CLEARING THE BOUNDARY:

A multilevel analysis of how gendered relations enable female leadership in non-professional cricket

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Abstract

Women have traditionally been underrepresented across many areas of sport. Whilst inroads have been made in recent years with increased participation rates, greater media representation, and the professionalisation of many elite women's sports, one area which has continued to flounder—especially within male dominated sports—is female leadership representation. Whilst research to date has identified numerous gendered barriers which perpetuate the dominance of men in positions of power in sport, little attention has been paid to the enabling factors when women—through natural progression—reach leadership roles.

Through an intersectional critical feminist lens, this thesis identifies the gendered enablers for nine females who hold leadership positions within non-professional cricket clubs in the Melbourne metropolitan area. A multilevel analysis of interviews and observations, utilising the theories of Pierre Bourdieu and Raewyn Connell, identifies four core themes. The findings will reveal that no one theme enables these female leaders, rather all four work in concert. Additionally, the interplay between each of the women and the enablers alters from one woman to another, and from one field to another. The implications drawn from this research point to a need to adopt new research approaches in the female leadership underrepresentation in sport space going forward.

Student Declaration

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"I, Lisa Lymbery, declare that the Master of Research thesis entitled 'CLEARING THE BOUNDARY: A multilevel analysis of how gendered relations enable female leadership in non-professional cricket', is no more than 50,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

I have conducted my research in alignment with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and Victoria University's Higher Degree by Research Policy and Procedures.

All research procedures reported in the thesis were approved by the Low Risk Human Research Ethics Committee number HRE19-120.
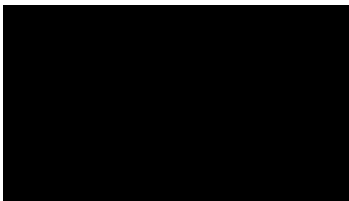
Lisa Lymbery   2nd February 2021

Acknowledgments

Well, what a journey! It's been super fun but also a massive challenge, with the last 12 months especially hard going. First, we had Covid-19 turn everyone's world upside down, then the madness of US politics over the course of 2020 - which took up way too much of my time when I should have been focusing on my thesis... So, needless to say I would not have got through it without the help of my awesome supervisors: Dr Fiona McLachlan and Dr Brent McDonald. Thanks so much for all your encouragement, ideas, feedback, knowledge, and of course the fun and frivolity along the way! But, most of all, thanks for being patient with all my questions.

I'd also like to shout out a thanks to my fellow research students who helped me navigate my way up until Covid-19 hit. Our lunchtime chats, occasional reading groups, and political chats (yes, I'm looking at you Jack), were both helpful and a necessary break from focusing on my project.

I'd be remiss not to include a big thank you to my research participants. Everyone was so enthusiastic and open with their responses, which made the analysis and writing both interesting and exciting.

And finally, I want to thank my partner Mandy for helping me proofread, and just supporting me along the way – especially the last six weeks when I rarely looked up from my laptop – let alone left the house.

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List of Acronyms

ASC   Australian Sports Commission

CA   Cricket Australia

CV   Cricket Victoria

IOC   International Olympic Committee

NSO   National Sporting Organisation

SSO   State Sporting Organisation

Glossary

To provide a common understanding of terms discussed throughout this thesis, definitions are provided below.

Enable

To make something possible; to facilitate; to empower; to overcome barriers.

Female leader (in non-professional cricket)

Includes women appointed to coach, committee member, and/or club management roles (such as operations manager, team manager, sponsorship manager, event manager).

Gender

The term 'gender' in this thesis has its foundation based on the sociological understanding that gender is socially constructed when compared to sex (which is biological).

Gender equality

Equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities for women and men, girls, and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that women's and men's opportunities, rights and responsibilities do not depend upon whether they are born female or male. It implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration (United Nations, 2015).

Gender equity

The process of being fair to women and men, girls and boys, by taking into account the different needs of women and men, cultural barriers, and past and present discrimination against a specific group. Gender equity may involve the use of temporary special measures of differential treatment to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination against one sex in order to obtain equality of outcomes and end results (United Nations, 2015).

Gendered relations

The social interactions between men and women as a result of a social structure which centres on reproductive difference, rather than their biological sex (Connell, 2009).

Multilevel analysis

An exploration of the individual and interconnecting impacts that gendered relations have for a female leader at their interpersonal (micro), club (meso), and cricket (macro) levels.

Non-professional cricket

Any cricket competition which is not considered **professional cricket**. Whilst some players may take part in both professional and non-professional competitions, the emphasis of difference is on the level of competition, rather than the level of the athlete's playing ability.

Patriarchy

An ideology which promotes traditional gender roles based on one's sex. Men are considered strong, protective, and rational, whilst women are weak, emotional, nurturing, and submissive; the outcome being "a belief that women are innately inferior to men" (Tyson, 2014).

Professional cricket

Any Australian senior National or International cricket competition. This includes all international series, and the following 2019-20 Australian domestic series: Sheffield Shield, One-Day Cup, Big Bash League (BBL), Women's National Cricket League (WNCL) and Women's Big Bash League (WBBL).

Preface

…knowledge of the world cannot be advanced apart from the sociologists
knowledge of himself [sic], and his position in the social world, or apart
from his efforts to change them (Gouldner as cited in Letherby, Scott, &
Williams, 2012, p. 128)

Researchers' past experiences within their designated field have directly influenced the construction of their habitus within that environment.[1] This resultant habitus can in turn lead to analytic distortions through the inadvertent imposition of the researcher's own views. Bourdieu (1977) argues as social interactions are not objective, it is impossible for social researchers to be objective (Maggio, 2018). Following Bourdieu as I embark on this research project, I think it is imperative that I understand my cricketing habitus and how it could potentially affect the legitimacy of my findings.

I followed what would be considered a conventional rite of passage for female cricketers of my age: backyard cricket as a youngster, playing in men's teams in my teens and early twenties, before moving onto women's cricket and finally focusing on coaching and administrative roles as retirement beckoned. So, at the ripe old age of 50 something, my personal experiences are the backbone of my knowledge of the sport. Not from a physical or material point of view—such as how one learns to become a more skilled player or coach—but the knowledge of what is 'expected' of its participants. That awareness of the normalised social practices has undoubtedly shaped my personal disposition when immersed in the field of cricket.

During my earlier years in cricket, I benefited from the innocence (and naivety) of youth. As I grew older though two things occurred: firstly, I became more aware of the gendered inequalities of the world, and second, my self-consciousness around bringing attention to those inequalities dissipated. It was in these later years when I became a leader within the sport that I experienced my highest levels

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[1] The Bourdieusian concept of habitus refers to normalised social practices within given environments which unconsciously manifest within one's body and mind, and in turn guide their actions (Bourdieu, 1977).

of misogynistic and sexist treatment. Over a period of approximately six years, I teetered along a tightrope between either vocally advocating for gender equality or conforming to the gendered expectation of 'knowing my place'. Undoubtedly the backlash I experienced as a result of my outspoken support for change within a male dominated environment was exacerbated by my open homosexuality, and eventually my love for the game transformed to disappointment and helplessness. It was at this stage I made the decision to step away from coaching. My reflexivity over those years had led me to agency, and I rebelled against the norms expected of me as I no longer saw value in 'playing the game'; hence my habitus had been transformed.

I am aware of the negative feelings I hold towards cricket as a result of my own experiences, but I do not assume my reality reflects that of other female cricketer's. Whilst my truth has been the catalyst for this research, it is the representation of others' truths I aim to explore. My research journey will therefore be built around a conscious decision to detach my previous struggles from the process and instead open myself to a new stage of knowledge development.

Chapter 1: Sport, gender, leadership

There has been much positive progress with regards to equality of opportunity for women and girls in sport in recent years. In Australia, female sport participation numbers in traditionally male dominated sports such as cricket, soccer, rugby league, and Australian Rules football have increased substantially (Cricket Australia, 2018a; Roy Morgan, 2018; Victorian Government, 2015). Despite these increases, we still have a way to go to reach true gender equality in the sports space, with one area being especially difficult to overcome: the leadership representation disparity. Whether within national and state sports organisations, at the elite level, or within community sport, there is unfortunately an enduring belief that men are the most suitable (and preferred) candidate to take on authoritative roles (Galloway, 2012). This is indicative of a wider patriarchal societal view where (hegemonic) men are considered the rightful holders of power (Connell, 1987; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Much research on female leadership underrepresentation has been undertaken in sport—as will be discussed in chapter two—and many strategies have been implemented as a result, but the inequality persists. We therefore need to reassess how we are exploring and attempting to overcome the issue of gender within the leadership space, and this thesis is a step in that direction. Specifically, the focus of this thesis is on examining how gender relations enable women to become leaders in sport at the community level.

This chapter will provide a summary of the issue at hand, first by offering a snapshot of current inequity ratios across different countries and sectors. This will be followed with a discussion around why we are in this situation, specifically with regard to sport, and an explanation of why it is imperative that we address the underrepresentation of female leaders. An overview of my research will then be presented including research question, aim, and contribution.

Current state of play

To fully understand why there is a need to continue research into the underrepresentation of females, we first need to grasp the reality of the current situation. The dominance of men in leadership positions is not restricted to sport, but evident across many industries. In the corporate sector only between 11% and 12% of women hold board positions across all companies in the United States (Hersh, 2016), whilst in Australia, 25% of executive roles in the top 200 listed companies were held by women as at August 2020, with only 10 of those companies having a female Chief Executive Officer (Chief Executive Women, 2020). Whilst 25% may appear to some as great progress towards equality, as Knight (2019) points out, the devil is in the detail. Approximately 90% of all executive appointments during the 2019-20 year were for 'line' roles (roles directly accountable for profit and loss outcomes), but only 12% of those roles were held by women during that period. Furthermore, a disturbingly high 65% of the companies had no women in line roles, which represented an 8% increase on the year prior. This 'broken rung' where there is a lack of women in potential management promotional pools (Liang, Lourie, & Nekrasov, 2020), aligns with a December 2019 report on female leadership within 317 Canadian and US companies. Whilst 21% of executive roles across the private, public, and social sectors were held by females, they only held 38% of manager level positions—the first rung to senior management promotion (McKinsey & Company, 2020). One shining light in Australia are government boards which are currently on track to reach their minimum target of 40%. Though this target was initially set in 2010 (Parliament of Australia, 2015), an impressive 48.5% of all appointments during the 2019-20 financial year went to women, reaching a total of 36.9% at 30 June 2020 (Australian Government, 2020).

The gendered attitude whereby men are considered better leaders than women, appears to be more prominent in sport than many other industries. A 2015 US survey found that only 8% of respondents believed (with all other things being equal) that a woman would do a better job than a man in professional sports. In comparison, 54% believed a man would outperform a woman (Appelbaum, D'Antico, & Daoussis, 2019), and actual leadership gender ratios do appear to

align with these perceptions. For example, in 2016 the International Olympic Committee (IOC) established minimum 30% benchmarks for women in decision-making roles within the Olympic Movement (IOC Board and Commissions, National and International Olympic Committees, Federations, and Governing Bodies). Whilst the IOC reached this benchmark in 2020 across its Commissions, it still falls short at the Executive Board level, as do the majority of the remaining sports bodies (Gaston, Blundell, & Fletcher, 2020; International Olympic Committee, 2020). In the US less than 25% of senior leadership roles were held by women in 2015 (Burton & Leberman, 2017), and across 39 European countries, only 18% of board positions within National Sports Federations were held by women as at 2014 (Adriaanse, 2018).

In Australia, only four women currently hold the Chief Executive Officer position across 38 National Sports Organisations (NSO) (Blood, 2020). In 2015 the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) *Mandatory Sports Governance Principles* included a statement that each NSO should "seek to achieve a target of 40 per cent representation of females on their boards" (Australian Sports Commission, 2015). As at June 2018 the figure across all of those national bodies for the Chair or President position was at only 27% (Tasmanian Government, 2019). Within the state of Victoria where this study is situated, only 33% of board positions and 29% of executive officer roles are held by women within the state and regional sports bodies (Victorian Government, 2015). When looking at cricket specifically, whilst the NSO Cricket Australia (CA) had no female representation on its board as recently as 2011 (Crawford & Carter, 2011), it has made positive progress towards a 40% target, with 32% at board level and 33% across all other levels of management currently (Cricket Australia, 2020). Unfortunately, gender ratios for leadership roles at the community level of sport, including cricket, are unknown.

Sport as a male preserve

Sport in Australia, as in many nations, has been a prime means of gender-fixing; a way of socialising children into gender-based social roles; a

method of informing, even dictating to, both men and women how they should behave on and off the sportsfield. (Adair & Vamplew, 1997, p. 144)

Whilst there are many gendered factors that explain why women are underrepresented within sport, the overarching reason stems from an historic view that sport is a male preserve. As a British colony it is no surprise that Australia's sporting landscape was shaped by the motherland. During the mid-nineteenth century Australian private schools based their teachings on the traditional system of their English counterparts where religious doctrine and strict rules were at the forefront of a philosophy that manliness was considered a feature of the mind and spirit (Crotty, 2000). By the last quarter of the nineteenth century though, rapid declines in enrolments forced an ideological change to a 'new' British educational ethos—one where the development of the body through sport and exercise was considered a crucial addition to religion. Whilst its origins are debated (Watson, Weir, & Friend, 2005), Charles Kingsley has largely been credited with the indoctrination of this ideology referred to as 'muscular Christianity'. As a Christian socialist and cleric, Kingsley believed sport and religious worship could facilitate the development of desired moral characters required of the future protectors and leaders of society. Muscular Christianity was viewed as the path to the development of ideal 'manly virtues' including courage, patriotism, fortitude, and self-reliance (Bloomfield, 1994). Sports such as rugby, football and cricket became the moral breeding ground for young bourgeois men, with those who did not take part being labelled weak and unmanly (Giulianotti, 2015). The spread of muscular Christianity was not restricted to British colonies, and two decades into the 21st century these traditional roots are still evident in sport worldwide.

Historically therefore, sport has been an environment which enables men to solidify their socially allocated—and often accepted—position as the dominant sex. Women's femininity, frailty, and reproductive duties saw them relegated to the sidelines to 'cheer on their man'. Those who dared take the field often experienced harsh criticism and societal shunning if they did not maintain expected female traits, and dared to risk decreased fertility as a result of strenuous physical activity (Parnther, Deranek, & Michel, 2014). Dunning and Sheard (1973) highlighted sport as being a 'male preserve' where (otherwise unacceptable) behaviours such as

violence, nudity, and female degradation were "crucial elements in the rearticulation, reiteration, and reification of social power" (Matthews, 2016, p. 313). This sexist ideology where women must maintain their femininity whilst men overtly prove their masculinity has supported the ongoing acceptance of a patriarchal society within sport.

Overtly patriarchal and often toxic behaviours are quite often the default (or hegemonic) expectation for males within sport, especially traditionally male dominated sports. Connell (1985) identified that whilst a diverse range of masculinities will be present within any institution, a certain pattern will be the dominant position, a term she coined 'hegemonic masculinity'. These behaviours become accepted by others through compliance and complicity, and in turn guarantee the maintenance of power and privilege by men within those institutions. Heterosexual hyper masculinity is considered the status quo, and hence women and homosexual males are seen as inferior (Walker, 2013).

Cricket as a male preserve

Even though Australia has a large cricket obsessed South-East Asian population, and a women's national team who regularly outperform their male counterparts on the international stage, the sport has until very recently been overtly 'pale, male, stale'. Whilst the origins of cricket are debated, there is wide consensus that it was invented in England, with the first recorded women's competition played there in 1745. After an initial period of popularity and growth, a nineteenth century discourse where cricket's identity was the 'national game' played by 'manly Britons' saw women's cricket decline (Malcolm & Velija, 2008). To uphold those characteristics and retain its 'Englishness', cricket needed to exclude foreigners and present itself as a male preserve. As recently as 1916 an English dictionary still defined the sport as "a boys' game" (International Cricket Council, n.d.). British colonisation saw cricket introduced in Australia throughout the early settlement years, and whilst Australia and England are fierce rivals on the field, the domestic game and its underlying gendered ideologies have undoubtedly been shaped by our British roots.

Cricket has been touted as a 'gentleman's game', but one could argue this moniker is perhaps a reference to its class shaped past rather than the likelihood that its players adhere to behavioural expectations set out in the *Spirit of Cricket*. Displays of toxic hegemonic masculinity such as sledging, cheating, and physical intimidation throughout the game's history certainly contradict this illusory belief. An early example was the unsportsmanlike 'bodyline' scandal adopted by England in 1932-33 against their highly successful Australian opponents. The tactic saw English bowlers aiming for the opposition batsmen's body rather than the stumps and resulted in countless Australian injuries, the worst being Bert Oldfield's fractured skull.

Australian examples include when during a 1995 Test match, then captain Steve Waugh reacted aggressively when West Indian Curtly Ambrose—fielding in close to the wicket—gave Waugh his infamous 'death stare'. The pair had to be pulled apart by team-mates and umpires mid-pitch. Waugh's response when asked about the incident at the post-match media conference was, "it's Test cricket. If you want an easy game, go play netball" (Sengupta, 2016); a clear indication that he considered cricket a sport that only 'men' are invited to play. More recently, Australia's 2018 'sandpapergate' ball tampering scandal saw three players, including captain Steve Smith, suspended. This led to an independent review of CA's culture, the outcome of which was 42 ethical and sportsmanship focused recommendations.

CA have implemented initiatives in recent years specifically aimed at the inclusion of more women and girls in the game, which has resulted in a 26% increase in female participation at the community level since 2018 (Cricket Australia, 2020). However, increased participation does not necessarily lead to the positive reforming of gender relations (Jeanes et al., 2020), and regardless of these inroads, women are still widely underrepresented as athletes, leaders, and volunteers across the majority of levels of Australian cricket. Furthermore, a recent study on junior elite programs within the sport indicate patriarchal and homophobic gendered discourses still exist (Mooney, Hickey, Ollis, & Harrison, 2019).

Why more female leaders?

There are two central arguments for why society should continue to strive for gender equality across leadership: the social justice case and the business case. Social justice is based on the concept of equity and fairness (Falk, Hampton, Hodgkinson, Parker, & Rorris, 1993). Balancing the gender equality scales is considered justice because why should one human being not have access to the same equitable opportunities and privileges as another? Discriminating against half of the population is a social justice issue and to ensure fairness exists in society, women should be afforded the same rights as men (UN Women, 2016). The social justice case with regards to leadership in society therefore refers to women being afforded the same opportunities as men. As has already been set out in this chapter, and will be explored in detail in chapter two, this is not presently the case. Thus, we have a responsibility to continue to strive to reach this goal.

An increase in female leadership representation can also lead to additional social justice benefits such as increased levels of gender equality when female leaders take women's lives into account when planning (Pfister, 2010b), and the benefits of a greater focus on corporate social responsibility (Joecks, Pull, & Vetter, 2013; Terjesen, Sealy, & Singh, 2009).

The business case puts forward the economic benefits of women holding leadership roles, with a range of studies suggesting diversity at the board level increases business performance (Catalyst, 2004; Hersh, 2016; Joecks et al., 2013; Nielsen & Huse, 2010; Torchia, Calabrò, & Huse, 2011). These economic impacts can benefit sports organisations as was evidenced when higher female leadership representation in US sport National Governing Bodies correlated with increased female membership numbers (Gaston et al., 2020), an outcome that could be just as easily met at the community sports level.

Beyond the social and economic benefits, women in leadership within sport are role models. Just as female athletes inspire women and girls to participate and navigate their way in sport (Avery, Tonidandel, & Phillips, 2008; Bevan, Drummond, Abery, Elliott, & Pennesi, 2020; Meier, 2015), female leaders not only pave the way for other women and girls to lead by knocking down gendered

barriers, they also demonstrate to young females that they too can step into positions of power (Fowlie, Eime, & Griffiths, 2020).

Research aim and question

In this thesis, I aimed to use a critical feminist lens to critically analyse the gendered relations which shape women's abilities to reach leadership levels within cricket clubs in the Melbourne Metropolitan area, and to maintain those positions. Specifically, I addressed the following research question: Using a multilevel analysis, what influence do gendered relations have on enabling female leadership representation in non-professional cricket.

Contribution to knowledge

Research into gender inequality in sport leadership is predominately focused on identifying the barriers women face within organisational or elite environments, and at the macro (or institutional) level. My research has taken a different approach which will not only add to existing literature, but also generate potential new approaches for future research. Firstly, I have taken a relational approach where I explored the research question across the macro, meso, and micro levels. Secondly, I positioned the study within the community (or non-professional) sport environment. Thirdly, rather than focus on barriers to female leadership underrepresentation, I instead analysed the enablers. And finally, I took both a gendered and cultural intersectional approach, something which has not been adopted in this research area previously.

Practical outcomes

Bourdieu's 'intellectualist bias' is a phenomenon were as researchers we view the world as a spectacle which needs to be interpreted, rather than something we can solve through the provision of practical outcomes (Bourdieu, 1990). Reflexivity of

our intellectual bias aims to alert the researcher to the importance of providing practical outcomes for those directly impacted by the sociological environment being studied. This is in direct comparison to carrying out the project simply to provide an academic outcome. Whilst knowledge is obviously the output, utilising that knowledge to create positive change should be the end goal.

My personal approach to issues in my life is practical, workable solutions. Whilst the choice of a focus on gender and leadership stemmed from my personal experiences (as outlined in the preface), my initial decision to take the leap from reflection to research was built on a desire to create change. When I made the decision to no longer coach cricket, I realised that while I was no longer able to create change from within the environment, there was no reason why I could not work towards this from outside; hence my decision to undertake this research with a focus on the enablers to female leadership rather than the well-worn path of research on barriers. I wanted to discover what is working for women so we can implement functional solutions and pathways for future women who step into leadership roles, and to encourage more women to take on those roles. It is with that in mind that I present my findings and discussion with a practical view and provide suggested future research specifically aimed towards positive social change.

Thesis overview

Chapter two of this thesis will present a review of the existing literature on female leadership in sport across the macro, micro, and meso levels. It will identify consistent patterns researchers of female leadership in sport have followed, and how this recognition led to the identification of gaps which this research will explore.

In chapters three and four I will provide an overview of my theoretical and methodological approach, with a discussion of the motivation for adopting a critical feminist paradigm, sociological theorists, and research methods. A discussion of the process undertaken to recruit participants and subsequent data collection and analysis will follow.

Chapters five through eight will present relevant findings and discuss how they have led to the identification of four specific enablers for female leaders in non-professional cricket as a result of the gendered relations encountered across their interpersonal, club and cricket spheres. Each chapter will reveal one enabler as follows: chapter five will present the 'right' support, chapter six the 'right' capital, chapter seven the 'right' gendered habitus, and chapter eight the 'right' time.

In the final chapter I will summarise the answer to my research question and how it contributes to the literature, put forward suggested future research directions, and present my final conclusions.

Chapter 2: Exploring the literature

Research on the barriers to female involvement in sport historically focused on athletic participation (Acosta & Carpenter, 1988; Felshin, 1973; Theberge, 1985). However, in recent decades there has been increased attention on barriers women face in reaching leadership roles, with a range of factors evidenced as maintaining the persistent underrepresentation of women at higher levels. Organisational and structural gendered prejudices regularly prevent women from progressing to management levels or see them only promoted to those levels when the current climate is 'setting them up to fail' (Ahn & Cunningham, 2020). The 'glass labyrinth' is an umbrella term used to explain these invisible barriers (Hartzell & Dixon, 2019). The components of the labyrinth include firstly the 'glass ceiling': a widely used metaphor which refers to the barrier women hit when attempting to move up the hierarchical chain. Horizontally, gender role stereotyping sees women allocated to roles considered 'appropriate' for females whilst the 'male roles' are out of their reach; in other words, they are hidden behind a 'glass wall'. Research also indicates that women are promoted to high-level leadership roles in turbulent times when organisations are facing higher degrees of risk, and hence there is a greater probability they will fail and fall off the 'glass cliff' (Galloway, 2012).

In this chapter I review the literature on gender and sport leadership with a particular focus on the factors that explain the underrepresentation of women as leaders in sport at macro, meso and micro levels. While the distinction between these levels is not always clear, several authors have organised the literature in this way when summarising and commenting on the existing research on female leadership in sport (Burton, 2015; Burton & Leberman, 2017; Evans & Pfister, 2020). The discussion will also summarise some of the features of the research that has focused on enablers. I end the review of literature by making a case for my unique approach to the problem, which is to look at macro/meso/micro (relational) factors that enable female leaders in non-professional cricket settings, whilst being mindful of an intersectional approach.

Macro-level

The macro-level refers to gendered practices at the institutional level (Burton & Leberman, 2017). The literature on female leadership underrepresentation at this level predominantly explores the lack of women holding governance positions within sports organisations, and the gendered recruitment practices which prevent them from reaching these levels. From an enabling perspective, strategies aiming at improving women's chances of being recruited through individual empowerment, or through attempts to overcome gendered structural practices are the two main themes (Elling, Knoppers, & Hovden, 2018).

Barriers to female leadership

Sports governance

The underrepresentation of women holding decision-making positions within sports organisations and governance structures has been a persistent issue, with men dominating leadership positions (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). For example, in Adriaanse's (2016) 'Sydney Scoreboard Global Index', in 2012 at the national sports organisation level only four countries of 45 had more than 30% female representation at board level. Six years later, Adriaanse (2018) found that women's representation on sports boards still remains low—even in the women's sport space—with the lofty heights of the chair position especially difficult to reach. Furthermore, gendered practices that lead to this male dominance is exacerbated through the normalisation of men as leaders (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012). These findings are reflective of a range of recent studies of sports organisation across various regions in both the northern hemisphere (Elling, Hovden, & Knoppers, 2018; Hancock, Cintron, & Darvin, 2018) and within Australasia (Adriaanse & Claringbould, 2016; Leberman & Shaw, 2015). Whilst these studies provide a macro view of the gender disparities, there is little focus on the levels of female representation within governance structures at the meso level, specifically, committee representation numbers within community (or grassroots) sports clubs. Furthermore, whilst some of these studies did not include the investigation of

causative factors (Evans & Pfister, 2020), multiple studies explore the gendered barriers preventing women from obtaining decision-making positions on boards (Adriaanse & Schofield, 2013; Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Ely & Padavic, 2007; Pfister & Radtke, 2009; Shaw & Frisby, 2006; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003), whilst ignoring enablers.

Gendered recruitment

Within sport, the gender of the applicant applying for a leadership role – as well as the gender of the recruiter—can have a direct impact on their success in gaining that role. This is a result of multiple gendered biases stemming from societal norms which designate women as carers whilst men are expected to 'take charge' (Galloway, 2012). As sport is considered a male preserve, it is no surprise that those allocations translate as specific sporting roles being considered 'masculine' and therefore unsuitable for women. The outcome is that women are recruited for typically feminine roles only. McKay's (1997) study of the management of national sport organisations in Australia, Canada and New Zealand found that male managers often attribute the under-representation of women in decision making roles to "'tradition', 'society', or 'natural' sex differences" (p.51).

Limiting role allocations for females is not the only effect gender stereotyping has on recruitment and promotion. It also exacerbates the lack of female allocation to leadership roles because existing managers tend to recruit those whom they identify with. Kanter (1977) coined this phenomenon 'homologous reproduction', a theory whereby those in power unconsciously reproduce themselves. Knoppers (1987) concluded that as someone gains more power they generally have more input into personnel appointments, so whilst we continue to have an overrepresentation of men as leaders, these recruitment biases will only perpetuate that imbalance. Conversely though, a number of studies have found that college female coach numbers are notably higher with a female athletic director or head coach in place (Darvin & Lubke, 2020; Sagas, Cunningham, & Teed, 2006; Stangl & Kane, 1991), thus it is imperative that we aim to reflect existing societal gender proportions in leadership numbers.

Enablers to female leadership

Structural enablers

Many sports organisations have introduced the setting of quotas or targets to address the shortage of women at the governance level. As a 'fast track' approach to gender equality, quotas within sports organisations are considered "one of the most adequate and efficient strategies to change gender power structures" (Hovden, 2015, p. 36), and can also generate additional positive outcomes such as the active identification of talented women (Adriaanse, 2017), and shifts in the gendering of role allocations (Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014).

Structural enablers do have limitations though as they are insufficient in shifting the balance of gendered power (Sibson, 2010). As Adriaanse & Schofield (2013) point out, organisations who adopt quotas tend to perceive them as the maximum rather than minimum value, and hence create another artificial 'ceiling'. Furthermore policies such as these may not only result in the reinforcement of gender stereotypes, but also potentially give rise to backlash as they are considered tokenistic and female appointees lack merit (Pfister, 2010a; Pike, White, Matthews, Southon, & Piggott, 2018). These approaches do not result in changes to gendered practices because they are akin to the liberal feminist approach of 'add women and stir'; hence they are ineffective unless supported with additional gender equality policies and actions (Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014).

Empowerment

An alternative enabling approach at the institutional level is to focus on the empowerment of women through programs aimed at strengthening their leadership competencies and access to mentoring and networks. Referred to as 'individual track discourses', this approach is aimed at 'fixing women' (Evans & Pfister, 2020) so they have sufficient skill levels and expanded networks in order to compete with men (Leberman, 2017). Whilst networking and mentoring are

considered valuable and essential leadership tools (Shaw & Frisby, 2006; Sisjord, 2012; Wells & Hancock, 2017) and leadership training beneficial, quite often networks built during these initiatives do not extend beyond the program, whilst training is based on improving 'masculine' leadership traits which reinforce gendered structures (Pike et al., 2018). These programs—as is the case with quotas and targets—are a liberal feminist 'equality of opportunity' approach where issues of institutionalised gendered attitudes and practices are not addressed.

Meso-level

The meso-level explores how patriarchal power structures maintain female leadership underrepresentation within sports organisations and clubs. Specifically, gender stereotyping of women where they are not considered 'leadership material', and the perpetuation of sporting cultures built around a tradition of male domination. Research on enablers to counter these patriarchal barriers is limited.

Barriers to female leadership

Gender stereotyping

Patriarchal societies position men as superior to women, with men strong and rational breadwinners, whilst women are weak, irrational carers. Consequently, women are considered unfit for leadership roles and instead allocated 'feminine' roles such as secretaries or personal assistants (Shaw & Hoeber, 2003), or positions with a focus on employees or children (Shaw & Frisby, 2006), whilst men dominate senior management and strategic roles (Adriaanse & Schofield, 2013; Burton, Barr, Fink, & Bruening, 2009; Velija, Ratna, & Flintoff, 2012). These gendered role beliefs spill over from sports organisations to volunteer community clubs where many women are tasked with secretarial and cleaning roles (Sibson, 2010), whilst being limited in their ability to be considered for coaching roles (Spaaij, Knoppers, & Jeanes, 2019).

Women's 'natural' lack of leadership skills results in a perception that they are less ambitious, less competitive, and less competent, but also too risk-averse (Hovden, 2010). At the same time though, women face a double-bind where they are criticised and marginalised if their behaviours are considered too masculine (Sartore & Cunningham, 2007). When analysing how gendered discourses influence employment roles within English sport governing bodies, Shaw and Hoeber (2003) found that a direct woman is vastly unpopular compared to a direct man; she's considered a bitch, whilst he's a strong man. Therefore, some women—either consciously or unconsciously—change their behaviour to ensure they are adopting those expected female traits and gendered discourses. Where exactly women's behaviour needs to lie though is somewhat confusing, but it appears those who are "tough" without being "macho" (McKay, 1997) can be accepted in leadership roles.

Gendered cultures

Gender stereotyping also leads to gendered cultures within sports organisations and sports clubs built around patriarchal norms and practices. These cultures directly influence policies and procedures which negatively impact the ability for women to reach leadership levels. Male dominated power structures can perpetuate gendered cultures through the preservation of policies and procedures not conducive to inclusivity or adaptability. Whilst Cunningham & Sagas (2008) demonstrated that diversity within organisations can improve cultures, very few actually do diversify (Cunningham & Fink, 2006). When combined with societal expectations where childcare and family chores rest heavily on women's shoulders, cultures with inflexible leadership demands more heavily impact women (Knoppers & Anthonissen, 2008; Pfister & Radtke, 2009; Piggott & Pike, 2019). Dress codes within sports organisations have also been found to be gendered (Piggott & Pike, 2019; Shaw & Frisby, 2006).

Enablers to female leadership

Challenging gendered practices

Unfortunately, there are few studies aimed at identifying enabling factors for the challenging of gendered stereotypes and gendered cultures. Some studies have shown that female leaders can effect change in gendered practices through resistance or allyship (Heffernan, 2018; Strittmatter & Skirstad, 2017), but as Evans & Pfister (2020) point out, there is limited research in this area. Diversification within sport organisations has proved to be beneficial in challenging gendered cultures (Cunningham & Sagas, 2008; Terjesen et al., 2009), and the adoption of family-friendly policies can assist women in leadership roles to meet their work and life demands (Allen & Shaw, 2009; Bruening & Dixon, 2007).

Micro-level

The micro-level focuses on the individual women's leadership experiences within sports organisations. Specifically, this level focuses on men and women's gendered perceptions and attitudes with regards to power, policies, and procedures within sports organisations (Burton & Leberman, 2017) and their resultant gendered behaviours. The method predominantly used for micro-level research in this area is discourse analysis.

Barriers to female leadership

Kane & LaVoi (2018) showed that women's perceptions of why there was an underrepresentation of female coaches in the US college system differed to their male counterparts, with men attributing individual factors such as family commitments, whilst women attributed it to institutional or structural barriers. Identification by women as to their position within sport as the 'other' may lead to a belief that they are not suitable or capable to take on leadership roles (Sartore & Cunningham, 2007). Support for female leaders in sporting organisations can

increase confidence levels (Mikkonen, 2019) so is imperative for overcoming self-doubt. Building networks is one potential avenue of support, but there is a perception that the weakness of women's networks is partially to blame for the lack of female leaders in sport, and hence this perception can deter women from seeking networks, with the result being increased social capital afforded to males who do take advantage of networks (Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Piggott & Pike, 2019; Sagas & Cunningham, 2004).

Claringbould and Knoppers (2008) explored how board members made sense of the gendered composition of their board, with both men and women displaying behaviours akin to 'doing' and 'undoing' gender. Whilst Spaaij, Knoppers & Jeanes (2019) illustrated how male leaders at the sports club level—through the use of discourse—resisted club diversification.

Enablers to female leadership

As with the meso-level, there is also a dearth of literature focusing on how to overcome barriers for female leadership representation at the micro-level. Sartore & Cunningham (2007) proposed a model aimed at identifying women's self-limiting behaviour; whether this model has been utilised though is unknown. In their recent reviews of the literature on female leadership underrepresentation in sport, neither Burton & Leberman (2017) or Evans & Pfister (2020) provided details of any studies aimed at enabling women as leaders by addressing barriers at the micro level.

Addressing the gaps

In my review of the literature on underrepresentation of female leaders in sport contexts I have identified the following four gaps in the literature which will be the focus of my exploration in this study.

Multilevel approach

The review of literature provided in this chapter presented female leadership underrepresentation across three levels: macro, meso, micro. It is evident from the range of topics and breadth of existing literature within each of these categories that there is a greater focus on the macro level, from both a barriers and enablers perspective. Additionally, although gender in sport can be viewed as multilevel (Cunningham & Sagas, 2008), very few studies on female leadership underrepresentation have taken this approach. As my research specifically focuses on women who have overcome barriers to leadership within community sports clubs, an analysis of the factors which enabled their appointments would be incomplete if only the leaders and/or the clubs pertaining to those appointments, were investigated. The influence of gender relations extends beyond the club environment and into both the leaders' personal lives and the sport itself. Therefore a relational approach will be adopted to understand how all three levels interact to enable female leadership appointments, which will in turn assist in providing a more realistic interpretation of why we continue to see the underrepresentation of women (Burton, 2015). As this research focuses on community sport, the macro or institutional level refers to the administrators of the sport—in this case Cricket Victoria (CV), the meso refers to gender relations within the participant cricket clubs, and the micro focuses on the female leaders' experiences.

Non-professional cricket

Hoeber & Shaw (Hoeber & Shaw, 2019) also recognised that literature on female leadership in sport has been fixated on the organisational (or macro) level, and therefore recommended that research be undertaken within local (or community) sports clubs in order to gain a big picture view of sport governance. This research will follow that approach by positioning its analysis within non-professional cricket clubs.

Enablers as well as barriers

Another factor this literature review has highlighted is the focus on barriers to female leadership in sport, whilst enablers are virtually ignored. Enablers in this sense also appear to be focused on critiquing practical initiatives rather than investigating natural progressions of women reaching leadership levels. Initiatives are a result of research, and as the previous discussions have shown current initiatives are not necessarily working, and in some instances exacerbate the issue. The removal of barriers is not occurring because those barriers are built on gender biases. Artificial increases to female leadership representation through tokenistic appointments or the use of quotas for example is not addressing those biases. As noted by Evans and Pfister (2020, p. 20): "we know *what prevents* progress—we know less about *what works*." This research will therefore focus on exploring how gendered relations work to enable women to gain leadership roles in sport.

Intersectional approach

The final gap identified is the lack of an intersectional approach within studies on gender and female leadership in sport. Literature in this area often focuses on comparisons between men and women only (Evans & Pfister, 2020; Pike et al., 2018), and lacks the inclusion of either sexuality (Elling, Knoppers, et al., 2018), or ethnicity (Knoppers & McLachlan, 2018; Melton & Bryant, 2017). Taking an intersectional approach allows the researcher to gain an understanding of how "one's identity (e.g., race, gender, sexuality, age, class, ability, and ethnicity) interacts on multiple, interdependent, and often simultaneous levels with racism, sexism, homophobia, and belief-based bigotry, which contributes to 'intersecting' forms of systemic injustice, oppression, and social inequality" (LaVoi, 2016, p. 6).

This research will aim to overcome these shortfalls firstly by analysing gender relations *between* women (in addition to relations between men and women), and

second by adopting an intersectional approach through the inclusion of participants who identify as homosexual or are of south-east Asian descent. This will allow me to analyse and hence identify any contrasting enablers for the female leaders which arise as a result of their intersecting identities.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the literature on female leadership underrepresentation in sport and presented four gaps which this research will aim to address. In the following chapter I will present the theoretical approach adopted.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

All researchers bring underlying assumptions of knowledge to their projects which have been formulated as a result of personal experiences. Through the articulation of these assumptions one can identify theoretical frameworks, principles and concepts which will position the research within scholarly guidelines, and provide the ideal path to meaningful and credible conclusions (Adom et al., 2016). The aim of this chapter is to present my theoretical approach by first explaining how my perspective has been shaped by those assumptions of reality and knowledge gained through experiences within the field of cricket. This will be followed with an explanation and synthesis of sociological concepts to be adopted from my chosen theorists: Pierre Bourdieu and Raewyn Connell. The discussion of selected concepts will include a demonstration of their pertinence to sport and gender, and how they have been tailored through the synthesis specifically with the aim of answering my research question.

Critical feminist paradigm

Bourdieu advocated for a more responsible reflexivity where we as researchers acknowledge biases that "may blur the sociological gaze" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 39). The first of those biases is the influence of a researcher's social origins including gender, class, sexual orientation, and ethnicity—but also their experiences within the specific social setting they have chosen to investigate. A second reflexive focus of Bourdieu's is aimed at recognising potential academic biases; what factors influence the choice of theoretical and methodological approaches. As should be evident from the preface, my own life experiences as a female leader in cricket have shaped my knowledge of the uneven gendered power relations within the sport. My initial assumption from those experiences was that all female leaders within cricket are surely encountering the same issues as I did. When I subsequently made the decision to stop coaching within the sport as I could not cope with the emotional impact of those inequalities any longer, I began to ask myself how do other female leaders survive? What is it that was enabling

them to not only gain their role within a heavily male dominated sport, but to also persist in the role? Perhaps they were not experiencing the same biases as me? Or maybe they had coping mechanisms which I was either incapable of—or unwilling to—deploy? It was these questions that not only defined my research question, but also guided me to choose to situate my research within a critical feminist paradigm.

Critical feminist theory examines the oppression of women and how it is constructed and replicated through both the literature, and through societal and cultural interactions (Tyson, 2014). It is an approach which is "explicitly about power and how gender relations are reproduced by, resisted in, and transformed" (Birrell, 2000, p. 8). It assumes inequitable power relationships are always evident within society with females regularly facing alienation (Kane & LaVoi, 2018). These unequal power relations are a direct result of the enforcement of traditional gender roles within a patriarchal society where women are considered the other. In a society driven by an ideology where men are the rational and powerful overseer, women consequently receive unequal treatment or are excluded from specific areas of society: such as leadership and decision-making positions.

Oppression through critical feminist theory is not limited to men versus women (based on sex), but rather examines the oppression of people based on their gender. Gender refers to the manifestation of masculinity or femininity as a result of social and cultural influences and interactions, rather than the biological sex assigned at birth; a view termed social constructionism (Tyson, 2014). This wider view allows us to consider the positioning of people along a gender continuum—with the ideal (or hegemonic) male for any given environment sitting atop of the gender order. Critical feminist theory is not limited therefore to the exploration of man versus woman, but rather the hegemonic male versus all other.

The goal of utilising critical feminist theory within sociological research is to prompt social change which leads to gender equality. Sport is one of the most prominent fields where inequitable gendered power struggles are evident—as was discussed in the introduction—and this thesis is specifically focusing on female leadership and the exploration of how gender relations are disrupting those (traditionally male

dominated) power distributions, therefore the adoption of a critical feminist theoretical perspective is appropriate.

Sociological theorists

My life experiences also guided and influenced my choice of sociological theorists with which to frame my research design. My professional career prior to undertaking this thesis included a stint as an aircraft engineer followed by two decades as an accountant, which meant I came into this research journey with little to no knowledge of philosophic and/or feminist theories. In the first semester of this Masters of Research program, I was tasked with undertaking an ad-hoc subject where I would explore suitable theorists for my anticipated research question. It was not long before I realised that philosophical and sociological theories are all about debates, which makes sense I guess considering academia is the process of proving your research and seeing how well it stands up to peer critique. I must admit though that I was quite surprised by the historical (and ongoing) debates on structure and agency. The fact there were two schools of thought—both of whom were adamant their side of the dichotomy was the right side—conflicted with my expectations of a fraternity built on expanding knowledge through subjective means. How could they be so 'scientific' when understanding human actions? The actions taken by my female participants will likely have been influenced by binary opposites prevalent in traditionally male dominated sport such as man/woman, masculine/feminine and strong/weak, but at the same time I see the merit in agency because without it, would not every one of those females act the same way? So, I tried to align each side of the argument against my own personal experiences to test them. My conclusion: if there were no structures in place that prevented me from experiencing (what I considered to be) equitable outcomes, then why would I walk away from coaching as I did? And if I had no agency, then I would not know to walk away (or could not walk away). The outcome of this conclusion was to therefore adopt a research approach which encapsulated my beliefs of social construction based on gender, but which was also guided by both structure and agency. Hence, I have elected to design my research using an amalgamation of sociological concepts put forward by two prominent sociological

scholars: Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice and Raewyn Connell's theory of gender.

Pierre Bourdieu: a theory of practice

Bourdieu's theory of practice is his sociological explanation of what determines human actions (Maggio, 2018). It was Bourdieu's study of the Kabyle people in northern Algeria that led him to develop this framework in 1972 as he opposed the objectivist view adopted by theoretical approaches within the social sciences at the time. Practices he had observed in Algeria were not necessarily restricted by societal rules, and therefore he believed rules and practice should remain separate (Maggio, 2018). 'Practice' (or human action) is relative to social context. It is the result of one's position—or level of power—within a social structure, and that power is determined by the interplay between three key concepts: the rules of the field, the individual's level of capital, and their habitus.

Field and capital

Bourdieu contends that "capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 101). This interconnection is demonstrated by Bourdieu when providing an analytic definition of a field:

> *…a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 97)*

Put simply, a field can be thought of as any 'space' where agents compete for what is considered most valuable or beneficial to those within that field. Those who obtain said benefits do so because of their position in the field, which is determined by the level of capital they possess. It is capital which not only determines an

agent's position within a field—and hence their level of power—but also subsequently regulates their ability to obtain further capital.

Bourdieu categorised capital as economic (wealth and money), cultural (knowledge and taste), or social (networks and relationships), with the accumulation of one type of capital being advantageous to the accumulation of another. The specific profits on offer within each field dictate the hierarchy each form of capital holds; accordingly all fields differ in what is considered the most valuable type of capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Furthermore, people can only enter a field once they have been legitimised as possessing "a definite configuration of properties" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 107); in other words, they must possess the 'right' capital for any given field. This right capital—or that which is perceived as legitimate and most valued within a given field—Bourdieu refers to as s*ymbolic capital* (Hunter, 2004)*.*

Whilst non-professional cricket is the overarching field for this research, as a multilevel analysis was undertaken the fields with which the sport's administrators, the participant clubs, and the individual female leaders situate themselves have all been explored. Through the assessment of a female leader's level of capital—including her access to capital accumulation—we can gain an understanding of its relational effect on her ability to position herself within each field in order to enable herself as a leader within the sport.

Habitus

> *…practice is the product of a habitus that is itself the product of the embodiment of the immanent regularities and tendencies of the world (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 138)*

Habitus is one's embodied dispositions evident in social interactions. It is the result of field and capital, and hence with any change in field there will be a corollary change in habitus. Normalised social practices within a given field unconsciously manifest within an agents' body and mind and in turn guide their actions. Habitus goes beyond simply being an explanation for one's actions because of structural

forces though as these unconscious acts in turn reproduce those structures. Hunter (2004, p. 177) provides a practical example as:

> *…the student reproducing oppressive practices of sexism, sometimes unconsciously taken up in the habitus as a result of normalizing practices of the society into which s/he was born and learned to re-enact.*

Habitus is a form of capital which when aligned to the field enables one to be repositioned upwards within the hierarchical gender order. So, whilst actions are a direct result of social conditioning within a gendered structure, abiding by the 'rules' of that structure both validate and perpetuate the structure.

A translation of the above example provided by Hunter but within a gendered sporting context, could be the female athlete who has internalised misogyny as a result of her positioning within a male dominated sporting environment where she constantly faces sexist and misogynistic attacks. With specific regard to female leaders, it may be the complicity of oppressive treatment from her male superiors. Habitus is central to the exploration of female leadership enablement in sport because it allows us to analyse how our female leaders' unconscious dispositions beneficially position them to be considered for their leadership roles and enable them to lead.

Illusio and doxa

A common criticism of Bourdieu's practice is the refutation of his claim that habitus overcomes the dualism of structure and agency, but instead provides a passage between determinism and voluntarism (Chambers, 2005). Hargreaves (2002) for example contends that Bourdieu fails to acknowledge the capability people have to bring about change to gender relations within fields such as sport. Bourdieu believes this criticism of habitus is the result of its misinterpretation.

> *Habitus is not the fate that some people read into it. Being the product of history, it is an* open system of dispositions *that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures. It is durable but not eternal! (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133)*

In other words, throughout a person's life the myriad of experiences they encounter not only construct their habitus (and hence maintain structures as discussed above), but they also offer an opportunity for one to alter those structures. The habitus can be consciously controlled as a result of one's "reflexive awakening to the workings of human societies" (Maggio, 2018, p. 55).

Two additional components of Bourdieu's 'practice' help demonstrate this claim: the related concepts of *illusio* and *doxa*. Using Bourdieu's analogy of a game, players have an investment in the game (*illusio)* because they acquiesce to their belief in the game (*doxa*) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). It is a result of illusio and doxa that the player maintains the game and their position within it (Hunter, 2004). A logical conclusion therefore is that if it is doxa that results in one maintaining the status quo—and hence forming and preserving one's habitus—then the disruption of this 'belief in the game' (through agency) can lead to social change.

> *When doxa is questioned, a fracture in social order occurs that can potentially translate into social change. It follows that practice is not fixed, but changes through time under certain conditions. (Maggio, 2018, p. 41)*

When field and habitus no longer seamlessly fit together and there is "a disparity between the feel for the game and the game itself" (Adkins, 2003, p. 26), through critical reflexivity a disruption of the negotiation between subjective and objective structures can occur, and the habitus reshaped.

In male dominated sporting environments such as cricket, the 'rules of the game' extend way beyond the Laws of Cricket. There is an additional set of unprinted yet well published gendered rules which participants in the field must abide by such as an expectation that women who play the sport should maintain their femininity, or the assumption that men are the natural choice for leadership positions. Whilst following these gendered rules can beneficially position women within the field, if they consciously begin to question them (through reflexivity) and reassess their desire to continue to follow them, they have taken the first step towards potentially modifying those rules and creating a more gender equitable environment.

Bourdieu and gender

Bourdieu's theory of practice does not specifically include gender as a mechanism for habitus formation and thus it's appropriateness for feminist research has been much debated. Chodos and Curtis (2002) argue that Bourdieu's attempt to rectify this issue within *Masculine Domination* (Bourdieu, 2001), puts forward a universal view of persistent male domination whilst ignoring progress made by feminists in their fight for gender equality. Thorpe (2009) criticises Bourdieu for his ahistorical and androcentric views. Bourdieu and his proponents argue against this criticism though, citing that detractors misunderstand his position put forward in *Masculine Domination* (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

It is not my intention in this thesis to debate the merits of utilising Bourdieu's relational approach in feminist scholarship, rather it is to acknowledge the opposing schools of thought and put forward a remedy to address them. Hence my decision to synthesise Bourdieu's theory of practice with Connell's gender regime.

Raewyn Connell: a theory of gender

When defining gender, Connell rejects the dichotomous view where social and psychological differences between men and women are assigned to correspond which their biological categories. She argues this binary perspective not only ignores gendered differences between and among men and women—such as sexuality and varying degrees of masculinity and femininity—but it also ignores the social structures which influence an individual's gender. To overcome these shortfalls Connell proposes that a shift from "a focus on difference to a focus on relations" (Connell, 2009, p. 10) is needed because gender is not simply a result of one's biological difference. Gender is instead the outcome of a social structure which centres on reproductive difference, with the resulting social relations shaping our bodily practices and social processes. Whilst this move to a discussion on outcomes based on social relations allows gender to be far more broadly considered, one could be confused by the parallels between 'biological difference'

and 'reproductive difference' and hence criticise Connell as simply replicating the dichotomous view she repudiates. But the distinction between the two approaches lies in the relationship between the social and the body; the biological difference viewpoint does not take social structures and processes—what Connell refers to as the gender domain—into account, whereas the reproductive arena does.

When it comes to analysing gender relations, Connell recognises that gender logic changes relevant to differing social functions (Connell & Pearse, 2014); for example, the contrasting treatments women experience as a mother versus as a leader in the workplace. She therefore proposes the use of a four-dimension gender regime model to analyse specific gendered fields such as workplaces—or in the case of this thesis—cricket clubs. These patterns of gender relations considered within the gender regime reflect wider patterns—or the gender order— within society. A summary of each of the four dimensions (power, production, cathexis, and symbolism) and how they are relevant within the context of this research, follows.

Power revolves around inherent biases within gender relations as a direct result of the patriarchy, with men considered the dominant sex (Connell & Pearse, 2014, p. 72). This results in the domination and oppression of women, non-binary and those who fall outside the category of heterosexual. Connell argues that patriarchy in sport is not only built on its link with masculinity, but also the parallel link between masculinity and power (Connell, 1987); hence why they dominate leadership roles. An analysis of power within this thesis is therefore aiming to recognise how this traditional structure has been altered, allowing women to penetrate those long held barriers. Has there been a shift in power relations, a lessening of the dominance of men, and hence a softening of the patriarchy?

Production as a dimension of gender relations refers to the sexual division of labour (Connell & Pearse, 2014). As discussed in chapter two, women are considered the carers within society whilst men are the breadwinners. Within a cricket club we see evidence of this when women are allocated to running the canteen for example. And with regards to leadership roles, sometimes the appointment of a woman to the committee may unfortunately not be a sign of 'the

end of patriarchy', but rather a form of gendered role allocation; "you want a woman leader in our club? Sure, she can be the secretary".

Cathexis is the English term assigned to Freud's 'emotional attachment' (Connell & Pearse, 2014, p. 76). It encompasses the emotional aspects of gender relations such as sexuality, romantic attachment, the bond between parent and child, and emotional relations in the workplace. These emotions can be positive or negative, or both hostile and loving at the same time (Connell & Pearse, 2014, p. 76). Examples of negative emotional commitments within the field of cricket could include misogyny and homophobia, whilst the most relevant positive instance would be the building of close relationships through bonding between team and club members.

The final dimension of Connell's gender regime is symbolism, which can be thought of as how a society or field displays its gendered culture. This culture is revealed through language (discourse), or through more physical forms such as dress expectations and the built environment. Examples of symbolic discourse within cricket—as in many other traditionally male sports—includes the 'throws like a girl' disparagement, and the persistence in referring to the men's and boy's teams as the default (by only prefixing the women's and girl's teams). Physical examples include the use of pink balls for women's matches, men's monopoly on Saturday play, allocation of inferior grounds to women's teams, uniforms only being manufactured with a men's cut, and club bars which only stock beer; all symbols of the inherent assumption that cricket is a game for men only.

A Bourdieu and Connell synthesis

As previously noted, one aim of the amalgamation of Bourdieu's theory of practice and Connell's theory of gender is to curtail anticipated criticism of my use of Bourdieu for his lack of focus on gender. But more importantly—and as I will demonstrate—it enables me to create a stronger theoretical framework suited to the aims of this project. Specifically, it allows me to analyse how the gender regime influences gendered relations within cricket, situates women within the field, and

subsequently shapes their disposition (or gendered habitus) in order to enable them to become leaders, and to maintain that position.

Connell's gender regime has been utilised within sports sociology predominantly as a means to analyse the four individual categories of the gender regime against organisational norms within sporting organisations; see (Adriaanse & Schofield, 2013, 2014; Boyle & McKay, 1995). It is not my intention though to follow the same method with CA, CV, or the individual participant clubs. Instead, as Mennesson (2012) did in her study of gendered dispositions in women's soccer and boxing, my aim is to analyse how the gender regime regulates specific interactions, relations, and behaviours across all levels of the sport, and in turn influences the formation and maintenance of gendered habitus; but without providing a specific breakdown for each of the individual regime categories.

Structure and agency

I have already established how an aim of Bourdieu's theory of practice is to overcome the structure versus agency dichotomy. It is beneficial in this instance to quote Connell in order to demonstrate how her theory of gender aligns with and complements Bourdieu. Connell does not prioritise structure or agency, but instead maintains "the idea of an active presence of structure in practice and an active constitution of structure by practice" (Connell as cited in Mennesson, 2012). Connell also points out how change is intrinsically interwoven and dependent on this relationship between the individual and social structure and its impact on change:

> *A structure of relations does not mechanically decide how people or groups act. …But a structure of relations certainly defines possibilities and consequences for action. …In this sense, social structure conditions practice. Yet social structure does not exist in an abstract world that is somehow prior to everyday life. …gender relations came into being, and keep coming into being as we continue to engage in 'gendered modes of behaviour', as Caril Hagemenn-White (1987) puts it. Therefore, structure and change are not opposed; they are indeed part of the same dynamic of our social life. (Connell, 2009, p. 74)*

As both Connell and Bourdieu specifically aim to demonstrate how structure and agency interact and guide an individual's behaviour, and how that interaction can in turn affect social change, the merging of their concepts only strengthens their intention. With reference to answering my research question, adopting a theoretical stance based on both structure and agency will allow me to not only identify how gendered structures within cricket guide the female leaders and shape their habitus, but also how their habitus in turn reifies those structures.

Practice and gender

It is easy to see how Bourdieu's theory of practice and Connell's theory of gender can be merged to create the concept of a 'gendered habitus'. Through practice one's habitus is a result of following the rules of the field in order to maintain or improve their position (capital), whilst one's gender practice is a result of the gender order they find themselves in (Connell, 2009). The overarching field in this research is the sport of cricket: a male dominated domain where agents are defined within the dichotomies of male/female or masculine/feminine. This project is therefore an exploration of how females within this social space negotiate the normalised social rules allotted to those categories in order to perform their duties and maintain their position as a leader. It is an examination of how gender and habitus align; how the gender order within the field of cricket shapes one's habitus, and in turn can potentially reshape the field.

Gendered habitus formed within a male dominant environment can lead women to take the point of view of the dominant on the dominant and on themselves (Mottier, 2002). This is a result of Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic violence': a form of indirect cultural restraint imposed through a system of symbolism and meanings "in such a way that they are experienced as legitimate" (Jenkins as cited in Cushion & Jones, 2006, p. 144). Those affected are complicit and tend to misrecognise their domination (Bourdieu, 2001; Cushion & Jones, 2006). This aspect of gendered habitus aligns well with Connell's 'symbolism' and is relevant to this thesis as we can gain an understanding of what methods the sport may be utilising in order to overcome these incidental actions which traditionally restrain women

from being leaders. Alternatively, we may in fact identify tokenistic appointments if these restraints are in fact still evident.

Another aspect to consider with regards to gendered habitus is Bourdieu's concept of 'collective expectations': the expectation that traits or actions are seen as "normal or extraordinary, *for a given category* i.e. in particular for *a* man or for *a* woman" (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 57). In sport, this manifests as a form of gendered essentialism where men are expected to be strong, masculine, and highly skilled, whilst women are considered weaker and less skilled. A female's gendered habitus could potentially have both a positive and negative impact on their perceived suitability for a leadership role within cricket; a highly skilled female could benefit from increased physical capital, but conversely that capital may decrease it if they are too manly or pose a threat to masculinity.

Change

Another benefit of combining Bourdieu and Connell is to encapsulate gender when addressing societal change. The relational concept of structure and agency sees changes in human actions over time which alter social structures, and in turn result in even more progressive displays of agency. Bourdieu argues this change occurs through habitus disruption at the individual level when illusio and doxa no longer hold the weight they previously did. Connell asserts that social structures are historic as they reflect human behaviour over time. As a result, societal struggles with gender bring about changes to symbolic expressions, and hence changes to the gender order (Connell & Pearse, 2014). Combining an individual and societal view of change through a gendered lens allows me to situate female leadership enablers within our current place in history; in other words, are they potentially a result of improvements to gendered relations in recent times? Is the current increased focus on women's sport prompting female participants to reflexively re-evaluate their internalised dispositions and in turn enable themselves to be a leader within the field? Alternatively, if we recognise an opportunity to harness this moment in time to create change, how do we proceed?

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated how my personal experiences guided the formation of my theoretical approach and selection of sociological theorists. The relevance of concepts included within Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice to the positioning of sport participants for leadership roles makes it a suitable choice. But as it does not have a focus on gender and this research project is specifically focusing on gendered relations, Raewyn Connell's theory of gender and gender regime have been included to strengthen the theoretical framework, and a subsequent synthesis of the two theorists' concepts has been presented. In the following chapter, the theoretical synthesis as presented will be operationalised in my methodology.

Chapter 4: Methodology

A sound data collection strategy is paramount for the generation of credible research, and without appropriately linked theoretical perspectives and data collection strategies and techniques the research question cannot be sufficiently answered. My theoretical framework as laid out in the previous chapter was guided by my assumptions about reality and knowledge; these same assumptions should also justify my chosen methodologies and methods (Crotty, 1998). Thus, in this chapter I will initially explain my intended data collection strategy and the rationale for those choices, followed by a detailed explanation of how I implemented that strategy.

As my ability to interpret gendered relations was of vital importance, I believed a positivist approach where objective and value-free quantitative methods were utilised would be insufficient. Feminists have rejected such methods because of their androcentricism and the researcher's lack of interaction with participants—or detachment—because of a view that the researcher is the 'knower' (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004). The subjectivity of the researcher—being the influence the researcher's personal and political values have on qualitative research design (Ratner, 2002)—allows participants' views to be heard. This is imperative as feminist research is concerned with giving the researched 'a voice'. As a result, I chose to adopt a qualitative methodological approach.

When combining my history with cricket and the inequalities I encountered as a female leader with my belief that knowledge is constructed by life's experiences, I knew that an ethnographic methodology was not the right choice for me. I am aware that my experiences have unfortunately skewed my expectations of a welcoming and authentic acceptance of women as leaders within the sport. An ethnographic study requires the researcher to truly immerse themselves in the environment they are studying so as to have the same experiences (or at least freely observe them) as their subjects. I was aware that if I was to go down the ethnographic path, I would likely not feel fully comfortable within the environment I was studying as I was beyond being immersed in cricket clubs. As the encouragement or assessment of participant reflexivity was not a goal of my

research, it was important that I did not allow my own subjectivity to influence, or co-construct participant truths. My fear therefore was if I did immerse myself within the participant clubs and experienced the same gender issues I had previously, it may prompt me to vocalise the unfairness of it all and potentially influence or jeopardise the authenticity of my participant's actions. Accordingly, I made the decision early in my research journey to utilise interviews and unobtrusive observations as data collection methods.

Analytical level

The use of Bourdieu and Connell within my theoretical framework allows me to overcome the structure versus agency dichotomy—or the micro versus the macro—and instead understand that human action is a consequence of the interactions between social constraint and personal freedom. Research into gender inequality in sport leadership is predominately focused on forces at one structural or relational level only. But as Cunningham and Sagas (2008) explain, due to the multifaceted relationships within sports organisations and sports clubs an understanding of the impact that gendered relations have on enabling female leaders cannot be ascertained without a multilevel analysis. A macro-level approach identifies the field of sport itself as a gendered institution (Burton, 2015) where for example a culture of hegemonic masculinity could influence notions that masculine leadership qualities are preferable (Shaw & Frisby, 2006). At the meso-level it is gendered practices within sport organisations or clubs which can have an impact on employee or member's behaviour. And finally, at the micro-level it is the individuals' gendered experiences that can potentially lead to self-limiting behaviours (Sartore & Cunningham, 2007) or alternatively provide them with the confidence to stand up as a leader. Interactions across all levels of cricket affect the gendered nature of relations, and hence either hinder or enable female club members to reach leadership levels. I have therefore chosen to not restrict the analysis of my data to simply understand the individual, the club, or the sport itself, but instead to understand how they work together.

Target participants

To reflect gaps in sport sociology literature specifically focusing on female leadership underrepresentation—as identified in chapter two—this study is situated at the local or community level, rather than within the elite echelons of cricket. To signal this choice within my research, I elected to utilise the term 'non-professional'. To clarify, this term is not referring to the individual cricketers involved but rather the competition level that the participant clubs compete at, and a definition of both 'professional' and 'non-professional' cricket has been provided within the glossary. With that in mind, Figure 1 displays the senior cricket competition levels played in the Melbourne Metropolitan area based on playing ability, and their separation as professional and non-professional.
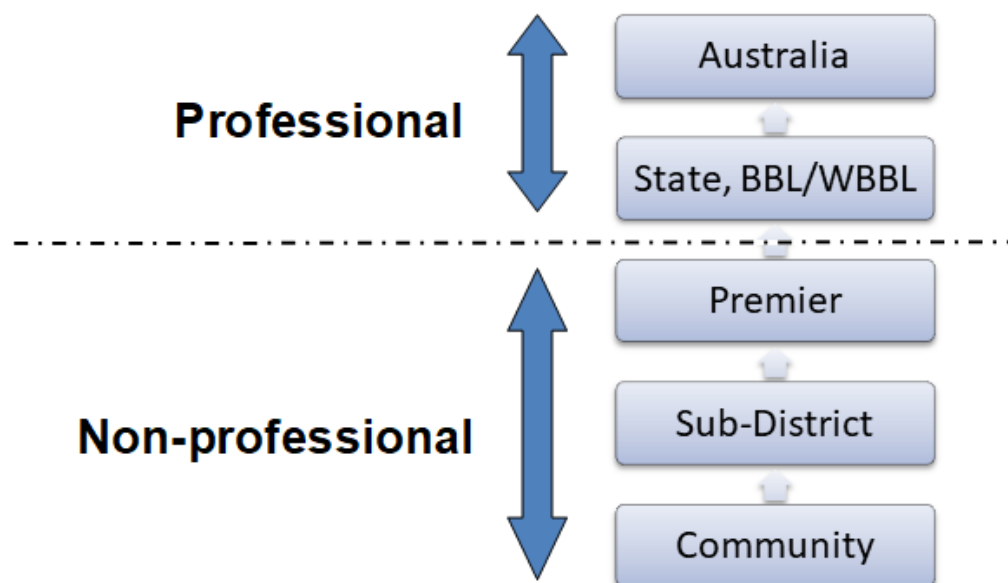
Figure 1: Victorian senior cricket competition levels

A second literature gap identified in chapter two was the lack of an intersectional approach within existing female sport leadership research. I therefore chose to actively pursue the identification of a multicultural club to include as a participant within my project.

Participant selection and recruitment

As my research focused specifically on the gendered relationship factors that enable women to gain leadership roles within the club environment, I chose to link participant selection with the club rather than the individual. Finding clubs with a greater than average number of female leaders was priority for a number of reasons: 1) it would potentially indicate an environment not driven by tokenistic appointments, 2) it would allow me to maximise the number of interviews whilst minimising the number of clubs—which was important due to my limited research time frame, and 3) it would allow me to observe relations *between* the female leaders because as Connell (2009) points out, analysing gender relations includes focusing on relationships both between and among men and women.

Purposive sampling—a non-random technique where participants are deliberately selected due to qualities they possess or parameters they meet (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016)—was used for my initial club search. My personal experiences with cricket as a player, coach, and administrator had enabled me to gain an understanding of how to systematically search for suitable clubs. CA and their state members utilise *MyCricket*, a database which records details of all cricket associations, clubs, and players within Australian cricket competitions. This software is made available to associations and clubs who maintain member details and record match day results and player statistics. The 'front-end' of *MyCricket* is readily accessible by the general public. Whilst entering match and player statistics is a requirement for clubs when they enter a competition, they are also encouraged to provide details of key club members. I therefore began my search using *MyCricket,* but with an awareness that it could potentially be limited as provision of key member details by clubs is not a compulsory requirement.

Taking the above considerations into account and to align with my research question, the initial club search was based on the following selection parameters:

1. A mixed gender club with a women's team

2. Clubs with teams in non-professional competitions only

3. At least one club playing in the Premier competition

4. Clubs from a mix of competitions and socioeconomic regions, (to gain a more diverse group of participants)

5. A culturally diverse club for the inclusion of an intersectional analysis

6. A mix of senior-only clubs and clubs with juniors (if possible).

My aim was to find a minimum of two and maximum of four clubs within the Melbourne Metropolitan region. As I was specifically looking for clubs with female teams, my search was restricted to clubs who enter teams in one of the six women's cricket competitions included in Figure 2.

Premier Cricket	Community Cricket
Women's Premier Competition	CV Women's Community Cricket (WCCC)
	Cricket Southern Bayside
	North Metro Cricket Association
	North West Metro Cricket Association
	VTCA Deer Park Club
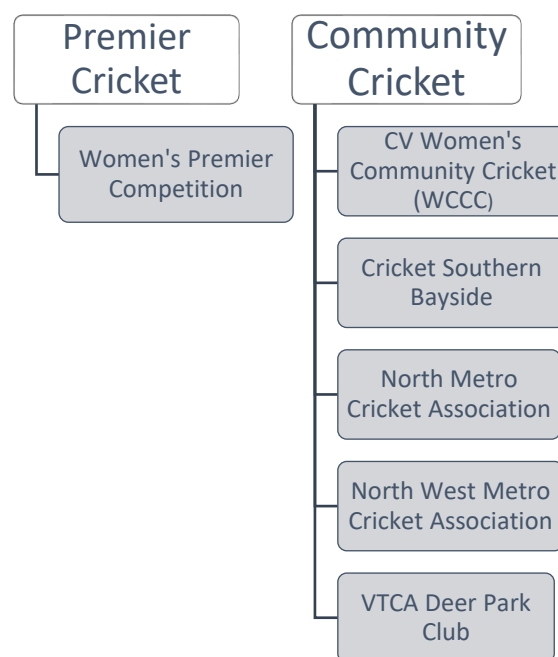
Figure 2: Melbourne Metropolitan women's cricket competitions (2019-20 season)

A total of 79 clubs had provided sufficient information in *MyCricket* to ascertain female leadership numbers. After entering club details into a spreadsheet and analysing female leader numbers, numbers as a percentage of total club leaders, and the roles that females held in each club, I reduced my potential participant list to 16 clubs.

After contacting the top five preferred clubs I recruited my first within a short period of time—a multicultural club with two female leaders of Sri Lankan heritage. I was excited that I had been able to achieve my aim of recruiting a multicultural club,

but I realised this brought with it one further consideration that I needed to acknowledge before undertaking my data collection: the privilege I hold as a white Australian-born researcher exploring the field of cricket. Whilst as a homosexual woman I have experienced the position of the 'other' within the sport's gender order, cricket in Australia has traditionally been synonymous with participants of English or European decent. It was imperative therefore that I recognise the benefit I gain from this ethnic alignment when compared to the increasing numbers of (predominantly) South-East Asian's now participating across the country. The impact of this was twofold: first, this benefit may translate to me holding an unspoken position of power when interviewing the female leaders which could inadvertently influence their responses—particularly along racial lines. And second, cultural influences construct gendered outcomes within cricket regardless of one's heritage, but whilst I may understand how the 'Aussie' psyche contributes, I have no knowledge of how Sri Lankan culture shapes my participants behaviour and experiences. Ergo I must ensure whilst interviewing these leaders I recognise and appreciate our cultural differences and focus my questions (and active listening skills) on gaining an understanding of their differing influences.

Continuing with my search for additional clubs, unfortunately the remaining four initially identified were non-responsive or reluctant. At the same time though, some unexpected personal encounters resulted in me re-assessing participant parameters. I had initially omitted women-only clubs from my search because I wanted to understand the enablers within a mixed-gender environment—specifically how are these women gaining and retaining their roles within male dominated clubs. But after being asked to assist a women-only club in an administrative capacity for the upcoming season, I realised this could be an ideal opportunity to combine my time spent at the club with researching not only the stories behind the female leaders, but also how they interact outside of the women-only environment and within the patriarchal field of cricket. Do their behaviours change between the two, and hence do the enabling factors differ from one field to the other? I therefore asked the committee if they would be willing to take part in the research to which they agreed; I had now recruited two participant clubs.

In addition to taking on this role with the women-only club, the multicultural club I had recruited asked me to play in one of their teams for the season. I had to therefore consider the potential impact this could have on my data collection. I had already chosen to undertake interviews rather than ethnography specifically to remain somewhat objective and not influence participant actions, so my increased participation with both clubs forced me to again reflect on my approach. I made a conscious plan to enter my 'cricket' roles with the intention of not becoming too immersed in the club's day-to-day activities or relationships, but instead prioritise my 'researcher' role. I hence made a concerted effort throughout the season to find a balance between keeping relationships on a professional level, but at the same time building enough of a rapport with my female leaders so they felt comfortable enough to open up when being interviewed. Thankfully this approach worked well, and I was able to collect very detailed and informative data.

The next personal encounter which influenced my participant club selection—and lead to the recruitment of my third club—was when my research came up in conversation at a representative training session I was attending. Another woman taking part in the session suggested her club could be an ideal participant as it was a men's club where she was the only female player, a committee member, and captain of one of the (men's) teams. The club also had two other women on the committee. I had initially briefly contemplated including a men's-only club but decided against it for two reasons, first because there are so many men's clubs it would be impossible to search MyCricket in the same manner as I did for clubs with women's teams, and second, I thought the chances of finding a men's club with a high number of female leaders would basically be impossible. Thus, I felt like I had hit pay dirt when the club President agreed to take part in the study.

At this stage I had recruited three clubs, one women-only club, one men-only club, and one mixed gender club. My intention at that stage was to not recruit anymore clubs because I had enough female leaders within those three clubs. Once I began data collection though, it was through an interview with a CV employee that I discovered one of the men's clubs within the Premier competition had appointed a female as their President at the start of the season. As there had only been one previous female President in a men-only Victorian Premier Cricket club within its

115-year history, this was an opportunity not to pass up. I contacted the President immediately and was happy when she agreed to take part in the research, with the club becoming my fourth (and final) recruit.

Table 1 provides an overview of each of the participant clubs.

Pseudonym	Competition level	Teams (gender)	Details
PWO	Premier	Women only	Located in the west of Melbourne. A club with a long and proud history including players who have reached elite level. A successful club with many premiership trophies in the cabinet. During the 2019-20 season 8 females held roles on the committee and 2 females held coaching roles.
PMO	Premier	Men only	Located in the east of Melbourne. PMO are also a successful club with elite players throughout their long history. During the 2019-20 season 3 females held roles on the committee (including President).
CMO	Community	Men only	Located in the north-east of Melbourne. CMO has been established for over 150 years and won more than 20 premierships. During the 2019-20 season 3 females held roles on the committee.
CMG	Community	Men and women	Located in the south-east of Melbourne. A family focused multicultural club, CMG has also had some Premiership success for both their men's and women's teams since their establishment in the 1980's. During the 2019-20 season 4 females held roles on the committee.

Table 1: Participant clubs

In addition to my club participants, I also contacted CA and CV and recruited employees in relevant roles to interview.

Data collection

Covid-19 impact

Australia recorded its first confirmed case of Covid-19 in January 2020. Melbourne was the hardest hit Australian capital city and entered its first state government enforced lockdown in March 2020. At this point in time, I had already finalised data collection from all participants except my final recruited club PMO (who were not recruited until April 2020). This lockdown impacted my ability to collect data from PMO as residents could not leave their home other than for four essential reasons. Therefore, my interview with PMO President Gemma was carried out over the telephone in April 2020, and I was unfortunately not able to attend the club to carry out anticipated observations. My research project was not directly impacted by Covid-19 in any other way.

Semi-structured interviews

Interviewing has been used in many research projects focused on gender relations in sport (Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014; Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; de Haan & Norman, 2019; McSharry, 2017). Semi-structured interviews are particularly useful as a research tool because of their ability to probe participant responses more fully. Through the inclusion of open-ended questions, the researcher can add additional follow-up queries to expand on or clarify answers, or to explore connecting themes. During the data collection period I carried out a total of 18 semi-structured interviews (as presented in Table 2).

Club/Org	Interviewee	Gender	Role
PWO	Jackie	Female	President
	Georgia	Female	Vice President
	Courtney	Female	Committee & Coach
	Ruby	Female	Coach
PMO	Gemma	Female	President
CMO	Peter	Male	President
	Cleo	Female	Secretary
	Jo	Female	Committee
CMG	Zac	Male	President
	Imasha	Female	Committee
	Oshadi	Female	Committee
Cricket Victoria	Brett	Male	Premier cricket
	Aiden	Male	Community cricket
	Tim	Male	Regional Manager
	Kelsey	Female	Girl's Leadership Program
Cricket Australia	Christine	Female	Female participation
	Maddie	Female	Female participation
	Jenny	Female	Female coach program

Table 2: Interviewee details

To gain an understanding of club attitudes and processes I chose to interview the President of each club, plus as many additional female leaders as possible. This allowed me to include two male leaders within my data which was imperative as I was not only gaining perspectives on female enablers from both men and women,

but it could also potentially indicate differing enablers between men and women. Each interview followed a schedule based on the participant's role, with all female club leaders following the same schedule (Appendix 1). The overarching aim of the questions was to explore themes relevant to my theoretical framework, hence they were structured to gain an understanding of each individual's history with cricket, how they came to be appointed to their leadership roles, their own personal influences on female leadership appointments within the sport, and their gendered attitudes. The interview schedules for the remaining participants (CA and CV employees) were individually tailored to their specific roles within the organisation.

Observations

In addition to interviews, I carried out unobtrusive observations of committee meetings within three of the four clubs. As mentioned above, observation of PMO committee meetings were unfortunately not possible due to the impact of Covid-19. Jones (2014) believes that through observation as an unobtrusive outsider, the researcher will see the participant's 'true' behaviour as they are being observed within their natural setting, and hence participant bias will be reduced. As I was attending regular meetings at PWO as part of my administrative role with the club I was already observing the committee members' natural behaviour. When observing the meetings at CMO and CMG, I positioned myself as far away from the group as possible and verbally indicated that I was not there to contribute to the meeting in any way but instead to just listen. I utilised a two-tiered observation style which included 1) non-systematic sampling where I recorded anything that was of interest with regards to the content, discourse and/or behaviour of committee members, and 2) behaviour sampling where I kept a record of how often and for how long each committee member spoke. The purpose of this second method was specifically aimed at ascertaining the inclusion (or exclusion) of power by individuals within the group.

I also attended a one-day Cricket Victoria 'Girls Leadership Program' workshop where I observed gendered interactions between program facilitators and the teenage girls in attendance.

Data analysis

Five interview recordings were sent to a third-party professional transcription service, whilst I transcribed the remaining 13 interviews using the online transcription software *Otter.ai*. Completed transcripts were then uploaded to Nvivo for thematic analysis. Using a non-linear coding process as set out by Williams and Moser (2019) I began with open coding where I identified themes and concepts based on my interview schedules and theoretical framework. This resulted in the creation of a table consisting of 17 parent nodes with multiple sub-nodes for each parent. I then set these nodes up in Nvivo and began coding interview transcripts. As I coded, I kept notes of themes and relationships I was seeing between interviews and merged and deleted nodes accordingly. The final step in my coding—the selective coding phase—aimed at reducing my nodes into a smaller number of major themes.

When analysing the interview transcripts, it became immediately apparent—as anticipated—that no single factor enables women to be leaders in non-professional cricket clubs, but rather it is a result of multiple interconnecting gendered elements and interactions which position the women within the field of cricket. Each had a story of how they became a female leader at their respective clubs, and then once they did take up their leadership role, they faced constant negotiations of how to maintain and retain their position. The data illustrates that gendered relations—shaped by historic structures and attitudes—subconsciously influence and guide the women on how to tailor their behaviour in order to advantageously position themselves within what has traditionally been a male domain. As the interview schedules were created with the theoretical framework in mind, common themes identified throughout the analysis aligned with both 'practice' and gendered concepts. Specifically, four core themes—support, capital, gender, and time—were identified as the foundation for answering my research question. Whilst the first three categories were evident throughout responses to all interview questions, the final category of 'time' was not necessarily a recurring theme, but instead a specific targeted question which elicited a commonality in responses. Whilst these four themes were evident across all analytical levels, they are not consistent from

one female to another or from one club to another. It is instead the field the individual finds themselves in which shapes the enabler; hence I have prefixed each with the 'right' as a qualifier (Figure 3).
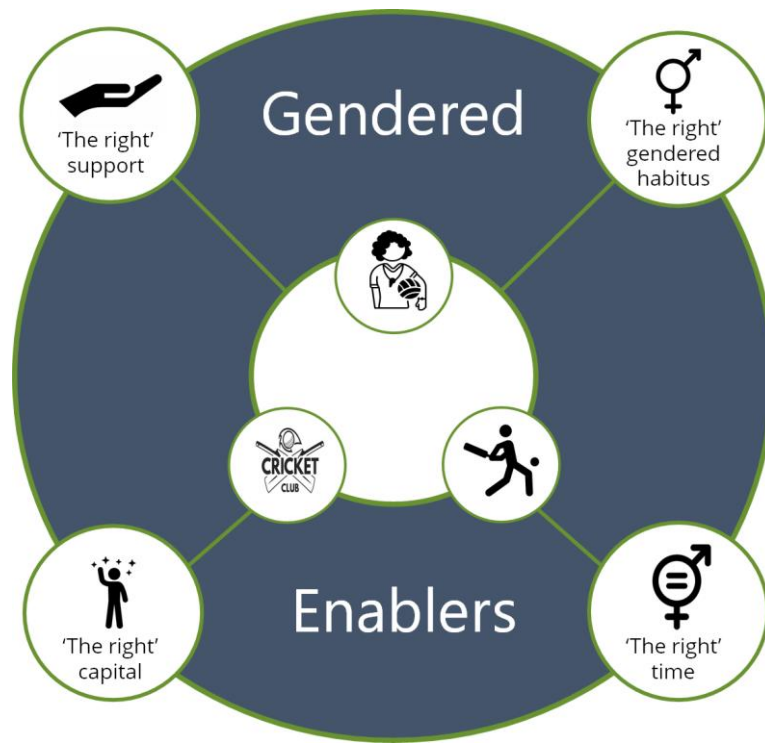
Figure 3: Gendered relation enablers

Conclusion

This chapter presented my selected methodology and methods, and the justification for their choice. I chose to follow a qualitative approach utilising semi-structured interviews and observations, both of which aimed to explore theoretical themes as set out in chapter three. Thematic analysis of the findings generated four key themes which have been selected as the foundational enablers for answering my research question. Demonstration of how the relevant findings for each of these enablers assist female leaders within non-professional cricket will now be presented over the following four chapters. Chapter five will present the 'right' support, which will align with key threads pertinent to the support of female leaders in sport within the existing literature as presented in chapter two—as well as the identification of potential gaps. The following three chapters will go beyond

looking at 'support' to try and understand the remaining enablers with specific reference to my Bourdieu and Connell theoretical synthesis. They will be presented as: the 'right' capital (chapter six), the 'right' gendered habitus (chapter seven), and the 'right' time (chapter eight).

Chapter 5: The 'right' support

As discussed in chapter two, there are a range of support mechanisms which can assist females in gaining leadership roles in sport. This chapter will present and discuss findings of support received by the female leaders which helped them overcome barriers: whether it be support from their partner or family, their club, or from those who administer cricket. Data collected in this study categorically verifies that support is an enabler, but it also reveals that it is inconsistent. The assistance or encouragement one leader experiences is not necessarily a reflection of another's because support can differ from one field to another. Whilst this indicates that not all women require the same type or levels of support, it also highlights that potentially more women may aspire to become a leader in sport if support was consistent.

Interpersonal support

As the aim of this research is to understand the gendered factors that enabled the female leaders interviewed to accept or volunteer for their leadership roles, it is important to gain an understanding of any potential barriers contemplated when considering whether to take on the position, and how they overcame those obstacles. The two most common reservations put forward were the time commitment required, and a lack of self-confidence. Norman (2014) found that a lack of self-confidence resulted in aspiring female coaches failing to put themselves forward for roles or development opportunities. Low confidence levels are also one explanation for the lack of female leaders in voluntary sport organisations (Pfister & Radtke, 2009), a finding this study confirms.

Cleo had been Team Manager of her son's team at CMO for the past six seasons when she was approached by the President to take on the newly vacated role of Secretary. Cleo's husband was supportive in her choice and encouraged her to ignore her fears.

> **Interviewer: …**you kind of seem like you weren't 100% sure that you wanted to take on the role?

> **Cleo:** No, I wasn't. …Yeah, I was just not sure that I could do it. It seemed like a big responsibility you know, from just being a mom at the club who manages and that, I was like "oh I don't know"… I was really nervous but my husband, he was the one that said, "just give it a go, what have you got to lose?" And I was, "I suppose you're right, okay, yeah".

Volunteering at a sports club can be a considerable time commitment, especially for those in leadership positions. The effect therefore that existing time constraints have on females when contemplating whether to take on a volunteer leadership role is both a perception (Kane & LaVoi, 2018) and a reality (Pfister & Radtke, 2009). For those who have young children, whilst existing research indicates that spousal support can influence some father's decisions on whether to play sport or not (Fletcher, 2020), because of the gendered expectation that women are the primary caregiver, spousal support and encouragement is imperative for mothers, especially for those juggling careers and families (Pfister & Radtke, 2009).

Whilst Gemma had total belief in her ability to carry out her role as President at PWO—and her husband supported her in this regard—the breadth of what was involved, and the accompanying time commitment was certainly a factor to consider. Through his own experience with club cricket Gemma's husband shared this reservation and tried to help Gemma understand just what would be required. Regardless of his own hesitancy though, he supported her wholeheartedly to not only accept the role but also continue it for a second year.

> **Gemma:** …another key concern was how much time, like what would the time commitment be? Because I'm not, you know, the gentleman that was in it before me, he was retired. He'd been there for a long, long time. So, certainly had a certain legacy there. I didn't have, I don't have that time. Like I don't have the time to sit down there all-day Saturday. And I have an eight-year-old, so you know, it's a really important time in her life so I'm not going to sit down there all-day Saturday. I definitely take her down there with me, but we spend probably two, three hours and then that's enough for her, and I need to respect that. …He [husband] probably wasn't rapt. Cause he knows. I probably underestimated it to be honest—the role— but he definitely understood being involved in club administration for a long time.

He definitely didn't underestimate the role, and I probably underestimated it. I probably didn't listen, but that's, that's probably my stubbornness.

Interviewer: …so he's told you that it was going to be more difficult than you anticipated? Um, and he was correct. But at the same time, I'm assuming he was still encouraging though, because you did take the role in the end?

Gemma: Oh, definitely. …he was encouraging in the way that he knew I could do it, and he is encouraging that once I set my mind to something that I will do it. He was just more that, I probably didn't understand the time commitment and, and just all the issues that can arise and what falls on the President. But he was definitely encouraging 100%. And very encouraging for me to go around again [for] year two.

All the female leaders who were in relationships received positive support from their partners with regards to their leadership endeavours—hence spousal support can be considered an enabler. What was also evident though is that their spouse's involvement or interest in cricket, or the club, may be an influencing factor—but with a gendered twist. Cleo's husband plays at CMO and keenly supports their sons who play in the junior teams, and Gemma's husband has been involved in cricket all his life as both a player and administrator. Whilst Oshadi's partner played cricket when he was younger but does not currently, he helps Oshadi practice when he can, and obviously has an interest in both the game and the social aspects of the club.

Oshadi: He comes to watch the games and he's like, if I ever need extra practices or anything he's always willing to come—and he lives like 30 minutes away—but he's always willing to come down and give me some throw downs and just go through things. …He's made friends with a lot of the guys… …all the guys love him. Whenever I'm there, and he's not they're like, "Where is he? Like bring him along."

Whilst Jo's husband only plays the occasional game of cricket and is not overly involved at the club, he fully supports her commitment and recognises the benefit their sons (both juniors at the club who love their cricket), gain from her involvement.

Jo: …he's the most laid-back critter. I just, he's like that laid back he's reversed. Like if you look at what I do here, a normal husband would be going [indicates

getting angry], or getting jealous or, but he's like ridiculously, like scarily, like 'he doesn't care' sort of laid back, so that works. …Yeah, but he'll come down—like last night he was here cooking the BBQ for the 20/20. So, he sort of, he embraces it, and he knows the hours I put in, and he knows now it's also for the boys. So, it's not all just for me. It's…the boys are now reaping.

It is clear that the male partners from PMO, CMO and CMG, gain value from the positions our female leaders hold because they either value cricket, their social involvement with the club, or the resultant family benefits it affords. When taking partner support for the female leaders at PWO into account though, none of their partners play or have any interest in cricket, they rarely socialise at the club, and they have no children or family links to PWO (though one of the couples do have a young child). Yet they still provide their full support with regards to the time the leaders commit to the club. So how does gender come into this discussion? The women from PWO are all in long-term same-sex relationships; their partners identify as female. Does this indicate therefore that a gendered disparity exists when individuals consider whether to support their partner's leadership aspirations? Pfister and Radtke (2009) showed that a significantly larger percentage of women leaders in voluntary sport (when compared to male counterparts) had spouses who were also involved in voluntary sport. Similarly, Leberman and LaVoi (2011) found mothers who coached youth sport received a higher level of spousal support than their peers, if their husbands also coached. Is the enablement of our female leaders through spousal support dependent therefore on partner gender, with male partners providing support only if they attach value to the leadership role?

Interpersonal support from parents and siblings was only raised by Oshadi and Imasha. Being of Sri Lankan heritage, in their early twenties, and both still living at home with their parents, it became evident that familial support for women in their culture was needed in order to simply play the game, let alone commit to the additional time required of a leadership role. Whilst Oshadi's partner and family support her in both endeavours, she does recognise many of her friends and teammates—including Imasha—are not as well supported. Imasha does not currently have a partner, and whilst she was initially encouraged and supported to

play by her male friends at university, her focus of interpersonal support centered around the barriers women in her culture can experience.

> **Imasha:** So, my dad pushed my brother very, very hard—back in Milo cricket, back in the day—pushed him really hard, bought him his kit and everything, and my brother did like two weeks and was like, no, I hate this. …My dad pushed me more into music. Yeah, I got pushed into music. So, I was playing piano and my brother was trying different sports. That's how it was. Yeah, that's how, Sri Lankan parents don't really, don't really push the girls into sport. Yeah, that's how it is.

> **Interviewer:** How are your parents now that you've been playing for the last four years?

> **Imasha:** Yeah, it's tough trying to convince them, because I do spend a lot of my time at CMG—a lot more than they'd like for sure.

> **Interviewer:** So, would it be right to say that they'd prefer you to still be playing the piano than your cricket?

> **Imasha:** I think they'd prefer me to focus on my like career, [rather] than my cricket. …Yeah. So, like, you know, because they'll be—back when there's indoor cricket as well—it'd be like Monday night training, Tuesday night indoor, Wednesday we'll probably have off, Thursday night training again, Friday nights off, but then Saturdays and Sundays like the weekends are fully booked for cricket as well. And they'd be like, "pick a day where you're not..." And then some weeks you know, some of the girls would be like, "Oh, can we have an extra session on the Friday night?" My parents will go nuts! They're like "you need less, stop! Like, where is this gonna take you in your life?" You know, cause it's not like we're gonna go play for Australia now, like. It's all like, it's all just for the fun of it. But they're…it's like they're saying it's too much fun, you know?

A large portion of Imasha and Oshadi's teammates are also of Sri Lankan heritage, so the cultural gendered expectation that time should not be 'wasted' at cricket, but rather on more suitable endeavours, was not unusual.

> **Interviewer:** Do you think that many of the other women have much pressure from their parents?

> **Imasha:** I know that a lot of them, like, can't spend too much (time at cricket). Like the guys you know, they don't have too much pressure from their parents to be home right after games or be home right after training or, you know, to limit how often they come. …So, there's a bit of, yeah we can play, but you can't, we've got to prioritise everything else above, because this is just like our little hobbies.

Whilst a lack of support from family is a barrier for some women, Imasha has been able to overcome this barrier. Regardless of her parent's pleas for her to focus on her career instead of cricket, and her father's ongoing lack of support, Imasha continues to not only play but also volunteered to take on her leadership role at the start of the season. What enabled her to overcome this barrier whilst other women at her club have not, is an agency driven by her desire to be with friends at the club; in other words, the support she receives from the club itself.

Club support: relationships and inclusion

A club supportive of the inclusion of women is an integral part of enabling and encouraging females to take on leadership roles, just as a non-supportive club can dissuade them. As discussed in the first chapter cricket is a male preserve, and in patriarchal fields cathexis (emotional relations) can take on negative forms such as misogyny (Connell & Pearse, 2014). Conversely, evidence of emotionally supportive relations between men and women in a field where power has traditionally been dominated by men, is an example of positive cathexis.

Club relationships and social interactions appear to be an important enabling factor for seven of the nine women. Cleo had no close relationships at CMO and it was her husband who allayed her fears of taking on the role, whilst Gemma—who was new to PMO so went into the role not knowing anyone at the club—relied on support from her close friend Tim and other CV employees to assure her that the club would be welcoming. The remainder of the women had built close friendships with other club members and feel welcomed and comfortable within the environment; comfortable enough to step up and challenge themselves without a fear of being ridiculed. Just as Cleo's husband had encouraged her to face her fears, in these instances it was the club that empowered the women.

CMG have had several women on the Committee in past years—even before they had a women's team. The club is very family oriented, multicultural, and building friendships is a core value. It is obvious these factors influenced both Oshadi and Imasha to join the club and encouraged them to volunteer for their roles. Beyond the relationships, the overall support from the club for their women's teams is also evident and I think it is beneficial to demonstrate this by quoting the women extensively.

> **Oshadi**: …the people were so friendly, and like we got along so well. And I think that was what got me into it more than the actual cricket itself - it was definitely the people…

> **Imasha:** The biggest thing for us coming to CMG was just hearing how much they wanted women's cricket, and how much they were so supportive of it. …they've been supportive from day one. They've shown us from day one, how much they care about women being involved. And they've always put me on, they've always made me feel really, from day one they made me feel so important. They'll never fail to keep telling me you know, "you're a key part of this club, you're a key part of us." They'll always, every day they'll make me feel like I'm a really big part of it.

> **Oshadi:** CMG is all about being a family. …Like every single week after Sundays or Saturdays like once the matches are finished, everyone just comes back to the club, has a drink, has something to eat, and we're just talking till God knows what time and we're like "No we've got work tomorrow, we've got to go". Like we don't really want to go, it's just, it just feels like home because as soon as you come to the club like you know everyone there, and like you feel comfortable there. Like you spend like three times a week there, like at least three times a week! There's other days we come as well. And just like the people, I think it's yeah, the people are what makes a family because everyone you can, you feel comfortable around them. You can do what, you know, you can be yourself and it's really good… So it's like, you feel like you really belong when you get there. And that's what I guess makes it feel like a family. …we've got the coaches, and then we've got partners and families and all that [who] come back to the club.

> **Imasha:** I think 99% of the people there [CMG] play cricket for the social life, for the social culture, more than it is for the sport. Like, I think a lot of—I don't know too much about the men—but a lot of girls recently have learned how crap a sport

cricket is. And if it wasn't for, you know the girls—or even, no, even the guys—if it wasn't for the culture that we have, we would lose, we wouldn't, we wouldn't be able to contain that many people [women] in our team in the first place. So, the biggest, the biggest, like all the time, every social function I'll hear people say you know, "we're not here because of the game, the game sucks. We're here because of each other." But that's something that I really noticed [the] difference between [previous club] and CMG as well: [at previous club] the girls tried to do a lot of stuff together, we tried to plan a lot of events and do things, but it would just be the girls. And then the guys would just go straight home after. Like you know, we would never, we would never mingle with the men's; girls were separate, guys were separate.

Oshadi: ...the guys have been so welcoming. And they're like, even during training, they're always willing to help out the girls no matter like what they're doing. Like if we have a question or if we're struggling, they see it, they just come up to us, they help us there. You know, like, if they can't help, they'll find someone else that can help. …some of the guys actually come to watch the girls matches. So then once we finish, they come back to the club as well. And if, especially if we're playing at the club, like there's always more of a crowd because it's easier to get there. …the guys that come are just guys from the club. Like there's a few guys that like they're always willing to help out. Like they're not in the finals for this week but they still came down to training this week, and they're helping us, giving us throw downs, giving us catches and everything, and then definitely they said that they'll come down to watch our match as well. And they're just supportive of the club and there's no, like there's no ulterior motive for them to come. They just want to support the girls and support the team.

It is evident from these comments that the women's program at CMG is well supported by the club, and the male and female club members have built very close relationships. Both the support and friendships are encouraging the women to want to be at the club as often as possible, and to pay back the club by assisting with leadership roles. Imasha's capital acquisition—as will be discussed in the following chapter—has elevated her social status, and in turn provided a social benefit in the form of close relationships. And outside of the club—as will be expanded on in chapter seven—Imasha has been expected to conform to cultural and familial gendered expectations where women should not take part in

masculine sports such as cricket, but rather focus on careers or other more feminine 'hobbies' which will make her a much more attractive proposition for potential suitors. Imasha's desire to want to play cricket and be at the club with her friends is allowing her to experience an environment where women are encouraged to ignore gendered demands.

Positive gender relations that provide a supportive and inclusive environment are just as important and empowering in the women-only club as they are in mixed gender clubs. PWO have regular social events and an engaged past playing group who are a crucial part of the club culture. Comments such as these from Jackie and Ruby are indicative of not only all the leaders I interacted with at PWO, but of everyone within the club.

> **Jackie:** I think the unique thing and the thing that I've always loved about this club is that it's got such an open and inclusive social culture. And I think a really big part of that is, is the engagement that we have from people who aren't currently playing. You know, you come, you come down here on a Wednesday night when we've got a game, or a Saturday where there's a game here, and you'll see, it's like, it's almost like you know, someone's house, who you go there and you always know there's going to be a friend there… …there's such an engaged and vibrant past player group from, you know, women who are in their 80s, 70s, 60s, all the way down to, you know, people who are in their 20s and 30s, who, who haven't played for years. And so, I think when you're a member of the leadership of this club you're a real custodian of the history of the club.

> **Ruby:** I think the unique thing about our club is the involvement of the past players. I think that adds a lot of value to our culture. I think there's this connection that other clubs don't have. I think the players, particularly in the First XI, if they don't understand it, they get it hammered down their throats, because we love it so much. On the weekend, we'll have four or five past players watching and I know that there's a group of us that go, "Yeah, that'll be us." And I think that's really special.

Club relationships and support from the leadership group also had a direct influence on some of the women when considering whether to take on their leadership roles.

Jackie: Georgia approached me [about taking on the President's role], and I spoke to Georgia and Jodie. And Jodie I've known since I started; Jodie was my first captain when I played here and, and has been a friend for a really long time. They were super supportive and really, really encouraging and really keen, and um really made me feel as though the skills that I had were something that could really help the club. I think that was, that was the really important thing from my perspective is, they weren't saying we need you because we need someone, they were saying we need you because you know, the way you think and the way you lead is gonna take us to the next level. So that was, that was really, gave me a lot of confidence.

Courtney: Well, because Paula and I played with and against each other in Queensland, and I knew she was on the committee—she was on there—[so] I thought if they needed a hand I would jump on as well. So that made it a bit easier just to have her there.

CMO offers an example of the direct impact that a transformation from a non-inclusive club to a more welcoming and supportive club can have on female leadership representation. Jo (as the only female player at CMO) initially volunteered to be Treasurer many years ago, but after a new President was appointed, she began to have second thoughts. She provided many examples of the new President's non-supportive behaviour towards her, including this instance when attending the funeral of a deceased club member:

Jo: …so I'm walking in the back of the church and there was no one else and he's come the other way, and he spits on me. At a funeral! I'm like yeah, you're, you are classy, congratulations.

This treatment by the President was not limited to Jo but extended to other females who came to the club including supporters, with Jo recalling a time when they held an event for the football club they share their clubrooms with:

Jo: …[he's] just sitting there and he turns to a—[he] loves the ladies, loves the ladies… "Yah you fat bitch!". This is a woman, mother of a player, sponsor, volunteer—[she] hasn't been back to the club since.

Not surprisingly this behaviour led Jo to resign from the Treasurer's role. According to CMG's current President Peter, the lack of inclusion displayed by the previous

President and committee was widespread, with poor behaviour driving a culture which had negative impacts on club membership.

> **Interviewer:** And how much do you think that [behaviour] shaped the attitude within the whole club?

> **Peter:** Oh, we lost, we lost player after player after player. We were down to three senior teams, two junior teams. They didn't want the Vets; they didn't like the Veterans.

> **Interviewer:** And so, I guess, was it—I'm assuming here…—not so much family [at] social functions?

> **Peter:** No, no.

> **Interviewer:** Just the men?

> **Peter**: Yep.

In stark contrast to the previous President, Peter's appointment three years ago brought about a deliberate focus on female inclusion and the creation of a family-friendly environment. Since then, Jo has re-joined the committee and an additional two women have also been elected as committee members.

> **Peter:** That's the first thing I did was get a gender balance. I knew it was critical to being a success. Didn't have to be a gender balance, but it had to be females on the committee because old boys' networks, I've seen them in business, and I've seen them in sporting clubs. …I think if you're going to create a family environment, I think you need a gender balance. Because if you have females on the committee, they bring a whole different set of skills, whole different set of, emotion to the committee, to the club, they bring a whole new set of ideas, they understand from a female perspective. Just basic things like make sure the toilets are clean on a Saturday. You know, make sure you've got good white wine in the fridge, don't buy cheap shit. …champagne! So, cater for women. And we do that. What else did we do? Pink stumps day: females only. …Veterans: we'd invite all the families back, give the kids free drinks. Christmas party was bouncy castles, pony rides…must be something for kids, must be something for females…before that we'd just come along, everyone just got smashed! …So, yeah, I think, yeah making it an environment where females feel comfortable, they feel like they're wanting, wanted

to be here. That they're welcome. By creating things like this—you know we've got a female model and a male model around the corner modelling our apparel, not just a male. So again, trying to keep it balanced.

Cleo commented on the change she has seen within the club since Peter's appointment.

> **Cleo: …**a couple of years ago perhaps the culture of the club wasn't what it should have been. And I think they've worked really hard, and it's really improved. It really has. It's really great now.

In addition to the inclusion initiatives that CMO's committee implemented, Peter also supported Jo as a leader on the field by asking (and encouraging) her to take on the role of captain for a new team.

> **Peter:** So, we decided to set up a one-day grade that was purely for people that wanted to come back to the club who hadn't been here for so long because the previous, previous President was such a cock. So, Jo was able to drive that because she had all these contacts. So, she decided that yep, "I'll do it, but I'll only play if needed." I said, "Well, hang on. You're, you're a very talented cricketer. You're a very good club person. You're a very smart cricketer. You're a good coach. You're a good mentor. You're a good sponsor. You're a good administrator. You're good at everything like that. I think you'd be a great captain too." So, I said "no I think you should be Captain, because I think, I think a lot of people would really enjoy being captained by yourself. I mean some people might not like it, but those people are gone now".

The club also presented Jo with a Life Membership last season, being only the second person to receive this award. The first hour of the annual awards night was dedicated to a 'This Is Your Life' style presentation to demonstrate to Jo just how much the club appreciated her effort over the years.

> **Peter: …**you know, the effort people, people don't understand the effort it takes. And she's gone through so much adversity. …She's probably told you the story, she got treated very, very poorly. …How she's still standing is beyond me, but she's so dogged and determined.

The change to club culture since Peter was appointed as President and the new committee elected, has converted the club into an inclusive and supportive environment which no doubt enabled the women to take on their roles, with Jo being confirmation. This supports existing literature which indicates that inclusive club environments where committee members support gender diversity, empower and encourage females to take on leadership roles.

Club support: leadership

In addition to interviews, I attended committee meetings at CMO, CMG and PWO to observe how gender relations, power and decision-making interacted. As previously mentioned, I was unable to attend a committee meeting at PMO due to the impact of Covid-19. Exclusionary power as a result of male domination and/or tokenistic appointments can limit a female leader's ability to impact club decisions (Sibson, 2010; Velija et al., 2012). Whilst club support through inclusion and relationships can incentivise and empower females to step up and take on leadership positions, support should also extend to performance of the role. This support was evident at PWO where the female committee members commented on the collaborative leadership style adopted by the club, and how it supported them in having a voice in club decisions.

> **Georgia:** I think just being able to listen is the biggest one for me. And I think people… I think that is a quality you need for people to feel like they can engage with you and not be…you don't want to be a dictatorship or anything like that.

> **Courtney:** Most of the time though I avoid committees like the plague because it's people loving the sound of their own voice. So I rarely, rarely do it. I came to the AGM just to see what the club was about and how they ran, and I just honestly liked their style. So PWO was easy because it was a collaborative approach. ...it's so supportive of what you would like to contribute, and it's got some massive drivers behind the club.

After observing a number of committee meetings at PWO during the data collection period, I witnessed that a collaborative approach is indeed in place, with every

decision only arrived at after discussions where everyone had the opportunity to provide their input.

The meeting I attended at CMO indicated a relaxed environment where whilst some of the male members made limited contributions, Cleo and Jo were involved and vocal. What surprised me though was that the behaviour I observed from each of them in the meeting was opposite to what I anticipated. I had interviewed all the CMO participants prior to the meeting and Cleo, whilst displaying a great sense of humour, came across as reserved and somewhat timid. To my surprise though, during the meeting she was quite vocal. This indicated that the self-doubt she had when initially considering whether to take on the role had disappeared, and she was comfortable speaking up and adding her opinion to decisions within the committee environment. Jo on the other hand is usually loud, always making jokes, and very talkative—with our interview lasting three hours. During the meeting however, whilst she did provide input into decisions, she was much quieter than usual. On reflection though, and after analysis of Jo's interview, this aligns with her gendered behaviour where she prefers to take a back seat—something I will expand on in greater detail in chapter seven.

It has already been established that CMG provides outstanding support to females at the club which in turn empower them to step into positions of leadership. Unfortunately though, both the interview data and the committee meeting indicate this support does not extend to enabling the women to carry out their duties or encourage them to influence club decisions. When both Imasha and Oshadi volunteered for the Secretary role at the start of the season, the committee decided rather than saying "no" to one of them, they would instead share the position. That was a supportive decision and a way for the women to overcome doubts they had about being able to perform a role neither of them had experience doing, as they could provide each other with support.

> **Oshadi:** …when they said that me and Imasha would do it together I was like," Oh, yeah, that's fine, at least I have someone".

Unfortunately though it appears neither of the women received training or guidance on how to actually carry out the role.

Imasha: I was doing nothing. She [Oshadi] was at least doing something—I had no idea what was going on. You know we were getting these emails asking [us] like, "Can you do this?" You know, "this is this, this is this." And I'd read that and be like, "So what do we, what do we do with this? What does that mean?" And she's like, "I don't know, either." So we just kept forwarding all the emails back to Zac [President] and being like [shrugs]... And he was just dealing with Secretary and President [roles] in the end. He would do it.

When the Treasurer then stepped down early in the season, the committee reassigned Imasha to that role, but again with little assistance.

Imasha: …it took until like a month and a half ago for me to understand my role properly. Until then I was like, people were giving me receipts and I'm like [shrugs]…we both wish that we had a bit more guidance getting to know the roles.

This lack of organisation and teamwork was also evident when observing the CMG committee meeting where the President and Vice President talked for almost the entire time and with minimal input from other committee members. This is an example of the absence of the 'right' support; it is not enough for a club to support women by making them feel welcome and included at a social and cricketing level, without ensuring they feel comfortable enough to make contributions through their leadership role. The effect of not presenting the committee as a supportive space became evident when discussing Oshadi's willingness to speak up at committee meetings.

Interviewer: So do you feel then like if you had something that you wanted to suggest for the club, or something you saw as an issue that you wanted to, you know bring to the attention of the committee and discuss it, or some great idea you had—that you would just have no problems going into that committee and going "I want to do this" or you know, "this is a suggestion, what do you think about that?"

Oshadi: As much as I want to say yes, it's like..I want to say yes. But I feel like if there is something that I had issues with or if I wanted to suggest, I might have some hesitations about it and I might probably talk to like another person or two— just to like get their ideas about it and, and see if I should. I don't, I don't know if that's because I feel like I'll be rejected or like anything like that. …yeah, I think it's

definitely the reaction I'll get probably. Like I'm not sure how everyone will react to it or anything like that.

Oshadi went on to clarify that her reticence was due to a lack of self-confidence rather than a fear that the club would not support her or listen to what she has to say. This indicates that whilst Oshadi feels completely comfortable and confident within the social space of the club, this confidence evaporates in the committee space. As experience within leadership settings can positively influence female leaders' confidence levels (Mikkonen, 2019), the 'right' support should extend to providing female leaders with an avenue to speak freely; not only so they can build their confidence but to recognise the women's voices as valuable. Whether it be assigning them with specific tasks to investigate and report on at the meetings or having a deliberate process where each committee member is asked to contribute one item to the agenda each month, practical solutions should be implemented to ensure the women are being enabled in all areas of the club.

The leadership approaches witnessed during the meetings align with existing research on gendered leadership styles. Female only club PWO encourages a collaborative, democratic, and inclusive environment where open communication and teamwork are promoted, and this is indicative of a transformational leadership style adopted by most female sport leaders (Brown & Light, 2012; Fine, 2009; Hovden, 2010). As discussed in chapter two, the gendered perception that leaders require 'masculine' attributes such as dominance and self-confidence, not only results in men being considered 'natural' leaders (Hovden, 2010), but also encourages them to display these behaviours (Burton et al., 2009). Both the CMO and CMG meetings were presided over by male Presidents, and in the case of CMG a male Vice-President as well. Whilst CMO did not exclude the female leaders from providing input, club President Peter did adopt a far less collaborative approach in comparison to PWO and he guided the meeting throughout. The approach taken by CMG's President and Vice President was more along the lines of presenting a report to the committee on "this is what we have done, and this is what we are going to do", with no input from the other members or delegation to them. This aligns with the masculine trait of 'leading by example' or 'just getting things done' (Brown & Light, 2012), a style which excludes all people from contributing (both males and females). Regardless of a leader's gender, Welty-Peachey and Burton (2012) found that subordinates prefer a transformational

leadership style. It is therefore imperative that club Presidents encourage a collaborative approach with open communication to ensure all committee members can provide input and assist in leading the club.

Cricket support: leading by example?

As discussed in chapter one, CA have responded positively to mandatory board and executive management targets set by the ASC in 2015. Whilst they are the national administrative body for cricket in Australia, as CA employee Christine points out they have no power to direct the six state bodies on strategies or initiatives.

> **Christine:** …each state association is also their own independent body. And as you may know, the six state associations—the big ones, not the territory ones—they actually own Cricket Australia. So you know, if the WACA wants to do it one way, and if Cricket New South Wales wants to do it another way, then that's within their right to do so.

As this study is focused on non-professional cricket clubs in the state of Victoria, a focus on CV's support for female leadership therefore makes sense. As an organisation, an indication of CV's gendered attitude towards women as leaders can be gauged by the number of females appointed to leadership roles internally. At the time of data collection only one of the approximately 20 CV Regional Manager roles was held by a woman. The Regional Manager works directly with Premier and community cricket clubs on a day-to-day basis, and hence is the 'face of cricket' for those clubs. On the administrative side at CV Head Office, whilst the organisation has increased total female employee numbers in recent years, there are very few women in management roles. This was unfortunately exacerbated by recent staff cuts as a result of the impact of Covid-19, with some key female participation roles disappearing from both CV and CA.

In 2015 CV had only one female on their board. In the same year the *Inquiry into women and girls in sport and active recreation: A five year game plan for Victoria,* aligned with ASC by putting forward a recommendation that "all organisations that receive Victoria Government funding should have a minimum of 40% women on

their governing bodies" (O'Neal et al., 2015, p. 18). This recommendation was adopted by the Victorian Minister for Sport with effected organisations given until 30th June 2019 to meet the target. This forced CV's hand, and after appointing two additional women in March and April 2018, the final appointment did not occur until the 28th of June 2019, just two days before their funding would have been jeopardised. Without taking anything away from the merit of that final appointee, an appointment at that late stage does lead one to question the seriousness of the board in wanting to reach the target, as well as the potential that it was unfortunately a tokenistic appointment.

A positive step the CV board has taken since, is the nomination of Mel Jones to the CA board—the first ever female nominated for one of the six positions selected by state bodies. Something to contemplate therefore is whether this nomination was a result of CV now having four female board members influencing that decision. Claringbould & Knoppers (2008) showed that male members who had progressed from a male dominated board to a gender balanced one, not only noticed the impact of the change but were also subsequently more reflective of stereotypical behaviours. So perhaps this decision by the CV board was a result of the male members reflecting on the positive impact a more gender balanced environment was having within their meetings?

When asked if the organisation had thought about the potential of using a similar prerequisite for clubs—where funding from CV would only be accessible if female leadership targets were met—the responses indicate just how influential the (still existent) traditional patriarchal model within clubs has on gendered decisions by the state administrative body.

> **Brett:** No, absolutely not. Uh yeah, it's a brave person to go out and suggest that. Very, very brave.
>
> **Interviewer:** Do you mind extending on why?
>
> **Brett:** Uh look, in my world Premier Cricket tradition and legacy is very, very, still male dominated and fiercely dominated, and fiercely protected. Due to I guess, just the way the whole environment and culture has been conditioned over the years. I genuinely think due to all our hard work that women in the Premier world, women

are now respected, but to be brutally honest, giving up ah I guess traditional roles and control ah…

Interviewer: Is another story?

Brett: Yeah, is another challenge, yeah.

A more diplomatic "no" was the response from Aiden who works with community level clubs. His follow-up comment was rather perplexing considering funding provided to clubs in recent years through the 'Growing Cricket for Girls Fund' was tied to a range of assessment criteria which a number of clubs did not actually meet and hence had to repay their grants.

> **Aiden:** I'd ideally like to continue to build and move forward, as opposed to a dictatorial approach.

An additional observation regarding that funding is that one of its conditions was that the girl's team "must receive training by a currently accredited Community Coach" (Cricket Australia, 2018b, p. 8)—a lost opportunity because that condition could have also been tied to a female coach program.

Cricket support: clubs and community

Looking outside of the organisation and instead into the wider cricketing community, when asked of any CV strategies or initiatives aimed at increasing female leadership representation at the community level it became apparent there are none.

> **Aiden:** That's a good point. I think we don't do enough in that space. …at the moment it's about focusing on some of the core elements of the club and providing that support to the fundamental nature of the club. …At the moment we'd have no direct, formal influence on the nature of cricket committees and association committees.

When posing the same question to Brett regarding Premier cricket and female leadership, there also appears to be limited initiatives along with a reluctance to pursue them.

> **Brett:** I know in the past we have offered exclusive levels of coaching accreditation just for, for women, which haven't really been well taken up. As to reasons why, I don't know. Whether the communication's not getting out there far and wide enough, or whether there's just very few, I guess women who are aspirational enough—well, what's the incentive really, for women to coach? There's not much of a career pathway or, or even ah. Yeah, as far as, as far as coaching high performance, it's a very, very narrow pathway. And, and the, the other side of it, the, the let's say the operations and executive side of running clubs and whatever, it's you know, it's a big commitment. It's easier for—without trying to sound sexist—but it's easier for I guess males to find the time and run and get engaged with cricket. It's not as easy with the women and females to get into that side of it given commitments, careers, time, um, attitudes, whatever.

Firstly, there appears to be an assumption (or perhaps admittance) that women have no chance (or place) in professional coaching ranks, but also as a result of Brett's gendered role allocation assumptions, a form of women-blaming is evident. This belief that women are not interested or willing to put in the same commitment as men because of their priority to family is an issue in sports organisations (Pfister, 2010a, p. 2). If women are considered mothers and carers rather than leaders by CV employees who directly influence decisions on female leadership initiatives, we will continue to see this 'what's the point' attitude.

Brett did mention the 'Premier Cricket Development Plan' as a way for CV to benchmark female leadership in their clubs. The plan is a self-assessed ranking system where Premier Clubs rate themselves across a variety of categories. Within its 'Club Environment' section clubs are required to assess the number of females who hold leadership governance roles; there is no mention of or requirement to evaluate women holding coaching roles. Whilst the plan sets 80% as a targeted goal for clubs to meet, it appears not all clubs do reach that level, the consequences of which are unclear. As Brett did not mention any other female leadership initiatives though I assume there are no follow-up requirements if a club has no or very few female leaders.

One positive community female leadership initiative CV does provide is their *Girls Leadership Program*. This state government funded program was initially created in 2015 by CV and School Sports Victoria (SSV) with its focus being to provide

girls in Years 7 and 8 with leadership skills. Content includes an online introductory component followed by a one-day workshop which has two core leadership sessions: mentoring, and mindfulness; two physical activity sessions: Cricket Blast and yoga or Pilates; and a panel discussion. I attended one of these workshops during my data collection period, not to critique the content, but rather to observe delivery of it through a gendered lens—specifically with regards to portraying females as leaders. A female MC presented the overall program and there was a gender balance across the facilitators and panel members—a positive approach as it provided the girls with both female and male role models. This was extended to the leadership specific sessions with one facilitated by two females and the other by a male. The framework of the presentation of the program was therefore very positive, but within the sessions themselves there were some instances which unfortunately contradicted the premise of the program. The first incident was when a male teacher (who was chaperoning one of the groups of girls attending) sat in on one of the leadership sessions and proceeded to answer questions posed to the girls by the CV facilitator, and regale personal stories rather than allowing the girls to contribute. Whilst CV were not to blame for this interjection by the male teacher, an awareness of the *potential* for this to occur could have alerted the facilitator with how to deal with it, or pre-emptively ensured it did not happen.

The second example was the one most directly linked to this research, that being how CV presented female leaders in a cricket context. CV employee Kelsey stated during her interview that this program was specifically created with a focus on the girl's leadership development rather than an opportunity to increase cricket participation. This was reflected in the program with only one of the workshops—the Cricket Blast session—having a cricket focus. Whilst this approach was admirable, leadership development for young girls does not stop once they start taking part in a fun cricket activity. So when the Cricket Blast session was run by an older white male, they presented the sport as aligning with the 'white, stale, male' moniker it regularly receives. Add to this that the male presenter had a female assistant who had never been involved in the facilitation of a Cricket Blast session before—so she spent the session being told what to do and how to do it by the male facilitator—and the girls were not being provided any form of leadership empowerment, but instead witnessed the reinforcement of their likely

already learned position of women as the subordinate. Whilst the program is a fantastic initiative and one CV should be proud of, more thought should be put into ensuring their facilitators lead in a manner conducive with the program's intended aims.

Cricket support: helping the leaders?

As will be discussed further in chapter six, the PWO female leaders who reached elite playing status received support and training from CV over those years as players and/or coaches. The skill acquisition as a result of those experiences (and the networks built as a consequence) have assisted them as leaders within the sport. But cricket's administrative bodies—including CV—had no direct influence in their leadership appointments, nor have they provided them with any administrative or governance leadership development or assistance with their current roles. Courtney's response is indicative of the responses from PWO leaders.

> **Courtney**: They provided pathways for me to represent in each state [as a player], which I've been very fortunate to have that opportunity, so that pathway representation means I know a little bit about cricket.
>
> **Interviewer:** As far as leadership goes?
>
> **Courtney:** Yeah. No, I would have loved to have done more in terms of leadership within those organisations but wouldn't have known who to approach or how to go about that.

None of the women from CMO or CMG have had any interactions with CV which have positively impacted them as players or leaders, with some of them having had no contact whatsoever with them throughout their time in cricket. The only leader who did have direct support from CV was PMO President Gemma.

To understand why Gemma received direct support from CV whilst the other female leaders did not, we first need to understand her background with the organisation. Approximately six years ago Gemma was employed in a

management role by CV for five years. Additionally, Tim—a family friend of Gemma's for 20 years—is currently employed by CV, and it was Tim who initially approached Gemma about taking on the role with PMO. Tim has been a player at PMO for many years and he supported Gemma when she was contemplating whether to take on the role, by putting her mind at ease with any questions or reservations she had regarding the position and the club. When asked if she received any other support from CV in addition to Tim's encouragement, it became immediately apparent that she had been afforded a level of attention that none of the other female leaders had the privilege of experiencing.

> **Gemma:** Um yes, [name], the General Manager of [department]—so he was encouraging. And Brett. Yep. Because I'd obviously worked with them. So both of them were very encouraging. Yeah. So they were both very, very encouraging. And you know what, they both still are. Like we had a delegate's meeting last night which was done via video. …And you know straight after [General Manager] text me, just a quick you know, a quick check in to see how I am, and just those type of things. And Brett will call every now and then to check in. Just those type of encouraging things are very helpful. …And even the CEO, who I didn't even know, even when I go to the delegates meetings, he will go out of his way to come and check-in.

Clearly this level of support from CV is exceptional, but why was it confined to only one of the nine leaders interviewed? In order to answer that question a summary of Gemma's capital levels—which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter six—need to be provided at this point. Gemma's social capital as a result of her relationships with CV employees, when combined with her heteronormativity and a lack of physical capital, is an example of the 'right' capital for her as a female, to gain an appointment to the role of President at a Premier men's club. CV providing Gemma with levels of support well exceeding those afforded to the other female leaders, appears to indicate that the 'right' capital can also translate to the 'right' support. CV understand all too well what a gendered environment a men's Premier cricket club is; as a reminder, Brett referred to Premier cricket as "male dominated and fiercely dominated, and fiercely protected". As a consequence, if they are going to support the appointment of a woman as President of a men-only club—

again remembering that men's clubs are considered the creme-de-la-creme of the competition—then they would be conscious of appointing the 'right' woman.

When asked to reflect on what she considered her greatest enabler, Gemma's response gave a sense of not only how empowering the support from CV was, but also the impact on any women in a similar position not receiving that support.

> **Gemma:** I think what was very helpful was the—and what still is helpful—is probably the check-ins that I get from the two people I know at Cricket Victoria. And the fact that when I have a question, or I have something that's very challenging that, I can call them, and I can call them directly and feel very comfortable calling them directly. And I wonder if someone else was to go into the President role of another Premier club, if they didn't know those two guys they probably couldn't call them. Which I think would be very, that would be very hard. So I'm very lucky that I already know them. And they're both well you know, their two roles, they're really key to what I do, so they're a wealth of knowledge. Yeah, they've been very good.

Whilst it would not be expected that CV provide this level of support to all female leaders, the total lack of support for any of the other women is an issue.

Cricket support: missed opportunities?

This analysis of the support provided by the State's administrative body has disappointingly only identified one instance of direct enablement for our female leaders. But what it has done is highlight opportunities which have been ignored or limited in their effectiveness. With a heavily male dominated workforce, gendered decisions based on archaic patriarchal structures are limiting potential positive initiatives. Whilst existing literature suggests targets are an effective tool— and they appear to have potentially improved gendered decisions at the CV Board level—they are not the sole answer to addressing female leadership underrepresentation at the club level as they do not address gendered behaviours. But the fact that CV immediately wrote them off as impossible or dictatorial possibly indicates a lack of commitment to exploring new avenues. And without detracting from their *Girls Leadership Program*—because it is a positive initiative—

the conscious decision to not link it with cricket participation is most definitely a missed opportunity and lack of foresight; imagine providing this program to teenage girls who are already playing cricket and linking it with a club leadership mentoring program. Unfortunately this research indicates that CV have no specific initiatives in place aimed at increasing female representation on committees within the cricketing community, and it appears the enablement at this point in time is limited to interpersonal and club support.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a discussion of the findings relating to the different forms of support the female leaders received which directly enabled them to become leaders, and to carry out their roles. What it underlined was the inconsistency: firstly with not all women requiring the same levels of support, and conversely, some women benefiting from support whilst others missed out. The link between capital and support must be highlighted because if support for female leaders is dependent on who they know, how well they play, or whether they tick the right gendered boxes, then support from one female to another will typically be inconsistent. It is imperative therefore that female leaders (or potential leaders) receive the 'right' support through a holistic approach where at a macro/meso level they receive identical support (from the sport's administrators and within clubs), whilst simultaneously identifying areas where support can be tailored to individuals to enable access to further capital accumulation.

With regards to support through leadership development opportunities, as was discussed CV do not offer any form of training to women other than coaching courses. There was also no training provided or offered by any of the clubs. It should be pointed out though that there is no development offered outside of coaching for males either. This is therefore a future opportunity for both CV and the clubs to address, but to avoid the 'fix the woman' issue as discussed in the literature review, this training should be offered to both males and females.

One final point of interest regarding support is that none of the female leaders experienced mentoring prior to taking on their leadership roles, or since. Whilst the

literature indicates that mentoring can be beneficial for female leaders—as discussed in chapter two—it was not a necessary enabler in this instance. The reason I have brought it into this discussion though, is to point out that mentoring as a form of the 'right' support was not an available mechanism for these women. As it was not promoted by either the clubs or the sport's administrators, its absence highlights an opportunity to address.

The following chapter will present the findings and related discussion for the 'right' capital as an enabler, the first of the three enablers with a specific focus on my Bourdieu and Connell theoretical synthesis.

Chapter 6: The 'right' capital

This chapter will present and discuss relevant findings which demonstrate how capital enabled our female leaders. Specifically it will illustrate the ways in which the participants' habitus is recognised by those in the social field of cricket as having value, and the ways in which aspects of their embodied social history translates into various species of capital (Dukic, McDonald, & Spaaij, 2017). The previous chapter demonstrated that the support required by or provided to each of the women was not consistent. Inconsistency also applies with reference to capital, with the women possessing differing types and levels of capital dependent on which field they occupied. As discussed in chapter three, an individual's symbolic capital positions them along the dominant/subordinate continuum within a given field. This capital is a reflection of what is considered 'legitimate' and valued within that field (Hunter, 2004) and can vary between fields, with each field having their own hierarchy of capital. This deviation between fields can occur at any analytical level (or indeed across levels). For example, the type of capital CV may consider most valuable for a club leader may not align with what a club values most. Alternatively, one club may assign higher value to leadership experience for instance, whilst another affords playing ability much greater credence. The result of this inconsistency across fields not only limits the potential fields one can lead in, but it can also prevent access to alternative avenues of capital accumulation.

Adding to this inherent inconsistency is the additional layer of gender, with capital acquisition in sport generally more readily available to males than females (Shilling, 1991; Thorpe, 2009)—an unsurprising outcome considering sport is a male preserve. Whilst women can benefit from some of the same capital accumulating factors as men, gendered norms position man and masculinity above female and femininity. Therefore, for women to gain capital within some sections of these fields they must meet an additional set of criteria, which I refer to as the 'right' capital. What therefore are the values or qualities a female must possess to be considered a worthy proposition for a leadership role in cricket? And how do those values—or requirements—differ between fields? An overview of each female leaders' cricket journey will be woven throughout this chapter with the aim to demonstrate their attainment of capital along the way, how it can lead to

acquisition of other forms of capital, and how their accrued capital positioned them differently depending on which sub-field of cricket they exist in.

Physical capital

As with all forms of capital, physical capital—or the involvement in sport (West & Allin, 2000)—is transformative as it can lead to the accessibility of previously unavailable avenues of further capital accumulation (Shilling, 1991). The benefits of physical capital for the enablement of our female leaders can be considered through two paths: first, simply being a part of the game of cricket in itself generates symbolic capital as a characteristic of an ideal leader in voluntary sport is "a long commitment to sport and sports clubs" (Pfister & Radtke, 2009, p. 241). It enables one to grasp an understanding of the game beyond just the rules; instead they recognise what is valued within the field, what is expected in the field, and their place in the field: i.e. the formation of their 'cricket habitus'. The women's time in the sport has therefore directly translated into capital and hence locates them in a variety of social positions within their club and the wider field of cricket, and inherently assisted them in gaining their leadership roles. Thus, I will begin by demonstrating that for the majority of the women a long history with cricket has enabled them to accrue this valuable capital.

Time in the game

Being born into a cricket playing family saw both Courtney and Gemma exposed to the game very early on.

> **Courtney:** I started playing when I was eight because of my dad and my brother. My dad was the president of our local club and a first-grade player and that sort of thing. So, it was just natural that after my older brother got involved, I did.

> **Gemma:** My history of cricket was I grew up in a club. My dad was President of Hovedale Cricket Club, and my mum was also on the committee. And I grew up

with two older brothers. So, every Saturday in summer consisted of being down at the cricket.

Other leaders' parents may not have played cricket or even had an interest in sport, but social influences saw the women gain a connection to cricket early on regardless.

> **Georgia:** I'm one of five: four girls and one boy. No-one in my family did any sport, my mum and dad are hopeless. No-one does anything to do with sport. I don't know where I got it from but my neighbours up the road had four boys and every night, I'd be up at their place playing footy and cricket and everything.

> **Jackie:** Yeah, so my family's not sporty at all. So, I'm one of three: both brothers, both younger than me, and both not interested in sport… (I) just always um, was always interested in like a whole bunch of different sports and cricket was one that I really, I got, I got into from a very early age, you know from two or three sort of hitting a ball around the backyard with a bat. And my mom's dad, my grandfather, was very into cricket. But we didn't have a super close relationship with him, with that side of the family, so they sent me to the Boxing Day test, that was sort of like a once-a-year kind of thing.

> **Ruby:** Dad's an immigrant. So, he came out when he was very young, but he grew up speaking Russian and only learned English when he went to school. And I think he tried to play footy but didn't really get it. And he liked cricket but again, didn't play. And so, I think when we were little, we just started playing in the backyard— he just started playing in the backyard. Purely, like the only experience he would've had would be watching it on TV. And so…his bowling is pretty funny.

Like Ruby, the two female leaders from CMG also have parents who emigrated to Australia but from Sri Lanka. Whilst their parents playing of the game did not advance beyond the backyard setting, the influence of an obsession with cricket that is synonymous with the sub-continent was evident.

> **Imasha:** Well, I'm Sri Lankan, so my family's obviously very involved in watching the sport. And, like all our family outings from when we were young always involved some backyard cricket, always. So that's a big, been a big part of it.

> **Oshadi:** So, when I was younger, we'd always play like backyard cricket when we go to barbecues and things we'd play like, the usual cricket. I loved, I loved playing

cricket like that, I really enjoyed it. And my parents love watching cricket, so when they've got the World Cup on in like another country, we'd have our mattresses out on the floor like in front of the TV at like, three o'clock in the morning or whatever, watching the World Cup and stuff.

For those who are current or past players, their progression into playing holds a similar theme along club lines. The women from PWO all tell a story of a childhood playing cricket from an early age in male competitions before transitioning to the women's.

> **Georgia:** I played my first actual season—I think it was 'under 12's' (boys) maybe. ...with the 16's, I played that until I was 18, I think they'd let you play two years younger. And I used to also play in the men's, like E grade in the afternoons. And then once I got to 18…. I went to PWO.

> **Jackie:** So, I started cricket when I was really young, about six, in the VIC Crick program. I played, did two years in that, and then played with the boys under 10s, under 12s, under 14s, and under 16s.

> **Courtney:** I started playing when I was eight… I played boys' cricket until I was 15 because there was no other girls playing. Then our school put a team in because one of our PE teachers decided that, they knew I played so they did that at high school. And we went and we competed – oh, no, they sent me to a trial for the Northern Rivers team to play the New South Wales championships. So, I got involved playing women's cricket from then.

Ruby, being younger than the other three female leaders at her club, was fortunate enough to experience playing in a girl's competition as well.

> **Ruby:** Well, like most people, started playing in the backyard with my brothers and playing under 12 boy's cricket in the same team as my brothers. And from there, I was really fortunate, played in an all-girls comp in Pascoe Vale which would've been quite rare at the time, I think. …and I joined PWO when I was 14.

The two leaders from CMG had a very different pathway to the other players, but like the PWO leaders they had similar stories to each other, with persuasive friends being the theme. Both in their early twenties and of Sri Lankan heritage, they took part in regular backyard battles but neither of them played 'real' cricket until

recently. Imasha became friends with players from the men's CMG team through university and they encouraged her to start playing three seasons ago.

> **Imasha:** That's how I got to know CMG people in the first place; it was at Uni. …they'd always be training and stuff anyway. Not, not with the Uni club, but just guys who played cricket. They'd be training. Yeah," what should we do today?" You know, just "let's go have some throw downs". And I'd be like "I'll come" and then, yeah. I never played. I just threw the balls. I didn't bowl the balls; I just threw the balls right [laughing]. Yeah, I didn't think I'd ever get involved, even then, not a chance. …then one day they were like "oh, why don't you give it a go?", and then I gave it a go. Like I put the stuff on and had a go as a joke, you know….and that same time that I started doing that the university started their female side. (So) I joined in on that…

Meanwhile Oshadi was asked to fill in on her boyfriend's mixed indoor cricket team when they were short of players one week, and it was here that she met Imasha who played on that team as well. Imasha convinced Oshadi to attend a 'Come & Try' day as part of CMG's drive to start a women's team, and the rest as they say is history.

As a female leader and the only female player at all-male club CMO, Jo's introduction to cricket was through boy's competitions—though she started at a later age than the women from PWO. After gaining a scholarship to Carey Grammar for tennis in Year 9, Jo was encouraged to also take up cricket by one of her teachers and became the first girl to play for Carey in the Associated Public Schools (APS) boy's cricket competition—a team that was in later years captained by Meg Lanning (the current Australian Women's team captain). After graduating from school Jo's transition to adult cricket came about when the then President of CMO (her local club) asked her to join after he spotted her bowling in the nets. Other than having a few years off when her children were born, Jo has played with the club ever since.

Not all of the female leaders transitioned from the backyard though. When asked if she has ever played cricket Cleo was quick to respond with a self-deprecating and humour-laced "No! And you don't want that." Instead, her involvement—and

the subsequent formation of her 'cricket' habitus and capital—came about as a result of her sons playing at the club.

> **Cleo:** I really got involved with the cricket because I've only got boys, I've got three boys…. So, I've been at the Cricket Club since—Greg who's now 22—started doing you know under 10's. So, but I've been Team Manager, probably for the last, for 5,6,7 years, and Club Secretary for the last two. ...I thought if I didn't get involved in what they're doing then I'm gonna miss out on a big chunk of their life.

Gemma on the other hand wanted to play cricket from an early age but unfortunately her father would not allow her to—something I will discuss in more depth in a later chapter.

As this initial historical overview of each woman's introduction and progress reveals, they have all accumulated a considerable amount of symbolic capital within the field of cricket simply through their involvement and dedication to the sport.

Physical prowess

The second way in which physical capital can be beneficial for leadership aspirants is through their playing ability. This is evident in sport more broadly when we consider the number of athletes sought out for leadership roles if they excelled as players—coaching being the most prominent. West & Allin (2000) demonstrated that high levels of involvement in sport and symbolic capital gained through an advanced playing ability had been converted to economic capital in the form of paid coaching or outdoor education roles. Is this transference of capital—as a result of playing ability—uniform between the different club environments though? And when taking gender into consideration, is this benefit confined to women seeking leadership roles within a women's field, but not available when they encroach on men?

In Bourdieu's 1978 exploration of the links between professional sport and social class, he assigned physical capital to the sexes as follows:

"…the sports market is to the boys' physical capital what the system of beauty prizes and the occupations to which they lead—hostess, etc.—is to the girls' physical capital." (Bourdieu, 1978, p. 832)

This gendered allocation of physicality aligns sporting ability with masculinity, and physical attractiveness with femininity—a standpoint that situates sport very much as a male preserve and a direct consequence of gendered habitus formation. The dichotomous view of men and women in sport is embodied, with men's bodies (and their athletic performances) being the benchmark, whilst women are relegated to displays befitting their appointment as the weaker sex (Pfister, 2010b). And as McSharry's (2017) research displayed, females whose skill levels belied these gendered expectations may be elevated in status by males, but simultaneously their ability was considered intimidating and emasculating. How then does this ideology reconcile females in our study who display the 'masculine' trait of being a physically proficient athlete with their leadership enablement?

For the women in this project who have formally played the game, their cricketing ability varies and generally aligns to the level of competition they play in. PWO has a proud history of players progressing to State and/or Australian cricket representation. It is no surprise therefore that three of the four female leaders have previously played at the elite level.

> **Courtney:** I played on a New South Wales high school's team and then Under 19s. …then I got picked for Queensland. I was in Second XI in 2006 or something, I think played for Queensland, debuted in the 2007/08 season, and played for five or six years for them, ended up opening the batting so that was fun.

Georgia's State representative career spanned approximately 17 years.

> **Georgia:** I think I was 13 when I first played 'under 17's' state cricket. So I played four years of that. And then, yeah, played two years of 19's and then I got in the Australian Under 19's team. And then I got in the…I was in the Shooting Stars Squad, I think it was called at the time, like the Australian—I don't know if it was the 'under 21's or '23's' squad—yeah, so did that. Don't know when I made my debut for Victoria, maybe when I was 20, 21 or something. …My last season was the season before Big Bash came in.

Ruby also represented Victoria from an early age and has been a regular standout performer in PWO's First XI team.

> **Ruby:** I played all the sort of under 15s, 17s, 19s for Victoria, second XI as well, and played one round of WNCL for Victoria. And yeah, played in the first XI here [PWO] probably since I was about 16.

Whilst Jackie—PWO's current President—did not play at the elite level, her 13-year playing history at the club has afforded her a high level of respect. Joining the club when she was 15, being part of an A grade premiership winning team, and captaining the Second XI for five seasons from the age of 18 (which included another premiership) have all situated her well within the club. It is obvious that as a women-only club, female physical prowess at PWO is highly respected.

Is physical capital an enabler though for the female leaders at the remaining three clubs, and as they are mixed gender clubs what impact does gender have on the value of that physical capital? Both Oshadi and Imasha from CMG play in the Women's First XI and are two of the better female players at the club. They are not considered emasculating within the club environment though because both are relatively new to the game and their skill levels are well below those of the male players. With regards to Jo as the only female player at CMO, she is a very proficient cricketer who displays more ability than many of the men at her club, with club President Peter commenting on her being "a very talented cricketer". Jo currently only plays in the lower grades though, so whilst her playing ability has emasculated many opposition players as well as males within the club—as will be made evident in the following chapter—she now sits well below the standard considered to be the ideal embodiment of physical prowess as held by the higher-grade players. Hence, she is not seen as a threat to the fabric of the club's masculinity. In addition, Jo has learned through gender performativity that she can reduce the impact her physical capital has (as will also be expanded on further in chapter seven).

In Bourdieu's practice, what is considered a valuable form of capital in one field may be of little or no value in another, and when we consider Gemma as President of PMO it appears that female physical prowess falls into this category. Gemma

has never played cricket and the club has a female Treasurer—a mother of one of their players—who has also never played cricket. Gemma mentioned in her interview that the club is looking to appoint two additional females to the committee for the 2020/21 season, both of whom are mothers of players and have never played cricket themselves. One may think that physical prowess is irrelevant to the women's leadership appointment in this context because the utilisation of mothers is good use of existing club members. But Gemma does not have a child playing at PMO, nor had she ever been involved with the club in any capacity before her appointment. In fact, Gemma is the only female leader interviewed who had no prior history with or connection to the cricket club she currently holds her leadership role with; PMO instead went out and actively recruited her (as previously discussed). What stands out therefore, is whilst physical prowess is certainly not the only enabler for the female leaders at PWO, CMG and CMO, it did not hamper their ability to gain their roles. PMO on the other hand has no female leaders who possess physical prowess, or with any cricket playing experience whatsoever. This indicates that what holds value for women leaders at PMO is potentially the *absence* of physical capital.

PMO plays Premier cricket, which as the highest level of competition in Victoria below State representation is considered the epitome of hegemonic masculinity within non-professional cricket. It is possible therefore that the patriarchy is fighting to preserve that sacred position within the club for men, and men only, and this could potentially be the reason why PMO has no female leaders who possess physical capital through ability. If PMO is a male-only domain where heteronormative masculinity equates to power, a woman who takes on a leadership role and possesses emasculating features (such as physical prowess) may not conform to that ideology and would therefore be confined to 'women's spaces'. This is evident when we look at the coaching ranks throughout Premier cricket: outside of the women-only club PWO there is only one female currently holding a coaching role in the competition, and although she is a former Australian representative and ICC Hall of Fame inductee, she is restricted to coaching the women's teams.

It appears that heteronormative femininity holds higher value than physical prowess for female leaders at PMO, and as an extension of this it appears that motherhood also holds value. This is the meeting of Connell and Bourdieu as there is an alignment of cricket habitus and gendered habitus, and the formation of what is perhaps the most valuable form of capital for PMO. What is more validating to femininity and 'knowing your place' in the gender order than being a heterosexual mother. As discussed in chapter three, Connell (2009) believes that gendered embodiment revolves around the reproductive arena. This not only aligns with physicality in sport being considered masculine, but also with women as the bearers of children being tasked with nurturing and caring for them, (an example of Connell's 'production' as the sexual division of labour), but also potentially an example of cathexis with regard to the bond between a parent and child (Connell & Pearse, 2014). Gemma indicated that the average age of the players at PMO is approximately 23 years of age; it stands to reason therefore that the social field of the club could not only protect these young men from the perils of having their masculinity dented through the designation of power roles to physically talented female cricketers, but to also provide them with confirmation that if a woman is to be in a position of authority, she should be a heterosexual mother who is there to nurture and care for them.

Social capital

Social capital built through friendships and networks, or converted from other forms of capital, can lead to a number of benefits such as increasing one's reputation within the wider field (Steward, Walker, Hutt, & Kumar, 2010) and in turn provide exposure to further expanding networks. Existing literature as discussed in chapter two illustrates the importance of networks for female leaders. This study demonstrated that whilst networks were indeed beneficial, none of the women actively pursued them—they were instead inherent within their field. Furthermore, the extent of each leader's access to networks was dependent on where they were positioned within that wider field.

Whilst Courtney was exposed to high level networks from an early age, once identified as a talented player her physical capital led to social capital, with her networks within elite environments expanding for many years to come.

> **Courtney:** I was lucky enough to have Stan Gilchrist and Adam Gilchrist[2] as my coach because they come from up my home way as well. ...Kim Fazackerley, who used to play for Australia, she was one of our coaches. …I had the privilege of playing under Lyn Larsen and a wonderful strong and varied group of women form my region. We played against all the open and under-age NSW players including Belinda Clark and Lisa Keightly. ...happened to go a club called Wynnum Manly up there and that happened to be where Julia Price[3] played, Trish Brown, Megan White, you know, all those sort of girls who were doing really well for Queensland. So yeah, Pricey and I became best mates from there. ...we had amazing people like Julia Price playing, Mel Bulow, Kirsten Pike, you know, playing then and Joan Broadbent coaching. …maybe in the last year I played against Rolts[4], and then when she was coaching South Australia I was with her there. Jonesy[5] I knew via Pricey because they're best mates, and obviously Pricey and I were very close.

These cricket networks ultimately had a direct link to her playing and being appointed to a leadership role at PWO.

> **Courtney:** …three years ago I happened to talk to Mel Jones[6] and say, "Oh, Mel, I don't want to go back to [undisclosed club]…" "…Do you think PWO would be happy for me just to come and have a hit?" And Jonesy said, "yeah, just talk to them. That would be great." And coincidentally through no communication between the two of them, Rolts called me two weeks later and said, "would you be interested in coaching?"

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[2] Adam Gilchrist is a former Australian cricket representative.
[3] Julia Price is a former Australian cricket representative.
[4] Karen Rolton is a former Australian cricket representative, Australian Cricket Hall of Fame inductee and International Cricket Council (ICC) Hall of Fame inductee.
[5] Melanie Jones OAM is a former Australian cricket representative, cricket media commentator, and Cricket Australia board member.
[6] Mel Jones was a past player at PWO

> **Georgia:** I've been on the Women's Premier Panel and stuff like that. …The first time I probably had a leadership position in anything was Second XI State Cricket, I was named captain. And that was at the…at Fitz's[7] [coach] request, I think.

The friendships and networks Jackie had built with PWO members over many years led her to initially volunteer to Chair a club sub-committee.

> **Jackie:** We had a conversation about setting up a bit of a sub-committee to look at what our options were including amalgamation, and all of that kind of stuff and um, so, you know, she [then President] and the committee sort of run with that idea and set up a future subcommittee, which um, which I put my hand up to be on and ended up chairing earlier this year.

Undertaking that initial volunteer role led the club President (who was wanting to retire) to ask Jackie if she would nominate herself to take over.

> **Jackie:** Georgia reached out to me and said, "Oh, you know look, you know, really happy with what you did there and wondering if you might come on board as President?"

It was also a result of internal club friendships and networks that lead to Ruby being asked to take on a coaching role.

> **Ruby:** We identified a gap probably at the end of last season, that we had a coach specifically for the 2nds and someone working with the 3rd XI…. and [head coach] sort of overseeing everything, but not someone sort of aligned to the First XI…..and so, there was talk about employing someone as a First XI coach in the committee and then, yes, the former president approached me about doing it, to have a think about it.

At CMO, Cleo's appointment was a direct result of the networks and reputation she had built as a Team Manager, with a club member putting her name forward to the President as a suitable candidate to fill the recently vacated position of secretary. For Jo, she had built a strong network at CMO over her decades with the club, and it was herself and two other close friends within that network who

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[7] Cathryn Fitzpatrick is a former Australian cricket representative, former Victorian and Australian Women's Head Coach, Australian Cricket Hall of Fame inductee and International Cricket Council (ICC) Hall of Fame inductee.

grouped together to rebuild the club after the previous executive resigned, and this directly led to Jo being appointed to her current role on the committee. For Imasha and Oshadi at CMG, it was through their networks that they first started playing at the club and resulted in Imasha being appointed as the First XI women's captain. The subsequent extended networks and friendships they built within the club empowered them to volunteer for their leadership roles.

Gemma, the President of PMO, had initially built cricket networks through her family's local club ties, but it was her employment with CV where she accessed networks most beneficial to her current appointment. As discussed in the previous chapter, five years in a management role at CV allowed her to greatly develop her cricket relationships, including with a number of staff whom she now deals with on a regular basis. Tim, as a CV employee, long-time family friend, and long-time player at PMO proposed Gemma as a suitable candidate to take on the President's role, whilst other CV employees who knew Gemma from her time with the organisation had a direct impact on her being accepted for the position. Her ability to gain her President's role was therefore a direct result of the social capital gained through those networks.

Gemma and the female leaders at PWO demonstrate well how the acquisition of one form of capital can lead to further capital accumulation. Three of the four PWO female leaders reached elite level playing status which opened a pathway to inclusion in high performance programs, whilst others hold administrative or management roles with CA or other respected sporting bodies such as the Australian Football League (AFL). These expanded ties with cricket—and sport overall—gave Gemma and the PWO leaders access to networks that the other women have not been exposed to; their social or physical capital led to even greater social networks (and hence greater social capital). For the leaders at CMG and CMO though, whilst they were also able to access beneficial networks within their clubs, they were very much limited to their club environment rather than having access to greater opportunities within the wider field of cricket.

Cultural capital

Cultural capital is relevant to any leadership appointment through the value given to experience levels: whether it be the necessary skills one possesses, or prior leadership experience. A common debate in the female leadership space, as discussed in chapter two, is meritocracy: the argument that women should not simply be appointed to leadership roles to 'artificially' create gender equality, but rather follow traditional channels where appointment is reliant on the possession of required skills and experience. For our female leaders, was this form of cultural capital gained through prior experience a necessary or influencing factor for their appointments? And if so, was the possession of capital in this sense uniform across the different clubs?

Both Courtney and Ruby from PWO have representative coaching experience.

> **Courtney:** I did Under 15s. I did a combination Victoria/New South Wales team. So I was a manager and helped out with assistant coaching.

> **Ruby:** I was assistant coach I think, to begin with. I did assistant coach or manager roles and then sort of worked into the coaching roles. I was like the team manager or the assistant coach, and then…I did the head coach role. I also worked for Bob when he was at Cricket Victoria in the Regional Manager role, so I did a little bit of stuff out west with him and that was how I got into doing the under 15s for Victoria…. I think I did it for about, maybe I did four years in a row and then I had a little break because I sort of focused on playing for a little while. And then another three years, so maybe seven years in total.

Whilst Courtney does not have a coaching qualification beyond the initial training she undertook in NSW at 16 years of age, Ruby's social and physical capital enabled her to gain the Cricket Australia High Performance (Level 3) coaching accreditation.

> **Ruby:** [Employee] from Cricket Victoria, he called me and said, "We want to put you through the Level 3," and I said okay. ACA as well, because I've played my one game for Victoria, got that connection. And so yeah, the two organisations can fund past players to do it. And I think they were trying to get more females to go through the course.

Outside of cricket, Courtney has gained many years leadership experience as a small business owner and consultant, whilst as an employee Ruby is a member of the leadership team. Jackie and Georgia have both spent time on a CV women's cricket panel (the Victorian Women's Cricket Association Board and Women's Premier Cricket Panel respectively) and have always been employed as sports administrators. Whilst Jackie is not currently in a leadership role, she has held leadership roles in the past. Georgia is currently the General Manager (and second in charge) of a regional football league—a factor she believes was influential to her club appointment.

> **Georgia:** I don't think I was necessarily putting my hand up, but yeah, it was sort of the consensus that I would be the best option for it. Like I think with my background with work and stuff like that. And you know, just governance and things like that. Which we didn't really have.

As previously discussed, PWO President Gemma was employed as a manager at CV, and she now holds a high-level management role with a multinational construction firm. When interviewing Tim from CV/PMO he did refer to Gemma's management experience as positive factors when pursuing her for the role. Whilst Jo from CMO explained her reticence to lead people in employment settings, she has gained management experience running her own business as a sole trader for a number of years. She also currently captains one of the teams at the club and as mentioned previously, she also held the Treasurer role previously.

Indications therefore are that these women's cultural capital as a result of their skills and/or prior leadership experiences, were of positive value in their appointments. Of the remaining women though, neither Oshadi or Imasha (CMG), or Cleo (CMO), had any previous leadership or management experience, and all three came into their roles having no idea how to perform them. Whilst they had other forms of capital seen as value to their respective clubs and committees, this indicates that meritocracy based on cultural capital through the acquisition of prior experience is not necessary as an enabler within all clubs. Whilst this study is limited to include only four clubs, from a cricketing sub-field context the value of this form of capital appears to be higher within Premier clubs than within community clubs. As PWO and PMO both play in the highest non-professional

level of competition in the State it would be expected that capital levels required to be a leader within their clubs would exceed the level of capital required to be a leader at the community level, as merit should be proportional to competition level. Whilst in general terms the appointment to a leadership role may be dependent on the applicant possessing specific prior experience, in the case of volunteer roles within club sport there is no need for this to be a necessary requirement. As the women without prior leadership experience, or the necessary skills to carry out the role at the time of appointment, have been successful in their roles, and remain in them for the 2020-21 season, meritocracy is not a sound argument as a prerequisite for female leaders in the non-professional cricket space, rather, this capital can be gained as a result of their appointment.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented varying forms of capital which can enable women in their leadership endeavours. It demonstrated that gender can determine the value given to specific types of capital, with changes dependent on what field the female leader finds herself in. Whilst a history with cricket is an avenue for enablement through physical capital accrual, high levels of playing ability may have negative impacts within male dominated fields.

This discussion also demonstrated that women within the higher-level competition can overcome the disadvantage women traditionally have in gaining additional forms of capital when compared to male counterparts, but the community level women cannot. For example, they do not have access to networks capable of increasing their capital status beyond the club or community level. If we are to make inroads into the persistent gendered leadership imbalances within the sport, the importance of ensuring women at all levels can gain access to capital building networks—not only within their sub-field but outside of it—is imperative.

A final observation is that cultural capital as a result of skill and leadership experience is not necessarily a requirement or enabler for all of the women but can instead be acquired after appointment to their role. What is critical though is

that clubs and sports administrators ensure those women are provided with the right support for them to perform and learn their role—and hence build their capital.

The following chapter will now present and discuss how the 'right' gendered habitus enables female leaders in non-professional cricket.

Chapter 7: The 'right' gendered habitus

Our gendered habitus is formed as a result of following the rules—or the normalised gendered social practices—within a given field. As rules can differ from one field to another, the gendered habitus which lends itself to the greatest possible capital accumulation is the one which most closely aligns with the norms of that field. Cricket is traditionally a patriarchal environment, thus for females to excel and be accepted as leaders they need to display the 'right' gendered habitus. If I were to explain how having the right gendered habitus in cricket enables women in layperson terms, I'd say they learn to know their place in order to not upset the patriarchal apple cart. They have been socially conditioned—as a result of gendered interactions with other socially conditioned actors in the field of cricket—as to the ideal way to negotiate gender relations in order to maintain their position as a leader, and the capital that goes with being a leader. In this chapter I will demonstrate how these gendered experiences have shaped the female leaders' attitudes and behaviours, and hence their habitus.

The shaping of habitus

Imasha and Oshadi's stories in the previous chapter indicated a familial and cultural awareness of the gender order from an early age. For the female leaders who grew up playing cricket in the backyard with older brothers, or played in boys' competitions, their social conditioning also began early. Not only would they have gained the understanding of the game in a way that would likely assist them as leaders later in life, but they would have also recognised the gendered power differential in sport where girls are the 'weaker sex'. In a recent study investigating barriers to cricket participation for adolescent females, participants sited intimidation, gendered attitudes and judgments by boys as a deterrent (Fowlie et al., 2020), with Jackie's story indicative:

> **Jackie:** …played with the boys under 10s, under 12s, under 14s, and under 16s. Got to sort of 15 years old and um, wasn't really enjoying playing with the boys that much anymore. So, I'd sort of stopped playing with the boys and um, I played a

little bit of school cricket, just, um just public school, sort of schooling, secondary school sport, and my, one of my teachers happened to be involved with the rep program in the area. So he got me down to play for what was Northwest Force at that point, in the under 18s. And really it was my first experience playing female-only sport, and loved it, and made some friends there that I still have, um today.

Gemma's refusal by her father to allow her to play cricket provided her with an early indication that females are positioned as the 'other' within the field.

Gemma: There was no females playing cricket back then at the club. I very much wanted to play cricket. So, I used to play cricket in the driveway with my brothers. I played cricket at the club on the side, so my brothers were on the field, and I would always play against the wall, with any kind of bat and ball that I could find, and I would ask a lot if I could play. And my dad's certainly not…I don't see him as sexist at all, he's 75 now and I, I just, I don't see him as sexist. But however, he was very clear that he already had two sons and he didn't want a third, and I wasn't allowed to play cricket.

Jo's father on the other hand made it obvious to her that if she was going to play a 'man's sport' then she needs to be able to compete 'like a man'.

Jo: So, I got on really well with my dad. Dad loved his sport… Yeah, um, very much a chauvi... like that, like a male chauvinist, like went to the pub with the boys, hated women's footy you know like, and you know. …Nothing you do, nothing you could have done would have changed my dad's [opinion]. …Yeah, hated women's footy, hated…but, with me like there was no extra special bubble wrap for me because if you, if you want to mix it, mix it but don't mix it. Like don't take the piss.

When Jo joined CMO as a 19-year-old, the club was required to gain permission from their Association before she could play in the men's competition. Their response: she could only play if there was someone else playing in the men's competitions at the club who was a worse player than her (referring to playing ability)—as Jo was a talented player, she met the grade. She was made aware at an early stage however, that her infiltration into a male domain—especially as a woman who could actually play the game—was not accepted by some of her fellow club members.

Jo: I remember in my first game I made 20 odd runs or whatever it was, and yeah, and you know and it's, it was harder—a lot harder than women's cricket obviously because it's... I remember training in the nets and people [men] bowling three foot over the line and being hit, and [thinking to myself] don't cry, don't cry...don't cry! And even to this day some of the people that I started playing with then are still here. Most of the people have taken it beautifully, [but] there's still a couple that just hate it, with a vengeance.

Whilst these are all indications of the female leaders' social conditioning when young, their teachings of 'women as the other' have persisted to this day, as the following findings will demonstrate.

For Sri Lankan women, simply playing cricket can be a difficult prospect, and whilst Imasha has refused to allow her parents' wishes to deter her, she is regularly reminded that their view reflects wider cultural beliefs.

Imasha: There is a marriage, an anti-marriage, like a thing that prevents us from getting married. So, there was one girl who had to quit playing because her parents thought that her being in the sun too much was going to get her darker and she's not going to be able to find a husband that way. I told that to my mom, I was like "this is a funny thing, hear this." And she was like "no wait, that's, that's true." I was like "come on!" And then, a lot of other girls had the same thing and were like making jokes about it to their parents, and a lot of them [the parents] were like, "no, that's a good point…" And now we're like, "Why did we bring this up?! Why have we done this?!"

Cricket and body image, and its resultant negative impact on finding a future husband, also aligns with the traditional patriarchal view that women should maintain their femininity rather than risk the masculine side-effects of playing sport.

Imasha: And then like also, after I play really long, I'll get like, you know when your veins stick out a little bit when your [muscles have built mass]... Yeah, so my mom sees it sometimes and she's like, "No guy's gonna like that." And I'm like "Come on mum."

For Jo it's been a constant battle of the sexes on the field, with this story of a recent incident demonstrating that misogyny and homophobia are still alive and well in cricket, with any woman daring to encroach on the men's turf falling outside of the heteronormative expectations for a female.

> **Peter:** There was a game out here, last year, Jo was playing in—I played in it too…Jo was batting—and the wicketkeeper stood behind, and Jo was batting with TJ—and the wicketkeeper yells out: "Put the dyke back on strike."

Another recent example demonstrates that women still pose a threat to men's masculinity in sport.

> **Jo:** There's like a Barbie doll, you know, 'bowled by a girl' trophy, and that he was there, and he'd hit a century, a century and I bowled him out, and he was you know, still to this day getting bagged. Two years ago, I went to the [Association] presentation night, we're on a table with two other guys and I'm "I think I know you." [He says] "no, no, no". And one of them, he goes "don't talk to me about women cricketers, I hate them. 20 years ago or something, I got bowled by one." And I'm like hmmm, I said "what club would that have been?" "CMO, it was CMO. I've been getting shit ever since, rah rah, rah." I said "Buddy, that was me." And then the guy went "oh fuck we've gotta get a picture, get a picture." So, we got a picture of the two of us, put it on their club web page.

Georgia's experiences at Premier Club President meetings indicate the persistent display of men as hegemonic when it comes to leadership positions in the field of cricket.

> **Georgia:** [At] Cricket Victoria President's meetings, you walk in there and it's shocking really. It's literally around the table, one female and old males…stale, what do they say?
>
> **Interviewer:** White, stale, male, yeah.
>
> **Georgia:** White, stale, males. It's just…it's terrible.

The actions and attitudes of sports administrators will also influence the formation of the women's gendered habitus. For example, if men's competitions are provided preferential treatment over women's, and the women recognise this, they may

potentially accept their inferior position as the other. de Haan and Norman (2019) demonstrated this when the negativity women rowers felt because of the sport's focus on the men's eight (considered the ultimate race) led them to not physically sit out from rowing, but instead remove themselves from under the men's shadow. A complicity with their inferior status, moulded through symbolic violence, led them to accept that position.

CV's Premier competition has been very much a male bastion, as Brett noted when asked about whether required leadership qualities differ for men and women.

> **Brett:** No, no. No difference whatsoever, other than if you're female you've got to, I guess, cope with 115 years of male dominated industry.

Whilst the sport's administrators have been making positive inroads with regards to increasing female participation, it appears there is still an uneven playing field with preferential treatment for men's competitions. Brett readily admits that "the men still protect their Saturday", and when the Women's World Cup final was scheduled to be played on the Sunday of the last round of Premier cricket—and hence would clash with the Premier women's matches—they considered cancelling the round. On contemplation though they questioned whether they would cancel the men's cricket in the same situation and as the answer was "no" they instead rescheduled the round. During the conversation between CV employees though, preferential bias was still evident:

> **Brett:** …someone did flippantly say, "well, why don't you just swap days, put the women on the Saturday and the men on the Sunday". And that was, that remark was put to everyone in the room, and it was, "oh no, you know, no, no". Um, where I looked at it and went, well like that was a fair and reasonable suggestion. It shouldn't be just, you know, flipped off and blown off or dismissed so…but it was.

Brett did go on to say that there has been a positive shift towards equal treatment between the men and women.

> **Brett:** I've said this for the last couple of years, it's just going to become more prevalent that [men's] seconds, thirds, and fourths, are gonna have to move if Women's Premier Ones needs to be scheduled somewhere [on a Saturday]. But a big shift in the last three to four years of our scheduling where Men's Premier Ones,

and Women's Premier Ones are treated the same level. So, if there's any, if there's any clash, or any scheduling issue, it's the men's and women's first XI to take precedence now where five or six years ago you wouldn't do that.

In reality though a number of incidents in both the Premier and Women's Community Cricket competitions indicate there is still a gendered bias: one of those being when PWO's Second XI played a Saturday home match last season. Contrary to Brett's assurances of movement towards equal treatment, the women's match was not provided an umpire by CV whilst every men's Premier game down to the lowest grade was. This is an example of Connell's symbolism, with the gendered culture displayed by the game's administrators preferencing men over women. Incidents such as this continue to instil an impression in females that the administrators' focus on equal participation does not extend to equality across other areas of the game. This in turn maintains the incongruity of the women's gendered habitus from within their supportive club environment to their position as others within the wider field of cricket.

I'm a feminist, but...

Within our patriarchal society there is an expectation that women are the subordinate. When confronted with that reality, women gain an understanding that in order to compete in certain fields they must abide by that expectation, but they also learn to follow more specific rules which indicate they are compliant with this ideology. Whilst there is evidence that men who support gender equality are valued within women's sport contexts (Schull, Shaw, & Kihl, 2013), the opposite rule applies for women and hence they must not identify as openly feminist (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Knoppers & Anthonissen, 2008). The alternative to following these inherent guidelines is to be exposed to backlash.

To gauge their thoughts on gender equality, each of the female leaders were asked if they considered themselves to be a feminist. The aim of this question was to discern whether they were aware of these rules of the game—and the necessity of abiding by them. For those who aligned with the feminist ideology, all pointed out the negative association attached to it.

Jackie: I studied gender at uni, and so I feel like I have a really strong understanding of feminism, but I think that's a scary word for a lot of people as well. And I think the connotations are, you know, the sort of hairy arm-pitted radical lesbian, which is one tiny subsection of a much broader spectrum and, like I kind of, I kind of think that most women are feminists, they just don't realise, and they don't know how to label it. But like if you, if you believe that men and women are equal, or you know, if you believe that women should have an equal position or even if you just believe they should have a better position in society, like of course you're a fucking feminist.

Courtney: Yeah, because I think feminism is just about equality. I get annoyed, especially on Twitter or something like that where they talk about feminists are just about man-bashing and that sort of thing. I think anyone can be a feminist and I think it's just about levelling the playing field.

Ruby: Yeah. Not like in the strong sort of, like some people can sort of put people offside with their feminist views. I don't think that that's something that I do, but yeah, I think I'd call myself a feminist.

The remaining women—bar one—supported gender equality, however there was a reluctance to be labelled a feminist, or confusion around what the term actually means—again, likely due to the backlash and societal stigma attached to it.

Gemma: No

Interviewer: No? Do you want to expand on that? You don't have to, but I'm just wondering, you were very quick to say no then.

Gemma: Yeah, um, yeah, I'm not sure why I was quick. That went down like I was negative didn't it, which I'm not. I just, I think I'm more about fairness and, and I'm guessing about equality. And, um and giving people equal, equal chances. And, but I'm also about squashing probably old biases that are, that are there. …people might go well, well, you know, "only a guy can do that job." "Well why do you think that?" "Well, because guys have always done that job." And it's just because there's such old biases there that you actually need to break down those old biases to help change their mind. So, I'm very much about trying to break down all those old biases. So, I definitely wouldn't say I'm a feminist, but I am very much about trying to change cultures and trying to create better understanding. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, can I ask then, just to extend on that, what you would define as feminism? What you think that you're not I guess is probably the best way of putting it.

Gemma: So I would say that when um, I would say old school feminism would be that—not old school feminism, but feminism now—I would say would be that, like I don't necessarily agree with um, quotas yet. However, I agree with targets. So, I think there's a difference between quotas and targets. I don't, I don't necessarily— like especially in construction—I don't think you can have a quota for example, when you only have say 28% of females doing construction. So, how can you have 50/50 graduates when you've only got 28% doing the degree. That's just not gonna work and it's actually going to set females back because you're not gonna have quality there. Um so, I would think that would be an error. And now I would say that that would be feminism, I would say that would be a good example. Okay. Yep.

Cleo: Probably not. I probably don't think about it too much, to be honest. Maybe I live in the dark ages, I don't know? But I don't really think about it. I just get on and do what I gotta do and you know. I do you know think that, you know, things like equal—oh we don't get paid for this—but equal pay, and I think women need to be shown respect. So, I think they need to be shown respect, there needs to be equality…. but I never, I don't go into the whole feminism thing. You won't find me out there with the banners and that, yeah.

Imasha: Oh.... (long pause). No.......? I don't, I don't fully, I've never fully understood the word to be 100 percent honest with you.

Interviewer: Okay. What do you think it might be, like, what do you kind of think it is?

Imasha: Ok, well what I feel like it should mean—what I feel like most people do understand that it does mean is just making sure that, like the whole equality thing. Not that girls are better, or not that girls deserve more, and not that girls haven't, you know—we've been lacking and now we, you know, now we've got to be above because they've had this, they've had it all this time. I think it is about equality and making sure that we're treated the same and we get the same. But um, I think the

reason that a lot of people are against it is because some people have taken it extreme, and then that's pushed people away. Like, you know, "girls don't deserve more." Like, I think that's the reason that I'm, I don't even know where I stand anymore either because the word feminist itself has a lot of negative on it now. Because, because of how people are taking it and how some people are a bit more extreme than others. And it's not like some people don't take it as equality anymore, and then now other people are like "Wait, is it about equality anymore?" So even me, I'm like, I don't, I don't fully, I don't want to call myself a feminist because I don't know what, what people take that as. So I'm not sure.

Interviewer: So, there's potential backlash if you call yourself a feminist?

Imasha: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Oshadi: Um....frankly yeah. I just want to know that the definition of it is equality, not just women are better than men?

Interviewer: Spot on.

Oshadi: Yeah, so I, yeah, I definitely do. I know like a lot of people say women can't do the same things as men—in some perspective, maybe. But I think when it comes to leadership or just doing general basic things we can like yeah, I think we're just as good as them, yeah definitely.

Interviewer: All right. It's, it's interesting you know…. [you said] "I want to clarify what feminism means...." So, does that come from do you think the stigma around feminism? So, people think that feminism is like rah rah rah this angry kind of thing? Is that what you think people perceive it as?

Oshadi: Yeah, I feel like a lot of people are like even if they are feminist, they're worried about saying they're a feminist because like it's perceived so wrong these days. Like, everyone just thinks feminism is where they're like, putting down men and saying, "no we're better than men", we're you know, "we can do this, we can do that". But in reality, it's just—I think it's maybe the word itself because it has the word feminine in it—maybe that could be something that they think I dunno, it means that we're better, you know.

Interviewer: It's all about women.

Oshadi: Exactly, right. But um, yeah, I think people are also a little bit scared of speaking up about it as well because then they'll get like pushed down and things like that. But I've definitely met men that are feminists as well, so it's good yeah.

Feminism came up in the discussion without any prompting when interviewing Jo and she was quick to point out she is not a feminist, and she is aware of the backlash she would be exposed to if she was.

Jo: I'm not a—and you can ask anyone—I'm not a woman's activist or a… so my cousin who doesn't play sport or anything she's very......[long pause]

Interviewer: Feminist?

Jo: Yeah feminist, feminist, Yeah, I'm not at all, which has worked for me. I think if I had have gone in like that, that would have.....[long pause]

Interviewer: Pushed people away?

Jo: Yeah. And you could tell, you know.

Jo then proceeded to explain that she does not need the special treatment females are receiving now, and there were indications of resentment towards the focus on girls in sport because it negatively impacts her through her sons (who in her mind, are now receiving unequal treatment as a result).

Jo: "I've just missed that female 'getting everything her way' time" [that's happening now]. "I've been a pioneer and been treated like shit.. …now I'm going to cop the other brunt of it where I've got sons, I'm gonna cop it for having sons."

Unlike the other female leaders who did not necessarily carry the label of a feminist but in reality support gender equality, Jo's comments throughout her interview appear to hinge on the attitude her father had, where women are only equal to men if they can perform equally. This was not restricted to the cricket field but extended into her professional life where she "was always a female in male dominated industries"; "never had a good female boss"; and "the more women you get in a team, the more shit you gotta deal with". These comments suggest an internalised misogyny—likely initially formed through social conditioning within the family environment—which has not only spilled over into both her professional and

sporting life but has been exacerbated by her regular existence within heavily male dominated fields.

Doing gender

I've now demonstrated that the female leaders' habitus has been formed on an understanding that women are the other, and they are aware that not following the rules of the patriarchal game can be detrimental. Rather than experiencing backlash the female leaders are instead complicit with their inferior positioning—an example of Bourdieu's symbolic violence. As Bourdieu explains:

> "The case of gender domination shows better than any other that *symbolic violence accomplishes itself through an act of contrition and of misrecognition that lies beyond—or beneath the controls of consciousness and will,* in the obscurities of the schemata of habitus that are at once gendered and gendering." (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 171-172).

Bourdieu goes on to clarify that complicity does not arise because the agent *desires* the 'violence' (in this case gender domination), but rather whilst they recognise it, they do not consider it to be violent. In other words, as a result of symbolic violence women allow themselves to be the subordinate because although they may not necessarily be happy about it, they are aware of the expectation and accept it as the norm. Simultaneously, they understand if they are to be successful in positioning themselves favourably within the field in order to reach and maintain a leadership level (through capital accumulation), they can only do so if they conform to those norms. The result is formation of the 'right' gendered habitus where the female leaders 'do gender' by presenting themselves as women should (Pfister, 2010b).

To demonstrate the 'right' gendered habitus we can consider the behaviour and attitudes of the women for signs that gender is guiding their dispositions. For Jackie and Courtney, it is obvious they have a clear understanding of the rules they're required to abide by and an awareness of the potential backlash, and hence a need to tread carefully. When asked what qualities are required of a leader

in cricket, there is recognition of the double-bind. Within the sports field this impasse between being not too feminine, but also not too masculine, has an even greater impact (than in general business settings) due to the expectation that women in sport should not physically embody masculine traits (Krais & William, 2000), as was discussed in chapter six.

> **Jackie:** …if we're talking about President's roles specifically, I think, the way that I want to lead and the things that I think are really important are um, I think it's important to be calm and to be considered. You know, and I and I'm probably someone who's naturally a bit emotional, and so I certainly make a really conscious effort to try and stop, think, work my way through a situation.

> **Courtney:** I think in most situations in business and in sport, a female needs to show both masculine and feminine characteristics in order to get ahead. So, you need to be able to play the game of—because leadership is male, historically has been male—so you need to understand that game.

> **Jackie:** …being a leader in a female sporting club is kind of creative problem solving 101, right? Because you have to, you get thrown a myriad of unique challenges, and you have to deal with them in a way that is different to how men might have to deal with it. You know, you can't necessarily, and this is where the gender stuff becomes really important, right? Because, you know, it's all that stuff around if, if a man screams, he's passionate, and if a woman screams, she's hysterical. And so, you almost need to become a chameleon in terms of having the emotional intelligence to try and to understand how, what is going to get the best results in any given, in any given situation.

Jackie points out her internal conflict between the need for outspoken gender advocacy with the realisation that it is not well received.

> **Jackie:** I think that there are a subsection of women now, who, who are the ones that go this is, you know, this is not fair, and they call it out. And they, that's, that's really that makes, that's really uncomfortable right, and, and it's hard because I think that's a really important part of the overall debate, but I also don't think that's how you get people to do what you want them to do. When I talk about, you know, sort of solution-based thinking and stuff like that, I go, okay, what do we want? We want, you know, equal pay, or we want you know, an AFLW competition that goes 15 weeks or whatever it might be, how do we how do we get there? We probably

don't get there by telling people that a) telling people that that's what they've gotta do, and b) telling them that if they don't do it, that they're bigoted. …because it does, it does give people the license to go oh fuck, like you know, you know, how dare you do this? How dare you, you know, you're so extreme, that we can now go the other end of the extreme. Whereas if you try and push from the middle, you might get everyone over. But I still think that it's, I still think it's, it's just something that I grapple with, right, because I, because I do feel like that kind of, that kind of advocacy, really strong and extreme advocacy, is quite important in some ways, but I don't think that that's ultimately what changes people or culture at its core.

When recalling a specific current gender issue PWO were having with CV, we can see how this conflict influences how she deals with the male employees.

Jackie: …I've thought about it and it's one of those things where I, I sit on something for a little while because I want to think about the best way to, to get what I think is fair. Right. And I think like I could call Cricket Victoria, I could have called [CV employee] yesterday and yelled at him about it. But I'm not sure that would have done anything.

Interviewer: Probably would have just got his back up?

Jackie: Yeah, that's right.

Through Gemma's recollection of reservations about taking on the role as President of PMO, we can see that she too understood stepping into another male dominated environment meant taking on the gendered expectations that entails. Being conscious of that requirement but knowing her experiences in cricket and construction had positioned her well enough to "deal with it", indicates a willingness to adopt the 'right' gendered habitus.

Gemma: So, I definitely had reservations because Premier men's cricket and the administration behind it is known—or has been known and can still be known—as like an old man's club. So, and because I've worked in cricket and understand the delegate system, that was probably my biggest reservation. And I thought do I really want to um, I already have a very full-on full-time job in construction, so I work in a very male dominated industry. So I already get paid to do that, and I thought do I then want to volunteer and also put up with that as well, to be honest… But I thought well, I thought I get paid to do it and I think I do it pretty well. So, it

won't be a big shock. So, I thought I can deal with it, and it won't be as big a shock because I have seen it, and I've been in delegates meetings before.

Complicity through symbolic violence not only encourages the status quo with regards to the gender order, but also maintains the belief that the hegemonic masculinity within the field of cricket is that of heterosexual hyper masculinity. As Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) demonstrate, hegemonic masculinity is at its most powerful through the compliance and complicity of heterosexual women, and men who do not display outwardly masculine dominant behaviours. As Jo's habitus has been built around an acceptance of women as sport's weaker sex, when confronted with blatant misogyny or masculine intimidation she deals with it in one of two ways so as to avoid backlash. Continuing the previous recollection from Peter when an opposition wicketkeeper called Jo a dyke, her first tactic is simply to ignore it.

> **Peter:** So, Jo was at the non-striker's end with me, and I didn't hear it. TJ stepped away from the wicket and said, "seriously mate, you right?" And he [the wicketkeeper] just started laughing. So, I said, I said—cause I was umpiring—I said to TJ "what's going on?" He said, "oh he just said something", and Jo said, "don't do anything". I said, "hang on, I just want to know what he said". So, I said "wicketkeeper what'd you just say"? And TJ's said, "he said put the dyke back on strike". So, I started walking down towards him and I said, "right now, you will apologize to her". And Jo is going "Peter stop, don't. I've put up with worse than that".

Jo's second way of dealing with sexist attacks is to take on the persona of the Magda Szubanski character Pixie Anne Wheatley: the ditzy female sports reporter with very little knowledge of sport and an over-the-top laugh.

> **Jo:** ...one of the captains in this comp…he comes up to me and goes "ah, female captain: novelty!". And like the shake it was just like this [indicates a limp handshake]…"novelty!". Then when I came in to bat, he goes "Um give me the ball, captain to captain". Okay. And [he] bowled the absolute biggest bouncers. Idiot. So yeah, it's just been, it's been interesting. I wouldn't have had it any other way, but ah we have to have very thick skin. And you have to have this Pixie Anne Wheatley type of setup all going cause you just go [impersonating Pixie Anne's laugh] "ohhhh ha hi", you think I'm a dickhead but "ha ha hi."

That final statement indicates her willingness to reduce herself to a level more accepted by her male counterparts; a dithering inferior female is far more acceptable than an emasculating woman who can play cricket.

The discussions of Jo throughout this chapter may indicate the gendered habitus required of females who are constantly positioned within fields where women are considered the other. In stark comparison to Gemma at PMO where the 'right' habitus appeared to be a mother who does not play cricket, Jo is a woman who can compete physically with men in an all-male environment. The 'right' habitus for a female meeting this criteria appears to be an acceptance of abuse, a complicity with being the other, and not only the acceptance of backlash towards females striving for equality within the male preserve of sport, but the active participation in it. One may ask why Jo continues to play at (and help) the club considering the treatment she has received over the years? Remembering that habitus is below the level of consciousness, the first answer is that her habitus has formed in such a way that she considers this environment—and the treatment she receives—as the norm. But there is an additional component to this question when talking specifically about Jo being a leader at the club: if she did not have the support of the current committee, she would not be a leader—as was the case when the previous club President was not supportive of her. This is therefore another example of the interplay between the identified enablers.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated a three-step process where the female leaders have developed a habitus which best allows them to survive and succeed in the field of cricket. First, their dispositions are unconsciously formed as a result of their social conditioning in a patriarchal society (and cricket specifically) which portrays women as the other, second, they gain an understanding that openly aligning to feminist ideology or speaking out against misogynistic or sexist treatment will result in backlash, and finally, the knowledge gained through those first two steps manifests into the 'right' gendered habitus.

In the next chapter I will discuss my final identified enabler for female leaders: the 'right' time.

Chapter 8: The 'right time

In recent years the focus on women's sport has generated positive steps towards increased female participation in sport, including within leadership roles (Braund, 2014; Women in Sport, 2015). Indeed, it could be argued that some of the women in this study may not have gained their leadership roles if we were not in the midst of a women in sport boom. The inclusion of women's teams for the first time at CMG and the resultant appointment of Oshadi and Imasha to leadership roles, may not have occurred. And Gemma's invitation to be only the second ever female President of a men's Victorian Premier Cricket club in the competition's 115-year history would certainly have been less likely. My decision to include time as an enabler is therefore directly related to the progressive period we are presently experiencing. But, whilst the current spurt of positive initiatives is certainly a factor in enabling female leadership—as discussion of the previous three enablers revealed—we are unfortunately making little progress towards definitive change to long held gendered structural issues within cricket. As I stated in chapter three when discussing my reasoning behind adopting a feminist paradigm for this research, the goal of utilising critical feminist theory within sociological research is to prompt social change which leads to gender equality. This chapter will therefore propose that the 'right' time is not simply a period where we aim to increase participation rates or build female-friendly change rooms—or in the case of female leadership, set quotas or targets and provide free female-only coaching courses. Rather, the 'right' time is about change; it is a time where we can harness the enthusiasm around women's sport and government funding and direct it instead towards creating true gendered social change.

Time is critical to both Bourdieu and Connell's propositions for social change. As Connell states, social structures are historically composed; they are a direct result of human practice over time (Connell & Pearse, 2014). Changing societal attitudes throughout history can lead to disrupted social hierarchies and hence alter them from one period to another. Gender relations therefore are not static, and as Connell points out:

> "…the strategic question is not 'Can gender change?' but 'In what direction is gender changing?' Any situation admits of a range of possible responses." (Connell, 2009, p. 71)

Bourdieu presents a similar argument with his assertion that habitus is not only a direct product of history but itself creates history (Bourdieu, 1990). It is over time that history can alter practice because what may have once been considered beneficial can lose its impact, and habitus will be altered consequently (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

As we are currently enjoying a period of time where there is an increased focus on gender equality, it is important to try and gauge what impact this is having on attitudes; are we in one of those moments in time that Connell and Bourdieu are alluding to? Each of the participants in this study were asked to share their thoughts on whether the current spotlight on gender issues—specifically regarding the #MeToo movement and the increased attention on women in sport—was having a positive impact on behaviours within cricket and society more broadly? Or alternatively, do they feel societal backlash is occurring? The responses indicate a combination of the two, with the general consensus being increased exposure has built a greater awareness which has resulted in some positive outcomes, but at the same time they recognise that backlash towards equality is certainly still a challenge. Themes identified in the responses point to several ways in which this 'right' time can be harnessed to create lasting change. Whilst these themes do not focus on change towards enabling female leaders in sport specifically—but rather on gender equality in sport more broadly—their impact could see women as leaders accepted as the norm.

Time for habitus change

Social change through Bourdieu's theory of practice is dependent on habitus change. This change occurs as a result of one's reflexive awakening to the mechanisms of society, which enables individuals to consciously control their habitus (Maggio, 2018). Bourdieu refers to this critical reflexivity as an "awakening of consciousness" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 88) where a custom of objectivity—once

accepted as a normalised practice without thought—converts to one of subjectivity with concurrent questioning of the structures guiding those practices (Adkins, 2003). This awareness subsequently alters what one considers most valuable within a given environment (in the form of capital), and hence the alteration of one's habitus occurs.

When societal attitudes evolve, any resultant change to norms will take time; hence habitus change is not an instant process. If we are aiming to generate reflexivity as a means of change—in this case by altering normalised gendered practices which perpetuate inequality—it is imperative that those who practice these targeted norms be consistently exposed to the desire for societal change. As habitus is the repetition of attitudes and practices unconsciously formulated as a result of consistent exposure to norms within a given field (Bourdieu, 1987),one's regular involvement in and exposure to norms promoting gender equality is imperative for habitus change to occur. This argument is reflected in some of the participant's responses, with Oshadi believing that whilst some existing sports initiatives are positive, the lack of involvement by men—and hence their lack of awareness of the issues at hand—is problematic.

> **Oshadi:** …like the This Girl Can movement and things like that, there's a lot of women involved in it, and it's like, it's really great, but I feel like the fact that it's so advertised to the women, like men aren't hearing about it as much so they don't really like see the actual things. Like women totally like hear that and everything and they're like fully into it, but I feel like the guys aren't as involved in that as much. So for them it's not a big like, thing. I feel like if maybe they involve the guys as well then like maybe they can see that.

Imasha believes the current spotlight is positive because although it is generating backlash, it also stimulates reflection.

> **Imasha:** I think some people do think it is a bit in their face. Some people—I think it's gotten, it's um—I think it's kind of similar to the feminist thing where it kind of makes them step back and be like, I don't really care. …I think it'll make them think about their own actions though, so it's definitely a really good moment.

Reflexivity makes one question what is most valuable to them within a given field. It awakens subjectivity which forces them to recognise and reconsider once held

internalised (and unconscious) beliefs, and in turn potentially lose an interest in the rules of the game they had previously been (unwittingly) taking part in. Through repetitive exposure to desired social change and increased objections to backlash, detractors will over time (through reflexivity) recognise their misogynistic behaviours and protestations are no longer appreciated or of value. Aiden indicates that detractor numbers are reducing at the club level. Though anecdotal, as a CV employee Aiden's day-to-day interactions with club members (the coalface of cricket) does provide support to this assertion.

> **Aiden:** I think it's both. I think a minority - and I'm confident that's not just a wish, from all the conversations I've had—a minority have it as a push back. …There is a very, very small minority of people that I talk to that might roll their eyes a little bit. That's definitely diminished over the last, you know, five years or so. …They're doing that even less and less in cricket.

Courtney also supports this argument with a belief that increased support as a result of consistent exposure will lead to decreased detractors.

> **Courtney:** …hopefully the positive will outweigh the negative eventually, and I think it will because I don't think anyone's getting off this train, I think the train is just going to keep going. So I think they will become less and less, the detractors and the aggression of it as well. They'll be shouted down more. I think as the exposure grows, there's more power involved in the argument that, you know, women's sport is just as good… …there's more and more people supporting it, especially as more and more girls are getting involved from a younger age and they become part of the pathway. So their family, their extended family become supporters of it. Again, more exposure, so yeah, I think the train is getting faster and faster and no-one is getting in the way of that soon.

Whilst Jo thinks those who do not support the shift face consequences.

> **Jo:** …if you don't hop on board as a male, then you're going to have egg on your face. So, I think it's now got to a stage where momentums gathered and it's happening.

Jackie notes that visibility of backlash by detractors is a way to hold them accountable.

> **Jackie:** I think you know, social media is such a, is such a bastion of hatred in some ways. In that respect, even though it might be actually just a really small percentage of men that think that, I think that what it does is it's, it's actually a way that we can hold people accountable to how they think about equality.

The calling out of backlash is key: if we can increase the number of people willing to object to inequalities, we can potentially guide detractors towards reflexivity. And it is not only men whose habitus we need to change; we have seen in the previous chapter that our female leaders have been conditioned to allow themselves to be the subordinate—so it is about allowing them to be reflexive as well. The more support they receive from society, and the more people speak out against the bias and backlash that women face—including as leaders—the more those women will recognise that they too no longer need to simply comply.

Reflexivity in action

Recollection of some incidents during the participant interviews did provide an example of reflexivity in action. Referring to the incident discussed previously where Jo was called a dyke by an opposition wicketkeeper and she asked Peter to ignore it so as to not create a scene, Peter refused and instead berated the player.

> **Peter:** I said, "you apologise, and you apologise now", so he did. After the game, he came up to her and apologised as we were walking off. And then as we're having a drink at the bar, afterwards, he actually bought her a drink. Saw what she was drinking, bought her a drink and apologised again.

The player appears to have reflected on his behaviour as a result of Peter's negative reaction. Whilst this positive outcome may not occur in every instance, the more often disparagement of this type of behaviour occurs the more normalised disparagement becomes, and the less accepting we are of sexist behaviour.

Recollection of the following incident by Gemma shows that she chose to speak out against gendered discourse at her club as a result of her reflexivity. She felt

the need to speak out in order to provide an example for the young players at the club, and to make it clear to the older males in the room that this discourse has no value—hence forcing them to also reflect. Gemma's gendered habitus has been formed through many years of exposure to patriarchal dominance—both within cricket and the construction industry—and one wonders whether she would have spoken out in years past, or if it is a result of the current climate (a question I was remiss in not asking at the time).

> **Gemma:** I had a key person on the committee getting up in front of the club talking about—we were having a function—and talking about that it would be good if you could get your wives or your partners or your mothers or your sisters to bring a salad. Which....like you know, just makes me like [angry]. You know I actually stopped him, and I stood up, and I stood up in front of the whole club, and I corrected him in front of everyone. Because one, it's just not on, it's just not on. But we've got, as I said our average age of our players, of our young men is 23, and if they're hearing that type of language—and this committee member, he's actually a lovely guy. He's a really, he's a, he's a good, nice family man who wouldn't deliberately try to say the wrong thing—but we're not in 1990 now. We've moved past that, and that, that's not an excuse anymore. So, we need to set an example for our young men that that type of wording and that type of language is just not acceptable.

Time for a new generation?

Gemma's reference to the younger players at her club brings me to the final theme identified from participant responses, the potential of the younger generation as a catalyst for gender equality. Aligning with Connell and Bourdieu's assertions that history plays a part in social change because of ever-changing attitudes (Bourdieu, 1990; Connell & Pearse, 2014), the younger men and women of today may already have a different gendered habitus to those of their parents and previous generations. As previously mentioned, cricket is synonymous with 'white, stale, male' and this was evident throughout the interviews, with a number of references made to the older generation of males as a hurdle for equality in sport. Jo's following comment indicates her awareness of the older generation's resistance,

noting however her belief that the possibility for change exists in both her generation and her children's.

> **Jo:** Like you got someone like my dad who's like arrrgghh, football arrgghh [is not for women], and you're going to get that, that's that generation. Nothing you do, nothing you could have done would have changed my dad's [opinion]. Nothing you're going to do ever is going to change Trisha's dad's mind [Jo's best friend]. That is what it is. So [it's] people like me, or that next tier down who are open, yeah.

When discussing backlash on the drive for gender equality in sport, Jo spoke about an incident at a recent Melbourne Cricket Ground event (with mostly older guests in attendance) when an AFLW player stated she should "basically be paid the same as Buddy Franklin".

> **Jo:** Like you should have heard the "Ohhh!", and the table comments. Like you had people who had—and it's that crew that you're gonna be up against—the tour guides that have worked there and volunteered for the last 40 years, they're like going "ohhh!" You know, it just went down like a ton of bricks.

Gemma's response to current attitudes indicated a potential shift within younger demographics which perhaps points to societal habitus change. If there is a continuance in an increased value of (or demand for) gender equality from younger women, then there is a higher possibility of it becoming the norm.

> **Gemma: …**because our players are so young—we've got such a young playing list—I actually feel that—because I think the average age is 23—I think that at that age, girls are more demanding it [gender equality]. And those players that's, that to a certain extent all they know.

Gemma's view somewhat aligns with the perspective at the community men's-only club which has a history of toxic masculinity, with Peter pointing out the young men no longer behave that way.

> **Peter:** I think that the behavioral issues of males towards females is, you know because I used to see it quite a bit, you know that, you know these male chauvinists and how they treat women etc was, you know. People have more respect for them now. I think, like if I look around, if I look around say the change rooms for example, when the guys, they'll have their towels around them or something, they stay within

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the confines of the change room or in the shower block [now]. They're not coming out walking around with their towels around them [anymore], like even if it's a hot day like you know, you might have seen that, the showmanship you know, because they're young and they're, they're virile that sort of stuff you know. You don't see that now. You don't see—in all honesty, when I was playing cricket at school, if it was raining, and we had to stop—which happened a lot in Dunedin—someone would pull out a deck of cards and there was nude females on the back of them. You don't see that anymore. That type of behaviour is now gone. And that's a good thing.

Whilst Brett from CV unfortunately paints a bleak outlook for gender equality in Premier Cricket in the near future, he also believes the younger males coming through are being exposed to new norms.

Brett: I wouldn't say Premier Cricket is gonna sit there and say we think women know how to, know everything about Premier Cricket—I don't believe it'll come to that stage, or not in our lifetime anyway. But look it's definitely, the landscape has definitely, definitely changed... …I think, I think we're now, I think it's now that we're starting to see young males who have come through now with girls playing, females playing with them in their junior teams. So, it's becoming a bit more normal.

If we are indeed experiencing a generational shift in habitus then we could be witnessing a changing of the guard, which whilst unlikely to eradicate gender inequality in its entirety, could certainly be harnessed to drive change for future generations.

How the intersection of cricket and family has played out for Imasha over the past four years is a great example for both habitus change and generational change. Imasha is 24 years old and as discussed previously, her parents' have not supported her choice to play cricket because of their cultural beliefs around women and sport. Imasha has persisted though, and as a result she no longer has an investment in the 'gendered' game within her family settings; her habitus has transformed within the family field, which is in turn impacting her parent's habitus, as this recollection indicates:

Imasha: My mom has recently, this season she's been around at the club a bit more often—everyone's noticing that a lot. I think she's trying to be more supportive

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this season. But it did take a bit. My dad's a little different. If he sees me playing, he'll be really happy at the time. But outside of—but he won't come see [me play] very often—outside of that he's always complaining about it... I've seen him one time—because he's a bus driver in the Frankston area—so one time I was playing at Frankston and I saw, I saw his bus—like I don't think he knows, but I saw him stop his bus there, and he stopped for a bit. I knew it was him, I saw it was him. (He) stayed there for about 10 minutes and then he drove off again. Like I'm pretty sure he didn't want me to see that he watched me. Like he's, he's quietly supporting me. Even he will never tell me to my face like but my brother's told me—like because he came to watch a bit of another game one time too—my brother's like, oh you know, [dad said] "that's a really good shot that she just played just then". But he'll never come say that to me.

Imasha's elevated capital within the club field—as the female driver behind the formation of CMG's first women's team and their inaugural (and current) First XI captain—has translated to cultural capital in her familial field. Cricket is an important part of Sri Lankan lives, as is the case with Imasha's family, so Imasha's position within the family field has changed for the better. She has gone from being the daughter who is not following gendered expectations, to the daughter who is not following gendered expectations *but* can play cricket well and has thus earned the respect of her fellow cricketers (men and women alike). After four years of persistence Imasha's mother is now supporting her, and it is apparent that her father is secretly proud of her. Whilst he is still battling with the oppositional forces of gender and cricket capital, perhaps with more exposure to the club and watching Imasha play more regularly, he could become more supportive as well.

Time for constant action

The importance of maintaining a constant push for gender equality in sport if we wish to create reflexivity and hence habitus change, is imperative. History has shown though that periods of positive progression come in waves. McLachlan's (2019) historical media analysis on women's sport in Australia demonstrates that since the 1880's there has been a procession of declarations of unprecedented periods of progress. What her study also revealed is that not only do these

declarations—and the underlying initiatives—appear to be repeated over time, but this repetition potentially provides a false sense that we have reached gender equality within sport. The current boom we're experiencing therefore is not a new phenomenon, but simply the resurgence of a well-worn path where true progression towards gender equality is questionable. The fact that these reports of 'never before seen' advancements in female sport reappear every decade or so should lead us to question their validity—or at least their impact—because if we were experiencing such positive progress why do we need to keep revisiting the same inequalities? Whilst we have seen various attempts to smash the glass ceiling for female leaders over the years—along with recent advances in skill development, professionalisation, and media exposure across women's sport in general—these initiatives are not changing the underlying rules of the game; sport is still a male preserve. It is imperative therefore that we work towards a consistent push for gender equality, rather than sporadically revisiting the issue and mainly focusing on participation. The 'right' time should be a constant—rather than an event which occurs once every decade or so—and we need to replace these individual so-called 'boom' times with their incremental improvements and celebratory discourse, with a committed focus on long-lasting social change.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented my vision for grasping the current 'boom' time in women's sport and using it as a catalyst for social change. Through the consistent push for gender equality in sport, the calling out of backlash, and a focus on habitus change, we may be able to create a level playing field where women in sport—including as leaders—is the norm.

This is the final chapter of my findings and related discussion of the identified enablers that assist women to become leaders in non-professional cricket. In the next chapter I will present my conclusions and offer suggestions for future research.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The underrepresentation of female leaders—both within and outside of sport—is not a new phenomenon but rather an enduring inequity. Over recent decades there has been an increased focus on research aiming to establish why this injustice persists (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Darvin & Lubke, 2020; Hovden, 1999, 2010; Knoppers & Anthonissen, 2008; Pfister, 2010a; Piggott & Pike, 2019; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003; Sotiriadou & Pavlidis, 2020). That research initially brought to light numerous barriers women face when seeking appointment to a leadership role, and subsequently identified additional issues encountered once they are successful. The aim of this study was to gain an understanding of how gendered relations can help women overcome those barriers and issues, specifically within non-professional cricket, and hence enable them to gain a leadership role and to maintain that position.

A multilevel analysis was adopted where the gendered interactions and influences of nine female leaders were analysed across both their interpersonal and club realms, but also extended into the sport's administrative body to assess the wider area of cricket itself. Four core enablers were identified, with the effect of each enabler not necessarily consistent across the leaders as they are dependent upon the specific sub-field of cricket they found themselves in. Hence the enablers were prefixed with a qualifier as: the 'right' support, the 'right' capital, the 'right' gendered habitus, and the 'right' time. Each enabler has been presented separately to this point, but conclusions drawn from the discussion of each make it evident that my decision to evaluate the effect of gender relations across all three analytical levels was justified; no one factor is an enabler on its own, nor are the enablers restricted to any one level. The enablement of the female leaders is instead a result of socially constructed gendered interactions both within and outside of the field of cricket, influenced by gendered structures ratified by administrators, club members, and the female leaders themselves. I will therefore present in this concluding chapter a summary of the key ways in which each of the four individual enablers work together to assist the women.

Summary of key findings

Support from partners and/or family is an important enabler for female leaders, but it appears that male partners need to value the activity of cricket as a prerequisite to offering their support. With this knowledge, to further enable women to be leaders, clubs should ensure they provide opportunities for partners and families to be included as well. Whether it be as players, providing junior teams for those with children, the active inclusion of partners socially, or encouraging them to come into the club as volunteers or leaders themselves will be beneficial. Whilst partner and/or family support is beneficial it is not imperative as it can be offset by club support (through the form of friendships). This provides clubs with a second reason why an inclusive and social environment is helpful. For female leaders, friendships within clubs can be empowering but also build social capital which is a necessary enabler. Social capital was an enabler for all female leaders interviewed, and for the women at Premier level it led to the provision of even greater levels of capital through access to expanded networks. Those in community level competitions were limited to networks within their club environment though, a potential opportunity for CV to address.

Unlike social capital, cultural capital—in the form of leadership skills or experience—was not a necessary enabler for all of the women. As would be expected, the higher the level of competition the higher value cultural capital held. What this research tells us is that women without cultural capital can still be leaders in non-professional cricket, as long as support is provided by their club. Unfortunately, CV's enablement of leaders through assistance with cultural capital building initiatives is severely lacking, and this is another opportunity for them to increase their support levels.

Physical capital built from knowledge gained over years of watching or being involved in cricket was an enabler for all of the women. The enablement of physical capital in terms of cricketing prowess though, depended on the specific value assigned to it within each field. Whilst highly valued at the women-only club—and hence an enabler—its value varied across the remaining clubs based on whether it was considered emasculating or not. A lack of physical prowess (and combined with motherhood) appeared to be the preferred enabler within the top-level men-

only club—though this does warrant further research to be conclusive. For a woman within a male club who does hold physical capital in the form of ability, she is faced with a barrier. To overcome that barrier, the adoption of a gendered habitus conducive with a male dominated environment becomes an enabler. The gender performativity attached to this habitus—and required for this specific field—needs to be at such a level as to remove the emasculation by re-positioning the female leader to the level of subordinate.

The gendered habitus formed by the female leaders is the result of a subconscious alignment with the gendered norms of the field they find themselves in. Furthermore, both the level of capital and the level of support they receive, is also dependent on their gendered habitus aligning with the field. If we imagine the gendered habitus of a leader existing along a continuum therefore, those required to most re-align to patriarchal views would be at one end, and the field where there is less pressure at the other. This study indicates that a female leader who displays physical prowess in an all-male environment would be at one extreme, whilst female leaders in a women-only club would be at the other. When these women move outside of their club though and into the wider field of cricket their positions may change; for example, as the female leaders at the women-only club are homosexual *and* display physical prowess, they would likely have the most significant change to their gendered habitus.

The final enabler identified—and which works holistically with the other three—is being in a time where there is a societal push for gender equality, and specifically in sport. This has likely been an enabler for all of the women outside of those at PWO, so this is the 'right' time (at this point in time). But this current push we're experiencing is just one of many, and it is not removing the gendered norms which have always existed to prevent women from being leaders. Therefore, the true 'right' time will be when we maintain a consistent focus on gender equality, along with added attention to behaviour change.

The inclusion of an intersectional approach within this study was beneficial as a number of contrasting enablers (and barriers) were identified between the female leaders based on the intersection of their gender, sexuality and/or ethnicity. It is evident that female leaders whose cultural heritage does not align with white

Australian, or those who identify as lesbians, face additional challenges when aiming to gain and maintain their leadership roles.

One final major finding I would be remiss of not mentioning is the lack of support by CV to existing female leaders, or initiatives aimed at increasing female leadership representation within the sport. Unfortunately, their support appears to be restricted to female leaders who meet their 'ideal' views, and who represent the top echelons of male non-professional cricket. Outside of coaching courses, CV provide no governance or leadership training, or support with such, and it appears they have no intention of putting in place any initiatives where clubs are encouraged to increase their female leader numbers. CV have many opportunities to make a positive impact on increasing female leaders within clubs, but it appears this is not a priority for them.

Research contribution

This study has contributed to the existing body of literature focusing on gender and leadership in sport by addressing four gaps: analysis across all three levels (macro, meso, micro), situated at the non-professional level (rather than organisational or elite), focusing on the enablers (rather than barriers), whilst incorporating both a gendered and multicultural intersectional approach.

Beyond these gaps—which were identified at the commencement of the study, the findings have opened a path to new ways of aiming to overcome the persistent underrepresentation of female leaders. The foundation of the female leaders' experiences in this research point to individuals who, through their love of the game of cricket, expanded their opportunities, but also followed an ancient route signposted with gendered and cultural 'norms'. At times those signposts were clearly evident, for all to see—but some were shrouded in mist with travellers unconsciously choosing the path of least resistance. It is our duty as researchers to redirect and create new paths which are not only mapped out for all to see, but also free flowing for all genders. As researchers we know the barriers; we know the negative impact that gendered relations can have, and we know that women are forced to adapt their behaviours in male dominated environments. But for some

reason we keep researching the 'why' and adding more women in the hope it will all change, but without addressing the why. We have tried to change the system by addressing organisational and club inequality in sport through inclusion & diversity programs, quotas, male champions of change, and female targeted training, networking, and mentoring programs. These approaches are not working, and this research is therefore proposing a new approach.

With regards to future research on female leadership in sport, my first recommendation is to focus on social change through behaviour change. It was obvious through the findings that the female leaders adapt their behaviour to align with gendered expectations, and whilst the majority of the leaders support gender equity in sport, they shy away from being identified as a feminist and are in fact confused as to what feminism actually means. Therefore, action research adopting a Bourdieusian reflexive approach with the aim being to alter female's gendered habitus should be priority. Helping women to not only recognise gender inequity and identify when they are being complicit, but to empower them to openly identify as a feminist and resist and speak out against such behaviour can begin to rebuild feminism as a social movement. Aligning with my discussions around the younger generation as a catalyst for gender equity, it is imperative that younger women and girls be included in this research. As this research can potentially lead to increased levels of backlash from males (as a result of the women resisting inequity) similar research aimed at male habitus change should be run alongside or included within the female focused action research.

Additional research suggestions specific to the findings of this thesis include action research within clubs aiming to actively involve partners and family members to help overcome cultural gendered ideologies, and to create social environments; research to explore whether the absence of physical capital as an enabler for female leaders within male sports clubs in higher level competitions is a broader pattern within sport; and finally, the wider adoption of an intersectional approach within female leadership research.

The enablers and shortcomings identified within this thesis also give rise to a number of practical recommendations which CV could adopt. Specifically, they should provide a range of leadership development opportunities to clubs (including

inclusive and collaborative leadership training for club Presidents); provide practical assistance and work with clubs to create a social and inclusive environment; create a program where Premier and community clubs work together to provide mentoring and networking opportunities for emerging leaders (both female and male); link a female coaching program with the funding requirements of any future grants focused on increasing women and girls participation; set specific parameters and guidance for facilitators of their *Girls Leadership Program* to ensure presentation aligns with the aims of the program, and link that program with the aforementioned mentoring program. The final recommendation for CV is to take on a leadership role themselves and set an example for other State Sporting Organisations by linking female leadership targets to club funding. And if they really wanted to make change: run a campaign focused on the promotion of feminism as a value synonymous with cricket.

A final reflection

As is the case for many researchers, my reasons for wanting to embark on this journey stem from my personal experiences. As a female coach who stepped away from cricket due to the levels of gender bias I was encountering, I wanted to identify how the experiences of the female leaders in this study aligned with and differed to my own. Specifically, how do they survive in a male dominated sports environment when I could not? This thesis has confirmed my suspicions; the gender bias I received is not restricted to me but is part of a larger issue. Women in cricket are the other, and their gendered treatment is determined by how well they conform to, and comply with, that status. The difference between myself and the female leaders in this study was my refusal to play that game.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Female leader interview schedule

Introduction	Ensure recording started.
	Water available.
	Let interviewee know what their pseudonym is.
	"My name is Lisa Lymbery and I'm interviewing [**pseudonym**] about her experiences as a female leader in a cricket club, and how she believes female leaders are enabled within the club."
	"Do you understand the informed consent form that you've signed, and do you have any questions before we start?

Anchor	Key Question	Prompts	Comments
Biographical	Could you please let me know your age, which suburb you currently live in, and what role you hold at the Club?		

| Introduction to Cricket | Can you please give me a rundown on your history with cricket? | - How long have you been involved in cricket?

- How did you become involved / did someone encourage you?

- What roles have you had in cricket? (player, coach, committee, etc)

- Are any of your family members currently involved with cricket or been involved in the past (parents, siblings, spouse/partner, or children)?

    o At this club or another?

    o Their cricket history

    o If no spouse/partner/children at the club, is their spouse/partner supportive of them being a part of cricket? | |

Leadership	What leadership role do you currently hold at the club?	- How long have you had the role? - How did you get the role? (Application / asked to do the role / other)? - Did anyone encourage you to take the role? President, male committee members, anyone specific? - Did Cricket Victoria have an impact? How?	
	What qualities do you think someone needs to have to be a leader in a cricket club?	- Are these qualities any different for a female leader outside of a club environment? - Do you think men and women need to have the same qualities to be a leader in a cricket club? If not how do they differ? - What is your leadership style? (Aggressive, nurturing, communicative, decisive, emotional). - Do you speak up about things you'd like changed in the club or are you happy to sit back and let others guide the changes?	

Leadership	Are you a leader outside of the club?	- What is your role outside the club – work / student / other? - Are you a leader outside of the club: do you feel that your leadership style at work is different to your style at the cricket club? - Is your workplace culture similar to the club culture or different?	
	Committee member: Do you feel that you're included in all of the decision making that happens in the club?	- Are decisions made at committee meetings or are some things decided by the other committee members without consultation? - Do you get involved in the meetings – do you think you provide a lot of input? - Do you feel that you're listened to when you do provide input?	
	Coach / coordinator / other: How much guidance do you get from the club with your role?	- Do you design sessions yourself / run your own schedule? - Do you have a lot of leeway if you wanted to do something differently? Say there was something that was really inefficient for you and you had an idea for a better way to do it, would you be able to just do it the way you want, or would you need to approach someone to get it approved?	