on shared leadership. For example, past research documented those servant leaders acknowledge their limitations through humility and this subsequently allows for the establishment of a joint decision-making culture by encouraging the contribution of other members in organizations (Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2016). Further, servant leaders' genuine emphasis on prioritizing followers' development and interests positively influences followers to become selfless and prosocial leaders helping the growth of other members (Wang, Jiang, Liu, & Ma, 2017). Accordingly, leaders in SDP organizations should accept the inevitable limitations of decision-making relying on a single leader and instead demonstrate genuine willingness to help develop the capacity of individual members. In doing so, individual members would serve others in organizations, which is a base condition for shared leadership.

Additionally, Tiffany shared her experience on the empowerment from vertical leaders demonstrating servant leadership:

I think the way I perceive strong leadership is I think it's called servant-leadership, but it's the idea that you're serving those that... you're most accountable to those that you are serving. And that is the spirit that I get from Laureus, so it's not kind of top-down, "Here's what we're imposing", but the spirit that I very much get is, "We're in it for the children. You're serving the children, what can we do to empower the work that you do?". And so I very much feel that, in that way, our voices would be respected and heard. They're not out there to impose the perceptions of those that supervise them, like whoever the head of Laureus is, but that they're very much in it to empower the work that is going on.

The perceived empowerment from Laureus and the program director is important since this can motivate members of collaboratives to take the initiative in serving sport-based social change projects in local communities. According to prior research, servant leaders' empowering nature aims to foster other members' self-motivated attitude for self-directed decision-making, information sharing, and innovative performance (van Dierendonck, 2011). Based on the enhanced motivation through the empowerment from servant leaders, past research reported organizational members mutually encourage to lead each other on tasks, actively share information, and help other members' growth, which subsequently facilitates shared leadership (Pearce & Sims, 2003; Sims et al., 2009; Yammarino et al., 2012). Therefore, this supports prior research on servant leadership as a facilitator for shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Jones et al., 2018; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2016; Wang, Jiang, Liu, & Ma, 2017; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2017).

How can existing SDP leaders be supportive of shared leadership in practice? First, it is important for positional leaders to acknowledge the limitations of decisions made by a single individual and empower other organizational members to serve in leadership roles and take ownership of specific tasks and projects. Executive directors may need to learn from external experts (e.g., leadership consultants) about how to empower individual members and share their authority with others. Embracing servant leadership behavior is one way that positional leaders could help support the development of shared leadership. By doing so, servant leaders can guide stepwise transition into shared leadership (Jones et al., 2018).

**Shared Events.** The Laureus Foundation provided shared events including coalition meetings and professional development sessions with partnership actors. Six SDP practitioners mentioned they perceived these shared events are where they contribute to a collaborative form of



leadership and their voices are equally heard in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. For example, Elisabeth expressed her view on the role of the coalition meeting for sharing the opinion of members:

There are quarterly town hall meetings to share with the greater membership body and various other stakeholders to get a very collaborative approach on how all of our partner organizations can work together to have a collective impact.

Tom also shared a similar perspective on the role of meetings as shared events for collecting extensive opinions on issues from all members in the collaboratives: “Basically, we have quarterly or every other month we have meeting sessions, where information is discussed how to better effectively lead our communities when it comes to sports.” These findings suggest that utilizing regular meeting sessions help partnership actors better engage in citywide collaborations as well as share collective goals of the broader SDP collaboratives. In addition to the meetings, professional development sessions organized by the Laureus Foundation and individual members were also spaces where members perceived their leadership demonstration as well as a sense of collectiveness. For instance, Alex mentioned his experience of organizing a professional development session: “This professional development, that's one area that would provide leadership in Sport for Good.” The experience of organizing and leading the professional development sessions by participating organizations is a great opportunity for partnership actors because shared leadership emerges by leading one another based on members’ expertise rather than positional power (Barnett et al., 2016; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Pearce & Manz, 2005).

Moreover, Katy said she recognized the collectiveness through the professional development sessions: “We have attended their coaches summit, which I would say it has been the most beneficial because everybody comes together and we were able to network.” The shared events sub-theme supports the concept of shared purpose that was suggested in previous

research as a key factor in developing shared leadership. According to Carson et al. (2007), if organizational members spend time together discussing goals, expectations, and action plans for the project, they are more likely to share leadership responsibility of the organization. Further, some leadership scholars underscored the role of professional development programs such as workshops to establish collective identity, which helps foster shared leadership (Jones, Hadgraft, Harvey, Lefoe, & Ryland, 2014; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). Therefore, SDP organizations and executive leaders should intentionally design and organize events where organizational members have an opportunity to interact with other individuals they may otherwise not work with. By doing so, partnership actors can be motivated to invest their efforts for shared leadership in multi-organizational collaboratives.

**Personal Characteristics.** Personal characteristics and commitment of individual members in multi-organizational collaborations also emerged as a salient theme for developing shared leadership. Elisabeth who recently became a leadership council member from a non-leadership council position shared her attitude for citywide collaborations:

One example is a bowling event that was just a couple months back that was not focused around work specific or learning opportunities, but just a great opportunity for the members from various organizations representing various fields to come together and just get to know each other, talk about work, personal life, et cetera.

Active engagement even outside of the collaborative allowed her to build good relationships with other members. The current study contributes to the SDP literature by demonstrating the role of members' personal characteristics and proactivity to build a relationship with other members in the collaboratives, which leads to the emergence of shared leadership (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Small & Rentsch, 2010; Zhou, 2016). This is important since relationship qualities between organizational members can influence the development of shared leadership (Zhu et al., 2018).

Meanwhile, Jennifer expressed her outgoing personality enabled her to reach out to other members and/or organizations involved in the collaboratives:

During professional developments, when we go down and like introduce ourselves, I'll be able to like okay, I want to talk to that person after. Or I need to connect with that lady from that organization after this professional development. So, I think a lot of it has to do with my personality is being able to talk to people. I think it just helps that everyone is like on the same page and is open with sharing ideas. Also, the programs or people I've met, I follow on social media or follow their organization's page.

Similarly, Merry also shared her experience with extraverted members in her group in the collaboratives: "In my group in particular, I'll have to say that they were all very vocal so...leaders of my group didn't have to work too hard to make sure everybody's voice was heard, but because everyone was very passionate..." These findings support Jackson's (2000) argument that members' commitment, attitude, and motivation toward collaborative work can positively influence the development of shared leadership. At the same time, Jack, a representative of an organization participating in the collaborations for two years, mentioned the difficulty in his personality of building relationships with others in collaboratives:

I don't know if this has anything to do with Laureus or it's probably my own weakness or short-coming. And I think, my personality ... I worked a long time as a teacher and then as a non-profit in Chicago and I'm used to just working by myself. I'm used to people not caring what I think. So maybe I've just developed some bad habits where I don't talk to people or let people know what I'm thinking. And maybe that's wrong. I guess I'm skeptical.

Although Jack and his organization have participated in the collaboratives for about two years, he stated that he has very limited engagement in the collaboratives. As he noted, this study found introverted personality and individualistic work habits of individuals limit the potential of shared leadership. Further, he also mentioned he felt uncomfortable to share his opinions in the collaboratives since he was concerned if his opinions are accepted: "I'm scared because... A lot of times what I think should be done or my opinions aren't always popular. And I don't want to

negatively impact my organization because of my personal politics. So, like I'm kind of careful.” These findings can be interpreted by Hoch’s (2017) conceptualization of group characteristics. In particular, extraversion characterized as social skills and openness to experiences are factors that might reduce one’s willingness to engage in shared leadership.

In addition to individual characteristics, some interviewees argued organizational members’ commitment to the collaboratives influences shared leadership. For example, Merry mentioned the importance of individual commitment for multi-organizational collaborations if shared leadership is developed: “You can't really think about your own organization. I have to be able to see okay, together as a group, here's what we're here to accomplish.” Elisabeth also discussed:

I think the only thing that I wanted to confirm before joining was there is a significant amount of time commitment surrounding leading and driving a lot of this work, which is in addition to my full time role as the Program Director. So, that was just the only hindrance that I wanted to be sure that I had enough time to commit to do quality work on both fronts.

Current findings support scholars’ suggestions regarding employee commitment as an important predictor of shared leadership. According to Pearce and Manz (2005), employee commitment refers to “a willingness to above and beyond the call of duty” (p. 136) and is an important factor for developing shared leadership. In particular, several scholars suggested the concept of self-leadership as a condition to influence individual members’ level of commitment, which in turn facilitate the sustained mutual influence in an organization that develops shared leadership (Bligh et al., 2006). In other words, employees’ level of commitment is likely to transcend individual levels and transform into a greater level of commitment exhibited by shared leadership.

Combined, findings from this study demonstrate the characteristics and commitment of individuals as antecedents of shared leadership. Specifically, findings align with Hoch and

Dulebohn's (2017) conceptualization of the big five personality dimensions including extraversion, openness to experiences, and conscientiousness for the development of shared leadership. Given a large number of research mainly investigated the personal characteristics of hierarchical leaders, this study contributes to sport management scholarship by highlighting the role of personal traits and commitment in facilitating or inhibiting shared leadership in SDP.

How can existing leaders in multi-organizational collaboratives utilize the findings from this study? The successful development of shared leadership requires that SDP collaboratives analyze the personal traits of individual members to better identify which members may work better with others and what each person needs to thrive in a collaborative environment. In doing so, leaders could provide feedback and motivations for eliciting a stronger commitment of members toward shared leadership. Here, existing leaders could engage organizational members in completing personality assessments and sharing their lessons learned with others to develop an enhanced understanding of how people within a collaborative or an organization function together.

**Summary.** This study explored how SDP practitioners perceived a shared form of leadership within the multi-organizational collaboratives. Four themes and several relevant sub-themes were identified as conditions and/or circumstances that representatives perceived shared leadership in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives: (a) strategic planning, (b) support from vertical leaders, (c) shared events, and (d) personal characteristics. Findings revealed that strategic planning is the most salient theme for developing shared leadership. Indeed, the majority of representatives involved in the SDP collaboratives reported that the strategic planning and/or approach taken by the collaboratives enabled them to perceive a shared form of leadership. Specifically, the existence of multiple leaders, collective decision-making, and leadership transition were key strategies taken within the multi-organizational collaboratives.

Initiated by a larger nonprofit (i.e., the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation), the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives had a unique leadership structure. For example, the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation along with the local program director takes the lead on administrative and resource-related support while the leadership council that is composed of around 10 representatives of participating organizations formally shared leadership. Accordingly, most interviewees reported there are multiple leaders in the collaboratives. Sharing leadership across multiple individuals demonstrates how shared leadership is manifested in SDP collaboratives. At the same time, the perceived existence of multiple leaders supports previous research emphasizing leadership as a decentralized concept through mutual influence among multiple individuals (Carson et al., 2007; D’Innocenzo et al., 2016; Ensley et al., 2006; Nicolaides et al., 2014; Pearce & Conger, 2003). Further, some SDP practitioners mentioned that there are some people who are deemed as informal leaders in the collaboratives regardless of their formal positions. This is an important contribution to scholarship because the findings show how the strategically shared form of leadership subsequently result in sharing leadership responsibilities and roles with more broad population in SDP (Carson et al., 2007; Contractor et al., 2012; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Lord et al., 2017; Morgeson et al., 2010; Pearce et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2018).

In addition to the multiple leaders, SDP practitioners noted collective decision-making through group consensus allowed them to perceive shared leadership in the collaboratives. A general misconception on shared leadership is that all members should participate in the decision-making process. However, SDP practitioners often serve multiple roles in their organizations for daily operations (e.g., Shin et al., 2020; Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013; Thorpe & Chawansky, 2017) and it is practically impossible for all members to be involved in every

aspect of decisions in the collaboratives. In this regard, decisions are made by groups including the leadership council and committees (i.e., task forces) that take on different areas of the collaboratives by reflecting on opinions and feedbacks of individual members. Therefore, the finding provides an important implication on how multi-organizational SDP collaborations strategically utilize group-based collective decision-making to better coordinate a shared form of leadership (Pitelis & Wagner, 2019).

Leadership transition also emerged as an important aspect of strategic planning of shared leadership in the collaboratives. The rotated composition of the leadership council aligns with Pearce and Conger's (2003) conceptualization of shared leadership that emphasizes mutual leadership influences among members as well as provides leadership experience with general members. The perceived role of leadership transition for developing shared leadership in SDP collaboratives extends prior literature indicating the nature of a rotated form of shared leadership that shifts roles between leaders and non-leaders over time (Lord et al., 2017; Pearce et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2018). This suggests SDP organizations can take a strategic approach to leadership transition over time to overcome challenges associated with power dynamics in external partnerships and local communities.

Another salient theme was vertical leaders' support to help establish and/or maintain a favorable environment for shared leadership. Interviewees reported mutual cooperation with the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation along with program directors characterized as vertical leaders in the collaboratives to realize the full potential of shared leadership (Barnett et al., 2016; Hoch, 2013; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Martin, et al., 2013; Wang, Jiang, Liu, & Ma, 2017; Zhu et al., 2018). In particular, this study supports findings from prior literature regarding vertical leaders' personal traits such as being less authoritarian and more encouraging of others as well as

inclusive communication style for the development of shared leadership (Fausing et al., 2015; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Manz, 2005). In addition, some representatives specifically indicated servant leadership behaviors including humility, authenticity, and empowerment from vertical leaders help develop shared leadership. This supports findings from past research indicating servant leadership as a facilitator for shared leadership in other contexts (Carson et al., 2007; Pearce & Sims, 2003; Sims et al., 2009; van Dierendonck, 2011; Yammarino et al., 2012). In particular, findings provide empirical supports for previous SDP studies related to the relationship between servant and shared leadership through the lived experience of SDP practitioners (Jones et al., 2018; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2017).

Representatives also noted shared events including coalition meetings and professional development sessions led by partnership actors enabled leadership to be shared across multiple individuals. Providing regular meetings helps collaboration actors engage more in multi-organizational collaborations. In fact, the collaboration actors perceived their opinions are reflected in such events, which contributes to building shared leadership. Furthermore, findings demonstrated collaboration actors experienced a shared sense of leadership as they could coordinate and lead professional development sessions for other organizations based on their expertise (Barnett et al., 2016; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Pearce & Manz, 2005). The more time spent through shared events, the more shared responsibilities and identity (Carson et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2014; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). Therefore, findings suggest leaders create shared events where individual members recognize their contributions are valued within the multi-organizational collaborations through shared leadership.

Individual members' personal characteristics also emerged as a critical element for shared leadership. In this sense, some SDP practitioners discussed their relationship-oriented and



outgoing personalities enabled them to engage in shared leadership. These findings align with previous studies by demonstrating the role of personal traits and/or capacity of employees to facilitate or inhibit shared leadership development in SDP (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Small & Rentsch, 2010; Zhou, 2016). Accordingly, SDP leaders and organizations should consider the characteristics of individual members who participate in collaborations when they plan to implement shared leadership. At the same time, leaders should recognize the potential insights for the collaboratives from members who feel uncomfortable to share their ideas or opinions in practicing shared leadership. Thus, the leaders should encompass their participation by building more inclusive and supportive cultures around trust in the collaboratives.

## **RQ 2: Benefits of Shared Leadership**

A number of researchers have suggested shared leadership is associated with a wide range of team and/or organizational outcomes. In fact, the positive relationship between shared leadership and different types of consequences has been widely reported in the broader management literature (Carson et al., 2007; Choi et al., 2017; Han et al., 2018; Hoch, 2014; Karriker et al., 2017; Mehra et al., 2006; Robert & You, 2018; Small & Rentsch, 2010; Wu et al., 2018). In this study, RQ 2 was about the potential benefits of shared leadership from the perception of SDP practitioners involved in the multi-organizational collaboratives. Five themes emerged including (a) collective impact, (b) capacity building, (c) organizational learning, (d) cohesiveness, and (e) shared responsibilities.

**Collective Impact.** The most evident benefit SDP practitioners perceived and experienced was the collective impact on social change missions of the SDP collaboratives through shared leadership. This benefit aligns with stated purpose and desired outcomes of the multi-

organizational collaboratives presented in organizational and promotional documents about the Model City initiative. Collective impact, in this context, refers to the commitment of multiple entities to a common agenda for addressing a particular challenge (Kania & Kramer, 2011). In this study, two sub-themes emerged: (a) diverse expertise and perspectives as well as (b) collective advocacy.

***Diverse expertise and perspectives.*** Interview participants valued shared leadership since this leadership approach allowed them to leverage the diverse expertise and perspectives of members from different organizations within the SDP collaboratives. This was supported by the analysis of publicly available documents from the Laureus USA, which emphasized the value of diverse perspectives allowing the collaboratives to develop a shared, comprehensive SDP approach. Leveraging the diverse capabilities of partnership actors, in turn, was perceived to facilitate collective impact on common social change goals through sport. Grant noted a clear effort to respect different perspectives in the collaboratives through shared leadership: “I’ve seen efforts there to give people a chance to express their views and influence the decisions of the coalition.” Similarly, Katy also expressed the positive role of shared leadership encouraging the acceptance of different perspectives of members:

I would say the benefits are having different perspectives, different groups bringing in their own experiences. That would be the two best things, the different perspectives and different experiences. Because when people have different expertise, they’re able to think differently, bring something different to the table and offer different opinions, because everyone has different skills and have come from different backgrounds.

Shared leadership has a unique characteristic in that it focuses on identifying the opinions and expertise of individuals for organizations, which is different from more traditional delegation of authority and decision-making (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). The findings from this study contribute to the literature by demonstrating the critical role of shared leadership for establishing

a supportive environment in SDP collaboratives by encouraging the expression of diverse perspectives. In other words, the findings from this study provide evidence of how shared leadership promotes multiple perspectives in decision-making rather than overreliance on a single decision-maker in SDP. Here, findings from the current study align with prior literature highlighting the benefit of shared leadership enhancing mutual respect for team members and open culture (Lyndon & Pandey, 2019).

For instance, Lyndon and Pandey (2019) demonstrated shared leadership helps build an open culture where employees feel free to express their viewpoints and sometimes confront others' opinions. As O'Connor and Quinn (2004) noted:

when leadership is viewed as a property of whole systems, as opposed to solely the property of individuals, effectiveness in leadership becomes more a product of those connections or relationships among parts than the result of any one part of that system (such as the leader) (p.66).

In this regard, SDP leaders should ensure the authenticity of implementing shared leadership to develop a welcoming organizational environment for diverse viewpoints, which can subsequently help facilitate collective impact in SDP. Understanding how collective impact can be facilitated is especially important in the context of SDP as many organizations partner with organizations from different sectors.

In addition to the appreciation of different perspectives, Grant further discussed why he perceived diverse perspectives as a benefit of shared leadership in the collaboratives:

I think it just gives different perspectives and it helps identify what is needed more when more people have input. It gives more perspective on what the group needs because the program director is not a practitioner, right? He's not delivering services, he's managing Laureus' impact in the city, but he's not delivering direct programming. So, I think that's why it's important to have people who are actually delivering services also have input on the leadership team.

This is important since it underlines shared leadership allows to reflect input from front-line organizations and/or individuals implementing SDP programs for local communities. To date, a growing number of local organizations are involved in multi-organizational and/or global SDP networks initiated by larger network organizations that have no or limited knowledge of local communities (Lindsey, 2017; Spaaij et al., 2018). In particular, the implementation of SDP programs under such conditions is characterized as a top-down program approach aiming to address issues in communities without local consultation. The findings from this study support the critical role of shared leadership for incorporating knowledge and insights of local practitioners to facilitate a bottom-up program approach (Darnell & Dao, 2017; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Rossi & Jeanes, 2018; Whitley & Welty Peachey, 2020).

Another representative, Macie, a leadership council member, shared her experience of working with a diverse set of nonprofit sport organizations:

The first thing that comes to my mind is just like different perspectives...A lot of youth organizations are in a lot of different phases of what they do. So, some could have just started a year ago. Some other organizations had started almost 20 years ago. Some organizations are serving a hundred kids, some are serving ten, some are serving ten thousand. So, I think what really benefits from the leadership council is to have people that are representative of all these different types of youth organizations. So, this works best for our group, so this is probably what's going to work best for everyone.

In this study, structural diversity regarding types of sport, organizational tenure, and program size of participating organizations was perceived to contribute to collective impact. Moreover, Hannah expressed the importance of having different sector partners and its benefit through shared leadership in the collaboratives:

I think it is less helpful if you have a bunch of people coming from the exact same type of group... And you're going to get one perspective. But, I think, try to be really intentional with... We have people coming from different organizations, not just non-profits. But, schools and startups and then people in different roles. So, people who are working as program directors, people who are working on the research and evaluation side of things.

People who are working in different parts of the city. Some of us are working city wide, and some of us are overseas, which is a different approach.

She perceived sharing leadership with other sector partners is beneficial to demonstrate the potential role of the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives for local communities.

Specifically, she perceived the expertise and experiences of partnership actors can be transformed and shared across entire collaboratives. Accordingly, the findings support a recent study claiming the role of collective learning and interactive relationship with external partners for achieving collective SDP impact in local communities (Hambrick, et al., 2019; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019). Also, this study extends prior SDP literature by suggesting the potential contribution of shared leadership to the partnership context for achieving collective impact in SDP (Darnell & Black, 2011; Giulianotti et al., 2016; Hambrick et al., 2019; Svensson & Hambrick 2019; Svensson & Loat, 2019). SDP practitioners should think about how to design the composition of collaboration actors to fully leverage the benefits of shared leadership.

Other representatives of the collaboratives also reported shared leadership allows them to utilize certain expertise and/or skills of individual members for the collective benefit of the city-wide SDP collaborative. For example, Justin shared his perspective:

I think people have different things to offer. I think early on we had someone who's been doing this work 20 years...So, I think people gravitated it towards his ideas, or a vision that he may have for where it's going, or what was needed... I think where people have individual expertise, we also have someone who's an evaluation specialist who's bringing in an evaluation lens to our work for the first time, and helping us consider what we should be evaluating, and how on a more consistent basis. So, I think we're looking at different areas of expertise, and looking for their leadership to help bring that to our overall strategies.

Katy also roughly stated the use of other's expertise: "Different groups bringing in their own experiences... because when people have different expertise...Bring something different to the

table...” In particular, Emily elaborated on specific expertise that can be brought in the collaboratives:

The pro sports teams in any given city, they have money, and they probably have some sort of community relations or some sort of community development mission. And then there's the park district, and the park district has lots of space and people because they are in charge of all of the places that people would go to play, and my organization, for example, what we have is program and curriculum and this type of stuff, and so we're trying to figure out how to use all of these things together so that we can have collective effect.

It is difficult for formally designated leaders to have all aspects of knowledge, skills, and abilities to lead organizations given the dynamic and complex environments that organizations are facing (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Further, scholars underscored many SDP agencies are involved in inter-organizational linkages aiming for collective impact (Giulianotti et al., 2016). In this regard, these findings indicate that shared leadership allows for managerial system of SDP collaboratives to gather expertise and experiences of partnership actors. These findings also align with claims of prior studies about the benefits of shared leadership. For example, the literature demonstrated that teams with shared knowledge, skills, and abilities across multiple individuals not only can influence other members with expertise but also enhance the performance of the teams (Cakiroglu, Caetano, & Costa, 2020; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Ramthun & Matkin, 2014).

To leverage the value of diversity through shared leadership, leaders should formalize the process of how organizational members share their expertise with others. For example, leaders can create internal advisory groups based on different areas of specialization (e.g., fundraising, education, PR, marketing, etc.) to increase opportunities for members to leverage their existing expertise. Further, leaders should also actively work to ensure the diversity of experiences and perspectives is represented in the composition of steering committees to ensure the structural diversity necessary for collective impact. Even if findings of this study primarily focused on the

contribution of diverse expertise and perspectives through shared leadership for collective SDP impact. These findings should be interpreted with caution because SDP interventions serve broad social issues and measuring the collective impact in SDP can be difficult (Cooper, 2017).

Therefore, future research should undertake a longitudinal approach to examine the contribution of shared leadership (i.e., the value of diversity) to achieving collective impact in the context of SDP partnerships.

***Collective advocacy.*** Some representatives participating in the collaboratives highlighted that shared leadership plays a role in building a community for local organizations for collective advocacy of the positive role of sport-based social change movement in communities they serve. For example, Lili shared:

A good thing is having a stronger voice around positive sports youth development in the city of Chicago. So, people have to pay attention because it's not just one organization saying this. You've got all these organizations that are saying whatever it is that we want to say, whatever campaigns that we're working on, stronger for advocacy for sure.

While complex social issues require collective efforts initiated by multiple organizations, a large number of nonprofit organizations still provide isolated social service programs (Alexander, 2020; Kania & Kramer, 2011). Other interviewees such as Eric also reported this perception:

“The impact of the community that you're serving is much larger... You know, we share likeminded values... The ultimate goal is to increase our collective impact for the community.” In this sense, findings from this study provide new insight about the perceived role of shared leadership for unifying isolated efforts and/or voices of local organizations for collective advocacy for SDP efforts. Thus, these findings are consistent with the claim of the literature that the focus of shared leadership is for collective achievement across the organization (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017).

Another practitioner, Jordan, spoke about how the SDP collaborative's shared form of leadership secured the authenticity of collective social intervention through sport in local communities:

The visibility of good leadership impacts others, persuades others. And then two, the influence that good leaders have on others. There's been a lot of influentially positive people involved that have been among the leadership. So, they have well-considered reputations around the city. So, it brings value and adds validity to our voice and to what we're doing.

His emphasis on the exposure of a shared leadership model implemented by well-regarded individuals advocating for the SDP movement in the nonprofit sector provides insight for SDP practitioners aiming to cultivate a collective voice. According to social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), the behavior of influencing and leading professionals in the SDP sector can be observed and modeled by other practitioners. Indeed, a recent study underscored the critical role of leading figures in promoting shared leadership through the concept of social modeling (Ali, Wang, & Johnson, 2020). If the shared form of leadership is widely observed and subsequently becomes a normative expectation in the SDP sector, it would help gather individual SDP organizations together under the common agenda of SDP. At the same time, however, SDP leaders and organizations should also understand the simple application of shared leadership approach within partnership contexts does not necessarily result in a collective voice. Instead, they need to strategically implement a shared leadership model and clarify its potential for incorporating isolated sport-based social change efforts into a collective voice over time.

Meanwhile, the reported the contribution of shared leadership for creating the collective advocacy from partnership actors raises a question about how the collective advocacy of local organizations can materialize into collective impact. Here, Jenny suggested:



If we're able to collaborate with other organizations, we can go to funders, other funders and show that we're working together and that for this, the sport, they get a bigger bang for their buck. They get a bigger impression, but they're making when they have more than one organization working together. And typically, it can mean that there are more populations that are being served as a result.

Scholars have reported that SDP organizations often find it difficult to convince external stakeholders regarding how sport programs help address diverse social issues (Svensson & Hambrick, 2019; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). In this regard, this study suggests shared leadership can potentially help SDP organizations enhance their persuasive power when dealing with external stakeholders to secure support for sustainable community development. SDP organizations and/or collaboratives employing shared leadership also need to actively advocate for why a collective leadership approach is so valuable for collective impact in the SDP sector. This type of internal advocacy is critical to educate all relevant stakeholders on the process and potential impact of shared leadership and why it can provide an effective way of developing more inclusive efforts for achieving collective impact. In addition, future research should take a longitudinal approach to investigate the relationship between collective advocacy and/or voice accumulated by local SDP entities and the achievement of desired outcomes in local communities.

Interestingly, a few SDP practitioners in this study mentioned the collective mindset as a positive consequence of shared leadership in the collaboratives. Hannah, for instance, stated the collective mindset was established through shared leadership:

I think most people look at each other as like, let's share resources. Let's figure out how we can work together. Like, let's do what we can to make all of our workloads easier because everybody is sort of in it for this mission-driven reason of trying to, work with kids and provide them with the opportunities and lessons they need to be successful in life.

This finding that emerged in this study is different from earlier findings reported in mainstream management and leadership studies. In prior literature, scholars have reported organizational members' collective mindset and/or attitude as a precondition for developing shared leadership (Hoch, 2017; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017; Zhu et al., 2018). Specifically, such relationship is explained by the concept of the shared mental model (Burke, Fiore, & Salas, 2003). A possible explanation of this finding is that the contextual characteristics employing shared leadership in the collaboratives might influence partnership actors to internalize the collective mindset. Future research is needed to further examine how shared leadership helps build a collective mindset among partnership actors involve in multi-organizational collaborations.

**Capacity Building.** Researchers investigating managerial aspects of nonprofit organizations commonly define organizational capacity as the ability of organizations to utilize various types of resources to achieve desired goals (Christensen & Gazley, 2008; Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Millar & Doherty, 2016; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Svensson et al., 2018). According to Hall et al. (2003), organizational capacity is divided into several dimensions including human resource, financial resource, and structural resource capacity. In sport management, researchers have suggested organizational capacity can facilitate shared leadership. For example, a recent quantitative assessment of shared leadership found human resource capacity as a predictor of shared leadership (Svensson et al., 2019). In this study, SDP practitioners underscored their experience of developing capabilities through leadership shared across the multi-organizational collaboratives. Specifically, two sub-themes including professional development and networking emerged in this study.

***Professional development.*** In SDP, human resource capacity includes valued skills and competencies of individual members (Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019). Along this line, many SDP

practitioners in this study perceived professional development as a benefit of sharing leadership with other partnership actors in the SDP collaboratives. Elisabeth shared her experience related to professional development:

We do provide training and professional development for all of our staff members. So, those that work directly with our programs and our program partners have seen true gains on the professional development side. There's been a professional development for a new manager training, which we were able to have multiple of our staff join as well and build up some of their skills that directly correlated to their professional work. That's been around coaching specific practices...And then some have been more around data collection, so some opportunities to learn and observe from the leaders in the data field.

Chelsea, who represented an organization working with local youth in Atlanta through a bicycle-based program also mentioned this aspect: “They also offered the capacity building support in terms of building institutional knowledge and offering trainings and materials and access to experts.” As noted in the previous sections, individual members and/or organizations are allowed to organize and then lead professional development sessions where they share skills and knowledge with others according to their expertise. Knowledge sharing refers to the behavior of organizational members sharing information and knowledge to well perform their work (Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009). Past research highlighted supportive organizational environments that encourage interactions through shared leadership allows for improved knowledge sharing between members (Carson et al., 2007). As prior literature noted, the improved knowledge sharing opportunities through shared leadership in the collaboratives can subsequently develop professional capabilities of partnership actors (Carmeli & Paulus, 2015; Carson et al., 2007; Han et al., 2018; Lee, Lee, Seo, & Choi, 2015; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Wu & Cormican, 2016; Zhu et al., 2018). Based on the findings in this study, leaders of SDP collaboratives should allow members to plan and lead professional development sessions based on their own expertise. The experience of leading other members can give an important sense of

ownership to that individual while other members are provided context-specific professional development opportunities through such specialized workshops or training.

At the same time, findings showed that skills and knowledge learned from other partnership actors can subsequently be shared with other staff members in their own organizations. In this sense, the current study provides evidence about the role of shared leadership for enhancing human resource capacity (e.g., members' expertise) since sharing individual expertise with other members through shared leadership can lead to the development of relevant skills and knowledge among partnership actors (Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Doherty et al., 2014; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Svensson et al., 2017). This provides important insight that the enhanced individual task-related capacity can result in better team and/or organizational level outcomes (Hoch 2013; Wu & Cormican, 2016; Zhu et al., 2018). Combined, the present study contributes to SDP literature by demonstrating the role of shared leadership in enhancing knowledge sharing for better task-related performance among SDP practitioners in the context of partnerships (Hambrick et al., 2019).

Beyond the enhancement of professional expertise among individuals, other interviewees discussed organizational-level benefits associated with human resource capacity. For example, Justin expressed sharing his expertise with other partnership actors subsequently gave more opportunities for his organization: "We've done some trainings through the network, so been hired by Sport for Good Chicago to deliver a professional development thing for folks within the membership. That's been great because it gives us a chance to get our content out more, and again introduce what we do to more people." As such, this finding suggests the experience of leading one another for professional development through shared leadership helped raise the

awareness of organizations in the nonprofit sector (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b; Schulenkorf & Siefken, 2019; Seifried et al., 2018). Thus, this study demonstrates the perceived contribution of shared leadership between SDP practitioners for achieving associational value that is deemed as an expected benefit from nonprofit partnerships (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b; Hambrick et al., 2019).

In addition, some interviewees such as Jordan mentioned professional development initiated through shared leadership across the collaboratives helped reduce training cost for their organizations:

Largest part has probably been in terms of capacity building. So, we've been able to do a lot of training... So, my staff has been able to receive that professional development. And quite frankly we've been able to receive it at little to no cost because of the existence of the coalition whereas it may have cost us a lot more per individual to receive that same training or development.

Nonprofit organizations are known for having limited financial resources to invest in human resource development such as staff training (Gregory & Howard, 2009; Lecy & Searing, 2015; Schubert & Boenigk, 2019). Organizations' ability to mobilize and train staff members is a critical element of human resource capacity for the sustainability of SDP organizations (Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Cohen, Taylor, & Hanrahan, 2020; Svensson et al., 2016; Svensson et al., 2018; Whitley & Welty Peachey, 2020). Therefore, the findings that emerged from SDP practitioners in this study contribute to the literature by highlighting the perceived influence of shared leadership on reducing the burden of expenses for human resource development.

**Networking.** In Hall et al.'s (2003) three dimensions of organizational capacity, structural capacity has three sub-dimensions including (a) planning and development capacity, (b) infrastructure and process capacity, and (c) relationship and network capacity. In particular, the

relationship and network capacity refer to “the ability to draw on relationships with clients, members, funders, partners, government, the media, corporations, volunteers, and the public”. (Hall et al., 2003, p. 6). As such, building and maintaining relationships with other individuals and/or organizations is a critical way for organizations to develop the relationship and network capacity (Doherty et al., 2014; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Svensson & Hambrick, 2016; Svensson et al., 2020). In this study, the majority of SDP practitioners perceived multi-organizational collaboratives employing shared leadership helped build meaningful relationships with external stakeholders. This was further supported by the guiding principles of the Model City initiative described in document released by Laureus USA. Heather, for example, mentioned such aspect: “I think it was valuable networking and relationship building, but also access to new ways of thinking and new ways of doing things that have yielded some real results for us.” Justin also shared a similar experience about relationships building:

It's helped me broaden my network, and meet new people that become potential collaborators, but even beyond that, it's helped me get a finger on the pulse of what's going on in the city, in our field. So, I've enjoyed the network part of it, and I've gotten a lot out of the community of people who are involved.

To date, an increasing number of nonprofit organizations, including SDP entities, engage in collaborative networks and/or partnerships to overcome capacity challenges (Sherry & Schulenkorf, 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). However, value incongruity (Cornforth et al., 2015; Vangen & Huxham, 2012; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019), power dynamics (Lucidarme et al., 2016; Lie, 2015; Jones et al., 2017; Shin et al., 2020), and competition for resources (Proulx et al., 2014; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019) have been reported as challenges to build or maintain collaborative partnerships. Furthermore, SDP scholars have underscored that we have limited evidence if SDP organizations’ involvement in collaborative networks leads to increased organizational capacity (Svensson et al., 2018; Svensson et al.,

2020). In this respect, the abovementioned findings provide empirical evidence from the lived experience of SDP practitioners regarding the contribution of shared leadership to the development of relationship and network capacity. Shared leadership can benefit members by providing meaningful networking opportunities with other SDP actors. Therefore, leaders and steering committee members should organize more informal meetings or gatherings for members to enhance their network based on the findings of this study. These types of opportunities could be particularly valuable for newer members to build relationships with others, which may result in future collaborations.

As previously noted, shared leadership in multi-organizational SDP collaboratives encourage the presence of multiple leaders (i.e., formal, and informal leaders) and this subsequently results in multiple leader-follower relationships (Carson et al., 2007). The extensive relationships built through shared leadership can create active interactions and socialization between individuals within the collaboratives. Along this line, findings from this study are consistent with prior literature indicating the role of shared leadership in facilitating positive social exchanges among members (Aime, Humphrey, DeRue, & Paul, 2014; Drescher et al., 2014). Further, the current study suggests SDP organizations employ and leverage shared leadership as a means of partnership management for enhancing the relationship and network capacity of their own organizations.

This is important since the increased relationship and network capacity would play a role as a stepping-stone bringing more interaction values (i.e., non-monetary value) from the multi-organizational collaboratives (Agranoff, 2006; Misener & Doherty, 2012; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019). For example, Emily roughly mentioned the importance of building the relationship and network capacity that could potentially bring other values:

A lot of the events are meetings or social events that are for sharing information about Laureus, but then whenever you go to one of those, a meeting in person with people in this sector or this industry, it's good because you can check in with people who you don't see very much. You can do that for more informal networking. That helps you build and maintain relationships that are really good for you personally or your organization.

Likewise, Jason representing a soccer program in Chicago expressed: “We can recommend contacts to one another, or recommend contacts to each other if we see some kind of symmetry or fit. So yeah, that's been a real plus.” These statements associated with the interaction values bring our attention to how the enhanced relationship and network capacity can be manifested in SDP from a practical standpoint. Some respondents spoke about how the enhanced relationship and network capacity through shared leadership can be embodied in practice. For instance, Lili shared her experience:

There's an organization called [Albatross] that from our connection with them through this, has made our networking stronger with them. So, that we can look to have a golf program with them at our site, because we don't offer golf. But that's what they do so, this partnership will give us an opportunity to provide golf for our young people.

Similar to Lili, Ashlyn also mentioned the joint program delivery utilizing network capacity:

We do a reading program in the fall around marathon season called read marathon, and the [Atlanta Run] is another member of the coalition. And so by being brought together for this round table, it gave me the opportunity to speak with the director of the [Atlanta Run] and make that connection. So, then we could reach out to them at a later date about possibly collaborating that initiative...

In addition to the joint program, Justin expressed joint grant funding experience by leveraging the enhanced relationship and network capacity:

We've done it with [You Go Girl]. We put a proposal together for us to bring some of our content, and do some work with [You Go Girl]... I'm working on a very big proposal that we're hoping to go after some joint money for, so yeah, it has resulted in real collaboration that's being pitched, and we're trying to get money like that.

As practitioners noted, these findings demonstrate the enhanced relationship and network capacity in the context of multi-organizational collaborations via shared leadership helped



individual organizations create new partnership opportunities through joint program delivery and grant funding. In this respect, findings suggest the enhanced joint efforts through shared leadership can be interpreted as an initial step for collective SDP intervention (Darnell & Black, 2011; Giulianotti et al., 2016; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Svensson & Loat, 2019). Future studies are required to investigate the process, benefits, and challenges of the joint efforts for collective impact.

Beyond joint efforts, some interviewees discussed that enhanced network capacity also allowed for resource sharing. For example, Eric mentioned human resource sharing: “If my organization was in need of staff capacity building, because of lack of resources or programming...[Golf for Kids Atlanta] is one of the partners that we have a great strategic relationship with that I can leverage on.” Ashlyn provided more specific example: “I think also the volunteer resource tool has been great because we with different things we do pull from their volunteer pool, the program we're doing.” At the same time, Alex who involves in youth basketball program in Chicago discussed other types of resource sharing facilitated by the relationship and network capacity:

I benefit from the resources that they have that I may not have access to. They may have access to funders, they may have access to research data, they may have access to whatever that I don't have access to. Everybody openly brings their resources to the table and shares it with the group on the leadership council as well as potentially the collective citywide members.

Overall, such findings indicate the increased relationship and network capacity enabled SDP organizations to utilize resources owned by other partnership actors. Given the resource-scarce nature of nonprofit organizations, these findings highlight the influence of shared leadership on building social capital via network capacity. Social capital is generally defined as accumulated resources through interactions among individuals and/or groups (Schulenkorf,

2013; Wicker & Breuer, 2014). Recent studies indicated social capital as one of the critical elements in the relationship and network capacity for SDP organizations (Clutterbuck, 2018; Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019). Thus, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating the role of shared leadership in helping generate social capital that can be interpreted as interaction value in the partnership context.

**Organizational Learning.** In addition to capacity building, representatives involved in the SDP collaboratives also reported that shared leadership helps partnership actors learn from each other. Specifically, SDP practitioners emphasized they learned best practices from others due to the shared form of leadership.

***Best practice.*** Learning the best way of implementing sport-based community interventions for addressing issues in given communities from others emerged as the most salient sub-theme. Indeed, a total of eighteen interviewees discussed how shared leadership allowed them to learn best practices of SDP efforts from other individuals and/or organizations. For example, Justin roughly mentioned learning best practices in relation to the operation of an organization: “I am speaking with other members of the alliance. It gives you a diversity of how people run their organizations to give you some ideas on how you need to provide training in that area.” Another respondent, Jordan, emphasized individuals and/or organizations can learn insight from other leaders involved in the multi-organizational collaboratives:

By having leaders at the table, I have the ability to learn from them. I learned from how they think and how they approach sport-based youth development and how they approach leading their organization. It's an opportunity to learn from other professionals in the field.

Organizational learning is generally defined as collective learning by individuals within organizations. According to the literature, organizational learning involves several processes

including the discovery of knowledge, knowledge diffusion, and application of the knowledge within organizations (Yukl, 2009). Some interviewees expressed such organizational learning processes focused on knowledge diffusion and application within the SDP collaboratives. For instance, Macie shared her experience of learning the know-how of a specific issue from peer organizations in the collaboratives:

It's like if you're struggling with the performance of a staff member, like it's kind of someone that you can lean on either people to say like have you ever experienced a coach doing this? And like if you have, how have you overcome it? In those, like in those kind of complications that you might know if you have anyone to turn into. Sometimes it's really helpful to have an outside perspective of someone that's not in your organization either.

According to a recent study, the capacity of SDP organizations vary by organizational life stages. In other words, organizations in a start-up stage have a relatively low-level of organizational capacity in the area of planning, finance, infrastructure, and partnerships (Svensson et al., 2018). Therefore, start-up organizations may face more challenges to operate SDP programs for local communities than more mature organizations. Along this line, other practitioners stated shared leadership enabled start-up organizations to learn from successful partner organizations that are more established in communities. Jordan, a leadership council member, expressed how small and young organizations can learn from more matured organizations:

The individuals on the leadership council have already gone through the growing pains. What a lot of the member organizations will be going through or are going through. They share best practices to eliminate potential roadblocks that citywide member organizations will face in the future and say this is something that will happen or this is something that has had happened to us and this is how we combated it.

Elisabeth also shared a similar perception regarding the enhanced organizational learning through shared leadership by indicating it as the growth opportunities in the SDP collaboratives:

It's for growth opportunities across various organizations, so sharing best practices and being able to learn from each other who certain organizations may have already gone through certain things that younger or different organizations might be trying to take initial steps on launching.

Combined, learning best practice in multi-organizational collaboratives appear to involve social interactions with other individuals and/or organizations. Considering interactive influence among individuals is one of the key elements of shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Pearce & Conger, 2003), the findings from this study indicate an important connection between shared leadership and organizational learning in the context of SDP partnerships. Based on these findings, the current study suggests SDP leaders can enhance organizational learning through the use of shared leadership. For example, SDP leaders should initiate mentoring programs within SDP collaboratives where more experienced members can share their experience and best practices of operating local SDP programs with newer members or smaller SDP organizations. These practices would also provide important mechanisms for better engaging and supporting newer collaborative members. In SDP, limited attention has been given to explore how multiple individuals influence organizational and/or collective learning while several researchers highlighted the role of collective learning in SDP (Svensson & Hambrick, 2019; Svensson & Loat, 2019). Therefore, these findings support prior management and leadership literature emphasizing the positive influence of shared leadership on team and/or organizational learning behaviors (Han et al., 2018; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Liu et al., 2014; Lorinkova, Pearsall, & Sims, 2013; Wang, Han, Fisher, & Pan, 2017).

Although a recent study on innovative SDP organizations emphasized the facilitating role of collective learning with external stakeholders for innovation (Svensson & Hambrick, 2019), we still have limited understanding on how shared leadership influences specific organizational learning processes. In other words, while the current study demonstrates shared leadership

enables mutual influence across individuals, which then facilitates partnership actors to learn best knowledge shared by others, sport management scholars have paid limited attention to explaining the contribution of shared leadership on the development of new knowledge. Therefore, these findings provide a foundation for follow-up research to investigate the influence of shared leadership on the process of organizational learning (i.e., discovery of knowledge, knowledge diffusion, and application of knowledge). Further, future studies should also examine how such organizational learning processes are manifested (e.g., formal, or informal learning) in the context of SDP.

In addition to learning best practice between nonprofits, a few respondents from for-profit organizations highlighted that shared form of leadership helped expand their knowledge about nonprofit sport programs. For example, Tom, a for-profit sport enterprise owner shared his opinion:

There's an organization called [Little Gym] and what [Little Gym] is they teach adolescence, young people gymnastics, how to flip, tumble, things of that nature. Just learning more about what everybody that what's going on in the city. We have another organization called [Love Soccer]. Being able to seeing how they are building soccer fields in the inside of the perimeter, or inside of the city limits. That is huge... Just learning what every different pockets of sports and athletics that are going on in the city has been very beneficial and advantageous for me.

By doing so, Tom also added shared leadership as a learning process that helps understand how to better collaborate with other sector partners: “One is the understanding how to work together better as a team. That has probably been one of the biggest personal benefits for me, is understanding how to better work together as a team and with other people.”

Another for-profit partnership actor, Grant, also mentioned how interactive relationships encouraged by shared leadership allowed a for-profit grant funder to understand SDP approaches taken by local nonprofit partners:

Recently, I learned about an organization that is doing work in another city and I learned about the innovative approach that they are taking to their programs, so by talking with other people who come to these trainings or social events helps me to learn more about new organizations or about different kinds of approaches to these programs.

Partnerships with other entities are imperative for the sustainability of SDP organizations.

Even so, conflicts and/or challenges between partnership actors are often reported due to the limited understanding of counterparts (Cornforth et al., 2015; Shier & Handy, 2016). As scholars have noted, external stakeholders often do not understand the intention of utilizing sport for achieving diverse social change outcomes (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). In this context, the findings of this study provide evidence that organizational learning encouraged by shared leadership help facilitate mutual understanding among partnership actors, which potentially contribute to the sustainability of SDP partnerships.

**Cohesion.** Some individuals engaged in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives spoke about positive cognitive outcomes of shared leadership including cohesion and trust. Specifically, they perceived shared leadership contributes to building cohesion across the collaboratives. Previous research highlighted the role of shared leadership inhibiting conflict and facilitating cohesion in team contexts (Bergman et al., 2012; Cox et al., 2003; Ensley, Pearson, & Pearce, 2003; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Mathieu et al., 2015). For example, Heather expressed trust built across the collaboratives through leadership encouraging mutual influence:

I think that it builds meaningful trust within the membership group. And I think it again, it builds relationships and a more meaningful way. And my expectation would be that once we moved towards a citywide plan, which is I think we're where the group of that right now to start thinking about that whatever those recommendations put forward will the group will feel shared ownership over it. So, I took away that, that means there is more meaningful trust being built.

Similarly, Grant also stated he felt trustworthiness as he realized leadership authority is shared by multiple people: “Having a specific body that is charged with making decisions related

to the coalition, that gives people a sense of trust and credibility.” These findings can be interpreted as sharing responsibilities to lead the collaboratives together with other individuals may influence feelings of partnership actors. As prior research noted, sharing responsibilities for leading multi-organizational collaboratives facilitates trust-building among partnership actors (Bergman et al., 2012). Further, perceived authenticity and/or commitment toward shared leadership recognized by other members in the collaboratives necessarily solidify trustworthiness among individuals. In this respect, Eddie shared his thought:

Obviously, the people that you've seen around longer, you feel more connected to and you feel like you can trust them more. They're not just trying to make a name for themselves or doing something, they're not fool's gold. You know that they're tested and that they're here and that they're in this, so there can be more trust there.

His response supports prior literature emphasizing the importance of leadership commitments of organizational members observed by others to build trust in organizations employing shared leadership (Robert & You, 2018). Also, findings from this study are consistent with previous studies demonstrating the impact of shared leadership on trust among employees (Avolio et al., 1996; Drescher et al., 2014; Robert & You, 2018). These findings provide a practical implication for multi-organizational SDP collaborations when the members share leadership roles. For example, the collaborative body should appoint individuals with demonstrated ability to serve the shared form of leadership in order to secure a sense of trust of their commitment among other members.

The current study also found that trust built through shared leadership can subsequently result in stronger bonds among partnership actors. Tiffany, for instance, briefly stated such aspect: “I would say, moral support. In doing this work, it is motivating to encounter other people that are in it for the right reasons.” Later, she added:

I can definitely vouch for the fact that we are not alone in having that collaborative mentality... We're able to celebrate the successes because we know we can't serve everybody. We do an amazing job and I actually feel very fortunate because I know not everybody operates in that spirit. I feel fortunate to have encountered those organizations that have the right priorities.

The link between shared leadership and cohesion has been reported in prior literature. In particular, continuous interaction and socialization processes as well as joint responsibilities strengthened by shared leadership collectively develop trust and cohesion among members. Further, Pearce et al. (2004) identified shared leadership influences several key factors needed for group cohesion such as sticking together, cooperation intention, and getting along together among social worker teams. Overall, this study supports prior literature highlighting that the more leadership is shared, the more cohesive that group of people will be (Bergman et al., 2012; Ensley, et al., 2003; Mathieu et al., 2015; Zhu et al., 2018). Particularly, findings of this study extend prior literature indicating positive impact of shared leadership on social integration (Bergman et al., 2012; Pearce et al., 2004). In practice, SDP organizations and/or collaboratives that plan to adopt shared leadership should take action enhance cohesion based on the findings of this study. For example, utilizing different team-building activities could be an effective way to enhance the collective culture in SDP collaboratives by strengthening the cohesion among members. At the same time, the present study also provides one area for future research. Future studies should examine how cognitive and/or affective responses (i.e., trust, cohesion) of shared leadership among members impact organizational effectiveness and performance (Cox et al., 2003; Mathieu et al., 2015).

**Shared Responsibilities.** SDP practitioners interviewed in this study also perceived sharing responsibilities with other partnership actors is another benefit of employing shared leadership in multi-organizational collaboratives. Zhu et al. (2018) described shared leadership can occur in



multiple ways. For example, shared leadership emerges when members work together at the same time and place to perform leadership activity including decision-making. Shared leadership also emerges when members take turn to serve leadership roles or members take specific responsibility to lead different areas of the task in organizations. Interviewees in the current study emphasized the sense of shared responsibilities via shared leadership. For instance, as a leadership council member, Alex discussed his experience of shared responsibilities when he worked with other members of the leadership council:

We talked through the validity of each idea and how it fits within the goals that the group has decided on collectively. And through that discussion we identify a good course of action and then how to proceed on that course of action. And then from there we delegate the responsibilities to one or multiple people based on the needs.

Lili also briefly mentioned the role of shared responsibility for dealing with shared tasks in the collaboratives: “Well, one benefit definitely is shared responsibility... Shared responsibility in getting a particular thing done, if it was something that you're trying to do city wide, it's better to do it together, that's good.” Combined, these statements demonstrate shared leadership played a role in distributing leadership responsibilities across the collaboratives to co-perform tasks to serve local communities and SDP practitioners satisfied such dispersion of responsibilities.

These findings raise a natural question regarding specific reasons practitioners valued shared responsibilities in the context of multi-organizational collaboratives. Hannah expressed her opinion regarding this aspect:

I think, it's everyone on the leadership council has like a full-time job, at least a full-time job. Some people have like a full-time job plus other roles and so you have to share the workload. So, it allows people to kind of step up when they're able to take on more of the work and then kind of step back when they're able to say like I'm swamped right now. I don't have any time. And that's really important because I think that we've all had things we haven't been able to participate as much. And then other areas where we're like, okay,

I can kind of give more to this one. So, it makes it a little more easier to kind of commit to being a part of the group.

This finding provides an insight that practitioners perceived sharing responsibilities with other partnership actors is valuable since it lessens the burden of responsibilities among individuals. It is widely known that SDP practitioners are required to take on multiple responsibilities to serve marginalized communities through sport-based social intervention (Kang & Svensson, 2019; Shin et al., 2020; Svensson et al., 2017). Thus, engaging in a multi-organizational partnership may cause an additional burden for staff members that outweigh the benefits from the partnership (e.g., Agranoff, 2006; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a; Hambrick et al., 2019). Here, the current study supports prior studies highlighting the role of shared leadership can serve in sharing work-related stress with others and subsequently relieve burnout (Alanezi, 2016; Lyndon & Pandey, 2019). By doing so, another interviewee such as Eddie underscored shared responsibilities enabled him to better focus on his work in the collaboratives:

It helps me be able to focus more on just what I do and not be worried about having to do those other things... Everybody was involved in the thought process behind the decisions that we made. Everybody knew where we all wanted to go. So, that would be a huge benefit.

Under the condition of shared responsibilities, a few respondents of this study also reported that shared leadership enabled them to feel a sense of ownership and/or authority in the collaboratives. For example, Jordan highlighted collective engagement toward leadership allowed him to perceive authority:

I think it's really open and it's fair and it gives everybody a turn and you feel like you're inputting, versus a static situation where you come in and certain people are already at the helm of leadership, they have officer roles that've stayed static for years and years and years, and it's the same person making all of the decisions. So, this is opposite of that.

Also, Emily added the sense of authority strengthened by shared leadership could bring more engagement of members for shared leadership:

If a good variety of people are involved, then they will feel authority and leadership and that will also then translate... they will be stewards of that information, or of that plan to more people so it will reach more people more impactfully.

When organizational members are empowered and take responsibilities via shared leadership toward organizational practices (e.g., tasks, goals, outcomes), they feel a sense of ownership in organizations (Hooker & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Khasawneh, 2011; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Pearce & Manz, 2005). Further, the sense of ownership and/or authority can facilitate continued participation in shared leadership processes (Van Ameijde, Nelson, Billsberry, & Van Meurs, 2009). Several scholars have indicated a sense of ownership can strengthen performance outcomes such as commitment to work (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Based on the findings of this study, leaders of SDP collaboratives can intentionally leverage shared leadership to promote shared responsibilities. For instance, the leadership teams of SDP collaboratives should clarify the importance of making decisions together from the initial decision to implement shared leadership. By explicitly emphasizing the value in sharing responsibilities, members may feel a sense of authority as well as a sense of relief from the excessive responsibilities many SDP practitioners typically have to manage.

In addition, some respondents mentioned an interesting aspect of shared leadership including minimizing leadership vacuum through shared responsibilities with multiple individuals. For example, Jordan roughly spoke about this: “If I left they're very strong, they can still carry on, we'd be okay and that's how it should be.” Similarly, Blake also highlighted the leadership vacuum is manageable:

I think obviously a benefit, if you just look at my situation. At the beginning, I was very involved in the leadership experience. I was a co-whatever president, whatever you want to call it, and now I'm gone. I'm not there. So, if it was just based on my individual preferences and what I wanted to do, then when I left, I would have left this huge hole in leadership... Because it is more of a collective process, I'm not saying that nothing is

missing, because I'm not there, because obviously it's going to have some impact, but manageable, right?

As noted in prior literature, shared leadership involves an emergent process where different individuals step up at different times for exercising leadership responsibilities (Hoch, 2017; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Conger, 2003). Accordingly, the current study provides evidence that shared leadership helps minimize the risks of a leadership vacuum through responsibilities shared across the multi-organizational collaboratives in SDP. While the present study found a positive influence of shared leadership through shared responsibilities, findings from this study should be interpreted with caution because recent literature pointed out the issues of free riding and social loafing in large organizations employing shared leadership (Zhu et al., 2018).

**Summary.** A growing number of studies have examined decentralized and/or shared forms of leadership to help provide an alternative to over-dependence on a formally appointed leader in hierarchical organizational systems. To date, various types of positive outcomes of shared leadership have been found across different disciplines. In sport management, several scholars have also begun to investigate the consequences of shared leadership. As Svensson and colleagues (2019) noted, however, there remains a gap in the existing sport management literature on investigating employee experiences of shared leadership, particularly in partnership contexts. To answer more in-depth questions regarding the benefits of shared leadership, the present study explored the perceived benefits of shared leadership from practitioners involved in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives (RQ2). As a result, five salient themes along with several sub-themes emerged as benefits of shared leadership in the context of SDP collaboratives. Specifically, they were (a) collective impact, (b) capacity building, (c) organizational learning, (d) cohesion, and (e) shared responsibilities.

SDP practitioners in this study indicated collective impact was the most important advantage of employing shared leadership in the collaboratives since shared leadership allowed them to incorporate strengths of individual partnership actors for addressing common goals (e.g., sport-based communities change). In particular, utilizing the diverse expertise and perspectives of partnership actors as well as demonstrating the collective appeal were identified as specific benefits of shared leadership for collective SDP impact. Many participants of this study underscored shared leadership enabled them to leverage the different expertise and perspectives of members to help address complex social problems together. As a starting point, practitioners reported shared leadership helps members feel comfortable in the collaboratives to share different expertise and perspectives. This supports prior literature emphasizing the role of shared leadership in building an inclusive organizational culture where different views are respected (Lyndon & Pandey, 2019). For example, shared leadership helped open the door for incorporating insights from local organizations that serve local communities to facilitate a bottom-up program approach in SDP (Darnell & Dao, 2017; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Rossi & Jeanes, 2018; Whitley & Welty Peachey, 2020).

Furthermore, shared leadership allowed the expertise of other nonprofits and for-profit partners to be transformed to others as well as shared across the entire collaboratives to better serve local communities through sport. The mutual influence process enhanced by shared leadership can facilitate such practices and subsequently strengthen organizational performance (Cakiroglu et al., 2020; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Ramthun & Matkin, 2014). Thus, this study supports recent studies emphasizing collective learning and interactive relationships with external stakeholders for achieving collective impact in SDP (Hambrick, et al., 2019; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019). These findings offer practical implications for SDP actors. First, SDP

leaders should demonstrate their true support for implementing shared leadership so that members feel comfortable to share different opinions as well as sometimes confront others (Lyndon & Pandey, 2019). Second, the composition of partnership actors should be considered to best leverage different expertise from SDP collaborations to achieve collective impact.

In addition, this study also found practitioners perceived that shared leadership helps build a collective voice of partnership actors to better appeal to local communities about the role of sport for addressing social change issues. In this sense, findings from this study contribute to the literature by offering an insight about the perceived role of shared leadership to incorporate isolated efforts and advocacy for SDP by individual organizations into a collective effort (Alexander, 2020; Kania & Kramer, 2011; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). At the same time, respondents of this study also mentioned the exposure of an alternative leadership approach such as shared leadership by well-regarded nonprofit leaders in the communities helps demonstrate the authenticity of collective SDP efforts for others. In this regard, the current study is consistent with Ali et al.'s (2020) emphasis on social modeling by promoting shared leadership. SDP organizations should develop strategic shared leadership promotion plans to turn isolated support for SDP efforts into collective advocacy engaging other entities given the skepticism toward sport-based social change interventions from external stakeholders (Svensson & Hambrick, 2019; Welty Peachey et al., 2018).

Another salient theme was capacity building through shared leadership including professional development and networking. Specific elements of capacity were enhanced through shared leadership (i.e., professional development, networking). A considerable number of interviewees reported shared leadership implemented in the collaboratives also helped develop their professional capabilities to serve the SDP sector. In the collaboratives, individual members

and/or organizations were allowed to organize and lead professional development sessions to share their skills and knowledge with other partners.

From a human resource capacity standpoint (Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019), the practitioners perceived professional development sessions delivered by other partnership actors or invited instructors helped enhance work-related skills as the sessions encouraged knowledge sharing across the collaboratives. These findings support prior research emphasizing the influence of shared leadership on knowledge sharing among members and the subsequent impact of knowledge sharing behaviors on improving professional capabilities (Carmeli & Paulus, 2015; Carson et al., 2007; Han et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2015; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Wu & Cormican, 2016; Zhu et al., 2018). As previous studies noted, the enhanced expertise of members can also result in better organizational outcomes (Hoch, 2013; Wu & Cormican, 2016; Zhu et al., 2018).

Further, some interview representatives mentioned the experience of leading one another for professional development via shared leadership helped improve organizational capacity building such as improved organizational profiles and reduced human resource development cost. These findings contribute to the literature by demonstrating the influence of shared leadership on associational value among nonprofits (e.g., Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b; Hambrick et al., 2019) and financial capacity associated with human resource development (e.g., Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Cohen et al., 2020; Svensson et al., 2016; Svensson et al., 2018; Whitley & Welty Peachey, 2020).

Moreover, SDP practitioners in this study also highlighted the multi-organizational collaboratives employing shared leadership helped build and maintain good relationships with external stakeholders. While many SDP agencies engage in multi-organizational linkages to overcome capacity challenges (Sherry & Schulenkorf, 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018),

scholars have reported different types of challenges that often limit the benefits from such partnerships (e.g., Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Jones et al., 2017; Shin et al., 2020; Svensson & Hambrick, 2018). In this respect, the findings from this study provide empirical support for the potential role of shared leadership to enhance network capacity of SDP organizations through active social exchanges among partnership stakeholders (Aime et al., 2014; Drescher et al., 2014). Further, this study identified the increased network capacity could lead to additional value creation such as interaction values (i.e., non-monetary values) from the collaboratives (Agranoff, 2006; Jones, Misener, Svensson, Taylor, & Hyun, 2020; Svensson & Hambrick, 2018). For example, interviewees in this study shared their experiences of joint program delivery, joint grant funding, and resource sharing with other partnership actors by leveraging their improved network capacity. Given the resource-scarce environment of the nonprofit sector, such findings show the facilitating role of shared leadership for building collaborative efforts (e.g., Giulianotti et al., 2016; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Svensson & Loat, 2019) and social capital (e.g., Clutterbuck, 2018; Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019).

Organizational learning also emerged as a benefit of shared leadership from the experience of representatives involved in the SDP collaboratives. Organizational learning refers to collective learning among individuals in organizations and it involves three processes including the discovery of knowledge, knowledge diffusion, and application of the knowledge (Yukl, 2006). The practice of shared leadership encouraged such processes in the collaboratives and helped individuals learn best practices in SDP. For instance, learning about unique program approaches and know-how for addressing particular issues when serving sport-based social change interventions were typical findings reported by interviewees. In this sense, findings from this study indicated learning best practices in the collaboratives provide particular growth



opportunities for small and/or start-up partnership actors. Identifying the connection between shared leadership and organizational learning in the context of SDP partnerships, this study contributes to the current body of knowledge by highlighting the influence of interactive influence among individuals on organizational and/or collective learning (Han et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2014; Lorinkova et al., 2013; Misener & Doherty, 2012; Svensson & Hambrick, 2019). Beyond organizational learning between nonprofit partners, some for-profit partners also stated shared leadership enabled them to expand their knowledge about nonprofit sport programs so that they can better work together for sustainable SDP collaboratives.

Positive cognitive outcomes of shared leadership characterized as cohesion within the collaboratives also emerged as a theme in this study, which support previous studies in other contexts (Bergman et al., 2012; Cox et al., 2003; Ensley et al., 2003; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Mathieu et al., 2015). Specifically, interview respondents suggested cohesion is established based on trust built through the experience of sharing responsibilities with other individuals in the collaboratives (Bergman et al., 2012). Further, individuals' commitments to the shared leadership process observed by other colleagues can also result in building cohesion (Drescher et al., 2014; Robert & You, 2018). Findings associated with cohesion provide several implications for SDP practice and scholarship. From a practical standpoint, SDP organizations should consider partnership history and/or potential contribution of external stakeholders to shared leadership when they plan to collaborate with others to secure trust and commitment among partnership actors. At the same time, future research is required to examine potential associations of cognitive and/or affective constructs (i.e., trust, cohesion) of shared leadership with other organizational-level outcomes including effectiveness and performance (Cox et al., 2003; Mathieu et al., 2015).

Lastly, SDP practitioners in this study emphasized shared responsibilities across the entire collaborative as another benefit of employing shared leadership. Particularly, this research found shared responsibilities are manifested when individuals co-perform the same tasks or they take turn for leading different takes. In prior literature, it has been reported that nonprofit employees often take on multiple responsibilities (Kang & Svensson, 2019; Shin et al., 2020; Svensson et al., 2017) and the involvement of partnerships with external stakeholders may be an additional burden for these organizations (Agranoff, 2006; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a; Hambrick et al., 2019). Along this line, respondents of this study emphasized sharing responsibilities with other members was beneficial in terms of relieving such burden of responsibilities and/or demands required to serve in the collaboratives. These findings are consistent with the literature indicating the role of shared leadership for distributing task-related stress and minimizing burnout among organizational members (Alanezi, 2016; Lyndon & Pandey, 2019). In the meantime, this study also found the reduced work-related burden among partnership actors motivated them to focus more on their responsibilities and subsequently feel a stronger sense of ownership and/or authority in the collaboratives (Hooker & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Khasawneh, 2011; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Pearce & Manz, 2005). These findings warrant future research to examine if the increased sense of ownership through shared leadership influence other human resource development factors such as turnover intention among partnership actors in SDP.

In addition, a few interview representatives noted shared responsibilities helped establish a flexible structure of the multi-organizational collaboratives to cope with the leadership vacuum. As leadership scholars have noted, shared leadership can help build an organizational environment where different individuals emerge to take leadership responsibilities at different

times (Hoch, 2017; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Conger, 2003). Therefore, such findings from this study offer evidence regarding the contribution of shared leadership to manage leaderless situations. Even so, more research is required in the future to examine if shared leadership involving the emergent process may result in negative situations such as free riding and social loafing according to the size of organizations and/or collaboratives (Zhu et al., 2018).

### **RQ 3: Challenges of Shared Leadership**

A number of prior research studies primarily focused on examining drivers affecting the development of shared leadership and positive consequences of shared leadership in different team and/or organizational settings to facilitate a paradigm shift of leadership (Barnett et al., 2016; Carson et al., 2007; Drescher et al., 2014; Grille et al., 2015; Han et al., 2018; Hoch, 2013, Small & Rentsch, 2010; Zhu et al., 2018). At the same time, however, the implementation of shared leadership is not an easy process and there are many elements that play a role as barriers in developing and employing shared leadership (Jackson, 2000). In this study, potential challenges of shared leadership were examined to address RQ 3. Several themes along with sub-themes were identified from SDP practitioners' lived experiences in the multi-organizational collaboratives where shared leadership was employed.

**Leadership Dynamics.** Despite the emerging need for a non-hierarchical leadership approach, a relation-oriented leadership approach such as shared leadership is associated with paradoxical aspects and challenges in practice (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003). In this regard, 12 practitioners involved in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives discussed several challenges of developing and exercising shared leadership. Specifically, three elements including power dynamics, potential competitions, and slow decision-making emerged in this study.

**Power dynamics.** While shared leadership is often differentiated from the traditional vertical leadership approach by decentralizing power to multiple individuals (Pearce et al., 2008), some interview participants of this study expressed slight power dynamics they perceived in the leadership council. While organizational documents from the collaboratives emphasized equity in governance as a critical component of the initiative, the findings from the interviews in this study was somewhat contradictory based on the lived experiences of interview participants. Eric, a former leadership council member, shared his perspective in regard to the power dynamics in the leadership council for pushing particular perspectives from influential people and/or organizations:

Do I think there is leadership there? Yes. I think that's for those who are in a leadership role to be there and to serve and have an impact. But, I believe that that's the case moving forward. I'm going to say no. I think that there is what I call it now the perspective of their sign, that who just moving forward, and trying to control at this point, who takes on a voice or who has a voice from a leader on the leadership. So, I think that's the change there.

Similarly, Caroline also expressed caution as to dominating individuals and/or organizations: “If you have maybe only the largest or the most powerful organizations on the council, it may not be participatory.” Although shared leadership highlights vertical and horizontal influence processes among individuals to lead each other for achieving organizational goals (Pearce & Conger, 2003), findings from this study demonstrate the potential challenges of implementing shared leadership regarding the emergence of more influential individuals and/or organizations than others in the context of multi-organizational collaboratives. Interestingly, Olivia also mentioned a similar aspect:

In terms of who the leaders are. And, I would say that on that council, some people are there in a little bit of grant funding that they got out of it. I think there are other people in the whole Alliance that are there just because they're big organizations and they want to see change happening.

This power dynamics among partnership actors should be interpreted in the context of multi-organizational collaborations. Despite the potential benefits of the partnerships, a number of prior studies have indicated inevitable power imbalance among partnership actors as a challenge of partnerships (e.g., Lucidarme et al., 2016; Shier & Handy, 2016). In SDP, an unbalanced power structure between partners is mainly associated with donor and recipient relationships (Hambrick et al., 2019; Straume & Hasselgård, 2014; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Although no donor and recipient relationships existed between partnership actors of the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives, this study found that practitioners perceived power dynamics between leadership council members as well as those who become members of the leadership council according to their affiliated organizational size and industry influence in the local communities. Grant who is from the for-profit sector reported the perceived power dynamics between nonprofit partners:

I think that there's a competition between organizations so people don't always want to listen to others from other organizations. They sometimes want to promote their own interests or their own organization's interest. So, you're challenged, because people don't play nice with each other all the time and they might say that they want to support this but they are not getting some. I have heard that one organization did not want the other organization to be the only leader coalition so they wanted to have shared control, not one organization that had more control than others. I think that there is sometimes... One organization wants to take the lead or has one vision for how the coalition should focus. Not everybody wants to follow the lead of that one organization.

Overall, these findings can be compared to a recent conceptual study on shared leadership in SDP that emphasized the potential role of shared leadership for addressing issues of unbalanced power structure among partnership actors (Kang & Svensson, 2019). Although employing shared leadership enabled the multi-organizational collaboratives to distribute leadership authorities with partnership actors and this subsequently resulted in several benefits reported in the previous chapter (i.e., RQ2), the current study provides a practical implication for

SDP practitioners regarding the importance of setting up a system of checks and balances between partnership actors for addressing potential issues of the power dynamic in the process of exercising shared leadership. This is important since such power dynamics can lead to the re-emergence of the traditional vertical leadership approach (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Indeed, past research has identified cases where organizational members gave up their efforts for shared leadership when they perceived some powerful members and/or groups in an organization exerting more influence on decisions of the whole organization (Jones et al., 2014).

Although the structure in the collaboratives adopted some representative groups (i.e., leadership council, small committees) based on their willingness and expertise to serve for the entire collaboratives, practitioners involved in the SDP collaboratives should consider how to convince and remove a sense of alienation among newer and/or less-powerful members from a positional perspective (i.e., non-leadership council members) to increase their commitment to shared leadership. In this respect, findings from this study align with prior research indicating some blind spots of shared leadership in that it fails to realize practical issues inherent in organizational settings such as conflict, opportunism, and political dynamics related to power and authority between members (Denis et al., 2012; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). Therefore, the present study contributes to bridging the gap in the literature by demonstrating the importance of considering and addressing power dynamics embedded in organizations if shared leadership is to be successfully developed (e.g., Zhu et al., 2018). In addition to such theoretical implications, several practical actions should also be taken in the collaboratives to address the issue of power dynamics. As a first step, clear mission statements are needed to highlight common goals through shared leadership. Periodic evaluations of leadership teams by non-steering committee members also presents a possible way to minimize the risk of power dynamics between

members. Doing so can help evaluate whether shared leadership practices are properly working for achieving shared goals across the collaboratives. The founders of SDP collaboratives should also ensure that steering group opportunities are accessible to members from smaller and less-resourced organizations.

***Potential competitions.*** While shared leadership encourages dynamic and interactive influence among individuals to achieve organizational goals (Carson et al., 2007; Pearce & Conger, 2003), SDP practitioners expressed concerns about potential competitions among partnership actors as a potential challenge to the development and employment of shared leadership in the context of multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. For example, Jason mentioned competitions for funding: “The only other challenge would be is that people are going for the same grant money. I think that's the only thing because people fight over money.” In addition, Ashlyn discussed a similar aspect as well as competitions for recruiting participants:

I think one of a barrier that you'll always have, when you get all a bunch of nonprofits together, especially if they're all focused in a similar area, which means, a lot of the nonprofits that come together under Laureus are all somewhat related to sport, then that means you're all going after similar funding dollars, while you share way your fundraising, I do think people are mindful of the fact that you may all be competing for similar funding dollars... If you have two programs in the same community that are doing the same thing, I could see where you might compete for participants, which ultimately lead to success of your program, which ultimately leads to whether or not people want to fund you.

Moreover, another interviewee such as Olivia mentioned potential competitions for volunteers: “Maybe the things that we would be competing for would be volunteer time if we're all working in the same school. And it's number of people in that school who are willing to volunteer.” While many nonprofit organizations, including SDP agencies, are motivated to join multi-organizational partnerships to overcome problems associated with insufficient resources (AbouAssi et al., 2016; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Giulianotti et al., 2016), it is also a widely

known challenge that they are competing with each other for potential resources even if they are in partnerships (Bunger, 2013; Jones et al., 2017; Proulx et al., 2014; Svensson & Hambrick 2018; Tsai, 2002; Welty Peachey et al., 2017). Therefore, the findings of this study support the argument of prior studies regarding the potential competition between same sector partners in multi-organizational collaboratives (Bunger, 2013; Proulx et al., 2014; Tsai, 2002). To address this issue, leaders need to emphasize the collective benefits (e.g., capacity building, professional development, network including joint program delivery) of shared leadership and that working together will benefit all member organizations by attracting more attention and resources to the entire local SDP sector.

Even if potential competitions emerged as a challenge of shared leadership in the context of the multi-organizational collaboratives, the findings from this study should be interpreted with some cautions because it is a potential concern of interviewees toward shared leadership by reflecting their prior experience of competing with other organizations in the nonprofit sector. As scholars have highlighted, the application of shared leadership involves a more complex and time-consuming process than vertical leadership (Pearce, 2004; Zhu et al., 2018). Given that shared leadership is still developing in the collaboratives, future research could take a longitudinal approach to examine the role of shared leadership on the issue of competitions in the context of multi-organizational collaborations. At the same time, the current study found shared leadership facilitated trust-building among partnership actors through the previous section to address RQ2. Therefore, future research should also investigate the twofold nature of trust and a sense of competition when employing shared leadership in the context of the collaboratives.

***Slow decision-making.*** The multi-organizational SDP collaboratives employing a shared form of leadership aim to encompass as many voices as possible from members to bring a



collective impact in local communities. At the same time, interviewees of this study also indicated a slow decision-making process as a potential challenge of implementing shared leadership in the collaboratives. For example, Elisabeth, a leadership council member, mentioned: “I mean a barrier could be that decisions could potentially take longer to solidify since multiple voices are being heard there.” Similarly, Macie also highlighted:

I think sometimes when you have the shared leadership approach, there's always challenges there, or things along those lines. I think one is sometimes it'll take longer to get decisions made because you're getting everyone's input and they'll be, there's like a saying of "too many chefs in the kitchen." Like there should be many thoughts, and sometimes you just need to have a decision made...

As noted in the previous sections by addressing RQ1, consensus-based group decision-making through shared leadership may lead to such perception as members of the collaboratives work together to make satisfactory decisions representing the needs of partnerships actors from different sectors (e.g., nonprofit, for-profit, school district, local communities).

Another interviewee, Merry, who is a non-leadership council member expressed the difficulty of checking progress on a particular agenda due to the slow decision-making along with extreme consensus-seeking: “Sometimes some people don't like that because you feel like you're spinning your wheels and you're not making progress.” Likewise, Ashlyn also pointed out this aspect:

I think with perhaps input from coalition partners, saying, Hey, we would like to see something on this. We would like a program about X, but I don't see that. I mean, there's not really, when I've been involved, there's not really decisions being made. It's more a facilitation of a collaboration, or it's a discussion about certain issues that are impacting our community...

These findings support what prior research indicated as a potentially time-consuming and less efficient decision-making process involved in shared leadership to reach consensus (Pearce, 2004; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Zhu et al., 2018). According to Zhu et al. (2018), organizations

with a high level of shared leadership may face such challenges especially when they are in industries with rapidly changing environments. As such, a recent qualitative study on shared leadership in military teams indicated shared leadership was not effective on urgent tasks requiring quick decisions (Cakiroglu et al., 2020). Another SDP practitioner, Heather, shared a similar opinion:

I think one is, you move slower. And so for people who feel some urgency about getting work done, like a sense of immediacy, and that can be a barrier. It can be applying outside of what we're doing if there's a real urgent issue that needs to be solved. This kind of shared leadership can be effective in solving that issue, saying that could be a barrier for us.

However, the findings of the current study should be understood with caution considering the contextual characteristics of SDP. Since nonprofit organizations including SDP agencies have to navigate in complex and changing environments, these organizations should take a collective decision-making approach by encompassing diverse voices as they aim to address long-standing and broad social issues. According to Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, the goal of the citywide multi-organizational SDP collaboratives is to promote long-term collaborations for collective impact. Further, Pearce and Manz (2005) highlighted that highly urgent situations requiring rapid decision-making are practically rare in most organizations except for several start-up firms in the for-profit sector. They also argued the use of shared leadership should be interpreted as a major investment in the future growth of the organization(s) to establish a robust leadership process. As scholars have noted, implementing shared leadership is a learning process (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003). Thus, findings from this study suggest SDP practitioners should think about how to make partnership actors better understand the shared leadership model and the need for patience for long-term success. At the same time, SDP practitioners should also avoid extreme consensus-seeking that is deemed as a limitation of shared leadership and make sure to

make a final decision on a given agenda so that members can see progress (see Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce et al., 2008; Zhu et al., 2018). Although shared leadership involves multiple members working together to reach a consensus, clear decision-making processes still need to be put in place across the collaboratives to ensure decisions are made in a timely manner. For example, group-level, committee-level, and collaborative-level decisions should be clarified so all members know how to approach different types of decisions. Further, a vertical leader or a set of vertical leaders (co-leaders) can also be identified for situations where members are unable to reach a decision and may need assistance in reaching a consensus.

**Level of Information Sharing.** While the interactive nature of shared leadership facilitated information and knowledge sharing among partnership actors as reported in the earlier sections (i.e., RQ2), SDP practitioners involved in the collaboratives also indicated several challenges limiting the positive impact of shared leadership. Specifically, challenges associated with the use of the online platform as well as the information gap among partnership actors emerged in this study.

**Online platform.** The foundation behind the collaboratives recently launched a membership-based online platform for networking and information sharing among members. As the effectiveness of shared leadership is heavily dependent on social interaction (Nicolaidis et al., 2014), this online platform was intended to serve as a virtual community to connect one with other like-minded individuals and/or organizations by overcoming physical restrictions. Although interview participants of this study agreed with the purpose of the online platform, a total of fifteen SDP practitioners discussed the challenges of using the online platform limiting the smooth social interaction along with limited information sharing among partnership actors.

Jane, for example, shared her experience using the online platform and the disappointment of the lack of member engagement:

I would say that the in person experience exceeded my expectation but the online experience was less than what I expected...It was the new website... That's been somewhat disappointing to me, I don't see activity on it, I don't really understand it. I'm not sure whether it's meant... Let me rephrase, I thought it was going to be like a Facebook group with a shared calendar so we could all get to know each other and put event on and share question. It seemed to me that is much more a platform for Laureus to promote it's own event.

Likewise, Joe also indicated a lack of engagement: “We haven't been involved enough yet. I think the membership portal isn't very good.” Similarly, Tim also mentioned: “It's not a space to engage. It's not engaging. The Laureus Foundation already knows that and they're working on it.” According to scholars, collective engagement of members in the leadership process and subsequent information sharing that built upon each other's ideas are key aspects of shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Ensley et al., 2006; Hoch, 2014). At the same time, shared leadership helps create an organizational culture that elicits voluntary engagement of members for information and/or knowledge sharing (Carson et al., 2007; Han et al., 2018; Hoch, 2014; Lee et al., 2015; Svensson et al., 2019; Wu & Cormican, 2016). Carson et al. (2007) highlighted the enhanced information sharing through shared leadership can provide organizations with a competitive advantage as organizational members are more engaged in sharing innovative ideas with others.

Thus, these findings provide new insight that the limited engagement of members toward information sharing in the online platform could potentially influence other organizational outcomes such as organizational performance, innovative working behaviors, and cohesion. Along this line, the current research provides insight for SDP practitioners into the importance of member engagement in virtual spaces for information sharing to fully leverage the potential

benefits of shared leadership. This is important given the recent circumstance emphasizing contact-free interactions due to the current global pandemic. Future research is needed to examine what it takes to facilitate online information sharing and the role of leaders coordinating interaction among members in virtual space (i.e., virtual leadership) (Schmidt, 2014).

Meanwhile, these responses from SDP practitioners raise a question about why partnership actors are not willing to engage in the online platform for information sharing. In this respect, a leadership council member, Hannah, shared her thought:

I think there's a lot of potential there, but I don't think it's been utilized enough and at a certain point like if not enough people are using it, then I think we need to revisit whether that's the right method... Honestly, I think it's just probably a combination of two things. One, people are just busy and so it's not like front of mind and then I think the other piece is we need to do a much better job of like getting the information out to people about the platform and how to use it.

This finding provides important insights into several reasons for the limited engagement of partnership actors on information sharing through the online platform. Specifically, the time constraint of individual members and the lack of information regarding the purpose of the platform as well as the user manual were mentioned. Another interviewee, Lili, spoke about the time constraint: "Time, to be honest, and it's like sometimes online, your attention... We've got to find a way to increase online engagement...Because everything is vying for your attention."

Given SDP practitioners perform multiple roles in their own organizations and are involved in different interactive activities including professional development sessions, coalition meetings, and network meetings in offline situations under the condition of shared leadership (Shin et al., 2020; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Thorpe & Chawansky, 2017), signing up and engaging in the new online platform might require additional attention of partnership actors. In fact, partnership actors have already used diverse modes of connections for information sharing such as in-person

communication, phone call, text message, and email. For example, Eddie added more about this aspect:

It's just a lack of time... So I've not been able to mess around with it much. They've communicated and everything, they sent out all the emails and everything and this is what's going on. But you know how email is, you've got 1,000 emails in your inbox and you're just clicking and going next, next, what's important? And then you're like, "Oh, I'll come back to this one day." And now there's 50,000 emails sitting in the box and it's in there somewhere...

As such, Jane stated she was not convinced of using the online platform: "I haven't actually gone on it except to register for events for the last probably two or three months. Because I just don't understand what the point is, and I've never seen anything useful on it." In this regard, the newly added online platform might overwhelm practitioners. Moreover, Jordan pointed out the format of the online platform does not reflect the needs of SDP practitioners:

People don't sit down and read a whole newspaper to get their daily news digest, right? They open their social media and get quick, bullet point news feed, right? ...They're all moving so quick that it's time consuming to have to go to the website, log in... So, that probably is the major reason why I don't use it as much. If it was a mobile app... There's just some quicker, easier way to access it to integrate it with your phone a little bit, easier... Probably would be more engaged with the system. I have to go to a website and log in each and every time I'm less likely to do that.

These findings indicate the importance of need assessment when developing and initiating a new online information sharing method. Participating in multi-organizational collaboratives is considered as an additional time-consuming task for SDP practitioners. Thus, online information sharing needs to be interactive and convenient for partnership actors if desired outcomes of the collaboratives are achieved through shared leadership.

In addition to time constraints and the need for a better rationale for the online platform, Macie emphasized the need for training for using the online platform if the collaboratives want to engage more members for information sharing:

So, like even attaching documents, or event flyer, or things like that. And I personally, like I just don't even know how to post in it, so I don't know if that all members have access to posts for it or if it's only like administrators do. I would say so, but I am also not very technology gifted, so maybe it's really easy and I just don't know how to do it. But I think going back to that, like maybe all members have like an FAQ on like, here's the portal, here's how it works, here's what you can do, here's what you can't do. I was just kind of given access to the portal without any context.

Similarly, Grant a for-profit partnership actor, expressed the difficult user interface of the platform influenced him not to engage in information sharing via the online platform:

It's been a while, I haven't really shared anything on that portal in a long time. I think when it was first opened it was a little hard to share stuff, but I haven't shared in a while so I don't know if they've fixed it or not. I think I tried to post an event and I don't think I did it correctly.

Pearce and Manz (2005) argued it is unreasonable to expect a high level of shared leadership and subsequent organizational benefits from employees who have not been provided proper training. In this respect, these findings demonstrate individual members should be provided training on how to use the online platform if the collaboratives expect to achieve enhanced information sharing, group cohesion, and other positive outcomes from shared leadership. Further, the findings of this study are consistent with what prior studies emphasized about the importance of training and technical support for facilitating interactions between members for shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch, 2014; Houghton et al., 2015; Pearce & Manz, 2005; Wassenaar et al., 2010). In sum, leaders should understand that online information-sharing platforms are not always conducive to shared leadership. The use of new technology and specialized platforms needs to be developed in consultation with existing members. Proper training is also needed to ensure all members understand the purpose of the technology and how to utilize the interface for sharing information through an online platform.

***Information gap.*** Sharing information has been viewed as an important element for team and/or organizational level performance outcomes including high-quality decision-making

(Bunderson & Sutcliffe, 2002; Hoch, 2014; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009). In the partnership context, sharing information with other partnership actors is not only important for building socio-emotional outcomes (e.g., trust, cohesion), but also enhancing performance outcomes in the partnership (Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009). While active engagement for sharing information is a key aspect of shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007), some interview respondents of this study indicated there is a gap in sharing information according to membership status (i.e., leadership council members vs. non-leadership council members) and tenure (i.e., existing members vs. new members) in the collaboratives.

For example, when discussing his perception regarding potential barriers for information sharing, Grant stated his concern regarding the information gap between leadership council members and non-leadership council members: “I mean I’m sure that the people on the leadership council probably have more information than people who are members.” A leadership council member, Emily, also shared a similar opinion:

I get that information because I’m on the leadership council, and so we have in-person meetings and calls, but if I was not on the leadership council and I was just a member, and my main platform for engagement was the website, I would have much less knowledge.

These findings bring our attention to the bandwidth of shared leadership facilitating information sharing in a partnership context. In particular, although the SDP collaboratives employing a shared form of leadership pursue equal access to information and/or knowledge to be shared, findings of this study indicated that quantity or quality of information among partnership actors was dependent on their roles in the collaboratives (i.e., leadership council members vs. general partnership members). While the small group of appointed leaders (i.e., leadership council members) is perceived as a strategic approach for implementing shared leadership in the prior section (i.e., RQ1), findings from this study should be interpreted that this strategic approach



should promote a multi-directional flow of information sharing across the collaboratives to fully leverage the potential of shared leadership.

In addition, some interviewees also mentioned an information gap between the existing and new members. For instance, Macie discussed her experience:

I actually, when I signed up as a member, this (online platform) was presented to me as the way to communicate. So, I have never known, I wasn't around when this portal was not in existence, so I have only ever known this. So, I think that kind of serves as a little bit of a benefit for me in the sense that I never knew another way to know about events. So, I think that they'll probably see, for members that just are starting, they might have more engagement from those folks on the portal, because that's all they know.

Along with Emily's (a leadership council member) statement, this finding demonstrates that new partnership actors have relatively limited experience in information and/or knowledge sharing with other partners as well as rely more on the online platform for information sharing than other members who have more experience in the collaboratives. These findings support arguments of prior research on team characteristics and knowledge sharing. For example, past research identified that if teams spend a long time together by establishing team cohesiveness, members of the teams share more knowledge (Bakker, Leenders, Gabbay, Kratzer, & Van Engelen., 2006; Lee et al., 2015; Sawng, Kim, & Han, 2006). As described in Table 5, the tenure of ten partnership actors in this study is limited to one year. Further, a considerable number of partnership actors have continuously joined and left the multi-organizational collaboratives. Therefore, existing leaders of SDP collaboratives should pay more attention to the non-steering committee and new members to help expand their information networks. Here, leaders can minimize existing information gaps by connecting members with others that may have useful expertise or knowledge.

**Lack of Understanding about Shared Leadership.** Insufficient understanding and/or confusion about shared leadership also emerged as a challenge limiting the effectiveness of shared leadership in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. Specifically, two elements associated with the lack of understanding of shared leadership emerged in this study: individual membership and lack of clarification. These sub-themes are discussed in the following sections.

***Individual membership.*** Interviewees perceived the collaboratives adopt an individual membership structure that requires individual partnership actors to sign up for the collaboratives by paying a certain amount of fee. However, publicly available documents suggested membership is open to any organizations or individuals. This indicates confusion about membership structure and scope of collaborations among partnership actors. In this regard, ten SDP practitioners in this study expressed the confusion of the level of collaboration and if the individual-based membership is a good strategy in multi-organizational collaboratives employing shared leadership that aims for collective impact. Along this line, some interviewees also showed their concern about the paid membership system given most participants of the collaboratives are from nonprofit organizations with limited financial capacity. For example, Macie talked about this aspect:

I think you know you are paying a membership for an organization. It's manageable for us at [Sports World] because we are given professional development opportunities, but preserve where dollars are a little bit more tight. And maybe \$49 a month is a big deal.

While Justin, a partnership actor from a for-profit business, valued the paid membership to bring like-minded people together, he also expressed potential concern if such paid membership system limits the engagement of other members from resource-scarce organizations for city-wide collaborations adopting shared leadership:

I actually think it's a very good thing to have this membership fee and to build a membership base. It's allowed us to have over 200 members in Chicago, who either purchased it themselves or their organizations have purchased it. But of course prices some people out. And so I think Laureus has to figure out how to not have that be a barrier to entry. I recognize that pricing out is an issue. So perhaps we could consider sliding scale, or we could consider some different outreach strategies, or maybe there's free access to certain benefits of the membership.

While these findings show practitioners perceived paid membership as an investment for opportunities of professional development and relationship, it appeared that partnership actors including Macie misunderstood the individually paid membership covers organizational-level membership for the SDP collaboratives. Although the membership fee (i.e., \$ 49) per person is charged annually, findings of this study indicate the individual-based paid membership could be a barrier for local SDP organizations to fully leverage the impact of collaboratives efforts in communities as a number of these organizations have limited financial resources and have more unpaid part-time staff members, coaches, and volunteers than full-time paid-staff (Lindsey, 2017; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Svensson et al., 2018). In other words, it may be burdensome for small SDP organizations to pay individual membership for the majority of staff members (unpaid part-time staff, part-time coaches, volunteers) who are frontline employees implementing programs. These findings suggest SDP partnerships and/or networks should re-consider membership models requiring fees for each individual.

As described earlier, interview respondents also spoke about their confusion about the level of collaborations in the multi-organizational collaboratives due to the individual membership. For example, Eddie discussed this aspect:

That's why it was all crazy in the beginning. At first it was organizations, and then it was like, "Well, what if there's only one person?" So now, it's individual. So, if in my organization I have five people that I want to have access to the Laureus platform, then I would pay the individual membership for all five of those people. Then so if one of my staff left, they would still have access if they still have access to the email that I gave them.

Similarly, Emily also expressed this issue:

Not everyone in my organization is a member of Sport for Good...I think that is actually one of the things that's been sort of a confusing... Like a discussion that we've had over the years is what is an organization a member of the coalition or are individuals members of the coalition. And honestly, I am not totally sure that I think that individual is the right way to do that...It's confusing and I don't think that they have really answered that question yet.

Combined, it is reasonable to have doubt if the individual-level membership is an appropriate strategy for the citywide multi-organizational collaboratives exercising shared leadership because individual involvement for the collaboratives does not necessarily guarantee the engagement of affiliated local SDP organizations. Jane provided important insight regarding why the current individual-based membership may inhibit the collective impact of shared leadership on collective impact:

When you say the coalitions, based on the way they have built their business model, it is not by organization, it is by people and there are good reasons for that. But the coalition can't actually say, "That [Run Together Chicago] is part of the coalition, because it's not organization based." Legally, it's just me, so if I quit my job today, I'm still part of a coalition. If my organization fires me I'm not part of the coalition, or I still am and the organization is not. So, the coalition cannot say, "That we speak on behalf of [Run Together Chicago]. It can only say that, we speak on behalf of our members, who are people in this professional field." I think that robs the coalition of leverage.

Wicked social problems that SDP organizations desire to address exceed the capacity of individual organizations and require the collective engagement of multiple organizations if such problems are to be solved (Alexander, 2020; Coalter, 2013; Sherry & Schulenkorf, 2016). In this respect, the level of membership used in SDP collaborative should be at an organizational-level to align with the intended purpose of the collaborative so that members clearly understand their role. By doing so, leaders can elicit collective efforts of local organizations to accomplish synergistic value from the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a; Darnell & Black, 2011; Hambrick et al., 2019; Svensson & Loat, 2019).

***Lack of clarification.*** Interview participants in this study also mentioned that it was challenging for them to exercise a shared form of leadership in the collaboratives because no clear guidelines of shared leadership were provided. Specifically, twelve SDP practitioners indicated the lack of clarification in regard to purpose, role expectation, action plans, and the impact of shared leadership as a challenge. For example, Emily mentioned the need for role clarification when exercising shared leadership in the collaboratives:

If many people view themselves as peer decision-makers, I think that then sometimes it's harder to negotiate who is moving which pieces forward. I think that if many people are owning a project, then you have to pay closer attention to delegating everyone's involvement with moving that subject forward so that it can successfully get from being a decision that got made, to a plan that got implemented or an action that got implemented.

In the meantime, some leadership council members expressed the trial and error they went through during the earlier stage of implementing shared leadership in the collaboratives. Hannah shared her experience:

I think that for us at the very beginning, it was a new experience for leadership here in Atlanta. So, there were no rigid guidelines for us to, so we were really kind of our way through the process of what is it that we want to accomplish in this period of time...It was challenging for us to actually come up with plans to move forward. It's challenging. I would say that it's going to be challenging for the current leadership and they're going to have to try and figure out how to make it work. And what's their purpose for creating this? I mean, what's the purpose for having this group of leaders that are sharing information, what's their purpose, what's their goal... how does that benefit the member?

Although another leadership council member such as Justin supported the organic and/or loosely structured nature of shared leadership, he also emphasized the need for more clarification in decision-making through shared leadership:

Even though it's sort of loose, I do think it's important as issues come up that it's clarified who's got the decision-making power of this and why, and just be honest about that. So, I think a lack of transparency is a barrier or a potential challenge...It could be a challenge if we're not sure where decisions lie and it's sort of vague that we're sharing leadership.

As such, findings from this study bring our attention to the importance of providing clear information and/or guideline for improved shared leadership in SDP collaboratives. As Hannah noted, adopting shared leadership is a new experience for most SDP practitioners. Although individuals may learn what it takes for shared leadership from experience (e.g., Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003), the findings of this study show that SDP practitioners perceived they need more guidance to effectively develop an alternative leadership approach in the citywide collaborations. In this regard, these findings are consistent with the argument of prior studies that clearly specified roles and responsibilities help individual members leverage their expertise as well as better coordinate shared tasks (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Van Amejide et al., 2009). Therefore, practitioners should recognize the importance of clarification on what shared leadership is and it works across organizations to better operate a relatively new form of leadership in SDP practice.

Also, these findings support prior studies highlighting the role of shared cognition as a foundation for the successful implementation of shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Ensley & Pearce, 2001; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Pearce & Ensley, 2004). For example, prior literature highlighted sharing a clear vision about the future direction of teams and/or organizations as well as providing expectations of tasks and performance are critical elements of building shared cognition (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Ensley, 2004; Van Amejide et al., 2009). Along this line, SDP organizations participating in multi-organizational collaboratives should engage in such practices so that the employment of shared leadership becomes more than a rhetorical strategy (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017).

The emphasis on shared cognition to address the reported challenge of shared leadership raises several questions. First, who should take an initiative in building the shared cognition to address the issue of clarification of shared leadership? As past research noted, vertical leaders

could help guide smooth implementation of shared leadership (Cox et al., 2003; Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Morgeson et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2014; Zhu et al., 2018). For instance, servant leaders could help partnership actors understand the vision and potential impact of shared leadership as servant leaders focus on the needs of followers (Jones et al., 2018; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Whitley & Welty Peachey, 2020). In the context of this study, the Laureus and local program directors could facilitate the process of shared cognition for complementing the challenges of shared leadership development.

Second, when and how should shared cognition be built to address the issue of clarification of shared leadership? Merry suggested:

I think the shared leadership is a great model, but it has to be established at the beginning and have very clear roles on what your role is as a leader and sometimes things emerge as you work in the community. I think it's a great model and great structure, but it needs to be embraced at the beginning of the project.

It is reasonable to articulate the purpose, roles, and expectations of shared leadership at the early stage of the multi-organizational collaboratives since internalization of the shared leadership model among employees takes time and is a critical factor for its successful implementation (Jackson, 2000). The importance of establishing the shared cognition at the beginning of the collaboratives was noticeable when discussing the perception of shared leadership approach with several practitioners. As an example, Jennifer who has been involved in the collaboratives for more than a year stated she does not know much about the leadership approach in the collaboratives: “Right now, I'm part of this coalition but I don't know much about it.” Similarly, Jason who was involved in the coalition for about a year also said: “That's a good question. I don't know... I'm not quite sure who the leaders are at the moment how they are able to drive collaborative initiatives. Well, that's the thing, because I do not have a lot of background information.” Along this line, Emily spoke about the relative difficulties of recently joined

partnership actors making sure they perceive the abovementioned information associated with shared leadership:

I see that in our newer members, and I think that they are... It's maybe a problem with shared leadership or with this way of doing things is that it's tricky to get people on the same page about what sort of involvement they are invited to give... People will come and then not really know how to put their opinions out there; how to advocate for different things, and maybe feel like, okay, I'm new and other people have been doing this, so maybe my opinion is less valuable, or, I don't know how to share; I don't know confident sharing. We have to onboard them or give them enough context that they can be successful and confident in that role.

It should be noted that the composition of partnership members is continuously changing.

In other words, some partnership actors began their involvement at the beginning of the collaboratives while other partners joined the collaborative in the middle of its implementation.

In this sense, some partnership members who joined the collaboratives later do not have enough information about shared leadership model, which in turn, resulted in limited involvement in the leadership process (e.g., decision-making, the participation of meetings, collaboration, interaction with others). Thus, this study provides an implication for better engaging members in adopting shared leadership. As prior literature has underscored, this study suggests SDP organizations should provide continuous education and/or training on the concept of shared leadership to reinforce the internalization of shared leadership model among members (Jackson, 2000; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Manz, 2005; Pearce & Sims, 2000). Future research should examine the influence of continuous learning and/or training programs on building shared cognition as well as on member engagement for shared leadership process.

In addition to the continuous training, Lili shared her insightful suggestion to make sure clear understanding of shared leadership across the collaboratives:

For shared leadership, in order for that to really work in my experience, you need to start off with a set of agreements that the group can agree to. Then make sure that you have



shared values and shared principles, and then really go through a process to figure out... So that you can make sure that you're all on the same page, so that when something goes wrong and you hold people accountable for it, we're all on the same page... Then, I think also with shared leadership, to have statements of commitment, so agreements and commitment, knowing what that is upfront is important.

Other practitioners interviewed in this study discussed the unclear progress checking regarding shared leadership in the collaboratives. For instance, Merry stated: "I think if you do the shared leadership... It would be great to hear where we're at... I don't know how we're doing to be honest. I don't know the status of what our coalition did." Likewise, Macie also expressed the need of assessing how their input in decision-making was reflected in practice: "I'm not on the leadership council for Laureus in Chicago. I'm just a member. So, I know that we're given the opportunity to provide feedback... But I simply just don't know how that advice or feedback then gets transitioned into policy." These findings support the argument of prior research on the need of evaluating the effectiveness and authenticity of shared leadership approach (Jones et al., 2014; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). Thus, leaders should develop written manuals and guidelines of the adopted shared leadership approach including purpose, goals, roles/responsibilities of members, implementation, and evaluation, which should then be provided for all existing as well as new members. In sum, findings in this study contribute to the literature by indicating the perceived challenge associated with the lack of clarification on shared leadership model as well as suggesting several implications to internalize shared leadership model among partnership members.

**Quality of Engagement.** Some practitioners interviewed in this study also brought attention to the perceived challenge of maintaining the quality of member engagement when implementing shared leadership in the collaboratives. Particularly, three sub-themes emerged including the

limited engagement of non-leadership council members, other sector partners, and turnover intention.

*Non-leadership council members.* As noted in the prior section, some non-leadership council members have relatively limited information about the shared leadership model along with insufficient contacts with others and it subsequently resulted in less engagement for shared leadership process. For example, Jane shared her experience:

I don't feel that this is a coalition, I feel that this is a professional development organization... [Program director] is an employee, I know him and he's terrific. I don't know what the other thing is. I don't know if the steering group, I don't know. Again, I was at one event and they brought eight people up and we clapped for them, that is 100% of my knowledge. I joined it thinking it was going to be a little bit more effective in promoting sports-based youth development in Chicago. That has not been my experience, my experience since then it's a well-run membership organization that does this professional development.

Similarly, Jennifer spoke about the limited engagement on shared leadership practice with the limited network in the collaboratives: “I'm not too familiar with, who's all on the... I just know of [Program director]. I don't know really of anybody else.” When discussing this issue with another interviewee such Jenny, she stated: “I'm questioning that as well, because I have not seen much work with the entities surrounding the organization [the coalition]. I know that the leadership committee that's meeting now meeting regularly, but the others are not as involved.”

Combined, these findings show the quality of engagement among non-leadership council members was relatively weaker than among leadership council members. At the same time, members with limited engagement perceived a close link with program directors from Laureus rather than with leadership council members and other peer partnership members, which could result in reliance on vertical leaders (i.e., Program directors and the Laureus Foundation). The limited engagement of non-leadership position partners is an indicator of their psychological

proximity of peer partnership actors as well as the broader collaboratives. In this sense, findings from this can be interpreted through the concept of employee engagement. According to literature, employee engagement refers to individuals' psychological states allowing them to choose the level of engagement in work-related activities (Harter, Schmidt, Hayes, 2002; Wagner & Harter, 2006). Individual members' decision on the level of engagement in work is related to their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral states (Shuck & Reio, 2014). In particular, employees with high emotional engagement may perceive a deep connection with an organization (Macey & Schneider, 2008). In their conceptual framework of shared leadership, Cox et al. (2003) suggested the association of physical proximity among members and the display of shared leadership. Given partnership actors are serving their programs in the same city (i.e., Atlanta, Chicago), the findings of this study contribute to the literature by demonstrating the important role of psychological proximity characterized as a concept of employee engagement. This is important because if non-leadership council members feel isolated in the collaboratives (i.e., low-level emotional engagement), they will not engage in shared leadership practices or other activities related to the collaboratives.

The size of the collaboratives should also be considered when interpreting the current findings. The number of members and/or organizations involved in the collaboratives may also limit relationship building among members, which in turn, can negatively influence the development of shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Cox et al., 2003). To reduce the psychological proximity and better engage members in shared leadership practice, Jackson (2000) highlighted the importance of team-building activities initiated by an organization to have members feel connected with other members and the broader collaboratives. Interestingly, Lili shared her insight from this standpoint:

I think if there are points when the leadership team, maybe could have a few organizations that they're responsible for. It's like well, I'm on the leadership team and then I'm responsible for these five organizations. So, these five organizations if they ever need anything, whatever they know that I'm their point of contact. So that way, it doesn't seem as so huge and then that person could also make sure that they're checking in with them once in a month or every other month. Or it's like, "Hey, we didn't see at the meeting, whatever..." The relationship building is what needs to happen, and then some of the things that you were talking about, could be addressed...They need a point of contact.

Given the reported psychological proximity and size of the SDP collaboratives, this finding provides important insight into the facilitating role of leadership council members for providing a sense of belonging for partnership actors with no-formal leadership positions to enhance the quality of engagement in shared leadership practice. One way that leaders of SDP collaboratives can take action to improve shared leadership practices is by matching existing leadership council members with non-leadership council members to build relationships, provide greater transparency, enable training for potential future leaders, and enhance their commitment to shared leadership in the collaborative. Future studies should investigate the impact of such actions on the engagement of employees and its subsequent influence on developing shared leadership in different organizational settings.

***Other sector partners.*** Another salient sub-theme identified in this study was the limited engagement of other sector partners in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. As illustrated in table 5, most partnership actors (i.e., 84%) in this study came from the nonprofit sector while only 5 partnership members were from a different industry such as the for-profit sector. When discussing the barriers of implementing shared leadership in the multi-organizational SDP collaboratives, practitioners who were interviewed in this study underlined the limited engagement of other sector partners in shared leadership practices. As an example, Jennifer mentioned: "Another barrier could be that maybe if we're just focused on this little

bubble, that we're missing something. A bigger perspective or something from the outside of the coalition. So, I think that could be some of the barriers.” Specifically, Alex discussed the need for youth development organizations serving non-sport programs and public school systems in communities:

One of the hurdles is to ensure that we have a cross industry or not even across industry, a cross section of youth development organizations at the table, not just sports-based youth development organizations. It is something that has to be intentionally looked at. So Chicago Housing Authority, it's a housing organization but they understand the importance of positive programming for youth and so we need them at the table...Chicago public school systems...We need them to understand that sports-based youth development needs to be incorporated in what they do.

Further, another interviewee such as Emily argued the need for greater diversity even in the leadership council: “I do think that we know that our leadership council is not very diverse in the things that I talked about, which is people from a variety of sectors and people with a variety of backgrounds and experiences.”

Although shared leadership adopted in the context of the multi-organizational collaboratives enabled partnership actors to share different expertise and/or perspectives among nonprofit partners, SDP practitioners perceived the need for more engagement from other sector partners. Considering collective impact through SDP programs requires a diverse range of stakeholder engagement (Giulianotti et al., 2016; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Svensson & Loat, 2019), these findings contribute to the literature by indicating the importance of a diverse composition of partnership stakeholders in order to fully leverage the potential of shared leadership in SDP. Partners with a similar background would speak the same language used in the nonprofit sector, which would be beneficial for consensus-seeking. On the other hand, partners with different industry backgrounds would bring complementary knowledge and expertise to better create collective impact in SDP (see Peters & Karren, 2009). In this

regard, this study supports a recent study on shared leadership emphasizing the positive influence of functional diversity on shared leadership (Kukenberger & D'Innocenzo, 2020).

In addition to the engagement of other sector partners, Merry expressed the lack of local engagement in shared decision-making process in the collaboratives:

There's not many residents from the community that are part of the coalition... I don't live in the West side community and my organization doesn't have a presence in the West side community. So, I'm one of many organizations that from the same position. So here are a bunch of organizations making decisions about what is happening in the community without really the community saying thing...Everybody's impacted by the decisions that we're making about the community. If you're trying to improve the health of the West side, shouldn't you consult with the people, shouldn't they be involved some way or some representation on the coalition?

This insightful finding supports prior studies by highlighting the importance of encompassing local leaders and/or community stakeholders in the decision-making process in SDP (Kang & Svensson, 2019; Welty Peachey et al., 2019; Whitley & Welty Peachey, 2020). Organizers of SDP collaboratives need to intentionally recruit and engage more diverse stakeholders in shared leadership practices. The inclusion of diverse stakeholders in shared leadership practice could help overcome the neo-liberal and top-down development approach in SDP (Darnell & Hayhurst, 2013; Kang & Svensson, 2019). Given shared leadership model and the citywide multi-organizational collaboratives are still developing, this study suggests the collaboratives to consider expanding their breadth of partnership actors for collective impact.

***Turnover intention.*** Lastly, some interview participants reported members' turnover from the collaboratives presents another challenge of shared leadership. Shared leadership involves a complex process and time to be established in organizations (Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Manz, 2005). Thus, retention of partnership actors is important for SDP collaboratives that aim to promote long-term collaborations for achieving collective impact in local communities. Alex

shared his concern about the potential turnover of leadership council members and the broader collaboratives:

Maintaining membership year to year. Basically, ensuring that members recognize the value that Sport for Good brings to the table to justify them renewing their membership. It's best if we have minimal turnover year to year for growth. Leadership council turnover... Job turnover can effect that. If somebody takes a new job with another organization, another organization and moves out of town or their workload is too heavy and you can potentially lose leadership council members and lose the strength of that member that's left.

This finding supports prior literature indicating a negative influence of member turnover on shared leadership (Avolio et al., 2003; Conger & Pearce, 2003). For example, Avolio et al. (2003) noted high-level of member turnover inhibits the development of a collective identity, which in turn, plays a role as a challenge in implementing shared leadership. The reported challenge from member turnover raises a question regarding what motivates partnership actors for the turnover. In this study, practitioners involved the collaboratives reported grant funding as a determinant motivating them not to engage or potentially leave the collaboratives. For example, Jack expressed: "Well when we applied for funding and we didn't get any and I was having a hard time getting to know anyone in the organization, I just sort of stopped paying attention." He said he did was not very involved in the coalition for the last two years because his grant proposal was rejected. Even if he is currently a member of the collaborative, it is reasonable to expect the lack of engagement could result in turnover. Similarly, Olivia also mentioned this aspect:

I think that would be one like the turnover of organizations in the coalition. I think of just organizations as a whole, I'd say there's a good deal of consistency between organizations to kind of, I have, I used to have a grant. I think those organizations they're stable to get buy in from other organizations that have not yet financially funded in some way. There's a lot of turnover on that level, which makes sense.

Indeed, a considerable number of nonprofits including SDP organizations are attracted to multi-organizational collaborations in hopes of resource acquisition (AbouAssi, et al., 2016; Bunker, 2013; Giulianotti et al., 2016; Misener & Doherty, 2013). Interviewees in this study were no exception. Thus, the findings of the current study support previous studies emphasizing the role of the reward system for the development of shared leadership. In prior leadership literature, reward systems including salary and career development opportunities were considered as an antecedent of shared leadership (Grille et al., 2015; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Houghton et al., 2015; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Manz, 2005). For example, Fausing et al. (2015) argued individuals continue to engage in shared leadership when they perceive fair reward in response to their commitment. Accordingly, collaborative SDP networks should consider different types of motivations (i.e., resource acquisition, institutional pressure, partner's characteristics, program improvement) of multi-organizational collaboratives among nonprofit entities. Leaders of SDP collaboratives need to acknowledge that shared leadership requires additional effort by members. Thus, material (e.g., grant) and non-material (e.g., career-related opportunities) incentives should be considered. Leaders also need to engage in conversations with members about their experiences within the collaborative and potential ways it can be further improved. Additionally, clear expectations should be put in place for existing members to provide advance notice of any intention to leave the collaborative or their own individual organization, which would require the training of a new member on how the collaborative works.

**Summary.** As existing literature mainly focused on the advantages of shared leadership in a team or organizational context, the current study explored perceived and/or potential challenges of implementing shared leadership in multi-organizational SDP collaboratives. Four main themes including leadership dynamics, level of information sharing, lack of understanding about shared



leadership, and quality of engagement emerged along with several sub-elements. While shared leadership is characterized as a more horizontal leadership approach compared to traditional vertical leadership styles, this qualitative study found power dynamics related to shared leadership in the collaboratives. First of all, practitioners interviewed in this study perceived unbalanced power dynamics among partnership actors. For example, interviewees mentioned there are influential individuals and/or organizations dominating the collaboratives. Unlike a recent study emphasizing the potential role of shared leadership for addressing power dynamics in SDP partnerships (Kang & Svensson, 2019), the findings from this study indicate the existence of such unequal power dynamics. These types of power dynamics can result in the reemergence of vertical leadership in collaboratives (Jones et al., 2014; Pearce & Conger, 2003). In this regard, the findings are consistent with prior research highlighting blind spots of shared leadership such as conflict, opportunism, and power dynamics among members (Denis et al., 2012; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). SDP practitioners should think about how to create a system of checks and balances among partnership actors when practicing shared leadership.

Although the nature of shared leadership involves interactive collaboration for mutual goals (Carson et al., 2007; Pearce & Conger, 2003), potential competitions emerged as a challenge in the collaboratives. Specifically, funding opportunities, as well as recruitment of program participants and volunteers, were key areas of the competitions perceived by SDP practitioners. Given resource acquisition is one of the motivations for multi-organizational collaborations in the nonprofit sector (AbouAssi et al., 2016; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Giulianotti et al., 2016), findings from this study support prior SDP studies indicating competitions among SDP partners (Svensson & Hambrick 2018; Welty Peachey et al., 2017). Even so, such findings should be understood with caution because interviewees may have

expected the competitions as a potential challenge based on their prior work experience in the nonprofit sector. Therefore, longitudinal research is needed to examine if the issue of competition is identified in the collaboratives adopting shared leadership.

While consensus-based collective decision-making emerged as a benefit of shared leadership, some interview participants expressed a slow decision-making process as a challenge of shared leadership. Excessive consensus-seeking and incomplete tasks were specific examples perceived by SDP practitioners. These findings are consistent with prior research highlighting the time-consuming and less efficient decision-making process of shared leadership (Pearce, 2004; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Zhu et al., 2018). Even so, prior literature suggests shared leadership involving collective decision-making should be considered as an investment and/or learning process for future growth (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003). Once members internalize the process of shared leadership, shared leadership could be a valuable tool for generating collective impact in the SDP sector. In the meantime, extreme consensus-seeking should be avoided and partnership actors should ensure to make a final on given tasks in order to check progress through shared leadership (see Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce et al., 2008; Zhu et al., 2018).

Another salient theme was the lack of information sharing among some members while social interaction through shared leadership is expected to facilitate information and/or knowledge sharing among members. Many interviewees expressed the challenge of using the online platform for sharing information. Leadership scholars have underlined that shared leadership helps engage individual members in information sharing, which subsequently results in a competitive advantage of the organization (Carson et al., 2007; Han et al., 2018; Hoch, 2014). However, limited engagement was identified due to time constraints of members, lack of rationale for using the platform, and a poorly designed interface. SDP practitioners are required

to serve in multiple roles within their own organizations (Shin et al., 2020; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Thorpe & Chawansky, 2017). In this respect, they might not empathize with the reason they should use a new online platform that failed to reflect the needs of the partnership actors. Further, a considerable number of interviewees reported the online platform inhibited them from successfully sharing important information. Thus, this study suggests the need for training for partnership members to facilitate improved information sharing in online spaces (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch, 2014; Houghton et al., 2015; Wassenaar et al., 2010).

While information sharing is a critical factor associated with socio-emotional (e.g., trust, cohesion) and performance outcomes in partnerships (see Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009), an information-sharing gap was reported between members according to their positional status (e.g., leadership council, non-leadership council) and tenure (i.e., existing members, new members) in the collaboratives. In fact, it was reported that the leadership council and existing partnership members have relatively more information than non-leadership and newly joined members in the collaboratives. These findings support prior research indicating the more members spend time together, the better information sharing behaviors based on established cohesiveness over time (Bakker et al., 2006; Lee et al., 2015; Sawng et al., 2006).

In addition, unclear information provided for partnership actors was discussed as a challenge to understand the leadership model and how shared leadership works. Particularly, individual membership and lack of clarification of shared leadership emerged as sub-themes. Indeed, many interviewees spoke about the confusion about the level of collaboration due to the unclear membership structure. Currently, the collaboratives utilize a paid individual-based membership structure. In other words, if one registers for the collaboratives by paying the membership fee, he or she becomes a member. However, some members were confused about

why it does not cover their organizations. This means that if one wants to join the collaboratives with the entire organization, they should pay for membership fee for all staff members. In this regard, the findings from this study warrant questions about whether individual-based membership is an appropriate approach for collective SDP outcomes to be achieved (Alexander, 2020; Coalter, 2013; Sherry & Schulenkorf, 2016). Further, practitioners were unsure if paid membership is effective to encompass more nonprofits for the citywide collaboratives considering the resource-scarce nature of SDP organizations (Lindsey, 2017; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Svensson et al., 2018).

At the same time, the lack of clarification regarding purpose, role expectation, action plans, and expected impact of shared leadership were reported as challenges. Considering practicing shared leadership is a new experience for SDP practitioners, leaders of the collaboratives should provide clear information about the intended shared leadership model. In this regard, these findings align with prior studies emphasizing the role of role clarification and responsibilities for fully utilizing individual expertise on shared work (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Van Ameijde et al., 2009). Further, this study supports prior literature illustrating the importance of shared cognition in terms of shared vision, role, and performance expectation for implementation of shared leadership (Carson et al., 2007; Ensley & Pearce, 2001; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Pearce & Ensley, 2004). SDP leaders should focus on developing shared cognition for the authentic development of shared leadership in the early stages (Cox et al., 2003; Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Morgeson et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2014; Zhu et al., 2018). Also, continuous education and/or training sessions, as well as impact assessment of shared leadership, is needed to help partnership members have a clear

understanding of this alternative leadership model (Jackson, 2000; Jones et al., 2014; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Manz, 2005; Pearce & Sims, 2000).

Maintaining engagement of partnership actors was also identified as a potential challenge of shared leadership in the collaboratives. Three sub-elements such as non-leadership council members, other sector partners, and turnover intention emerged in this study. Compared to leadership council members, most partnership actors were not in that position and they perceived psychological distance from the collaboratives. Moreover, they often stopped paying attention to the collaboratives for that reason. Findings from this study align with the concept of employee engagement as partnership actors' psychological states such as a sense of belonging make them less engaged in the collaboratives (Harter et al., 2002; Wagner & Harter, 2006), which in turn can negatively influence the shared leadership development. Thus, these findings suggest leadership council members should consider providing team-building activities across the collaboratives so that non-leadership council members feel better connected. This also warrants future research to examine the impact of the team-building activities on members' emotional states and the development of shared leadership.

The limited engagement of other sector partners was also reported as another challenge of implementing shared leadership in the collaboratives. As noted earlier, most partnership actors in this study were from the nonprofit sector while only a few members represented for-profit organizations. Although interviewees reported diverse expertise as a benefit of shared leadership, findings of this study demonstrate the scope of diversity was limited to fully leverage the potential of shared leadership in the collaboratives for collective impact (Giulianotti et al., 2016; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Svensson & Loat, 2019). For example, nonprofit practitioners encouraged more engagement from non-sport organizations, public

schools, for-profits, and professional sport teams in terms of the composition of the leadership council and the broader collaboratives. In this sense, the current study supports the positive role of functional diversity on shared leadership by encompassing different sector partners to bring complementary expertise to the collaboratives (Kukenberger & D'Innocenzo, 2020; Peters & Karren, 2009). At the same time, interviewees also mentioned the lack of engagement from local stakeholders. This is consistent with the emphasis of prior research on the inclusion of local communities in decision-making to overcome the neo-liberal and top-down approach often found in SDP (Darnell & Hayhurst, 2013; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Welty Peachey et al., 2019; Whitley & Welty Peachey, 2020).

Potential turnover from partnership actors also emerged as a challenge of implementing shared leadership in the collaboratives. The primary reason partnership actors became less engaged and turnover from the collaboratives was the failure of grant funding from the collaboratives. Maintaining partnership actors is important as both shared leadership and collective impact through SDP programs require a long-term approach (Pearce 2004). In this respect, findings support previous literature illustrating member turnover as an inhibiting factor for shared leadership (Avolio et al., 2003; Conger & Pearce, 2003). At the same time, these findings demonstrate the importance of understanding one of the motivations of nonprofit entities for the collaboratives. Past literature indicated resource acquisition as one of the primary motivations for nonprofits involving in the collaborations (AbouAssi, et al., 2016; Bunker, 2013; Giulianotti et al., 2016; Misener & Doherty, 2013). Also, leadership scholars underlined perceived fairness of reward system including salary and career development opportunities is a critical condition for the contribution of members for shared leadership development (Grille et al., 2015; Hoch & Dulebohn, 2013; Houghton et al., 2015; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017; Pearce & Manz, 2005).

Therefore, leaders of SDP collaborative networks should understand such motivation behind the nonprofit partnership actors. At the same time, the leaders should clearly illustrate the grant funding system of the collaboratives to help realize the fairness of the reward system.

### **Overall Summary of Findings**

Collaborating with external stakeholders has been encouraged in the SDP sector since it is deemed as an alternative to overcome organizational and environmental challenges of SDP organizations. To date, these collaborative structures have become a current trend in SDP. Sport management scholars have begun to examine different aspects of collaborative relationships and/or linkages. However, limited attention has been given to leadership approaches that could help address managerial challenges within multi-organizational collaborations. At the same time, the existing literature is limited to dyadic relationships (i.e., inter-organizational partnerships) rather than multi-organizational collaborations. Thus, this study sought to address such gap in the literature with the purpose of examining the role of shared leadership within multi-organizational collaboratives. Three research questions guided this qualitative study: (a) How is leadership shared between members in the multi-organizational SDP collaborative? (b) What potential benefits do SDP practitioners perceive shared leadership may have for the multi-organizational SDP collaborative? and (c) What challenges may limit the development of shared leadership between partnership actors? By embracing the concept of shared leadership and multi-organizational collaborations, findings from this study revealed lived experience of shared leadership in multi-organizational collaboratives.

A total of four elements related to conditions and/or circumstances of shared leadership is manifested in the SDP collaboratives emerged: strategic planning, support from vertical leaders, shared events, and personal characteristics. Many partnership actors emphasized a strategically

planned system of multiple leaders, collective decision-making, and leadership transition as key conditions for shared leadership. Further, the role of vertical leaders, shared events, and personal traits of partnership actors were also identified as factors facilitating or inhibiting shared leadership in the collaboratives. The contribution of these findings can be summarized in terms of antecedents of shared leadership from the lived experience of SDP practitioners in the context of multi-organizational collaboratives. While a few sport management studies investigated shared leadership (Jones et al., 2018; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Svensson et al., 2019), we have a limited understanding about how shared leadership is developed in SDP practice. Thus, findings from this study contribute to the literature by demonstrating the importance of a systematic approach employing shared leadership in SDP.

Regarding the benefits of shared leadership, five themes emerged: collective impact, capacity building, organizational learning, cohesion, and shared responsibilities. Specifically, interviewees expressed exercising shared leadership in the collaboratives enabled them to better incorporate individual partnership actors' expertise at a collective level. Subsequently, shared leadership can produce a variety of psychological (i.e., cohesion, shared responsibilities) and performance-related (i.e., collective impact, capacity building, and organizational learning) benefits in collaboratives. These findings contribute to scholarship by extending our knowledge about psychological benefits from shared leadership in the context of SDP, which was not discussed in prior sport management literature.

Four elements were found in relation to potential challenges of employing shared leadership in the collaboratives: leadership dynamics, level of information sharing, lack of understanding about shared leadership, and quality of engagement. Although practitioners acknowledged the potential of shared leadership, findings from the current study indicate there is



room for improvement in employing shared leadership. For example, partnership actors expressed challenges related to dynamics and limited information flow between partnership members. At the same time, some interviewees perceived a need for more clarification about the shared leadership model employed in the collaboratives in order to better engage partnership actors as well as to achieve collective impact goals. While existing literature mainly focused on examining the advantages of shared leadership to highlight its potential, little is known about the challenges of developing and implementing this type of leadership. Therefore, the findings in the current study provide specific insights for SDP practitioners with strategies for how they can better prepare, develop, and leverage shared leadership within multi-organizational collaboratives.

Overall, the main contribution of this study to sport management scholarship is the expansion of our knowledge of shared leadership through the lived experience of SDP practitioners engaged in multi-organizational collaboratives. Findings in this study echo prior studies' call for in-depth exploration of shared leadership among SDP practitioners (Kang & Svensson, 2019; Svensson et al., 2019). This study also provides practical implications including specific strategies for SDP leaders to develop and employee shared leadership to better manage multi-organizational collaborations for achieving collective impact in communities. The practical insights from SDP practitioners in this study also share experiential knowledge for others regarding how to plan and implement shared form of leadership for fully leveraging its potential in practice.

## APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW GUIDE

### Interview Questions

Do you have any questions for me?	YES	NO
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Do you agree to participate in this study?	YES	NO
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1. To start, could you please tell me briefly about your organization and how you personally got involved in the Sport for Development field?
2. What programs do you provide for participants?
  - a. Prompts: Length of program(s), type of sport and non-sport activities, size of program(s), recruitment of participants
3. What are the biggest current challenges for your organization?  
How have these challenges evolved over time?  
What do you believe you need to better meet those challenges?
4. How did your organization get involved with the Sport for Good Coalition?
  - a. Could you walk me through your organization's decision to join the coalition?
  - b. Prompts: How did you first hear about Laureus Sport for Good Foundation and the Sport for Good coalition? When did you join the Coalition? Did you have any concerns prior to joining? Did you know of Laureus before joining the Coalition?
5. What has your involvement with the Sport for Good Coalition looked like for you so far?
  - a. What has the collaborative asked of you as a member? Can you provide an example?
  - b. Do you feel that your expected contributions so far have been reasonable?
6. What has your organization gotten from your involvement in the Sport for Good Coalition?
  - a. Has the multi-organizational collaborative helped you address your organization's challenges?
  - b. Prompts: Funding, Access to Facilities, Training, Capacity-Building, New Partners
  - c. Has your involvement met your initial expectations? Can you provide an example?
7. Who do you perceive as the leaders of the coalition?
  - a. Prompts: How/when/why do you feel that they contribute to the leadership of the coalition?
  - b. Has the leadership changed over time?

- c. What role do members of the coalition serve in the leadership for the collaborative?
  - d. Do you believe there are multiple leaders (formal/informal) within the collaborative?
8. How are decisions made within the collaboration?
- a. Prompts: Who makes the decisions? Do you believe the opinions of different member organizations are considered? Are there ways you feel the decision-making process could be improved?
9. What role do you believe shared/collective leadership can serve in multiorganizational collaborations?
- a. What (if any) benefits do you perceive of shared leadership?
  - b. Based on your experience, how can shared leadership be developed?
  - c. What might be barriers to the development of shared leadership in multiorganizational collaborations?
10. How much contact do you have with other member organizations?
- a. Can you provide an example?
  - b. Has the coalition facilitated contact with someone you would not have otherwise connected with?
11. To what extent do you think that knowledge or information is shared among participating organizations?
- a. Do you feel that all members have equitable access to knowledge and information in the coalition?
  - b. What are the benefits of sharing information with other collaboration partners?
  - c. What are the challenges of sharing information with other collaboration partners?
12. What are some of the differences (if any) you see between different Coalition members?
- a. Prompts: financial resources, number of paid staff, years of experience
13. What do you believe the short-term goals are of the Sport for Good Coalition?
- a. Do you think that the coalition has successfully achieved its initial purpose?
14. What do you believe the long-term goals are of the Sport for Good Coalition?
- a. How likely do you think it will be that the coalition achieves its long-term goals?
  - b. What will it take in order for those goals to be achieved?
15. Thinking of your experience so far, are there any challenges or issues that you have found with the coalition?
- a. If so, how have those challenges limited the potential of the collaborative?
16. How does your organization assess and evaluate collaborations?

- a. Prompts: Mission alignments? Resource-needs?
17. Do you feel that Sport for Development organizations compete with each other?
- a. Prompts: funding? facilities? participants?
18. What do you hope to get from the coalition in the future? Why?
- a. What will it take for this vision of the collaboration to be achieved?
19. Who do you think the most comfortable person when you need information and help in the Coalition?

## APPENDIX B. IRB APPROVAL



### ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

**TO:** Seungmin Kang  
Kinesiology

**FROM:** Dennis Landin  
Chair, Institutional Review Board

**DATE:** October 16, 2019

**RE:** IRB# E11875

**TITLE:** Exploring Shared Leadership and Multi-Organizational Collaboration in sport for Development and Peace

Institutional Review Board  
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair  
130 David Boyd Hall  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
P: 225.578.8692  
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[lsu.edu/research](http://lsu.edu/research)

**New Protocol/Modification/Continuation:** New Protocol

**Review Date:** 10/15/2019

**Approved**     X     **Disapproved**                     

**Approval Date:** 10/15/2019 **Approval Expiration Date:** 10/14/2022

**Exemption Category/Paragraph:** 2a,b

**Signed Consent Waived?:** Yes

**Re-review frequency:** (three years unless otherwise stated)

**LSU Proposal Number** (if applicable):

**By:** Dennis Landin, Chairman 

### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –

#### Continuing approval is **CONDITIONAL** on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects\*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE:** When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation. Participants will need to verbally express their consent to participate.

\* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>

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## **VITA**

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