Contemporary organisational culture and competitive advantage: The case of the Crusaders super rugby franchise

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List of Abbreviations

OC   Organisational Culture

KM   Knowledge Management

LP   Lean Production

LO   Learning organisation

Acknowledgments

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Abstract

The way organisational culture is framed, organized and applied is seen by many researchers and practitioners as a key ingredient in organisational successes. This study critically excamines the dynamics and relationships between five significant pillars of organizational culture: organisational values, resilience, innovation, diversity and competitive advantage. The study will use the Crusaders rugby franchise as the major case study. While the Crusaders is often seen as one of the most sucessful rugby teams in the world, little is known about it's organizational culture, innovation strategies and ethical practices. This study, which is an interdisciplinary approach—at the intersection of business management and sports—attempts to examine what people do not often see—the behind the scene organizational culture which has created conditions for an innovative and cutting edge corporate system which translates itself into high level organizational outputs in the form of sporting success. Sports in the contemporary era is increasingly being corporatized and how this is manifested through institutional relationships, innovative thinking and new products may differ in particular specificites from other organizations but some of the broad trends, principles and processes are similar. The study shows that organizational culture evolves over time, is contextual and often made to fit specific situations and interests. In the case of the Crusaders, there is a complex and dynamic synergy between player-coach relationships, role of fans, management of the organization, handling of diversity issues and engaging with equity priciples. The study uses the qualitative, inductive and interpretivist methodology to engage with the organization and its people in a deeper and critical way. It uses Anthony Gidden's structuration theory to frame the study. While to the rest of the world, the Crusaders manifests sporting success, the deeper epistemological question is, what are the organizational values, structures and innovative norms which contribute to this success?

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview

This study investigates the significance of organisational culture (OC) in a sporting organisation. Whilst OC is a broad topic, this study will focus on five pillars; organisational values, resilience, innovation, and diversity and how they contribute to the organisation's competitive advantage. The study will use a case study approach, with the Crusaders Rugby Franchise (commonly known as the Crusaders) being the case organisation. It will then critically examine the nature of organisational values, how they are defined in the context of the Crusaders, and how they are understood and operationalised.

Organisational culture, including its framing, organisation and application, are seen by many researchers and practitioners as a key ingredient in organisational successes. This study attempts to critically examine the dynamics and relationships of organisational culture by using five proposed pillars: organisational values, resilience, innovation, diversity and competitive advantage. As case study, it will use the Crusaders rugby franchise. The Crusaders is often seen as one of the most sucessful rugby teams in the world, yet people know little about its organizational culture, innovation strategies and ethical practices. This interdisciplinary study—which is at the intersection of business management and sports—critically examines the behind-the-scene organizational culture which has created conditions for an innovative and cutting-edge corporate system which translates itself into high level organizational outputs in the form of sporting success. In the contemporary era sports is increasingly being corporatized and this is manifested through institutional relationships, innovative thinking and new products but this may differ in particular specificites from other organizations but some of the broad trends, principles and processes are similar. A major finding is that organizational culture evolves over time, is contextual and often made to fit specific situations and interests. In the case of the Crusaders, there is a complex and dynamic synergy between player-coach relationships, role of fans, management of the organization, handling of diversity issues and engaging with equity priciples. The methodology used is qualitative social science approach in the form of inductive and interpretivist methodologies to engage with the organization and its people in a deeper and critical way. While to outside observers, the Crusaders is an example of sporting success, the deeper epistemological question is, what are the organizational values, structures, and innovative norms, which contribute to this success?

The topic of organisational culture is extensive, and as said earlier, this study aims to examine the specific features of the five selected pillars that are believed to contribute to the longstanding welcoming environment of the Club. Amongst other things, this study is of the view that the Crusaders' environment was constructed based on these strong pillars and as such produced a healthy organisational culture. They are used to define professional and personal relationships, intra-corporation communication, relationships with the public and customers, relationships with other corporations, performance outcomes, and work ethics within the organisation.

The term organisational values refer to beliefs and traits that underpin the work, operation and sustainably of an organization (Kittler et al., 2011). Strong organizational values can lead to organization resilience. In this case resilience refers to the ability of an organization to withstand internal stress and exsternal pressure(Masten, 2015). This study looks at two types of resilience—"stationery resilience" (maintenance of original form despite stress) and "transformational resilience" (adaptation as a result of pressure) (Gunderson et al., 2006; Nilakant et al., 2020). The study shows that Crusaders have learnt to stick to their principles and values in tough times. For an organization, disruptions can provide inspiration to create better processes and methods. The March 15, 2019, mosque shooting in Christchurch forced the Crusaders to reimage itself and the stress was worsened by COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.

The concept of innovation is very critical in organizational success. Innovation refers to new, cutting edge and transformative ideas and methodologies which can drive organizations forwards (Hassi, 2019). In this case study, the Crusader's innovative spirit is one of its main selling points. This was due in part to the Club's challenges in both rugby and their business operations. The importance they placed on improving themselves over time kept them alert. During the course of the interviews, a senior staff member conveyed their perception of themselves as their own top competition. The staff reiterated the importance of continuously implementing innovative techniques in order to mitigate the risk of being overtaken by future competitors.

Diversity, which refers to the idea of facilitating, practicing and being part of different ideas, cultural systems, ideological positions, professional expertise and methodological approaches(Pringle, 2009), is now a new strategic avenue that most successful organisations employ. Crusaders has embraced the concept so well that it has transformed the organisation at so many levels. This is where the Club gets its identity, as well as its new advantage over the competition. The organisation encourages diversity in all aspects, including rugby and business.

Finally, the above organizational values have contributed significantly to the Crusader's competitive advantage. The Club has an advantage over competing rugby clubs and commercial platforms. According to the results of this research, a company's core principles can help foster innovative problem solving, perseverance, and diversity within the workforce, all of which add up to a significant competitive advantage. This facet of their culture is emphasised

because of the challenges they have faced. Generally, the Crusaders Rugby Franchise operates in a competitive sporting and commercial environment. Companies worldwide compete for a share of the market, and one of the ways they can develop resilience and competitive advantage is to create innovative approaches to their modes of operation, including unique organisational cultures. The Crusaders Rugby Franchise has been one of the most successful professional rugby clubs in World Rugby for the last 25 years. The notions of organizational values, resilience, innovation and competitive advantage will be framed within the broader framework of Gidden's structuration theory which proposes that structure and agency (people) engage in complex ways to create a transformative eco-system of relationship (Cohen, 1989).

1.2   Research aim & objectives

1.2.1   Broad aim

This study's broad aim is to investigate the role of organisational values in fostering resilience, innovation, and diversity to create a competitive advantage for the Crusaders Super Rugby Franchise.

1.2.2   Specific objectives

Hence, the specific objectives to guide this study are:

a) To critically examine the organisational values and how they are defined, understood and incorporated into the operational philosophy and principles, using the Crusaders Rugby Franchise as a case study.

b) To analyse how organisational values help the Crusaders embrace diversity, resilience, and innovations and how they contribute to the franchise's competitive advantage.

c) To show how lessons from this study could be used to foster new avenues for success in professional rugby clubs and sporting and corporate organisations at amateur and professional levels.

d) To develop a new theory that explains the relationships between the organisational culture pillars discussed in this study and its competitive edge.

1.3   Rationale and interest in topic

My research interests lie in the intersection of sports and business. Specifically, I am interested in learning more about the criteria by which professional sports teams, such as the case organisation, the Crusaders, understand

corporate culture. Furthermore, establishing the correct organisational culture to foster a successful rugby club has not received much attention. Traditionally, many organisational culture (OC) studies were conducted in the context of the countries of major economies. These mainly focused on corporate organisations, state-owned organisations, including non-profit organisations and how corporate culture contributes to the success of those organisations.

I have also used the Denison model, which is a tool used to measure the Organisational culture of an organisation (Denison et al., 2006). According to the model, organisational culture can be described by *mission, adaptability, involvement, and consistency*. OC is a vast subject; however, as previously mentioned, this thesis focuses on the five pillars of organisational values, diversity, innovation, and resilience and how they contribute to achieving competitiveness and success in a cut-throat industry like the sports industry. No other OC studies have focussed explicitly on these five pillars to investigate an organisation's organisational culture. This study intends to provide the industry this knowledge and build new theories to help understand it.

As a Human Resources professional, I have participated in various OC initiatives, from small-scale training sessions to large-scale structural overhauls, to foster a more harmonious OC. I have never dealt with a sports organisation before in the context of OC, so this is a first. Understanding how the Crusaders adapted to the OC five pillars of this research and the insights they provided will be illuminating.

1.4   Personal motivation

I have a strong interest in sports and was a competitive athlete in my youth. I was offered a rugby scholarship with the Canterbury Rugby Union after leading our 1st XV rugby team to a historic win in the national schools' rugby competition in 1996 in Fiji. I began my rugby career in Christchurch in 1997, but it was cut short due to injuries, and I returned to Fiji the same year. As a Management Cadet at Carpenters Fiji Limited, based at Morris Hedstrom Supermarkets, I began my corporate professional career in Fiji. After a year of training in the supermarket, I moved to the Human Resources (HR) Department in June 1999 to shadow the then-HR Manager (who was called back then as Personnel Officer) and took over the role after 6 months. I never looked back and rose from junior to executive level as an HR professional over a 20-year period. During my 20 years as an HR professional, I was involved in numerous organisational development activities and projects to improve and establish a thriving organisational culture. I appreciated being challenged and gaining new knowledge because time is precious and waits for no one. This study will benefit from my practical knowledge of corporate culture, and work experience, particularly in establishing linkages between the five pillars and comparing the practises and theoretical frameworks.

1.5   Structure of thesis

1.5.1   Chapter 2 – Literature review

The literature review intends to examine the existing knowledge and research relevant to this study. This study is multi-disciplinary and will be informed by the review in terms of the research direction.

The following questions will guide the literature review and identify the rationale for the research. The questions are as follows, and the subsequent sections address each of these questions:

a)   What research has been done?

b)   What gaps are there in the research?

c)   What research should be done?

d)   Why should the research be done?

Organisations have core values, and they reflect the majority of the founder's or key players' nationality values (Hofstede, 1985) . Culture shapes societies and organisations (Kittler et al., 2011), hence the national culture has become increasingly important, forcing organisations to adapt to diverse demographics and to elevate their strategic goals. Leading social theorist Anthony Giddens established the Theory of Structuration (Cohen, 1989). Giddens was dissatisfied with how these two ideas were employed to explain sociology's greatest difficulty - social order—the way people of different origins, emotions, and experiences function together without much disorder (Englund et al., 2020; Giddens, 1984). He found that structure-centred and agency theories complement one another rather than compete with each other. Structure indicates governance and resource categories, allowing the agents to use memory traces to accomplish social behaviours from structures.

1.5.2   Chapter 3 - Methodology

This chapter will look at the methodology used focusing on the qualitative, interprettive, inductive and case study approach. The Crusaders Rugby Franchise (commonly known as the Crusaders) is the case organisation.

1.5.3 Chapter 4 – History of world rugby

This chapter discusses rugby's origins and the ethics that shaped the game. It also examines the evolution of rugby and the pillars that have shaped it, culminating in the professional era. The chapter also discusses how diversity entered the sport and helped it grow to its current size. While it is still challenging in some regions, most people realise diversity is a social obligation and a way to promote the sport. This chapter also addresses COVID and how the pandemic has altered established platforms, businesses and society. Some companies resorted to cutting jobs and restructuring to survive during the pandemic.

1.5.4 Chapter 5 – History of Canterbury rugby and the Crusaders

In this chapter, we will look at the history of rugby in New Zealand, from its humble beginnings to its current status as one of the country's most defining sports and a major economic driver. The chapter then shifts focus to the Canterbury area, discussing how the early settlers' values and priorities impacted the development of rugby in the region, leading to the establishment of the Crusaders Super Rugby club in 1996. The evolution of the Crusaders rugby team from its humble beginnings to its current status as a super rugby and international powerhouse is also covered.

1.5.5 Chapter 6 – Organisational values

This chapter relooks at the various organisational values theories discussed in the literature review and in contrast examines how the case organisation, the Crusaders, understands them and how do they operationalise them in their routines. New findings are also discussed that usher in some new knowledge. Individuals' values and social norms play a crucial role in shaping their sense of self (Dawson et al., 2011). As a result, values determine how we interact with others, making it easier for us to adapt to novel circumstances (Weinert, 2014).

1.5.6 Chapter 7 – Innovation and resilience

This chapter discusses the evolution of innovation and the theoretical frameworks in the literature review. The Crusaders' Super Rugby Academy has endured and given them an edge. They are New Zealand's only Super Rugby Academy. While it prides itself on successful techniques that have been unique to the Club and a pillar of success for many years, they continue to find ways to integrate fresh ideas to flavour these foundations. It is extremely fascinating to observe that different sections of the Crusaders take a different approach to innovation. This is simply because of

the varying levels of problems each sector is exposed to and more or less because of the unique core roles that each segment plays. Using the information collected, a new Innovation theory was formulated to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the case organisation's success in combining resilience and innovation into a sustainable competitive advantage.

1.5.7 Chapter 8 - Diversity

This chapter will attempt to analyse and discuss the unique manner in which the Crusaders define diversity and how they manage diversity as an organisation from a strategic perspective. Diversity brings much positivity to the decision tables because the perspective is not based on a singular mindset but driven by various perceptions, which results in a very informative decision or resolution.

The diversity challenges are also discussed in this chapter. Rugby has been regarded as a sport for all kinds of people; the tall, the short, the big, the small, the fast, and the not so fast, and it is for all races, creeds and gender. Although it has a colonial and exclusive history, rugby is quickly becoming a cross-cultural global game.

1.5.8 Chapter 9 – Competitive advantage (Analysis)

This chapter will weave together strands of ideas from the organisational cultural pillars used in this study – organisation values, diversity, resilience, and innovation. It analyses how the case organisation approaches the five pillars, mentioned above. It then critically examines how these provide a platform for the Club's competitive advantage in a highly contested space, allowing the Club to succeed for a long period. While the victory is scored in the field, the off-field professional, cultural, sociological and psychological aspects, although implicit, would have contributed immensely to shaping the professional readiness of the players and officials.

1.5.9 Chapter 10 - Conclusion

This chapter will briefly discuss the study's significant findings using the thematic chapters' findings. It will examine how the organisational values influence innovation, resilience and diversity in the Crusaders Rugby Franchise and, further how this contributes to their competitive advantage. As such, this chapter will try to respond to the Aims and Objectives of this study.

Chapter 2: Organizational culture—theoretical exploration

2.1   Introduction

Amongst other things, the influence of national culture on corporate or organisational culture has been one of the primary drivers of this study. Global economic activities continue to make strides into new grounds, and consequently, the emphasis on the factors that build a positive organisational culture for economic returns is elevated (Rountree et al., 2014). Therefore, this has ushered in the need for multinational organisations to understand the role of culture in the business environment, particularly the host nation. Walmart, a giant American Retailer, struggled to replicate its successful strategies in other nations it ventured into because, in most cases, it failed to recognise and adapt to the local national culture, the way people shop, its law, resulting in the closure of 269 stores worldwide (Hunt et al., 2018). In its global expansion, the French retail giant Carrefour adapted well to some extent, especially in understanding local shopping or trading behaviours influenced by their local culture. The Chinese use an economic practice called 'guanxi', in which social capital is used ' to build a business relationship'(Chuang et al., 2011, p. 443). Each organisation has dominant value systems that form an integral part of an organisation, and these value systems capture a component of the nationality of the organisation's founder or the key players of the organisation or company (Hofstede, 1985).

2.2   Organizational culture: An overview

Saint Simon was perhaps the first social scientist that attempted an initial analysis of organisations that were developing in the western world during the industrial revolution (Prasad, 1965). He analysed some of the unique characteristics of evolving organisational patterns which he perceived to have an impact on future societies. Saint Simon further claimed that the change in the social structure also impacts the basis of administrative authority. His work was accorded acknowledgement in the history of sociology, however, Max weber, expanded on this subject on a much wider platform with a detailed analysis of the modern organization in which Weber maintained that bureaucracy was the optimal approach for building and administering an organisation, particularly for larger enterprises that needed to achieve maximum efficiency despite their size and numerous responsibilities (Lunenburg, 2017; Prasad, 1965).

People deem a culture to be legitimate because of the language that has consistently and constantly been communicated amongst their groups. Furthermore, societies use cultural artefacts metaphorically to depict an image and express a cultural identity that others will understand (Jo Hatch & Schultz, 1997). Every country in the world possesses ethnic-based cultures and values which distinguish them from other groups (Mityaeva et al., 2018). One of the challenges is that we often use the projected image formulated by our own cultural perspectives to interpret the depicted images of others. Therefore, intercultural research is essential.

The American anthropologist Edward T Hall's work had a significant impact on intercultural research (Kittler et al., 2011). In his book *The Silent Language* (1959), he used the Freudian psychoanalytic theory to analyse language. Hall disputed that "individuals tend to be partially unaware of elements of their non-verbal communication behavior" and suggested that time, space and context are essential in understanding culture (Kittler et al., 2011):

1. *Time* – this dimension explains how different cultures approach time and the manner they understand it (monochromic vs polychromic)

2. *Space* – refers to various cultural frameworks for defining and managing space

3. *Context* – refers to how people interpret things differently across cultures using different ratios of context and information.

Hall further stated in his book *Handbook for Proximity Research* (1973) that the structures present information in a context that creates meaning (Kittler et al., 2011).

In elaborating the *time dimension*, Hall introduced two orientations to assist when comparing two culture types: High-context and Low-context. Hall proposed that cultures can be defined according to the manner in which people communicate, whether it be verbal or non-verbal (Würtz, 2005). High-context culture is characteristically embroiled in relationships that sometimes make it difficult to get to the point quickly when communicating. This culture orientation tends to transmit messages through non-verbal gestures such as silence and body language. Hence including the "situation, behaviour and para verbal cues" as critical components of the communicated messages (Würtz, 2005, p. 274). Low-context cultures are direct and base their communication on horizontal patterns.

Culture is linked to social structures and influences organisations' shape (Kittler et al., 2011). The prominent role of national culture has risen phenomenally, forcing organisations to readjust their structure to absorb the variety of demographics, elevating organisations' strategic intent.

Brown, in his study conducted in 1984, stated that the word 'value' indicates an individual's preference of one thing over the other merely to establish superiority (Oreg & Katz-Gerro, 2006). However, in their work in 1996, Tesser & Martin argued that 'preference' is normally deducted using descriptors such as "good-bad, likeable-dislikable, moral-immoral, and pleasant unpleasant" (Oreg & Katz-Gerro, 2006, p. 466). Values and behavioral norms are key ingredients that determine the central identity of people (Dawson et al., 2011). Therefore, *values* shape our social perception, which allows individuals to embrace a new environment or setting (Weinert, 2014). In an organisational context, values establish a system of approach that necessitates appropriate behaviors of collective individuals, including activities and responsibilities demanded by the value system (Enz, 1988).

Organizational Culture (OC) is intangible and quite a challenge to determine because it deals with a phenomenon that appeals to emotions (Mohelska & Sokolova, 2015), and is deemed as a significant competitive advantage for business success. OC was seen as "an elusive phenomenon characterising the quality of the social climate within the organisation and determining the dominant work positions of all workers" (Mohelska & Sokolova, 2015, p. 1012). OC has an array of influence and it is challenging and can only be changed in a longer-term perception. Denison in his work in 1990 stated that organisational culture is "the underlying values, beliefs, and principles that serve as a foundation for an organisation's management system as well as a set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce those basic principles" (Sebastiao et al., 2017, p. 864). As such, OC is formed by a coalition of dominant forces, preserved by the internal functional systems and influenced by social values and the external environment. Hence, the organisational culture is dependent on the structure and strategy of an organisation and, more importantly, dependent also on the leader.

The ideology of OC emerged in the early 1980s as a major concern to administrators and researchers (Ramachandran et al., 2011). The earlier management thinking, particularly in the United States and Europe, assumed that all management principles across border and any organisation that aspire to become successful must align accordingly to the best practices in the richer countries (Hofstede, 1983). However, over the years this ideology began to shift and it was accepted that national cultures have a major influence on the corporate culture. (Hofstede, 1983) eluded that any form of development or change must ensure that it harnesses prudently the values of the home country and the organisational values. He further claimed that nationality is very crucial to management principles for three reasons. Firstly, the *political factor* that any organisation must deal with are factors that impact the policy frameworks it operates within, whether it be a multinational, multicultural, private or public organisation. Secondly, is the *sociological factor* particularly, the nationality or regional identity which has symbolic value to most citizens and emulates patriotism. This tends to be one of the key realities that management ideology has to creatively embrace. The third

reason why nationality is critical is the *psychological factor*. Our thinking capacity is impacted by national culture factors. The experiences that people go through from childhood to adulthood tend to be the backdrop of how they perceive and interpret things in life. These are experiences that are shared with people in their own community and nation and not with those outside the national boundaries. This psychological conditioning, as described by (Hofstede, 1983, p. 76) is transferred into various institutions in a nation, such as "government, legal systems, educational systems, industrial relations systems, family structures, religious organisations, sports clubs, settlement patterns, literature, architecture, and even scientific theories." (p. 76).

The OC concept was widely used in the corporate sector, however it also attracted the attention of the Higher Education Institutions (HEI). OC was not too difficult to embrace in the HEI because the sector was faced with similar challenges as private sectors in terms of a highly competitive environment. The market is driven by similar forces that influence the corporate sectors; the growing impacts of globalisation and the significant impact of technology (Ramachandran et al., 2011).

 Hofstede adopted an Inductive Research method in which he developed the theory from having conducted a major survey of IBM employees all over the world. Similarly, this thesis will also adopt an Inductive Research approach.

Organizational culture and leadership

The demands of leadership in the competitive business world have been elevated to a level with which workers expect their leader not only to be sound in operational effectiveness but to also skillfully use mechanisms that influence human behaviors. As stated by Mohelstra & Pitra in their work in 2012, workers anticipate their leader or manager to be also a psychologist (Mohelska & Sokolova, 2015). Leaders are expected to bring cohesion in teams fostering collaborations, thus resulting in quality decisions that are effective and will impact positivity in the work environment. In his work in 1992, Schein stated that leaders' characters and values are perceived to have a major impact on the culture of any organisation (Aitken, 2007). There has been growing interest in studies and theories on cross-cultural contexts, particularly on leadership (Kargas & Varoutas, 2015).

A study conducted by Tsui et al. (2016) on the relationship between *CEO leadership behavior* and *organisational culture* in China, pointed that researchers should not downplay the fact that leaders play a crucial role in organisational culture success. The study also established that leadership behavior need not be aligned to the established organisation's culture for success, however the leader can influence success but institutionalising best practices for positive outcomes (Tsui et al., 2006). The work by (Tsui et al., 2006) claimed that there is more occurrence of congruencies between CEO leadership and organisational culture.

In their study conducted in 2007, Uhl-Bien, Marion & McKelvey suggested that most leadership models which accommodated a traditional hierarchy were designed for the past century (Kargas & Varoutas, 2015). However, since the rise of globalisation, there has been growing concerns that these traditional leadership models may not fully fathom the compelling demands on leadership roles in today's complex and volatile economic landscape. These impacts have resulted in organisations adopting more *robust* leadership development programs to prepare leaders for the real world. Uhl-Bien, Marion & McKelvey also discussed one of their core prepositions namely the 'complexity leadership theory' (Kargas & Varoutas, 2015). The theory proposed that leadership is not an act of influence of an individual or individuals however it is coiled in a complex reciprocity of many interactive forces. For three decades, corporate organisations and institutions around the globe invested heavily in leadership and organisation culture, thus attracting repeated debates on the relationship of these two pillars.

Interestingly, leadership or, more specifically, *leadership integrity* is an attribute that to some extent is consistent across cultures (Martin et al., 2013). The study carried out by Martin et al explored and compared the meaning of leadership integrity in six societies representing three culture groups. These clusters were Ireland and the U.S. (Anglo cluster), Germany and Austria (Germanic Europe cluster) including China and Hong Kong (Confucian Asia cluster). The study concluded that each culture had specific attributes that leaders were expected to have to portray integrity. However, when the same attributes were analysed across cultures, nine common themes were found to be congruent with all societies. The themes were: "*guided by strong personal moral code/values*, *Value-Behavior consistency*, *Honest*, *Fair* and *Just*, *Openness and Transparency*, *Consideration and Respect for Others*, *Sense of Responsibility for/toward others*, and *Abiding by Rules and regulations*" (Martin et al., 2013, p. 449).

Organizational culture and communication

Communication has been integral to the human race from the beginning with its prominence growing when other mechanisms to resolve difficulties lost momentum (ŞOmĂCescu et al., 2016). Furthermore, the need for communication became elevated due to the manner in which people engage in collaborative activities that entail personal networks. Thus, mastering the art and science of communication is vital for any successful setup or organisation.

In fact, the advancement of the industrial society ushered in a new discipline: organisational communication. Katz & Kahn in their work in 1966 were of the impression that organisations were social systems that depend on communication in order to manage their risks efficiently (ŞOmĂCescu et al., 2016). In addition to the need for communication in an organisation, other elements of organisational behavior were deemed necessary. For an airline,

crisis communication is essential to its success and survival (Haruta & Hallahan, 2003). As such, the social elements which underpin how communication is executed have a major influence on how issues are resolved within an airline.

Although not perceived as different entities, the subject of communication and culture are vital and essential elements of every organisation that aspire to be successful (Bisel et al., 2010). Furthermore, an avenue to better define communication is to establish its relationship to organisational culture. The subject of communication is such a difficult subject to discuss. However, if put into context, it will shed much light, particularly for those who do not have a deeper appreciation of this phenomenon. Hence, discussing communication from an organisational context puts things into perspective and unpacks the gist of communication in the context of organisational culture (Bisel et al., 2010). In terms of CEOs there are constant demands on them to effectively communicate with key stakeholders, both internally and externally.

Management by Values (MBV) was an emerging strategic approach designed to consolidate previous management and leadership approaches into a more effective and profitable outlook (Dolan & Garcia, 2002). The concept focused on the daily activities of the organization guided by its values, resulting in positive results. MBV reinforces the management of values and "managing values means managing the culture of the company, strengthening it, day by day and always revitalizing it, to face the unknowns of the future" (Dolan & Garcia, 2002, p. 116). In a study conducted by a Canadian sport organization using the concept of 'Managing by Values' (MBV), one of the findings stated that the majority of the study participants agreed there is a strong connection between MBV and organizational performance, including individual performance.

2.3   Organizational diversity and competitive advantage

Countries in the world, particularly western societies, are quickly becoming multi-ethnic societies and this has influenced the dynamics of the workforce (Jones et al., 2000). The era of diversity management came in the early 1990s and has been embraced swiftly to complement or be deemed as a new expression of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) perception.

In the work of Nkomo and Cox in 1996, they argued that workplace diversity has its primary association in social and demographic groups and consequently the variety of employees' identities influences the informal relationships in organisations (Pringle, 2009). (2002; Silverman, 2010) stated that firm connection with personal identity is assumed to positively influence external parties to the group. Cox, an African-American scholar renowned for being an architect

of diversity management, stated that earlier literature defined diversity by focusing only on people (as in gender) and "racio-ethnic minority" (1994, p. 52). He argued that *diversity* is far more than the traditional descriptors and that the early research coverage was too focused on the minority group oppression in a majority social framework, thus creating a barrier that distorts the realisation of true abilities. Hence, this renewed perception fostered confidence in everyone's attributes towards accomplishments regardless of their status or identity. (Cox, 1994, p. 56)suggested that diversity must be deliberated in three categories of analysis – "individual, group/inter-group and organizational" (p. 56).

However, some critiques on diversity saw the introduction of workplace diversity as a softer approach to EEO because it is not legislated, therefore it cannot be proven whether organisations, particularly the private organisation, are practicing the concept. As compared to EEO, diversity without any vested power affects the credibility of organisational research, particularly the variables such as "status effects, functional background, tenure or personality variance" (Pringle, 2009, p. 77). A study conducted in Australia to identify Australian managers' perception and knowledge on workforce diversity, found that *workforce diversity* was not well understood or esteemed particularly by non- Human Resource Managers (Davis et al., 2016). The study seemed to indicate that many organisations do not consider Workforce Diversity Management (WDM) as a priority particularly at senior management level. However, the study also established that the views on WDM *varied* across the surveyed group.

In his book titled *The Competitive Advantage of Nations,* published in 1990, Michael Porter rejected the ideology that the escalation of world business will derail nationalism. Instead, a company's competitive edge will be established in a local setting, in other words, at its home base (Goett, 1999). In a study focussing on the innovativeness of Multi-National Enterprises (MNE), a new challenge was discussed: whilst innovative initiatives of MNEs remain largely at its country of origin, China has a growing reputation as a research centre for many MNEs from developed economies and as such their local cultire influences the work culture in these MNEs (Ervits, 2018). Intriguingly, the nature of the national culture plays a crucial role in the level of innovation in an organisation (Turró et al., 2014).

Interestingly, some theories argue that individuals, particularly at leadership level, are motivated by monetary incentives to pursue long-term goals (Baranchuk et al., 2014). A recent study by Nguyen (2018) suggested that CEOs' long-term incentives are associated with more significant successive corporate innovations. However, at the ground or operational level, employees also regard *Training and Development* as critical motivators that not only stimulate innovation but also necessitate sound leadership for a successful outcome. This approach includes recognition for efforts and a level of "autonomy and flexibility" (Ko, 2015, p. 156).

Michael Porter disputed that the fundamentals of strategy mapping are embedded in one's reaction to rivalry (Goett, 1999). In 1980 in his book titled *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors*, Porter introduced his famous five forces model of competition, which he claimed will ensure sustainable success for any organisation. Rivalry, the threat of new entrants, the threat of substitutes, the negotiating power of suppliers, and, finally, the bargaining power of consumers are the five forces that Goet (1999) identified. Business strategy is not a linear or straightforward exercise; however, it entails deep thoughts on the next strategic avenue for the organisation.

There are various strategies that organisations employ to establish a competitive edge over their rivals. One of these is the attention to Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR), particularly initiatives in improving the environment as a deliberate intent to foster sustainable success (Yadav et al., 2017). The study conducted by (Yadav et al., 2017) focused on analysing public trading companies in the United States, focusing on the impact of their environmental CSR performance on long-term competitive advantage. The findings suggest that performance on environmental resources positively influences the company's competitive advantage and compliments poorly performing companies in the group. They also suggested that companies that integrate environmental performance in their corporate strategy tend to illustrate responsible leadership and maximising of shareholders. (Sanja & Galjina, 2013, p. 123) conducted a study on some organisations that use *corporate communications* as their competitive advantage and have drawn a lot of research interest from the field of "organisations, marketing and public relations." (p. 123). Recent studies also suggested that the concept of reputation, a soft factor, is strongly connected with stakeholder theory. This theory underlines the significance of corporate communication for a company's competitive advantage (Sanja & Galjina, 2013).

The advocates for diversity hold that when organisations embrace the concept in the context of "relational demography, workgroup and workplace scenario"(Guillaume et al., 2017, p. 276), it will raise the level of innovations, improve decision making, establish a bigger pool of talents and expand the customer base. On the contrary, diversity is not linked to *outputs* such as *low morale workforce*, *increasing conflicts* and *reduced performance* output. A study conducted by Guillaume et al. (2017), using the Categorization-Elaboration Model, focused on factors that Managers or leadership had control over, such as '*strategy, unit design, human resource, leadership, culture/climate, and differences'.* The study concluded that two types of *moderator* incur positive effects:

i. a shared mindset of safety/trust/justice that advocates for social integration and well being through group interaction, and

ii. a shared mindset that embraces information sharing, including relationships that improve performance on difficult tasks via information clarity.

The diversity mindset stated above is considered to positively moderate the effects of diversity when these contingency factors are accurate, shared, and aware of sharedness (van Knippenberg et al., 2013). Diversity researchers for numerous decades endeavoured to understand equality and unfair work practices, explain the complex effects of diversity and work on ways to value diversity (Janssens & Steyaert, 2019). Using a practised-based theory of diversity, Janssens and Steyaert (2019, p. 518) conducted a study to understand better the complexity of diversity in organisations using the *relational ontology* fundamental concepts and methodology ideas. Hence, this led to the construct of a practice-based theory of diversity that claims that practices and connections are the best yardsticks to study and comprehend 'the social life of a diverse organisation'. The study concluded that theories presenting social life with limited elements tend to shrink the "persistent inequality, complexity, and sensitivity within and across organisations" (Janssens & Steyaert, 2019, p. 533). However, a practice-based theory of diversity tends to uncover findings in practices deemed to be less eye-catching, but which contributes to problematic social disorders and, consequently, exposes practices that value diversity.

The world, particularly in western societies, is quickly becoming a global society which has influenced the dynamics of the workforce (Jones et al., 2000). The era of diversity management came in the early 1990s and was embraced swiftly to complement or portray the new expression of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). In the work of Nkomo and Cox, 1996, they argued that workplace diversity has its primary association in social and demographic groups and, consequently, the variety in employees' identities influences the informal relationships in organisations (Pringle, 2009). Silverman (2010) stated that firm connection with personal identity is assumed to positively influence outlooks towards parties external to the group. Cox, the African-American scholar renown as an architect of diversity management stated that earlier literatures defined diversity by focusing only on people (as in gender) and "racio-ethnic minority" (1994, p. 52). He argued that diversity is far more than the traditional descriptors and that the early research coverage was too focused on the minority group oppression in a majority social framework. Thus, it creates a barrier that distorts the realisation of true abilities. Hence, this renewed perception fostered confidence in everyone's attributes towards accomplishments regardless of their status or identity.

In the global volatile business environment, innovation and creativity in the workplace have quickly become a crucial element of an organisation's "performance, success, and longer-term survival"(Anderson et al., 2014, p. 1298). Consequently, as organisations continue to harness ideas and proposals from employees, it becomes apparent that the

development of ideas and their implementation has become a source of peculiar competitive advantage. Holmstrom (1989) stated that innovation is risky and costly as it involves newly unproven methodologies.

Creativity and innovation are complex, at various levels, and evolve and require appropriate leadership that creates an environment that will maximise talents and results (Anderson et al., 2014). In a study across 33 Chinese organisations in which motivators for innovation were tested, the results indicated that group or team level support to nurture an innovative environment is dependent on the motivational mechanism that intermediated between 'transformational leadership and team innovative performance' (Chen et al., 2013). The study also indicated the same results for individual innovative performance when facilitated in a team environment. In the USA, innovativeness reached the political front, and national policies were set in motion to intervene and further induce efforts in its quest to be the global industrial leader (Holmstrom, 1989). In his book titled *The Competitive Advantage of Nations,* 1990, Michael Porter rejected the ideology that the escalation of world business will derail nationalism. Instead, a company's competitive edge will be established locally, in other words, at its home base (Goett, 1999). Intriguingly, the nature of the national culture plays a crucial role in the level of innovation in an organisation (Turró et al., 2014). As previously mentioned, findings from a study on MNE innovation indicated that, while MNEs continue to conduct the majority of their innovative projects in their home country, China is becoming more regarded as a prefered research hub for many MNEs from established nations (Ervits, 2018).

Interestingly, some theories argue that individuals, particularly at leadership levels, are motivated by monetary incentives to pursue long term goals (Baranchuk et al., 2014). A recent study by Nguyen (2018) suggested that CEOs' long-term incentives are associated with more significant successive corporate innovations. However, at the ground or operational level, employees also regard *Training and Development* as critical motivators that stimulate innovation but necessitates some sound leadership for a successful outcome. This approach included recognition for efforts and a level of 'autonomy and flexibility'(Ko, 2015, p. 156)

As mentioned earlier, Michael Porter disagreed that strategy mapping is driven by rivalry (Goett, 1999, p. 40). The rivals' business sector's economic dynamics cause the rivalry. Porter established his five forces model of competition in 1980's Competitive Strategy: Methods for Evaluating Industries and Rivals, claiming it would guarantee a company's long-term success. "Rivalry, threat of new entrants, threat of substitutes, suppliers' bargaining powers, and lastly, purchasers' bargaining powers," according to Goet (1999,p.40).

A study conducted claimed that a business strategy requires in-depth consideration of the company's next move. Organizations use numerous methods to get a competitive edge. One of these is focusing on Corporate Social

Responsibilities (CSR), particularly environmental activities, to ensure long-term success (Yadav et al., 2017). This study examined US public trading businesses' environmental CSR performance and long-term competitive advantage. The results imply that environmental resource performance boosted the company's competitive advantage and helped underperforming companies. It also advised that organisations who integrate environmental performance into their corporate strategy demonstrate responsible leadership and shareholder maximisation.

Diversity initiatives were intended to help those minority groups that are normally disadvantaged in societies to achieve favorable outcomes in an organisational setup (Leslie, 2019). These outcomes were however achieved unconsciously. In her work, (Leslie, 2019, p. 538) proposed a typological theory which states that diversity initiatives produce four unintended consequence types:

i.   Backfire (negative diversity goal progress),

ii.   Negative spillover (undesirable effects on outcome other than diversity goal progress),

iii.   Positive spillover (desirable effects on outcome other than diversity goal progress) and

iv.   False progress (improved diversity metrics without true diversity goal and progress) (p. 538).

The study adopted a perspective to identify the mechanisms that hold the four types of unintended consequences and the diversity practices that are highly likely to fabricate them. As a result, a proposed typological theory was developed, which configures a framework for prior work on the subject and outlines new elements of unintended consequence types and locates signals that are root causes. The theory also proposed that the unintended consequences of diversity initiatives are "interrelated and multidetermined"(Leslie, 2019, p. 538). In summary, these findings further advance the concept of the unintended consequences, bringing forth an array of critical elements for consideration.

Diversity is a widely used term in public and private entities to elaborate organisational objectives, values and processes (Spaaij et al., 2018, p. 278). The presumed benefits to organisational performance, such as elevated sales revenue, increased customer base, and greater return, are well documented. However, the challenge in prominent social institutions such as Sports is operationalising these phrases into actual practices. Diversity has been a critical issue that has continuously confronted sports. The work conducted by Cunningham in 2015 claimed that the only way sports managers, coaches and other sports professionals could understand diversity and inclusion is through education on its *effects* and the *reasons* for these concepts. To date, there are a good number of scholars that investigate diversity in sport, such as the work by Spracklen et al (2006). in which he investigated organisational change in which they questioned the capability of the new generic Equality Standard in British Sport to address racial diversity and

consequently promoting equality of results. Other scholars worked on topics such as "organisational cultures and practices, diversity discourses in sport organisations, gender diversity in sports governance and leadership, sports employees" and "parental attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGTB) members" (Spaaij et al., 2018, p. 278) .

Diversity management also attracted strong opposition from scholars, particularly Sara Ahmed's work in 2006, 2007 and 2012 which contributed immensely to the development of a conceptual framework for the study conducted by R. Spaaij et al.(2019). This framework was used as a critical lens for investigating diversity practice in various social institutional settings, including sports.

In the United States, the diversity efforts of The Civil Rights Act of 1964 where companies offered legitimate networks of support to employees whose membership were more often replicating Equal Employment Opportunity characteristics such as gender, race, sexual orientation and creed (Leslie et al., 2014). Employee Professional Networks (EPNs) are now very common in the workplace with the intent to also advocate for diversity and inclusion as dictated by public policies (Gutiérrez & Saint Clair, 2018). Two studies conducted by Gutiérrez & Saint Clair (2018) in America tried to establish EPN's impact on attracting new employees. The studies found that EPN's significant focus on minority employees tended to foster a reduction in perceived threat and amplified job pursuit intentions among Caucasian Americans as a means of their support for social hierarchy (or *Social Dominance Orientation*).   The integration of apparent threat and social hierarchy attitudes to establish the impact of EPNs is a unique academic contribution on saleable diversity and critical elements for leaders, guiding principle designers and academics (Gutiérrez & Saint Clair, 2018).

Similarly, affirmative action plans (AAPs) are intended to foster support for minority groups such as women or ethnic minorities, however, there is fear that the accorded support may stigmatise the target groups and as a result reduce their performance outcomes (Leslie et al., 2014).

The concept of 'inclusion' has been creating waves in the area of equality and diversity work (Brewis, 2019). Scholars have been trying to theorise on the definition of it as a normative goal and how it is mobilised in an organisation. In a study in U.K. organisations from October 2012 to October 2013 regardig employees trained to be inclusive, it found that the results tend to support '*Foucault's notions of power/knowledge, discipline, and practices of self*'(Brewis, 2019, p. 93). Foucault's approach was able to elaborate and deliberate the effects of inclusive bias in the perspective of diversity training in the U.K. . Brewis (Brewis, 2019) introduced the work of Foucault, who saw knowledge as an integral part of reality, in fact, it was a way of articulating how the world is, understanding our identity, how we relate with the

world and with each other. Foucault claims knowledge has the 'power' or is part of what can create a situation called 'domination' and therefore it is productive because "it establishes certain possibilities within reality" (Brewis, 2019, p. 96).

From a social science researcher perspective, it is difficult to define diversity because the term is deemed to be less theoretically embedded, however, it is more organisationally driven through national policies (Pasztor, 2019). One study conducted a summative *content analysis* and *framing analysis* of 15 of the top 20 corporate websites identified by the 2010 DiversityInc Survey as "top ranked" in diversity management (Pasztor, 2019, p. 56). The study's objective was to evaluate how diversity is created by organisations placed highly in diversity rankings, and also to gain an improved understanding of language and semiotic uniformity in diversity rhetoric and framing. The findings from the study proposed three basic approaches on how highly ranked organisations' frame diversity:

i.   diversity is deemed as an organisational asset that is promoted through its Human Resource Department and embedded in its corporate values,

ii.   diversity drives business excellence and competitive edge,

iii. diversity is disseminated in the organisation in well-structured mechanisms such "as employee mentoring, networking, diversity training and institutionalised governance" (Pasztor, 2019, p. 463).

The study also revealed that these ranked organisations are more concerned about the positive image that stakeholders and the public hold regarding their stance on diversity, compared to the actual profitable results these mechanisms bring. The findings also highlighted a consistently high level of language and symbolism use, regardless of the size, industry, or targeted audiences. The study used Entman's (1993) theoretical approach to analyse how organisations "frame their diversity communication to the public and stakeholders" via "*salience*". As such the study used Entman's (1993, p. 52) four-step selection process to:

i.   'define a problem',

ii.   analyse and gauge probable causes,

iii. assess moral or ethical concerns, and

iv.   recommend resolutions. (p. 52)

The study also recommended that adding more companies would provide a deeper understanding of language and semiotic use, regardless of the nature of the organisation, the industry it belongs to, and its targeted audiences.

Due to a variety of elements, changing national and "community demographics, equal employment laws", evolving organisational structures, and community push for inclusive employers, sporting institutions over the past two decades, 1999 to 2019, have developed to be more diverse (Lee & Cunningham, 2019, p. 139). As such, more scholars have a keen interest to understand the impact of diversity on organisational practices and outputs.

The initial theoretical frameworks attracted various scholars, including empirical investigations, such as the work conducted by Siciliano in 1996, which involved non-profit sports organisations (Lee & Cunningham, 2019). The study observed that the gender diversity amongst board members was more linked with social performance, even though the job-related diversity was positively related to external donations received. A similar study conducted in 2004 by Cunningham and Sagas (2019) found that diversity is positively linked to performance. Conversely, in the study of German professional football teams by Brandes, Franck and Theiler in 2009, a diverse nationality amongst defenders resulted in poor performances, presumably due to the differences in communication styles (Lee & Cunningham, 2019). A further study of professional sport teams conducted by Timmerman in 2000, suggested that diversity negatively affects performance when players are required to interact or work interdependently.

 One study developed a theoretical framework that expanded on the effects of diversity as a task of organisational culture (Spaaij et al., 2018). The framework suggests that when an organisation deeply embraces diversity, there is an expectation for organisational effectiveness, positive organisational performance, increased revenue and increased diversity of fans for sports clubs or customers for organisations (Lee & Cunningham, 2019). However, when differences are not appreciated, it portrays the less time invested in understanding the vagueness associated with diversity and, more importantly, the opportunity for constructive conflict is forfeited.

Inclusion is the term or concept quickly gaining recognition in *equality and diversity* work (Brewis, 2019). Scholars have begun to develop ideologies that will help the new concept be operationalised into the workplace. Over the last 30 years, the terms 'diversity' and 'diversity management' have gained recognition in the U.K., disrupting terminologies nearest to 'equality', such as equal opportunities and 'affirmative action' in the US context (Brewis, 2019, p. 91). In a further study conducted by (Brewis, 2019) the practices for diversity training in U.K. were examined.

In the book 'Applied Empathy: The new language of leadership', the author advocates that the newest approach to leadership is 'empathy' (Ventura, 2019). The concept has been extant for some years and is now surfacing and finding prominence with practitioners and academics, hence the adjective 'new'. The book describes empathy as the ability to perceive the world from other perspectives, to develop new understanding coupled with your own thoughts, to advance us to novel ways of thinking, being and doing. Empathy is about understanding that there are things and

people around you that are different. Some mistakenly think that empathy is sympathy or just being nice. It is therefore a skill that we can develop in our own personal space and take it to the organisations we serve in.

Engaging in planning and conducting research in a culturally diverse environment can introduce a heightened degree of complexity to the research process and with the growing need to recognise diversity in sports management research, the Pacific context has provided a qualitative approach called the "talanoa" (Stewart-Withers et al., 2017, p. 55). The "talanoa" approach is gathering of data that promotes the art of engaging people over storytelling. A study conducted argued that when conducting qualitative research that involves Pasifika issues or people, the *talanoa* approach is a culturally appropriate contemporary qualitative research approach(Stewart-Withers et al., 2017). The Sports Management field of research has been dominated by Western positivistic methodology and approaches, and as such, "talanoa" challenges the norms and provides another avenue that catches the spirit and the emotions around the subjects discussed.

One of the storytelling methodology champions, David Boje , stated that epic stories of experiences lived are no longer easily communicated in the companies, schools, or the government (p. 336). This is due to the introduction of a virtual organisation that broadly expounds everything but lacks any 'grounding in lived experience wisdom'. Storytelling is a crucial element of the IWOK (Indigenous Way of Knowing)-Native Science, which corroborates the craft of qualitative research methods because it is not mere science (Boje, 2019). Still, living story methods or relationships are observed not only by other human beings but also by other critical living things in the ecosystem of a particular setting (Boje, 2018).

2.4 Structuration: Contextualizing resilience, innovation and competitive advantage

Anthony Giddens, whose theory provides the conceptual framework for this thesis, developed the *Theory of Structuration (Cohen, 1989),* in which he challenged and analysed existing social theories that describe social structures, such as *culture* (Whittington, 2010). One of the existing arguments that Giddens analysed was the persisting debate of the supremacy of *structure-centred theory* against *agency centred theory* in shaping people's lives (Giddens, 1984). Giddens was unhappy about the way these two theories were used to understand the most prevalent issue in sociology, i.e., *social order* – the phenomenon that people of various backgrounds, emotions and experiences work in unison without causing much disorder (Englund et al., 2020). He concluded that *structure-centered* (or *structure*) and *agency theories* co-exist to complement each other and not compete for superiority. Structure signifies the governance framework and the types of resources available. Hence, allowing the agent which signifies the people or groups that

draw from the structures to perform social activities using memory traces as the vehicle to execute those social engagements. How the structure and agency interact constitute the dynamic operation of an organization. When we talk of organizational values, innovation, resilience, diversity and comparative advantage, we need to talk about the synergy between the agency which provides the social consciousness and values and the structures which provide the means to facilitating and sustaining these.

Human beings as agencies have been captivated since the beginning of time by stories of people who conquered adversities in their lives. The empirical studies of resilience in children only began in the 1960s and 1970s. The Resilience concept is well accepted across all disciplines and settings (Beltman et al., 2016). Cutuli et al. (2020) define *resilience* as the ability to adapt positively in very adverse circumstances. Their work focused on children and generally covered central concepts of resilience research in developmental science. Their findings are summarised in terms of *protective and promotive factors* linked to resilience. They highlight three strategies for resilience: – reduction of risks, emphasis on factors that build strengths and developing frameworks that embrace positive well-being.

A definition of resilience refers to the "capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten its ability to function and continue development" (Masten, 2015, p. 172). Resilience is a word that stems from the Latin verb '*resilire',* which is *to rebound.* In the English language, the word resiliency or *to spring back* refers to a similar definition as in the characteristic or a rubber band's elasticity after being stretched (Masten, 2015).

A study was conducted that looked into the difference between *resilience* and *transformation* from an ecological perspective and discussed how each refers to qualitatively different levels of change in complex systems (Gunderson et al., 2006). Ecologists define resilience as the ability of a system to accommodate disturbance and reconfigure while persisting in a similar state, where the underlying system retains its original functionality, structure, uniqueness, and feedback despite the disturbance (Gunderson et al., 2006, p. 1). However, a transformational shift indicates the introduction of brand-new tools, relationships, interconnections, and feedback into the system at large. Resilience and transformation both need *novelty.* When systems are disturbed, the manner it responds and reorganises itself depends on the new or novel approach.h it adopts using the same identity, feedback, and function to get back to its original state amidst the uncertainties that the disturbances fostered. However, systems can reorganise themselves using the *new or novel approach*. With the same old components they can develop an entirely new creation – this type of system is regarded as being *adaptive* regardless of the context it's being used, whether in genetics, artificial intelligence or culture.

There is a considerable lack of research on how organisations approach a disaster, manage it, and the energy to pursue progress after the adverse event(s) (Nilakant et al., 2020). Nilakant et al. (2020) labelled this 'adaptive

resilience' in their work, following the grave impacts of the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes in Christchurch, New Zealand. The study investigated 'lifeline organisations' that provide utility services, such as water, wastewater, transport, energy and telecommunication, including critical stakeholders such as the financial institutions and local government organisations. Data was collected from 11 organisations between 2012 to 2014, the majority through the qualitative method and, where necessary, quantitatively. Using a grounded theory approach, four central pillars or themes were developed to identify the post-disaster response from the studied organisation, including: (i) employee needs; well-being and engagement; (ii) collaboration; (iii) leadership; and (iv) learning from experience.

The results from the qualitative interviews established several things. Firstly, employees who felt that their leaders,from high level to middle management, genuinely care and are attentive to their well beings, seemed to have higher job satisfaction, reduced intent to leave the organisation, high resilience, and high engagement to work. Furthermore, what proved to be fruitful was the consideration of employee input on areas of interest and clear communication of their goals and company values. Moreover, the availability of leaders to engage with staff was also significant in building a positive perception in the employees' mindset, including the learning culture.

The term "learning organisation" (LO) was coined by Marsick and Watkins in 2003. It is a systematic approach to learning at the individual, departmental, and organisational levels, and it has since become a hallmark of successful businesses (Ventura, 2019). LO refers to a setting in which individuals actively work to improve their group's capacity to produce desired results through the use of novel methods of collective thought. A study was done to determine the correlation between specific sets of Lean Production (LP) and LO; ten LP operational constructs and seven LO dimensions (Tortorella et al., 2020). The study was survey-based involving 135 companies carrying out LP projects and the data was categorized into two variables – (I) type of organization and (ii) LP project experience or LP implementation. The seven LO dimensions used were:

- *D1 – Create continuous learning*

- *D2 – Promote dialogue*

- *D3 – Encourage collaboration and team learning*

- *D4 – Create systems to capture and share learning*

- *D5 – Empower individuals into a collective vision direction*

- *D6 – Connect organization and its environment*

- *D7 – Provide strategic leadership for learning*

The analysis of the data established that LP implementation and LO developments were strongly correlated, moreover, the results also vary according to the context – synergies and conflicting dimensions.

Adaptive resilience is not a one-off ability to address a situation, but it is a *process.* The four pillars discussed above immensely contribute to the quest for organisational resilience (Nilakant et al., 2020). However, the achievement of adaptive resilience will be dependent on how you manage the well being of the organisation's significant asset, its people. From the people factor, the organisation can further build resilience on internal and external collaboration, consequently setting up systems that enable learning from experiences. However, at the helm of this process is leadership's role, such as being empathetic, caring and honest and an effective communication, to ensure the proper environment is maintained for staff well-being, collaboration, and learning. Consequently, adaptive, resilient leaders empower their people during adverse situations, are appreciative and have high self-awareness and learning from personal experiences. One of the key findings from this research is that *resilience increased* when employees were rewarded for their innovative initiatives.

Complex challenges naturally are tough to articulate and in most cases are the result of conventional social structures that have established themselves as 'traps' (Moore & Westley, 2011). Therefore, resilience theory and adaptive process are platforms to understand how humans surge beyond the *traps* and the social innovation necessary to resolve the complex challenges.

The Dautona 500 NASCAR race on 17 February 2019 saw a mega crash pile up of 21 cars, triggered by one driver, Paul Menard, with just 10 more laps to go (Jacobo, 2019). There is no room for error with multiple cars bunched and travelling at the same average speed of 200 miles an hour. NASCAR races attract much interest because "they push the limits of both human and machine" (Euchner, 2019, p. 10). However, such testing of limits established that these cars and the super drivers are not very resilient to error. Resilience is an invisible asset that denotes the ability of a system to propel forward at a constant rate (Euchner, 2019). It is deemed a scarce resource because being resilient amid innovative initiatives is something not many can do. NASCAR drivers would prioritise resilience above speed, just like companies would often do, by embracing the intangible benefits of resilience as a priority above the tangible benefits of *efficiency*.

Resilience can be designed into a system that will help minimise risks and maintain growth in the company, thus adapting to new market changes and the emergence of new technologies. Resilience is necessary for innovation because *innovation* disrupts the normal state of any setting, and resilience will ensure that the organisation or company remains flexible for growth.

The term 'innovation' refers to a radical departure from established norms and practices; on the other hand, 'incremental innovation' refers to the introduction of little but significant improvements (Hassi, 2019). Innovation has become a critical pillar in an organisation's quest for success, whether it be a local hospitality industry or a multinational company or an ordinary street seller down the street. One study claimed that strategic planning is a framework for innovation, but it hinges on the commitment to learning from employees (Batra et al., 2018). Another study supported the notion that employees performing everyday duties develop new ideas to improve their work output; hence, employee-driven innovation using incentives tends to foster positive outcomes (Pandher et al., 2017). The study also suggests that flatter organisation structures can help eliminate *idea theft* and pay less in rewarding innovation rewards. Furthermore, all organisations can become more innovative if the quality of their governance framework is high; hence, the result resonates with Chandler's preposition that structure follows strategy. Similarly, the study suggests that an organisation's systems and structures can be adjusted to produce the competitive edge generated by its innovative resources.

Politicians and innovation champions as agencies have been persistent in promoting the importance of organisational innovations *resilience* to resolve economic meltdowns. In the UK, innovation organisations argued that innovation was significant for enabling economic recovery, similar to the strong position of the 2014 UK government's Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) that "innovation builds resilience and a dynamic economy" (Bristow & Healy, 2018, p. 266). The financial meltdown in 2007 – 2008, without a doubt, was tagged to be the most severe economic downturn in the E.U.(Bristow & Healy, 2018) – it would be second to the effects of COVID19. As such, regional economies in the E.U. responded differently in their journey to recovery. The study conducted by (Bristow & Healy, 2018) addressed the empirical gap analysing the relationship between regional innovation abilities and the resilience of European countries to the financial crisis of 2007 – 2008. The findings established that regions at the helm of their innovation activities at the time of the crisis had significant potential to resist or bounce back within three years.

Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration*,* is broad enough to encompass a whole range of human and institutional interactions discussed in the thesis (Cohen, 1989; Whittington, 2010)*.*

2.5 Crusaders organizational culture in comparison with other sports

An investigation into the organisational culture (OC) in the sports industry was carried out in the United States(Frontiera, 2008). The study involved interviewing six owners or general managers from professional sports teams, such as the National Football League (NFL), National Basketball Association (NBA), and Major Baseball League

(MBL). These executives have effectively guided their organisations through a transformation in organisational culture, as demonstrated by their team's performance (Frontiera, 2008). In this study, five primary themes emerged which together formed an initial model for organizational culture change in professional sport. This study identified five major themes (*Symptoms of a Dysfunctional Culture, My Way, Walk the Talk, Embedding New Culture, and Our Way*) that collectively established an early model for effecting organisational culture change in professional sport (Frontiera, 2008, p. 81). The study's discussions and conclusions identified two crucial factors for success: organisational values and leaders leading by example during the change.   These executives primarily commit themselves to the organisation's new values while guiding the transformation of its culture. A sports psychology study, employing a case study of a youth soccer academy, stated that a strong and united organisational culture within a youth club or team is a vital factor in successful athlete development (Henriksen, 2017).   Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of the coach and management in deliberately fostering and maintaining a supportive corporate culture through cultural leadership. In another case study that took a deep look into an English Premier League Football Club and the analysis of the data suggests that intracultural factors such as historical legacies, symbolic expressions, sub-cultural dynamics and employment practices (longevity) contributed to the *natural* continuation of the cultural norms, values and beliefs in a way that hampered management *planned* change efforts in the club (Ogbonna & Harris, 2014). The study also claimed that the extra cultural dimension organizational cultural perpetuation such as the fans play a very important role which influenced the cultural dynamics of the organization. Ogbonna and Harris (2014) further expanded that cultural continuity is a natural part of organisations that is often helped by factors inside and outside the organisation. Even though the executives in the study knew they wanted to change the organization's culture, they probably did not realise how much they had been influenced by it or how powerless they were. For example, they supported important parts of the culture, like the museum, the involvement of former players, and interactions with supporters' representatives, which slowed down efforts to change. Based on this, we think that cultures continue to grow and change naturally.

The Crusaders prioritise organisational values and are guided by effective leaders who ensure the organisation remains adaptable to changes while remaining committed to its established norms and beliefs, which have proven successful over the years.

2.6   **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined some of the relevant theoretical aspects of organizational culture which will be used in the analysis of the case study. These are organizational values, diversity, innovation, resilience and comparative advantage. The discussions have shown that the sustainability of an organization depends very much on these factors. They are all interconnected, yet they can also function independently. While different scholars may have different ways of framing them there are some common strands which point to how significant they are in ensuring that organizations have competitive advantage.

In this thesis, analysis will be focused on how organizational values, diversity, innovation, and resilience contribute to the comparative advantage of the Crusaders Rugby system as a corporate organization. While Crusaders as a rugby team is well known for its sports prowess, this study will be focused on its corporate and institutional culture. Before we discuss this in detail, the next chapter will look at the methodology used in the study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology used in this study is to investigate the role that organisational culture (OC) plays in a sporting organisation. Whilst OC is a broad topic, this study will focus on the five pillars: - organisational values, resilience, innovation, and diversity and how they contribute to the organisation's competitive advantage. This study will use a case study approach, and the Crusaders Rugby Franchise (commonly known as the Crusaders) is the case organisation. Consequently, this study will critically examine the nature of organisational values, how they are defined in the Crusaders, and how they are understood and operationalised.

3.2 Research Framework

Because of the qualitative nature of this study, the thesis uses two closely related qualitative methods; the interpretive and the induction approaches.

3.2.1 Interpretivism as a qualitative approach

This research uses interpretivism which is generally part of the qualitative approach. The goal of qualitative research is to provide a more detailed, in-depth knowledge of a phenomenon by drawing on the perspectives of those who are directly involved in the experience (Patton, 2015). In addition, the aim is to gain a comprehensive understanding of complex social situations through extensive exploratory studies that facilitate the discovery of high-quality replies throughout the study process (Biggam, 2008; Creswell, 2002; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). Qualitative research is based on the premise that individuals, ideas, ideologies and cultures shape society (Goldkuhl, 2012).

The rise of interpretivism can be traced back to a critique of positivism (knowledge generated by external senses of physical objects and social life) from a more people-centered perspective. Positivism, a school of thought within scientific philosophy, is often associated with natural scientists who work with societally visible 'facts' to generate broad generalisations. It emphasises the significance of the given, with a narrower focus on considering pure data and facts without being impacted by the bias of human interpretation (Saunders et al., 2009; Scotland, 2012). In positivism observation and the numerical value of occurrences are regarded as crucial to the advancement of knowledge. Yet, it does acknowledge the requirement for a theoretical framework to structure data in its more advanced characterisations (Dwyer, 1977; Thompson, 2015).

The philosopher of science Karl Popper claimed that hypotheses should be falsified through empirical testing and then superseded by more refined models. In this way, research would offer an ever-closer approximation to the truth of how things work and the causal relations between these phenomena. The positivist method of using empirical observation to build theories and models from which generalisations can be made has found widespread use in the natural sciences. According to this view, knowledge that cannot be empirically verified is invalid which led to the positivism dispute in the German sociology fraternity in which Karl Popper was also involved (Strubenhoff, 2018). One of the main criticisms of positivism is that it does not take into consideration the human agency and its interpretive and subjective capacity. People are socially conscious and have the capacity to evaluate, critically examine and reconstruct the nature of 'truth', rather than just being puppets who react to social factors. Various people perceive and understand the same objective reality in different ways. Research is meant to give respondents a deeper understanding of their life and why they act the way they do. Hence, this study's preference for interpretive and qualitative approach that allows interpretation of the participants' subjective responses (Thompson, 2015).

Humans cannot be investigated in the same way as physical phenomena since they construct more complex meanings through their own actions. Thus, interpretivism becomes more preoccupied with contextual and subjective elements and changing social realities. For this reason, research in the social sciences needs to be differentiated from research in the natural sciences. Cultural, historical, and contextual distinctions are taken into account by the interpretivist approach, along with their potential effects on the formation of new social realities. Where positivism seeks to establish definite and universal principles that can be generalised and applied to everyone independent of some crucial characteristics and aspects, interpretivism seeks to add richness in the insights gleaned (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

3.2.2 Inductive qualitative research

Apart from the interpretive approach, the research will also use the inductive qualitative method. The researchers who use the inductive qualitative approach distrust generalisations and prefer to immerse themselves in the details of a specific time and place (Patton, 2015). As such, they see the world as complex, dynamic, interdependent, textured, nuanced, unpredictable, and understood through stories. The approach examines the ways in which people record, analyse, and make sense of their own experiences. As a result of its humanistic orientation and attention to context, it seeks to gain insight into the perspectives of a relatively small number of people rather than the hard facts of objects or the testing of hypotheses on a large population (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Doz, 2011; Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2013; Gelo et al., 2008; Rynes & Gephart Jr, 2004).

In inductive research, researchers place a premium on participant feedback and give it primacy of place during the enquiry process (Ebbs, 1996). Data is analyzed using the 'inductive analysis' approach, a method that relies heavily on in-depth examination of the raw data in order to identify overarching patterns and themes (Thomas, 2006). Codes are assigned to paragraphs or segments of texts as concepts emerge that are relevant to the research questions (Thomas, 2006), which requires a careful line-by-line review of the data (Bradley et al., 2007; Curry et al., 2009). To capture the most empirically grounded and theoretically interesting factors, a recursive process is used and this involves going back and forth between data analysis and the literature to make sense out of emerging concepts (Neeley & Dumas, 2016; SchÜSsler et al., 2014). Although inductive findings are influenced by the researcher's evaluation objectives or questions, they are derived instead from the analysis of the raw data, rather than from any preconceived notions or preconceived models (Thomas, 2006).

3.2.3 Relevance of the interpretive and inductive qualitative approach to this study

This study has chosen the inductive qualitative research approach as being most relevant to my research. This is because it enables comprehension of the dynamic and subjective interplay between people and organisations and how these shape organizational culture. In this thesis I use the Crusaders as a case study of how organizational culture develops in a sporting organisation, and what level of influence employees have on the dynamics of the workplace. I also enjoy sports, particularly rugby, and it has always piqued my interest how professional rugby clubs manage their work environments and the immediate effects on their performance on the field. The approach is also appropriate because I can draw on my years of corporate experience to make sense of the raw data gathered from interviews, alongside secondary data. Consequently, the data collected will be closely examined to determine the organisational culture in light of the relationship between the five core pillars of this study: organisational values, resilience, innovation, diversity, and competitive advantage.

Few studies have been conducted focusing on the organizational culture of sporting organisations, particularly rugby. I, therefore, would like to contribute new knowledge in this area. The initial plan was to conduct a comparative study using two organisations, however, due to the limitations inflicted by COVID, I have decided to focus on one organisation, the Crusaders Rugby Franchise, as my case organisation. The combination of interpretive and inductive methodologies using a case study approach allows me to work with a smaller research population.

3.2.4 Case study approach

This thesis used a case study research strategy to investigate the organisation culture of the organisation, focusing on five distinctive pillars, as discussed earlier. Complex concepts such as organisational culture are best studied using case study methodology. This involves in-depth examination of data from multiple sources to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in natural settings (Sandelowski, 2011; Yin, 2009). In addition, the pragmatic nature of the case study method allows for taking whatever steps necessary to gather data and run whatever analyses we felt would provide the most insightful answers to our research question (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Case study research, by its very nature of in-depth investigation, tends to centre around a single case (Miles et al., 2014; Sandelowski, 1996; Yin, 2018); thus, empirical representativeness may be limited.

The case study approach was appropriate for the purpose of this study and the limited conditions caused by the global pandemic. The success of the Crusaders over the years was also a credible reason to use the case study approach, moreover, the findings may provide some level of generalisation in their application to other organizations.

3.3 Data collection and analysis

Both primary data and secondary data were collected. The primary data consisted of raw data gathered from interviews, while the secondary data came from organisational documents to better understand the multiple layers of operations of the organization. In the interviews I tried to ensure that there were representatives from; the Executive Management team; some from the middle management level; also from the organization's critical sectors. A balanced demographic was also important for ensuring a diversely representative sample. However, due to the limited availability of people due to COVID, I was forced to accept whoever was next available from the Crusaders' environment. Secondary data were also provided to me in the form of survey reports, strategic plans for the Board, organisational structure, and other information that aided my research.

3.3.1 Interview approach

I used a semi-structured interview approach (see questions in Table 3.1) to get as much information as possible from the interviewees. This included unscripted follow-up questions and additional explanations for questions that were unclear to the interviewees. Because of the different nature of their work, coaches were asked a different set of questions.

Table 3.1: Interview questions (except the coaches)

	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – excluding the Coaches				
	THEMES				
	VALUES	INNOVATION	RESILIENCE	DIVERSITY	COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
1	What are core values of your organisation (what is important to the company/trust?), and do they reflect your personal values?	Do you think innovation is very important for the success of your organisation? (why?)…What has your organisation done to embrace innovation?	What are some policies or strategies put in place to strengthen resilience?	Do you think diversity is important to your organisation … and how well does the organisation manage diversity (ethnicity/ gender/backgrounds /ideas/status/ etc)??	Who are the competitors for your organisation? and what makes your organisation different from them?
2	How does your company's values contribute to the success of this organisation? Are they incorporated into its operations and decision-making?	What are some of the innovative initiatives in the organisation in the last few months… and what are the factors that are driving these innovations?	What are some of the changes in policy or practice to further develop or address challenges such as the COVID19/Earthquakes? How has this been applied into the workplace?	What are some of the challenges (diversity) you faced… and how do you deal with these challenges?	What are some of the challenges you faced as an organisation in being a top Rugby franchise… how do you deal with these challenges??
3	What are some of the new values you have adopted recently, and how have these new values challenged your existing values?	What are some of the external forces or factors that have influenced the image or the organisation as a whole.. and the influence it has on innovation in the organisation?		How are the players/fans involved in the dynamics of the organisation… do they have any influence?	Have your strategies changed because of the new challenges? How?
4		What is the aim or what do you hope to achieve from these innovations… and what are some of the principles guiding the innovation… is it high performance or diversity etc?		What do you aim to achieve by embracing diversity?	

3.3.2 Confidentiality

Before each interview, the candidates were given the following information:

- schedule time and date of interview,
- Consent Form for the interviewee to sign as consent for me to use the information collected for my research. The form also included brief information about my thesis and the study's objectives. A copy of the consent form is attached in appendix 1.
- A copy of the interview questions so that they are familiar with them and could respond effectively.

3.3.3 Interview questions

The questions were classified according to the study's five key pillars: organisational values, innovation, resilience, diversity, and competitive advantage. Everyone received the same interview questions, with the exception of the coaches, who received some additional questions due to the importance of their role and the influence they have on the players and the organisational culture. Each candidate was given one hour, and a few of them went over.

The interview questions for coatches are in Table 3.2

Table 3.2: Interview questions

	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR COACHES ONLY				
	THEMES				
	VALUES	INNOVATION	RESILIENCE	DIVERSITY	COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
1	What are core values of your organisation (what is important to the organisation?)? How do these values resonate with your personal values?	Do you think innovation is very important for the success of your organisation? (why?)…What has your organisation done to embrace innovation?	What are some policies or strategies put in place to strengthen resilience?	Do you think diversity is important to your organisation.. and how well does the organisation manage diversity (ethnicity/ gender/backgrounds /ideas/status/ etc)??	Who are the competitors for your organisation.. and what makes your organisation different from them?
2	How much of the Crusaders Culture influences your coaching? And how much is your own influence in the way you coach?	What are some of the innovative initiatives in the organisation in the last few months.. and what are the factors that are driving these innovations?	What are some of the changes in policy or practice to further develop or address challenges such as the COVID19/Earthquakes? How has this been applied into the workplace?	What are some of the challenges (diversity) you faced.. and how do you deal with these challenges?	What are some of the challenges you faced as an organisation in being a top Rugby franchise… how do you deal with these challenges??

3	Are there any contradictions on what you wanted to do versus the corporate needs of the Crusaders?	What are some of the external forces or factors that have influenced the image or the organisation as a whole.. and the influence it has on innovation in the organisation?		How are the players/fans involved in the dynamics of the organisation.. do they have any influence?	Have your strategies changed because of the new challenges? How?
4	How do you share with or impact a player with the Crusaders' values?	What is the aim or what you hope to achieve from these innovations… and what are some of the "principles guiding the innovation… is it high performance or diversity etc?		What do you aim to achieve by embracing diversity?	

3.3.4 Interviewees

There was a total of 16 staff that were interviewed which included the Chief Executive Officer and the Head Coach. Majority of the interviewees had not given consent for their names to be used in this thesis except for the Head Coach and CEO, whose names are already public knowledge.

Personnel availability was one of the major obstacles. I had to work with who was available, but I was fortunate to have a team that represented a variety of organisational positions and departments, which I believed provided balance of the data I gathered.   Regrettably, I was unable to conduct interviews with several players owing to the impact of COVID-19, which led to the premature end of the Super Rugby Tournament that year and subsequently limited the players' availability.

3.3.5 Collection and analysis of data

The interviews were collected through audio voice recording using my phone and also my laptop to ensure the capture of accurate data. These audio files were then downloaded and given to my transcribers to transcribe into a Word document. Before the transcribing work, each transcriber was sent a copy of the Transcriber Confidentiality Form to sign and return – a copy of a sample form is attached in appendix 2.

The transcribed word documents were then uploaded through the NVIVO analytical software to organise and code data. This was to ease the analysing of data, with similar themes or categories in line with the 5 pillars of this thesis- organisational values, innovation, resilience, diversity and competitive advantage. Consequently, I devised five theme codes to symbolize the five fundamental pillars of this thesis.   Within the framework of the 5 primary themes, I devised codes for each interview question that pertains to these themes.   Afterwards, I categorized all the pertinent responses to each question into the five (5) themes for each of the 16 interview scripts.   For example, all responses to inquiries related to the "organisation values" topic from the 16 respondents were assigned the same codes, and the same procedure was followed for the remaining questions:

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
Organisational Values	Resilience	Innovation	Diversity	Competitive Advantage
• Theme 1 Q1 • Theme 1 Q2 • Theme 1 Q3	• Theme 2 Q1 • Theme 2 Q2	• Theme 3 Q1 • Theme 3 Q2 • Theme 3 Q3 • Theme 3 Q4	• Theme 4 Q1 • Theme 4 Q2 • Theme 4 Q3 • Theme 4 Q4	• Theme 5 Q1 • Theme 5 Q2 • Theme 5 Q3

All answers to each question were collated together in one document using the NVIVO software, using the assigned codes, which allowed me to analyse the perception of the interviewees on each pillar discussed. For example (alluded earlier), all answers to Question 1 under the Pillar 'Organisational Values' were assigned a code that the NVIVO software recognised as question 1. Once I assigned each answer to a specific topic, the NVIVO algorithm categorized the responses according to their corresponding questions. Upon categorising the interviews into similar groups, the data analysis was initiated in consideration of the research aims, objectives, research questions, and any novel insights that had emerged.

Some of the 16 interviews lasted exactly one hour, while others lasted longer, with only two (2) lasting less than one-hour. It was evident that employees with lengthier tenure in the organization undertook interviews that lasted an hour or more. Prior to joining the Crusaders, their current and previous positions were also significant such

as such as teachers, trainers, coaches and former senior public servants and holding senior roles. These roles likely required a level of articulation, and critical thinking, which allowed them to express their thoughts explicitly when responding to interview questions.

I also used End Note version 20.0 to organise the referencing of all literature using the APA 7th formatting, as required by the University.

3.3.6 Challenges

As indicated previously, the availability of personnel was one of the obstacles. I had to accept whoever was available, but as previously mentioned, I was fortunate to have a variety of different positions and departments represented. Momentarily, staff members cancelled their participation because of their demanding schedules, particularly during the height of the pandemic lockdown. As the pandemic's effects decreased, I was eventually asked to wait for the green light before visiting the Crusaders' building was allowed again.

I had also tried to interview some players, especially those of Pacific descent, but was not able to. This was because by the time I made the request, the super rugby was cut short and the players had returned to the provincial unions. I was told that I would need to contact them directly which was quite difficult.

I had to engage a few of the interviewees through alternative means, such as Zoom online video meeting. In spite of its limitations, such as non-face to face mode, I was still able to conduct full interviews.

3.4   Conclusion

The suitable methodology for this study; to investigate the role of Organisational culture in a sporting organisation, was the interpretive and inductive qualitative case study approach. To analyse the role of organisational culture in a sporting organisation, an inductive qualitative interpretivism case study methodology was deemed appropriate for this study. Employing a qualitative methodology provided a deeper understanding of the organisation. The purpose of the study was to comprehend the interaction between the primary components that create organisational culture. As such, a humanistic approach was taken which views organisational phenomena as complex and distinct. It avoids generalisation, as advocated by positivism, and takes into account variables such as the concept that the world is complicated, dynamic, interrelated, textured, nuanced, unpredictable, and understood through stories (Patton, 2015). Many social researchers believe that the case study technique, is the most effective way to investigate complex concepts such as organisational culture. This is because it involves the in-depth investigation of

data from numerous sources to acquire an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in natural settings. This study agrees with the recommendation to employ a case study methodology since it supports the goal of the study and the constrained conditions resulting from the global pandemic. The success of the Crusaders over the years was also a credible factor that must be investigated in depth, and the findings may provide a degree of generalisability in their application.

Interviews were used as primary data and organisational documents were used as secondary data for the analysis materials. A total of 16 Crusaders' staff members were interviewed in semi-structured interviews. There were two sets of questions, one for all staff members, besides the head coach. The other set was obviously designed for the head coach, who had a few extra questions due to his impact on the organisational culture and players. The interviews were recorded using audio recorders, transcribed, and uploaded to the NVIVO software for coding and grouping so that answers to pertinent questions could be coded and grouped to facilitate the analytic process. There were evident obstacles such as the impact of the COVID 19 epidemic, but I was able to collect good data that best represented the professional diversity of the organisation.

Chapter 4: The genesis of innovation in rugby

4.1 Introduction

The Crusaders franchice as a corporate entity is fundamentally concerned with rugby as a sports. This is where it is different from other corporate organizations. Sports, unlike goods marketing, is originally a social and cultural activity but as a result of professionalization, it became corporatized and the game itself became a sellable commodity in the media and corporate market. Before we analyse in critical details the organizational culture, values, innovation, diversity and comparative advantage of the Crusaders franchise, we should first of all ask the question: How did this marketization and corporatization of rugby as a social activity start? To respond to this, we need to look at the evolution of the game of rugby and how it changed over time in terms of its sporting values, institutional charatecter, innovation and relationship with society and the market.

This chapter looks into the history of rugby, how the sport started and the types of ethics that guided the spirit of how the game has been played and become what it is today. It also investigates the innovation of rugby; how it evolved over the years to the game that is played today. It further elucidates the pillars that have influenced how the game is played culminating in the era of professionalism. The chapter also sheds some light on how diversity forced its way into the sport, even though it was difficult initially, and the diverse approach that assisted the sport into the magnitude it has reached today. Even though it may still be a challenge in some places, generally, people are realizing that diversity is not only a social obligation but a strategic avenue to push further the interest of the sport.

The impact of COVID is also discussed in this chapter. The pandemic changed the traditional platforms in many ways, resulting in positive and negative outcomes for organisations, therefore influencing the social environment. All types of sports were affected, and some organizations resorted to redundancies and restructures to keep their business alive.

4.2 The genesis of rugby

In 1823, from a little town of Warwickshire in London's heart, a local tale extols a boy named William Webb Ellis who, during a soccer game in his School, Rugby School, picked up the ball and ran (Wise, 2017). This was one of the classic examples of how innovation has influenced the sport. That significant, bold action snowballed into something phenomenal. The spread of rugby globally was initially through the British colonial circuit and in countries where the British Empire's presence was deep and evident. For example, all the powerhouses of rugby today from the Southern

Hemisphere are: Australia, New Zealand and South Africa – these are Commonwealth countries. From the northern hemisphere are: England, Scotland, Wales, France and Ireland (which are close to England geographically) (Wood, 2017). In the pioneering years, Rugby was a means to express what level of class an individual belonged to (Majumdar, 2006) and was played in various segments of society in England, in locations that are still strongholds of rugby in Europe (Collins, 2015). The era of industrialisation generated many white-collar jobs. Consequently, sitting behind a desk for a whole day of work raised questions regarding health as office jobs had taken away the time to be active and inhale fresh air (Collins, 2009). The Scotland Rugby Union widely recognised this detrimental lifestyle to be a contributing factor to poor health. In the work of Lyons and Petrucelli in 1978, the importance of physical activity was found in ancient Chinese, Indian, Greek, and Roman writings and later in Berryman's work, in 1989 & 1995, in which he described the observation of Hippocrates and Galen. They ascertained that an inactive lifestyle was harmful to health (Paffenbarger & Lee Jr, 1998). In England in 1859, the Government, out of anxiety, created a Riffle Volunteer Movement in response to a possible invasion from France. This was after an Italian political refugee who spent most of the years in England tried to assassinate Napolean III in Paris. Out of patriotism, many young middle-class men responded to this call. When the threat had quietened, the Volunteers escalated their activities to include athletics, gymnastics, and other sports. Their training pitches were the first playing fields for rugby, soccer and athletics clubs (Collins, 2015).

The game's expansion led to England's first Rugby Union called the Rugby Football Union (RFU), in 1871. As in Scotland, elite members of the society in England primarily played rugby and termed it a Gentlemen's game. The rugby game experienced phenomenal growth when driven through the schools, as in most Commonwealth colonies (Collins, 2015). The first International test match was between England and Scotland on March 27 1871, a game of 20-a-side, played in Edinburgh, Scotland (Rugby, 2020c). Other British countries such as Wales and Ireland joined, and two years later, in 1886, the British Unions formed the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) (G. New Zealand, n.d). Since most rugby players and administrators were from the Middle Class and the Elite, a primary reason for the formation of the international rugby body, or IRFB, was to ensure the game stayed amateur and preserved their societal *middle-class* status (G. New Zealand, n.d). Football or Soccer had accepted professionalism, and the IRFB was adamant that rugby would not follow in that direction. They believed professionalism or players taking payments for playing the game they love would only destroy the sport. However, after a series of grievances, the working-class rugby players decided to form their rugby league brand to pay their players (Majumdar, 2006). Players who went North got barred from any further association with the rugby union (G. New Zealand, n.d).

4.2.1 Dr Thomas Arnold of Rugby School

To fully appreciate a holistic understanding of the origin of the game of rugby union, one will have to consider the influence and contribution of Dr Thomas Arnold in the history of the sport (Rayner, 2017). Rugby School was a public school that was the birthplace of the rugby union and founded in 1567. Around the 1800s, Rugby School was the second-largest School, of which the majority of the students were from high-class society in England. With the growth in numbers, the School became overtaken with an increase in fighting, cruelty, and lawlessness. Many times, outside help was needed to keep things calm. In 1828 Dr Arnold was appointed as the Headmaster of Rugby school and transformed the School using his Christian values. His objective was to create boys who had moral character and to develop leaders that would be very influential in British societies and their colonies. Dr Arnold deemed positive values as very critical to a boy's development. In the work of Asa Briggs in 1977, he recorded Dr Arnold's words that he would rather teach a boy to know the value of hard work than to see someone live in luxury and never realise the essence of moral character and service to his or her community (Rayner, 2017). Even though Dr Arnold was not keen on sports, his Christian beliefs were the embedding framework that would successfully develop boys to be great individuals and consequently impact England and the world. His belief was about exerting actions rather than words or contemplation, which seemed to portray Muscular Christianity. He believed that this was the appropriate approach to fight sin and maintain righteousness. Many middle-class individuals who went through Rugby school during the time of Dr Arnold adopted the values and continued to utilise them in their various career circles.

Dr Thomas Arnold was born on June 13, 1795, in a prosperous middle-class family. At that time discord between England and France directly impacted the lifestyle of Englishmen, who had enjoyed a prosperous, stable lifestyle for many years. The French were camping across the English channel, close to where the Arnold family lived, ready to launch an attack on England soil (Carter, 1963). Nearby residents felt terrified, including the Arnold family, and shifted residence to a safer area. These uncertainties were the beginning of Dr Thomas Arnold's fight in life until the day he was assigned to be the headmaster of Rugby School in England. As headmaster he introduced values that he felt were positive, practical and sustainable. Over the years, rugby teams, even at national level, began to adopt or at least work with something similar to Dr Arnold's approach and emphasis. His belief in working hard and having the right moral approach serves as the perfect formula for success in the organization (Rayner, 2017).

For the Crusaders Academy, one of the key contributors to their successes over the years has been to thoroughly approach their recruitment of academy players using Dr Arnold's moral filters because they believe, 'great men will make great rugby players', a phrase used by top rugby nations like New Zealand, England, and many others. The Crusaders believe that this approach has worked wonders for them for many years. They are one of the champion sides that hardly

recruit any fully fledged professional players from outside the region. This is because they recruit and breed their own professional players and most of them make the New Zealand All Blacks team.

4.2.2 The Amateur era

It would be quite unrecognisable for the pioneers of rugby, particularly those that played the game in the amateur days, after 25 years to see the state in which the game is played and managed on and off the field in this era, where the sport has turned professional (Nauright & Collins, 2017). There have been different approaches to professionalism adopted by foreign countries. Some have included amateurism in qualifying for amateur competition, but illegally pay players big money for their daily expenses. This practice was also known as veiled professionalism or 'shamateurism' and was an accepted practise by some countries (Nauright & Collins, 2017, p. ix). Such a dissembling practice triggered anger from the global rugby league fraternity who played their game at full amateurism yet were treated by Rugby Union as rejects or of lower status. The dignity and pride of the amateurism ideology in the rugby union, as compared to rugby league, was exposed. There was a genuine love for the game in the amateur era displayed in how they love to play or organise the game (Collins, 2009) without worrying about external influences. Rugby was a game for the players and watched by an audience of fans and not a game where players play according to the commercial demand of audiences. Rugby created an avenue for physical exercise and recreation, including societal prospects for the middle-class.

The growth of the economy in the North of England had influenced the dynamics of communities and was the catalyst in the spread of rugby. The competitive capitalist spirit in the Northerners spilt into the rugby ground. Hence, it set in motion a rivalry and fighting spirit in lower-class towns which formed teams to display their pride in the local communities they represented (Collins, 2009).

The difference between amateurs and professional players is evident in that amateurs have regular jobs or are students studying at University, whilst for professionals, rugby is their job and livelihood (Massie, 2014). Amateur players play for the love of the game and to build new friendships that last a lifetime. Amateur Clubs exist and are run by enthusiasts or maybe a coach that has a job. The high level of professionalism in the modern era of the 21st century, the increasing influence of commercialisation, and the response to the entertainment demands of the global television audience changed the dynamics of the game. This is because it was no longer about how the players played the game but played in response to the demands of the entertainment world. In the work of Jackson and Hokowhitu in 2002, they pointed out the 'Adidasification of the All Blacks and commodification of the haka' are some examples of the strides that have long surpassed the amateur era (Nauright & Collins, 2017, p. 64).

The year 1996/1997 was the first season of professional rugby in England, and to the many clubs that have opted for the professional status, it meant the change in the organisational values and internal structures of the clubs needs to adjust and adapt to the professional environment (O'Brien & Slack, 1999). Similarly, the Queensland Rugby Union was under pressure when the Australian Rugby Union accepted the decision to move to *professionalism* in 1995. This meant institutional changes that also impact the strategic and structural changes in response to critical forces that *professionalism* has introduced into the rugby environment (Skinner et al., 2004). The institutional environment denotes the social forces 'such as norms, standards, and expectations common' to stakeholders essential to the life of the Club. The Queensland Rugby Union's dilemma was to know where to strike a balance between the commercial demands against the sporting aspirations.

4.2.3 The birth of rugby league

The separation of the Rugby League from the Rugby Union in 1895 was known as the 'Great Split' (Collins, 2015, p. 27; Mudie, 2020). Today the sport has enjoyed and celebrated 125 years since its first match. In 1889, a prolific England international rugby player, Dicky Lockwood, was allegedly charged for *professionalism* by the England Rugby Union called the Rugby Football Union (RFU). This significant event shaped the game of rugby in the late 1800s (Collins, 2015). Dicky, was tagged with a few nicknames, such as the 'little Dick", "the world's wonder," "the little Maestro" or "the Little Tyke," due to his mesmerising skills at only 5 feet 4 inches (1.6 metres) tall (Mudie, 2020, p. 1). Most rugby players in England were from the elite part of the society, however, Dicky was born into a working-class home and later became a working-class rugby player. It was quite difficult for men of this status to leave work and play international rugby because it would reduce wages for days they were out. Furious fans began to express disappointment over the issue because men from a lower working class were treated differently from those of higher status. Dicky started demanding that RFU pay him and men of similar situations so that they did not lose out playing rugby for England (Mudie, 2020). This probe began the further divide of cultural and social status. Hence, to some extent, the sport of rugby league owes its existence to the broken time payments of working-class men (Light, 2013).

4.2.3.1 Rugby union vs rugby league

Rugby league was different from Rugby Union back then in the late 1800s, in mainly two ways:

i.   *Rugby Union for the Higher Class* - the sport of rugby started in a school in which future leaders attended and were most probably of families with noble or higher status in the communities. Over the years, the sport

continued to be played or dominated by the nobles or people of higher status. It was an ideal time for these men to wind down and have some social engagement.

ii. *Rugby league was created for working class people* - those who found it hard to take time off work to play the sport. So they got paid whilst playing the rugby game they loved.

To date there is little difference between the two sports, apart from the rules. Furthermore, star players of either code can jump ship and play the other sport. This is a great example of how both sports have evolved in innovation.   `

4.3 Rugby innovation

In their book published in 1997, Cleary and Griffiths eluded that money had been the catalyst in how the game has evolved to the next level (Eaves & Hughes, 2003). It pushed players to be much fitter, faster and as such, the game was much quicker. This resulted in more skilful players culminating in the lifting of the standard of rugby to be three times better. However, the high intensity of the game also attracted high injury concerns. Cleary and Griffiths' study concluded a few critical findings. One significant impact was that the increase in activity in a game would mean the design of training methods and preparations would need to simultaneously increase to help prepare players for the increased demands of the game of rugby union.

The commercial needs of partners to keep the customers or spectators entertained has been a significant driver to the increased intensity of rugby since turning professional. These innovative shifts have also influenced rugby lawmakers to introduce rules that increase the fluidity of the game and keep spectators engaged.

In a study conducted by (Hill et al., 2018) focused on the changes in body mass of male international players in the Northern hemisphere from 1955 to 2015. The findings suggested that players' body mass had increased by 24.3%, and this was due to the impact of professionalism. The forwards body mass increased gradually during the study period; however, the backs body mass had increased immensely after 1995, after Rugby turned professional. The 2015 players were averaging a body mass of 105.4 kg compared to 84.8 kg back in 1955. Players from 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995 were lighter than the 2015 average players. (Hill et al., 2018) claimed that before 1995 the height of players in rugby union was averaging 1.83m, but significantly increased after 1995 by an average of 4.3%. Certain positions had gained a significant change in body mass, particularly the Hookers and the Centres. Before 1995, none of the Hookers weighed more than 100 kg, but this gradually changed over the years, and by 2015 all Hookers were above 100kg in body mass.

Interestingly, the Rugby league players had similar changes in body mass, with rugby union players having a slight edge. However, by 2015 the body mass of rugby union players compared to rugby league players was quite statistically significant.

A study by (Murray et al., 2014) claimed that modern rugby is quite physically demanding for athletes. A significant factor of this high impact was that the professional era has led to an increase in the rugby ball's possession and the speed of the game. This speed also meant a rise in tackles made, due to the increased possession of rugby ball and increased rucks or phases. Therefore, as proven in the recent world cups, teams with the tallest and heavier players tend to outperform their opponents. Injury data has also confirmed that rugby has incurred more injuries than other sports. Furthermore, since turning professional, rugby has elevated the risk of athletes getting injured. The alarming risks pushed the governing body, at that time known as International Rugby Board (IRB), to implement changes to the laws and other changes that advocate for the safety and well-being of players.

4.3.1 The shift to professionalism

Rugby Union became professional in 1995. This was considered a significant twist in one of the world's last influential international sports (Nauright & Collins, 2017). To some, this new era presented a threat to the game by slowly erasing the sport's traditions and only focussing on the elite few. However, to others, this change was a long time coming and was welcomed with open arms.

On the eve of the 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa, the three major rugby unions from the southern hemisphere – Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, announced an agreement for a ten year deal with Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, at the value of US$550 million (Rugby, 2020a). This massive deal signifies the lucrative returns when rugby is corporatized, or operates commercially. With this deal would unfold a Super 12 rugby competition leading up to the Tri-Nations international tournament, including all the tours associated with the competition. The stars of the 1995 Rugby World Cup were on the radar of rugby league clubs from the southern and northern hemisphere. This was another challenge for the International Rugby Board (IRB). A more significant threat loomed: the threat of a breakaway competition known as the World Rugby Championship. This was spearheaded by the former International Australian prop, Ross Turnbull, and financially backed by Kerry Packer, an Australian media Tycoon. The proposed competition needed 900 players and staff for the 30 franchises around the world. By August that year, the new proposal had received 407 signatures that supported the initiative; however, the strong resistance from rugby unions nullified the new proposal.

Consequently, 'professionalism' was top of the agenda when the then International Rugby Board convened in Paris between 24 to 26 August 1995. After a gruelling three-day meeting, the then Chairman of the International Rugby Board – Venon Pugh, declared that the rugby union would become an open game. After the announcement, Newscorp signed off the deal with Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and the three unions were able to sign their best players using a central contract approach (Rugby, 2020a).

In August 2020, rugby had reached 25 years of being professional, and rugby union has not just become a game focused on individuals or the elite few, but has grown to be a game for everyone (Rugby, 2020b). The change was inevitable as rugby would have slowly eroded. According to World Rugby, the Rugby World Cup event is now the 3rd most prominent sporting event globally. The 2019 Rugby World Cup in Japan generated a sum of 4.3 billion pounds in output. It also sparked the new interest of around 2.25 million people from Asia.

4.3.1.1 The future of professionalism

World Rugby intends to make the sport of rugby a global game that reaches all corners of the globe. Over the years, the number of registered unions has increased, as reported by World Rugby in 2018, translating into increased fans and followers (Rugby, 2017). Consequently, rugby's commercialisation grew in leaps and bounds over the years due to the game's increased popularity. The New Zealand Rugby Football Union (NZRFU) received a lucrative offe from a U.S. Tech Giant, Silver Lake, a global Equity Firm and the two organisations have been in discussions since May 2020 (Napier, 2021). The offer of $465 million to NZRFU was for a 15% share of commercial rights valued at $3.1 billion, which is the largest transaction in the history of New Zealand sports since the sport turned professional 25 years ago. Stuff New Zealand also reported that the investment company's motivation to buy a slice of the NZRFU was due to its evaluation of the commercial arm being around $3.1 Billion (Cully, 2021). Silver Lake was adamant that it could stretch the All Blacks brand far and wide across the globe after successfully raising the profile of UFC to what it is today – this is something that NZRFU has struggled to achieve over the years. The $3.1 billion market value of the New Zealand Rugby brand is considered to be at the forefront of global sports with the L.A. Lakers basketball team valued at the US$4.4 billion (NZ$6.1b) and Manchester United, the third in the leader board, valued at US$3.8 billion(NZ$5.3b)

The NZRFU CEO, Mark Robinson, and team were on a roadshow presenting to the Provincial Unions and Super Rugby Clubs across New Zealand on its benefits and how it would immediately help the under-resourced grassroots level, particularly the decline in teenage participation in the sport. This potential partnership will deliver considerable opportunities to grow the sport and retain the talents drifting overseas for lucrative offers

4.3.2 **The role of safety in rugby innovation**

When the Rugby Union turned professional in 1995, significant changes unfolded on and off the field (Mellalieu et al., 2008). While the sport's growth was phenomenal, the academic studies were slow compared to other sports such as Soccer, golf, or Cricket.   The studies conducted by rugby researchers focused on performance analysis and physiological studies. The significant work on performance analysis research has led to other research focused on officials and performers; empirical studies such as the work of Hughes & Williams in 1998 on patterns of play; the work of Deutsch, Kearney, & Rehrer in 2007 focussing on work rates and activity patterns of players (Mellalieu et al., 2008). Other study have been carried out by; Hughes and Clark in 1994 on the performance of rugby officials and examinations of the rugby rules; and the comparison between successful teams and unsuccessful teams by Hunter & O'Donoghue in 2001.

Another significant work conducted by Bracewell in 2003 and James, Mellalieu & Jones in the same year focussed on profiling team performances, both individual and collectively. Similarly, studies were carried out focused on the physiological aspects due to the high demand for the player's physique externally.

4.3.2.1 Risks in the game of rugby

The Fuller Injury Surveillance Study (Fuller et al., 2008) used a research population of 626 (342 forwards, 284 backs) International rugby players, representing 20 teams who played in the 2007 Rugby World Cup. The study also included non-playing support staff and Tournament Officials covering the seven weeks of the 2007 Rugby World Cup. The study has led to some interesting findings. The findings included:

- a higher incidence of injury in rugby union, compared to other team sports;

- a higher injury risk ever since the sport turned professional;

- more injurious incidents during the actual game, compared to incidents during training;

- out of all the causes of injury, tackling has the most incidents compared to collision and scrums. (Murray et al., 2014)

Another study looked into the epidemiology of men in several elite rugby tournaments worldwide, including the World 7s Series (Fuller et al., 2015) . The study focussed on concussion, particularly the number of incidences in specified intervals, the average and median severity (days absence) and the leading causes of concussion (Fuller et al., 2015). The study indicated that rugby sevens presents are at a far greater risk of concussion than rugby fifteens. In rugby sevens,

head injuries were far more severe than in rugby fifteens. The majority of rugby 7s and rugby 15s players' heads are injured due to tackles. The percentage of concussed players who were removed from play early was higher in rugby 7s than in rugby 15s.

However, a study revealed the initiatives that had improved the handling of concussion. These include: the setting up of a system for evaluating players for concussions at the field's edge (Fuller et al., 2015); raising the rate at which return-to-play procedures are followed; working together with officials to analyse the collisions and determine their impact; enhancing the ability of players to make tackles. Hence, the forces exerted during tackles and collisions are being studied including the investigation of factors that contribute to the rising number of head injuries in Rugby 7s. This therefore required a New Legal Order to address these issues.

In 2016, World Rugby also introduced a significant change in the law of rugby 7s World series. This was the decreasing of the total number of playing time in the Finals to 14 minutes (7 minutes each half), compared to the 20 minutes earlier practised (Newman, 2016). Consequently, the global governing body of rugby back then, called the International Rugby Board (IRB), was ready to roll out new laws, inject sanctions, develop policies, and educate players and officials on reducing play that foster injuries. The new laws provided an environment for rugby to be enjoyed and 'acceptably safe' for players and entertaining to watch (Murray et al., 2014, p. 1).

In response to increasing risks of front-row neck injuries from scrums, the IRB amended the law in 2007 by reducing the speed of scrum engagement(Murray et al., 2014). The introduction of a new sequence of engagement significantly reduced the number of cervical spine injuries caused by scrummaging. The law was further revised to avoid acceleration and to negate the risks exerted by the collision force. In New Zealand, the law to enforce the compulsory use of mouthguards led to a 43% decrease in dental injuries from club rugby players. Dangerous tackle laws were introduced in 2009 and reinforced with National officials before the 2011 World Cup. The numbers of dangerous tackles decreased progressively.

After the introduction of the new laws, there was a significant drop in cervical spine injury caused by scrummaging (Fuller et al., 2015). The further revision of scrummaging engage sequence has reduced speed, which would also affect the collision impact (Murray et al., 2014). The introduction of mouth guard laws in New Zealand saw the reduction of dental injuries by 43% of club rugby players.

4.3.3   Rebranding- an innovative strategy

The original International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) was founded in 1886; the Board was given a new name, *International Rugby Board (IRB),* in 1998. In 2014, there was another rebranding in which the body unveiled its new logo and the name *World Rugby* (Rugby, 2014). The primary objective of the change was that the new logo and the new name would express World Rugby's mission statement, so as to grow the game throughout the World (Rugby, 2014). The fans believed that the previous name did not entirely embrace the stance to grow globally, and the change to World Rugby gave the game a rejuvenated perception that fans all over the world can be proud of (RugbyDump, 2014). The new logo was modern and vibrant, with the green and blue colour linking the name to the sport's rich history. World Rugby was confident that the brand would easily appeal to the consumers, as they ventured into various commercial opportunities.

The name change was the second time in sixteen years, and the then World Rugby Chairman, Bernard Lapasset, was confident that it was not only a name change, but set the tone for the direction that World Rugby wants to take the sport to in the future. It was planning to grow the sport beyond its traditional family and fans "and reflects the federation's evolution from rugby regulator to rugby inspirer."(Sport24, 2014, p. 1)

4.4   The World Rugby election process

The Executive Committee is the highest level of leadership in World Rugby and, over the years, has been dominated by the top Rugby Nations in Europe (G. New Zealand, n.d). The 2020 Executive Committee election was one of the most anticipated events in which the current (at that time) Chairman, Sir Bill Beaumont, and Vice-Chairman Agustin Pichot contested for World Rugby's Chairmanship.

The World Rugby voting system allows eight countries, including six regions, totalling up to 51 votes; done online and monitored in Switzerland (Lanbley, 2020). All the Six Nations countries, including England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and France, have three votes each. Similarly, the four Saanzar countries (New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Argentina) have three similar votes. Japan has two votes while the other seven countries; Romania, Georgia, Uruguay, USA, Canada, Samoa, and Fiji, have one vote each, totalling 39 country votes. Furthermore, six regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, North/Central America, South America and Oceania) have two votes each, totalling 12 vote; an overall 51 votes. If all the Six Nations' country vote for Sir Bill Beaumont, that would mean that he would only need another eight votes to surpass the midway and be retained as Chairman of World Rugby.

Sir Bill Beaumont eventually won by a margin. He outlined his plan to have a more diverse representative and an international partnership that is effective and beneficial to the game and not to the selected few, as perceived by many (Iveson, 2020). Bernard Laporte, President of the French Rugby Federation (FFR), competed with Sir Bill Beaumont in 2020 World Rugby Chairman election and has now taken the role as Vice Chairman of the World Rugby Executive Committee. Also on their agenda was how World Rugby would manage the pandemic and, at the same time, grow the sport.

4.4.1 Criticism against the world rugby election system

For some time, the World Rugby voting system has been criticised as biased and does not represent the notion of a global game (Rees, 2020). The unbalanced voting system raised a concern; for example, twenty-four Unions in Asia only allowed two votes, which Japan equally met. There were complaints that the consultation process was not thorough enough to capture their intent and their voting preference.

There are similar concerns that the number of votes concentrated on a handful of unions and not the whole spectrum of World Rugby. The Six Nations (18) and the Rugby Championship (12) command 30 votes or about 60%, whereas all other nations, which contain so many countries, had to share the rest of the 40% (21) of the votes. Another concern was that some nations were granted a seat in the World Rugby meeting but were unable to vote; a good example is Uruguay – they have been granted attendance at the meetings, but cannot vote. They have not been given a voice in this significant forum to allow their interests or concerns about the game to be heard. Interestingly, Tonga is allowed to vote, but not as a sovereign nation like Fiji and Samoa, but through the Oceanic region.

After the 2020 World Rugby election results were announced, Agustin Pichot expressed his disappointment in how the election was carried out and claimed that the process was not transparent, particularly the secret voting system (Cleary, 2020). Pichot further expressed that he preferred an open election using the show of hands, compared to the secretive method in which members vote using technology.

One of the notable controversies in the 2020 World Rugby election was when the Pacific Rugby Players Welfare Group wrote to the World Rugby Council protesting Fiji Rugby Union's appointment nominee, Francis Kean, for a World Rugby Executive position. Kean's nomination was supported by the French Rugby Federation President, Bernard Laporte. World rugby later withdrew Kean's nomination and probed into the allegations. World Rugby had further defended itself and the 2020 election process after a report from the Pacific Rugby Players Welfare alleging that World Rugby was involved in 'backroom deals' with Pacific Island Unions before the election (Lacey, 2020).

4.5   Diversity in rugby

The issues experienced in the pioneering years of rugby between the elite and the working class in England were not the only diversity issues in global rugby. Racial apartheid in South Africa had a different twist that ranged from fans to players' selection and even in the management or administration. To define d*iversity* in South Africa, 'race, gender, and class differences' are hand lenses to understand the dynamics in the local context *(*Cros, 2013, p. 227*)*. However, recent studies have extended these boundaries to include characteristics such as "age, physical traits (e.g., disability), sexual orientation, language, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, place of origin, social and political affiliations, seniority and experience, education and training, or what makes us to be or be perceived as different*"* (Bernstein, 2000, p. 5). Loftus Stadium, by default, has been known as the fortress of white Afrikaans rugby, and not many Black South Africans dared to watch rugby in this venue as it was too risky (Cros, 2013).

However, the Soccer World Cup held in South Africa in 2010 changed everything as the stadium was used for soccer matches. All rugby games scheduled for Loftus Stadium were shifted to Orlando stadium in Soweto, a community saturated by black South Africans. Both communities' critiques were adamant that the game's venue's shift was a big mistake because the general feeling was that the Blacks do not take an interest in rugby. The 2010 Tri-nation game played in Orlando stadium, which was the first, went down as the most celebrated South African rugby match in history. What transcended after the historic test match was the ability of rugby fans from both sides to learn off each other's differences, particularly the reality of situations of poverty that many black South Africans had to endure.

 Winning the 2019 Rugby World cup was another milestone for South Africa, led by the head coach, Johan' Rasie' Erasmus. He focussed on a unique strategy of harnessing the differences in the backgrounds within the team to motivate them to their 3rd World Cup victory (Patricios, 2020). Professor Jon Patricios, who specialises in Sports medicine in South Africa, drawing from the 2019 South African rugby team's success, argued that strength and perspective in diversity could foster positive results in organisations (2020). He further stated that the winning South African Rugby team's lessons could be adopted in any profession, even in Medicine.

Similar racial issues have been an ongoing debate in New Zealand rugby (Kahi, 2017b). During the Super Rugby season between 2010 and 2011, there were rumours that the Crusaders Rugby Club were using a racial quota, known as the 'darkies quota' when selecting players to join their Club (Laidlaw, 2010b). In one of the chapters of Chris Laidlaw's Book '*Somebody stole my game?*', he deliberated on a public perception that the performance of the All Blacks in the international scene has derailed due to the substitution of the might of white farmers with the tremendous energy and strength of Pasifika players (2010a). The reign of Pat Lam in the Auckland Blues as Head Coach for four years from 2009 brought to light racial concerns that have been lurking behind the scenes for so long (Kahi, 2017b). The team attracted

much criticism because for the four years Pat Lam, who had Pasifika heritage, only managed to get the Blues into one playoff in 2011. The critiques focused on his Samoan heritage and the fact that 22 of the 29 first-choice players in the Blues franchise were Pasifika and Maori.

Women's rugby and their involvement in sports have generally had their share of difficulties as resistance emanated from all community levels (Curtin, 2016). It was hard for the community to accept the new image of women in the sporting fields competing, but through their persistence, as in New Zealand, the barriers became smaller and smaller to the point that it no longer threatens their existence in the sport they love. Women's rugby in New Zealand has been flourishing in most provinces, but was only accepted by the New Zealand Rugby Union 1992. A study of female rugby players in a Collegiate in America, related to how they responded to stigmas about women in sports such as rugby, presented some exciting results (Ezzell, 2009). Instead of crumbling down to being stigmatised as "butch lesbians" from outsiders of the College, the female players devised a new identity namely, "heterosexy-fit" to challenge the sexist and homophobic humiliation (Ezzell, 2009, p. 124). The new identity presented the female rugby players as seriously committed players and brutal in the rugby field, but at the same time appealing to the opposite sex. This approach advocated their self-worth and pride in who they are as people whilst playing the sport they have become to love.

Rugby used to be known as a game for all sizes and shapes; however, from the study conducted by (Hill et al., 2018), it was evident that professionalism had transported the sport to a level of competitiveness that eliminated diversity. The commercial perspectives had influenced the type of physique that teams or coaches must have to field a powerful team, because winning is good for the business. This study established that when rugby turned professional, the average rugby player was much taller after the sport became professional and with a higher body mass.

4.6   The impact on organisational structure, values and ethics

The shift to professionalism significantly impacted organisations' structure, actors, communication lines, and relationships with external parties (O'Brien & Slack, 2003). The economic orientation of professionalism significantly impacted the nature of existing relationships, resulting in changes in strategies and organisation structures of rugby clubs to place them in a better commercial position. The Chairman of the Queensland Rugby Union (QRU), in the 1996 Annual Report, stated that the change to professionalism affected the elite players and influenced QRU's mandate and their approach in executing operational matters (Skinner et al., 2004). What had transpired revealed the persistent pressure on the sport to shift to professionalism, not only in QRU but around the world, particularly in its management and administration aspects.

The Fiji Rugby Union (FRU) encountered a challenging journey from the amateur era transitioning to the professional era (Rika et al., 2016). Before rugby turned professional, FRU used a straightforward accounting process because many of its funds were generated internally; therefore, there was no public accountability or urgency to have a sophisticated accounting system that would assist them in their strategic goals. Like the Rugby Football Union in England, the Fijian Rugby Management had fortified amateurism as the noble pathway and deliberately gave little importance to money in the sport. However, when the professional era began, the fund donors expected a high level of accountability, sound information management systems to eliminate the abuse of resources, and an accurate evaluation of the impact of their investment. The relationship with donors over the years since the sport turned professional has not been favourable due to repeated losses, unfavourable output and mismanagement of resources. (Rika et al., 2016) also established that even though the state of Fiji Rugby was in dire straights then, very influential partners to the Rugby Union endeavoured to manipulate financial resources and organisational structures to control and exploit it.

A sporting organisation like QRU can be easily influenced by the uncertain environment it operates in. When dealing with the transition to professionalism, it was further impacted by 'its strategic, structural, and normative characteristics'(Skinner et al., 2004, p. 78). The changes had introduced very significant *Actors* that have commercial influence. Not only do these Actors hold organisational values, that underline superior efficiency, but they also foster innovative institutional concepts.

Professionally oriented values and a new institutional logic were introduced by powerful new actors with deep ties to the corporate world. Due to the large sums of money invested in the sport, these players banded together to defend their financial holdings (O'Brien & Slack, 2003). Such initiatives included politicising relationships to build a coalition, which influenced rugby's legal boundaries (O'Brien & Slack, 2003). In the study conducted by O'Brien and Slack, they highlighted the initial resistance of English Clubs to the era of professionalism (2003). However, in 1995, the first significant transition to professionalism occurred when Sir John Hall, a business entrepreneur, bought the Newcastle-Gosforth Rugby Club. He restructured the organisation with him as the new Chief Executive Officer and renamed the Club *Newcastle Falcons.* With this move, Sir John Hall brought into the professional rugby arena his successful business values and philosophies, therefore challenging the *amateurism* status quo built on values that constitute volunteering.

4.7 The effects of COVID 19 on organisational culture

Sports is a multi-billion-dollar industry and are a source of livelihood for many. The Year 2020 entailed enormous anticipation of significant sports events, such as the 2020 Olympics that Japan was to host. The Deloitte Consulting Group

in the U.S. predicted five major trends that would significantly impact the sports industry; the continued rise of women's sports; the unrelenting rise of e-sports; the increase in legal sports betting; college athletes in America to profit from the use of the likeness (name and image) which may follow suit in other parts of the world; and the technological advancement of using 5G/sports in the cloud (Deloitte, 2020).

All these excitements came to a halt when the COVID 19 pandemic broke out. The adverse effects have been disastrous, leading to deaths, increased unemployment, stress, and other social impacts. Consequently, these also led to the closing of international borders causing business closures, thus reducing economic activities. As such, entities like Sports Organisations quickly re-strategised to survive the tsunami of challenges the pandemic had ushered into the economic and social environment. Consequently, the pandemic exerted a level of impact on the organisational structure and introduced new norms that influence the existing culture of organisations (Knowler, 2020b).

4.7.1   The New Zealand sporting experience – resilience and innovation

New Zealand regards itself to be a sporting nation that relatively punches above its weight when competing in the international arena. This is because of the size of its population in contrast to traditional oppositions or giants in whatever sport the nation competes in (Morin et al., 2001). This is a true picture of a resilient nation trying to maximise on its available resources to compete against the world. It is a nation that is driven by its local communities and societies encouraging innovation and connenctedness. At the weekends, it is a family affair, seen in the buzzing sight of parents, grandparents, mums, dads, siblings, relatives, and friends braving the cold mornings to support participating loved ones. Traffic, coffee stands, hotdogs, and hot chips are synonymous with a sporting weekend. It is invaluable and such an experience that brings the community together.

Unconsciously, it seems an essential part of a year's calendar for every sport-loving family, whether elite level, average, or just for the fun of participating. It is where new friends are made and existing relationships are reaffirmed through sharing a burden to achieve a common goal– this is such a powerful glue! Regardless of the expectations, the journey particularly becomes a significant outcome. Sports has been considered a significant time out from hectic life schedules and has helped individuals fight against stress. The effects of COVID19 on the five major sports in New Zealand; Rugby, Rugby League, Cricket, Netball, Basketball and Soccer, is no different from the severe effects all over the world.

The impacts of COVID19 on New Zealand Cricket (NZC) were substantial, resulting in the cancellation of all community or domestic Cricket, including all local clubs, schools, and all training (C. N. Zealand, 2020). International fixtures were in the red, and if cancelled, they would lose millions in revenues. Cricket New Zealand also announced in May 2020 the possibility of redundancies of staff (ESPNcricinfo.com). The projected savings they plannned to commit

to was NZ$6milion, of which NZ$1.5 million were from job cuts. Sports Stadiums or sporting arenas are a significant physical location to many top sporting brands because of the nature of their relationship with people, who are also consumers of these brands (Mastromartino et al., 2020). The absence of cricket tournaments in stadiums and local Club or provincial fixtures poses financial challenges to the sport affects a way of life and disturbs a mindset in a local community.

Fortunately, Cricket was one of the sports allowed to resume when the nation reached COVID19 Alert 2; however, there were strict guidelines (Cricket, 2020). These new guidelines added more stress to the players as these were other things they needed to think about apart from their game management and strategy. Issues like using saliva or sweat to polish the cricket balls were prohibited, and batters could not pick up the ball to return to the pitcher. They may look redundant; however, someone's life may depend on precautionary measures. Resilient strategies like these have been implemented by sports organisations to speed up the return to normalcy because sports are a very important part of the national culture.

Cricket ranked the 2nd most popular sport globally, and according to a survey conducted by the International Cricket Council (ICC), the sport has over 1 billion fans all over the world (ESPN, 2018). Another source exclaims the sport has 2.5 billion fans (Sports, 2020) and is mainly played in Australasia, Asia, and the U.K. Looking at basketball, the CEO of Basketball New Zealand, Ian Potter, expressed concerns over the sport running into jeopardy due to the effects of COVID19 (OneNews, 2020). It is one of the fastest-growing sports in Kiwi schools (Stuff, 2020). The impact carved through the associations and communities struggling to stay afloat by taking on approaches to manoeuvre through a difficult time. OneNews (2020) reported that Cricket New Zealand heavily relies on TAB funding and annually receives the largest share of the NZ$12Million pool shared by the 34 sporting bodies in New Zealand. Consequently, in the absence of sports fixtures for punters to bet on, the cash flow from TAB was reduced to devastating levels. According to CEO Potter, it could collapse the sport in the nation.

One of the key stakeholders of any sport is the fans. Arguably, the standard of the physical sporting arenas or sporting stadiums shapes the need of fans to have a shared identity with other fans in support of their favourite teams (Underwood et al., 2015). (Wakefield & Sloan, 1995) also suggested that the stadium's design can influence the fans' experience for a particular event and decide to return to the venue, even when their favourite team is not performing to their expectations.

4.8   Conclusion

From the literature discussed, *innovation* adequately portrays itself as a crucial part of the rugby survival equation. Without it, the game would have lost momentum and not be on the very successful platform it operates in today. What started as a past time activity to advocate for healthy living for the elite society has evolved into a phenomenon that influences communities and shapes nations.

The introduction of professionalism presented a paradigm shift in perspective and structure for rugby unions and clubs, setting the benchmark for the future of rugby, particularly its quest to be a global game. Professionalism had its pros and cons, as vividly discussed in this chapter. The sport became a lucrative sport, and for the first time after the 1995 World Cup, the game offered players a tremendous opportunity to build a career whilst playing the sport they love. However, to remain a lucrative career, professionalism focused on the excitement it brings to the fans and spectators or customers. These expectations generated many changes in how rugby is played and fostered subtle changes to the laws ensuring fluidity and engagement of the fans attending games, including viewers on television. The impact on the players therefore moved to a whole new level as they are required to be fitter and more robust, pushing their ability to the edge. Hence, players are essential to the marketing efforts of commercial partners.

The COVID 19 impacts of the sporting industry in New Zealand have fostered the leveation of resilience and innovation in trying to get the nation back to a level of normalcy because sports is a very important part of the New Zealand culture.

Chapter 5: The transformation and professional consolidation of the Crusaders

5.1 Introduction

In the work of Fougere in 1989, he claimed that sport was an integral part of New Zealand lifestyle (Morin et al., 2001), and the diverse population contributes to the various levels of participation in the different types of sport (Holland, 2012). Sport seems to be the mystical glue that breaks down barriers and brings people together regardless. It presents a levelled platform in which people from different facets of life can willingly engage. Kiwis have mutual consent that sport improves peer relations and fosters mutual respect by learning from each other, particularly between ethnicities and groups (Laidlaw, 2010a). Sports in New Zealand has played a critical part in defining the image of New Zealand that the whole World sees (Morin et al., 2001). This study will look at external contributors, such as communities and sports like *rugby,* influence on sporting organisations, particularly its organization culture.

This chapter discusses the introduction of rugby in New Zealand and how the pioneers of the game grew the sport to become one of the key national identities and a big contributor to the national economy. The chapter then moves on to the Canterbury region and how the early settlers' ethics and lifestyle influenced how rugby was approached in the region, eventually influencing the formation of the Crusaders Super Rugby franchise in 1996. The growth and transition of the Crusaders rugby team is discussed, from its inception to what it is today, a powerhouse in super rugby and around the world.

A study reported that Sports and Recreation contribution to New Zealand's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the year 2008/2009 amounted to $5.2 billion, which translated as 2.8% of GDP (Dalziel, 2011). This achievement levelled with the Dairy Industry's contribution to the national GDP. For the same period, there was an estimation of more than 15,000 sports and recreation clubs engaging 776,000 volunteers, an equivalent of 51 million hours per year (McLean, 2011). Consequently, the City Councils spent around $345 million on new sporting and recreational facilities for the same period. In the surveys done in 1997, 1998 and 2000, 92% of young people surveyed had taken part in either one or more sports. In the 2008/2009 national survey 96% of adults confirmed to have taken part in either one or more sports. In comparison, for 2018, the Australian sports industry contributed $14.4 billion to their national economy, 0.8%

of GDP. Recent studies show that the contribution of sports in New Zealand to its GDP is slightly more than Australian sports does for the national economy.

Globally the sports market grew from $324 billion in 2011 to a value of $471 billion in 2018, with the United States holding a 32.5% share of the global sports market (Tighe, 2020).

5.2   New Zealand Rugby resilience and innovation

Features of national identity are universally recognisable and have an effect on the growth of businesses domestically. As a result of this, national policies are designed to enable these identities. This has an impact not only on the environment of the workplace but also on the internal culture.

Rugby is arguably New Zealand's national sport (Palenski, 2015) after the triumphant tour of the All Blacks to Great Britain in 1905 (Curtin, 2016). On 16 April 1892, the New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRU) was formed and has enjoyed a long history of success (Wood, 2017). In the 19th century, New Zealand was developing rapidly as a colony of the British Empire, which was at the height of the Industrial Revolution and a commanding presence globally (Wood, 2017). However, considering that the British invented the game, it would be an absurd idea back then to think that New Zealand would be a giant in World Rugby (Collins, 2015). New Zealand became a British Colony in 1840, also marked by the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in the same year. The migrants that settled in New Zealand brought with them games and activities from their motherland, such as football by the British and the Victorian rules, later known as the Australian rules from the migrants of the Victorian Gold Fields in Australia. In the mix was the preference to play football using hands, which was later called *rugby*. Even though few rules were established at that time to govern the new football game, people began to find a new interest in the sport.

At the beginning of every rugby union game the national team plays, a traditional war dance or the *haka* is performed by the New Zealand All Blacks called the 'Kapa o Pango'. The ritual haka, traditional war dance, before every game captivates the fans, the players and even the opposition's fans. It portrays patriotism, just like the national anthem and the uniqueness of culture and underlines a profound identity for New Zealanders (Davis & McGinnis, 2016) (Murray, 2000).

The exodus of early settlers Europeans to come to New Zealand was driven by four reasons (Wood, 2017). The first was because of a strategic plan to colonise the land progressively. The second reasoning was from a religious perspective through the churches in which several settlements were established, including Otago, Canterbury, Nelson, Wellington, and New Plymouth. Through this group, a commercial arm was established to strengthen their plans, which

initially saw the establishment of the 'New Zealand Company' that founded the first settlement in 1839 on the Hutt River, near Wellington (Wood, 2017, p. 19). The third reason was the increase in trading activities in the North Island, and the fourth the discovery of gold and precious stones in Otago and Westland. This attraction of the unique stone fields caused the growth of the South Island and the many that had flocked to California, and the Victorian goldfields descended to New Zealand. By 1901, the population in New Zealand was estimated to be over half a million, 770,301 to be exact.

Britain was initially a rural society before the significant progression during the Industrial revolution. This meant that the country people traditionally had gatherings during 'special holidays, religious occasions, festivals and fairs'. People within and between town centres were encouraged to engage in games (Wood, 2017, p. 21). However, between the late 1850s and the early 1880s, significant settlers made their way to New Zealand desiring to elevate their middle class status further (Wood, 2017). This group reinforced their ambition by strengthening formal education throughout the colony. Between 1850 and 1868, a batch of schools was established. This development was significant also to the development of rugby in New Zealand. Those schools were Christ's College (1850), Wellington College (1852), Te Aute College in Hawke's Bay (1854), Nelson College (1856), Otago Boys High School (1863) and Auckland Grammar School (1868). What was significant was the caliber of staff that were in these schools, who had either been to Rugby School or had been influenced by a similar institution. There was a natural flow of the principles of Rugby from the staff to the students in these schools.

Not long after establishing these schools and the increased prominence of rugby, the three pillars of rugby in New Zealand were instituted; 'Club, Province and Country' (Wood, 2017, p. 25). Club Rugby stood out as the significant pillar contributing immensely to a sense of identity and belongingness typical of the modest communities' characteristics back in their motherland.

The New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRU) formation was not a straightforward process but was a struggle (Wood, 2017). The establishment of the NZRU was resisted by the Southern unions, i.e., Canterbury, Otago and Southland. A significant reason for the delay in their decision was that Otago was affiliated with the RFU in England. None of the Southern Region Unions supported the notion of a controlling body to be based outside their region. Hence, when the NZRU was formed in 1892, the three southern unions declined initially and took some time to decide.

The first test match was against Australia in 1893, which was held in Australia, and the first game of the tour was against New South Wales, which attracted 50,000 spectators(Wood, 2017). This tour benefited the NZRFU immensely, considering the costs incurred for sending the team and the negative perception of England towards the monetary gains.

5.2.1 The Maori rugby history and innovation

Rugby has become an important site for Maori men to gain status and a forum to uphold traditional notions of masculinity (Calabrò, 2016). The indigenous experience of rugby appears to be supported by national and international depictions of the Maori man as a rugby player, a modern version of the Maori warrior. For over a century, Maori have bargained for a place in rugby, and now their efforts have paid off. However, there are many complexities, ambiguities, and tensions at play in this phenomenon.

Historically, the Maori people of New Zealand would perform the haka in order to demonstrate the pride, strength, and solidarity of their tribe. It is widely known that the haka is a war dance that is performed to energise warriors before they go into combat. Nevertheless, the haka is also traditionally used as a way to celebrate, entertain, welcome, and challenge visiting tribes. During their tour of Britain and Australia in 1888-89, the very first New Zealand representative rugby side, which was known as The Natives, performed a haka for the crowd. The haka known as Ka Mate, which was performed back then, is being performed by the All Blacks today. Historically, the All Blacks were the only ones to do the haka outside of New Zealand whenever they travelled for a game. The Haka was not performed at home games until 1986, when it was first introduced. After that, the All Blacks started to take the haka more seriously, and ever since then, they've been doing it with the same level of accuracy, respect, and passion that it's become famous for. This is a very clever approach to prepare the players mentally for the game that they are going to play, and it is an innovative way to incorporate the Maori identity into the sport of rugby.

It was in keeping with the Victorian view of sport that included the notion of muscular Christianity (Hargreaves, 1985), that rugby was introduced to the Maori as part of the colonial policies typical of British cultural imperialism (Phillips, 1996; Stoddart, 1988). Since it became apparent that the Maori people would not disappear as predicted, colonial authorities encouraged and accepted Maori involvement in rugby, with Maori being allowed to play for the New Zealand national team, the All Blacks, and their own national team. As a means of endearing the indigenous man to the colonial society and further marginalising him (Chandler & Nauright, 1999; Hokowhitu, 2003), rugby became an integral part of the curriculum in Maori schools. Images of Maori men dominated by the archetype of the warrior-rugby player, whose brute strength serves as a defining characteristic, suggest that this image of Maori men as a whole continues to exert power. Similarly, Maori men continue to face structural disadvantages in New Zealand society, as evidenced by statistics that highlight issues such as poverty, unemployment, low education levels, crime, poor health, and suicide. Additionally, many Maori men today credit rugby with preparing them for the real world by developing in them a work ethic, a capacity for leadership, a tendency for teamwork, and an entrepreneurial spirit (Te Rito, 2007). Moreover, colonial sports became a communal event, serving as a platform for inter-tribe rivalry and bolstering tribal identity (Love,

1952; MacLean, 2013; Sorrenson, 1986, 1990) . Thus, athletics became a new arena through which to identify leaders (Calabrò, 2016; Winiata, 1967). These are some of the innovative ways in which the sport of rugby has been utilised to channel Maori identity and to shape its players into better people.

5.3   Regional rugby – Canterbury

5.3.1   The establishment and growth of the Canterbury community and impact of organizational culture

5.3.1.1   The Māori settlers in the South Island - Ngāi Tahu values and the organisation culture

The first Māori settlers arrived around 600 to 700 years ago; however, they dwelled around the productive wetlands closer to the coast and alongside Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere) and Wairewa (Lake Forsyth), which are famous for eel and fisheries (Wilson, 2015b). The Horomaka (Banks Peninsula) was also important, and it was an important location where the Maoris can access the forests and sea resources.

For centuries, the early tribes in Te Waipounamu, now known as Canterbury, were Hāwea, Rapuwai and Waitaha, and they were Moa Hunters. Later other tribes migrated to the South, including Ngāti Māmoe, Ngāti Wairaki and Ngāi Tahu (Libraries, 2021).

Figure 5.1 – Picture of a NZ Moa

Maori burn the forests and hunt Moa to extinction
Sourced from Kapiti Independent News
(http://kapitiindependentnews.net.nz/nz-biodiversity-3-moa-hunting-other-extinctions/)

The Ngāi Tahu is the main iwi (tribe) in the South Island, and they had emigrated from the East coast of the North Island, then moved to Wellington and finally to the South Island (Wilson, 2015b). In their quest for new territories, the Ngāi Tahu had to endure the challenges of two tribes that existed already in the South; Ngāti Māmoe and Waitaha, hence today's Ngāi Tahu tribe has descendants of these two tribes. Ngāi Tahu reached the bottom of the South Island, Foveaux Strait, by the 18th century. The Canterbury region lies within the traditional boundaries of the Ngāi Tahu. The tribe had a challenge from Ngāti Toa chief, Te Rauparaha, over ownership of the most prized pā (fortified refuge or settlement) in Kaiapoi, a centre of pounamu (greenstone) trade extracted from the West Coast. However, Ngāi Tahu fought off the challenge and established their ownership of Canterbury.

In recent years, indigenous values and customs have been used in the commercial environment to establish diversity in approach and also a competitive advantage because of its uniqueness to New Zealand. Entrepreneurship could be understood through the prism of indigenous cultural and spiritual traditions; paying homage to past practises could shed light on the present. (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990) argued that there is room to study how the historical impacts on indigenous societies have shaped the present-day setting in which their members manage their businesses. A great number of Maori organisations serve more than one purpose. This indicates that their primary goal is not to earn a profit in the short term. Many of them must strike a balance between being economically viable and fulfilling the social and cultural objectives of their owners in order to fulfil their primary purposes. Even while the organisations may engage in commercial activities and judge their performance based on economic metrics, the accumulation of wealth is not considered as an aim in and of itself (Education, 2023). These developments have an impact on the type of organisation culture that dictates the workplace environment and also business relationships. For example, the Chinese use an economic practice called 'guanxi', in which social capital is used 'to build a business relationship' (Chuang et al., 2011, p. 443). Each organisation has dominant value systems that form an integral part of an organisation, and these value systems capture a component of the nationality of the organisation's founder or the key players of the organisation or company (Hofstede, 1985).

5.3.1.2 The European contact

Captain James Cook was the first European to have sighted the Canterbury coast in 1770 but did not go to shore and explore the land (Wilson, 2015b). He only sighted the Banks Peninsula and assumed it was an island; therefore did not land (Library, 2021). Pegasus, was the first European ship to enter the Lyttleton harbour in 1809 and 1815, another sealing ship 'Governor Bligh' landed in Canterbury. The whaling ships started operating from Lyttleton by 1835, and two years later, another whaling station was established at Peraki Bay. The first settlers in the Canterbury plains came in the

'Sarah and Elizabeth' ship and landed on 12 April 1840. Herriot, McGillivray, Ellis, Shaw (and wife) and McKinnon (with his wife and child) initially planned to establish a farm at Riccarton. However, almost a year later, they decided to abandon their plan.

The colonisation of the Canterbury region was carried out by the Canterbury Association, which was founded by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Robert Godley in London in 1848 (Syddall, 2020). The Canterbury Region was a realisation of a dream that was articulated in "The Plan for the Forming of the Settlement of Canterbury in New Zealand", which was published in 1848 (University, 2016, p. 31). The plan was backed by His Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, including very prominent individuals from various parts of the society in England. Their vision was that the Canterbury Community would be different from others in New Zealand, with a hierarchical structure similar to the English society and the Anglican church at its heart (Wilson, 2015a).

The immigrants of the Canterbury Association, which Wakefield described as "a slice of English Society," were, as one might expect, handpicked by an extremely illustrious selection committee (University, 2016, p. 40). The handpicked members of the new community would begin with a Bishop and an Earl, and work its way down through groups of doctors, lawyers, clergy, teachers, artisans, farmers, and labourers. No "desperate and flighty and reckless people" were accepted after the committee looked through their "religious and educational qualifications"(University, 2016, p. 40). Consequently, a General Committee was formed in which Lord Lyttleton was Chairman. As the unfolding of the plan proceeded further, the Canterbury Association sent Captain Joseph Thomas, a former army lieutenant who was also a surveyor and an engineer, to assess the land of Aotearoa and also select the site for the Canterbury Association Settlement (Syddall, 2020). Upon arriving in New Zealand, Captain Thomas was lured by the then Governor, Sir George Grey, to take an interest in the Wairarapa District. However, Captain Thomas had received information beforehand of the potential in the plains of the South Island and was adamant about viewing the plains. Whilst setting foot and viewing the South Island plains, he was mesmerised by the enormous tract of flat land, well covered with grass and sustained with the lavish supply of rivers and creeks (University, 2016). The Canterbury Purchase, also known as the Kemp's Deed, was negotiated by Henry Tacy Kemp, on behalf of the Crown, and on 12 June 1848 was signed by a group of Ngai Tahu Chiefs. It was one of the most significant acquisitions of the land done by the Crown at a total of 13,551,400 acres for 2,000 Pounds (Tahu, 1997).

The European settler entrepreneurs were whalers; a new type of entrepreneuship. Prior to the turn of the 19th century, whalers began hunting in the oceans close to New Zealand. By the year 1805, whaling ships were making frequent stops in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. Maori provided them with food and clean water, and occasionally women as well (M. o. N. Zealand, 2020). In return for their labour, the Maori were given manufactured items, clothing,

and even occasionally muskets. Some British whalers decided to shift their focus from the wide ocean to the coastal seas of New Zealand, which was where whales travelled to give birth. The whalers established shore stations in various locations across the nation. Whale catching and processing was a cooperative effort between local Maori and British workers at these locations. Both parties believed that they came out ahead. Maori became proficient in a variety of new trades and obtained a variety of manufactured products (M. o. N. Zealand, 2020). The British were able to acquire a land base as well as access to the indigenous labour force. Marriages between whalers and Maori frequently resulted in the formation of a connection that ensured the safety of regional rangatira. These were innovative ways to use resources to foster new partnership and in return strengthen security for the rangatira. Britain and Australia valued New Zealand's timber. Māori and Pākehā formed export ventures which also resulted in the commencement of boatbuilding.

5.3.2   **Regional rugby**

5.3.2.1 The innovation in growing the sport in Canterbury.

The resilient and innovative mindset of rugby pioneers in the region was phenomenal. Moreover, the political significance of rugby has led to its gradual eclipse of other sports. This has resulted in the leadership of rugby players or administrators moving from the field to the stage of community life and eventually the platform of national politics. The Canterbury Rugby Football Union (CRFU) was founded in 1979 after a rugby match between South Canterbury and North Canterbury in Timaru, an annual event for a few years. The meeting was held on 26 July 1879 and sponsored by the Christchurch Football Club, which deliberated on a proposal to form the New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRFU). The meeting was attended by delegates representing Christchurch Football Club, Christ's College, Temuka, Rangiora from North Canterbury, Eastern from Christchurch, Timaru from South Canterbury, Ashburton and clubs from Southbridge (Gifford, 2004).

Figure 5.2- Canterbury's first representative rugby team, 1876

Canterbury's first representative rugby team, 1876
(Courtesy of the Christchurch City Council Libraries)

The proposal to form the NZRFU was not supported nor approved; however, the Christchurch FC had an *alternative plan*, as masterminded by Montague Lewin, who had attended Rugby School in England and immigrated to Christchurch. He was instrumental in adopting the rugby rules used by the England Rugby Union for the Canterbury Clubs (N. Z. M. f. C. a. Heritage, 2015). The alternative plan Montague Lewin proposed was forming a Canterbury Rugby Union made up of eight clubs stretching from Rangiora (North Canterbury) to Timaru (South Canterbury). The push to form the Union was also triggered by the visit of an Australian Victorian Rules football team in 1879, which was significant as far as the spread of rugby is concerned. South Canterbury decided to form its own Union in 1888 based in Timaru. In 1904, Ashburton County Union was created as a sub-union of South Canterbury; however, in 1952, it changed its name to Mid-Canterbury.

In October the same year, the Wellington Rugby Union was formed, including clubs from the Wairarapa and the nearby districts. This was followed by the formation of the Otago Rugby Union and followed by Auckland two years later. The first inter Union, or provincial game, was played on 27 August 1881 in which Otago defeated Canterbury, and by 1892, a total number of sixteen unions had been confirmed (Wood, 2017). The Rugby Unions' formation and affiliations were aligned to the Governmental provincial boundaries.

5.3.2.2 Heartland championship – an innovative segmentation

As rugby's popularity rose, it was a bold step to establish a second national competition for the Tier 2 and Tier 3 Unions to compete in. Not only did it provide rural players with a chance to play competitive rugby, but it also served as

a channel for New Zealand rugby to engage a wider demographic in the sport, which provided commercial and promotional benefits.

The Heartland Championship is lower than the major provincial championship and is a semi-professional competition (H. Rugby, 2021). This competition was founded in 2006 and consists of twelve teams outside the main New Zealand Centres. The match was created after the change of structure in the New Zealand domestic competition.

5.3.2.3 Meads Cup and Lochore Cup – innovation for competitive advantage

Figure 5.3 – Map of NZ Union
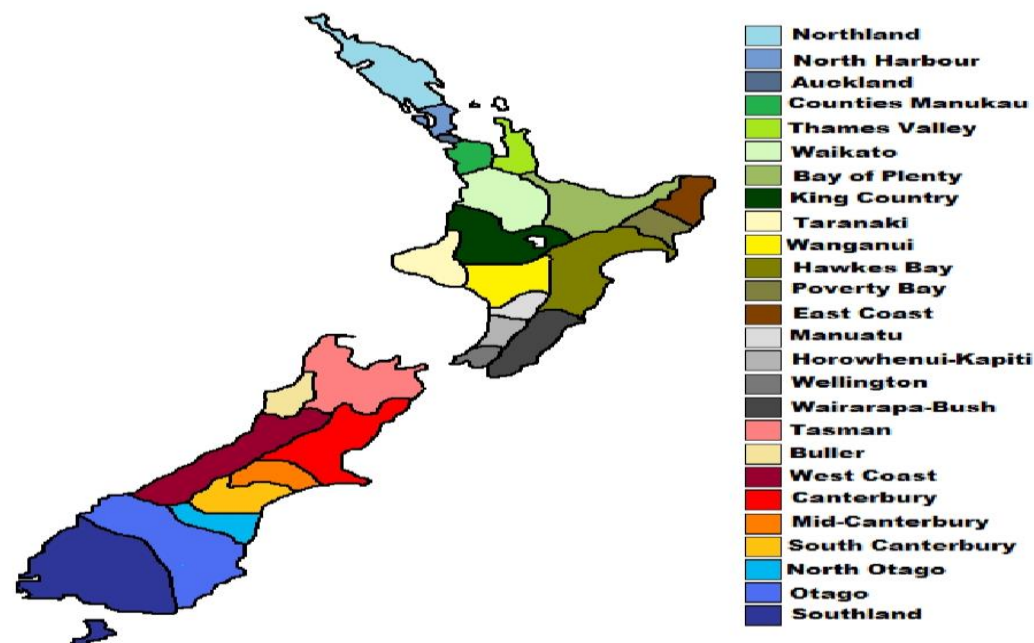
MAP OF NZ UNIONS
Sourced from Rugby Heartland
(https://rugbyheartland.co.nz/wp/about-heartland)

These cups were named after two great former All Blacks, Sir Colin Meads and Sir Brian Lochore. The 12 teams in the competition play round-robin games, and the top 4 teams go into the semifinal playoffs to compete for the Colin Meads Cup Finals. Based on the points from the round-robin, the teams ranked 5th to 8th will play for the Lochore Cup. The team ranked 5th will play against the 8th ranked team and the 6th against the 7th team, with home game advantage to the higher-ranked team of each semifinal (N. Z. Rugby, 2021a).

Figure 5.4 – All Blacks legend Sir Colin Meads

**All Blacks legend Colin Meads evades a tackle in the match
against Border during the 1970 tour of South Africa**

Sourced from nzhearld.com (https://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/sir-colin-meads-obituary-a-colossus-of-a-bygone-era/
ZW6UE2JDE6M5UOEA2U3R2DK3VQ/)

Sir Colin Meads grew up on a farm near Te Kuiti until he was an adult. He is an inspiration to current Heartland rugby players because he seemed to exemplify the skills and talents outside the main New Zealand Centres. He was nicknamed the 'Pinetree' standing at 1.92 meters tall and weighing 100kg. He was a legendary All Black that played 55 test matches from 1957 to 1971. Even though he was not the tallest in his team, the nickname was in recognition of his presence during each game he played and his physical and uncompromising approach using rugged rural masculinity, similar to those of the past (Heritage, 2017). In 1999 he was named New Zealand Player of the Century and named in the International Rugby Hall of Fame as "the most famous forward in world rugby throughout the 1960s" (Heritage, 2017, p. 1). He played for 13 years for the local Waitete Football Club. When in an urban environment, he seemed to be the odd one as he often displayed characteristics of early rural Pākehā men. In his 1974 biography, the writer described that "Meads sees himself as an ordinary bloke with a farm to work, sheep to shear, land to be cleared, a cow to milk. As a bloke who loves a beer with his mates" (Heritage, 2017, p. 1).

Sir Brian Lochore, was a Wairarapa born rugby player who became a prominent figure. He was an All Black, also a sheep farmer and, just like Sir Colin Meads, an inspirational figure to the Heartland rugby provincial players. In 1959 before turning 20, he played his game for his province, Wairarapa Bush, against the visiting British Lions team – a game that caught the attention of the All Blacks selectors. He played 68 games and played 25 test matches, of which 18 were as the All Black captain. He only lost 3 test matches as a Captain, and during his All Black career, he played outstandingly as a No.8 and a Lock.

Figure 5.5 – Former All Black captain, Brian Lochore

All Blacks captain Brian Lochore on the charge in a test in South Africa in 1970

He was also inducted into the International Rugby Hall of fame in 1999 and knighted the same year. After retiring from rugby, he went back to coach his Masterton Club and moved up to coach the Wairarapa-Bush Province in 1980. During his coaching with Wairarapa-Bush, the team was elevated to the first division of the National Provincial Competition in 1980. He became an All Black selector in 1983 before coaching the All Blacks from 1985 to the year they won the 1987 World Cup. He also took up the role of Manager for the 1995 All Blacks World Cup team that lost in the finals. He played a significant role in the post-1995 World Cup negotiations when rugby turned professional. He was very instrumental in helping New Zealand Rugby secure their leading players to be part of the first-ever professional competition. This was the Super 12 Rugby, funded by the signing with the competing professional tournament, the Sydney-based World Rugby Competition (WRC), and consequently the beginning of the famous Super 12 Rugby competition sponsored by Media magnate, Rupert Murdoch.

5.3.2.4 The introduction of the Ranfurly Shield – an innovative forward step for the sport

The Ranfurly shield was yet another innovative step forward for the sport. It raised the stakes, necessitating a steadfastness and creativity in the teams' approach to the shield's challenges that had not been there before. The sport is still reaping the advantages of this commitment to innovation.

The passion and relentless focus on provincial rugby in New Zealand have helped engrave the sport in a special place in the country's social and sporting history (M. o. C. a. Heritage, 2015). The Ranfurly Shield was a separate competition from the regular rugby matches. It was competed on a *challenge system* in which a province will challenge the existing holder of the shield. It was a symbol of New Zealand rugby supremacy and whoever wins the rugby match keeps the shield, awaiting the challenge from another province.

The shield was donated by the 5th Earl of Ranfurly, Uchter Knox, a politician who was the Governor of New Zealand from 1897 to 1904 (House, 2017). He was also the patron of the then New Zealand Rugby Football Union. The trophy was first designed to suit football; however, it was modified to suit the sport (N. Z. Rugby, 2021b) and was also known as the "log 'o Wood". Auckland became the first holder of the shield in 1902 and was also unbeaten that year (N. Z. Rugby, 2021b).Then, because Auckland was touring in 1903, there was no shield challenge because the challenge match must be done at the current holder's home ground. Hence, the first challenge was in 1904 and wellington beat Auckland to become the first province to win a shield challenge. The winner's name is usually engraved on the shield. In the present setup, the current holder must accept seven challenges in a year and vary from Unions in different levels of the competition, including the Heartland Championship.

Canterbury has a profound history with the Ranfurly Shield. It has won 15 times and has defended the shield 136 times which is second to Auckland. Canterbury first challenged the shield in 1904 but did not win the shield after the eleventh attempt. Over the years, Canterbury had been Auckland's most fierce rival for supremacy as the best rugby union in New Zealand (N. Z. M. f. C. a. Heritage, 2015). The competition between these two Unions has been tagged various names, such as *North vs South* or *City vs Country.* Canterbury's most extended hold on the shield was from 1982 to 1985, led by their Captain, Don Hayes, who fought off 25 challenges (Union, n.d). This achievement was an equal second-longest by any province in the history of the Ranfurly shield. One of the biggest upsets was when Canterbury lost to the underdog, Marlborough Province, a minnow, by 13-6, which stunned the faithful supporters packed at the then Lancaster Park.

5.3.2.5 Club rugby in the Canterbury region

Rugby at the grassroots level is extremely important to the New Zealand Rugby Union. The achievements that are accomplished at this level will always have an effect on the sport. At this level, the majority of activities and roles are carried out on a voluntary basis; here is also where the process of innovating and coming up with new ideas begins. They also make the decision on the kind of club culture that is required to assist their club in achieving their yearly goals, as well as their medium-term and long-term goals.

Every Saturday, over 100,000 rugby players of all sizes and ages gear up for their club rugby games all over New Zealand. The success of the New Zealand All Blacks in the international arena is built on the strength and commitment of grassroots rugby which is "the schools, the clubs, and representative teams of 26 provincial teams' of the nation (Tourism, 2019, p. 1). The real strength of rugby in New Zealand remains with those clubs that are closer or located in

the town areas or cities (Wood, 2017). The urban drift over the years also contributed to the well-replenished talents in the major clubs in the town or towns (Wood, 2017). From the initial establishment of the sport in the four major cities, Auckland still has six out of eight clubs established in 1914, Wellington and Christchurch still have eight out of the nine that started, and Otago has nine continuing clubs.

The Canterbury Rugby Union consists of 45 Rugby Football Clubs (RFC) registered in the 2021 season, the most of any other New Zealand Union, split into three sub-unions, *Ellesmere, North Canterbury and Metropolitan*(Union, 2021).

Ellesmere:

There are 19 clubs in the Ellesmere Sub-Union.

Table 5.1 - Ellesmere Sub-Union, 2021

1. Banks Peninsula RFC	11. Southbridge RFC
2. Darfield RFC	12. Springston RFC
3. Diamond Harbour RFC	13. Waihora RFC
4. Dunsandel/Irwell RFC	14. West Melton RFC
5. Kirwee RFC	15. BDI RFC
6. Leeston RFC	16. Halswell RFC
7. Lincoln RFC	17. Hornby RFC
8. Prebbleton RFC	18. Kaikoura RFC
9. Rolleston RFC	19. Selwyn RFC
10. Sheffield RFC	

North Canterbury:

There are nine clubs in the North Canterbury Sub-Union.

Table 5.2 – North Canterbury Sub Union, 2021

1. Amberley RFC
2. Ashley RFC
3. Glenmark Cheviot RFC
4. Kaiapoi RFC
5. Hurunui RFC
6. Ohoka RFC

7. Oxford RFC

8. Saracens RFC

9. Woodend RFC

Metropolitan:

There are 17 clubs in the Metropolitan Sub-Union.

Table 5.3 – Metrpolitan Sub-Union, 2021

1. Belfast RFC	10. New Brighton RFC
2. Burnside RFC	11. Otautahi RFC
3. Christchurch FC	12. Parklands RFC
4. High School Old Boys RFC	13. Shirley RFC
5. Linwood RFC	14. Suburbs RFC
6. Lyttelton RFC	15. Sumner RFC
7. Marist Albion RFC	16. Sydenham RFC
8. Lincoln University RFC	17. University RFC
9. Merivale Papanui RFC	

*RFC – Rugby Football Club

There are around 1380 females playing rugby in Canterbury around the same period.

5.4   Genesis of the Crusaders

5.4.1   The original Crusaders

The professional rugby era was the most innovative phase for the sport, which has seen many changes over its history. As a direct result of this, there has been a significant adjustment made to the rugby governing systems' approach

towards the sport; training techniques, rules, as well as a revolution in the organisational dynamics and more importantly, how the game is played. It was a chance to actually get paid for something that you would enjoy doing as a player, and for die-hard rugby fans, it was a chance to see a new level of the game that had never been seen before. The Super Rugby tournament, the first and most prominent professional competition in the Southern Hemisphere, was made possible after the formation of the SANZAR in 1996, after the global body, World Rugby, announced the transition from amateurism to professionalism in 1995.

The Crusaders Rugby was one of the five teams in New Zealand founded for the Super Rugby tournament and was formerly known as the Canterbury Crusaders. Still, the name was changed to truly represent the top region of the South Island provincial unions of; Buller, Canterbury, Mid-Canterbury, South Canterbury, and Tasman & West Coast (Geertson, 2007 - 2021). The Super Rugby Tournament has been running for 25 years, and the Crusaders is the most successful Club in the Super Rugby competition. In the latter years, clubs from Argentina and Japan were included (Crusaders, 2021c). This legacy has been a standard that many teams from the SANZAR region and worldwide have tried to emulate. The first Crusaders Team was created in December 1995, along with four other New Zealand Teams to be part of the new Super Rugby 12 tournament, which was the first few initiatives since Rugby Union went professional(Crusaders, 2021b). The original, or first Crusaders team, included the current Crusaders Head Coach, Scott "Razor" Robertson (In this study, the appellation "Razor" and Scott Robertson will be used interchangeably to denote the present Head Coach of the Crusaders.) and the other former player who became a coach was Todd Blackadder, who coached from 2008 to 2006. Todd's son, Ethan Blackadder, became a Crusader in 2018 who now plays for the All Blacks, following in his father's footsteps.

In 2021, a significant announcement was made confirming the change of the Super Rugby competition structure to exclude South Africa, Argentina, and Japan. The new Super Rugby Pacific includes the Fijian Drua, consisting of Fijian local and overseas players and the Pasifika Moana, which will consist of Tonga and Samoan players eligible to play for those two nations (Superrugby, 2021).

5.4.2   **Outstanding achievements in Super Rugby – a snapshot of resilience and innovation**

Without delving into the details of organisational dynamics, the number of wins and circumstances endured by the club discussed below can be summed up in two words: *resilience* and *innovation*.

Crusaders Rugby has won 11 titles, been finalists 16 times, semifinalists 20 times and have produced many national rugby players, captains, and coaches. The main home ground was the AMI stadium known as Jade Stadium, and before that was Lancaster Park (Bryant & Evans, 2017). After struggling in their first season in 1996, the Club reached

sixth place in 1997 before winning the tournament three years in a row, from 1998 to 2000. Todd Blackadder captained the team for those three years, and each of these finals was played away from home. This speaks volumes of the character in the team. The Club finished tenth place in 2001, which was the worst ever achievement after 1996. The Crusaders won again in 2002, when they set the record of an unbeaten season of 11 wins and no losses (Crusaders, 2021b). Consequently, in June the same year, the All Blacks played against Ireland, and 14 of the starting 15s were Crusaders players with a convincing score of 40 – 8 (Bryant & Evans, 2017). The Crusaders reached the finals in 2003 and 2004 but lost on both occasions; however, in 2005, after finishing first in the round-robin games, they hosted the finals and played against the Waratahs to win their fifth Super Rugby title, which Richie McCaw captained. In 2006, the competition expanded from Super 12 to Super 14, including Western Force from Australia and Cheetahs from South Africa (Scrum.com, 2006).

The Crusaders started the season well with an unbeaten run of sixteen matches, and even though they had mixed results towards the end, they still finished on top of the round-robin points table. The Crusaders beat the Bulls in the semifinals and played a home final against the Hurricanes, beating them by 19-12. They finished third in the 2007 season before returning in 2008 with a stunning 11 wins and two losses record along with the right to host the finals again at AMI Stadium against the Waratahs. They won 20-12 to win their seventh Super Rugby title (Crusaders, 2021b). In 2009 the Crusaders did not start the season well with just a win and a draw in the first five matches, but began to find their rhythm later in the season, just edging the Waratahs for a semifinal spot due to points differential (McCormick, 2009). They lost the semifinals to the Bulls 36-23 in front of a capacity crowd of 52,000 at Loftus Versfeld, Pretoria. The Bulls then went on to win the finals against the Chiefs 61-17.

Although the Crusaders started the 2010 season well, they did not have good results with three consecutive losses, resulting in an away semifinal with Bulls and losing 39-24. In 2011, they lost their first game to the Blues by two points and the second game against the Hurricanes was cancelled. The game was declared a draw because of the earthquake on 22 February, which caused the death of 182 individuals. However, their first game after the disaster was against Waratahs played in Nelson, which they won 33-18 (RugbyWorld, 2011). This game was dubbed an emotional day of rugby for the Crusaders region as emotions ran high after the earthquakes' shocking impact. The seven times super rugby champion brought some smiles and hope to the region that they were still one of the favourites for the 2011 Super Rugby title. However, due to the unavailability of their revenue-generating Jade stadium, they had to play a one-off match against the Sharks at London's Twickenham Stadium on 27 March with the hope to attract 55,000 spectators and inject a financial boost to their dilemma (AFP, 2021).

Unfortunately, the game only attracted 35,094 spectators. The Crusaders lost the final at Suncorp Stadium to the Queensland Reds after a crucial try by Will Genia won the game for the Reds 18-11. In 2012, the Crusaders played in their new home ground, which is now the Orangetheory stadium, and were defeated by the Chiefs in the semifinals. In 2017, Scott "Razor' Robertson became the Head Coach and led the Club to win their eighth Super Rugby title beating the Lions of South Africa 25-17 at Ellis Park stadium in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Club had lost to the British & Irish Lions during their New Zealand tour the same year. Again 2018, the Crusaders beat the Lions in their home game finals 37-18 to win their ninth title (Crusaders, 2021b). The Crusaders made the finals again in 2019 and played a home game versus the Jaguares from Argentina 19-3 for a three-peat win, which was their tenth Super rugby title.

COVD19 hit after the seventh round of the 2020 Super Rugby season, and the tournament halted. In June 2020, a domestic Super Rugby Aotearoa commenced which the Crusaders won after winning seven out of their eight games. This was also their eleventh Super Rugby title. There was a slight controversy, where it was reported that the Pounamu attached to the 2020 Aotearoa Super rugby trophy was damaged during a post-match celebration which received some criticisms from the public and the media (Stuff.co.nz, 2020). The Crusaders CEO, Colin Mansbridge, confirmed it was minor damage and they contacted the New Zealand Rugby Union for cultural advice and the repairs were to follow. The Crusaders repeated their good performance in 2020, despite losing two games, with a home game final beating the Chiefs 24-13 to win their fifth consecutive title, and twelfth Super Rugby title.

Significant also to their record was the multi-million-dollar revenue and profit gains in the early years before the earthquakes. A key contributor to these were their loyal fans attending games at an average of nearly 25,000 per game for ten years (Bryant & Evans, 2017). What is also evident in the Crusaders' success is that they are the only Super Rugby Franchise in New Zealand and develop young players not only for super rugby levels but also for national levels. In becoming champion athletes, Crusaders help these young players to have the right attitude, mindset and most of all with a good character – as the saying goes, *Good men will make good rugby players*.

5.4.3 Management Structure for competitive advantage

The Crusaders, as a successful rugby team that has also found success in the business world, recognise the importance of having solid organisational structures in place. The Management structure the organisation adopted to make its operations and strategic endeavours more efficient was a major factor in its long-term success.

The current structure of the Crusaders Rugby is twofold – the *on-the-field* and the *off-the-field.* The *on-the-field* represents the structure that deals directly with rugby and the players; coaches, physio, analysts, doctor, etc - including also the Academy staff. The *off-the-field* part is the support systems that help grow the organisation and players;

Marketing, Finance, Events Coordinators, etc. Both sides of the structure report to the Chief executive Officer, Colin Mansfield, who then report to the Board.

Some of the roles in their current structure, such as Head Coach and other technical roles, are funded by the NZRU and assigned to the Club. Some other roles are '*shared*' between the Crusaders and the Canterbury Rugby Union, mostly *off-the-field* functions. Some positions are '*contracted for*' service, meaning that these positions are on *a need basis* and are not employees of the organisation.

5.4.4 Challenges

5.4.4.1 Controversies in the club's name

Social factors also have an influence on the organisation dynamics because they are not only a business but also a community-based organisation that profess to represent the Canterbury region. Thus, these influences can either be positive or otherwise. However it may appear, the Crusaders have learnt to be resilient and innovative so that they stay competitive and relevant.

After the 2019 mosque shooting in Christchurch, that killed 50 people and left others with serious injuries, much attention swayed towards the Crusade Rugby Club. The criticism was levelled at the Club's name, which was seen as giving a very negative impression. Some suggested that the historical ambience of the Club's name and associated ideologies led to the shootings. In one of his media interviews, the Crusaders' CEO, Colin Mansbridge, stated that the Club was disappointed that the mosque shooting has been linked to the Club (Keerman & Harward, 2019). A leading New Zealand politics expert claimed that the logos and symbols used by the Crusaders rugby club could be perceived as promoting white supremacist and anti-Muslim ideologies (Kulasigham, 2019). The logo and types of displays, such as horses with sworders before games, invoke religious wars between Christians and Muslims during the medieval age. Such displays were seen as not respectful and insensitive. Professor Paul Spooney from Massey University, who studied the behaviors of evolving far-right and white supremacist movement in New Zealand, stated that the messages the Crusaders Rugby Club tend to transmit to the public through the use of their logos, the Club's name, speaks volumes of the lack of knowledge of the history surrounding the name of the Club (Kulasigham, 2019).

The Crusaders CEO expressed that the "Crusaders" has two meanings, and the first refers to a fighter in the medieval age. The second definition, " *A person who campaigns vigorously for political, social, or religious change; a campaigner.*", which is what the Crusaders rugby players are passionate about (Keerman & Harward, 2019, p. 1). After seeking legal advice, it became apparent that the use of horses with swords was a clear indication of referencing the first

definition, i.e., a fighter in the medieval age. This led to the removal of horses and less sight of swords, starting with the game against Brumbies in 2019, at home. As alluded to in the media, the Crusaders engaged a consultant to look into public opinion regarding the name change; it was clear that only a minority were the more prominent voice advocating a name change, and the majority did not agree. After further consultations, the Crusaders Rugby Club decided not to change the name.

Understanding Europe's Middle Age era is crucial in understanding the mindset of early settlers in the Canterbury region of New Zealand and the settlers' intentions to live in their new home (C & M, 2020). This approach also reestablished the need for tertiary organisations to embrace biculturalism, hence ushering in new medieval research ideas. It was strange to grasp the relevance of medieval Europe's history taught in Aotearoa, yet it seemed to be the appropriate means to help people understand *colonization* (C & M, 2020). Since the Mosque shooting on 15 March 2019, the naming of the 'Crusaders' Rugby team has been a subject of debate that brought to light issues that were already long-standing concerns in the communities, but suppressed in the dark. The European settlers perceived themselves superior over the people who arrived earlier, the indigenous. Three reasons stand out to understand why Europe's history matters and is essential to the New Zealand context. Unfortunately, the first reason had to be understood most tragically during the 15 March 2019, Mosque's shootings. The first issue brought to light was the general genuine concern from the New Zealand public for the victims and their families.

Consequently, there was a collective rejection of the ideologies that triggered the attacks. This event also brought to light some long-standing issues, such as the inadequate Firearms legislation. The other reasons were the obvious racism issue, which the Prime Minister, Jacinda Arden, acknowledged as a problem in parts of New Zealand society. The Middle Ages history may have minimal connection to the pacific nation; it is worth noting that any random individual can easily use medieval history to vindicate a twisted ideology that is harmful to society (C & M, 2020). The practical means of weakening that mentality is through clarity in communicating doctrines formulated during the history of Europe and the context in which those ideas originated. Thirdly is from a macro level - the Middle Ages principles are embedded in the constitution and legal frameworks of Aotearoa, including its rich history. Hence, the need to have a good appreciation of the medieval past is somewhat necessary. It establishes a backdrop to the objectives of various institutions and colonial frameworks that are practised to date. One must understand the origins and historical circumstances of how a nation's laws were developed to navigate into the future.

New Zealand rugby revealed in an article released by Newshub (2019) that the history of the Crusaders was not appropriately researched when the Super Rugby tournament started in 1996. The Commercial and Marketing Director

of New Zealand Rugby in 1996, Brendon O'Connor, stated that they rushed into the Super 12 rugby not realising that the history of the Crusaders during the medieval era, popes and kings ordered the slaughter of Muslims.

In order to facilitate comprehension for the intended audience, the mosque shooting event will be examined and analysed across multiple chapters, namely chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, due to its significant ramifications on the organisation. The forthcoming discussions will pertain to the pillars that have been examined in this research, including organization values, resilience, creativity, diversity, and competitive advantage.

5.4.4.2 Crusaders resilience when Stadium sizes and availability affected revenue and profitability

After the Christchurch earthquake in 2010 and 2011, the New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRU) announced its commitment to bail out the Crusaders from its financial difficulties caused by the devastating natural disaster (AFP, 2021). The former CEO for NZRU, Steve Tew, stated that the Canterbury Rugby Union and the Crusaders are well-structured and well-managed organisations, and they need help in this time of their greatest need.

One of the challenges that the Crusaders have faced, post-2010 and 2011 earthquakes to date, is the size of stadiums to host home games to collect good revenue. When AMI stadium was renovated and reduced by 10,000 seats in 2009, the Crusaders Franchise was hit by a reduced profit of $300,000 for the year (Stuff.co.nz, 2009). The former Crusaders Chief Executive, Hamish Riach, told the media 2011 was a disrupted year, forcing them to play in smaller venues. Even though the support has been tremendous, the revenue gains did not match what they usually get from a bigger venue: a total loss of NZ$696,300 for the year (Stutchbury, 2011).

Previously the Franchise would easily make millions of profit a year, and when the announcement was made for the renovation, the loss was expected. Each of the six unions that fall under the Crusaders region share the profits, yet, these shared profits are not declared and confidential, a policy that they have stood by over the years. However, from an outsider standpoint, one can assume that the two professional teams, Tasman and Canterbury, would get a more significant chunk of the payout and the amateur unions of South Canterbury, Mid-Canterbury, Buller and West Coast share the rest.

The new temporary Christchurch stadium was built on the Rugby League ground at Addington and was opened on 24 March 2012. To mark the occasion, the Crusaders played against the Cheetahs from South Africa, their first home game in Christchurch since the 2010/2011 earthquakes, to a sellout crowd of 18,000 which could have increased to 22,000 if it were an international match (Crusaders, 2021b). The new stadium was designed by the global sports specialist *Populous* who also led the redevelopment of Eden Park in Auckland, and the new Forsyth Barr Stadium in

Dunedin (Populous, 2012). The construction of the sporting complex in Addington was a concept inspired by the experience of their work with the 2012 London Olympics.

The Crusaders contributed more than half of their 2011 profit ($174,294), which was $87,000, into the Christchurch Stadium Trust. This was part of the deal with the Government who built the stadium. The Government was aware of the Crusaders' financial dilemma caused by the earthquakes, apart from the costs incurred by the new stadium and the fluctuating number of spectators that attend their games. In the game that the Crusaders hosted the Queensland Reds, for an extra round-robin match, the spectators decreased by ten per cent, which was about 15,000 when the stadium could accommodate 17,500 people. Furthermore, an appearance fee of $75,000 was paid to the Reds and a third of the Red's travelling and accommodation costs were covered. The former chairman of the Crusaders, Murray Ellis, said they were very proud to have given $87,000 more than what was required of them, particularly considering the many difficulties the Club was going through financially (Knowler, 2013).

However, what was once perceived as a token of recovery and light in the city after the devastating earthquakes of 2010/2011, the former AMI stadium, known as the Orangetheory Stadium, now cost taxpayers around NZ$700,000 to keep it open (Law, 2018). The temporary stadium was supposed to only last for five years; however, renovations and redevelopment had extended the stadium's lifespan three times over, covered by the Christchurch City Council. In 2017, 160 adjustments needed to be done before the new code of compliance was given. After the newly built stadium in 2023, the current temporary stadium had served the public for eleven years.

5.4.4.3 Pike River Mine Tragedy sparks resilience and innovation

In the afternoon on Friday, around 3.44 pm 19 November 2010, the underground coal mine at Pike River exploded, killing 29 workers (Nathan, 2021). The Pike River coal mine is located in the Paparoa Range and the west coast of the South Island, which falls within the Crusaders' Region under the West Coast Rugby Union, one of the amateur unions in the region. The nine Crusaders that were part of the 2010 UK Grandslam Tour were scheduled to visit the west coast community, particularly the Hokitika and the Greymouth communities. However, after the February 2011 earthquake, the Crusaders took the game to Nelson to play against the Waratahs. They wore the West Coast Rugby Union jersey in honour of the 29 people who died in the Pike River Coal mine explosion. The profiles of those 29 people were published by Stuff.co.nz and confirmed that two of those victims played rugby and represented West Coast (Stuff.co.nz, 2018b).

What was more significant was that the Crusaders Rugby was a vehicle to bring the Crusaders regions together to mourn and display solidarity as a community.

5.4.5 Opportunities – innovation for competitive edge

5.4.5.1 Minority shares with US based Seattle Seawolves

Over the years, the Crusaders rugby has always worked closely with the Canterbury Rugby Union (CRU) to source and share the players and resources. In 2018, both organisations joined forces to expand their riches and bought a minority share of an American professional rugby side, the Seattle Seawolves (Stuff.co.nz, 2018a). The CRU is the major shareholder of the Crusaders rugby, and the partnership with the US-based rugby team allows them to help the Club with their development programs and expand the brand of rugby the Christchurch based clubs are renowned for. The 1% investment made by the Crusaders and CRU perhaps seemed small, however, the former Canterbury Rugby CEO, Nathan Godfrey, stated the indirect benefits and returns of this long-term partnership are many (NZHerald, 2018).

5.4.5.2 Crusaders International Academy

This department is one of the commercial arms of the Crusaders Franchise that generates revenue. The Crusaders academy offers exceptional high-performance programs that include coaching and specialist roles for tailormade assistance, all done from the Crusaders base, Rugby Park in Christchurch (Crusaders, 2021a). One of the most considerable contributions to the enormous success of the Crusaders is the number of high calibre coaches. These visiting teams, coaches or individuals are taught 'the Crusader way of doing things' headed by Grant Keenan, the Crusaders International Academy Manager.

5.5 Conclusion

Rugby was introduced in New Zealand through schools, which evolved into clubs, provinces, and finally a national sport. One of the main reasons why the sport had such a stronghold in the country was because it flourished through grassroot structures, which included its administration. Because of their talents and power, which were combined with their culture, the surge in Maori players in the early days added another dimension to the sport. Later, Pacific-descent players became the focal point of debate across multiple platforms. The Canterbury region was one of the nation's earliest rugby regions, and it was where the majority of national initiatives to grow the game began. Farmers were strong and aggressive rugby players, and it appeared that most of those farming qualities of hard labour became the founding values of the first Crusaders Super Rugby franchise. These values gave birth to creativity and resilient mindsets that strive for continuous progress. The Crusaders' remarkable outcomes are simply the product of the systems and inventive ways they employ in all of their interactions. There were several hurdles they experienced in 2019 due to

various natural catastrophes and the Mosque shootings, but they tend to skilfully manoeuvre their way through the barriers and, aside from their large number of wins, they have 6 straight super rugby crowns since 2017.

Chapter 6: The Crusaders' organisation values

6.1   **Introduction**

Values and behavioural norms are vital ingredients that determine the central identity of people (Dawson et al., 2011). Therefore, 'values' shape our social perception, allowing individuals to embrace a new environment or setting (Weinert, 2014). In an organisational context, values establish a system of approach that necessitates appropriate behaviours of collective individuals, including activities and responsibilities demanded by the value system (Enz, 1988). This chapter will examine the Crusaders' key values, how they are operationalised in their systems and procedures, and how various organisation stakeholders view those values. The chapter will also carry out a discussion of some critical points derived from the analysis.

American anthropologist Edward T Hall's work significantly impacted intercultural research (Kittler et al., 2011). In his 1959 book *The Silent Language*, he applied Freudian psychoanalytic theory to language analysis. Hall disputed that "individuals tend to be partially unaware of elements of their non-verbal communication behavior" and suggested that time, space and context are essential in understanding culture (Kittler et al., 2011):

i.   *Time* – this dimension explains how different cultures approach time and the manner they understand it (monochromic vs polychromic)

ii.   *Space* – refers to various cultural frameworks for defining and managing space

iii.   *Context* – refers to how people interpret things differently across cultures using different ratios of context and information (Kittler et al., 2011).

Hall further stated in his book *Handbook for Proximity Research* in 1973 that the structures present information in a context that creates meaning (Kittler et al., 2011).   In elaborating the *time dimension*, Hall introduced two orientations to assist when comparing two culture types: High-context and Low-context. Hall proposed that cultures can be defined according to how people communicate, whether verbal or non-verbal (Würtz, 2005). Communication can become bogged down in *high-context* cultures due to the tangled web of personal connections that people maintain. There is a strong emphasis on silence and body language as means of communication in this worldview. Hence, including the "situation, behaviour and para verbal cues" as critical components of the communicated messages (Würtz, 2005, p. 274). Members of *low-context* societies tend to be forthright and rely on horizontal patterns of speech when interacting with one another*.* The Crusaders' coaches and leaders needed to capitalise on these distinctions to increase morale and

productivity. The out-of-the-ordinary circumstances presented the Crusaders with opportunities to be better as an organisation and as a rugby club.

6.2   The core organisational values of the Crusaders

The Crusaders is a values-driven organisation that operates on team values. These include; work ethic, enjoyment, quality, the team first, honesty, and integrity. These values drive their daily activities at the organisation, and are values that the club deems necessary to achieve its short-term and long-term objectives. One of the Managers that led the strategic talent developments at the Crusaders eluded that when trying to reflect on his values in relation to the Crusaders' values:

> Those (Crusaders Values) are what we operate under, on a daily basis. In terms of my own values, they are aligned really, really well with my own values. That's why it's easy for me to drive them so much, I would say that that's pretty much how I live life and have lived life. Till I got here, probably it's more clear to me now, as well. So, I guess its kind little bit of theirs and my values but also I absorbed them from the organisation as mine personal life as well. We're really strong on values so we talk about them a lot.

Brown, in his study conducted in 1984, stated that the word 'value' indicates an individual's preference for one thing over the other, merely to establish superiority (Oreg & Katz-Gerro, 2006). However, in their work in 1996, Tesser & Martin argued that 'preference' is usually determined by descriptors such as 'good-bad, likeable-dislikeable, moral-immoral, and pleasant unpleasant. (Oreg & Katz-Gerro, 2006, p. 466). In an organisational context, values establish a system of approach that necessitates appropriate behaviours of collective individuals, including activities and responsibilities demanded by the value system (Enz, 1988). Both successful and unsuccessful organisations typically have the exact words written on the walls displaying their values. It can be any significant company or sports team, even in Super Rugby, and they will all have that. So, it is not *what*. It is *how*, and that comes back to the type of people involved at various levels in the organisation. They are continually helping to align themselves to the same values with the people they lead and work with, or generally those who have parallel values. That has been a point of difference for the Crusaders for a long time. The organisation has had   people who have worked hard and are committed to their goals over the years. Over time, those strong values have created a strong organisational and rugby culture.

It was also crucial that these values aligned with the personal values of Crusaders' staff, on and off the field, to ensure alignment with the broad expectations of the organisation. This alignment of values guides the Crusaders rugby club in all aspects of their operation. As a consequence of this, we can say that it is a values-based organisation, which

denotes that all of the club's endeavours are driven by and centred on the values that the organisation upholds. How they train, how they prepare, the kind of language used, the decisions they make and everything else that deals with the core objectives of the Crusaders are driven and shaped by the values. These values are articulated in 'visible' form as demonstrated by the staff and players in everything they do. The values help build a positive culture at the Crusaders. Over the years, it has evolved into a fortress that continues to facilitate positive results.

This can be understood in the broader sociological context where people regard culture as legitimate because of the way the values are being communicated consistently and constantly in everyday life. This can be expressed through cultural artefacts which are metaphorically expressed to depict an image and express a cultural identity that others will understand (Jo Hatch & Schultz, 1997; Schein, 1994)

The new players, especially the young ones joining the Crusaders Academy, are introduced to these values so that they can understand them quickly and be emersed in them. The club holds these new players accountable for how they deal with the values and this is reinforced by ensuring that it is continuously part of daily conversations. This is based on the assumption that repetitive engagement with values through action and conversation will help. For example, one of the values is *integrity,* so the players ensure that they do their training with integrity, including any other task they have been assigned. The Club expects the individual players to produce the same results consistently, and they hold them accountable to their fellow players. Instead of having a model similar to a *teacher-student* relationship that will require them to be accountable to their coaches or trainers, the Crusaders adopted a peer-to-peer model, based on a horizontal relationship. This has proven to be very effective. In this model, the players are not pressured to be overthink or be under pressure to think and participate. However, they become themselves in a more relaxed environment with peer-to-peer relationships. They tend to learn better in this manner, similar to knowledge management(KM) principles. KM is the understanding, emphasis, and management of systematic, explicit, and deliberate knowledge construction, renewal, and application – i.e., the management of effective knowledge processes(EKP) (Wiig, 1997). Learning and dialogues are very effective in a more relaxed and informal environment. The quicker they learn these values, the quicker they become part of their daily routines. Hence, they quickly focus on their core roles in the Crusaders' playing group environment.

As previously stated, organisational culture is one of the critical factors that the Crusaders focus on. Their values drive the culture they wish to maintain; *sense of belonging* is one of the values essential to the organisation. There is a strong sense of responsibility within the club to build an environment that is welcoming and makes people feel they belong the first day they step into the organisation. There is an atmosphere of genuine friendliness and care towards one another. Any person or visitor that steps into that environment will feel and see these values being lived and shared

amongst the staff and players. It is infectious and a very positive environment which spills into the playing group's environment. Once they get the belongingness culture right, every other value that drives positivity within the organisation falls into the right place.

The culture of belonging is built and driven by the leadership. In the work conducted by Schein (1994) he claimed that a leader's character and values are perceived to have a significant impact on the culture of any organisation. There has been growing interest in studies and theories on cross-cultural contexts, particularly leadership (Kargas & Varoutas, 2015). A study on the relationship between CEO leadership behavior and organisational culture in China pointed out that researchers should not downplay the fact that leaders play a crucial role in an organisational culture's success (Tsui et al., 2006). The study also established that leadership behaviour need not be aligned with the established organisational culture for success. However, the leader can influence success but institutionalising best practices for positive outcomes (Tsui et al., 2006). The study by Tsui et al (2006) claimed that there is more congruency between CEO leadership and organisational culture.

When leadership takes the lead and sets the example, all other levels of the organisational hierarchy follow suit. Daniel Denison, in his work in 1990, stated that organisational culture is "the underlying values, beliefs, and principles that serve as a foundation for an organisation's management system as well as a set of management practices and behaviours that both exemplify and reinforce those basic principles" (Sebastiao et al., 2017, p. 864). As such, organisational culture is formed by a coalition of dominant forces, preserved by the internal functional systems and influenced by social values and the external environment. Hence, the organisational culture is dependent on the structure and strategy of an organisation and, more importantly, on the leader.

Staff members I talked to further discussed other values during the interviews; relentlessness, humbleness and connectedness. Connectedness is quite visible when someone walks around the office environment and how well people know their roles and how their work relates to other people. That connection contributes to the team and organisation's success.

The coaches shared a book called *The Culture Code* and started to talk about the book as an inspirational tool to keep people talking about the culture of the Crusaders. It was a unique approach compared to having posters on the wall and other forms of documentation to help spread the word. The Crusaders found a unique way of simply talking about the culture with people and connecting and doing the various small things related to behaviour and customs, on a daily basis. This seems just as important as putting up grand advertisements in the form of posters on the wall.

6.2.1 Crusaders' dominant culture and values

Every organisation has dominant value systems that are an integral part of the organisation. These value systems capture a component of the nationality of the organisation's founder or key players (Hofstede, 1985). In Chapter 5 of this study, the history of Canterbury and the early settlers was discussed showing how The Canterbury Association, which was established in London in 1848 by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Robert Godley, colonised the Canterbury region (Syddall, 2020). The immigrants of the Canterbury Association, which Wakefield described as 'a slice of English Society', were, as one might expect, handpicked by an extremely illustrious selection committee. The handpicked members of the new community were those with high moral values and from various levels in the society who would support the objectives of the new settlement. Their vision was that the Canterbury Community would be different from others in New Zealand with a hierarchical structure similar to the English society, with the Anglican church at its heart (Wilson, 2015b). In his book "*The Competitive Advantage of Nations",* published in 1990, Michael Porter rejected the ideology that the escalation of world business will derail nationalism. Instead, a company's competitive edge will be established locally, in other words, at its home base (Goett, 1999). A new challenge was discussed in a study on the innovativeness of Multi-National Enterprises (MNE) conducted by Ervits (2018). He suggested that even though multinational corporations tend to keep their innovative projects located primarily in their home countries, the national culture of the country in which the multinational corporations operate in always exerts some level of influence on the corporate culture of these foreign MNEs. Intriguingly, the nature and the dynamics of the national culture plays a crucial role in the level of innovation in an organization, especially SMEs (Turró et al., 2014).

It is reasonable to assume that these carefully selected immigrants in the Canterbury region had positive values that were passed down through generations, particularly in the growing farming community that it is today. The European settler generation is therefore the dominant nationality, and their values become dominant too, which has been the cornerstone of the Crusaders' success journey to date.

6.2.2 The 2017 Strategic plan values and the players' values

i. 2017 Strategic plan values

A strategic plan was put together by the Crusaders' Board, including specific values that the organisation must embrace to achieve the outlined long-term goals. The 2017 Strategic plan set by the Board had a theme 'To inspire to be the best', which was visible on the wall, with the set of values as outlined above. These are expected behaviours that the Board believed would help to achieve the strategic plan.

During the rebranding exercise, the support for the theme 'To inspire to be the best' did not come out strongly. People worked hard because they enjoyed connection, they enjoyed demonstrating resilience, being around good people and having a strong sense of identity. The Crusaders are also inspired by great athletes of other sports or great people who have done great things to inspire the playing group and the organisation as a whole. A Senior Manager of the Club stated:

> We say in our strategic plan we say to inspire through being the best and then we say humble, being modest, authentic and respectful, they don't really go together. .. We would be happy to follow someone if I think about the theming, as Razor (Head Coach) does for the team. Quite often he's (Razor) inspired by great athletes in other codes so we are happy to follow other people…. so I think while it's a very relevant strategic plan I think sometimes what actually happens in the real world is more relevant, more accurate and in terms of bringing that to life….

The Board acknowledged that the Crusaders playing group and other departments are approaching the organisation's objectives differently than what is written on the wall. The Senior Manager further stated:

> …I think we celebrate the culture often by talking to each other … discussing things with each other and being conscious of our culture. At the start of this year the coaches shared a book called the Culture Code and and started to talk about the book and used this as almost uh as inspiration to keep people to talk about the culture I've shared with a few it with a few people as well and I think it's a really good book to get you to think about what actual culture goes on inside the place ... when I first arrived I did think it'd be nice to capture all this and put it in some posters in a document and put it on the walls and I've held off doing that because I find talking about it with people and connecting with people and doing the small little customs and behaviors that we do each day is probably just as important as putting the poster on the wall if that makes sense.

ii.   Players' values

During the brand review exercise, the consulting company that led the project worked with the Crusaders to revisit the values that were critical to the club over the years. The project established that the players were using a slightly different set of values which they felt were relevant to how they approached their game and maintained their high-performance level. Former Crusaders' players still share deep connections to those values they developed and embraced over the last 25 years. Most of those interviewed agreed that not much has changed in those values, except it may differ in how they are interpreted nowadays, how they are applied to daily routines and how people are held

accountable for achieving targets. Some common words the players described as values they can relate to are; work ethic, respect, integrity, teamwork, enjoyment, equality, and loyalty. Some values, such as loyalty, are tested to some extent when the professional era continues to reach new heights. Influenced by factors beyond the club and the fact that rugby is a business that creates employment with associated benefits like any other employer, players' loyalty to the franchise tends to sway. The realisation that playing professional sports can earn a good living pushes the burden of players' decision-making to focus on livelihood issues, especially for young families. In the earlier years of the Crusaders, loyalty may have meant loyalty to the club and its brand for the lifetime of a player's rugby career in New Zealand.

However, younger players in this generation would define loyalty as loyalty to the club and its objectives whilst being contracted to the club. The younger players, or those still early in their rugby career that have set their eyes on national honours, tend to focus more on consistent game time. Some younger generations pursue this to earn a living and improve their living standards by securing contracts. Some compound their pursuit with the excitement that fame and accolades present. The Crusaders of the older generation were brought up from another era whose parents were baby boomers and were loyal to the red and black jerseys. Leaving the Crusaders to join another franchise is something not common or something they would readily accept. In the past, before the Super Rugby era, players would play 100 games for the red and black jersey and retire or go to play for overseas clubs instead of joining a rival super rugby club. In the modern rugby era, Crusaders is just another employer. When people are *no longer motivated to be part of the organisation*, they make a career decision fitting their career plans. This scenario portrays the different values of the two eras of super rugby in the Crusaders or the general rugby community.

6.2.3   Analysis of values – strategic plan values vs players' values

During the brand review after the Mosque shootings in 2019, the consulting company tasked with the project also evaluated the values of the Crusaders of the past since the beginning of the Super Rugby in 1996, and to what it is today. The Consultants summarised the various themes of values used over the years into four (4) distinct values. On the other hand, the values outlined by the Crusaders Board Strategic Plan launched in 2017 seemed to be slightly different. At first glance, one can quickly ascertain that the Strategic Plan values of the Board have more *values* than the Players' values. Below is a summary of those different set of values:

Table 6.1 – Current Crusaders values

CRUSADERS VALUES	
2017 STRATEGIC PLAN	Values unearthed by Consultant as being practised over the Years
Relentless	*Connection*
Humble	*Resilience*
Agile	*Identity*
Accountable	*Good people*
Credible	
Connected	

The consultant company established interesting findings regarding the Crusaders' values and concluded the following as being critical to the club over the years:

   i.   *Connection* – this value concerns shared enjoyment, understanding, belongingness, and inclusion.

   ii.   *Resilience* – refers to hard work, unwavering commitment and trying to get better all the time, which means never settling at a certain level but to keep pressing on for perfectness.

   iii.   *Identity* – being true to oneself and how to represent their community. Have fun and not be pressured to be someone they are not, but encouraged to be the best version of themself.

   iv.   *Good people* – being respectful of the organisation and what it represents, including its community. Hence, requiring personal sacrifices for the greater good and being proud of being part of the organisation. The expectation for members to support each other within and outside the Crusaders and the communities it represents. Not only to be a good ambassador of the Crusaders brand but to take leadership in being a leading role model in promoting unity in diversity. This attribute was quite evident during the March 2019 mosque shooting in which the team was empathetic towards the victims and the community.

v. *"To inspire to be the best"*

'To inspire to be the best' is the theme of the 2017 Strategic Plan endorsed by the Board. It is quite a bold and ambitious message, but it has also been unfavourable because people feel that it contradicts the *humility* value. Whilst the Crusaders' ultimate objective is to be successful and win championships, having the word "success" as a value does not aurgur well with the playing group, and does not suit the process-driven culture of the Crusaders pride themselves in. The word focusses too much attention on the outcome rather than the process. It is not pragmatic and can reduce the passion in what they do best, which is hard work and being respectful! However, the Board had driven those values because the Crusaders is a business and it will only thrive if it is successful.

6.2.4 Values defined by the staff

Apart from the thematic values outlined in the 2017 Strategic plan and the values put together by the consulting company during the brand review, the interviews conducted by this study highlighted some other essential values that connect directly or indirectly with the values discussed above. Outlined below are the values discussed by the staff that were invited for the interviews:

i.   *The Value of enjoyment*

The amount of effort and time put in by the players, coaches, administration and volunteers to keep the game of rugby going is enormous and a great demonstration of how people love the sport – people have to enjoy it to give the effort that they have demonstrated over the years. It is a cut-throat business, and at times the number of resources poured into grassroots level running the sport does not generate the same level of financial return. Typically, that kind of business and returns lead to a business shutdown or bankruptcy.

That is why enjoyment is key to the sport, not only for the players but for everyone involved. For players, the professional era's physical, mental, and emotional demands can be daunting and lead to significant withdrawal from the game. A senior manager stated:

.. So anyone involved in the industry, and that's just from a professional side of it, but even, you know, volunteers and people that in the amateur community game spend long hours trying to foster and grow the game, you've got to love what you do, you've got to enjoy it. If you don't enjoy it then I don't think, you're not going to last long. So the value of enjoyment is really relevant both sides of the fence. People's interpretation of enjoyment

is different. So you look now, I look on the sideline and I watch those guys go at it for 80 minutes and I think I could not think of anything worse, how's that enjoyable? But for an athlete and for a -- that's what they live for, you know, they live to play and they live to test themselves against the best and, you know, try and grow and be better and all those things and be aspirational. So, they take massive amount of enjoyment out of it. Doesn't mean so say it's easy, doesn't mean to say it's not tough and hugely challenging. But equally so, the person that puts hours and hours into the community game enjoys what they do for a different -- for different rewards perhaps. So yeah, there you go…

So enjoyment is a critical part of what the internal environment or culture must be built upon so that players and other stakeholders of the club feel refreshed and motivated to turn up and play. People need to love what they do to enjoy the game they play. One of the key contributors to enjoyment is leadership. The environment that the leadership team sets for the staff and players to work in plays a significant role. Most of the interviews had accredited the leadership teams from the CEO and everyone at the executive level over the years for the successes – they have modelled and championed it. More recently, the joining of the new CEO, Colin Mansbridge, together with other senior executives, bring their experience from various corporate organisations to set the tone for high professionalism and enjoyment at work.

ii.   Connectedness

One of the core pillars that the Crusaders as an organisation prides itself in is connectedness. No matter where people are, they always try to stay connected.   Diverse groups relating to the playing group, high performance, the back office, the commercial and marketing, and even with community rugby always try to maintain a sense of connection. It is vital to have excellent relationships with the people they work with - to get to know and understand them—this leads to cohesion and sustainability. There is a strategy to improve the level of connectedness to another level every year.

Being connected as an organisation is one of those things that has almost become such a ritual within the Crusaders and, at times, is taken for granted because it actually happens in the organisation and is almost second nature. They believe it contributes to their success because the more connected they are, the more they share their ideas and innovate. There is a constant sharing of, whether it is mundane things, how their day is, or the high-performance side of things. What is more significant is that the leadership team is leading the way.

iii.   Value for innovation

One of the values discussed was the critical environment for innovation and leading at the front, not being a follower. Whether it is innovation in products, marketing, strategic policy making, creating a new process, or dealing with the playing group, the environment to nurture innovation is critical. Creativity and innovation cannot be taught but can be given the right environment to be nurtured and grow to their full potential. People feel comfortable thinking outside the box and being creative in the Crusaders' environment. There is a kind of consensus that if there is an opportunity to innovate or change and make things better, then wherever that idea comes from, it is welcomed; even if someone has been in the Crusaders for 15 years, their ideas are still valued. It keeps very talented people excited about their work, because their ambitious minds are appreciated, which is a positive thing for them professionally and personally.

iv.   Sense of belonging

One of the critical values of the business as a whole is around the people. The sense of belonging makes people feel like they belong and connect with each other. Everyone has a part to play in the whole thing, and when we make this happen, people feel like they are part of something extraordinary in the organisation. The leadership has built on this foundation, and they have grown even more. It is probably one of the organisation's key strategies that have received much positive feedback from the staff.

v.   Continuous improvement

Another value is the intent to continuously improve. Not just settling for what has always been done, but constantly challenging each other to improve. It is something that the Crusaders, as an organisation, do so well. There is a saying in the organisation that is common to everyone, it goes like this; 'if you do not get better, you get beaten'. Not only does the playing group use this approach, but also areas as well, such as the Commercial Marketing division, in which they are constantly challenging each other to do better and doing it once and doing it right, if possible!

vi.   Value of integrity

Under the *integrity value*, honesty, and trust, were discussed intermittently with this fundamental value. In addition to that is the element of hard work. It is not always about what is done on the rugby field; what people do off the field makes them better. Those big things around honesty, trust, integrity, and working hard are huge for people who want to complete their academy training successfully. The consistency of quality work that is required of everyone makes the organisation a very high achiever.

One of the critical values that the Head Coach personally drives is *belonging*. Simply re-emphasising that they belong to the group or the team forms their identity; who they are as a team or club. Values and behavioural norms are vital ingredients that determine the central identity of people (Dawson et al., 2011). Therefore, *values* shape our social perception, allowing individuals to embrace a new environment or setting (Weinert, 2014). One of the significances of the Crusaders is the number of players who have played for the club for a long time, they have been very loyal, and they feel like they belong and have added to much of the club's legacy. This is why the coaching team focuses on ensuring that everyone feels included, that they belong, and that is when the club gets the best out of them. They feel that is when the players respond with integrity, and that is when the players bestow trust on the coaches. These are moments when the players entrust their respect because they feel they belong to the organisation.

A good example was a young Pacific island player, when asked if he would take an offer to play for another club, he replied that he felt he belonged to the Crusaders because of how the Head Coach approached him at his level. Sometimes he is shy and quiet, as a young Pacific islander would typically be in respect of leadership and older people, even though counter-productive at times. Understanding that and coming down to their level is something that the Head Coach does so well, and that gesture is what captures their loyalty to the Crusaders. There is openness and connectedness within the organisation, which they believe translates to success.

For example, for someone from Marketing to go in to watch the team named during the week and feel welcome to do that is empowering. Alternatively, one of the coaches attending a marketing meeting feels welcomed and knows their input has been valuable. Whilst closed-door meetings are still essential; there is an openness and willingness to share and work together. Probably one of the most excellent touches was that the support staff get invited to the team's celebrations, or they get invited into the changing sheds post-match for a game during the season. These gestures are the kind of things that make the staff feel they are in and are part of their success. Everyone is made to feel they contributed to it, and it is not just for the team out on the field; it is for everyone. It is a recognition of everyone's efforts. There has been little media coverage around the coaching staff and players publicly thanking the support staff working behind the scenes for their contribution, particularly during such challenging times with the pandemic, where it has been difficult for everyone. It is that credit and recognition that has lasting impacts on the staff.

The Crusaders use a system in which staff voluntarily take a psychometric test to identify their personality type. When the results come in, they are assigned a colour code to signify their personality according to the test results. All

the executive teams have taken the test, and people are beginning to be more aware of the exercise's objectives in raising awareness of how a particular person *has been wired* according to the colour they wear.

viii.   Trust and respect

The values of *trust* and *respect* are probably the two most prevalent. There is real empowerment in 'who' a person is rather than 'what' a person is. It allows that selfless contribution; the trust element empowers individuals to be fearless. When in this state, an individual can go in and provide in a way that allows them to take the odd risks in a controlled and comfortable way. Simply exploring different areas allows someone to be innovative. There is always the consciousness to achieve *excellence*, but that is an attribute that comes from other things. The love and understanding factors are other components that allow the club to succeed. There is an element of self-awareness and awareness of others. Not everyone can connect easily to the things that make us feel valued. As a result, the Crusaders excel at comprehending a wide range of different aspects of their roles. It is about understanding the group's differences and ensuring that the formulated approach is inclusive. The Crusaders' environment is designed for *care*, which means they are concerned about their contribution to any scenario and are worried about themselves more deeply because they believe the environment is concerned about them. It is an environment of selfless giving, knowing that the environment will reciprocate that love. Holistically, if these attributes are to be defined in broader values, it probably comes down to *trust* and *respect*.

It takes little effort to create a culture of trust and respect as it becomes a way of life. People who visit or join the team always feel that environment, which could be defined as Crusaders' culture. However, they do not intend to express their culture; instead, their actions determine their culture. When someone new arrives, they do not impose, 'Right, you come in, and this is our culture'. It will be the things that the new person sees, the things they hear, and, more importantly, the things they feel. That *feeling factor* is a what is hard to describe, but it is the Crusaders' most vibrant blend towards their success. The Crusaders very much operate around care, personal responsibility, being accountable for their actions and being connected to the community they are part of. The most significant part of values is in play day-to-day around the Crusaders' environment. Community connection, more than anything, naturally ushers in *care*.

6.2.5   Proposed Crusaders values fuels passion

The Crusaders values and ethics are what sets the tone and standards in everything they do. From every part of the process; the playing group, the back office, to the commercial arms, the values govern the day - they fuel the

Crusaders' passion as a family and as a champion club. This study will refers again to the table discussed earlier, however, include the values identified by the backoffice staff and noted below:

Table 6.2 – Current Crusaders' Values and values identified during study

CRUSADERS VALUES		
Board's 2017 Strategic Plan	Values identified by researcher as being practiced over the Years (Players)	Values discovered from this study (Staff)
Relentless	*Connection*	Enjoyment
Humble	*Resilience*	Connectedness
Agile	*Identity*	Innovation
Accountable	*Good people*	Sense of belonging
Credible		Continuous improvement
Connected		Integrity

From the analysis of the interviews, one value stood out and was not covered by the 2017 Strategic Plan nor the Consultants for their brand review, that is *Continuous Learning* or Organisational Continuous Learning (OCL) in some literature.

It was thoroughly discussed by the staff during the interviews of this study as something very important to their sustainable growth and consistency as champions. This study is adamant that continuous learning is the embedding value that incubates, nurtures and drives other values to maximum potential.

Consequently, from the analysis of given information (as stated above), relevant literature, and relevant corporate experiences, this study attempted to re-categorise these set of values.

Consequently, these values comprise both 'hard' values, which are easily quantifiable due to their obviousness, and 'soft' values, which are more subjective and difficult to pin down. Soft values are challenging to quantify since they are subjective and can only be done by surveying people's perceptions (Vidal Puche & Maduko, 2020; Wright, 2018).

The values have been regrouped in alignment to the objectives of this research and with the intent to assist the Crusaders in understanding their values better and how they contribute to their current, and future aspirations. The two proposed categories are - *Hard Values* and *Soft Values* as outlined below:

Table 6.3 – Proposed New Crusaders Values

CRUSADERS VALUES (proposed)	
HARD VALUES	**SOFT VALUES**
Relentless	Enjoyment
Continuous improvement	Humble
Accountable	Belongingness
Credible	Resilience
Diversity	Integrity
Innovation	

6.2.6 Values that fit the Crusaders culture

The Crusaders spend considerable time and detail recruiting players into the club, particularly those coming through the Crusaders academy. The Crusaders have the only Super Rugby academy in New Zealand, formed around five years ago. Every year when new super rugby teams are announced for the coming super rugby season, it is almost customary for the Crusaders not to be recruiting players from other franchises. Most of its recruitment is done internally through its Crusaders Academy players, who have been taken through a very robust program to be ready for super rugby honours.

One of the main points of difference between successful players and those that are not is the values they possess. The Crusaders look for players that fit into their values right from the start. While they can eliminate a few rough edges on the players' values, they are generally working towards a particular profile of player that will be able to graduate from the academy. The potential players must have a work ethic! If they have all the talents in the world but do not have a

good work ethic, then the Crusaders will probably not select them in the first place. From their investigation of young players, if they are dishonest, then they will not consider them. They might have made a mistake early on in life, but unfortunately for the club, they cannot take that risk because there are many other people to choose from. Take a scenario where one of two players had a little edge in ability but was dishonest. The Crusaders believe they could get much more out of the the person who had less talent but was honest than the one who is being disingenuous. They seek athletes they can grow, and those players are the ones who exhibit positive qualities. This is not just once, but throughout a few exercises where they can demonstrate those values, particularly during challenging training, to gauge their mental toughness. They also need to realise that the players can have *fun* and *enjoy* themselves. It is a critical process for the Crusaders: they first establish their identity and who they are in the players' minds, then drive and grow that identity, focusing mainly on how they live those values daily. Other sessions are purely for enjoyment and creating that fun element in the program. The coaches model the value of honesty by providing honest comments and engaging in open dialogue with the players. The Crusaders' values could not be instilled in their players unless the coaches themselves exemplified them. They are so tuned in to the organisational values, but their personal values remain intact because they form the basis for their development in the club. Value words written on the home base building walls help players recall where and what to align with as a Crusader.

The Crusaders understand that trying to remain the best at the helm of Super Rugby could be much more challenging than winning the title for the first time. To maintain its position at the top for as long as it has, and to continue to to maintain this, the organisation will always require more innovation and creativity from all levels. This could imply extending the Crusaders' normal boundaries to the global community, in order to gain inspiration and ideas on how to stay on top of their game and always have a competitive advantage. They've mastered the art of learning from other cultures and organisations, especially those on a global scale.

When dealing with new players, such as those of Pacific Island descent, the Crusaders needed to understand parts of their culture. For example, just because pacific islanders are shy or quiet does not imply that they are weak or not knowledgeable. This example may appear as a weakness to the Caucasian European perspective, but in that manner, the pacific islander is displaying respect and strength in the Pacific Island culture way. It is simply a show of respect to the leaders, and being quiet is sometimes a show of toughness. The challenge for the Crusaders' leadership or coaches is to find a way to get across to the pacific island players, to get them talking and communicating, which is an essential aspect of rugby.

6.3   The crusaders and the theory of structuration

The existence of two sets of values in the Crusaders' setup is an intriguing storyline. However, these differences have not affected the output or results of the club. When the Crusaders Board launched the 2017 Strategic Plan, a set of values were outlined to support the achievement of the plan. The other values were collated from the Crusaders' brand review conducted by a consulting company. They summarised the values used by players for the last 25 years of the club's existence into four distinct *values*.

Giddens   challenged and analysed existing social theories that describe social structures such as culture (Whittington, 2010). One of the existing arguments that Giddens analysed was the persisting debate on the supremacy of structure-centred theory against agency-centred theory in shaping people's lives (Giddens, 1984). Giddens was dissatisfied with how these two theories were applied to the most prevalent issue in sociology, namely, social order - the phenomenon in which people from various backgrounds, emotions, and experiences work together without causing much disorder (Englund et al., 2020). He concluded that structure-centred (or structure) and agency theories co-exist to complement each other and not compete for superiority. Structure signifies the governance framework and the types of resources available, thus allowing the empowerment of subordinates to carry out their roles. Agency signifies the people or groups that draw from the structures to perform social activities, using memory traces to execute those social engagements.

The values driven by the Crusaders Board are parallel to the structure-centred theory, which intends to drive governance through its structure with the available resources. The Consulting company's discovery of the set of values driven by players is analogous to the agency theory. The Crusaders' players use their influence in the community to perform social activities, such as building unity among the communities in the region and being a source of inspiration to people whenever they play. Their reputation as a champion rugby club has been used as a vehicle to build positivity in the community.

The Crusaders began a remarkable five-year run of back-to-back Super Rugby titles from 2017 to 2021. What can be deduced from this intriguing theory of structuration as a platform, used unconsciously by the Crusaders, is that while two sets of values existed, indicating the existence of structured-centred and Agency theories, the values were not contradictory. Still, all had positive connotations to potentially influence the club one way or the other. Since the playing group seemed to have values independent of those defined by the Board, it seemed reasonable to conclude that the values had not been developed as an organisation-wide effort. Yet, the organisation can benefit by demonstrating to all

of its constituents and important stakeholders that it is united in its operations and strategic goals, by harmonising the two sets of values into a single, cohesive whole.

6.4   Good values lead to good output

In an interview for a documentary about the All Blacks, legendary former coach Sir Graham Henry said, "great men, make great All Blacks" (Moore, 2017). The statement implies that to be a great rugby All-Black player, you must first be a good person. From the interviews conducted, the '*good person*' seemed to point towards the character and attitude of a rugby player, particularly for those wanting to be one– that seems to be the requirement. When speaking with Crusaders' Staff, this statement kept coming up. The Crusaders' values are not visible, on posters or in physical artefacts to help drive its implementations. The values are just intrinsic, and they are just part of the day-to-day life of a Crusader. It is not an effort trying to be *humble*, *agile*, *relentless* and *accountable*. It is just part of the Crusaders' culture and is just how things are done. There is no need to enforce it, but it is part of the Crusaders' DNA. The Crusader way of life is deeply rooted in their culture. It is something as little as the Head Coach, Scott Robinson, coming up and fist-bumping staff in the back office daily. Simply reiterating that all are striving to do their best for the company, regardless of whether we work in the accounting or human resources departments, in sales or the playing field, is a great way to build community and morale. It is not imposed or forced upon the staff; it is natural. It does not just happen overnight; it is the result of years of work that helped build the organisation to where it is today. The support staff enjoy working in this type of environment because of that sort of connection, being resilient under pressure, being around good people, and having a sense of identity in being who you are and behaving as authentically as you can be.

6.3.1   The commercial arm perspective

One of the values the commercial arm drives is *connectedness*. Not only do they learn to connect with colleagues at work, but their emphasis is also more on the connectedness with external stakeholders who are critical partners to the club, such as sponsors and partners. It is a core element. In their connection with their sponsors and commercial partnerships, they extend that sense of belonging, they have a sense of belonging to the club as well, and in that they show genuine care and interest in helping the players succeed. So, it starts within the organisation and they have a sense of wanting to look after, and the independence to bring their own authentic self to their role. This is then taken to their sponsors. The Crusaders strengthen their value offer to sponsors by ensuring that they receive the appropriate

value from their sponsors as a result of the manner in which they connect with those sponsors and the credible processes that they utilise. That approach resonates right through the club. Suppose they continue to be attuned to that sense of people trying to strive to be the best they are and with what is made available to them. In that case, they will continue to deliver high-performing individuals, connecting and helping each other improve. Hence, the combined energy is much brighter than in the previous performances.

As an organisation, they always want to build a culture that celebrates, recognises and continuously talks about the importance of helping one another to be their best. If a person does not fit, that is when leadership steps in. Individuals that join the club and, for some reason, are not working hard to adopt the Crusaders' culture probably do not last long in the environment.

Some rituals and symbols are part of what they do, connecting them to each other and the club. From the first day a person arrives in the Crusaders' environment, one might not know everyone, but they will come up to you and recognise you as a new person. They will give you a fist-bump and give you space to express yourself, be yourself and enable you to have a voice.

6.3.2   Measuring values in performance reviews

The Crusaders have value-based performance systems to ensure staff alignment with the organisation's values. Their Human Resource system has a half-yearly check-in and annual performance review. In these sessions, adherence to values or living the values are discussed in those performance reviews. However, most managers engage more frequently than just half yearly, including those direct reports to the CEO. Those would be fortnightly updates, monthly conversations about the values, how they feel about it, and where they are, and these conversations focus more on the person and not their work. For example, the CEO would not talk about his direct reports' work in that session because they get to talk about their work every other day of the week. However, in that one-hour session, they attempt to discuss the values and possible challenges in adhering to them.

6.3.3   Leaders leading

One of the common themes sounding louder from all the interviews and the theories is the role of leadership. The staff always wants to give more than required because of the positive environment. Everything rises and falls on leadership, and the Crusaders are a thriving organisation because the leaders lead in displaying and living the values. In his work in 1992, Schein stated that leaders' characters and values are perceived to have a significant impact on the culture of any organisation (Aitken, 2007). There has been growing interest in studies and theories on cross-cultural

contexts, particularly leadership (Kargas & Varoutas, 2015). A study conducted by (Tsui et al., 2006) on the relationship between *CEO leadership behaviour* and *organisational culture* in China, as previously mentioned, pointed out that researchers should not downplay the fact that leaders play a crucial role in a corporate culture's success. The study also established that leadership behaviour need *not be aligned* with the established organisational culture for success; however, the leader can influence success but institutionalising best practices for positive outcomes. (Tsui et al., 2006) also claimed that there is more congruency between CEO leadership and organisational culture.

The Crusaders have been fortunate to have had leadership leave such a legacy and history in the club over the years. Current Crusaders Head Coach Scott "Razor" Robertson is carrying on that tradition. The staff deemed the workplace as 'pretty special', and this is both *on the field* and *off the field*. Many people talk about work being an open environment or embracing diversity; the Crusaders' workplace actively encourages it, and people being their authentic selves. Whatever difference they have is accepted. A former Crusader, who was of pacific islands descent, was a significant character in the club, is an excellent example. In a different type of environment, he would have struggled to be that character, but in the Crusaders' world, he was welcomed to be that person. Consequently, the whole team was all the better because he just added a whole dimension to the place.

i. The Head Coach's values influence

One of the advantages that the Head Coach, Scott Robertson (Razor), had was that he played for the Crusaders for eight years and was one of the pioneering Crusaders team that played in 1996. He was passionate about the team as it is to date, and was fortunate to be coached by some great coaches, such as Wayne Smith, Steve Hansen, Robbie Deans, and Rob Penny. Amazingly, Razor was able to take what he felt he really liked about the coaching philosophies of those that coached him and add on his perspective and style. Essentially, Razor thought he could always get the best out of people in the group. He understood the sport of rugby very well, allowing him to repackage the knowledge in a way that the players would understand clearly, especially their game plan. His greatest gift and what he loves is connecting people together, giving a clear vision and mission of how they will achieve their goals. Razor emphasises why they exist as a team – what is their story as individuals and as a group, why are they here, and why do they belong? He drives his messages to the players through storytelling so they can believe, enjoy and connect.

Razor also tries to make the players understand that rugby is only a part of something big, and the other side is about *dealing with people*. That is why culture, or the internal environment, is so important in any club or organisation, because it fosters a culture of caring for one another and getting the most out of one another. One can conclude that Razor's emphasis around his coaching philosophy in the playing group is to create an environment where the boys love what they are doing, and then he gets the passion out of players.

6.3.4 **Good people make good rugby players**

Being a member of the Crusaders' setup gives one an impression of positivity and an opportunity to impact the community they represent. This includes not only being a member of the playing group, but also being a member of the organisation, mainly the support functions. They believe that as a Crusader, you are not only working for a normal organisation, but you are in an organisation connected to something bigger and beyond the realm of rugby. It is about being a good person and displaying good character. The former All Blacks and Crusaders rugby captain, Ruben Thorne, stated that if the club continues to display good attitudes and personalities and plays some good rugby, winning the championship will take care of itself. The staff feel that the Crusaders is genuinely about people, not just being good rugby players but being good people and doing good things, making a difference in people's lives. These attributes resonate well with many of the staff's personal values. There is a high pursuit for excellence in everything they do, whether as a playing group or as a support team.

The pursuit of excellence is only possible when individuals are good and do their best for one another, the organisation, and the group as a whole. That is how results are obtained because it is not only about the talents, though they are important, but also about the people. It is not based solely on talents; it is about everyone working together and doing their best for the greater good. Although a hierarchy exists, it does not heavily influence how people communicate and relate within the organisation. Every individual is made to feel valued and as if their opinion is valued, and regardless of where they are in the hierarchy, the attention is the same. For example, someone needed to relieve themselves in the reception area on one particular morning. One of the General Managers stepped in to cover the reception for one hour – people do not just do that, it takes a level of character and determination to do that.

The greater challenge was to establish a direct correlation between values and success of the playing group. The testimonies from the All Black greats, about having players with good values to produce good rugby players, has been consistently used by top rugby playing clubs and nations in the Tier 1 category. In a study that looked into the success and failure in organisational change in which the role of "values" was scrutinised, the findings concluded that values alignment was a key contribution to the success of their change (Burnes & Jackson, 2011). However, the alignment of values imposed by Management must be accepted by the staff or employees in order to improve. Management by Values (MBV) was a new strategic approach designed to consolidate previous management and leadership approaches into a more effective and profitable outlook (Dolan & Garcia, 2002). The concept focused on the organisation's daily activities guided by its values, resulting in positive results. MBV reinforces the management of values and *" managing values means managing the culture of the company, strengthening it, day by day and always revitalising it, to face the unknowns of the future"* (Dolan & Garcia, 2002, p. 116). In a study conducted by a Canadian sports organisation using

the concept of MBV, one of the findings stated that most of the study participants agree that there is a strong connection between MBV and organisational performance, including individual performance.

Similarly, the staff and coaches of the Crusaders, including former players, believe that there is a strong link between the values they live by and their performance at the organisational level and also as individuals.

6.3.5 Crusaders' values for social change

Every Super Rugby club is a part of the community it represents. As a result, rugby is naturally driven by the community, and all clubs do their best to support their community. For the Crusaders, this social role became even more prominent evident in the face of disasters, starting with the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes and the Pike River Coal Mine disaster, then continuing after the mosque shooting in 2019. The Crusaders had to play the leading role in bringing solidarity and community healing, being the iconic figures in the Crusaders rugby region, which consists of the top half of the South Island.

The brand review revealed that the Crusaders have always done their best for the community, whether it was through earthquakes and disasters, local club rugby, charities, or other community programmes. However, they were challenged on how they could do better, how they could be more socially progressive, and how they could lead social change. These are questions that the club is still trying to get their head around, because that will influence the level of resources available to serve these needs, as well as the *time* to do it without compromising the demands of commercial stakeholders on their champion brand. The review also sheds light on how the fans and the public have this passionate feeling of ownership of the club without realising that the Crusaders is a business entity.

The value of the Crusaders rugby brand and its attractiveness to its critical stakeholders hinges a lot on their weekly results during tournaments. Good performances in the rugby games sets the platform for these big companies' brands and the exposure it needs to sustain their loyal customers and attract potential customers. Extensive and successful companies like to associate themselves with champions or those with the potential to become something big in the sporting arena. These expectations on the Crusaders' performance, or any other professional entity, necessitate a disciplined approach by the players and enormous amounts of time in detailed preparation.

6.3.6 The Critique of the Crusaders' values approach

Whilst the Crusaders strive to pursue more community support, there are some challenges which will continue to challenge them.

i.   The cost of being a community role model

Controversies materialised when the public started connecting the negative connotations of the club's name to the shooting incidents, referring to the medieval era meanings. When its social role became more prominent and challenged, the Crusaders were not ready or maybe underestimated how *non – rugby factors* can have a major impact on its brand, the reputation of its club or franchise, and the future direction. Although they claim to represent the communities, they did not really fathom how deep it may translate to, and how much influence it would have on the organisation. When the March 2019 Mosque shooting occurred, the Crusaders were at the forefront of trying to help Christchurch communities get back to normality. However, the repercussions of the same events in 2020 led to the change of the Crusaders logo, and they nearly lost their Club name – that is how influential the communities are and vice versa.

ii.   The myth - great person will make a great rugby player

There has been some pushback from gender issues advocates on the use of 'men' in this famous statement, used by Sir Graham Henry and the like when recruiting the best rugby players for the franchise. The Crusaders have repeatedly used these statements as a practice and philosophy they have embraced over the years to assist them in producing great results. However, with the growing diverse perceptions and practices, particularly with the growth in Women's rugby globally, people are questioning whether a change to 'Great people…' instead of 'Great men…' is required. The former is more gender-inclusive than the latter (Great men) and therefore gives a broader base of perception. Sticking to the original 'men' will continue to attract noise and challenges from various social advocacies and current male and female rugby players.

World Rugby's efforts to grow Women's Rugby have taken the sport to a whole new level in terms of new territories, social inequality alleviation, increased fans and participation. Ultimately, it contributed to its return to the Olympics in 2016 after being absent for some time. World Rugby and rugby unions must continue to be aware of factors and practises that could derail the sport's momentum and evolution. If the March 2019 Mosque shootings taught us anything, it is the power of the community to influence such a powerful and model organisation as the Crusaders

iii.   Value needs to be explicit on walls and organisational artifacts/ merchandise for the next generation of Crusaders

The staff and players' demographics in the Crusaders, since the organisation was formed in 1996 until today, shows these have evolved. Players' composition has shown the increase in Pacific and Maori descent players in the last ten years. The staff composition has changed from a white male dominated workforce to more women, particularly in

leadership roles, and an increase in educated Pacific and Maori descent people means it will only be a matter of time when they start filling i roles in the Crusaders' structures. The number of migrants arriving onto the shores of Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly in the South Island, continue to rise. This means they also will continue to fill corporate roles and other industrial roles.

Currently, the Crusaders do have have their value readily displayed on every wall, but not on their stationary or corporate merchandise. This is because, to the current staff and rugby players, it is part of their daily lives and it does not need to be a policy. Whilst this is a noble and phenomenal culture, the reality of the matter is that the new migrants entering into the New Zealand workforce with a different belief system and approach will bring with them those differences. This study, therefore, asserts that if the Crusaders do not document their values and expose them through the merchandise and policies, the flooding in of migrants with their new approaches and understanding will potentially weaken the Crusaders culture. This is because they are new and may not be aware of inherent organisational values as they enter a workplace such as the Crusaders.

6.3.7   Management by values at Crusaders rugby franchise

The challenge posed in this chapter was to ascertain the link between positive organisational values and the team's successful performance on the playing field. Studies discussed earlier in this chapter claimed that there is a strong link between performance and strong organisational values. Particularly, the concept of Managing by Values (MBV) introduced by Dolan & Garcia (2002) in which a Canadian Sports Organisation used theory to understand organizational values in non-profit sports organisations. The theory is a newly proposed tool for managing organisations in which leaders use values to manage the daily functions of their organisation. MBV is so prevalent that if a more professional workforce is expected to produce high-quality work, traditional economic concepts, such as efficiency and return on investment are not as important as qualitative factors or values, such as trust, creativity, or honesty. In fact, the importance of these qualitative factors or values may even be greater (Dolan & Garcia, 2002).

Similarly, the staff and coaches of The Crusaders, including former players, believe that there is a strong link between the values they live by and their performance at organisational level and also as individuals. The Crusaders has been known for their phenomenal organisatioal culture that was driving their success since the inception of Super Rugby in 1996. The above studies and this study have brought to light the significant contribution of values in maintaining a successful culture that external parties see.

Whilst the Crusaders instill their organisational values into the players, they are always careful that they know where to strike the balance. Particularly, so that the players themselves do not lose some of the strong values they bring

that have been influenced by their communities and families. The Crusaders get to work on the connectivity of Crusaders values and individual values during their time in Academy development. Whilst they have had great successes over the years, there is still room for improvements which have been discussed separately.

6.4   Conclusion

This study confirmed that three sets of values have existed in the organization. One was initiated by the Board with the 2017 Strategic Plan, the second was a set of values that the playing group had. The third was discovered during this study which the staff and part of the officials of the playing group discussed. Interestingly, these sets of values have not in any sense contradicted each other or one been upheld higher than the other. The internal environment has found a way to forge ahead without being affected adversely when their values are challenged. What is quite clear from the interviews is that regardless of what group values a group or an individual intends to use, they always find a way to operate on common ground. They care too much about the team's performance and reputation to let a variation in values disrupt their successful journey. That says a lot about the type of individuals who work there and the solid bonds they have forged within the Crusaders. Those strong relationships have been built by a culture of learning. A learning culture that they developed over the years, which is capable of transforming adversities into opportunities. The love and caring of the Crusaders' community motivates them to improve their circumstances. This is the mentality that creates lasting bonds in friendships and partnerships.

One of the key objectives of this study is to critically examine the organizational values; how they are defined, understood and incorporated into the operational philosophy and principles, using the Crusaders Rugby Franchise as a case. Whilst the subject, organizational culture, is such a broad area, this study has endeavored to define the organizational culture of the Crusaders using 5 main pillars – Organizational Values, Resilience, Innovation, Diversity and Competitive Advantage. To this end, it can be confirmed that "organizational values" or "values" is the principal pillar that drives resilience, innovation, diversity, and competitive advantage at the Crusaders Super Rugby franchise.
From the analysis of organisational values, one value that stood out, but was not covered by the 2017 Strategic Plan or the Consultants in their brand review was continuous learning, also known as organisational continuous learning (OCL) in some literature. The staff and playing group officials thoroughly discussed it during the study's interviews as something fundamental to their sustainable growth and consistency as champions. This study is adamant that 'continuous learning' is the embedding value that creates the proper environment that incubates, nurtures, and drives the other pillars (resilience, innovation, diversity, and competitive advantage) to their maximum potential.

Another value that was discussed thoroughly in this study was 'diversity'. The employees never explicitly acknowledged this as a value, but it was frequently brought up as a key contributor to their innovation. In this study, a whole chapter was devoted to "diversity" and was not only discussed from a social perspective, but from multiple arrays of perspectives including; technical aspects of the sport, commercially and other significant stakeholders that influence the organisation. This chapter also discussed come challenges and areas that may need the organisation to relook at to maintain or increase their status as a professional rugby club.

Chapter 7: Organisational resilience and innovation of the Crusaders

7.1   Introduction

Resilience and *innovation* are two critical words embedded in the framework of the Crusaders rugby. Although they may not be written as part of an official document nor part of the daily language or communication, the two words are lived and practised in how the Crusaders do things. A senior Manager, when interviewed, shared these words:

> Sports is a dynamic industry anyway, you know, it's constantly evolving. In an operational sense, you know, no two years in the competition are ever the same, no two seasons or blocks are even the same, you never have the same team every year because of change. So you continually need to innovate and seek other ways to achieve what you are seeking to do better and in a more effective manner……. from a performance perspective around innovation, whether it's the use of technology, whether it's the growth of how we integrate our programme with the different relevant specialist areas, you know, with some medical teams, strength and conditioning, coaching group, operation group to ensure that we're being as efficient as we can.

They are an integral part of why and how they do things. They are one of the primary reasons Crusaders Rugby has been so successful for such a long time! In the interests of this study, the discussions regarding the organisational structure at Crusaders rugby will be divided into two parts. Namely, the on-field and off-field – this will essentially refer to the Club's staff, organisational structure, and operational issues. The *off-field* refers to departments or sections of the Club that deal indirectly with the rugby aspects: the administration, Finance, and the commercial arm that raises funds through retailing and partnerships with sponsors. The *on-field* departments deal directly with the rugby aspects, such as coaches, players, trainers, High-Performance units and analysts.

The Crusaders Rugby Club resembles a thriving organisation that embraces the Learning Organisation (LO) concept (Tortorella et al., 2020, p. 1). In a LO, training is systematically approached at various levels and rates so that all parties are on the same page. A study explored the correlation between the ten Lean Production (LP) implementation and seven LO dimensions in the literature discus*sions*. The seven LO dimensions used were:

- *D1 – Create a continuous learning*

- D2 – Promote dialogue

- D3 – Encourage collaboration and team learning

- D4 – Create systems to capture and share learning

- D5 – Empower individuals into a collective vision direction

- D6 – Connect organisation and its environment

- D7 – Provide strategic leadership for learning

The LP implementation suggests that the *actual continuous improvement activities* (known as *kaizen* in Japanese) will occur through a dynamic review exercise (known as *hansei* in Japanese) that fosters learning *from past successes or failures*. The consistent factor throughout the interviews was that all participants were passionate about the approach towards *continuous improvement* and the need to remain competitive or continue to win tournaments. A participant even mentioned that their biggest competition is *themselves*. The moment they think they are too good, or just when they feel that they can relax for some time, it will be the beginning of their downfall. From the on-field to the off-field, everyone is looking for improvement.

7.2   Why innovation and resilience in the Crusaders?

7.2.1   The Crusaders innovative approach

In several publications, 'innovation' and 'resilience' were used interchangeably to explain the causal impacts of one pillar over the other. Resilience is the capacity to respond to shocks or disturbances that threaten a system's capacity to function and evolve (Masten, 2015). In a research into the organisational culture of the hospitality sector, particularly leadership and its effect on innovation, the implementation of tiny changes was referred to as incremental innovation (Del Rosario et al., 2017). The Crusaders is proud of its well-established and effective methods, but it is also conscious that if it does not become more innovative, it will lose its competitive edge. Consequently, they concentrate on even the slightest details that contribute to their defined framework. Throughout their annual review sessions, these little improvements are identified and corrected. To make their system more substantial, fragments of enhancements were introduced; they term this an 'incremental improvement'. The interviews revealed that innovation is not only a technique for bringing about or enacting change; rather, it is an attitude they deploy to stay ahead of their competitors.

This innovative thinking was a novel strategy that provided an alternative path to resolving the organisation's issues over the years. In a study undertaken by Gunderson, Folke, and Janssen two concepts referring to qualitatively distinct types of change in complex ecological processes, namely Resilience and Transformation, were addressed and analysed. "Resilience is the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganise while maintaining a comparable state," and the embedded system retains the same functionality, structure, uniqueness, and responsiveness (Gunderson et al., 2006, p. 1). Transformational change, on the other hand, necessitates a new system with new apparatuses, relationships, interactions, and feedback. Ecosystems are able to reorganise utilising the same components, but produce an altogether new creation. Adaptive resilience is the name given to this type of system, regardless of its setting in biology, society, artificial intelligence, or culture. In terms of resilience, when systems are disturbed, how they react and reorganise; how they respond and reorganise themselves depends on the path they assume. One of the pathways entails using the same identity, feedback, and function to return to its original state amidst the uncertainties that the disturbances fostered. In the Crusaders context, the ecological system model best describes the innovation journey it has taken to what it is today.

Integrating technology into their processes, and with the actual playing group or the on-field team, tends to be a key element of their continuous improvement. Onsite analytical tools, software, gadgets like drones, training gears, and training methods come from the organisation's segments that have embraced technological advancement to improve their output to maximum levels. Consequently, departments such as the Finance are always looking for ways to reduce costs and improve their margins. As a senior manager shared during the interviews, these initiatives include adopting proper financial software so that the processes are lean, accurate, efficient, and effective in all their dealings:

> you know you have to innovate, to continue to be successful off the field um probably cost is a big, big one trying to reduce costs. Um, how can we do things better? We always do what we've always done. We're always going to get the same results.so yeah

7.3   The Crusaders academy

One of the innovative accomplishments that has stood the test of time and continues to be the competitive edge for the Crusaders Rugby is the establishment of its Super Rugby Academy. As previously stated, they are the only Super Rugby Academy in New Zealand, whereas the rest of the New Zealand Franchises have provincial-based academies. The Crusaders Rugby academy is a hub of innovation! Whilst it prides itself on successful practices that have been unique to the Club and a pillar of success for many years, they continue to find ways to introduce innovative ideas that will add flavour to these foundations.

Gain Line Analytics, an Australian-based organisation that uses a Cohesion Analytics technique and focuses on data analysis and quantitative research, was co-founded by Ben Darwin, a former professional rugby player who played 28 test matches for Australia (Analytics, 2013; Wallabies, 2021). He also played 42 games for his Club, the Brumbies Super Rugby Franchise. In one of Ben's podcasts in which he discusses the importance of cohesion in the success of any team sport, he began by defining the word cohesion as a level of expectations on someone in a team (Sportsmith, 2018). When a new player with existing or prior skills joins a new team, his or her ability to understand and quickly adopt the new club's objectives, determines the level of cohesiveness. Normally, when new players enter a new club, if they have not integrated properly, whenever they are under pressure in a game, they tend to go back to their old skills and objectives in managing the pressure. This means, therefore, excluding the objectives or processes that the new club has planned out. However, in a place or team that is high on cohesion, when the new player is under pressure, they are able to use the new club's plans and ways to manage those pressing situations. Gain Analytics also proposed that it is much better to recruit a rookie with very few skills because they learn much faster what the new club teaches them, how they do things, and the mindset they need to be successful in the club (Sportsmith, 2018). Having to recruit experienced players means sometimes it takes them time to unlearn the existing skills they have in order to adopt the new methods.

Gain Line Analytics findings, from their aforementioned studies, have re-affirmed the Crusaders competitive advantage in having an Academy at super rugby level. The fresh new rookie players are put into an environment to be taught the Crusaders way and to think like a Crusader. As such, the cohesion of players is simultaneously ingrained at the academy setup. Although the Crusaders have average facilities as eluded to by Ben Darwin of GainLine Analytics, their level of cohesiveness is very high and that is why they have been a champion team for so long (Sportsmith, 2018). The work on cohesiveness from the academy goes to another level, the Crusaders level, not only from the playing group (players and officials), but the support staff and commercial department.

7.3.1.1 The international reach

Whilst the Marketing department and Commercial teams focused on planning the next opportunity, one section that became very prominent in becoming a significant revenue earner was the Crusaders International Academy (CIA). The Crusaders opened the CIA in 2008 to allow international coaches, players, and support staff to learn from the most successful Super Rugby Club. The CIA had to develop new approaches, curricula, and processes to remain attractive and relevant to their international customers.   The Crusaders brand was the drawcard; however, the challenge back then was knowing how to make maximum returns on the investment that the Crusaders had poured in so much to in the previous years

7.3.2 The new logo

The inspiration to be innovative is also representated in the new Crusaders logo with the slogan *mā pango, mā whero, ka oti te mahi' – mā pango* is the colour *black* in Maori, meaning a sense of darkness in the water, our night sky, our universe (Crusaders, 2021b). It connects to something rich, providing a pathway to unearth innovation in the players and their community. . *Mā whero* is the colour red, denoting prestige and of high value – often set aside to acknowledge our inspirational leaders.   The integration of these two colours and what each represents fuels the passion for overcoming challenges. Hence, this study advocates that this determination to persevere has become the key ingredient of innovation.

The changes in the Crusaders logo to embrace an indigenous cultural symbolism is very innovative and an opportunity for the organisation to connect with the local iwi and the community in general, in a new dimension. The new logo became a reality checker of the wider community they represent, an opportunity to deepen its roots in its community involvement.

7.3.3 The Commercial innovation

The Club's commercial arm that deals with retail and sponsorships strongly agrees that innovation contributes to their success as a division. It is "vitally important", and they needed to do things differently to have the edge over competitors. The Sports industry is a viciously contested space with clubs and companies competing to dominate the market. One of the most significant contributors to an increased rugby market share is when the team or the Club is winning matches or championships. At the Crusaders commercial division, limited seatings in the Orange Theory Stadium, the home ground of the Crusaders Rugby, was their biggest challenge. It was a temporary setup, built to bring some normality after the earthquakes to a rugby-mad city and region. The temporary stadium at Addington could accommodate 18,000 spectators and can stretch to 22,000 for international games (Crusaders, 2021b).   It was understood that prior to the earthquake, the revenue brought in by the old AMI stadium, that had a seating capacity of 38,000, quickly ran into millions of dollars profit annually. After the devastating impacts of the earthquakes, the first year resulted in a total loss of around $300,000 in revenue.

This challenge continued to linger, and whilst the new stadium brought some relief, it was still not enough to restore the magnitude that its operational arm was capable of. As such, the Commercial Division now relies on innovative ideas to continue to meet its financial obligations and simultaneously make a profit. From dependence on

stadium revenue, the Club has been innovative over the years after the earthquakes and shifted to securing sponsorship deals, which by far has been a major revenue earner.

To maximise this new venue of revenue generation, the Club's think tank and strategists needed to relook at its brand and develop ways to market every potential area that will bring in revenue. The initiative included the segmentation of regions valuable to the Club that may be of some interest to potential and existing club sponsors. This diversification has benefitted the Club, so that sponsorships form a significant part of the Crusader's revenue streams. In light of the seating capacity challenges, one of the innovative approaches was to create a festive atmosphere every time they host a game. It was reaching out to a broader scope of fans, even those who do not follow rugby. The rugby environment on a game day is one where supporters and fans come for a game of footy and can also enjoy the festive atmosphere of bouncing castles, a stage for a rock band for entertainment during the breaks (half time), sponsored by companies. The limited seating capacity of the current Crusaders Home stadium, the Orange-Theory Stadium, has fostered innovation on how the Rugby Franchise can maximise returns for every game played on home ground.

The Commercial Division recently took the game experience to another level by mimicking what America's National Football League (NFL) Clubs do with their fans. The innovative idea allows supporters to understand being involved in the game by cheering on their rugby heroes and contributing to the results. Every time the Crusaders reach the oppositions' 22-meter line, the person at the stadium microphone rallies the supporters to do a drum roll with the feet at the stands to show support for the Crusaders that they are almost at the scoreline. These are the sights you see in big NFL games, which the Crusaders Commercial team have adopted but given 'a bit of a kiwi taste'. This innovative approach results from a resilient attitude towards challenges, which this organisation is renowned for. As previously mentioned, Mastern (2015) referenced *resilience* as something similar to the elastic characteristics of a rubber band and that it can bounce back to its original state or better.

If you have an eye for innovation, every year will not be the same. Every year, new players come in, and some players may have left. Therefore, strategies will change to suit the talents and skills presented to the coaches. The flexibility and adaptability level must be high to harness the transitions that innovation will usher in. Innovation is like air to the human body, the flame to the fire, like the wave needs the shore; similarly, innovation is the life of a vibrant organisation such as the Crusaders Rugby. The level of innovation determines the survival of an organisation for now and into the future.

The Finance Division tends to look at their efficiency level and how they can find ways to be effective by reducing costs in their operations and throughout the organisation. Tools such as Accounting software were part of the review so that the organisation was at the leading edge of such software.

7.3.4 The Innovative 2022 jersey

It is the first time such a jersey design has really portrayed the solidarity of the six unions under the Crusaders Region – Buller, Canterbury, Mid-Canterbury, South Canterbury, Tasman and West-Coast. The new design denotes the six mountain peaks representing the six Unions, proudly declaring its united stand that is driven by a demographically diverse community. Since the change of the logo in 2021, the organisation has really taken stock of what is already in their household or region that they can maximise on putting at the forefront the very thing that the Super Rugby Franchise represents. The jersey has the design of the mountain terrains that represent solidarity, creativity and a positive mindset. The Crusaders perceive the terrain or the mountain peaks as something that does not separate them but unites them. To embrace such motivation speaks volumes of the type of mindset that the Crusaders Rugby brand possesses as an organisation. To be able to perceive diversity in the community as a pillar of strength and a source of inspiration. Like a well-oiled farming machine ready to plough itself to success, the Crusaders Rugby is a very successful setup with a rich history, and it only needs to find the right motivation to fuel its passion.

7.3.5 The organisation structure shift

The Crusaders Rugby organisation structure is quite an interesting setup as it is a hybrid between centralised and service-oriented systems. The centralised design is influenced by the New Zealand Rugby Union's centralised structure. Few of the critical roles are highly technical, such as the coaches and specialists funded by the New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRU), but report to the Crusaders at an operational level. There have been public debates regarding the centralising nature of the NZRU systems as having an influence on the provincial operations, particularly on the funding or financial model. Hence, major sponsorships and economic gains made by the NZRU or directed to them are centrally and strategically dispensed. Public calls were made to propose the empowerment of provincial unions financially and let them manage their developments.

Interestingly, the New Zealand Rugby Players Association (NZRPA) funded the Professional Development Manager role in the Crusader structure. The position is being held by a female, Virginia Le Bass, a former senior policewoman. Her role is to assist players, especially the new and young players, transition and help manage their personal affairs as professional players. The funded position by NZRPA depicts how vital the organisation is to New Zealand rugby and the extent of its influence in this professional era of rugby.

The NZRPA is an independent body founded in 1999 to work with rugby administrators to address players' welfare and well-being and contribute to the game's development (NZRPA, n.d). The body also ensures that the players have a credible voice at the decision-making table and forums. The NZRFP is a founding member of the International Rugby Players' Association, hence has over the years built strong links with other international bodies in rugby and other sporting bodies.(NZRPA, n.d)

Another attractive characteristic of the Crusaders Rugby organisation structure is the integration with the Canterbury Rugby Football Union (CRFU). The old and new structures have roles that both organisations share and, interestingly, some positions have dual reporting lines. Amazingly, the Crusaders and the CRFU have harnessed these complexities. It speaks volumes of these two organisations' positive environment over the years.

The impact of COVID was to re-size and reshape the organisation structure of the Crusaders Rugby. During this study, the COVID outbreak was the global game changer, changing everything at all levels. The Crusaders Rugby had to adapt to these changes, resulting in modifying their organisational structure. It was an opportunity for the organisation to streamline its structure so as to meet its organisational objectives with its resources, impacted by COVID. As there were no games played, there was no revenue inflowing from that avenue, and the sponsors had to reduce their involvement as there was limited mileage when games were not played. It was difficult for every stakeholder, and business decisions such as restructures, resulting in redundancies, were inevitable. When interviewed, the CEO, Colin Mansbridge, confirmed that the Crusaders had to make changes to their operational model, and obviously, staff roles were affected (Knowler, 2020a).

7.3.5.1 Structural changes and the New Zealand employment law

The New Zealand Employment Relations Act 2000, Section 4 allows employers to make changes to their businesses and structures in a manner they deem is most effective and will benefit customers, in alignment with their business strategies (Business Innovation & Employment, 2021). The Crusaders, in this case, had to ensure that the workplace change or restructure was not an avenue to weed out underperforming employees, but the proposal to make change must entail genuine business reasons (E. New Zealand, n.d). These include:

- improved technology
- more productive business processes
- product changes
- loss of suppliers or markets
- shifts in customer or market requirements

- financial reasons

In light of the list above, it was clear that the impact of the pandemic had affected the Crusaders financially, as there was a shift in customers and market requirements. Thus, changes such as the above will always result in structural change, and these are examples of the employment law, considered lawful (New Zealand, 2022):

- adding new roles

- merging two or more existing roles

- refocussing aspects of a role

- removing roles that are not needed

- a combination of these things.

The Crusaders context falls under the fourth bullet point above, i.e., ' removing roles that are not needed', which defines redundancy. However, these workplace changes are guided by strict conditions as spelt out in the law, and when breached, it can cause significant disruptions to the organisation implementing the workplace change. These disruptions, if quantified, can equate to substantial dollar value. The law requires organisations to consult with employees fairly and reasonably, guided by the Good Faith principle. The good faith principle is understood in three aspects (Business Innovation & Employment, 2021). Firstly, the employer and the employee (or employee's rep) must not behave or act misleadingly or deceptively. Secondly, both parties (employer and employee or its rep) must be in a position to always respond promptly to any queries or correspondence. The intent to efficiently and effectively communicate during this transition period must be evident. Before any decision is reached that may result in job loss, the employer must accord the affected employees sufficient details and information of the proposal that gives employees understanding. They must also be given proper opportunity to comment.

Business decisions may be swift, which affects the organisational structure and staff's livelihood, but processes, such as redundancy are not always straightforward. Innovative initiatives in companies or organisations that impact employees are burdensome. The reason is that the employment law seems to operate on principles that incline towards the interests of employees. Hence the burden will always be on the employer's shoulder to ensure that any process, such as redundancies, are deemed fair and have followed due processes.

7.3.5.2 The new structure

This study took place at the start of the Crusaders Rugby transition in Pre-COVID structure, to the new system due to the impacts of COVID. The reform led to a significant drop in the number of personnel; from forty-six (46) to thirty-four (34) staff, a reduction of twelve staff members altogether.

A significant change was to reduce the Leadership, or Senior Management level, from seven roles into five roles. The two roles that existed in the old structure, which were made redundant, were the Human Resource Manager and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) roles. Both roles were outsourced and this led to a significant reduction in costs for the organisation; however, at the same time, it changed the dynamics of the organisation, which all existing staff will have to adjust to since there are no Finance or Human Resource department. Due to the changes and the desperation to focus on priority areas, the General Manager Partnership role was changed to General Manager Commercial, which is believed to be driven by the re-sizing of the workforce to a more focussed and dynamic workplace.

Another significant change to the structure was removing the finance division, which the Crusaders and CFRU shared. It was a department of seven (7) staff that included the CFO, an Accountant, Payroll, finance administration, reception, and the two ticketing staff. The Finance Division has been outsourced, which was a significant move; however, not surprising.

Whenever there is a redundancy decision, the common practice in most organisations is to reduce or outsource departments or functions that are perceived to be Cost Centres and not core roles to the organisation. These are mainly departments that are seen as support functions but do not bring direct revenue to the company coffers. The non-core roles such as the Human Resource Departments and Finance departments are always the first to be made redundant. However, in reality, the contributions of these non-core functions, such as the Human Resource division's, are huge and foster a very healthy organisational culture, resulting in positive outputs for the core roles. In the eyes of many corporate leaders who are less appreciative of the growing prominence of these non-core roles to the organisation's success, these non-core functions' contributions are indirect and not easily quantified, hence a piece of excess baggage. The organisation's interesting strategy was to shift some of its roles to individual contractors or independent contractors or sometimes called self-employed individuals. The New Zealand Employment Law regards this arrangement as a 'Contract *for* Service' (Employment, n.d). These are contracted individuals who are not employees of the organisation, but their services or skills are hired to perform specific jobs. In this arrangement, the employer saves a lot of money in various forms – Kiwisaver contribution, annual leave, sick leave, bereavement leave among others. The contract that a typical employee uses is called the "Contract *of* service". This arrangement is costly to employers as it must accord all legislated benefits to the employee through their contract. Employers chose this avenue because they accept the power

to ensure that their strategic goals are driven by the people and subsequently achieved. In the old structure, the Crusaders had only five roles performed by individual contractors, however, thirteen roles have been shifted to individual contractor status in the new structure.

The Marketing and Communications Department shifted from four staff to two – with the two staff being; one an Independent Contractor and the other role a Sponsorship & Event Manager shared with the Commercial Department. The Commercial department moved from six(6) staff (including the shared role with Marketing & Communication) to four (4) staff. Similar to the other departments, the changes elaborate the methodical intent to focus on the core functions that generate revenue, in other words, mainly on sponsorships, partnership, and event coordination at the games venue. During the interviews, it was evident that the inevitable changes ushered in by the pandemic have burdened the existing staff to be multiskilled as they were taking on some roles that they never used to perform before. They have added portfolios to the current allocation, and the new job titles seemed to be the blanket covering of all the added tasks covering multiple areas. It is a stretch on the employees; however, something that must be embraced and ensure it is workable, especially in these very challenging times seeing businesses closing and more people losing their jobs. Hence, a positive environment that is engaging and rewarding is unnegotiable.

Interestingly, the Crusaders academy has added the new role of Analyst, in the structure. The role is technical, and it adds value to the central hub that nurtures talents for the organisation's future. Whilst the organisation is in a transition situation, the Crusaders continue to invest in a setup that's already reaping success for them. Another clever move was for the organisation to embrace diversity and recruit a Pasifika staff member as the new Analyst. The move will give a diverse approach in the analytical space, hence resulting in a more informative resolution.

7.4   Challenges to innovation

Whilst innovation is a critical factor for any organisation; there are always challenges. From the interviews, it was clear that challenges differ with each department, depending on their role in the organisation. Two challenges that the Crusaders face are the availability of both resources and funds. These challenges limit their ability to do things in the way they see fitting and that would maximise the potentials they already have in their team or organisation. At times diversity can hamper or delay their ability to communicate effectively, which has a direct impact on innovation.

7.5   The drivers of innovation

The drive to be innovative for the Crusades rugby franchise comes in many forms. Its starts with the *internal* need to be better and always learn off others to bring the best out of the organisation. Another major driver of innovation in the organisation are external factors and, to some extent, they have forced the organisation to be innovative. Innovation in Crusaders Rugby is a matter of survival and is embraced as the only bridge to its competitive edge.

7.5.1   Competitiveness force

The level of competitiveness in the super rugby competition has been a major force in keeping the organisation innovative. It is a red zone of fierce competitiveness and this pressure has therefore driven the playing group or the rugby players, coaching and support team to be on the cutting edge. Each year of competition also brings along a very different set of challenges that other franchise or competitors manufacture to dethrone the champion Crusaders Rugby.

7.5.1.1 Super Rugby Aotearoa

The Super Rugby Aotearoa was one of the toughest super rugby tournaments the Crusaders have ever experienced. This is because it was a tournament between the New Zealand super rugby teams. The level of competition was high as it was intense and very physical.   The Crusaders envisage these high-level encounters, and this competitiveness changes the way they prepare, the way they train, the language they use, and the pace they plan to approach the game with. Furthermore, there was a genuine desire to rise above the pandemic challenges. There was a change of mindset in the way they conduct themselves prior to the beginning of the competition. They knew that they needed to win the first Super Rugby Aotearoa.

Part of the Crusaders innovation journey is embracing the humility to learn from other organisations and sporting bodies beyond rugby. The Crusaders strides far and wide fishing for best practices in extraordinary contexts that operate on principles that are transformative and provocative of the status quo, yet are transferrable to the rugby context. The Crusaders staff, especially from the Crusaders Academy, often visit recruitment organisations to study the way they recruit and the process they follow in appointing the best candidates. This is done to understand the theories and principles behind their decisions on the best candidate, which they return and customise to suit their objective and context. These learnings influence and drive the need to innovate in the organisation. Similarly, best practices in other sports are crucial; how they approach the game, what successes they are known for, and how the Crusaders can transfer

that best practice to their organisation. These best practices are not limited only to the technicality of the game and players. They also include how they run their organisations commercially and how they manage their fans and engage them to be more active during game days and before game days.

7.5.2   The financial targets

The financial wellbeing and the desire to increase their market share are major driving forces and operate at different levels of the organisation.

The Crusaders Academy envisaged the need to have a setup in its super rugby franchise five years ago. It was an innovative intent to develop this concept to become a reality. The decision was to place this setup at the Super rugby level and not at the provincial level. Running an academy will need many resources to stay relevant and successful; hence the provincial teams and club levels are struggling with finance and resources. Thus, having the academy as part of the super rugby franchise would attract funding to run its operations. There were many trials and errors in establishing the academy, and it took nine long months to finally roll out a fully-fledged program. They are reaping their fruits and have become an integral part of the Crusaders' successful journey over the last five years.

The commercial division has also adjusted its financial strategy to attract like-minded sponsors and businesses with similar values as their organisation. These relationships are guided by mutually agreed conditions that also help promote the interests of the partnering companies pouring funds into the organisation. These interests include the values the sponsoring company lives by and are integral to their business success. Consequently, the Crusaders make choose their commercial partners carefully. While they are willing to compromise to adopt the partnering companies' values, they must ensure that they do not compromise their very own values too much, as they have stood the test of time. Apparently, a deliberate approach to choosing organisations with similar principles becomes paramount. Since rugby turned professional after the 1995 Rugby World Cup, institutional changes have impacted the values, norms, standards, and other structural setups, internally in Clubs (O'Brien & Slack, 1999). A study on the impacts of professionalism in the Queensland Rugby Union established various types of forces, such as *political, functional, and social forces,* that led to the structural changes of rugby clubs. This was at the height of the transitions from amateur to professionalism after the signing of the Paris Declaration in 1995. The study results seemed to portray similar challenges to those the Crusaders Rugby is facing with the external commercial forces (O'Brien & Slack, 1999). These forces have been embraced positively by the Crusaders resulting in innovative initiatives.

The decrease of interest in rugby amongst the public has also contributed to the innovative initiatives of the Crusaders. In the earlier days, after the successful tour of the All Blacks to Great Britain in 1905, rugby arguably became

the number one sport in New Zealand (Palenski, 2015). However, other sports have been competing for the same market and this competition continues to grow. This has impacted the level of rugby involvement in schools and the public arena.

Previously, almost every school had a rugby program, but this has declined over the years to the point that some schools do not even have a rugby program as an optional sport. This is a major dilemma that the Crusaders, other rugby franchises, and the New Zealand Rugby Union face. This challenge is assumed to have trickled down from the early days when the South African Springbok national team toured New Zealand between July and September 1981. This event divided the New Zealand public because of the apartheid issues in South Africa, which was why many New Zealanders resented the South African National Rugby Team touring the nation. It was tagged the largest civil unrest since the waterfront dispute in 1951, in which more than 150,000 individuals took part in 200 demonstrations in 28 centres all over New Zealand (Palenski, 2015). Some violent protests resulted with 1500 individuals being charged for offences. High profile All Blacks withdrew from playing any game against the touring South African team and even withdrew their children from playing the sport (Palenski, 2015). That year, 1981, was when the sport took a nosedive as the leading sport in New Zealand, and its effects are still felt today. The decline represents an uphill challenge that the Crusaders face every year. How do you increase the involvement of more people to go down and watch the game and more young people to play the sport? The crowd capacity and following of the sport have major impacts on the organisation's financial status.

7.5.3 Social forces

In March 2019, a gunman stomped into two mosques in Christchurch and started shooting, resulting in the death of 51 people. This incident created social waves that have influenced Crusaders Rugby's innovativeness. The organisation was put to the test, particularly the organisations' name and the medieval logo of a crusader warrior. Even though the Crusaders rugby strongly rejected the public perception that the shootings were also linked to the Club, the public perception was a significant challenge. It threatened in such a way to make the players susceptible to change – the Club's name and the logo! Joining the *social forces* bandwagon were the mainline media news as it was a new twist to the shooting scenario. Some of these pushbacks were through the social media platform, where people expressed their opinions on the old logo and the Club's name.

7.5.3.1 The historical meaning of name "Crusaders"

The term "crusade" is derived from the Latin phrase "cruce signati," which was used to designate the crusaders after the 12th century (Madden, 2013). To regain the Holy Land from the Muslims, Pope Urban II rallied all European Christians on November 27, 1095, with the cry of "Deus vult!" or "God wills it," in what was arguably the most influential speech of the Middle Ages. Starting in the late 11th century, Christians in western Europe organised military expeditions in response to centuries of Muslim wars of expansion (Dickson, 2022). *These were known as the Crusades.* Many of those who took part in these wars, saw it as a way to atone for their sins while also stopping the spread of Islam, reclaiming the Holy Land in the eastern Mediterranean, conquering pagan areas, and reclaiming territory that had previously been Christian. There were a number of Crusades between 1095, when the first Crusade began, and 1291, when Latin Christians were finally expelled from their kingdom in Syria, though the Crusades continued for several centuries after 1291 (Dickson, 2022). The Protestant Reformation and the subsequent decline of the Pope's authority on state affairs contributed to a sharp decline in crusading activity during the 16th century.

An astounding amount of progress was made during the First Crusade, which had been initiated in response to a plea for assistance from the Byzantine emperor Alexius Comnenus (Phillips, 2015). Following their conquest of Nicaea (now located in Turkey) and Antioch, the Crusaders moved on to grab Jerusalem and establish a series of nations that were ruled by Crusaders. However, after the Muslim leader Zang caught one of them, the second Crusade was summoned in response. However, they were beaten at Dorylaeum (which is near Nicaea), and their effort to attack Damascus was unsuccessful. The Third Crusade was called for after Saladin took control of the Crusader state of Jerusalem. It resulted in the conquest of Cyprus and the successful siege of Acre (which is now in Israel). Richard I's army beat Saladin's men at the Battle of Arsf and at Jaffa. Richard negotiated and signed a peace pact with Saladin, which opened the door for Christians to enter Jerusalem. Instead of assaulting Egypt, which was at the time the centre of Muslim power, the Fourth Crusade laid waste to the Christian capital of Constantinople in Byzantine Turkey. None of the subsequent Crusades met with any measure of success. The end of Crusader dominance in the Middle East is generally seen to have occurred with the conquest of Acre in 1291 by the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Khalil.

It is essential to recognise the gravity of these historical events, particularly the slaughter of Muslims that began in the latter half of the 11th century by the so-called Crusades. Consequently, the massacres at the Christchurch mosques in 2019 brought these old crusades ideologies to light, which in turn led to an upsurge in comments from the general public, which in turn attracted the attention of the Crusaders rugby franchise raising a red flag to the organisation. Therefore, they hired a consulting company to conduct a survey of the public reactions, including former players. The brand change was a tough time at the Club as recalled by one of the Managers during the interview:

Mosque shootings was hugely impactful on us because of the name change, you know, we all felt very personal around what people thought around our name, where we didn't stand for that, but for us to change our symbology and become a better organisation from our understanding, that we're Crusaders for our people and for rugby, not for the historic events that had happened. So to go back and reconnect with our past and make a real clear future and want to tell a different story, what's our story now was real powerful for us, with ma pango ma whero and that, with red and with black and with leadership and our people, probably dug our roots a little bit deeper than before

These forces led to the change in the Crusaders logo, which according to the interviews, was a timely change and an opportunity for the organisation to be innovative and develop something relevantly fresh that really represents the community they represent. One of the Managers that was interviewed vividly recalled the challenges that were presented to them at multi-layers:

Well, again, I think those external factors of, you know, it's almost controllables and uncontrollables and, you know, our organisation has been around 25 years and each of those years would have an influence. And whether it be, you know, your sponsorship when it's up or down or -- then we've already mentioned the earthquakes and, you know, the Covid element of the natural influence and then obviously the mosque shootings last year as well. So they're things that really rattle our organisational cage, but it's, you know, we've carried on trying to be, within our constraints of geographical location, you know, we've just tried to excite people to stay connected with us and then also there's that challenge of exciting people to actually connect with us. ......We possibly have had a disconnection, so therefore there's an effort to reconnect and you hope you do it in the right ways. And really, as I say, around -- we haven't -- we've had different marketing campaigns, but a lot of them are tagged against the, how would you put it, they're tagged against the timeframe that we're involved in at present point in time. An example might be, I think there was a marketing campaign just as we were going into lockdown and it was -- the tag lines were relative to us working towards our fourth title, and then of course with Covid coming in then we actually had to be really sympathetic to some of the terminology used in it around the success when people were faced with a financial crisis, some of the things that we were tagging we had to be really mindful of. So that meant that there's -- we had to be innovative in those changes and actually look at a conceptual representation that would catch that collective that we were trying to connect and keep connected

The Crusaders name remained the same; however, the Club ensured that everyone knew what they were *crusading* for – crusading for good, crusading for rugby and the community! The public brand survey conducted by the consultants established that only a handful of people were making the loud noises and that most were happy to keep the name. It was also a business decision by the Crusaders Board that a lot would be at stake if the name was changed compared to changing the logos and symbolism, such as the sworsdsmen during the pre-game rituals.

The social pressure from the community has also led to the change in the way the Crusaders present themselves to the community it represents. Instead of purely pursuing community engagement from a strictly financial perspective,

they have a fresh motivation to engage as a *social partner* for community development. They see themselves as a tool to socially construct positivity in the community, advocating for family values and that rugby is not just a sport, it is a way of life. The disasters such as the earthquakes, the coal mine deaths on the West Coast, and the mosque shooting have only reinforced the part that sporting clubs such as the Crusaders play in community resilience.

The Crusaders felt that they have a responsibility to put a smile on the people's faces or warmth in their hearts in the face of disasters, and when they win, it helps take people's minds away from the predicaments for a moment. This motivation is an innovative change in purpose and intent that the Crusaders have taken in response to the social forces that came at them. A famous statement by one of their greatest coaches, Wayne Smith, echoes in the Crusaders rugby environment "Through the greatest adversity, comes the greatest opportunity". The adversities that the Crusaders went through has given them the greatest opportunity to create and innovate and was quoted by one of the Managers that was interviewed sharing these words:

> So I think, yeah, external factors are always there. You can control what you can control, but if you've got your mindset right, you know, you can do great things. So I think it was Wayne Smith who said through the greatest adversity comes the greatest opportunity. So it's that kind of, I think, thinking where we're always up for the challenge

It had bestowed on them the wonderful burden of being that lighthouse to the community when the journey seemed blurry, and the seas were rough. That burden becomes the competitive edge they have over any super rugby franchise because it becomes one of the reasons they play the game they love. The is a noble purpose that is beyond them, something that is bigger than the franchise.

7.5.4 The digital force on media & communication

The digital era has revolutionised businesses to communicate and sell their products to their customers and potential markets. This change in the business environment and the escalated prominence of social media platforms has compelled the Crusaders Rugby to maximise its digital marketing and communication framework to reach out to its fans and to recruit potential fans and customers. It was a tool that was very useful for the organisation to change the public's perception towards the franchise so that they continue to focus on the noble intent that they are crusading for; the good of the community.

7.5.4.1 E-Games and Online Entertainment a Real Threat to Super Rugby competitive edge

A senior marketing staff member who was interviewed mentioned that even though much emphasis has been on innovation and creativity, there may still be some room for technology to lift the operational efficiencies of the back

office and also the rugby playing group. An intriguing perspective shared by one of the Executives was the concern regarding the significant impact of the digital entertainment industry on people's recreational activities. The Executive stated:

> I think other things appeal to fans' times so you know things like television and you know the internet or digital exposure, those things compete the fans time and attention and I think they're probably more competitive. We are more concerned about then others sports frankly, I think other sports um you know other sports actually yeah they can complement what you do rather than be true competitors…

In 2019, the Online entertainment market was valued at US$183.1 billion and was estimated to hit a massive US$652.5 billion by 2027 (K & D, 2020). The most popular forms of online entertainment are social media, online video games, online casinos, music streaming, and video streaming. The increasing availability of smartphones and affordable internet services has driven extreme growth in this industry. This translates to more people sitting around at home watching movies or playing games online as an avenue to destress instead of going down to the grounds to watch a good game of rugby. Apart from alternative sports, these groups affect the Crusaders' participation and gate-takings. They would rather spend their money online in the comfort of their home than step out to meet friends and family watching a good game of rugby. The Crusaders compete not only for the commercial dollar of fans but with the fun activities outside the four walls of people's houses.

Augustine Pichott, a former Vice Chairman of World Rugby, during his campaign when he was running for the job of Chairman of World Rugby, revealed his ambitions to push rugby in the E-Games platforms and Online entertainment. He intended to convince children to participate so they might learn and enjoy the game (Cleary, 2020). The world soccer governing body, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the American National Football League (NFL) are enjoying the benefits of such a revolutionary venture to enjoy and get people involved in sports, especially the younger generation

7.5.5 Significant force of peculiar events

As previously discussed, the mosque shooting significantly impacted the organisation. People began to connect the organisation with the medieval meaning of Crusaders, which had a very negative impression. The organisation felt worried about how the public was starting to doubt the good and rich history they had laboured so hard to build. As discussed, the cloud of doubt and public pressure led to the commissioning of a consulting company to conduct a public survey on the crusaders brand and logo, which revealed that only a few unhappy fans were beating the drums loud.

More fans and the community were receptive to the change in the logo, but it was only appropriate to keep the name 'Crusaders'. It was an opportunity to emphasise the franchise's positive vibes, particularly with the community. The franchise had to dig deep to reconnect with the rich past and history and refocus their story – crusading for the good, crusading for rugby.

New communications and marketing strategies were put in place, particularly the big drive in maximising social media because that is where many people spend most of their time in a single day. It helps to track its performance in real-time, and customers can easily enquire online for assistance on specific issues. A new method was adopted that was highly digital, cost-effective, and empowering. The feeling of getting your tickets immediately after paying online gives some level of excitement towards the game, and a fan is less worried about securing tickets in the manual version, where you collect them at the gates of the game's venue. The ticketing method has constantly been evolving, and the Crusaders have had changes over the years in alignment with the digital wave's evolution.

7.5.6 Longevity: a competitive edge for the Crusaders

Another Executive, having worked in another New Zealand franchise, pointed out that the difference between the other Rugby Franchises and the Crusaders is the longevity of players and officials alike, meaning coaches and Managers. It is a significant factor because these long-serving individuals have experienced a winning environment, setbacks, and every other rugby environment. Whilst other franchises struggle to adapt and map out the right strategy, the Crusaders are well ahead. They are fine-tuning what they have done because it is what they have been doing for years; consistently learning, implementing, and refining strategies. As such, the club dedicates time and resources to globally researching best practices. Whether it is from sporting groups, the military, or a business, they learn and modify concepts applicable to the Crusaders.

By the time the interview occurred, 17 Crusaders players had played 100 games. This points to the fact that they had been a member of the club for a significant amount of time, which is one of the advantages that Crusaders have over other clubs. Continuity and experienced players can hold the team together during adversity on and off the field. There have not been many Crusaders' coaches because there have not been many coaching vacancies. Coaches like Vance Stewart, Wayne Smith, Steve Hansen, Robbie Deans, and Todd Blackadder have been part of the organisation for a considerable time. Hence, many core players have received coaching from the same coaches, allowing continuity and fine-tuning of skills.

The resources are utilised well when the right people are in a proper setup, supported by continuous learning. They will always attract the best talents on and off the rugby field. Being a highly successful club for the last 25 years

has not only created a winning lifestyle, it has also reinforced the Crusaders' brand to a level synonymous with quality and prestige. It is an incubator for rugby success in all its facets. From the perspective of the Crusaders' coaches, the team's rivals include all other professional rugby clubs in New Zealand and worldwide. Working in an organisation with a strong brand like the Crusaders is a significant competitive edge for a Marketing Executive.

Interestingly, due to the impacts of the pandemic, the Crusaders had to succumb to a restructure, and redundancy was inevitable. However, one of the unaffected departments was the CIA, which was a valuable revenue-generating avenue for the organisation.

7.6   The resilient Crusaders

The resilience journey for the Crusaders started when the Super Rugby competition started. In the first year of the competition in 1996, the Crusaders finished an embarrassing last place, but in 1997, they finished sixth. However, in 1998, 60% of the pioneer players returned, and that was the year the Club won the super rugby tournament, also winning the following two years.   The Crusaders saw the need to bounce back early in their super rugby and go again. They tributed this characteristic to the great people they have in their setup and their internal connection.   The interviews seemed to establish that their connectivity during the tough times, knowing that they are all on the journey together, appeared to be the glue that drives them through the challenges until they reach the other side. It is quite a significant show of resilience and unity adversities.

Connectedness is a crucial factor that one can feel and experience when taking a tour within the organisation, from human relations to office space management, all of which is a result of the organisational cultural drive to be successful. Even though the structure is hierarchical, everyone in the organisation seems to have a very open and highly interactive relationship. When it was the *General Manager Professional Rugby*'s turn to be interviewed, he had asked to delay the interview for about 5 minutes as he was waiting for the Receptionist/Front Desk Assistant to return. This scenario speaks volumes of the work culture and environment that exists, that even an executive or senior manager can step in to cover a very generic and junior role. Furthermore, after being taken around for a small tour meeting the off-field staff and part of the on-field staff, the connectivity between the staff was quite evident, and people were quite comfortable interacting with their immediate superiors.

Another factor that the staff feel drives resilience is the sense of "belonging", which has been one of the key pillars upon which the Crusaders have built their healthy environment. The feeling of belonging may not be formalised as an organisational policy or process. however, they have adopted a lifestyle over the years. It has even appeared in the Crusaders marketing, namely, 'I belong', and was an overflow of what was happening within the Crusaders'

environment. It seemed as if it was a social undertaking that the Crusaders had embarked on in trying to be a positive model embedded in positive values and culture. It is also an opportunity to showcase to the public, especially to those who do not follow rugby, that the sport is not just about a certain type of people with similar interests. Still, it is inclusive and includes all races, sizes, gender, age and any other demographic preferences. The Club took leadership in building a community that was always ravelled by peculiar circumstances. In the interviews, a few senior Managers had fervently and passionately eluded the importance that players, particularly the new players, feel belonging to the Crusaders family. It is the unique environment that they want their people to understand, belong to, and help maintain or build to the next level.

The Crusaders Head Coach, Razor, is so passionate about this phenomenon. One of the young Pasifika talented players was asked why he continued to stay with the Crusaders even though other players, including senior players, were vying for the same spot in the run-on team. He replied that it was because of 'Razor', the head coach. The Head Coach made people feel that they belonged, and he also created a fun environment without compromising work ethics. Razor always comes down to the level of young players, and being a Pasifika, these wonderful gestures by the Head Coach help, because naturally when in a new environment they tend to be quiet and reserved. The young player further stated that those were the main reasons he wakes up every morning and feels energised to go to training in the morning.

That was a classic example of resilience when provided with the right environment. It was apparent that the *people,* particularly leadership, were the driving force for resilience. The business itself, the brand and what it represents seems to attract the best people for the jobs and makes them stay longer.

7.6.1   Resilience when traditions are challenged

What is also evident is that some staff, including the Head Coach, Scott Robertson (or passionately known by fans and the rugby community as 'Razor') and the General Manager Professional Rugby, Angus Gardiner, are the two longest serving. In the sense that they were players, particularly as the pioneering Crusaders team in 1996, and are now involved in the Club's coaching and operations management. They bring back those traditions and processes that remind the Club of what worked for the Crusaders in the yesteryears of triumph. These are precious inputs, and a lot of the things they do were arguably inspired by their former Crusaders coaches; Robbie Deans and Wayne Smith, who were both very successful coaches earlier in the history of the Club. Interestingly, some members of senior executives did not come through the same pathway as Razor, the Head Coach, and Angus Gardiner, the General Manager Rugby Professional. Consequently, the business expertise of these other senior executives appeared to complement the technical knowledge of Razor and Angus Gardiner, enabling them to acquire value-adding skills from domains beyond rugby.

Also significant was the different dimensions of thought process that Colin, Alex, and other non-rugby (off-the-field) members bring to the discussion tables. It was a healthy platform for the Club to embrace these differences so that systems and processes that used to work in former years are challenged to allow more resilient outcomes to be birthed that are innovative and novel.

This diverse approach is something that the Crusaders Rugby, as an organisation, does so well. The capacity to learn as an organisation and challenge its traditions for the better gives them the edge over competitors. The whole organisation is by default accustomed to the concept that the only way to get better is to keep on learning and challenging the status quo, and to some extent, testing the durability and relevancy of what used to work in the past. Such an approach marks a resilient mindset, a resilient organisation.

As earlier discussed, ecosystem resilience takes two forms of resilience when disturbed. It either transforms into a totally new creation that this study labels as *transformation resilience* or only builds back to its original state labelled as *stationary resilience*. In the Crusaders'context, as deducted from the interviews, the disturbances to the Crusaders' ecosystem is caused by two forces. Firstly, the disruptions caused by forces beyond their control, such as earthquakes, deaths in the Coal mines in Westcoast and the 15 March 2019 Mosque shootings. The second force is not caused by something beyond their control, the disturbance of the Crusaders' ecosystem is perceived as self-inflicted. This admirable habit has been underpinned by the organisational desire to maintain a successful high-performance culture driven by a continuous learning environment. They understand the business they are in and understand very well the level of competitiveness they face from various players in the sporting industry. Resilience must be second nature or otherwise, they will no longer be leaders in the environment they operate in.

7.6.1.1 The Eco-type Innovation Concept

The greatest opportunity for any organisation to progress further is when they are overwhelmed with challenges, even at the brink of elimination from its existence in the sector or industry they operate in. It will then take a fresh pair of eyes willing to see the opportunities rather than the disaster. To best describe and understand the innovation journey of the Crusaders, one will have to see the level of *resilience* activities occurring at the organisation. The ecological change processes of resilience and transformational change (Gunderson et al., 2006) seem to adequately describe the layers of initiatives occurring over the years in response to disasters, lack of resources, adverse circumstances or just the burning desire to be better. With resilience there is a bounce back from a disturbance using the same characteristics and contexts to its original state. Whilst transformation changes tend to use the current or old status to create a whole new product, that is adaptive to any situation or context in the future.

7.7   Conclusion

From the interviews with the Crusaders rugby, it is quite interesting to note that different sections approach innovation differently. This is merely because of the different levels of challenges each section are exposed to and are, more or less, unique to its core roles.

The *on-field* approaches towards innovation also vary in the sense that some sections largely embrace the subject to remain competitive and relevant, whist others rely largely on what has been successful over the years, but use innovation as competitive advantage for 'around the edges'. For example, the Academy channels innovation into their system to make changes on the smaller things that they feel will reap big harvest for them and make a significant difference. The challenges that the *Off-field* divisions are exposed to in their operations and in meeting the organisational objectives are a little different from the on field, although the complexity may be similar to some extent. Over the years, the Crusaders have developed a systematic approach to developing talents through their academy and there is *continuous learning and improvement* throughout the organisation. What was also noticeable during the interviews was that a good number of interviewees were former school teachers. They hold key roles in the organisation that directly influence its dynamics, particularly where the players are dealt with. They were quite meticulous in their responses and were very detailed. One can only imagine the quality of interaction between players and staff and general communication within the team and within the organisation. Their meticulous, precise and clear communication styles would always rub off onto others. Furthermore, the patience to allow proper learning is quite ideal in this very competitive environment.

Evidently, the limited resources and challenging situations that the Club has gone through has not at all turned the organisation into turmoil. In fact, it has unleashed hidden potentials and skills that can only be displayed in the face of unfavourable situations. One example is Analysts coming up with an innovative way to give real time feedback to the players during their training. They use golf carts to carry TV screens and drive into the training huddles to give a brief of their analysis. This allows players to correct their mistakes during training, as opposed to to going back to the classroom sessions hours later to hear feedback from the Analysts. The limited funds for a sophisticated tool has pushed the Analysts to think beyond the shortfall point and develop an innovative solution.

Gain Line Analytics findings on cohesiveness in the Crusaders have cemented the phenomenon of competitive advantage in having a Crusaders academy. Their studies claimed that organisations with high cohesion will always perform beyond expectations. This is particularly seen where the club absorbs rookies, because they learn faster and are taught the Crusaders' way, hence resulting in high cohesion.

In light of all the findings relating to Resilience and Innovation, it can be established that the manner in which the organisation embraced its values has laid a platform on how they were resilient with adveristies that challenged their brand and the reason why they exist as an organization.

Chapter 8: Diversity: Crusaders' multi-approach for competitive advantage

8.1 Introduction

This chapter will attempt to analyse and discuss the unique way the Crusaders define diversity and, furthermore, how they manage diversity as an organisation, from a strategic perspective. Over the years, the Crusaders' have realised the importance of diversity to the point that it has become a critical part of their strategic intent with the playing group and the organisation. They have operationalised diversity by weaving this pillar into their processes and discussions. Even though there is room for improvement, the Crusaders' staff demographics have changed significantly since its inception in 1996. More females are in the hierarchy and even represented in executive management and the Board. The playing group has diversified approaches, looking far and wide globally to adopt new ideas and techniques that will keep them ahead.

Diversity has been an essential and integral part of the Crusaders' rugby journey over the years to what it is today. Whilst this is crucial, the interviews also established that the organisation still has much space to improve. Specifically, matching how other sporting bodies have integrated diversity into their daily operations and made it a way of life or culture for the organisation. No one ever arrives at the final destination when dealing with diversity – there is always room for more improvement. As previously mentioned, Rugby has been regarded as a sport for all kinds of people. Although it has a colonial and exclusive history, rugby is quickly becoming a cross-cultural global game.

Diversity brings much positivity to the decision tables because the perspective is not based on a singular mindset but driven by various perception. This results in a very informative decision or resolution. Crusaders are always inclined to believe that a group of individuals with multiple backgrounds will always get a 'great' idea. On the flip side, there is a consensus that the Club still has a long way to go to address diversity both in totality and organizationally. While some parts of the organisation embrace and realise diversity's potential, the interviews of Crusaders show that some processes and practices need to be changed. The mindset needs to change holistically to adapt and accept the vast changes happening in the world, particularly from the social perspective.

It was the Crusaders brand review which crystalised the need for the organisation to embrace diversity further. The feedback on the people's perception made them realise that there are some critical areas that they need to examine so as to open new opportunities unique to the organisation. One of the other significant findings of the brand review was the level of their connection to the region and the local communities – the iwis, the Pacific Islanders' community and the local population. There have been activities organised over the years addressing these important pillars.

However, the initiatives have met challenges in terms of people of the Crusaders' region forming a meaningful social partnership with the Crusaders. This avenue is vital to the strategic intent of the Crusaders because it presents an array of opportunities. The drive to pursue this social progression exhibits a diverse mindset that the Crusaders have grasped. This is to look into things that matter to the region's people and to have that competitive edge which will influence why they play the game! Post-brand review, the Crusaders have a new passion that drives their on-field and off-field mentality. The passion created by the playing group revolves around the statement they developed – *On-field Courage, off-field compassion*! The organisation worked on a community program that facilitated the push for this passion, portraying a message that they (the community) are one of the reasons why they do so well on the rugby field.

This chapter examines some strategic and innovative ways the Crusaders franchise has used diversity as an essential ingredient in organisational and sporting transformation and success.

8.1.1 Diversity growth in Crusaders rugby

The Crusaders got involved in community programs with Pasifika and Māori communities. What was apparent was that the Pacific Island community had grown so much from 10 years ago. More Pacific islanders had moved from the north island and other places outside the Canterbury region to look for work after the 2011 earthquakes. Between 1991 and 2018, the Māori and Pasifika populations in the area had also grown substantially. There were 22,005 Maori individuals registered in 1991, compared to 37.938 in 2018 — an increase of 72%. The population of Pasifika had increased by 110 per cent, from 5835 in 1991 to 12,279 in 2018 (Day, 2020). Consequently, as stated by (Nkomo & Stewart, 2006) the same growth has been evident in the players' composition of the Club in recent years, seeing the increase in Pasifika players in the Crusader's rugby setup. The Crusaders playing group and the Academy are quite diverse, with players from various ethnicities, such as those of Pacific Island origin and a player from Germany, Anton Segner, who was with the Crusaders academy but now contracted with the Blues Rugby Franchise. They all bring diverse tastes and knowledge of various cultural perspectives, which, when utilised skillfully, has become a competitive advantage for the Club.

The review by the players in the previous year 2021 also highlighted the diversity issue. The focus is on continuously improving on being inclusive – not that they are not inclusive, but how they can improve each year. During one of the former players' alumni meetings, they shared similar sentiments on diversity. They highlighted changes in the Club compared to when they played in the red and black jersey. The team always seemed like it had a *look* and a *feel*, and now most of the feel and look has changed for the better. In the work of Nkomo and Cox in 1996, they argued that workplace diversity is primarily associated with social and demographic groups(Nkomo & Stewart, 2006).

Consequently, the variety in employees' identities influences informal organisational relationships (Pringle, 2009). Cox, an African-American scholar, argued that diversity is far more than the traditional descriptors. The early research coverage was too focused on the minority group oppression in a majority social framework, thus creating a barrier that distorts the realisation of the true abilities of people (Cox 1994). Hence, the Crusaders' renewed perception fostered confidence in everyone's attributes towards accomplishments, regardless of their status or identity. Many of the current Crusaders' perspectives align with the theories discussed. It is not only about traditional racial or ethnic diversity but a whole array of diversity factors, including gender, ideas, perspectives, coaching, and many more.

There is so much growth in technology nowadays compared to the earlier years of Crusaders rugby. It is an area that has been an integral part of corporate businesses or any organisation that is in a very competitive environment. Technology has introduced a lot of efficient and effective alternatives that benefit organisations such as the Crusaders. However, technology itself is only useful if it has a user with an innovative mindset that is diversity driven. The contrast between competitors is the ability to utilise concepts relevant to the organisation and maximise technology to facilitate those creative ideas. The Crusaders have been one of those many organisations that have embraced technology to achieve positive results. This is seen particularly in the training methods, feedback mechanisms to the players, and game strategies using various analytical computer software.

8.1.1.1 The leadership influence on diversity

A study by Nguyen (2018) suggested that CEOs' long-term incentives are associated with more significant successive corporate innovations. However, at the ground or operational level, employees also regard training and development as critical motivators that not only stimulate innovation but also necessitate some sound leadership for a successful outcome. This approach includes recognition for effort, autonomy, and flexibility (Ko, 2015, p. 156). A study analysed public trading companies in the United States, focusing on the impacts of their environmental CSR performance on long-term competitive advantage (Yadav et al., 2017). The findings suggest that the environmental resources' performance positively influences the company's competitive advantage and compliments poorly performing companies in the group. The findings also indicated that companies that integrate environmental performance in their corporate strategy tend to illustrate responsible leadership and maximising of shareholders.

In light of the arguments highlighted, the growth in positive diversity initiatives in the Crusaders over the years has been accredited to the various leaderships that have embraced various forms of positivity towards encouraging diversity. The present executive leadership has infused a significant amount of positive energy by leveraging their diverse skills gained from previous organisations before to joining the Crusaders. This pertains to the use of their

networks and business connections to engage with influential people in order to expand their networks and, as a result, acquire valuable insights from these peers.

The leadership team created an environment that allowed people to discuss diverse options in their dealings or operations. The leadership team challenged their thought process to look beyond the norm and into places or organisations that an average rugby mind would not dare to pursue. People are starting to think differently and challenge the status quo in exchange for ways of executing tasks, especially in sports science. The scientific dimension has provided huge insight into how athletes are managed according to genetic differences and how these diverse varieties are harnessed to provide a cohesive unit moving in a common direction.

8.1.2 Diversity in team composition

In 2010, the New Zealand rugby community was shocked by the claims made by a former All Black Captain, Andy Haden, stating that the Crusaders Super Rugby Franchise operationalises the limitation of non-white players into their system only to have three per season (scrum.com, 2010). Haden made this claim during a panel discussion on Sky TV's Deaker on Sport , Wednesday, 26 May 2010 (Herald, 2010a; Te Karere, 2010). When questioned, Haden mentioned that a former All-Black friend was contacted by a Canterbury coach querying about a player. After a few words, the coach stated that the Canterbury Academy could only take two to three Pacific islander players to integrate them slowly. In a radio interview with Radio New Zealand, Haden clarified that he was not talking about the Maori players but explicitly referring to the Pacific Islander players. The *New Zealand Herald* published an online article detailing the list of Maori and Pacific Islander Players that played for the Crusaders from 2001 to 2010 (Herald, 2010b), as summarised below:

Table 8.1 – Number of Pacific descent & Maori players in Crusaders 2001-2010

CRUSADERS	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Maori	6	6	6	5	5	6	11	8	9	7
Pacific Islanders	2	2	1	4	3	2	3	1	1	0

As reported by the New Zealand Herald in 2010, the table above seemed to support the claims by the former All-Black Captain, Andy Haden, regarding the deliberately limited recruitment of Pasific Islander players. Except for 2004, in which the Crusaders recruited the highest (four players) for the ten years, all the other years from 2001 to 2009 were

either one (1) Pacific islander player or two (2) and three (3) players in 2005 and 2007. Surprisingly, there were no Pacific islander players at all in 2010. However, in saying that, there could be other reasons why Pacific islander players were not heavily recruited into the Crusaders Rugby during those ten years. The lack of basic cultural knowledge of pacific descent players and how to manage them in a professional environment could have been a barrier (Schaaf, 2006).

The claims by Andy Haden were made during a Television live-on-air round table with former All Black, Mr Chris Laidlaw, a former Member of Parliament for Wellington Central electorate and renowned Broadcaster and columnist (RadioNZ, 2021). The panel's subject focused on 'Browning of New Zealand rugby', an issue Laidlaw's recent book discussed. He has always been vocal in New Zealand rugby cases that caused controversies, particularly when highlighting matters integrated silently into the rugby community (Kahi, 2017a). In one of his first books, 'Mud in Your Eye', Laidlaw brought up a few issues that addressed the state of rugby in New Zealand, particularly the racial aspects of New Zealand rugby. In his column, he questioned the 2002 All Blacks selectors strategy. Laidlaw claimed they selected the pakehās over the Māori and Pacific Islanders (Grainger et al., 2012). In his book 'Somebody Stole My Game' , published in 2010, he had a chapter called 'Is brown the new black'. Laidlaw discussed the ideologies tn the New Zealand rugby community regarding the rise of brown-skinned rugby players, referring to Māori's and Pacific Islander players' prominence in the rugby arena (Laidlaw, 2010a). Haden was one of the six government-appointed ambassadors of the 2011 Rugby World Cup in New Zealand. The then New Zealand Prime Minister, John Key, stated that Haden's public claims were offensive, but he would leave it to the Minister responsible for the Rugby World Cup to address the matter amicably.

Furthermore, after further investigations into the public claim of the *New Zealand Herald* in 2010 regarding the number of players of Pacific Island origin recruited by the Crusaders, as summarised in the table above, it was evident that out of the ten years (2000 – 2010) as tabulated, only 2000 and 2004 were accurately reported. As reported by *The New Zealand Herald*, the other years were *lowe*r than the *actual number* of players of Pacific Islander origin that the Club recruited for the same period.

In the last five years, the Crusaders have set a unique record by winning the super rugby competition for five years; from 2017 to 2021. The Crusaders have also evolved over the years, specifically the last five to 10 years. Looking back at the claims made publicly by the former All Blacks captain, Andy Haden, on the deliberate reduction of Pasific Islander players in the Crusaders squad, this table shows an updated version of the number of Pasifika players in the Crusaders squad from 2012 to 2021:

Table 8.2 - Pasifika players in the Crusaders squad from 2012 to 2021

CRUSADERS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Squad No.	30	32	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
Pacific Islanders (PI)	2	5	8	8	13	12	9	8	12	12
% of PI players	7%	16%	22%	21%	34%	32%	24%	21%	32%	32%

In 2012, the Crusaders recruited only two Pasific Islander players from a total of thirty (30) players drafted for that season, which was 7% of the entire squad (SuperXV, 2021). Former All Blacks and Crusaders Captain, Todd Blackadder, was the Head Coach and was supported by former Crusaders players Daryl Gibson and Dave Hewett. Blackadder was the Head Coach for the Crusaders for eight years; from 2009 to 2016.

Todd Blackadder and his coaching team selected a 32-member squad for the 2013 season, increasing from 30 members in the previous year. There was an increase in the number of Pacific Islander players from 3 in 2012 to 5 in 2013 (Rugby, 2022). This increased from 7% to 16% of Pacific Islanders players. In 2014, the entire squad increased to 37 players, of which 9 were Pacific islanders, 22% of the entire team (SuperXV, 2022a). The following year, the 2015 squad slightly increased from 37 players to 38, of which eight players were of Pacific Island origin, equivalent to 21% of the teamd\ (SuperXV, 2022b). In Blackadder's last season as Head Coach, the 2016 squad had a total of 38 players, of which 13 players were of Pacific Island origin, equivalent to slightly more than one-third of the squad (34%) (SuperXV, 2022c).

Scott Robinson (Razor), the new head coach, took over in 2017. This was following successful appearances as coach for the Canterbury Premier Division Team in the National Provincial Championship (NPC) and the New Zealand Under 20s in World Rugby Junior World Cups. In his first year as Super Rugby Coach, Razor selected a 38-member squad, of which 12 were of Pacific Island origin, an equivalent of 32% of the entire squad. It was one of the highest Pacific Islanders' recruitment in the Crusaders' Super Rugby squad (NZ, 2016). The Crusaders recruited 38 players in 2018, of which nine were of Pacific Island origin (Rugbypass, 2017), which was around 24% of the total squad. In 2019, the same number of players were recruited, of which eight were of Pacific Island origins, equating to 21% (1news, 2018). In 2020 and 2021, Razor and his coaching team confirmed a 38-member squad, and in both years, 12 Pacific islanders were recruited, equivalent to 32% of the total players (Crusaders, n.d).

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8.1.2.1 Analysis of Crusaders Player composition data in the table above

From the table of Crusaders rugby squad player composition, it is evident that the Club had evolved in its diversity initiatives. Thus, ensuring that they consistently perform at the highest level and attract the best players to achieve its goals. From 2013, the number of Pacific Islander rugby players increased to 5 and has never reduced lower than the year 2013, but continued to increase. There were times when the numbers dropped; for example, in 2018 and 2019, the numbers were less than the number of Pacific Islander players in 2017, but was still higher than in 2012 and 2013.

Figure 8.1 – Pacific Island descent players vs Total Crusaders Squad (2012-2021)
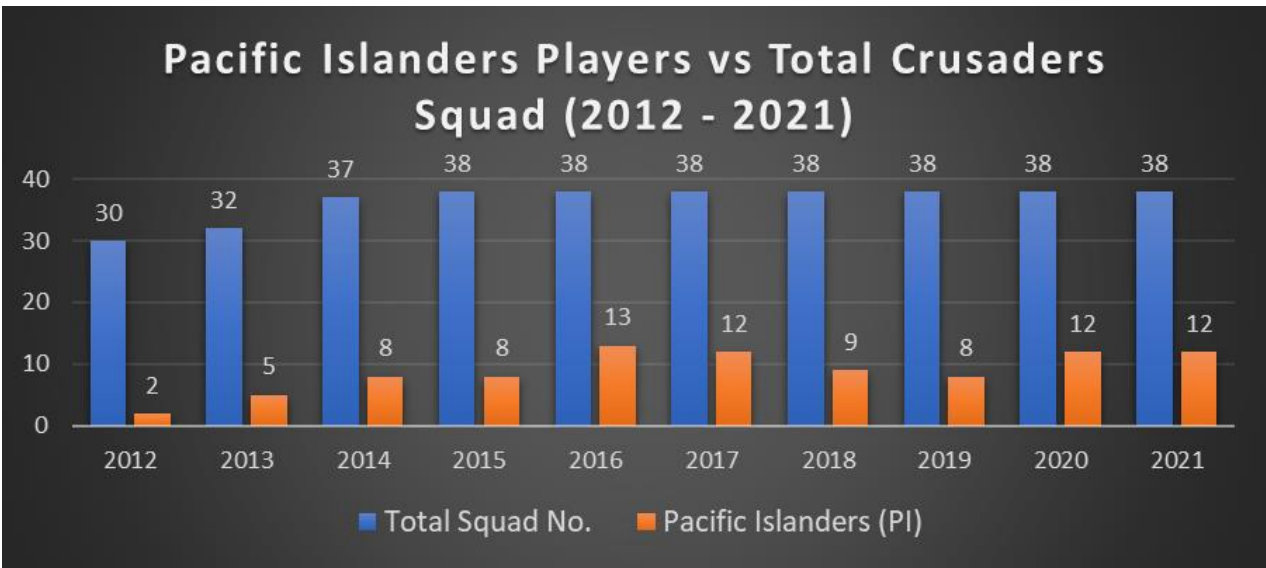
The table below confirms the percentages of Pacific Islander players against the total number of players in the squad for a year.

Figure 8.2 - % of Pacific descent Players vs Total Crusaders Squad (2012-2021)

% of Pacific Islander players vs Total Crusaders squad (2012 - 2021)
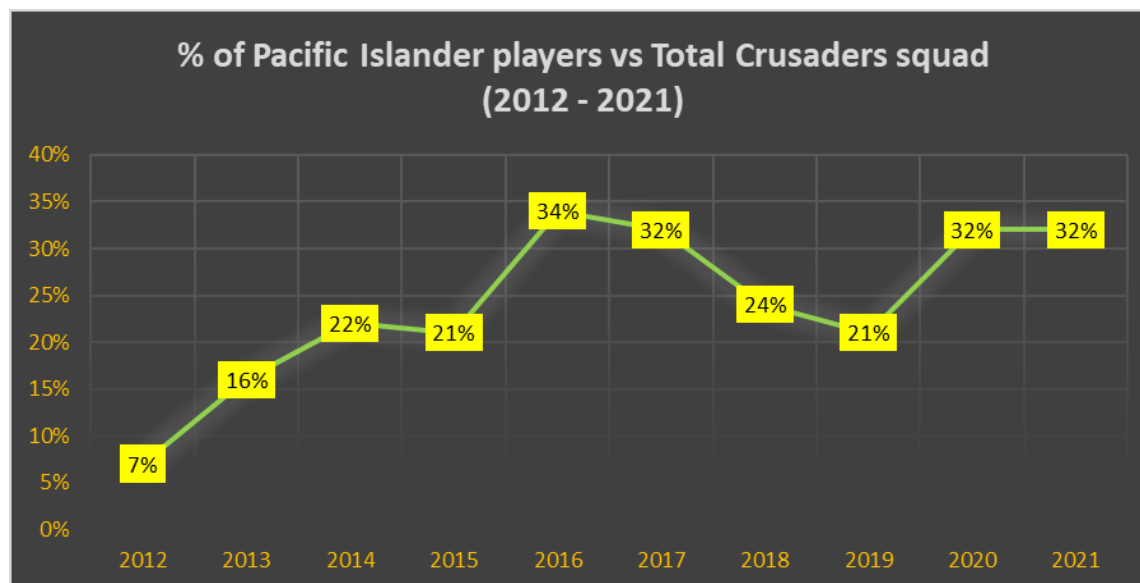
The percentage of Pacific Islander players was low in 2012, similar to earlier years (2000 to 2010). However, over the years, the number grew, and from 2016 to 2021, the average number of Pacific Islanders players was around one-third of the total number of players. This was a significant indication of the diversity initiatives in the Crusaders' rugby setup and how it has evolved over the years to what it is today. There was no targeted quota discussed by the interviewees, as claimed by Andy Haden (Herald, 2010a) as being the practice at the club. However, one can establish from the interviews that the element that has led to the recruitment of players of various backgrounds was their belief in diversity.

The diversity of mindset in the Crusaders' setup when approaching their rugby strategies is something significant to their brand of rugby. One can *theorise* that the level of increase in diversity in the Crusaders' structure has also contributed to the substantial performance of the Club in the last five years; the five times straight wins of the Super Rugby tournaments. Significantly, the number of Pacific Islander players in the previous five years was an average of 35%, which is slightly above a third of the Crusaders squad. In addition to the physical characteristics of its demographics, the squad composition, which included 35% players of Pacific descent and the other 65% shared by the Maori and European descent players, seemed to give insights into the type of rugby the Crusaders would play, notably, a powerful, fast, and intelligent rugby display.

A perception existed in the rugby community that the poor performance of the All Blacks in the international arena was due to the absence of tough white farmers, now being replaced by the energetic prowess of Pasifika players. However, on the other end, Laidlaw claimed the Pasifika dynamism tends to be exposed by missing tackles because they tend to deviate from the set game plans. Laidlaw concluded that there will always be a need for the white players at the

helm of Pacific Islanders' talents and energy. The white players' skills and articulation will foster a balanced and diverse approach, referring to two great All Blacks white players to establish his opinion – "There will always be a place for a Grant Fox or a Conrad Smith…"(Laidlaw, 2010a, p. 212). What is eluded to by Laidlaw, is the sensation that the Crusaders have done so well and a classic example of how to maximise on differences.

As mentioned above, by 2021 the number of Pacific Island origin players had risen to about a third of the squad plus with a good mixture of white players with various backgrounds; such as those from farms or rural areas, including city-based players. Diversity was a place of strength and a competitive edge for the Crusaders. Razor talked about the Pacific Island boys' strength, power, explosiveness, and energy. Despite their differences as Pacific Islanders, they have unique strengths and flair – The Samoans, Tongans, Fijians and Māori players. They bring their own historical and cultural heritage to the team, particularly the Haka from the Maori players. The New Zealand Europeans also bring in their various backgrounds, tending to view the game differently, with different skill sets. When bringing all these differences, the unity of diversity becomes very powerful. These diversities must be maintained and continuously demanded from the players to display their unique talents and skills.

The diverse demographic of players and the diverse background of the coaching panel has laid a solid platform for the Crusaders. Hence, the success of the last five years could not have been more magical; it resulted from very strategic thinking and planning based on sound theories and principles. The Crusaders recently secured the signing of Argentinian international rugby player Pablo Matera for the 2022 Pacific Super Rugby season. Pablo arrived in Christchurch in December 2021 with his family and started training in early January 2022. In a video interview in December 2021 with Crusaders Head Coach Razor and Pablo Matera, Razor mentioned that one of the main factors of bringing Pablo over to New Zealand was that the Crusaders could learn from the veteran test player how the Argentinians approach the game, and vice versa (RugbyPass, 2021).

Crusaders, at times like to draw learnings from sport or areas that are not so similar or compatible with rugby. This wisdom comes from years of consistent learning and being humble enough to embrace a mindset that is never satisfied with what they have achieved. However, it is a mindset that understands the red zone industry it operates in, which is competitive and intensive.

8.1.3 Gender diversity at the Crusaders

The world is becoming a salad bowl of different ethnicities and societies and, therefore, influences the workplace dynamics (Jones et al., 2000). In the early days of the Club, The Crusaders struggled to embrace the diversity concept in many levels of the organisation. There were few women working as staff, let alone in the playing group or on the field.

Whereas now, almost 25% of the current Crusaders workforce is female, which shows how time has evolved and how the mindset has changed to remain competitive in the market or industry.

Female staff tend to bring a different dimension in perspectives that is healthy for an organisation. The value they bring from an emotional point of view is instrumental, especially when dealing with players' welfare and general administration issues. Emotional intelligence (EQ) is quite effective in understanding and bringing a well-balanced view and approach, particularly when dealing or planning about families and children of players and staff.

One of the positive outcomes of having more women in the organisation was the increased level of care and support for the players. Previously, the players' welfare was managed by a male staff member. However, when the number of female staff increased, this was passed on to the women staff to lead to the involvement in this project; the improvement started to show. The detailed aspect such as players' partners, family, children and general welfare were not an important priority in the "to-do list" – it's not that it is not essential, it is just the way males are wired and perceive things very broadly. With the increase in women staff, they see things differently, and the players are adequately managed. The level of care has extended to the players' spouses and getting them involved in some of their partners' rugby career activities.

8.1.4 Diversification: Innovative coaching - approach

One of the most innovative approaches that the Crusaders introduced in the last few years was to adopt an overseas coaching panel into their coaching team. The first was Ronan O'Gara, a former Irish rugby international player, who joined the Crusaders in 2018 and 2019 as one of the Assistant Coaches. One of the most innovative and bold moves that the Club has ever done. It was new, revolutionary but very successful and contributed to the five years winning streak by the Club from 2017 to 2021. It was probably one of the rare incidents in which someone from outside of New Zealand was appointed into an Assistant Coaching role in one of New Zealand's high-profile rugby setups. However, this bold move had its fair share of criticism and resentment from Crusaders fans, particularly former All Blacks coach and Crusaders Coach, Steve Hansen. The Rugby Pass news reported that Ronan O'Gara felt that Steve Hansen was bitter towards him and suspicious of a high profile Irish coach coaching in a successful setup in New Zealand (Pass, 2019). O'Gara understood the resentment from Steven Hansen towards his appointment at the Crusaders merely because the recruitment of an overseas coach to a New Zealand Rugby Franchise had never happened before and because Hanson had been around for such a long time in the New Zealand coaching environment. After the departure of O'Gara, the Crusaders recruited Mark Jones, a former player and coach of Welsh rugby. He also coached in top European clubs as skills and/or attacking coach, including other specialist coaching roles at various levels.

Razor, the Head Coach, was convinced that it was of benefit to import Northern hemisphere coaches who were both highly rated former international players for their respective nations. They both played in a different environment, different competitions, different styles of rugby, and coached differently.   The various attributes were influential contributions to the Crusaders team during their tenure.   Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, Mark Jones did not complete his term as Assistant Coach for the Crusaders 2021 Super Rugby season. He was the Crusaders' defense coach and Attack/Backs coach for Canterbury.

8.1.5 Diverse motivation for competitive advantage

The organisation looks into places that are not even compatible with its core business. This is to simply be inspired and find ways to integrate into their environment, whether the commercial arm, administration, or the playing group. The Senior Executives use their wider networks to connect departments or individuals from that department to these places so as to build their connections and hopefully pick up some ideas foreign to the Crusaders' setup. However, they can integrate or customise to suit the local environment. The external connections are opportunities to have their current mindsets challenged, to think outside the box or for ideas to be transformed into something bigger and better for the organisation.

One of the more recent diversity approaches, as discussed earlier, is the inclusion of the highly regarded Argentinian International, Pablo Matera, into the Crusaders 2022 season. This was something fresh for the Crusaders and the newly created Super Rugby Pacific competition, particularly the New Zealand conference. During his first interview in December 2021, days after arriving in Christchurch, the media flocked in to hear his first interview and what he had to say. It was something fresh for the news industry in New Zealand, and even the Head coach, Razor, acknowledged the number of media personnel that attended the news conference. The Sky TV rugby media arm had given much attention to Pablo Matera, and he appeared on a few rugby Talk-Back Show platforms run by the TV station. Consequently, it was something that the Crusaders' commercial arm will continue to maximize on, of course, without compromising Pablo's capacity to prepare well for training and weekly games. His inclusion has also potentially attracted a new dimension of audience; the Hispanic-speaking rugby community worldwide, to support the Crusaders. In one of his interviews, Pablo mentioned that now that he is a member of the Crusaders rugby team, Argentina rugby fans will follow the Crusaders. This was a similar experience in Fiji when Fijian rugby players such as Marika Vunibaka, Nemani Nadolo and Sevu Reece played for the Crusaders. Nearly all the rugby followers in Fiji supported the Crusaders, and the Crusaders also mentioned that one of their biggest fanbases is in Fiji. This was evident when the first-ever Super Rugby game was played in Suva, Fiji, in which the Crusaders played against the Chiefs, and the game was the Chief's home

game. The number of people cheering the Crusaders was so overwhelming that it seemed like a Crusaders' home game. Including the Fijian Super rugby team will change this preference from the Fiji fans as their number one team would be the Drua. Similarly, Fiji Airways, a major sponsor of the Crusaders, will soon be withdrawing their sponsorship commitment as they are also a major sponsor of the Fijian Drua.

Similarly, the growth in the number of Crusaders' fans due to Pablo Matera's inclusion is expected to be substantial. Argentina is not only a country that loves rugby, but it has a population of almost 46 million (Review, 2022); rugby is the second most popular sport in Argentina, behind soccer or football. Argentinia's total number of adults as of 2021 was 16 million, with survey results released by World Rugby in 2012 stating that the total number of adult fans in Argentina was around 11.6%. If we use the same 11.6 % adult fans in 2012 (of course, it would have increased in 2021) as a yardstick, in the 2022 Argentina's total adult population of 16 million, the value of 11.6% in 2021 (adult population fans) would be around 2 million. The Crusaders' commercial department can use an extra 2 million potential fans to further drive their commercial initiatives, particularly in the Hispanic sporting world. As mentioned above, the 11.6% of Argentina fans in 2012 would have significantly increased after the massive success of the 2019 Rugby World Cup in Japan and Rugby 7s in the Olympic games in 2016. The Argentinean sevens rugby team featured prominently and won the Bronze medal in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics after beating Great Britain 17 points to 12.

The other avenue assumed to be a point of difference is the Crusaders' social responsibility to be a role model for the community. This burden they have shouldered deepens their ties to the communities. Whenever something drastic happens, such as the Mosque shootings or the earthquakes, the Crusaders seem to have the social responsibility to win games to put a smile on the fans' faces and communities in the Crusaders region adversely affected by the circumstances.

The other community partnership aspect was when the organisation was assessed and certified with a Rainbow Tick. Rainbow Tick is a certification mark for organisations that complete a Diversity & Inclusion assessment process. 'Rainbow' refers to those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, takatāpui and intersex (LGBTTQIA+). The inclination to be certified with a Rainbow tick was not necessarily due to the need to have it done; however, it indicates the perception of the organisation to be more aware of the daily environment it operates in. The development of the women's game has also been a significant diversity shift. Therefore, it has increased the number of interests in their games from fans or rugby lovers, particularly at the commercial end.

8.1.6   The Crusaders rugby brand by –   Diversifying the rugby landscape in Northern hemisphere clubs

The global village is becoming a salad bowl, particularly the western societies (Jones et al., 2000). It has been enriched with diverse cultures, ethnicities, perceptions, and interests, which ushers these countries to more economic prowess. The global demography has also impacted the composition of rugby teams worldwide. The sight of various ethnicities in professional rugby clubs in Europe is common nowadays, particularly the presence of Southern hemisphere rugby players (Rugby, 2016). Diversity has impacted the Northern Hemisphere, particularly in how they play the game, approach it, and the intensity of their game.

A classic example was the story covered by the World Rugby news on how the Leicester Tigers turned around their attacking prowess in 2016 because of former Crusaders/All Blacks player Aaron Mauger, who joined the Club's coaching panel (Stuff, 2015). The article highlighted that apart from the change of players, one of the main reasons for the high performance by the Leicester Tigers was how Aaron Mauger introduced the Canterbury-style or the Crusaders-style of attack and revolutionalised the way the Club played. The previous season they were second-last in tries tally for the 22 regular-season games. Still, in 2016, they showed remarkable improvement by scoring 47 tries, with more games left to be played when the article was published.

The former Crusaders Assistant Coach and Irish International, Ronan O'Gara, took over the Head Coaching role in La Rochelle in France. The French Club rose to new heights as never been before, even reaching the semifinals of the champions cup for the first time in the 123-year history of the competition (NZ, 2021). O'Gara eluded that the new bold approach in playing that he had introduced was inspired by his stint in New Zealand with the Crusaders Rugby Franchise. He further stated that to play in that way; it will take a mindset, a different type of thinking, in which KBA (Keeping Ball Alive) is the order of the day, compared to the massive ruck focus that most northern hemisphere rugby seemed to be inclined to. O'Gara added that the KBA style with speed on the ball and identifying space is risky, but the rewards are enormous.

The Crusaders' rugby influence in the Northern hemisphere is phenomenal and a testament to how *diversity* can positively influence a setup. The northern hemisphere rugby environment experienced the Crusaders' way of attack, which was birthed out of a high-performance culture and years of experimentation. It requires a specific mindset to replicate the Crusaders' play pattern and understand the principles that drive that mindset.

The Crusaders' style of play used anywhere in the world will always reflect the Crusaders' rugby brand in Christchurch, New Zealand. The style is always a mixture of plays and done with speed and precise execution. This indicates the diverse mindset in the coaching approach. Furthermore, the style and approach will also depend on the type of opponents. Although it is not a deliberate initiative by the organisation, those ex-players and coaches tend to market the quality of

the Crusaders brand. Therefore, they attract more players and coaches through their Crusaders International Academy (CIA) structure.

Diversity is critical to the Crusaders because it is a global brand; therefore, the mindset internally must be accustomed to that global reach. The level of acceptance for the various changes and differences will elevate. Hence, the organization, by default exerts a purpose-driven mindset when conducting activities.

8.2 Diversity challenges

The Crusaders' most significant challenges are habit, stereotype and history. These components have been major hurdles to the awareness efforts for diversity. Fortunately, the information-sharing efforts have been the catalyst in the evolution of the former practices to what they are today. There is more awareness of the diversity concept in the organisation to date and, furthermore, how important it is for any organisation to be aware of the relevant shifts in the external social environment. It is also a tool that strategically presents itself to give an organisation or any entity the edge over its competitors, if harnessed smartly. Unfortunately, like many concepts, diversity is a journey that will never end; however, it can institute lasting impressions.

8.2.1 Diversity gaps in the organisation

The work of Guillaume (2017) advocated for diversity, claiming that when organisations absorb the diversity concept in the context of relational demography, workgroup, and workplace scenarios, the level of innovation escalates, decision-making improves, a larger pool of talents will be in place and there will be a broader customer base. These same sentiments were shared during the interviews at the Crusaders, as well as that the Club could still do better in many areas to fully address diversity issues. Currently, there are not many women executives immediately after the CEO and Board Members. Out of the seven (7) at the executive level, one is female, which is about 14% of the total executives. The staffing generally is dominated by Caucasians, and at times it is tough for Pasifika players to adapt quickly to their new environment.   There is no staff of Pasifika origin in the Crusaders' structure who Pasifika players can connect with; to have this available could give a sense of comfort. It may help Pasifika players to settle in quickly and start producing positive results quickly for the Crusaders. Pasifika players may want to connect to their heritage, culture, and roots. The longer it takes for people to settle in quickly in their new environment, the longer it takes for them to start producing for their organisation. It does not matter which role they hold in the organisation, as long as we have someone internally whom Pacific Islanders players can connect with quickly.

There was a common understanding from the interviewees that the diversity element must be emphasised at the recruitment process. However, this should be without compromising the objective of the interview process to select the most suitable candidate for the vacant role. Thus, ensuring that the long-term objectives of Crusaders are not only accommodated, but operationalised into their practice and inserted into policies. A study conducted by Pasztor (2019, p. 56) focussed on summative *content analysis* and *framing analysis* of 15 of the top 20 corporate websites identified by the 2010 *DiversityInc* Survey as 'top ranked' in diversity management. The study revealed that those ranked organisations were more concerned about the positive image stakeholders and the public hold regarding diversity than the actual profitable results these mechanisms bring in. The factor that makes the difference between an organisation in the modern era is the ability to recognise the *diversity pillar* as a strategy and not approach it as a compliant issue as required by the national policies and other strong advocates of the subject.

8.2.2 Gender-related challenges reducing innovation and competitive advantage

The number of females in the Crusaders structure has grown to about 25% of the workforce, with some in leadership roles. One of the significant challenges is when these females juggle their personal life with their professional careers. Most of the females are roughly in the same age group and are young mothers. The challenge for the Crusaders is to ensure that the environment contributes to their positive wellbeing and that the ladies need not put on hold their careers to take care of their family and young children.

The Executives of Crusaders implemented the Unconscious Biased Policy, a significant change in terms of promoting diversity. The policy guides the staff to be as objective as they can in all their dealings as it is easy at times to fall back to the unconscious bias mindset. Having a policy is a great step forward towards addressing issues such as discrimination, that the Crusaders have been tagged with in the past. It is a positive step denoting that they are very serious in confronting such issues and therefore protecting the reputation of the organization.

8.2.3 Availability of relevant skills in the market for recruitment diversity

From the interviews, another factor discussed was that even though they aspire to achieve diversity at its maximum, the practicality of implementing the concept may seem to be a challenge at times. Whilst the Club endures efforts to embrace diversity, it must be emphasised that diversity is not a platform to allow mediocre performance. Due to the industry's competitiveness, the Club sometimes cannot compromise effective policies and practices that have worked so well for the organisation, just to be seen as a diverse entity. The competitive commercial environment that the Crusaders compete in necessitates individuals that need to deliver results in the roles they have been employed to.

Therefore, the ultimate goal is the best person with the right skills and experience because the Crusaders is fundamentally a business entity. When recruited, the people around these newly recruited individuals, by default, bestow their trust, knowing they are the best available in the market to deliver the required results. While it is ideal to have a diversified workforce, the availability of specific skill sets that the organisation looks for may be limited in the market. The organisation will have to resort to the best available skills to ensure that their commercial needs are met, regardless of the demographics. It does not negate their intent to be diversified, but these challenges make them think deeper about how they can change what they can influence to achieve maximum results in this space.

8.2.4 Cultural awareness to maximise competitive advantage

A notable challenge was using the Maori language, or Te Reo Maori, in the Crusaders' environment. In New Zealand organisations, whenever someone addresses staff or a group of staff, it is common to start with an introduction in the Te Reo language to greet people, and some go as far as speaking a line or two before getting into the main speech. This is something that still needs to be fully embraced in this organisation. The re-branding exercise was a massive success because the organisation equipped itself with resources that gave sound advice on the project's key objectives. It also helped them navigate the challenging waters until they reach their final destination. However, in the cultural awareness space, the resources to offer advice and guidance in managing these critical cultural issues are challenging. The way the Aotearoa Super Rugby competition trophy was handled would be a strong case for the need for good resources to advise the organisation of its cultural obligations and responsibility, as an influential icon in New Zealand sporting communities.

Each ethnicity and nationality celebrates unique occasions, such as Independence Day, Fiji Day, and Samoan Language Week. To maximise the participation of athletes of different ethnicities, the Crusaders must act expeditiously in this area.

It is great to see the Crusaders enjoying a diverse playing group, up to almost a third being Pacific Islanders. The results of the diversified demographic speak for themselves; however, this diversity sensation needs to flow more fluidly into other operational aspects of the organisation.

8.2.5 Accepting and adapting to new challenges

In some departments, existing staff have been there for quite some time. When new team members or a new boss starts, it is sometimes difficult for them to accept the new ideas or concepts that will take the department or

organisation to the next level. Just because the Crusaders have been winning, it does not mean that the same formula will always work in the new year. People need to be open to innovation, to be open to different ideas

Similarly, another challenge was the ability of staff to connect, adapt and relate quickly to a challenging situation. When the mosque shooting occurred in March 2019, the situation required much more profound level of connection with the Muslim community, the Ngai Tahu Iwi of the South Island and other people in the community. Not only was there a need for them to connect, but also a need to provide a place of comfort to everyone needing it and looking to them as a role model. It was hard work trying to be relevant to everyone in the community and to build those bridges. Moreover, the March 2019 events ushered more challenges to the Crusaders, particularly the public perception towards the previous logo of the Club. The Club has always perceived its journey as a crusade for the good and communities they represent. Their intent was never tied to the historical representation of the old Crusaders logo, which attracted a negative connotation of war and bloodshed. The challenge post mosque shooting was to retell their success stories to the public and not the ones connected to the front of the old Crusaders logo.

8.2.6   The pressure of being popular - possible threat to brand competitive advantage

The renowned brand of the Crusaders is the result of years of hard work by the on-field and off-field teams; the whole organisation, regardless of how minimal the role may seem, contributed to the organisation's success. From a broader standpoint, getting to be at the top seemed easy, however, consistently staying there requires more hard work and much creativity to stay ahead of competitors. It has taken a lot of energy and resources to reach the top now. The Crusaders have needed to maintain those added energies to stay at that champion bandwidth or vicinity, but at the same time they must exert more to stay ahead of their competitors.

This desire to always be at the summit seems to have defined the Crusaders' Super Rugby journey over the past two decades. It refers to the playing group and everything else outside the playing group under the Crusaders' framework. Therefore, the burden of maintaining the status of being a champion has challenged the commercial and marketing team's quality of work in the public domain. They must always put a lens over their work, knowing that the public and passionate fans will heavily scrutinise it. During the Crusaders brand review, it was apparent that the passionate fans seemed to have the mentality that they own the Crusaders, and whatever they say must be taken on board. That is another challenge that the Club must manage when dealing with its external stakeholders. The overwhelming challenges that fans from the Crusaders region had to endure, from the earthquakes right to 15 March 2019, have built unity within the community like never before. After the February 2011 earthquake, the Crusaders went unbeaten to reach the playoffs. They had to play all their home games outside of Christchurch, and one of the semi-

finals in South Africa, to reach the finals. The Reds edged the Crusaders in the finals, but people turned up to the airport in large numbers to await the return of their heroes. Consequently, that passion escalated to the mindset that their opinions matter and influence the Club's running. While there is some truth to this thought, they must also realise that the Crusaders are an actual business and that any changes are based on sound business research and decisions.

The incident that took place in 2019 in South Africa, after a rugby match, was a really good learning curve for the players to realise that being in the spotlight can easily make them a target for certain things (StuffNZ, 2019). The accusations levelled at some of the teams have appeared on a number of social media platforms and include that one team member spat beer at a woman. Another person claimed to have been part of a group 'attacked by members of the New Zealand rugby team' while in a McDonald's restaurant. The tweet accused the team of displaying threatening and homophobic behaviour. The nature of the complaint mentioning racists remarks was significant because it seemed to be similar claims that Andy Haden had made in 2010 (Herald, 2010a; Laidlaw, 2010b).

As in other incidents of top athletes going into local and international news headlines, the pressure to maintain professionalism is high, and sometimes it can be unforgiving. The bad news is sometimes good news to any news media as they need to keep their customers and potential customers attracted and glued to their products. Professional athletes become victims of this media strategy.

Furthermore, Crusaders being a champion for several years and playing the game seemed to imply a perception that they are arrogant, which has been a challenge. However, during the brand review, when the company that worked on the project came down from Auckland to work with the Crusaders, they were greatly impressed by the willingness of individuals in the organisation to talk and share openly with the project team and to be open to learning. The challenge for the organisation is dealing with the external perceptions and the successes the Crusaders have accumulated over the years. If people take a closer look, they will see something different, something that has been built on positive principles, implemented so well in a well-structured setup, and the results are the outcome of those essential inputs.

8.3   The influence of players and stakeholders on diversity in the Crusaders

8.3.1   Players' diversity influence on the Club

One of the critical attributes of the Crusaders is the ability to use methods or processes that are smart and based on sound principles. In dealing with the players, particularly the younger generation rugby players joining their structure, the Crusaders realised that imposing the Crusaders' way directly onto the young person's thinking and learning frame

would not be ideal nor bring forth the desired results. Most of the coaches and staff are from an older generation; they, therefore, get these young men involved in the decision-making process and navigate their way using their creativity to reach desired outcome set by the Crusaders. The more established and older players are also encouraged to influence the processes and systems that have served the Club so well in the last 20-plus years. This is part of the continuous learning environment. The new approach embraces various ideas and practices that produce a better output. The Club has harnessed and maximised the varied demographics in the Club, mainly from players, This positive approach has allowed the players to influence the organisation positively for better results.

From the perspective of players' welfare, it is quite prudent for the commercial arm to take in opinions or requests made by players regarding issues that affect their welfare. There has always been a positive acceptance in that space, and as far as they are concerned, they have never refused or declined any requests or opinions put forward by the players. As far as the commercial department is concerned, if the players are happy, they are happy.

8.3.2   **The fans' influence on the club**

Organisations employ various strategies to establish a competitive edge over their rivals. One of these is the attention to Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR), particularly initiatives in improving the external environment as a strategic intent to foster sustainable success (Yadav et al., 2017). The study conducted by Yadav et al. (2017) focused on analysing public trading companies in the United States, focusing on the impacts of their environment CSR performance on long-term competitive advantage. The findings suggest that the environmental resources' performance positively influenced the company's competitive advantage and compliments the poorly performing companies in the group. It also suggested that companies that integrate environmental performance in their corporate strategy tend to illustrate responsible leadership and maximising of shareholders.

Sanja & Galjina (2013) conducted a study on some organisations that use 'corporate communications' as their competitive advantage and drew a lot of research interest from the field of ''organisations, marketing and public relations" (p. 123). Recent studies have also suggested that the concept of reputation, which is a soft factor, is strongly connected with stakeholder theory. This theory underlines the significance of corporate communication for a company's competitive advantage (Sanja & Galjina, 2013). The Crusaders have an excellent fan base, and some have been with the Crusaders for 20 plus years. They are also quite passionate, and the Club has received many accolades regarding their positive environment. When the Club is winning, it helps the fans justify their support for the champion side. The Crusaders have successfully managed their corporate social responsibility (CSR) by taking on a role model position through rugby in bringing hope and solidarity in the communities. With the growth of social media in global business,

the Crusaders have always had their attention close to issues discussed in social media and how those perceptions will impact their brand.

However, after the Mosque shootings in 2019, the same fans started to question the name of the Club and how the global community reacted. A few fans became very defensive and protective of the past, trying to defend the name of the Club and its history. What was more challenging was the two definitions of the Club's name that were at the centre of public discussions. The first was the definition associated with the medieval history that has a negative connotation. The other was a more favourable impression focusing on the concept of crusading for good, for the community and the sport of rugby. These exchanges in the public arena led to the brand review exercise, resulting in the change in the logo. Subsequently, the transformation escalated to enormous positivity in which the Crusaders embraced the opportunity to strengthen their relationship with their communities in the regions they represent. These strengths existed but were not realised until the adversities pushed them to the forefront and became a strategic avenue for the organisation.

One of the Crusaders' critical activities, rolled out through their marketing arm, is to increase younger generation fans. The older generation either grew up with the Crusaders rugby brand or have lived through the Canterbury region days before the Super Rugby tournament started in 1996 and have carried on that loyalty to the Crusaders red and black jersey. However, rugby had lost its grasp over the years as the number one sport in New Zealand after some landmark events, particularly the South African Rugby Team's tour to New Zealand in 1981, as discussed in chapter 7. Top New Zealand players at that time vowed to take their children out of the sport in protest against the South African rugby, whose government was practising apartheid laws of discrimination and segregation. This has had an effect on the popularity of the sport to this day. Provincial rugby unions find it hard to get the desired results from the younger generation's involvement in the sport. Other sports such as cricket, basketball, soccer, rowing and swimming forced their hands to share the sporting market in New Zealand. The New Zealand rugby union conducted a study to help identify the decreased number of young people in the sport. One of the findings was the demotivation of young rugby players when not selected for provincial representation from an early age. In response to the findings, the Crusaders and Canterbury rugby union changed the rugby representative policies to encourage more involvement from young people. Previously, the representative age groups started from lower age groups, such as Under 11. The new strategy saw the scrapping of all lower age group level grades and only starting at the Under 16 level and above.

8.4 Conclusion

The diversity policy of the Crusaders in terms of corporate culture, players and coaches, form a powerful combination in improving the game's standard, coaching, and environment. The Crusaders are a proven example of a setup that maximises the diversity concept. One thing that stood out from the interviews was the acknowledgement of the centrality of diversity in an environment that is constantly evolving in many facets of the organisation. Diversity is both a result and enabler of an inclusive environment and mindset. As Pablo Matera, the Argentinean rugby star, summed up his experience with the Crusaders, it is all about the process and the desire to be better and learn every time. The Crusaders' intent to be connected at a deeper level to their region and communities demonstrates their commitment to engaging far and wide. The interviews showed that even though the organisation has embarked on various diversity programs, there is still room for more improvement.

One significance of the Crusaders' environment which is compelling is how they have embraced differences. Instead of seeing these differences as a weakness and driving them to align and adopt an existing culture, they have learnt to embrace the differences in a salad bowl-type situation. This involves melting and focusing different cultures, age, gender, personalities and skills into a common direction using innovative and potentially rewarding approaches. People of different levels and stature in the rugby world have a sense of responsibility to reach out to the younger ones and mentor them, particularly the All-Blacks players. Moreover, it is a culture embedded with fun in which people feel comfortable belonging to and tend to think and perform well within that foundation.

In one of the conversations with emerging young Crusaders player who is also of Pacific Islander by ethnicity, he mentioned that he cannot wait to go to work and train every day. It is almost as if it is not a workplace but a fun place, and you get paid to do it, which directly impacts how they perform on the rugby field. People like Razor, the Head Coach, make their experience at the Crusaders something special. The fun element at work does not negate the intensity of the hard work required but assists it. The fun environment helps create a very positive environment to handle the challenging aspects of their professional rugby career. It gives people the energy to perform better than what is expected of them.

The other aspect, that many corporate organisations have, is to have flexible work arrangements to keep a balance between their professional life and personal life. The work-life balance concept provides any employer an edge over other employers because it establishes the personalised and caring character of the employer towards its people. From a Human Resources (HR) perspective, specific policies of discrimination and harassment must be in place. These policies help facilitate what is already working so well for the Crusaders and ensures that the negative aspects of the diversity concept are kept at bay. Furthermore, the rules are visible enough to be a reminder. Thus, it helps protect the staff and players from any possible activities that will breach the culture they have built so amicably and, therefore,

become a fortress for the Crusaders. The policies also address other critical areas such as recruitment decisions, salaries or performance decisions, ensuring that all decisions are based on merit facilitated by a very objective process.

There are many reasons, previously discussed, on the ultimate purpose of embracing diversity. Diversity is first and foremost embraced in the organisation because it is a moral responsibility. It allows every individual to grow their outlook of life and learn to appreciate each other's differences, thus enriching cultures. Trying to assimilate the genetic differences of each player is no longer a difficulty, but a task that injects excitement to strategise against rivals. Each player has unique characteristics and offers something different to the team. These are specific profiles that the Crusaders are looking for that will fit precisely into the coaches' game plans. From an organisational perspective, diversity gives the organisation a broader scope of access and is relevant in various market segments. From the external standpoint, it gives fans and followers a wider platform as a point of reference to connect to, either as a fan or a potential fan. Diversity is not only a moral responsibility, but it is a strategic intent and gives space for innovation to evolve. An environment embedded in positivity sets a platform for talents to rise and express themselves. Talents and gifts in a person cannot be trained and learned but need the right environment to flourish. Therefore, an environment that allows diversity has also set itself up to embrace talents and gifts to grow and flourish.

Additionally, diversity allows an entity like the Crusaders to develop a quality foundation to make quality decisions. It helps make good decisions because it gives more options, a quality decision reached because the outcome will be a well-informed decision. This type of decision tends to spill over into the rugby field. Players are fortunate to be immersing themselves in an environment that trains them to be decisive with given information and resources. That attribute contributes to quality players and develops sound leadership skills. One of the ultimate reasons for embracing diversity is that Crusaders want to be the place that people want to come and work, they want to be the team that people want to play for, and as a business, it is an entity that sponsors and stakeholders will want to form partnerships with. They also want a fan base that is diverse and spread far and wide across the globe. The Crusaders brand is no longer just for the people of a particular region. It is for people of all cultures, worldwide. This is critical for the organisation.

In summary, the Crusaders perceive *diversity* as a significant organizational philosophy and strategy. It will be tough to stay competitive in a relentless environment without it. Diversity is also related to innovation. The advocates for diversity hold that when organisations embrace the concept in the context of 'relational demography, workgroup and workplace scenarios', it will raise the level of innovation, improve decision-making, establish a bigger pool of talents, and expand the customer base. As Guillaume et al (2017, p. 276)stated, diversity has potential to improve and transform the morale of the workforce, relationship and performance (p. 276).

Chapter 9: Analysing the Crusaders' competitive advantage

9.1   Introduction

One thing that is quite evident in the Crusaders' environment is the willingness of players, coaches, and staff as agencies to put their heads together and be innovative. It causes people to use their previous experience and try new revolutionary things. At the same time, the initiative makes sense and is relevant in creating a positive environment. Creativity and innovation are not skills that can be taught, but a business or organisation may foster an atmosphere in which individuals' natural abilities and gifts are encouraged to thrive and be expressed in the most appropriate manner. The Crusaders have made considerable efforts to replicate this environment where the players are encouraged and where making mistakes the first few times is acceptable. The Crusaders maximise the number of years of experience, being a champion club, having a robust structure, an admirable culture, and a sound setup and resources. As eluded too by one of the Crusaders' executives, if you come to this Club, "we will make you better". The Crusaders envisage innovation as something inevitable because the ambition is to continue growing. The two words, *Crusaders* and *innovation*, are considered synonymous in the rugby culture the club has fostered. A person or an organisation cannot stay the same because someone else is challenging a more significant piece of your market.

This chapter will weave together strands of ideas from the Crusaders' approaches to organisational values, innovation, resilience and diversity, as outlined in the previous chapters. The chapter also critically examines how these provide a platform for the club's competitive advantage in a highly contested space as the structurte-agency synergy plays out. The high level of competitiveness of the Club is manifested by its phenomenal performance in the last 25 years of Super Rugby competition, having won the Super Rugby title in the last seven consecutive seasons. While the victory is scored in the field, the off field professional, cultural, sociological and psychological aspects, although implicit, would have contributed immensely to shaping the professional readiness of the players and officials.

9.2 Crusaders innovation, resilience and competitive advantage

9.2.1 The competitive global market

In the volatile global business environment, innovation and creativity in the workplace have quickly become a crucial element of an organisation's "performance, success, and longer-term survival" (Anderson et al., 2014, p. 1298). Consequently, as organisations continue to harness ideas and proposals from employees, it becomes apparent that the development of ideas and their implementation has become a source of peculiar competitive advantage. Holmstrom (1989) stated that innovation is risky and costly as it involves newly unproven methodologies. Creativity and innovation are complex at various levels and evolve and require appropriate leadership that creates an environment which will maximise talents and results (Anderson et al., 2014). In a study across 33 Chinese organisations in which motivators for innovation were tested, the results indicated that group or team level support to nurture an innovative environment is dependent on the motivational mechanism that intermediated between transformational leadership and team innovative performance (Chen et al., 2013). The study also indicated the same results for individual innovative performance when facilitated in a team environment. In the United States of America, innovativeness reached the political front, and national policies were set in motion to intervene and further induce efforts in its quest to be the global industrial leader (Holmstrom, 1989). In his book '*The Competitive Advantage of Nations,* published in 1990, Michael Porter rejected the ideology that the escalation of world business will derail nationalism. Instead, a company's competitive edge will be established locally; at its home base (Goett, 1999). As discussed earlier, Ervits found a new Multi National Enterprise (MNE) innovation issue (2018). He noted that many MNEs from developed economies are using China as a research centre. Interestingly, national culture affects a company's innovation (Turró et al., 2014).

Michael Porter argued against the notion that the basics of strategy mapping are inherent in one's reaction to rivalry and that rivalry does not necessarily originate directly from a particular business sector, but rather from the fundamental economics of that sector (Goett, 1999, p. 41). In 1980 in his book titled *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors*, Porter introduced his famous five forces model of competition, which he claimed would ensure sustainable success for any organisation. These five forces are 'rivalry, threat of new entrants, threat of substitutes, suppliers bargaining powers and lastly the buyers bargaining powers' (Goett, 1999, p. 41). Business strategy is not a linear or straightforward exercise; however, it entails a process of deep thought on the next strategic avenue for the organisation.

9.2.2 The internal structure is the competitive edge

An exciting perspective discussed by one of the staff interviewed regarding the commercial competitors is worth reflecting on. There are different levels of competitors, and at the top of that list would be the other four Super Rugby teams in New Zealand. They are primarily crucial competitors. However, an interesting fact is the relationships that the Super Rugby franchises share, even though they are competitors in other aspects. These franchises work closely together, particularly in the commercial space, fighting for the corporate dollar. The senior marketing staff interviewed affirmed that what makes the Crusaders different is the connectedness of all departments. There is much internal disconnection among the other teams, where the workflow between departments and the playing group seemed to work in silos. The Crusaders' competitive edge is that there is clear collaboration across departments, including the playing group of the other departments. They believe they have great connections within the teams and across the organisations, including the playing group, management, coaches, and CEO. For example, the CEO's office location is very close to the marketing department, so they are connected. They feel that is important and what makes them different from other franchises.

I argued in Chapter 6 that the Crusaders values, driven by the Crusaders Board, are parallel to the *structure-centred theory,* which intends to drive governance through its structure, with the available resources. The Consulting company's discovery of the set of values driven by players is analogous to the *Agency theory*. Crusaders' players use their influence in the community to perform social activities such as building unity among the communities in the region and being a source of inspiration to people whenever they play. Their reputation as a champion rugby club has been used as a vehicle to build positivity in the community. As discussed previously, Anthony Giddens created the Theory of Structuration (Cohen, 1989). He challenged social norms (Whittington, 2010) and debated structure-centered vs. agency-centered life shaping (Giddens, 1984). Giddens was concerned with how these two theories applied to sociology's biggest issue, social order—how people from diverse backgrounds, emotions, and experiences function without much disorder (Englund et al., 2020). He found structure-centred and agency theories compatible.

Hence, this structure gave way to another competitive edge that the Crusaders have: the ability to work with other sporting bodies in the region, such as the Netball Super League team, the Tactix. Mainland Netball, the governing body of South Island Netball, including the Tactix, entered voluntary liquidation in 2020 due to poor financial performance, mainly caused by COVID-19, and the loss of essential funding sources (George, 2020). The Crusaders were delighted at the chance to collaborate with Tactix because they share the same community and are both Red and Black. It was considered healthy competition, and the partnership with Tactix continued throughout the year to help the organisation regain its footing. The same collaboration occurred with Canterbury Rugby, and being in the same

building as the Crusaders really helped them work closely together, particularly in the daily business space—which was also important for the Crusaders.

From the interviews, most have alluded to the fact that one of the most critical elements to their success is the *people* within the organisation, the staff. There is a great deal of camaraderie within the workplace, and everyone is driven by the same emotions or goals that make the Crusaders who they are. One of the staff interviewed gave an example comparing with a previous employer. At this employer, when there was a morning tea where staff come together to share food, it was almost natural for someone to enter the room and only look for people they could connect with and are comfortable with. The Crusaders' setting is more community-oriented, meaning that one have no problem connecting with anyone in the room. One of the female staff members interviewed attested to the significance of the place and the people. She believed that the Crusaders are fortunate to have some 'pretty special people in the organisation' that hold key roles and enable such a positive environment. Angus Gardiner, General Manager of Professional Rugby, is considered an exceptional person for the organisation, being one of the original Crusaders pioneering team in 1996 who shares his knowledge with players and management. The likes of Scott Robertson (Razor), the head coach, and the CEO, Colin Mansbridge, are only a few exceptional individuals who recognise the significance of the past and are committed to preserving it. The Executive who was interviewed was convinced that the Crusaders have the best employees.

People are learning from each other and are not scared to learn new things or try new things. In fact, it is the essence of their success that the learning organisation concept is embraced. There is always room for people to make mistakes. In an earlier chapter on innovation, we established the fact that the Crusaders are an organisation that thrives using the learning organisation concept without even realising it. They are passionate about learning and exploring new things in order to stay on top of the competition table for the last 25 years. One of the interviewees attested that the positive environment with innovative leadership is another element that is very key to the success of the Crusaders. They have had great leaders that have brought in the right changes, when it matters, and led from the front. Undoubtedly, an organisation will experience growth and positive results if there is excellent leadership. However, if the leadership is not good, it will reflect on the performance of the organisation. The long success over the 25 years of Super rugby reflects the various types of leadership in the Crusaders. The interviewees spoke of legendary coaches who were great coaches who led with principles and values still practised by the playing group and, to some extent, the whole organisation. The current CEO has such a positive approach and is respected by everyone in the organisation.

That leadership trait, an important aspect of agency, also spills over into how they do things. They have a mindset that they must be leaders in all their product or service offerings. For instance, if the team needs help with the belongingness of new players, they must be able to provide that internally or through diversity requests; they must be the first to provide that service or product. Alternately, from a marketing standpoint, their products and services are to be the leaders in a market segment in addressing those deprived areas. This leadership concept can also refer to the new partnership deals that they get involved in and become the first to enter into such agreements. An institution such as the University of Canterbury, which has a long association with the Crusaders, could take advantage of this by aligning its advertising and promotion with the Crusaders so as to emotionally engage fans. Both the Crusaders and the University of Canterbury stand to benefit from this partnership, which could change their perspectives from rivals to collaborators.

9.2.3   Commercial innovation

Being a champion club brings a much competitive edge to its commercial prowess. As long as they win, it keeps the donors and sponsors happy as they will only identify with the best. The fantastic 25 years of Crusaders' dominance in the Super Rugby Competition has set a solid platform for the Club to be commercially viable. Even after the earthquakes in 2011, which affected one of its major revenue contributors, the Jakes stadium, the sustaining reputation of the Club helped them. They changed their financial model, which depends on sponsors and donors. Even though the Blues and the Hurricanes have those massive stadiums that would help them financially, the Crusaders still have some edge over them when it comes to the bottom lines. The major sponsors of New Zealand rugby and Super rugby clubs usually approach the Crusaders first when they need to roll out one of their products. They talk to them and seek their feedback on whether the proposed products will be successful before formally introducing them to other rugby regions in New Zealand. That shows the level of confidence in the Crusaders' brand and the people that run its operations and strategic mechanism. It is an acknowledgement of the financial innovativeness of the Crusaders, that even though they are challenged by limited sitting stadiums, they still have the prowess and the innovativeness to outdo others commercially.

9.2.3.1 Crusaders International Academy (CIA)

One of the critical revenue-generating departments was the Crusaders' International Academy, which opened its doors to train international rugby players and rugby clubs or schools. It has gone through its challenges but is a sought-after service on the global front. A great example was when COVID-19 hit globally, including rugby in Australasia; most

departments were affected, which led to the restructuring of the Crusaders' organisation structure to survive.   In 2021, one of its clients was a prominent rugby school in Australia that was scheduled when COVID-19 hit. The school was bringing around 30 players and coaches. Instead of cancelling the trip, the Crusaders sent its coaches to Australia. They hired some gear from Australia for the planned training. The initiative was a success, and both parties benefitted.

9.2.4   Innovative approach of Crusaders on societal factors

The Crusaders are still engaged in the battle for increased involvement and support; they tactically rely on the significance of their internal Crusaders' culture. The mid-and long-term goal is for that positive culture to spread throughout the community and be recognised as a culture that peers or groups will want to be associated with because it has established some credible identities amongst groups and individuals. As such, this sense of belonging also tends to address young people's social issues with association and affiliation in communities, particularly those of Maori and Pacific descent. This is the ultimate good that the Crusaders would like to see in the communities.

One of the issues that continues to be a challenge is the ability of families to meet the costs of getting their children to participate in rugby or the sports they choose. One Senior Manager of the Crusaders pointed out that even though their children were skilful and enjoying various types of sports, they consider themselves more fortunate to be able to support their children to play the different sports of their choice. This is unlike those who struggle with their minimum income to put food on the table, let alone keep their kids playing a sport. Because of the associated costs, it is expensive for a parent to consent for their child or children to participate.

The other issue the Crusaders have to deal with is the kids' mindset on why they take up rugby as a sport. As an organisation, they want every child playing rugby to enjoy the sport more than anything else. Kids need to enjoy the game and not just train hard during the summer to make the team. If they do not make the team, then they perceive it as a waste of time, and the following natural reaction is to quit the game. Enjoyment will lead to loyalty which is why at the grassroots of the Canterbury Rugby Union, including other unions, they have abandoned representative rugby in the junior grades in favor of starting at the age of 16. These are some social factors that the Crusaders and the Canterbury Rugby Union have addressed in recent years to ensure maximum inclusion of players from a younger age, until their mid-secondary school time. By this time, they would have developed confidence and maturity in the sport, resulting in more kids staying on. The national population's well-being level would increase as people continued to engage in sports for longer.

Societal changes such as the preference for E-games and online entertainment will continue to be an uphill battle for the Crusaders and a barrier to resolving social issues. World Rugby and the Crusaders, or New Zealand Rugby, may

not have supported the further exploration of E-Games. It was clear that E Games would potentially threaten the game itself regarding its fans, actual attendance, and revenue. E-games and online entertainment will be hazardous to the New Zealand population contributing to more unhealthy people and unproductive in the workplace and the community. In a study released by the World Health on Mental disorders and substance abuse from 1990 to 2019, New Zealand had one of the highest increases in cases within that period (Dattani et al., 2021). In 2017, it was estimated that 792 million people had a mental health disorder, or slightly more than one person in ten. Depression seemed to be the fourth leading cause of death in 15-29-year-olds. In another study, psychological distress appeared to be the highest during the height of COVID-19 and more cases were recorded compared to the pre-COVID-19 period. While the Crusaders seem to have a noble intention to model exemplary character and positive culture, they are unaware that their influence could be more than just behaviour and culture. They could be saving people from mental stress, even to the point of death. The Crusaders can lead the fight against mental health using its successful model and structure to somehow intervene in young and older people's lives.

Another way a Crusaders' senior Manager discussed combating the influence of digital entertainment was to present the Crusaders organisation as a favourite identity to be associated with or a community they would like. The senior Manager stated:

> To combat them I think we want to engage people to the whole organisation, with our brand and our culture so we want to make them feel connected. For example, if there's a gang and if I want someone to join, it's the Crusaders gang. I much prefer they join the Crusaders gang than another gang, and to help them join that gang it's about making them feel they can be part of it. So they can feel like when we're successful or even when we're not successful, they're part of the journey and that they help in the players performance. They feel connected to the person beside them, they enjoy winning they enjoy the actual experience of the game, so I think that connection piece is really important… and I think being…This identity piece or this diversity piece will help us have lots of fans...The more fans that we can have from more different backgrounds and environments, the more inclusive place it's gonna be and and the more fun it's gonna be. The more fun it's gonna be for people it will therefore get people off their devices and at least to come along to an event or let's get them away to try something else.

The Crusaders are aware of their competition and have thought and planned ways to overcome these challenges. They are very resilient, making them very innovative as an organisation. That has been one of the driving forces in the organisation for the last 25 years. They understand the value of people and how important it is to manage this resource well, because without a productive and happy workforce, we all have million-dollar buildings, equipment and machines, but no substantial returns. The people who handle the system and processes are what count; their

success depends on the person handling the procedure. This study is adamant that every business that exists is a people's business. Whether it be professional sports, airlines, corporate office, engineering or even construction, every business is set up to service people to enjoy and possibly generate loyalty to return for more.

9.2.5 **Longevity: a competitive edge for the Crusaders**

Another Executive pointed out that the difference between the other Rugby Franchises and the Crusaders, after having worked in another New Zealand Franchise, is the longevity of players and officials, meaning coaches and Managers alike. It is a significant factor because these long-serving individuals have experienced a winning environment, setbacks, and every other rugby environment. Whilst other franchises struggle to adapt and map out the right strategy, the Crusaders are well ahead. They are fine-tuning what they have done because it is what they have been doing for years, which is; consistently learning, implementing, and refining strategies. As such, the Club dedicates time and resources to researching best practices globally. Whether it is from sporting groups, the military, or a business, they learn and modify concepts applicable to the Crusaders.

By the time the interview occurred, 17 Crusaders players had played 100 games. This can only point to the fact that they had been a member of the Club for a significant amount of time, and it is one of the advantages that Crusaders have over other clubs. Continuity and experienced players can hold the team together during adversity on and off the field. There have not been many Crusaders' coaches because there have not been many coaching vacancies. Coaches like Vance Stewart, Wayne Smith, Steve Hansen, Robbie Deans, and Todd Blackadder have been part of the organisation for a considerable time. Hence, many core players have received coaching from the same coaches, allowing continuity and fine-tuning of skills.

The resources are utilised well when the right people are in a proper setup supported by continuous learning. They will always attract the best talents on and off the rugby field. Being a highly successful club for the last 25 years has not only created a winning lifestyle, it has reinforced the Crusaders' brand to a level synonymous with quality and prestige. It is an incubator for rugby success in all its facets. From the perspective of the Crusaders' coaches, the team's rivals include all other professional rugby clubs in New Zealand and worldwide. Working in an organisation with a strong brand like the Crusaders is a significant competitive edge for a Marketing Executive.

Interestingly, due to the impacts of the pandemic, the Crusaders' had to succumb to a restructure, and redundancy was inevitable. However, one of the unaffected department was the CIA, which was a valuable revenue-generating avenue for the organisation.

Gain Line Analytics, an Australian-based organisation that uses a Cohesion Analytics technique and focuses on data analysis and quantitative research, was co-founded by Ben Darwin, a former professional rugby player who played 28 test matches for Australia(Analytics, 2013; Wallabies, 2021). He also played 42 games for his Club, the Brumbies Super Rugby Franchise. One of the findings from their work on cohesion is that longevity of players and officials is very important for building cohesive teams (Sportsmith, 2018). Changes need patience in order to build into great results. If clubs or organisations keep chopping and cutting off players there won't be any continuity for learning and no real capacity to grow cohesion amongst the players and officials. Teams with high cohesion tend to perform above expectations. These findings consolidate the unique competitive advantage that the Crusaders have over other organisations, as being the Club that has a great number of players that have been with the club for so long.

9.3 Crusaders organizational values and competitive advantage

In chapter 6, I argued that the primary edge that the Crusaders' rugby has had over the years is the ability to articulate and emphasise the Club's values and what they mean to them. Everything they do is empowered and revolves around the values of the organisation. They are a values-driven organisation; other clubs may be trying to define their values and what they mean to them. The Crusaders do not just talk about it, nor is it just visible on the walls of the offices, like many corporate organisations. They live them and breathe them daily. They do not need the policy to help them live those Crusaders' values - it is part of their daily lives. When asked about the firm's values and if they were driven by corporate policy, the facial expressions of some interviewees seemed to query, 'Do we need a policy for that?'. It was a stern statement of belief and sheer commitment to the values of the organisation. The question asked was as if I was mocking them with how they have approached their values over the years. This attitude speaks volumes of how much their values dictate how they do things and conduct themselves and further how these values have become an intrinsic fundamental of their growth over the years.

One of the Executives of the Crusaders noted that in previous years, the other franchises were the only competition to their Super rugby franchise. However, recently, other competitions have entered the race for fans and athletes. Basketball, soccer, and cricket are alternatives in the market that strategically engage young elite players by offering scholarships at the secondary level. One player influences the whole family and spills over to relatives or extended families. These spiral effects reduce the piece of market segment that rugby used to enjoy hence, losing the fight for that commercial dollar that contributes to the game. However, the interviewed Executive was adamant that the Crusaders' competitive advantage is firmly rooted in their beliefs and values. More importantly, how they have been able to activate and live those values. How these values have governed their everyday life, the decisions they make, the

changes they introduce, and the recruitment they do revolve around these values. The underlying reality is that it all boils down to good people! The pursuit of excellence and innovation hinges on being a good individual. The players understand that to achieve greatness; they cannot disregard the importance of hard work, as it is the foundation of their success formula. The great All-Black Captain and Crusaders Captain, Richie McCaw, once said, "I don't believe in magic. I believe in hard work .." (@AllBlacks, 2015)The players understand that there is no other way to achieve their dreams; they must embrace hard work because there is always someone else out there working harder than them and may eventually overtake them. For the Crusaders, they believe they must keep innovating and working hard because there is always some other sporting environment that can take a piece of the market.

9.3.1 Intangible edge vs tangible edge

In chapter 6, I discussed the main driving force behind the values and narrowed the discussion to soft and hard skills. When analysing the responses from interviewees and the history of the Crusaders' phenomenal journey, two major characteristics stands out:

i.   Intangible resources refer to soft skills which are often challenging to acquire even through training and sometimes these are related to specific skills related to a person's personality and behaviour. The Crusaders' emphasis on 'intangible resources' and the atmosphere in which they operate enables the skill to develop, be adaptable, resilient, and innovative. Their level of self-awareness in order to be able to relate and work with others effectively is quite interesting. During the interviews, most of the interviewees referred to the colour-coded system they were using to distinguish the various level of personalities or characteristics of every individual in the organisation. Therefore, when they stroll around the workplace and observe employees wearing coloured badges, they know precisely what personality type each individual possesses. Therefore, dialogues or interactions are functioning with greater awareness and only lead to effective and positive outcomes, even in a not-so-favourable situation.

ii.   Tangible resources refer to "hard skills" because they are easily defined, and the perimeter may be measured or determined without difficulty. Anyone can be trained to acquire them; hence, developing them is almost a simple exercise compared to acquiring soft skills.

The Crusaders place tremendous focus on their knowledge of the rugby trade, the technical aspects of the game, and all of its supporting functions, allowing them to stay ahead of the competition. These are the hard skill factors of Crusaders' organisational structure. In the theories (Lyu & Liu, 2021) discussed earlier, hard skills are sometimes called technical skills and are very specific to a particular job requirement. For example, a driver needs to know what level of gear to apply at various speeds of the vehicle. However, that knowledge is not needed for a surgeon operating in a surgical theatre. Hard skills refer to employees' job-related knowledge and abilities to perform their duties effectively.

I had further established in my discussions in Chapter 6 how important it is in Crusaders' rugby to have the "edge" over the competition, as it sets the tone for professional athletes' daily routines and processes at their highest levels of performance or outputs. The term 'edge' as discussed above, or in short "E", will be further used to integrate with the Intangible resources (soft) and Tangible resources (hard) expressions to describe a new theory.

In this study, some new terminologies with definitions (below) have been assembled to help put things into perspective the new approach before diving deeper into the analysis of the Crusaders' environment and their competitive advantage:

9.3.1.1 Intangible Edge (IE=soft) VS Tangible Edge (TE=Hard)

It is imperative to promptly establish the definitions of certain new terms and acronyms that will facilitate a more comprehensive exploration of the findings expounded upon in this subsection. The term "intangible," abbreviated as "I," pertains to soft skills as explained in chapter 9.3.2, while the term "tangible," abbreviated as "T," pertains to hard skills as explained in chapter 9.3.2. Moreover, the term 'edge', abbreviated as "E", pertains to the competitive advantage held by the Crusaders over their rivals.

This study contends that in light of the Crusaders performance, an individual or organisation must balance "TE" and "IE" elements to be successful in a highly competitive environment such as professional rugby. The table below intends to explain the likelihood of outputs when different levels of *Intangibles* and *Tangibles* are inserted into the input process:

Table 9.1 – Intangible Edge (IE) vs Tangible Edge (TE)

	INTANGIBLE	STATUS	+	TANGIBLE	STATUS	RESULTS
				Intangible Edge (IE) & Tangible Edge (TE)		
1	IE (Intangible Edge)	High	+	Tangible Edge (TE)	High	High Output, Longevity
2	IE (Intangible Edge)	Low	+	Tangible Edge (TE)	High	Low Output, Short-term success
3	IE (Intangible Edge)	High	+	Tangible Edge (TE)	Low	Medium Output, Medium-term success
4	IE (Intangible Edge)	High	+	Tangible Edge (TE)	Low	Low Output, Low or No Success

From the table, we can conclude that when there is an imbalance in the inputs (tangible/intangible), the outputs will be mixed or inconsistent. This refers to inputs that have a high IE but a low TE or vice versa. However, if the inputs are *both high* in TE and IE (Row 1), the output will be high, and there will be longevity in success. Also what is significant in this table is the claim that when the Intangible (IE) is high, and the Intangible (TE) is low (Row 3), the output would be *Medium*, not low. There would be flashes of brilliance and victory, but it is not designed for the long haul.

The competitive advantage that the Crusaders developed from their organisational values is that they have learned to pursue *High Performance* in both the soft and the hard approaches of rugby or tangible Edge (Hard skills) and the Intangible Edge (soft skills) of rugby. This makes the Crusaders a team very adamant about winning. Their continuous learning prowess ushered them beyond some of their competition.

Whilst other franchises are busy trying to be technically sound, the Crusaders have been busy trying to ensure that the technical aspects of the role are innovative and relevant, but more importantly, the soft side of rugby, the Intangible edge (IE), is something they have been busy on to ensure that it reaches a stage where it is levelled with their rugby prowess, their *Tangible Edge (TE).* This study has therefore established the competitive advantage that the Crusaders have over other competitors.

Furthermore, I have also established in Chapter 6 that there were three sets of values at the time I conducted this study – one set was developed by the Board and was launched together with the 2017 strategic plan, the other set of values were those that the playing group have lived by since the Crusaders was formed as a super rugby club. The third set of values were the ones discovered by this study, and shared by the interviewees as something they believe was very important to the success of the Crusaders. I argued that even though the values seemed chaotic having 3 sets of values, most were overlapping or expressing the same attributes. In the final analysis, I concluded that when re-arranged or reviewed, the values were grouped into two categories – the soft values and the hard values. The hard values guided the commercial and rugby high-performance aspects of The Crusaders. The soft values guided the development and maintenance of a positive environment and the motivations to be the best in conduct inside and outside of rugby. I argued that these two sets of values had given the Crusaders a great competitive edge platform over the other franchises, who would normally have just one set of values. The two categories of value (soft & hard) outline a clear demarcation of commercial, high – performance and positive organisational culture.

9.3.2   **Values driven Crusaders**

The Crusaders' values have been critical to their success for the last 25 years. The values are the brains, the soul, and the engine room that drives the Crusaders' Rugby Franchise. The values are the organisation's Central Processing Unit (CPU). No matter how slick or expensive it may be, all the tangible and intangible resources are just as good as its brains – the CPU or Values.

To make my point clear, I want to illustrate here the impact of values on the Crusaders performance using the anology of a flashlight with light beaming in the darkness as shown below.

Figure 9.1- Illustration on the impact of organisation values
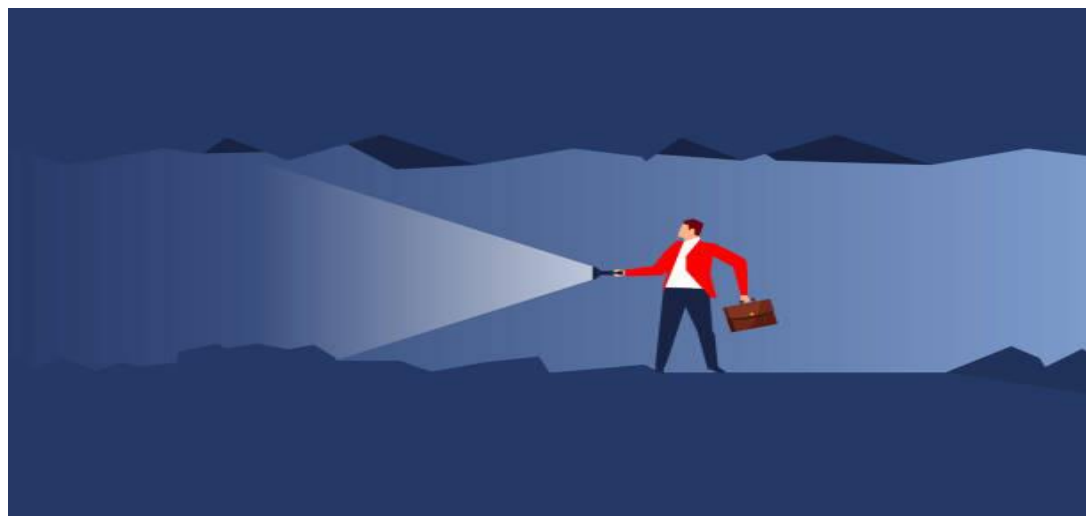
The beaming light generated by the torch is the ultimate result or output that the Crusaders aspire to achieve such as the Crusaders winning multiple Super rugby championship titles, and their positive attributes to reinforce their community. The physical torch represents the Crusaders' tangible edge (TE) (hard skills) and physical resources. These aspects of the Club that are visible for people to see – their skill sets, fitness, physicality, buildings, gyms, academy, among others. The type of "batteries" (quality or cheap) in a physical torch or flashlight represents the intangible edge (IE) (soft skills) and the values of the Crusaders. The quality of the beaming light, including its durability, is determined by the quality of the batteries (values) and soft skills (intangible edge[IE]).

The pysical torch is meaningless without the power or electricity generated by the batteries – that is the crucial purpose of IE or the soft skills and values. The Crusaders have developed the wisdom over the years to harness their values and intangible edge (soft skills) to achieve outstandig results. The person holding the flashlight represents the Crusaders' Organisational Learning Environment or the learning mindset of the person holding the torch. The quality of know-how or the wisdom in the person (learning ennvironment), will determine the quality of batteries (values and soft skills) to use in bringing the best beam of light (output).

The learning mindset is only possible if the person or the environment embraces the 'humility' to be taught or to continue to learn, even in greatest heights of achievement. The values bring discipline in managing tangible and intangible resources, especially for an organisation like the Crusaders. Values bring energy and purpose to the organisation and make the journey meaningful, regardless of how challenging the process may be. They know the direction of their journey and are not easily swayed by what they go through. Values establish a belief system and bring together a community or village to nurture their existing relationship.

9.3.2.1 Sports analytics findings and the Crusaders

Gain Line Analytics of Australia, in one of their studies regarding top sporting organisations and corporate businesses, conclude that great teams result from an organization's interdependence and mutual support rather than the simple accumulation of its members (Analytics, 2013). In one of their podcast interviews, they further explained that if a club has a group of players with high cohesion and high expectations of each other but average talents, they will always perform beyond expectations (Sportsmith, 2018). They also stated that some clubs have high-class facilities but underperform because they struggle to get players to gel together.

Gain Analytics also argued that the Crusaders are a prime example of a club with good cohesion. Still, their facilities are mediocre compared to other clubs (Sportsmith, 2018). As stated earlier, Gain Analytics found that the Crusaders had strong cohesion and their facilities are average (Sportsmith, 2018).   They have won eleven Super Rugby

titles and made it to the playoffs more than any other club. Their culture, structure, and systems are all built around cohesiveness.

In chapter 7, I also discussed the findings of Gain Line Analytics on the high preference in recruiting rookies because they learn faster and are quickly molded into the Crusaders way. This is compared to experienced players, who will take time to unlearn and to learn the plans and objectives of their new club. This study therefore consolidates the role of the Crusaders Academy as the setup that places the Crusaders far apart from its rivals.

9.4   Re-thinking the theory of structuration from a values perspective.

In chapter 6, this study identified three sets of values within the Crusaders that were found to be chaotic. When interviewing the participants, they expressed concern but were unable to pinpoint the specific negative repercussions, if any, that were arising from these varieties of values. This chapter provides an analysis of the importance of soft skills and hard skills of the Crusaders by employing the lens of the Structuration theory.

I argued also in Chapter 6 that the values upheld by the Crusaders, as established by the Crusaders Board in 2017, align with the structure-centered theory. This theory aims to govern by using the organisation's structure and available resources. The Agency theory bears resemblance to the conclusions of a Consulting firm regarding the set of values embraced by players. Crusaders leverage their power within the community to engage in social initiatives, such as creating cohesion among local communities and serving as a source of inspiration for individuals. The interactions and behaviors of the agencies, or the individuals involved within the Crusaders, have an impact on the structure of the organisation, and vice versa. This concept is central to Anthony Giddens' Theory of Structuration. In the same chapter, the values were restructured to align more effectively with the objectives of this study, aiming to enhance the Crusaders' comprehension of their values and their relevance to their current and future aspirations. Upon analyzing the values of the three groups (as discussed in chapter 6) any overlapping or comparable values were excluded, resulting in the identification of two primary categories: Hard Values and Soft Values, as specified in the following:

Table 9.2 – Crusaders proposed Values (Soft Values & Hard Values)

CRUSADERS VALUES (proposed)	
HARD VALUES	**SOFT VALUES**
Relentless	Enjoyment
Continuous improvement	Humble
Accountable	Belongingness
Credible	Resilience
Diversity	Integrity
Innovation	

By employing structuration theory, namely the *Structural-centered theory* and *Agency theory*, this study examined and analysed the categories of values held by the Crusaders. This study reclassified the Crusader "hard values" as "Structural Values". Structural values govern and mold the structure of an organization and its output can be measured. Thus, providing a setting to accommodate the soft values or the behavious that the organisation embraces and hold as significant to their success. Similarly, the study renamed the "Soft values" as "Agency Values" to accurately represent the accepted behaviors and principles that drive all interactions and motivations within the business, contributing to its overall performance. In fact, the agency values fuel and gives motivation to the achievement of structural values, hence, contributing to the success of the Crusaders over the years.

9.5   Diversity and competitive advantage

Crusaders still acknowledge that other super rugby franchises are their biggest threats as they vie for supremacy. The vast majority of donors will only want to be associated with champions. Therefore, dominance will result in increased financial gains through sponsorships and grants. Whenever a professional sporting Club is struggling to win, it puts at risk the value of the team, and lingering poor performances will always lead to reduced financial support. Being a champion club also requires possessing the right talent or persons who, once fully developed under the Crusaders' development structure, can eventually offer favourable outcomes. At this point, the five New Zealand Super Rugby franchises are beginning to compete against one another.

From the interviews, 'diversity' is the pillar that came out very strong and by far, as I claimed in Chapter 8, this is the point of difference between the Crusaders and its competitors. Anyone can practice diversity, but the real challenge is how far they are willing to go. In what form of diversity are they willing to explore and establish as a critical component for their survival? My analysis in chapter 8 also confirmed that diversity is all about the process and the desire to be better and learn every time. Since the Crusaders have been predominantly driven by their values, particularly 'continuously learning', they have deliberately diversified in most of their operations, even in the coaching team; for some years, they have always had someone from Europe in the ranks as an Assistant Coach. They bring a mindset and details that differ from the Southern Hemisphere style of play, as well as the New Zealand way. Moreover, historically, the organisation used to be dominated by white males, but in today's structure, more women have been absorbed and significantly in leadership roles, including the leadership level.

Significantly, there is more diversity in the type of players contracted into the franchise and this only adds strength to the existing team. Following is a table that summarises the composition of the Crusaders' rugby squad from 2012 to 2021, particularly looking at the increased inclusion of players of Pacific descent:

Table 9.2 : % of Pacific Island descent players vs Total Squad from 2012 - 2021

CRUSADERS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Squad No.	30	32	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
Pacific Islanders (PI)	2	5	8	8	13	12	9	8	12	12
% of PI players	7%	16%	22%	21%	34%	32%	24%	21%	32%	32%

Whilst the Crusaders are doing so well in many areas of diversity, there are a few critical areas that they still need to improve on, and this was consistently echoed through the interviews. It is still a journey and they have not yet quite arrived to where they would love to be. One of the Managers, when interviewed, concurred to the fact that there is much room yet, but they have improved over the years to date, and I quote:

> I think we've got better. As I said, when I first came here it was like a little bit embarrassing in that everything I'd come from in Government you would do "te reo" (Maori anguage) introductions and -- It was just not, it's still not really done here, and funnily enough I don't do it now. Generally if I was doing a presentation I would introduce myself, introduce in te reo. Like as far as the main team goes, you know, there's women, you know, it's mainly all men. I don't think -- you know, I guess some of the things that I -- there's Pasifika weeks and like we've got Pasifika boys here, there was Cook Island week last week and we don't embrace as an organisation to celebrate any of those things, and that surprises me a

little bit when we have people -- and I know when it's Fiji week and I make a bit of a thing of it for the Fijian boys, they really like that, and they really respect it, that recognition. So I tend to think it's a bit of a blind spot. So again, I guess I'm used to working in organisations when an organisation will pick up on, whether it's mental health week or -- and when you bring that, you know, commit as an organisation to mentioning it or, you know, putting up the something, then people seem to learn or understand a little bit more around people

The increase in diversity practice in other franchises and sport has also led to external competition. From across the Tasman, the Australian Super Rugby Clubs have escalated the competition for the same athletes cultivated locally in New Zealand. This competition for athletes is known as athlete poaching. Poaching of academy players from the Crusaders was expected as the Crusaders were the only Super rugby club with an academy. Outsiders who know how the system works tend to sell their enticing packages targeting the shortfalls in the Crusaders' system. One is the high number of talents trained in the academy but only limited opportunities available to progress players. Some must wait a few years before breaking into the National Provincial Championship (NPC). These backlogs result in an abundant supply of academy-trained talents waiting in the queue for their time to be part of the Crusaders' senior team. After progressing into the NPC team or the Crusaders' Knights team, they still have to wait to play for the Crusaders Super Rugby senior team. In that waiting period, some players are lured by scouts and agents of other franchises in New Zealand or Australia and even to other sports.

A classic example was when the Blues Super Rugby Franchise signed two academy players from the Crusaders to strengthen their long-term prospects. One was the German-born loose forward Anton Segner, who attended Nelson College as an exchange student. He became a schoolboy rugby star player, winning the Crusaders' secondary schools titles and captaining that winning team. He was groomed at the Tasman Makos Provincial Rugby Union-affiliated Crusaders academy in Nelson. Nonetheless, the Blues Rugby franchise snatched him, and he signed a three-year contract starting at the end of 2021 (Hinton, 2021).

Furthermore, another example of a player that departed the Crusaders' crib was Sam Darry, who played locks for Canterbury. The Crusaders Academy nurtured him in Christchurch (Smith, 2021). Sam joined the Blues at the end of 2020 and acknowledged the Crusaders for developing him into the player he is today. Moving was a personal choice; he wanted a full-time contract and greater playing time rather than the difficulties of breaking into the team while so many more experienced players were ahead of him in line. The CEO of the Crusaders, Colin Mansbridge, admitted that they could not keep every athlete they have developed through their highly successful academy structure (Royen, 2021). The Crusaders have come to terms with the fact that they cannot keep every athlete they have developed. It will continue

to occur; nevertheless, the Crusaders have opted to focus on the good aspect of the dilemma. The difficulty will not prevent them from developing players; they will decide where they wish to finish up.

The Crusaders have therefore not only benefitted from the diversity concept, but have also been threatened by the concept.

9.5.1 Coaching panel

The first observation a bystander can make is that in the last few years the Crusaders have always been diverse in the way they approach coaching, to the point that they've always had an Assistant coach who is somewhat different from the New Zealand coaching. They have been employing European coaches who bring a different perspective in how they approach rugby, especially in the set-pieces like scrums and lineouts. The type of mindset that the southern hemisphere rugby clubs have is that they approach important aspects of rugby technicality differently from how the Northern hemisphere rugby's approach. Recently we have seen the Blues rugby franchise include a New Zealand coach who has been coaching in Europe for many years at international level.

9.5.2 Diversity in motivation for innovation

I established in chapter 7 the new Eco-innovation theory process in which I claimed that innovation can only occur in uncomfortable situations and there are two ways to arrive at an uncomfortable situation:

i.   either by choice; you choose to be uncomfortable and be in the next level, which is normally driven by passion or values to innovate. The next level is 'new' and it is uncomfortable, but at times the only way forward

ii.   The other is when a person or entity is forced into a comfortable situation through the challenges being faced.

The two avenues above are very critical inputs to an innovative journey. As earlier discussed also, the decision to be challenged or be pushed into a challenging situation will introduce them to a level of resilience which will eventually result in innovation. The level of resilience will depend on the type of learning environment the person or entity is in. I previously argued that the greater the input, when managed properly, the greater will result be the output (innovation).

9.5.2.1 Comparison with other Super Rugby clubs

Considering the Eco-innovation theory, discussed above, in comparison to other Super rugby clubs, the Crusaders seemed to have the edge over it's a couple of ways.

Firstly, the inputs as 'choosing to be in the next level' or to do better, is something that has been ingrained in the Crusaders environment for a very long time. It is part of their values and something that is second nature to them. It is quite evident when analysing their websites, their type of values. Some clubs talk about success or explain the vision to deduct its values, and some do not have anything. However, the Crusaders values discussed in their website are very process driven. This attitude to be driven by process will always demand the next level.

Secondly, the input of 'challenges', or being driven by challenges is something unique to the Crusaders. The earthquakes, the Pike River Coal Mines incident and the mosque shooting are far greater motivators for the Crusaders than any super rugby club can find. These significant motivators push the Club to be better in their innovation. As stated earlier, the quality of the inputs, will always contribute to the quality of output (innovation). The Crusaders have very quality inputs and that is why they have always had the competitive advantage over other clubs.

Thirdly, it is important to note also is how their approach to diversity seems to be advanced. One of the reasons for this is because of the longevity of Officials and players involved in the Club. They have coaches, managers, administrators and officials who have been in the Club for a long time and have been in those winning years. This historical knowledge becomes the edge when analysing and strategising for the future.

9.5.3   Innovation and resilience pillars for competitive advantage environment

In chapter 7, I argued that for both pillars to provide highly favourable outcomes, they must be based on extremely positive values. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of continuous learning in creating a climate or atmosphere that supports creativity and resiliency. As indicated previously, the values facilitate a belief system centred on excellence and discipline. Innovation is an unmistakable indication that a company is determined to lead and thrive in the market in which it competes. Due to the nature of life, challenges and difficult times are unavoidable; nevertheless, if you have strong values and a mindset or set of beliefs centred on excellence, you will automatically develop resilience.

I also argued in the Innovation and Resilience chapter (Chapter 7) about the new Eco-Innovation theory that was developed by this study. The theory claims that 'innovation can only occur in an uncomfortable situation and must be approached with a learning mindset and a resilient attitude'*.* The *uncomfortable situation* acts as the trigger to kick-

start the innovation process. I had further established that 'It is also worth mentioning that, with this Eco-innovation theory, the quality of the innovation output is also determined by the quality of the input. That is, the greater the uncomfortable situation, when harnessed properly, will equate to greater output (innovation)'. As such, an organisation or an individual can either have a stationary resilience experience, by which it gets back to its orginial state after the challenges, or, the resilient experience ushers the individual or the organisation into a newly transformed state, better that it was. From the Crusaders' perspective, both experiences were necessary because they could not neglect their rich history, which has given them great lessons that are still applicable in current scenarios. They have also learned to transform into something better as part of their resilient process, providing an innovation platform. The uncomfortable situation that produces innovation can either be by choice; choosing to be better every time and not complacent at one level, or triggered by the challenges that drive one or an entity to be resilient and innovative in order to survive.

Any franchise can use this eco-innovation theory, but what makes the Crusaders different is the level of input they exert into the innovation process. Their uncomfortable situations are unprecedented and profound, which cannot be imitated by other super rugby clubs. The earthquakes, mosque shootings, and Pike River coal mine incident were all unique to the Crusaders and profound because they significantly affected the communities they represent. These communities then looked to the Crusaders as heroes that would help them recover from these adversities. That is something to play for; that is something unique to represent. The challenge for other super rugby clubs is finding something or a similar trigger(s) that means a lot to the community they represent.

9.6   Challenges

Like in any organisation, there is still room for improvement that the Crusaders need to continue to work on.

9.6.1   Organisational structure an edge for the Crusaders

The success of any system and processes in any organisation are just as good as the the calibre of people that use or activate that system. Having the right people in an organisation is crucial; furthermore, having the proper structure and setup which will facilitate the success of the people, is even better. One of the contributing factors to the Crusaders' success, as stated by a few of those interviewed, is the level of collaboration happening amongst the departments; from the playing group right to the back office (off-the-field) team. The manner they set up their office spaces was open, which avoided silos in the workplace. The Crusaders' office spaces are set up in a manner that encourages a free flow of information, and people feel they are interacting and connected. The office structure is a key

factor and must be planned in a way that facilitates collaboration and teamwork. One of the senior marketing staff stated during the interview:

> So yeah, I think probably the things that I've mentioned earlier is what makes us different from them. I believe that there's a lot of disconnect in the other teams, the other franchises across departments, and they work a lot in silos and I think that's probably the benefit of us here at the Crusaders is that we're really collaborative, we've got great connections with our team, our management, coaches, CEO, like he sits – Colin(CEO) sits in our office, so we're all really connected. So I think that's, yeah, that's really important for us and that's kind of -- I think that's what makes us different

The other dynamic this has brought to the forefront is the importance of the organisation structure or line management and reporting lines. There seemed to be a lot of dotted lines crossing over work relationships, which is encouraged, common and visible when you visit their office space or workplace. If a first-time visitor steps into the Crusaders' head office, one can tell how smooth the interaction lines are in the organisation and how people are humble and willing to do anything to grow the organisation. For example, during the first batch of interviews, it was the General Manager's (GM) turn to be interviewed that morning. Surprisingly the GM was relieved at the receptionist and taking calls whilst the actual receptionist had just gone out for 5 minutes. The GM introduced himself and apologised because he was still engaged at the reception, so his interview session would have to be delayed a little. That encounter sums up a lot and describes the culture and the calibre of people that make the Crusaders the brand it is today.

In summary, the Crusaders' organisation structure unconsciously enjoyed integrating the agency and structure-centred theories as it managed its affairs. Agency in the sense that players use their influence in the community to perform social activities, for example, community building after the earthquakes, the Pike River mines disaster and the mosque shootings. On the other hand, the structure-centred theory allowed the organisation, through its leadership, to drive the organisation to successful heights through its structure and available resources.

9.6.2 Diversity issues

As discussed, diversity is an area that still needs a lot of attention, as echoed by many of the staff interviewed. Whilst the people demographics are beginning to be more diversified with the inclusion of more women; there needs to be an increase in the inclusion of Pacific and Maori staff in the organisation structure. Players of pacific descent make up around 20% - 30% of the total number of super rugby players, at least they have for the last five years

– that is excluding the Maori players. Furthermore, there needs to be a greater appreciation of the Te Reo or Maori language in the workplace, as in corporate or governmental organisations.

Furthermore, even though the organisation has been certified by the Rainbow community as practising inclusion, the challenge that is yet to be realised is when a rugby player, a Crusader, comes out and openly admits that he is gay or is a practising homosexual. How that will be received in reality, is yet to be seen because to date, no one has come out to the openly admit this, in comparison to their counterparts in Europe and also in the rugby league community.

9.6.3   Human Resource (HR) Department

With such a robust and sucessful organisation as the Crusaders, they must seriously consider having a fully-fledged or semi-fully-fledged HR department. They have operated with a part time HR Manager for some years and have now outsourced their HR, which from the perspective of this study is a very serious matter they have not really realised.

The Crusaders formular of success, as far as this study is concerned, heavily rides on soft or intangible resources, such as people skills, and to contnue to operate on this fact without professional HR personnel is like walking on very thin ice. People issues are always tough to handle, as elaborated earlier regarding soft skills. The organisation will continue to grow as the game continues to grow, especially with approval of the construction of the new Stadium. There, the issues surrounding people will continue to grow and the Crusaders must envision having a systematic and expert approach to managing people issues.

9.6.4   Size of the organisation

This study is adamant that the Crusaders are who they are today and doing what they are able to do, because of the size of the organisation. It may be doubtful if they can replicate this type of performance if it were a large organisation - the approcah may have to be different. One of the managers interviewed shared this same thought as quoted below:

I think size has got a lot to do with it, I think it's much easier, or it's much more challenging to get that common goal and that common focus, you know, the larger the organisation it is, the more difficult. I mean there are some organisations that do it really well, Air New Zealand would be one, they seem to have managed to -- very, very large organisation with a great deal of people and certainly from the -- from the outward-facing side of it, you know, they seem to have that shared goal, I mean without going inside the organisation you don't know how that actually manifests itself inside the organisation. But, you know, but here, I think it is a lot to do with the size of the organisation. And there's so much cross-over between

roles, and even between the Crusaders and Canterbury Rugby themselves, that -- so people slip in and out of different roles through the year, depending on the time of the season or the time of the year. And I think -- and they work across a wider range of the business and actually understand -- they understand what are the challenges for the part of business. So, yeah, so I think size has got a lot to do with how you can tack a set of values or a vision and a goal and actually operationalise it through the business, you know, and this is probably -- under 100 would probably be the optimum size to do that, because everybody's successful. You can get everybody into one room and talk to them, you know, and everybody can have a voice

9.7 Competitive Advantage – Further findings

9.7.1 Competitive advantage

In chapter 5, I discussed the historical background of the Canterbury region, which was a well planned settlement by the Canterbury Association back in England. The colonisation of the Canterbury region was carried out by the Canterbury Association, founded by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Robert Godley in London in 1848 (Syddall, 2020). Their vision was that the Canterbury Community would be different from others in New Zealand, with a hierarchical structure similar to the English Club with the Anglican church at its heart (Wilson, 2015a). By design, the region was deemed for great things and the careful choice of people from England to settle in the Canterbury region. I argued in Chapter 5 that dominant culture and values set by the early settlers in the Canterbury region would only translate to great values, great ethics and attributes that were passed down through generations. I also claimed that presuming also that the positive values were passed down had influenced their community. This is one aspect of the region's legacy that makes the Crusaders different from other regional super rugby franchises.

The newly developed Eco-Innovation theory established in Chapter 7 and also in this chapter, hinges on the level or quality of inputs to generate the quality output (innovation). Part of the input is the level of challenges that an organisation or a person goes through, and the Crusaders have been through so much as a region – from the earthquakes, the Pike River coal Mines incident and to the March 2019 Mosque shootings. The Crusaders have managed these challenges properly in a way they maximise their returns. These unique challenges give the Crusaders a competitive advantage in terms of diverse motivations to play for and also challenges the Commercial division of the Club to think diferently. This critical aspect of the organisation has done so well over the years, integrating well with the playing group and even the major sponsors of rugby in New zealand who all seek their feedback on major projects they want to roll out in New Zealand.

It was also noticeable that the logevity of players and officials that have been part of the organisation for such a long time play a critical role in their sustainable success. By the time I was doing the interviews, a total of 17 Crusaders players have already played 100 games for the Club. This longevity gives the Club a good platform to analyse their rich history and what they have been doing right. However on the flipside, a closer look at the shortfalls needs extra attention.

Furthermore, the continuous learning environment is what sets the Crusaders apart from their competitors. Even with the colourful success rate, they still believe that they themselves are their own worst enemy. Once they think that their journey has reached the final destination, that will be the beginning of their downfall. They are always making changes either in bigger ways or just fine-tuning around the fringes. Whilst there are are core practices that have worked for them for years, which they do not change holistically, there are always incremental changes or improvements happening every year around the fringes on the way they do things.

With the proper environment, creativity and innovation will always flourish, as it has been for the last 20 plus years for the Crusdaers. This environment has been built through enabling values and a continuous learning mindset.

Diversity is one of the key strengths of the Crusaders. Over the years they have become one of the frontrunners in New Zealand rugby on embracing diversity in almost all organisational aspects. The organisational dynamics and structure have shown a lot of changes, where there are now many females not only working in the organisation but holding key positions. At the executive level, women have also been represented and even at Board level. This is positive progress considering that this work environment used to be dominated by white males. The demographics of players have changed immensely in the last ten years, which saw players of Pacific Island descent making up a third of the team, without even counting the Maori indigenous players. The coaching panel over the last few years have been diverse in that they always have someone who has had experience playing outside of New Zealand, particularly in Europe. This diversified approach helps the Crusaders to approach the game with a different mindset and has been one of the points of difference for the Crusaders.

However, what still is yet to be seen is if a player of the LGTB community declared himself in the open and is a member of the Crusaders rugby club. What the reaction of the whole playing group or the organisation would be is unknown. The Maori language has not been really integrated into the daily language of the Club, as compared to government departments and corporate organisations. Whenever a leader or someone from the organisations speaks to an audience, they would be speaking in Te Reo first to start their speech, but this is hardly the case in the Crusader's

environment. The Club needs more Pacifika staff in their system to help the Club manage the needs of its players of pacific descent, who make up one third of the squad.

Despite being process-driven, the Crusaders' organisational values category helped them unconsciously dispense a diverse structure, reminiscent of the theory of structuration proposed by prominent British sociologist and social theorist Anthony Giddens. The Crusaders Board's core values align with the *structure-centred* approach, which seeks to direct governance via its structure and the resources at its disposal. The Agency theory is similar to the Consulting company's discovery of the values driven by players. Giddens concluded that structure-centred and agency theories do not compete with one another but rather serve to complement one another. This is apparent where the players use their public profiles for good causes, such as bringing people together in the region and serving as an inspiration to fans. Their success on the rugby field has been leveraged to spread goodwill in the neighbourhood.

9.7.2 Conclusion

A few things have been discussed in this chapter to give pointers on the way forward, and one thing is clear, the Crusaders is a values-based organisation. With its values facilitated in a learning environment, the organisation will continue to be resilient and innovative, thus generating various levels of competitive advantage.

Cohesion studies on the Crusaders confirmed that, while their facilities are average in comparison to other super rugby clubs, their level of cohesion throughout the organisation sets them apart and has kept them a champion club for so long. When an organisation is high on cohesion, it always performs above expectations, even if it has average players with average talents. The Crusaders academy has been one of their outstanding innovations, in which they breed rookies, train them the Crusaders way, and by the time they break into the Super Rugby team, they produce results quickly. In comparison, an experienced player joining will find it difficult to unlearn in order to learn the new ways.

The Crusaders will continue to grow. An organisation that relies heavily on harnessing the soft and hard issues like the Crusaders must develop ways to capture some unwritten practices that have been critical to its success journey. This is illustrated in the development of policies and process mapping to help maintain the knowledge within the organisation, so that when people resign or leave the organisation, their wisdom and implicit knowledge are now captured as "explicit knowledge" for everyone to use.

The growth will also need the organisation to plan for an internal Human Resources department to help the organisation manage its significant resources—its people.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1 Some final observations

The relationship between structure and agency is complex as it involves normatice, professional, political and social dimentions. In the case of Crusaders, the organizational values, innovation, resilience, diversity and comparative advantage all constitute the means by which this relationship take place. Organizational values result from this multilayered process of interaction, synthesis and transformational process.

10.1.1 Structure-agency theory and organizational values

For a sports team like Crusaders, values are fundamental to the institutional eco-system which bind people as agencies with the structure. The three sets of values discussed in Chapter 6 are: Values set by the Crusaders Board in the 2017 Strategic Plan – relentless, humble, agile, accountable, credible, connected; values unearthed by the consultant that worked on their brand review in 2019 - connection, resilience, identity, good people; values discovered during this study that was discussed by the staff and some playing group officials – enjoyment, connectedness, innovation, sense of belonging, continuous improvement, integrity.

The 2017 Strategic Plan values utilised results-oriented terminology and includes both 'hard' values, which are objective and straightforward to quantify, and 'soft' values, which are more subjective and elusive. Soft values are challenging to quantify since they are subjective and can only be done by surveying people's perceptions (Vidal Puche & Maduko, 2020; Wright, 2018). Super Rugby is a company, and the mindset that created these values was results-oriented; therefore, it makes sense for the Board to accept and drive them. During the brand review after the Mosque shootings in March 2019, the consultants found that these were the values that the Crusaders playing group had consistently upheld since the first year of Super Rugby in 1996. When analysing the terminology used, the values appeared to centre on deep relational or interactive fundamentals that foster healthy teams. They are primarily soft values because they are difficult to quantify and this can only be done through surveys that assess perceptions.

These values appeared to be more interpersonal, interactive, and useful for team building than the strategic plan values. The values are at the heart of everything the playing group does, including their preparation, the environment they create, how they play, and how they respond to external forces. The values guide everything they do. The values discovered in this study are a mixture of relational values (soft) and hard values. This is understandable because the majority of those staff interviewed were from the support team and commercial division and their roles would require

them to interact with the playing group, internal parties and external stakeholders for some of them. Their widened perception will essentially expose them to both the soft and hard values.

At first glance, having three sets of values may appear chaotic and detrimental to the organisation. Dual motivation is impossible since you can only be loyal to one entity at a time. Since adopting these values and unveiling the Board's Strategic Plan in 2017, the Crusaders have benefited from this controversial, yet exciting platform. Since the club's formation five years ago, or even far earlier, these three sets of values have neither conflicted or been prioritised over one another. Although it may appear contradictory to an outsider, the internal environment has discovered a means to move forward without being adversely influenced by different values. Some values overlap and exist in the three groups, but they are all linked to the same value and are designated by different labels.

The proposed category of values (Soft and Hard) will give the Crusaders more clarity and discipline on how they approach operational and strategic matters. It will help elevate the current culture and performance to a new level and prepare the organisation for future challenges.

Values bring discipline in managing tangible and intangible resources, especially for an organisation like the Crusaders. Furthermore, values bring energy and purpose to the organisation and make the journey meaningful, regardless of how challenging the process may be. They know the direction of their journey and are not easily swayed by what they go through until they reach their destination. Additionally, values establish a belief system and bring together a community or village. In an organisational context, values establish a system of approach that necessitates appropriate behaviours of collective individuals, including activities and responsibilities demanded by the value system (Enz, 1988). The Crusaders' values have been critical to their success for the last 25 years. The values are the *brains*, *the soul*, and *the engine room* that drives the Crusaders' Rugby Franchise. The values are the organisation's Central Processing Unit (CPU). No matter how slick or expensive it may be, all the tangible and intangible resources are just as good as its brains – the CPU or Values.

In chapter 6, I discussed the theory introduced by Dolan & Garcia (2002) called Management by Values (MBV), in which they used the concept to study a Canadian Sports organisation on the use of organisational values in non-profit organisations. The theory is a newly proposed tool for managing organisations in which leaders use values to manage the daily functions of their organisation. MBV is so prevalent that if a more professional workforce is expected to produce high-quality work, traditional economic concepts, such as efficiency and return on investment, are not as important as qualitative factors or values, such as trust, creativity, or honesty. In fact, the importance of these qualitative factors or values may even be greater (Dolan & Garcia, 2002). As such, the theory argues that there is a strong link between the values that employees live by and their performance at the organisational and individual levels. The

Crusaders' environment is values-driven and therefore creates the environment for resilience and innovation, supports diversity in approach at all facets of the organisation and, consequently, elevates their levels of competitive advantage. From the analysis of the interviews, one 'value' stood out and was not covered by the 2017 Strategic Plan nor the Consultants for their brand review; Continuous Learning or Organisational Continuous Learning (COL), as discussed in Chapter 7 (Tortorella et al., 2020). COL training is systematically approached at various levels and a rate so that all parties are in agreement. A study explored the correlation between the ten Lean Production (LP) implementations and seven Learning Organization (LO) dimensions in the literature discussions. The seven LO dimensions used were: *c*reate a continuous learning; promote dialogue; encourage collaboration and team learning; create systems to capture and share learning; empower individuals into a collective vision direction; connect organisation and its environment and provide strategic leadership for learning

It was thoroughly discussed by the staff during the interviews of this study as something very important to their sustainable growth and consistency as champions. As Pablo Matera, the Argentinean rugby star, summed up his experience so far with the Crusaders, it is all about the process and the desire to be better and learn all the time (Skysport, 2022)This study shows that continuous learning is the embedding value that incubates, nurture and drives other values to maximum potential.

This study evaluated the Crusaders values using structuration theory, namely Structural-centered and Agency theory. All values identified were grouped into two categories of Crusaders' values, i.e., Hard Values and Soft values. Hence, renamed Crusades' hard values "Structural Values". Organizational structure and output are shaped by structural values. Thus, accommodating the soft values or behaviors the organization promotes and considers important to its success. The study also renamed "Soft values" as "Agency Values" to appropriately describe the accepted behaviors and principles that drive all corporate interactions and incentives, improving performance. Fuel and structural values are valued by the agency, which has helped the Crusaders succeed over time.

10.1.2 **Structure-agency at work: Innovation and resilience of the Crusaders**

From the interviews with the Crusaders rugby team, it is quite interesting to note that different sections approach *innovation* differently merely because of the different levels of challenges each section is exposed to and is more or less unique to its core roles.

Resilience and innovation are two critical pillars that the Crusaders know so well and have lived and breathed in this space for so long. From the interviews it was quite prevalent that the only reason why the Crusaders are who they are, and why they have attained phenomenal achievements, is because of the positive environment they operate in that

is driven by leadership that allows everyone to be resilient and creative. The challenges they had to endure such as the Earthquakes, the Pike River Coal mine accident, the 2019 Mosque shootings, and consequently the Crusaders logo change gave the organisation great opportunities to be resilient and innovate something that is transformational. One of the staff quoted the statement by one of the legendary coaches of the Crusaders, Wayne Smith "In greatest tragedies, comes greatest opportunities". The Crusaders organization knew and shared, also by a few interviewees, that one of their greatest competitors is *themselves*. Once they think they have done it, that is when they are at their greatest risk of being surpassed by competitors. The *Crusaders Academy* has been one of their greatest innovations and the setup was done in response to their values and need to be ahead of their competitors. "Resilience is the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganise while maintaining a comparable state," and the embedded system retains the same functionality, structure, uniqueness, and responsiveness (Gunderson et al., 2006, p. 1). On the other hand, transformational change necessitates a new system with new apparatuses, relationships, interactions, and feedback. Ecosystems are able to reorganise utilising the same components, but produce an altogether new creation.

Over the years, the Crusaders have developed a systematic approach in developing talents through their academy and there is *continuous learning and improvement* throughout the organisation. What was noticeable also during the interviews was that a good number of interviewees were former school teachers and hold key roles in the organisation that directly influences its dynamics, particularly those dealing with the players. They were quite meticulous in their responses and were very detailed. One can only imagine the quality of interaction between players and staff and general communication within the team and within the organisation. Their meticulous, precise and clear communication styles would always rub off onto others. Furthermore the patience to allow proper learning would be quite ideal in this very competitive environment.

Evidently, the limited resources and challenging situations that the Club has gone through, has not at all turned the organisation into turmoil. In fact, it has unleashed hidden potentials and skills that can only be displayed in the face of unfavourable situations. One such example is analysts coming up with an innovative way to give real time feedback to the players during their training, by using golf carts to carry TV screens and drive into the training huddles to give a brief of their analysis. This allows players to adjust and correct their mistakes during training, compared to going back to the classroom sessions hours later to hear of feedback from the Analysts. The limited funds for a sophisticated tool have pushed the Analyst to think beyond the shortfall point and to develop an innovative solution.

In order to provide highly favourable results, both pillars rely on very positive values. The importance of continuous learning cannot be overstated in maintaining a climate that fosters creativity and resilience. As was already mentioned, the values foster a belief system that is focused on excellence and discipline. Being innovative is an

indication that a company is driven to lead and excel in the market space in which it competes. Because of the nature of life, challenges and difficult times are unavoidable; nevertheless, when you have strong values and a mentality or belief system that is focused on excellence, resilience naturally arises.

In Chapter 7, I argued that the Innovation can only occur in an uncomfortable situation but must be approached with a learning mindset and a resilient attitude. Under resilience, the organisation or the individual can either have a stationary resilience experience by which it returns to its orginial state after the challenges, or the resilient experience which ushers the individual or t organisation into a newly transformed state, better than it was. Hence, from the Crusaders' perspective, both experiences were necessary, because they could not neglect their rich history as it has given them great lessons that are still applicable in current scenarios. They have also learned to transform into something better as part of their resilient process, and this gives a platform for innovation. The uncomfortable situation that produces innovation can either be by choice; choosing to be better every time and not complacent at one level, or driven by challenges that drive one or an entity to be resilient and nnovative in order to survive.

A learning culture, or continuous learning is an organisnational value of the Crusaders, and as such provides the platform for innovation and resilience. The values such as continuous learning bring discipline in managing tangible and intangible resources, especially for an organisation like the Crusaders. Values give energy and purpose to the organisation and make the journey meaningful, regardless of how challenging the process may be. Being innovative is an indication that a company is driven to lead and excel in the market space in which it competes. This mindset, therefore, gives birth to a diversified approach. Diversity is not only a social obligation but a tool to increase innovation by having diversified approaches in resolving issues or projects. An increase in diversity will also increase innovation. When innovation increases, the Crusaders' competitive advantage also elevates.

10.1.3 **Diversity of agency**

Diversity of people as agency is the a key strategy for success in any organisation striving to be competitive in a market or area of influence. Diversity is a mindset that requires someone with courage, with an eye to the future. From the interviews, this pillar came out very strongly as by far the point of difference between the Crusaders and its comeptitors. Anyone can practice diversity, but the real challenge is how far they are willing to go, and In what form of diversity are they willing to explore and establish as a critical component for their survival. Since the Crusaders have been predominantly driven by their values, particularly 'continuously learning', they have deliberately diversified in most of their operations, even in the coaching team; for some years always having someone from Europe in the ranks as an Assistant Coach. They bring a mindset and details that differ from the Southern Hemisphere style of play, let alone the

New Zealand way. Historically, the organisation used to be dominated by white males, but in today's structure, more women have been absorbed, significantly in leadership roles, including at the leadership level. There is more diversity in the type of players contracted into the franchise and this only adds strength to the existing team. The Crusaders' rugby squad from 2012 to 2021 saw an increase in the number of Pacific island descent players, from 7% in 2012 to around one third of the squad by 2021

Whilst the Crusaders are doing so well in many areas of diversity, there are a few critical areas that they still need to improve on, and this has been consistently echoed through the interviews. It is still a journey and they have not yet arrived at where they would love to be. One of the Managers, when interviewed, concurred to the fact that there is much room yet, but they have improved over the years to date. The Crusaders have received certification as a LGBTIQ community to indicate support for inclusion, however it will be interesting to see if one of the super rugby players openly admits that he is a gay or homosexual. The focus dwells on continuously improving and being inclusive – not that they are not inclusive but how they can get better each year.

Cox (1994), an African-American scholar renowned as an architect of diversity management, stated that earlier literature defined diversity by focusing only on people (as in gender) and 'racio-ethnic minority'(1994, p. 52). He argued that *diversity* is far more than the traditional descriptors and that the early research coverage was too focused on the minority group oppression in a majority social framework, thus creating a barrier that distorts the realisation of true abilities. Hence, this renewed perception fostered confidence in everyone's attributes towards accomplishments, regardless of their status or identity. The Crusaders have really looked beyond the traditional descriptors of diversity that deny the realisation of true capbilities of the minority, or less thought of avenues in terms of strategy and operations. Many of the current Crusaders' perspectives align with the theories discussed. It is not only about the traditional racial or ethnic diversity, but a whole array of diversity factors, including gender, ideas, perspectives, coaching, methodologies, and processes. During one of the former players' alumni meetings, they shared similar sentiments on diversity and highlighted the many changes in the Club compared to when they were playing in the red and black jersey. The team always seemed like it had a *look* and a *feel,* and now the majority of the feel and look has changed for the better.

Diversity is a result of *values* such as innovation, resilience and continuous improvement, as discussed in Chapter 6. The diversity of players and officials' ethnicity has allowed higher innovation activities in the Club. There is more than one perspective on a particular strategy or technical approach to rugby for aspects, such as the set pieces. The inclusion of Argentinian captain, Pablo Matera, increased the fan base of the Crusaders in Argentina who has a population of 46 million, with rugby being the second most popular sport. This has the potential to increase the competitive advantage

of the Club commercially. The inclination to be certified with a Rainbow tick was not necessarily due to the need to have it done; however, it indicates the perception of the organisation to be more aware of the daily environment it operates in. The development of the women's game has been a significant diversity shift. Therefore, it has increased the numbers of those interested in their games from fans or rugby lovers and particularly at the commercial end.

10.1.4 **Structure-agency and competitive advantage**

Competetive advantage requires the resielce and strength of both structure and agency. From the study interviews, it is evident that the Crusaders understand the need for a competitive edge or they will fall behind their rivals. Over the years, they have been able to manage the external forces exerting pressure into their organisation and turned it into opportunities. This represents the level of resilience and innovation that the organisation has, leading into strong competitive advantage. These two pillars have been motivated by their organisational values.

Historically, the Canterbury region is a settlement well planned by the Canterbury Association back in England. Their vision was that the Canterbury Community would be different from others in New Zealand, with a hierarchical structure similar to the English Club with the Anglican church at its heart (Wilson, 2015a). By design, the region was deemed for great things, and the careful choice of people from England to settle in the region would only translate to great values and attributes which speaks volumes of the great ethics which were passed down. Presumably the positive values that were passed down also influenced their community. Over the years, the Crusaders developed several competitive advantages.

In his book *The competitive advantage of nations,* published in 1990, Michael Porter rejected the ideology that the escalation of world business will derail nationalism. Instead, a company's competitive edge will be established locally; at its home base (Goett, 1999). A new challenge was discussed in a study on the innovativeness of Multi-National Enterprises (MNE) conducted by Ervits (2018). He suggested that while innovative initiatives of MNEs remain largely in their country of origin, China has a growing reputation as a research centre for many MNEs from developed economies. Intriguingly, the nature of the national culture plays a crucial role in the level of innovation in an organisation (Turró et al., 2014).

The coaches, players, and officials as agencies are all aware of the advantages they have over their opponents, including their rich history and the excellent principles they have inherited from the pioneers. Being a champion club provides much competitive edge to its commercial prowess. As long as they win, it keeps the funders and sponsors pleased as they will only identify with the best. The magnificent 25 years of Crusaders' dominance in the Super Rugby

Competition has built a solid framework for the club to be commercially viable. The biggest sponsors of New Zealand rugby and Super rugby clubs normally approach the Crusaders first when they need to roll out one of their goods. They talk to them and seek their feedback on whether the proposed products will be successful, before formally introducing them to other rugby regions in New Zealand. That shows the level of confidence in the Crusaders' brand and the people that run its operations and strategic mechanism. It is an acknowledgement of the financial innovativeness of the Crusaders that even though they are challenged by limited sitting stadiums, they still have the prowess and the innovativeness to edge others commercially.

10.1.5 **Competitive advantage: Values, diversity, innovation and resilience of agency**

Not only are the Crusaders results-driven, they are also values- driven. This attitude speaks volumes of how much their values dictate how they do things and conduct themselves and how these values have become an intrinsic fundamental of their growth over the years. Longevity of players and officials is very important for building cohesive teams (Sportsmith, 2018). Changes need patience in order to build into great results. If clubs or organisations keep chopping and cutting off players there won't be any continuity for learning and no real capacity to grow cohesion amongst the players and officials. Teams with high cohesion tend to perform above expectations. By the time this study was conducting interviews, over 17 Crusaders' players had played over 100 games for the Club. Since the inception of Super Rugby, the Crusaders have been overseen by only three CEOs: former New Zealand Rugby CEO Steve Tew, Hamish Riach, and current incumbent Colin Mansbridge. The longevity of players and officials signifies the very positive environment in the Crusaders that has been supported by leadership. This also points to the calibre of the Leadership team and the environment they have built to keep people longer. Longevity allows people or an organisation to master a skill then they innovate. Because of the learning environment in the Crusaders, diversity naturally evolves; diversity from a social perspective and also in approach, thinking, processes and methodologies. All these require good solid values to fuel the passion of each pillar discussed in this study.

This research teaches us several important lessons. To begin, whatever you see with your eyes or what is visible or tangible is only at face value. They are simply the outcome of a much deeper structure-agency processes. The Crusaders have been successful because they focus on the intangible resources in developing their agencies through their values. The values bring discipline to the management of tangible and intangible resources, which is particularly important for an organisation like the Crusaders. Furthermore, values give energy and purpose to the agencies as well as structure and make the journey meaningful, no matter how difficult the process may be. The Crusaders have realised that if they manage their soft skills and intangible resources effectively, the results will follow. What can also be learned

is that innovation can only thrive the structure if it is given the right environment to grow in as it requires the right environment to thrive. However, innovation is linked to resilience, and resilience can only occur in challenging circumstances.

As Giddens reminds us, the complex and dialectical synergy between structure and agency work in multiple ways in both implicit and explicit forms. Crusaders has strategically and smartly utilized this to work to their advantage. While they are a successful sports team in the eyes of the public, their corporate and organizational culture and people-based values behind the scene provide the conditions for transformational success. Although organizational culture, values, innovation, resilience, diversity and competitive advantage are not tangible, they do provide the social, cultural and intellectual engine for organizational and people success when used the right way in the right circumstances as Crusaders has proven.

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