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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### TESTING KUSCHMAN, KHUN & PFAERRER'S (2012) COMMUNICATIVE FRAMEWORK ON A GLOBAL NGO: THE CASE OF THE WSKF SPORTS FOUNDATION

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#### ABSTRACT

Kuschman, Khun & Pfaerrer's (2012) "Communicative Framework of Value in Cross-Sector Partnerships" represents a model for optimizing performance of NGOs. This paper presents the case of the *WSKF Sports Foundation*, which is part of a million-strong Japanese federation that spans over 20,000 clubs in more than 100 countries throughout all the continents except Antarctica, with cross-sectional illustrations of how the meaningful participation of members, the centripetal forces generated by the organization, and the consolidation of an institutional image through a coherent narrative, worked on the basis of authoritative texts, generated external influences and indeed led to substantially more revenues for the organization. **Purpose:** To explore the applicability and success of Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) model in a global non-profit organization, and its implications for theory building on texts and institutional development. **Design/methodology/approach:** Case study, with internal data and interviews from a sample of country leaders to compare the degree of application of Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) model, and the results obtained between the US, Canada, Ireland, Spain, Panama and Venezuela. **Findings:** Meaningful participation, expressed as collaborative networks, centripetal forces, and text adoption generate momentum and contribute in raising resources for the organization. The lack of such networks and internal forces, and/or the lack of a coherent narrative, working through authoritative texts, will negatively affect external influences and capitalization. **Research limitations & implications:** The impressive results of the *WSKF Sports Foundation* in Venezuela were institutionalized through that country's 2011 Sports Development Law. Since 2009, it had already achieved 100% coverage of its championship costs and expenses. Nonetheless, there were differences in sister organizations located in countries that lack such socialist incentive. Also, the majority of the leaders in WSKF are college-trained, instead of only former athletes, a factor that should be controlled for in cross-sectional studies. **Practical implications:** An integral and integrating communicative framework, which according to Kuschman *et al.* (2012), requires a coherent narrative evolving from authoritative texts, is necessary to optimize the effectiveness of NGOs. Internal and external networking activities are of the essence in such development. **Originality/value:** Non-profit revenue depends on Disposable Personal Income and Public Awareness (as to any social cause). NGOs, however, can only influence one of these two variables, public awareness, and that can be best achieved through a coherent communicative framework and network.

#### INTRODUCTION

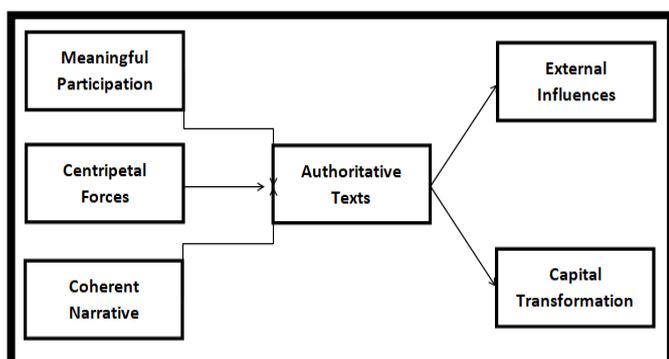
Numerous authors have researched and written on the performance of non-government organizations (NGOs), from Gray's (2000) idealized definition of a single organizational entity that has the capacity to act, to exhibit agency, or to otherwise "make a difference" for the participants involved, their member organizations, and the broader communities, to Kuschman, Khun and Pfaerrer's (2012) "Communicative Framework of Value in Cross-Sector Partnerships", which in itself represents a clear, simple and well-defined model for optimizing NGO performance, quite useful, accordingly, for case analyses. Kuschman *et al.* (2012) define cross-sectional partnerships (XSPs) as that interaction of business, government and NGOs that make up a unique form of social organization,

and found that their overall value is not based solely in networking interested stakeholders but, rather, in their capacity to act—to influence over people, public opinion, and over key issues that ultimately affect their social cause. This capacity puts into effect the old Gestalt theorem, "the whole is greater than the sum of the parts" (Koffka, 2013) by way of integrating organizational forms that are different from their members' and that constitute what they call a "collective agency"—that is, an ability to influence a range of significant outcomes that are beyond the reach of individuals and beyond what founding organizations can accomplish, based on what they define as the generation of centripetal forces, and the consolidation of an image to work through "authoritative texts", to exert influence and capture and transform capital. The authors proposed, first, that increasing the members' meaningful participation enhances the potential of any collective agency, and its capacity to generate value; second, that, ideally, centripetal

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forces draw people together, whereas centrifugal forces separate and divide them but are nonetheless necessary for fruitful dialogue; third, that a coherent narrative increases the distinctiveness, and the sustainability of an organization's (brand) identity; fourth, that an organization will be more likely to be qualified as valuable to the extent that its "authoritative texts" justify its existence to members, home organizations, and to external stakeholders, that is, they give it meaning, insofar as these also influence accounts of higher-order effects; and fifth, as long as that influence is capable of generating and transforming capital. In summary, and graphically, their model would look as follows:



Now, while Provan & Milward (1995) argued that the empirical evidence supporting NGOs' effectiveness is scant, thus making it hard to understand and assess their value, Rein & Stott (2009) presented a case study of a collective partnership which had proven to be successful, pointing to the opportunity to analyze performance as well. What follows, accordingly, is a case study of the *WSKF Sports Foundation* <https://www.wskf-venezuela.com/fundacion-deportiva-wskf/>, which illustrates how meaningful participation, centripetal forces, and consolidating an institutional image through a coherent and cohesive narrative around authoritative texts, that is, in essence, following Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) model above, will lead to substantially more revenues for any such organization, using Moog, Spicer & Bohm's (2015) template for case analyses in this field.

WSKF operates as what Waddock (1991) calls a "federative" organization, composed of different local federations from over 100 countries, spanning over 20,000 clubs and close to one million members, many local federations have separate philanthropic arms, following Albert & Whetten's (1985) concept of the "dual organization". The *WSKF Sports Foundation*, in turn, is by its statutes and by definition a "cause-based partnership", as characterized by Parker & Selsky (2004), dedicated to the promotion of karate-do instruction and the funding of championships and events throughout the world. Its partnership with the Venezuelan Sports Ministry and close to 200 firms would also qualify under Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) definition of a Cross-Sectional Partnership (XSP).

**Review of the Literature:** Lindahl & Conley (2002) present an extensive literature review of the topic of NGO and non-profit management, and confirm that the field has a rich knowledge base that can ground the theory and orient further research. NGO's have come of age. Lewis, Isbell, & Koschmann (2010) state that NGOs offer tremendous promise, are most often mandated by their founders and funders, and assumed by policy makers to be the best way of working on

certain specific social problems, the key word being "specific". Matsunaga & Yamauchi (2004) stated that non-profits have a critical, substantive and distinctive role in contemporary society, as increasingly recognized by researchers; while in the past, they argue, the non-profit sector was seen as residual of other economic activities, say, corporations trying to use surplus cash to get fiscal breaks, it has recently, and with increasing consistency, been considered a respected sector which plays a crucial role in addressing society's most troubling issues. Accordingly, Quevedo & Quevedo-Prince (2019) state that non-profits contribute almost \$1 trillion to the US economy, representing 5.4% of gross domestic product (GDP) and generating over 12 million jobs in 2017.

Their model established that revenues are a function of two variables, disposable personal income and public awareness as to any specific social cause. In the end, fundraisers can only influence one of these two variables, public awareness, so the more and the better donors know, the more likely they will be to support a particular cause. According to List (2011), the NGO market revolves around three types of players: (1) the donors, who fund charities, churches, foundations and similar organizations. Donors can be individuals, corporations, government agencies, and non-government organizations; (2) charities, churches, foundations and similar organizations, which promote their causes to attract resources and allocate them accordingly; and (3) the government, which may support such causes directly or indirectly, depending on the way it taxes or exempts donations, by approving grants, and deciding which public goods it may provide directly. This triumvirate fits Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) definition of a Cross-Sector Partnership (XSP). Indeed, many non-profits operate under Seitani & Crane's (2009) concept of institutionalized business-NGO partnerships, as corporate philanthropic appendices that carry the brand name and support their institutional image. Wymer and Samu (2003) indicate that this practice "has grown tremendously" in recent years. Milne, Iyer and Goodwin-Williams (1996) include strategic alliances in this definition of business-NGO partnerships, but extend the concept to include government agencies and inter-NGO alliances. Froelich (1999) analyzed three major revenue strategies in non-profit organizations: private donations, government funding, and commercial activities. Quevedo & Quevedo-Prince (2019) found that fees from commercial activities like tuition in colleges and universities, ticket sales in museums, or in-patient charges in hospitals, account for almost half of total non-profit revenues, government sources reach one third, and private donations add close to 14%, the remainder coming from investments and other sources of income, especially considering new crowd-funding methods.

Eikenberry & Drapal Kluver (2004) came to discuss what they called then the marketization of non-profit activities, given by the introduction of marketing practices like sales of POP and different goods and services, competing for consulting contracts, donor relations management, (the philanthropic version of CRM), and social entrepreneurship. Herman & Renz (1999) say that non-profit organizational effectiveness is always a matter of comparison, and that it is multidimensional, somewhat related to board effectiveness and to the use of correct management practices, though not simply by way of applying "best practices". Furthermore, they state they are a "social construction", suggesting that they mean nothing until someone comes to analyze them. Also, they say that organizational responsiveness is a useful organizational-level

effectiveness measure, that we must distinguish among different types of non-profits, and that the level of analysis makes a great difference in understanding and researching NGO effectiveness. Kendall & Knapp (2000) suggest there are eight domains of NGO performance: “economy, effectiveness, efficiency, choice/pluralism, equity, participation, innovation and advocacy”, with twenty-two separate metrics, in line with Herman & Renz’s (1999) concept of multi-dimensionality, while, in trying to define a model of performance, Kania & Kramer (2011) showed that the success of initiatives that have a collective impact is subject to five conditions that altogether produce effective process alignment, and lead to unquestionable results: (1) a common agenda, which brings people together and may be manifest in their charter and plans, (2) shared metrics, which very well be represented by a balanced score card, (3) mutually reinforcing activities, much in line with Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) concept of centripetal forces, (4) constant communication, and (5) the support of backbone organizations, following Wood & Gray’s (1992) more dynamic angle, which defined the preconditions, process, and outcomes of collaboration. Alfirević, Pavičić & Najev-Čačija (2014) found that sources of funding influence fundraising performance, so as to suggest that the effectiveness of mining depends on the mine you choose. And Joyaux (2011) stated that plans must include wide organizational development goals. Indeed, wide-reaching, metrics-centered management tools such as Kaplan & Norton’s (1996) balanced score card and strategy map, which suggests that initiatives revolve around organizational, operational, customer and financial metrics, have been widely instrumented in non-profit management.

All in all, supporting Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) concept of a coherent narrative, and Quevedo & Quevedo-Prince’s (2019) predictive model of the non-profit sector which highlights the vital importance of communication, a clear stream of research concentrated on the communicational foundations of NGO effectiveness (Hardy, Lawrence & Grant, 2005; Kuhn, 2008; Ashcraft, Kuhn & Cooren, 2009), as the backbone support their three main revenue streams, commercial activities, government sources, and private donations. It would seem as if NGOs need a bible, a code or a map to guide them and to align the actions of their many stakeholders. Kuhn & Deetz (2008) found that marshaling consent is the means by which the organization’s authoritative text is authored; it refers to how one party (or coalition) in the organization persuades others both inside and outside the organization’s boundaries to accept a particular definition of the situation, an agenda for addressing a problem, a clear conception of supporters and stakeholders, both internal and external, written rules and procedures, and an evoked set of decisional alternatives.

Like branding, which is based on consistency, Allen (2000) would suggest that any “text can only ever be understood in relation to other texts; no work stands alone but is interlinked with the tradition that came before it and the context in which it is produced...” In NGOs, the collective, the “we” takes over. Beech & Huxham (2003) stress the importance of organizational identity in nurturing any collaborative process. Tsoukas (2009) says that a more richly communicative conception portrays dialogue as implicit in communication, such that meanings, identities, and agendas are always construed but open to reconsideration. Communication is thus seen as a central organizing process (Ashcraft, Kuhn & Cooren, 2009). Communication is a two-way street. Heath

(2007) speaks of a dialogue amongst stakeholders as necessary to consolidate productive collaborative partnerships. Le Ber & Branzei (2010) spoke of a “beneficiary voice” in three dimensions: voice-receiving, voice-making and voice-taking, pointing to a dialogue with stakeholders. In CCO (the Communicative Constitution of Organization) theorizing, communication is rendered rather differently than it is in most management and organizational literature. Instead of being the mere transmission of information or the outward representation of the actors’ internal dispositions, communication is understood as a complicated and continuous process of negotiation and construction of ultimate means and meanings by which relevant actors use symbols and make interpretations to create (maintain, transform, or destroy) those meanings that guide and control their activities and the accumulation of knowledge (Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009). Communication makes sense out of all organizational purposes and processes. If it does not give them meaning, at the very least, it expresses it. Mc Phee (2004) talks about “texts”, and views them along three lines, their symbolism, their internalization and relational capacity as being instrumental in the creation of an organizational identity. Texts are thus the expression of a collective identity.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

We were guided by a simple yet intriguing question. Can we take Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) model for a ride? This translated into the following research question:

Q1: *Can the case of the WSKF Sports Foundation be used to test and prove Kuschman et al.’s (2012) communicative framework of value in cross-sector partnerships (XSPs)?*

In line with Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) model we proposed the following:

P1: *Meaningful participation, centripetal forces, and consolidating a solid institutional image through a coherent narrative that is based on authoritative texts will lead to exerting greater external influence and will generate more capital for the organization.*

To test the model, and to prove our proposition, we set out to interview a group of relevant and representative international leaders of the organization to ascertain to what degree they have applied, construct by construct, Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) model, or not, and how much were their results affected by their deviations. The interviewees included, for Venezuela, Sensei Fouad Korban, 7<sup>th</sup> degree and Vice-President of the world organization.

Chief Instructor, and President of the *WSKF Sports Foundation*, as ground zero for this case analysis, the author, as Trustee of the *WSKF USA® Foundation*, Sensei Juan Osuna, *WSKF Canada’s* Chief Instructor, *WSKF Ireland’s* Colette Mc Corry, who has been Club Secretary and reports on international events, *WSKF Panama’s* President, Kaiser Ponce, and his sidekick, Sensei Tomas Hernandez, plus Sensei Francisco Astudillo, an industrial engineer, who is promoting the Spanish Delegation and co-authored the Fundraising flowchart, adding cross-references from other non-profit organizations as well. We asked them twelve specific questions to cover the application of the model being tested, and the results obtained, as indicated in Appendix # 2.

## RESULTS

We held an exploratory conversation first with Tomas Hernandez, 5<sup>th</sup> Degree Black Belt and engineer, who's second in command at *WSKF Panama*, and who worked with the *WSKF Sports Foundation* in Venezuela for many years.

who gets the money, the best or the highest ranked? Second, parent participation was limited, given the weight of adults in their National Team; third, they do not generate grants or projects, as the Panamanian law does not call for a sports' tax; fourth, they have obtain good press coverage, and have done their due diligence with the press; fifth, there is a strategy plan,

**Table 1. Summary of interviews with WSKF leaders around the world**

Country	Independent Variables	Moderating Factors	Outcomes
Venezuela <a href="http://www.wskf-venezuela.com/fundacion-deportiva-wskf/">http://www.wskf-venezuela.com/fundacion-deportiva-wskf/</a>	An average of 30 parents and adults participate in the process during world championship cycles, along with a dozen instructors; normally two or three grants or projects are submitted to the Ministry of Sports; press releases are sent to media prior, during and after each championship; quarterly BUDOTips are sent to all athletes and parents, and to up to 180 fundraising contacts, reached also by mail, with constant social media presence, followed up in person to promote donations. The Foundation and the sports organization act jointly to provide institutional support, and maintain tight control of the fundraising process.	A Strategy Map, the Fundraising Process Flowchart, Control meetings, an Affiliation Contract. The Foundation is separated from the sports-driven organization.	Support of the National Karate Federation and the Ministry of Sports. Over 190 corporate donors in data base. Up to 70 news mentions on TV, radio, print and digital media per championship cycle, highlighting the medal-count which reached 61 in 2017. Between 33 and 40% of donors are activated, reaching over 100% coverage of expenses, which leaves surplus capital to support other social causes.
USA <a href="https://www.wskf-usa-foundation.org/">https://www.wskf-usa-foundation.org/</a>	Being a new organization, efforts are so far limited to one parent; no grants or projects are submitted, considering the US legal framework does not offer such opportunities for the development of sports, but research on fundraising does draw attention from new clubs in Florida and from other countries' WSKF delegations; BUDOTips International are sent to instructors and donors quarterly, followed up in person to promote donations, while maintaining a constant social media presence. No joint efforts have been activated yet between the sports organization and the Foundation.	A Strategy Map, the Fundraising Process Flowchart was adapted to the American philanthropic environment. The Foundation is separate from the sports-driven organization.	Secured direct and indirect institutional support from The NY Jets, Camp Cody and Pace University, plus ten individual donors to cover roughly 60% of travel expenses, limited to one athlete. No surplus. Obtained media coverage in three occasions with international requests for articles.
Canada <a href="http://www.osunakarate.com/">http://www.osunakarate.com/</a>	Efforts limited to a one on one, parent-child process, with no newsletter support, nor with any authoritative texts; the website is limited to Calgary.	The Chief Instructor referred to the effects of a slow economy in Calgary.	Limited results in terms of external influence, though WSKF Canada maintains a presence in the National Karate Federation, with limited capital transformation.
Ireland <a href="http://www.wskf.ie/">http://www.wskf.ie/</a>	Fundraising is campaign-driven for members within each Club, particularly when athletes have been selected for international duties. A blog ( <a href="http://karateconsultants.blogspot.com/">http://karateconsultants.blogspot.com/</a> ) serves to promote a coherent narrative through an independent initiative of two key instructors; it also replicates all issues of BUDOTips International. Successful joint fundraising projects or campaigns, involving parents and instructors, have been undertaken with the umbrella organization, which generated a coherent narrative through letters and POP material, though some issues of control and fund distribution have risen.	Fundraising is a separate process from the sports-driven organization. A handbook or manual guides all activities and serves as a cohesive selling tool that fosters the meaningful participation of members and parents; it provides a constitution, a code of conduct, and several useful forms.	Fundraising has targeted individuals, politicians, businesses, and local authorities; local and community events have supported major campaigns. Press coverage has been secured by the success of WSKF Ireland athletes in world events, and by community events. Funds generated have covered the athletes' travel expenses 100%, with some surplus that went to cover their parents' costs in part.
Panama <a href="http://www.karate.com.pa/">http://www.karate.com.pa/</a>	Parents account for less than 60% of fundraising; the organization performs analyses of networking potential among instructors; nonnewsletter circulates, but information is provided through the organization's website and blog. The organization of international competitions has attracted the interest of the media, which has been worked well.	Panama follows a strategic plan and the Senseis' Manual, which act as authoritative texts. No formal fundraising process (flowchart) is in play. Fundraising is <i>not</i> separated from the sports-driven organization.	National Karate Federation and some official support. Corporate donors like COPA Air Lines, Cable Onda Sport, Power Club, Hotel W and several restaurants. International events held in Panama, help recuperate costs and close fundraising gaps.
Spain <a href="https://www.facebook.com/wskfspain/">https://www.facebook.com/wskfspain/...</a>	A budding delegation, depending on an extension of Ireland's blog and on scattered instructors' support which require local certification, according to Spanish law. Community contacts are on the start.	Sensei Astudillo was co-creator of the Fundraising flowchart.	One Club has been affiliated so far, and two more are in the works. Seminars and special events have been the sole method to generate capital.
Other: The MDCC Foundation and the Marcelo Saenz Scholarship Fund <a href="https://www.mdccfoundation.com/marcelosaenzscholarship">https://www.mdccfoundation.com/marcelosaenzscholarship</a>	No parent involvement for Scholarship Fund, web support from Miami Dade Community College, no coherent texts, some spotlighting by MDCC.	None, except any legally binding documents between the College and the Fund.	Sole donor can reach only seven students per term.

Serving as an introduction to international practices, and results, we could ascertain that Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) model was not followed to the letter in Panama, a high-performance delegation nonetheless, thus affecting their results significantly. First, WSKF Panama has not separated the fundraising arm from the sports organization, which tends to complicate funding decisions with martial considerations like

but they could publish only one trial issue BUDOTips®. The fundraising process is modeled after the Venezuelan (Graph # 4); sixth, corporate influence has depended mostly on the organization's leaders' relationships, but funding has been limited to a top of ten athletes taken to the US Open in 2018. Attendance of the 2017 World Championship in Tokyo was cut down to three top figures due to funding limitations.

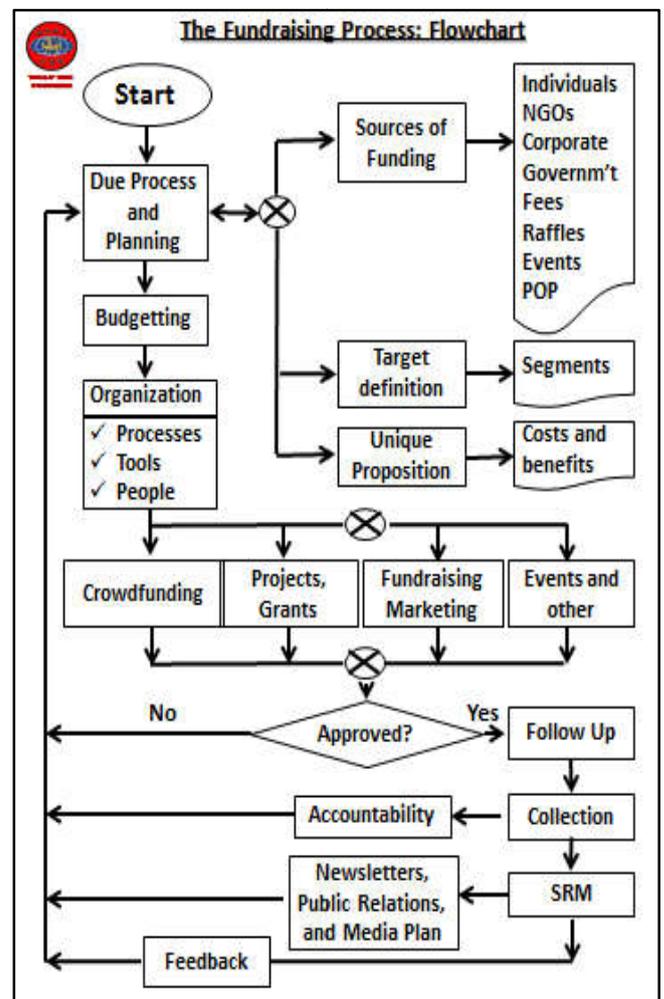
Table 2. Tracing Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) constructs in the WSKF Venezuela Sports Foundation

Authoritative Texts	Participation	Outcomes
Strategy Map Fundraising Flowchart BUDOTips newsletter	Instructors' Involvement in Fundraising Parents' Involvement in Fundraising Team Members' Involvement in Fundraising	National Federation Endorsement Growing Data Base of Corporate and Individual Donors Press coverage, Institutional Image.
Affiliation Contract Instructors' Manual	Corporate Involvement in Fundraising Individuals' Involvement, Fundraising & Crowd funding	Government Approval of Grants or Projects Capital Transformation

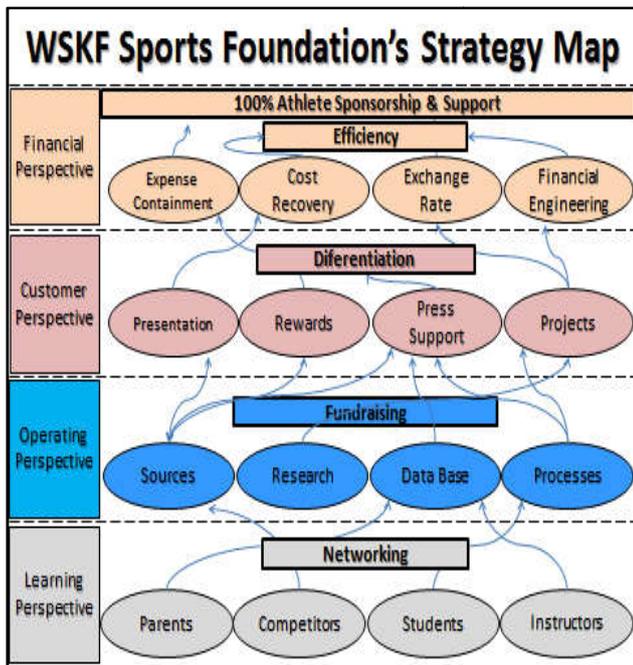


Graph 1. The Cyprus 2010 Guidelines

on authoritative texts, will lead to exerting relevant external influences, and to the most effective capture and transformation of capital. We checked prior research on each of the interviewees' particular contexts to better understand, to cross-reference and validate their answers. Wiekping & Handy's (2016), for instance, provide a panoramic view of fundraising in Canada which might shed some light on the difficulties experienced there by WSKF.



Graph 3.



Graph 2. An Authoritative Text

“These are the issues that we are still trying to resolve...” says Sensei Hernandez, who also spoke freely about some internal complications. Further analysis, based on interviews with WSKF leaders and representatives from Venezuela, the US, Canada, Ireland, Panama and Spain, plus a cross reference from a separate foundation, shows that following Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) model, construct by construct, that is, from securing a wide and meaningful participation of actors by generating centripetal forces, and consolidating a solid institutional image through a coherent narrative, all leveraged

The partnership between government and NGOs is so strong in Canada, they say, that the Canadian National Accounts System classifies all hospitals, which depend up to 80% on government funding, colleges and universities as part of the public sector, regardless of ownership. The non-profit sector in Canada accounts for 7.1% of GDP. Almost 25% of tax payers claim up to 29% tax credit from donations which average \$1,478 per year, leaning heavily toward health, social services and religious causes. Contrary to the US and Canada, where individual donors are most relevant to non-profit revenues, Santos & Pinzon (2016) highlight the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Panama, which evidently shifts the

target for fundraisers, as WSKF has rightly done there. McGee & Donoghue (2009) stress the importance of trustworthiness for fundraising in Ireland, warning that organizations are not investing in their marketing efforts, nor developing the appropriate processes, which is leading to a lack of development in the profession of fundraising.

## DISCUSSION

Ever since its creation in 2008, the *WSKF Sports Foundation* followed Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) model, that is, to be clear, four years ahead of its time. It created a backbone support for the founding organization that concentrated in securing funds for its athletes, not on training them for competition, but in finding the money to train and compete, as its primary purpose. Together, WSKF and its foundation constitute a collective agency, one resulting from communication processes that were distinct from the accustomed mechanisms of control and the martial chain of command, and generated effective collaboration, a cooperative, inter-organizational action that produced innovative, synergistic solutions and balanced divergent stakeholder concerns (Hardy, Lawrence & Grant, 2005). Following Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) constructs, as indicated in Table # 2 above, we can describe their detailed application, on the part of the Foundation, step by step, as follows:

- The crucial “meaningful participation” of instructors and parents, in well-structured regular meetings, with minutes, as they organized to raise funds for their teams, beyond the martial chain of command, and under the supervision of the Foundation. As an indicator of such meaningful participation, 100% of team-related parents and adult competitors supported the effort, though roughly only 90% connected with one or more donors.
- Following Seitanidi & Crane's (2009) concept of the institutionalization of business–NGO partnerships, the *WSKF Sports Foundation* brings corporate donors sports projects approved and/or accredited by the Sports Ministry for sponsorship. Companies can thus donate up to 0.25% of their profits to these, and deduct their donations from the Sports Tax payable each year. These were essential to linking the fundraising process to fiscal incentives, thus generating “centripetal forces” around which fundraising parents could work.
- As an indicator of such centripetal force, no less than one project is submitted for approval each year, at least two during biannual world championship cycles for a rough total of nine between 2012 and 2017 (the Sports Development Fund was created in August 2011).
- Following Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) suggested key communication practice; the founders chose to name the Foundation “WSKF”, as “an image of an agreed-upon existence” that spans over 100 countries, and as a sign of “internal unity”. And with respect to “a coherent narrative”, intensive press coverage of the teams' standings in world events (boasting 266 medals won between 2007 and 2017), social media and the organization's support of other social causes from Japan's Fukushima crisis to the poor in Africa leveraged the WSKF® brand image.
- As an indicator of coverage, the average number of traditional media mentions hovers around 70 during championship cycles.
- Reaffirming the coherent narrative construction process proposed by Kuschman *et al.* (2012), BUDOTips® was created after polls among parents, athletes and instructors revealed their expectations, which served to define its different sections: an editorial which set the tempo for each edition; Budo, which responded to the parents' wish to have their children taught principles and values; Technique, which targeted the competitor; Management, which catered to the instructor; and F.Y.I., which provided news and upcoming events (See appendix # 1). It was, and still is, sent out every quarter to a network of members, reporters, and 190 donors from Coca-Cola® to Pepsi-Cola®.
- As an indicator of texts, we would add the 56 quarterly “tips” sent to stakeholders since 2008. These texts supported alliances with crucial stakeholders like the Currency Exchange Commission, which was instrumental for securing hard currency at the official rate.
- By Kuhn's (2008) definition of an authoritative text as one which represents the collective, shows how its activities are connected as a unit, and portrays the relations of authority and criteria of appropriateness that become manifest in practice, the Foundation's Strategy Map (see Graph # 2 above) falls into that characterization, and so do the Sensei's Manual, the Affiliation Contract, and the Fundraising Process as detailed in the Flowchart shown in Graph # 4.
- As Allen (2000) would suggest that any text can only ever be understood in relation to other texts; no work stands alone but is interlinked with the tradition that came before it and the context in which it is produced, all of the Foundation's texts, posts and documents are linked together.
- Outcomes, according to Kuschman *et al.*'s (2012) model, can be defined in terms of “external influence” and “capital transformation”. On the one hand would be the Sports' Ministry's approval of the *WSKF Sports Foundation*'s national team projects, something close to a grant, and the number of corporate and individual donors activated to support them; and in the other, the funds donated and their coverage of championship expenses.

As an indicator of such external influence, we would mention first that all projects presented to the Sports Ministry since 2011 were approved for funding, and that 190 corporate donors in the data base, roughly one third of which donated for any championship cycle. Funds raised exceeded \$4 million between 2007 and 2017, but as Herman & Renz (1999) say, non-profit organizational effectiveness is multidimensional, and will never be reducible to a single measure. As a further indicator of capital, it must be mentioned that coverage of championship expenses went from 50% in 2009 to over 100% by 2015. Teams are usually made of 30 competitors, 3 alternates, the Director, an MD, a Dentist, and up to 2 coaches, totaling 38 people. The Foundation also measures medals won, which totaled 266 between 2007 and 2017. The Delegation also won awards to Best Team, Best Competitor, Best Branch and Best Instructor in different events.

The Foundation supports other causes, particularly two homes for needy children in Caracas and Valencia, Venezuela, and the Downs Foundation as well, and it even served as consultants in SRC projects for Parmalat® and Farnatodo®,

and held fundraising seminars at local colleges and libraries, publishing an article on “Predictive Modeling for the US Non-Profit Sector”, which added to the “external influences”; sister foundations sprouted in the US, Japan, Australia, Ireland, Iran and many of the over 110 countries where the organization operates. It must be mentioned that the athletes’ voice was always heard and spoken to in the Foundation, in tune with Le Ber & Branzei’s (2010) construct of the “beneficiary voice”. Athletes had representation in the board of directors of the organization, based in part on the Venezuela Law for the Development of Sports which required it. Considering that non-profits must have wide organizational development goals (Joyaux, 2011), the Foundation followed Kaplan & Norton’s (1996) strategy map model with multiple metrics and initiatives carefully intertwined. See Graph # 3 above. Alfirević, Pavičić & Najev-Čačija (2014) found that sources of funding influence fundraising performance. As seen on Graph # 4, the Foundation’s fundraising process is supported by business intelligence that pinpoints from the start a wide range of sources. Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) model provides a clear and concise framework for optimizing non-profit and NGOs’ performance, and certainly, and the *WSKF Sports Foundation* followed it to the letter five years before it was published. Its Strategy Map approach to management is as wide-reaching as Kendall & Knapp’s (2000) eight domains of performance, and the results prove the effectiveness of a solid communicational network, as Hardy Lawrence & Grant (2005), Kuhn (2008), and Ashcraft, Kuhn & Cooren (2009) wrote, marshaling wide ranging consent, as Kuhn & Deetz (2008) said it should, through the use of a coherent narrative (Allen, 2000) and texts (McPhee, 2004), nurturing a collaborative environment (Beech & Huxham, 2003) through dialogue (Heath, 2007; Tsoukas, 2009). Although Provan & Milward (1995) say that the empirical evidence of non-profit organizations’ effectiveness is scarce, making it difficult to understand and assess their actual value, this case study allows us to see the successful application of a theoretical model, which in the words of Rein & Stott (2009), who presented the case of a partnership approach, has also proven to be successful, indeed it can be used as a valuable learning resource. And the non-profit sector can surely benefit from such analyses and research. Matsunaga & Yamauchi (2004) highlighted its relevance, which Quevedo & Quevedo-Prince (2019) quantified as 5.4% of US GDP, while Lewis, Isbell, & Koschmann (2010) stressed their tremendous promise for tackling very specific social issues.

Indeed, bringing together List’s (2011) triumvirate (donors, businesses and the government), and operating under Seitanidi & Crane’s (2009) partnership model, which is ever more common, particularly in the form of strategic alliances (Wymer & Samu, 2003; Milne, Iyer and Goodwin-Williams, 1996), while working under Waddock’s (1991) concept of a “federative” organization, and Albert & Whetten’s (1985) “dual organization” as a “cause-based partnership” (Parker & Selsky, 2004), *WSKF* and its sports foundation are a large conglomeration of martial artists from over 100 countries, which presents all the ailments of such institutions. The Foundation exploited Froelich’s (1999) three major revenue strategies: private contributions, government funding, and commercial activities, consulting on fundraising and CSR projects, in particular, without falling into Eikenberry & Drapal Kluver’s (2004) concept of “the marketization” of non-profit activity. As Tuler (2000) said, the process of decision making becomes adversarial in diverse organizations. Kuhn (2008) warned that struggles over power, strategy, and

organizational form may be disruptive, and indeed, in such a kaleidoscope of interests. These also tended to surface in the dynamics of the *WSKF Sports Foundation*, but were appropriately handled by the leadership. As Herman & Renz (1999) proposed that the success, or failure of NGOs is always a matter of comparison, this Case Analysis compared several countries and organizations to form an informed opinion. The differences found will surely point to organizational development goals for many delegations, as Joyaux (2011) would suggest. In any event, fundraisers must adapt their practices to local cultures and legal frameworks (Wiepking & Handy’s, 2016; Santos & Pinzon, 2016; McGee & Donoghue, 2009); adapt or perish, we would add.

**Implications:** Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) model is a useful framework for optimizing non-profit performance, as the *WSKF Sports Foundation* has proven. The more detailed its application, the better the results: meaningful participation, generating centripetal forces, and a coherent narrative, working on the basis of authoritative texts, lead to achieving external influences and capital transformation. But performance has not been consistent throughout the more than 100 countries where the Federation operates. It seems like exporting successful models is not easy, especially considering the work it entails, like editing a newsletter, maintaining a donor data base, nurturing donor relations, and especially keeping all efforts aligned with a master plan. Organizational learning is not easy in loosely-held multinational XSP, if we use the term coined by Kuschman *et al.* (2012).

## CONCLUSIONS

If as Sawhill & Williamson (2001) say, that every non-profit organization should measure its progress in fulfilling its mission, its success in mobilizing its resources, and its staff’s effectiveness on the job, the applicability of Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) model, as executed by the *WSKF Sports Foundation* cannot be denied. *WSKF* has stuck to Kania & Kramer’s (2011) five conditions to produce true alignment and lead to powerful results: (1) a common agenda, which brings people together and may be manifest in their charter and plans, (2) shared metrics, which very well be represented by a balanced score card, (3) mutually reinforcing activities, much in line with Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) concept of centripetal forces, (4) constant communication, and (5) the support of backbone organizations. Pinpointing which element of Kuschman *et al.*’s (2012) model is most important proves hard. It may be like asking which of a car’s four tires, or which organ of the human body, matters most. The sequence acts as a whole: meaningful participation > centripetal forces > coherent narrative > authoritative texts > external influence > capitalization. It would seem as if any weakness in the chain will affect the process. *WSKF Venezuela* applied the model in full detail and has served a model for the world; Panama was weak on internal communication, which could account for the lower participation and effectiveness of the athletes’ parents there, but it showed strong organizational forces which was able to influence corporate donors; Ireland was strong on participation but weak on organizational force; both delegations fared well, but only the Irish showed a surplus in capital. Lastly, as Wiepking & Handy’s (2016), Santos & Pinzon (2016), and McGee & Donoghue (2009) let us see, each country presents cultural and legal challenges that must be addressed by all non-profit organizations which operate worldwide. No one is to blame for an adverse environment, but if we look at the

Venezuelan situation, it seems like staying the course and taking advantage of any opportunity proves to be the most successful strategy.

**Limitations and Further Study:** Wolff (2017) stated that revolutionary organizations depend to an extraordinary extent on the ebb and flow of fundraising. Indeed, it must be pointed out that the impressive results of the *WSKF Sports Foundation* in Venezuela were perfected over that country's socialist-oriented 2011 Sports Development Law, and its 0.5% tax on corporate profits. However, by 2009, the Foundation was already achieving 100% coverage of its championship costs and expenses, so it cannot be said that the law was the sole essence of its success. Nonetheless, this fact must be taken into account when comparing results with sister organizations located in countries that lack such socialist incentive. Another element which may act as a moderator is the professional nature of the leadership, right from Hitoshi Kasuya's law degree, which may not be typical of similar sports organizations which may be led by former athletes without managerial training. This moderating influence should be controlled for in comparative, cross-sectional studies.

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### Appendix # 1: Questionnaire applied to WSKF world leaders

- **Organization:**
  - ✓ Please describe how you have organized the fundraising process, indicating whether you maintain a separate organization for such purposes.
- **Independent Variable "Participation":**
  - ✓ Please describe to what extent you have engaged the meaningful participation of your Team members' parents in our Fundraising process.
- **Independent Variable "Centripetal force":**
  - ✓ Please describe how and to what extent you have exploited all possible sources of funding (Government, corporate and individual donations, events, POP, crowdfunding, etc.)
- **Independent Variable "Image":**
  - ✓ Please describe to what extent you have received press coverage for your events and/or fundraising campaigns (Print media, social media, radio and TV).
- **Moderating Factor "Authoritative Texts":**
  - ✓ Please describe to what extent your actions are guided by a clear strategic plan that is shared by all.
  - ✓ Please describe to what extent your Fundraising follows detailed processes/flowchart.
  - ✓ Please describe if and with what frequency your organization publishes and distributes any type of newsletter.
- **Dependent Variable "Influence":**
  - ✓ Please describe how many donors (individual and/or corporate) support your Fundraising process.
  - ✓ Please describe to what extent you offer Fundraising advice or any other service to third parties.
- **Dependent Variable "Capital":**
  - ✓ Please describe to what extent are your competition & travel costs covered by your Fundraising process.
  - **Please indicate how many athletes and support personnel travel**
  - ✓ Please describe to what extent your Foundation supports other social causes.

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