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Legitimacy-seeking organizational strategies in controversial industries:

A case study analysis and a bidimensional model

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ABSTRACT

Controversial industry sectors, such as alcohol, gambling, and tobacco, though long-established, suffer organizational legitimacy problems. The authors consider various strategies used to seek organizational legitimacy in the U.K. casino gambling market. The findings are based on a detailed, multistakeholder case study pertaining to a failed bid for a regional supercasino. They suggest four generic strategies for seeking organizational legitimacy in this highly complex context: construing, earning, bargaining, and capturing, as well as pathways that combine these strategies. The case analysis and proposed bidimensional model of generic legitimacy-seeking strategies contribute to limited literature on organizational legitimacy in controversial industry sectors. In addition, beyond organizations active in controversial contexts, this study and its implications are useful for individuals and organizations supporting or opposing the organizational legitimacy of organizations in controversial industries.

KEYWORDS

Case study; casino; controversial industry; corporate social responsibility; legitimacy; stakeholders.

INTRODUCTION

The precise categorization of controversial industry sectors and organizations (hereafter, controversial industries) varies over time (Campbell, 2007; Sethi, 1975) and by culture (Fam et al., 2002; Katsanis, 1994). In the modern era, several legal industries are widely perceived as unethical or offensive and therefore can be classified as controversial (Freeman, 2007; Waller et al., 2005). Such controversial industries relate to “products, services or concepts that for reasons of delicacy, decency, morality, or even fear, elicit reactions of distaste, disgust, offence or outrage when mentioned or when openly presented” (Wilson and West, 1981, p. 92), such as alcohol, gambling, firearms, pornography, or tobacco. Actors in these controversial markets struggle to gain and maintain organizational legitimacy (Palazzo and Richter, 2005; Rundle-Thiele et al., 2008).

Rather than focusing on organizations in controversial industries though, literature on organizational legitimacy emphasizes the importance of gaining the support and approval of external stakeholders to gain access to resources and operate successfully (Meyer and Scott, 1983; Suchman, 1995). In this sense, “organizational legitimacy seems to provide organizations with a ‘reservoir of support’ that enhances the likelihood of organizational survival” (Tost, 2011, p. 686) and helps perpetuate the organization’s influence by increasing stakeholders’ loyalty and readiness to accept organizational actions, decisions, and policies (Tyler and Blader, 2005; Weigelt and Camerer, 1988). Regardless of whether research takes an institutional approach, predicting that the environment solely determines the legitimacy of the organization, or a strategic approach, such that the organization has some influence on its own legitimacy, it concurs that organizational legitimacy is vital (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Emery and Trist, 1965; Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005).

For organizations operating in controversial industries, the standards of scrutiny are much higher than for those classified as uncontroversial; the range of activities that organizations in

controversial industries can undertake, such as corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, also appears constrained by their infamy (Byrne, 2007, 2010; DeColle and York, 2009; Frynas, 2005; Yoon et al., 2006). Despite such acknowledgments of the chronic, persistent, and significant legitimacy issues for organizations in controversial industries and their impact on organizational activities, relatively little prior research pertaining to organizational legitimacy has focused explicitly on organizations in controversial industries and their legitimacy-seeking concerns. For example, prior research addressing legitimacy-seeking behaviors notes the comprehensive concerns of new organizations and emerging industries (e.g., Aldrich and Fiol, 1994; Freeman et al., 1983; Zimmerman and Zeitz, 2002), organizations confronting organizational or institutional change contexts (e.g., Hongwei and Bruch, 2010; Ruef and Scott, 1998; Vaara et al., 2006), and firms struggling with timely, legitimacy-threatening events and situations (e.g., Beelitz and Merkl-Davies, 2012; Elsbach, 1994; Erkama and Vaara, 2010).

In contrast, we examine, from a strategic perspective, the organizational legitimacy-seeking behaviors of organizations in the highly complex casino gambling industry, whose reputation remains tarnished by its associations with immoral and illegal activities, such as crime, prostitution, and extortion, as well as the damaging social ills of problem gambling (Kindt, 2006; Miller and Schwartz, 1998; Pizam and Pokela, 1985). The central question that guides our study relates to determining which strategies organizations in controversial industries use to seek organizational legitimacy and the legitimacy sources on which they draw. We contribute by identifying four generic legitimacy-seeking strategies in the casino gambling industry: construing, earning, bargaining, and capturing, as well as their combinations. Beyond the insights for organizations active in controversial (and less controversial) industries, our case study analysis and four strategies generate valuable

implications for individuals and organizations that support or oppose the organizational legitimacy of these corporate actors.

We structure the remainder of this article as follows. First, the theoretical background introduces the problems of legitimacy for organizations in controversial industries and appraises relevant theories and frameworks from the organizational legitimacy domain. Second, the methodology describes the background to the case, as well as the data collection and analysis. Third, the findings present the case of Kerzner International's failed entry into the U.K. casino market. Fourth, we discuss the conceptual contributions of our study, some managerial and stakeholder insights, and limitations and avenues for further research.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Organizational legitimacy

As a critical notion for understanding the organization–environment interface, organizational legitimacy has been explored and conceptualized in organization and management literature through a diverse range of theoretical lenses, including institutional theory (e.g., DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Ruef and Scott, 1998; Zucker, 1987), organizational ecology (e.g., Aldrich and Fiol, 1994; Zimmerman and Zeitz, 2002), resource dependence theory (e.g., Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975; Pfeffer, 1981), and agency theory (e.g., Woodward et al., 1996).

Suchman (1995) synthesizes this large, diverse body of literature by highlighting the similarities and disparities between what he calls the two leading approaches (institutional and strategic). He also defines organizational legitimacy with a middle-of-the-road perspective, as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995, p. 574). Thus, when it uses an institutional approach, the organization (and its legitimacy) appears shaped and influenced primarily by the external environment, and its organizational legitimacy reflects the set of beliefs, values,

and norms in broader society, which form and give meaning to existing and emerging organizational practices (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer and Scott, 1983). The strategic approach instead assumes that legitimacy is “conferred when stakeholders—that is, internal and external audiences affected by organizational outcomes—endorse and support an organization’s goals and activities” (Elsbach and Sutton, 1992, p. 700). This perspective acknowledges a greater organizational influence over its own legitimacy (e.g., Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Heugens and Landler, 2009; Kostova and Zaheer, 1999), such that “actions ... can be taken to legitimate an organization” (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975, p. 122).

Organizations seeking, supporting, or opposing organizational legitimacy ideally are cognizant of the bases of legitimacy they aim to influence. Research on organizational legitimacy identifies three bases of legitimacy: pragmatic, moral, or cognitive. Pragmatic legitimacy rests on the “self-interested calculation of an organization’s most immediate audiences” (Suchman, 1995, p. 578) and gets bestowed when the organization is supported by its stakeholders, because the organization offers something valuable and thus gets something valuable in return. Moral legitimacy instead reflects a normative evaluation of the organization and its activities (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994), which rests on audiences’ conscious judgments about whether its actions are “the right thing to do” and are worthy of moral approval. Moral legitimacy depends on stakeholders’ value systems and “is socially constructed by giving and considering reasons to justify certain actions, practices, or institutions” (Palazzo and Scherer, 2006, p. 73). Finally, unlike pragmatic and moral legitimacies, cognitive legitimacy does not involve an evaluation. It is based instead on comprehensibility or taken-for-grantedness, as a feature of the organizational environment (Jepperson, 1991). Cognitive legitimacy evolves from “the mere acceptance of the organization as necessary or inevitable” (Suchman, 1995, p. 82). In turn, pragmatic legitimacy is less resilient than moral legitimacy, which in turn is less resilient than cognitive

legitimacy (Suchman, 1995; Zucker, 1987). Thus legitimacy-seeking behaviors become more difficult, moving from pragmatic to moral to cognitive (Suchman, 1995).

Managing organizational legitimacy

Suggesting ways to manage organizational legitimacy, Suchman (1995) distinguishes between seeking continuity and seeking enhanced credibility, as well as between seeking passive acquiescence (i.e., an organization wants a particular audience to leave it alone) or active support (i.e., an organization seeks protracted audience intervention). Research pertaining to the specific ways organizations in controversial industries seek continuity, credibility, and passive or active support remains sparse; notable exceptions include Patriotta et al. (2011) and Du and Vieira (2012). Extant studies instead tend to focus on “reactive responses to unforeseen crisis of meaning,” in which “suddenly, the successes of the past become impediments to the future” (Suchman, 1995, p. 597). These contributions help address the impact of certain controversial actions on an organization’s initiatives and ability to manage legitimacy (Elsbach and Sutton, 1993; Hannan and Carroll, 1992) but largely ignore organizations in controversial industries that face long-term, continuous legitimacy-related issues, due to the nature of their industry.

Literature on the management of organizational legitimacy also suggests potential actions for defending, maintaining, or gaining organizational legitimacy, which might suggest strategically appropriate initiatives for organizations seeking legitimacy in controversial industries. These legitimacy-seeking strategies and tactics include obtaining external endorsements (Galaskiewicz, 1985) and developing and maintaining relationships and collaborations with legitimate entities (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Oliver, 1991), such as when respected individuals serve on management boards (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975). Other efforts might aim to construct a firewall between past (short-term) illegitimate actions and the overall essence of the organization (Suchman, 1995) or to decouple or distance the

organization from illegitimate actions by preexisting regimes (Elsbach and Sutton, 1992). Impression management and the use of normalizing accounts (e.g., denials, excuses, justifications, explanations, confessions) are more common if the firm faces acute legitimacy threats (Elsbach, 1994; Suchman, 1995). Finally, some firms engage in efforts to identify with symbols or values that offer a stronger base of social legitimacy (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975), such as through CSR-related initiatives, disclosures, and communications (Deegan, 2002; Werther and Chandler, 2005).

The applicability and strategic relevance of such actions and initiatives in the specific contexts of controversial industries remains unclear. Because seeking organizational legitimacy inappropriately can trigger the “possibility of dangerous feedback loops” (Suchman, 1995, p. 599), the general lack of trust in controversial industries means that organizations in these industries risk severe reputational and legitimacy-related backlash if they develop and communicate about their CSR commitments and initiatives (Frynas, 2005; Palazzo and Richter, 2005; Yoon et al., 2006). In addition, the relevance of these actions and initiatives may be less appropriate for different types of stakeholders. Finally, we lack any structured or comprehensive typologies and generic categories that might provide a clearer picture of legitimacy-seeking efforts by controversial industries.

In short, controversial industries and the organizations in them represent a challenge to organizational legitimacy literature, in that they are neither shaped by nor fully conform to the institutional environment, as suggested by the institutional approach, nor can they effectively improve their legitimacy status strategically or engage in public impression management (Miller and Michelson, 2012; Milne and Patten, 2002; Palazzo and Richter, 2005). We thus need further knowledge about different industry contexts and their organizational legitimacy issues and management (Lounsbury and Glynn, 2001; Suchman, 1995).

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative, inductive research designs can reveal what lies behind any complex, poorly understood phenomenon (Eisenhardt, 1989; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Yin, 2003). Such designs elucidate the contextual meanings of events, processes, and structures (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In a qualitative research process, the use of secondary data and multiple interviews also helps develop rich insights and provides the basis for greater transferability of the findings to other contexts (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Considering the relative paucity of research related to legitimacy-seeking strategies by organizations in controversial industries, the complexity of the associated multistakeholder processes, and the theory development goals of our study, we adopt a single case study strategy (Yin, 2003). In-depth single case studies “are capable of developing and refining generalizable concepts and frames of reference” (Pettigrew, 1985, p. 242). Therefore, we select an information-rich case that exemplifies the legitimacy-seeking phenomenon (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002).

Case selection

Following the introduction of the U.K. Gambling Act 2005, the U.K. government established a competitive bidding process for casino providers. In this process, the global casino operator Kerzner International used various strategies to seek legitimacy in attempting a successful entry into the U.K. casino market, through the right to run a regional supercasino complex. Kerzner International chose to partner with the Manchester City Council, which was interested in the regeneration of a deprived area of the city. The regional casino development was planned to provide a regeneration investment of £260m, create 3,000–5,000 jobs for local residents in East Manchester, and provide other supply chain opportunities for local businesses. However, the bid ultimately failed. Our in-depth case study, focused on legitimacy-seeking strategies within a controversial industry, was part of a wider study that

examined cross-sector social partnerships and regeneration. Some of the data reported thus have been used in other published work (see [X]; reference hidden for review process).

The highly complex legitimacy-seeking process associated with the Manchester supercasino involved specific organizational stakeholders (e.g., local developers, potential partner businesses), community stakeholders (e.g., East Manchester Residents' Forum; Greater Manchester Faith and Community Group; CSR and gambling experts and academics; Manchester Joint Health Unit; New East Manchester Ltd.), regulatory stakeholders (e.g., Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Police), and the local and national media (*The Daily Mail*). The case provides a rich, long-term (more than three years) example of a legitimacy-seeking plan by an organization within a controversial industry. It also features aspects of CSR, such as problem gambling minimization measures proposed to limit harmful social impacts.

Data collection

We develop a rich case history around the legitimacy-seeking efforts of Kerzner International as it attempted to enter the U.K. casino gambling market by gathering data about the processes and strategies Kerzner International adopted to gain legitimacy for its planned launch of the Manchester supercasino. To gather these data, we conducted interviews with 10 key representatives from nine different organizations within the organizational, community, and regulatory sectors. Participants included CEOs, managers, and lead representatives from the key stakeholder groups surrounding the project, whether supportive or opposing, which had the power to grant legitimacy to Kerzner International's proposed casino development. We stopped the interviews upon saturation—that is, when extra interviews begin to yield few new insights (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The informant details appear in Table 1. Each interview was digitally recorded and averaged 90 minutes in length (range: 45–120 minutes). Each interview was transcribed, resulting in 240 A4 pages of transcript.

{Insert Table 1 around here}

Our approach relied on constant comparative analysis. After every few interviews, we wrote theoretical memos as part of our theory-building process (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), refined the research questions, and developed a theoretical focus for our subsequent interviews. During each round of interviews, informants described their attitudes toward the legitimacy of Kerzner International and the supercasino project, as well as how their attitudes changed over the project period. We also asked informants if, how, and why they became involved in the casino project. These interviews contained a mix of grand-tour questions and floating prompts to reduce interviewer bias and allow for rich insights (McCracken, 1986).

As the interviews commenced, it became clear that informants were mostly in agreement in their initial concerns about the concept of a supercasino in the East Manchester area. Thus our subsequent interviews focused on understanding the nature of the legitimacy-seeking process used by Kerzner International, as well as its impact. Informants noted which factors contributed to them reevaluating the legitimacy of Kerzner International and the proposed supercasino. If no change took place, we examined why. During these phases, we engaged in constant comparisons among the emerging theory, new data, and extant literature. Such dialectical tacking drove our approach. Furthermore, prior to each interview, we reviewed publicly available secondary material, including more than 120 documents, to increase our familiarity with the case. These multiple sources improved the quality of the final interpretation and helped ensure triangulation (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Yin, 2003).

Data analysis

During the case analysis, we elaborated on theoretical categories through open and axial coding procedures (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). We tacked back and forth between research on organizational legitimacy and our interview data and thus derived theoretical categories and sub-categories (Spiggle, 1994). We analyzed each interview transcript to gain a richer

understanding of the type of legitimacy-seeking strategies employed, their motivation, and the responses of stakeholder groups.

During the open coding stage, we read and examined discrete parts of the interview transcripts to identify similarities and differences. Each author undertook this analysis independently and classified each interview part according to an initial coding scheme: casino industry legitimacy, Kerzner International legitimacy, legitimacy types, strategies used to gain legitimacy, and reasons the legitimacy evaluations were changed or maintained. The authors then met to discuss and agree on any parts of the analysis subject to disagreement.

We next applied axial coding to reassemble the data into categories and subcategories, in an effort to understand the role of the various legitimacy strategies and processes. For example, due to their unique and often particular characteristics, different stakeholder groups tended to focus only on specific issues that they believed were the most appropriate and relevant for the casino development project. Finally, we applied selective coding by integrating and refining the theory emerging from our data.

Throughout the study, multiple methods served to improve the quality of the research. In particular, the four researchers provided independent interpretations of the findings; we conducted multiple interviews; and respondents had an opportunity to provide feedback on initial findings. In addition, though all four colleagues performed independent coding of the transcripts, the same interviewer conducted all the interviews, to reduce the potential for bias (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

FINDINGS

We present our findings in four sections. First, building on prior literature and integrating the research findings, we present an overall bidimensional model of legitimacy-seeking strategies, which integrates various legitimacy-seeking tactics into four generic strategies. Second, we consider each of the four generic types of strategy outlined by this model. Third,

we describe the strategic pathways of legitimacy-seeking strategies. Fourth, we detail the outcomes of the legitimacy-seeking strategic initiatives.

Bidimensional model of legitimacy-seeking strategies in controversial industries

The findings from our case study indicate that Kerzner International used four generic strategies in seeking legitimacy. The framework of generic strategies depicted in Figure 1 represents a development and structuring of these legitimacy-seeking tactics.

{Insert Figure 1 about here}

The horizontal axis in Figure 1 divides the strategies according to their foundation. A transactional approach makes investments (of corporate tangible and material resources) to attract, compensate, or reassure stakeholders. An interactional approach instead suggests the organization develops contacts (using corporate relational and communication resources) with targeted stakeholders to build dialogue and understanding. The vertical axis instead pertains to the underlying objective of the strategy (Suchman, 1995) and divides the generic strategies into those seeking passive acquiescence and those pursuing active support. The former threshold or baseline-level strategies recognize that the organization must achieve a base level of legitimacy to be able to operate and perform without opposition from stakeholders; it is dichotomous (i.e., “it either does or does not meet the threshold,” Zimmerman and Zeitz, 2002, p. 428; see also Rutherford and Buller, 2006). The latter auxiliary- or supplementary-level strategies typically take the form of protracted stakeholder backing and intervention.

Legitimacy-seeking strategies

Construing (threshold) legitimacy

The construing strategy represents a baseline-level strategy, aimed at producing passive support and acquiescence. This strategy likely gets used when the organization perceives a significant risk of moral disapproval of its business activities or some potential

misunderstanding of its business proposal from key stakeholders. Therefore, this strategy mostly addresses the moral and—to a certain extent—cognitive bases of the organization’s legitimacy.

Because stakeholders targeted with this strategy often are strong opponents (e.g., local and national faith groups, some national media, some national politicians), the organization may try to engage in long-term interactions with them. A realistic prospect is that the firm seeks and gains passive support through an improved or modified understanding, achieved because of its substantial communication and progressive sensegiving efforts. The organization endeavors to clarify and explain, through repeated dialogue, the meaning and appropriateness of its actions and to “influence the meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organizational reality [and activities]” (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991, p. 442).

For example, Kerzner International realized at an early stage that faith (religious) groups would be very difficult to convince about the merits of a supercasino, based on comments such as, “We didn’t want a casino. We would never want a casino because we feel that it is wrong and in a sense it is against our beliefs” (Rev. Stephen, faith group member). With a construing legitimacy strategy toward faith groups, the goal was to bring them to a limited cognitive adjustment, “a change in thinking or perception” (Foldy et al., 2008, p. 514), closer to acquiescence to the project. The faith groups participated in frequent consultations and dialogue with Kerzner International or its partners in early stages. The approach aimed to ensure that the religious bodies would be progressively convinced to remain neutral in any political debates:

We had attended meetings of that [faith] group and project representatives went and talked to the Bishop and said, ‘Look, we are thinking about this (casino), we know your views, but we need to talk about it. Can we come along and do a presentation to your group, and can we open up that dialogue?’ (Tom, CEO, New East Manchester [NEM] Ltd.).

Many meetings and consultations took place with the faith groups and other more skeptical stakeholders, both locally and nationally, during planning for the project. These meetings were intended to address some of the perceived misunderstandings about casinos and problem gambling. The meetings also at least partly aimed to explain aspects of the project better and minimize, or “demythify,” certain issues associated with the industry, because, “There are a lot of urban legends around casinos and it has had a pretty colorful past at some stage in America so everybody thinks that’s the way it still is, and it certainly isn’t” (Tobin Prior, CEO, Kerzner International). Furthermore, “A lot of the concerns, as is ever the case with something like gambling, are actually based more on myth than reality” (Paul Bellringer, OBE, Gambling CSR Expert).

A second route of the construing process, designed to minimize the threat that the faith groups posed to the legitimacy and success of the casino development, was to involve them in the team developing the package of CSR elements (e.g., providing problem gambling education, prevention, and treatment services) to support the casino. This package was intended to reduce the likelihood of problem gambling and seek to tackle it if it did occur. In light of available research evidence about the prevalence of problem gambling and effective prevention measures, the firm hoped that the faith groups would offer greater lenience about the nature and consequences of casino operations. That is, Kerzner International and its partners hoped that the faith groups would reduce their moral objections when—following the organization’s progressive sensegiving efforts—they came to recognize that the social impacts of casino gambling were less than anticipated, such that they would accede a threshold level of legitimacy. Accordingly, Kerzner International believed the religious lobby would remain neutral in any vote on the matter, because “We had been given assurances that there would be an abstention from the vote in Parliament” (Ian, Executive, NEM Ltd.).

The faith groups agreed to participate in developing the CSR package related to the casino, with the goal of directly minimizing any social issues that might result from the casino development. However, from the faith groups' perspective, this participation did not imply commitment to passive support for the project:

We acknowledged the likelihood of it happening and therefore that's why we engaged in the (CSR) process, if you like, as a critical voice, in order to challenge assertions over benefits and raise the profile of any concerns over weaknesses. (Rev. Stephen, faith group member)

Earning (threshold) legitimacy

Earning legitimacy also represents an entry level or threshold generic strategy, one capable of generating passive support from certain key stakeholders (e.g., city council, local residents, local media, Joint Health Unit, faith groups) but also from the organizational environment at large. In our case, this strategy relates to the development and use of initiatives that include any activities that reflect the social conscience of the organization, such as CSR. It mostly addresses moral legitimacy in relation to the impact of the organization on vulnerable groups in society. In seeking to earn threshold legitimacy, the organization endeavors to emphasize its willingness to consider, address, and neutralize potential social and societal concerns and issues that might be associated with its business proposal and thus obtain a license to operate.

Kerzner International's commitment to a significant CSR package strengthened its partnership with the Manchester City Council and reassured many other stakeholder groups. Kerzner International and the City Council invested significant resources (finance, independent specialist expertise, time, workforce) to develop what their expert advisors cited as good quality safeguarding policies. Kerzner International employed highly regarded, critical, credible, and objective specialists to help it construct a meaningful CSR package in support of the project, and "We certainly have commissioned very thorough studies into

mitigation of problem gambling” (Tobin Prior, CEO, Kerzner International). It knew the importance of the CSR safeguarding initiative, so in addition to involving the Joint Health Unit (part funded by the National Health Service) and some religious leaders, the organization gave a major role to gambling CSR experts:

One aspect of the plan and the policy on gambling was to set up a local unit, a Responsible Gambling Unit that would head off problems and address problems as and when they came up, but also to set a very high standard not only for the regional casino, but other gambling operators in the area as well. This is a very good, innovative step and would create a regional hub of a high standard. (Paul Bellringer, Gambling CSR Expert)

The CSR initiatives supporting the casino project revolved primarily around the Responsible Gambling Unit, which was to be funded largely by Kerzner International. The unit focused on education, prevention, and treatment services, as detailed in Table 2.

{Insert Table 2 about here}

Furthermore, the Responsible Gambling Unit was to be set up as a community trust, arms’ length from the City Council. The team that developed the plans for the Responsible Gambling Unit included the City Council, Kerzner International, gambling CSR experts, academics, faith groups, and psychiatric specialists. The team also gathered specialist guidance in drawing up their plans. The Unit was intended to serve the needs associated with the planned casino and the estimated 20,000 existing problem gamblers within the Manchester area. It thus planned to deal with both casino and other traditional gambling venue problems, including online gambling addiction.

The quality of the plans was widely praised; they even were held up as best practices by the Casino Advisory Panel (2007). However, some cynicism arose among stakeholders concerned about moral legitimacy and the ability of any CSR plans to address the issue of

problem gambling fully (e.g., local and national faith groups, some national politicians). Therefore, the potential for backlash associated with the earning strategy still existed.

Bargaining (auxiliary) legitimacy

This strategy to seek legitimacy represents a supplementary-level or auxiliary strategy, because it is likely to be used to generate active support for the project. It involves bargaining with stakeholder groups using various tangible resources (material, employment, infrastructure, supply chain, financial, human, skills training) to seek legitimacy. This bargaining approach mostly addresses pragmatic legitimacy (Suchman, 1995) and is unlikely to address the moral or cognitive bases of legitimacy, because it principally seeks to transact with stakeholders and encourage them to weigh the benefits of granting legitimacy against the costs of refusing to offer support and thus receiving no resource benefits (e.g., economic and infrastructure) from the organization.

In this strategic context, to be able to offer attractive resource packages that would gain it support, the organization needed to understand the motivations of the stakeholders to which it was appealing. If the strategy (and tangible resources) appeared beneficial to the targeted stakeholders on balance, they should grant pragmatic legitimacy and provide their active support. Because the groups (i.e., Manchester City Council, local residents, local businesses, local media) targeted by this strategic approach seemed less likely to oppose the business proposal, the implementation took place through a series of bargaining or negotiation rounds, rather than ongoing long-term interaction and frequent dialogue.

The investment in social infrastructure and local economy, providing direct and indirect employment opportunities in this deprived area, was a powerful negotiation tool for Kerzner International:

We wanted to basically deliver maximum benefit for Manchester. We spoke to a lot of public sector partners in terms of how we would train people, how we would transfer

skills, and how we would protect people and provide jobs. We also used Manchester architects, city planners, and traffic consultants. (Tobin Prior, CEO, Kerzner International)

In addition, the casino development represented a major business and investment opportunity, providing a wide range of facilities for local people, with extra revenues flowing into and regenerating the area:

The project was key to regenerating the area ... [It] would bring in a host of other leisure facilities, bars, restaurants, hotels and they were going to build a training centre on the site... The good points of having the casino well outweighed the bad points. It was sort of a balance. (Steve, Residents' Forum member).

In this context, the residents generally supported the development, reflecting their pragmatic perspective. The Manchester City Council clearly envisaged the potential economic advantages associated with project development in the greater Manchester area; the local business community as another important stakeholder group perceived tangible benefits of the proposed development. Several meetings therefore took place with local business groups to share the vision for the casino and leisure development, as well as foster these stakeholders' pragmatic balance of the perceived risks and benefits of the project. Active support from a significant part of the local business community developed quickly, with the recognition that "It wasn't just a casino; it was also a big hotel, leisure destination, so there would be food opportunities, training opportunities, all sorts of commercial supply-chain opportunities, which local businesses would be very keen to have a first sight of" (Ian, Executive, NEM Ltd.).

Capturing (auxiliary) legitimacy

Finally, capturing legitimacy offered another supplementary-level generic strategy capable of delivering active support from stakeholders. This strategy area relates to the pursuit of legitimacy through associative or partnering activities, mostly with the City Council and its

network of local partners (e.g., residents, businesses, developers). The legitimacy-seeking organization identifies key and significant stakeholders and seeks to develop, through interactions, closer and potential formal cooperation agreements. Such public partnering and collaboration with key (and respected, legitimate) stakeholders can lead to the transfer of legitimacy from partners to the legitimacy-seeking organization. The series of interactions with these stakeholders addresses mostly moral and, to a certain extent, cognitive legitimacy.

The capturing strategy adopted by Kerzner International was critical to its efforts to overcome its negative industry legitimacy and its own prior legitimacy problems (Clark and Muir, 2007). Having recognized Manchester as an ideal regional casino location, Kerzner International first approached a key stakeholder, the Manchester City Council. From Kerzner International's point of view, this association was pivotal to its legitimacy-seeking process, because such a partnership would bring credibility and respectability to Kerzner International's project. Soon after developing a dialogue-based, trusting relationship that allayed most of the City Council's fears about the social impact of gambling—as a result of the adoption of strategic moves aimed at construing (threshold) legitimacy—Kerzner International started working closely with the council and its CEO to develop a formal partnership. From Kerzner's point of view, the association was important to its legitimacy-seeking process, because “I think more than just high quality, they were credible” (Tobin Prior, CEO, Kerzner International).

In turn, Kerzner International was able to develop further relationships with the council's network of locally respected stakeholders (public, private, and not-for-profit organizations), which then jointly—as a cross-sector collaboration comprising public, private, and not-for-profit organizations—adopted the objective of gaining permission to build the regional casino:

It was predominantly driven by the very profit-oriented casino operators and the public authorities, but the way in which we developed the project in Manchester I think was a genuine partnership with not-for-profits as well. I think that historical relationships were fairly critical to be honest. Otherwise, I think people would have been very suspicious. (Tom, CEO, NEM Ltd)

The private sector was universally in support of what we were doing frankly, there was never any opposition to our proposals in the content of the overall strategy we presented, they all [actively] supported it. (Sir Howard, Chief Executive Officer, Manchester City Council)

The co-opting of several highly esteemed industry advisors, including experienced gambling CSR experts and academics, also helped reinforce Kerzner International's credibility as a responsible organization, intended to minimize potential backlash about its overall activities and CSR initiatives:

I was involved with the social impact of gambling for some 28 years.... They also used Professor Mark Griffiths, a noted academic in the field, who is a (problem gambling) specialist. Mark has done a tremendous amount on gambling issues.... They brought on board other international profile at all sorts of levels. (Paul Bellringer, Gambling CSR Expert)

Kerzner International thus eventually was able to build relationships with, and capture legitimacy from, various multisector, well-established, well-respected, legitimate entities. Its associations with credible and respected individuals and organizations likely contributed both evaluation-based moral legitimacy gains and less conscious improvements in the taken-for-grantedness of the organization and its project among diverse audiences.

Legitimacy-seeking strategies: pathways

Having described each type of generic legitimacy-seeking strategies, we further note that the strategies used by the organization evolved and developed through various pathways. An organization seeking legitimacy likely commences with a threshold strategy, earning or construing, to seek out passive support. The importance of gaining at least a minimum of passive support from key stakeholders cannot be underestimated. Having secured this passive support, the organization can move on to the use of an auxiliary strategy to seek more active support. Each strategy has a different emphasis on the legitimacy typologies (e.g., bargaining is almost purely pragmatic), so advancing the use of different strategies to address stakeholders can support the effective management of different bases of legitimacy. We provide two examples next.

Pathway 1: Manchester City Council

The City Council, as a pivotal element of Kerzner International's legitimacy-seeking process, first was approached by Kerzner International using a construing (threshold) legitimacy approach, which initiated early dialogue to avoid any potential early misunderstanding or misinterpretation about the nature of the project. In repeated, thoughtful discussions with the City Council, Kerzner International described and explained the nature of the project and started emphasizing its positive potential impacts on the local social and economic status of the Greater Manchester area. It also expressed early consideration of the potential negative social consequences and gambling-related issues.

This construing (threshold) legitimacy strategy was soon complemented by an earning (threshold) legitimacy strategy aimed at ensuring passive support from the Council and a bargaining (auxiliary) legitimacy strategy aimed at seeking its protracted intervention during the development of the project. That is, Kerzner International acknowledged that that the Council, with its visible public role, needed to be assured that the casino development would not be injurious to its local stakeholder groups. Therefore, it quickly worked with problem

gambling experts to gather evidence about the focal issues and also design, warrant, and initiate a relevant, significant CSR package. Simultaneously, Kerzner International, with the early support of the council, engaged in careful planning, measuring the benefits and opportunities for the Greater Manchester area. It negotiated during several bargaining rounds to clarify plans, resource allocations, and wealth redistribution.

Finally, Kerzner International moved into the auxiliary strategy of capturing, by partnering with the City Council to jointly develop the proposed casino development. This meant seeking legitimacy through association with the legitimate and credible City Council, which had a respectable track record of large, successful regeneration projects. Such a partnership (perceived as mutually beneficial by both partners) also meant accessing long-standing relationships with the City Council's stakeholders. Thus, Kerzner International took a long path through the legitimacy-seeking framework, using all four strategies to seek legitimacy from the council.

Pathway 2: Faith groups

With faith groups, Kerzner International commenced with a primary threshold strategy of construing, opening an intensive dialogue to develop better understanding and reassure this opposing group. Kerzner International then adopted the earning (threshold) legitimacy strategy, to substantiate its commitment to safeguarding and CSR and thus reinforce any passive support it was likely to gain from the faith groups. Met with skepticism from this group, Kerzner International then worked to include the faith groups in the team responsible for formulating the CSR and safeguarding package. The construing strategy toward the faith groups aimed to deliver at least minimum passive support for the project, but this co-opting tactic within a capturing strategy also had the potential to deliver active support. Although Kerzner International used some elements of this auxiliary strategy, the primary focus was

construing and, to a more limited extent, earning legitimacy strategies, to address the mostly moral legitimacy concerns and ensure passive support.

Legitimacy-seeking strategies: Outcomes

Kerzner International's overall package of legitimacy-seeking strategies failed to secure approval to develop the casino project. The finalization of the casino project needed approval by both Houses of Parliament; it was achieved in the House of Commons but failed by one vote in the House of Lords. In examining the reasons for this failure, we find that Kerzner International did not reach a threshold level of legitimacy with all key stakeholders. That is, it could not achieve the passive acquiescence of certain critical stakeholders, and some of its auxiliary strategies built on fragile, insubstantial legitimacy grounds. Therefore, the auxiliary strategies were insufficient on their own to improve the situation for Kerzner International in gaining overall approval for its proposal. Both forms of support were important and necessary for the overall legitimacy-seeking and approval campaign, but using auxiliary-level strategies without gaining threshold support ultimately could not succeed.

In particular, it appears that Kerzner International failed to secure a threshold level of legitimacy and passive support from three key audiences: faith groups, some national media, and some national politicians. Faith groups, despite the use of intensive construing and earning (threshold) legitimacy strategies by Kerzner International, remained skeptical and unconvinced and ultimately failed to provide passive support after strong debates, mostly on moral grounds. The faith groups then organized a block vote of the Lords Spiritual within the House of Lords (26 bishops have automatic seats in the House of Lords), which defeated the project. Among the politicians and media, though it is unclear whether any strategy would have succeeded, we argue that Kerzner International did not invest sufficient time in engaging in sensegiving efforts at the national level. The national media (e.g., *The Daily Mail*), despite Kerzner's construing efforts, campaigned against its project on moral and

cognitive grounds (Brogan and Merrick, 2007; Wansell, 2007). Politicians involved in ongoing construing efforts were divided in their opinions about planned casinos and failed to provide universal passive support. Thus, Kerzner International failed to secure moral and cognitive legitimacy.

Although the overall campaign ultimately failed, that failure is not the full picture. Most local businesses and residents offered pragmatic legitimacy, mostly through earning and bargaining. The Manchester City Council and Casino Advisory Panel contributed to all forms of legitimacy, influenced by all four strategy types used by Kerzner International. In addition, there appeared to be a relatively small margin between the success and failure of the Kerzner International campaign. A change in Prime Minister, from one (Tony Blair) who provided active support, in line with earning and bargaining strategies, and saw the project as a vehicle to help regenerate the Greater Manchester area, to another (Gordon Brown) with moral and cognitive objections, represented a critical episode for this project. Arguably, had this change not occurred, the project may have succeeded, despite the lack of threshold-level legitimacy granted by the faith groups and some elements of the national media. In summary, though Kerzner International enjoyed some success in gaining active support from some stakeholder groups, its failure to secure passive support from several key influential stakeholder groups ultimately undermined its legitimacy-seeking efforts.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Conceptual insights

This research emphasizes the benefits of integrating knowledge from extant literature to aid our understanding of problems of legitimacy among organizations in controversial industries. In this article, we conceptualize legitimacy seeking by a member of the casino gambling industry as a bidimensional legitimacy-seeking strategy model. The framework we provide emphasizes broad generic transactional and interactional strategies for pursuing threshold

(earning and construing) or auxiliary (bargaining and capturing) legitimacy. These strategies, available to organizations in controversial industries, represent attempts to address all three bases of legitimacy cited by Suchman (1995).

The findings also suggest that the strategic pathways can be adopted. Organizations first should use threshold strategies to secure passive support prior to (where possible) moving on to gain active support through auxiliary strategies. This strategic approach both reinforces and extends elements of extant organizational legitimacy literature. Various legitimacy-seeking tactics noted in prior literature but never thoroughly considered in the context of a controversial industry or structured in a consolidated fashion appear integrated into broader generic strategies and applied within this framework.

Kerzner International, with its casino project, had to attempt to decouple (Elsbach and Sutton, 1992) its own organizational legitimacy from the damaging long-term effects of the lack of legitimacy of casinos and the gambling industry, as well as from some prior poor publicity surrounding Kerzner International (Brogan and Merrick, 2007; Clark and Muir, 2007; Wansell, 2007). For Kerzner International to attain legitimacy for its organization and plans, it needed to construct a firewall between past actions and its ongoing essence (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Perrow, 1984; Suchman, 1995). As part of this distancing effort, Kerzner International used the generic strategies of construing and earning to seek passive support from opposing groups (Suchman, 1995), stressing its willingness to do well for the area and reassuring stakeholders about ways it would manage the potential negative impacts of its project development. When prior literature has advocated such preemptive tactics and self-regulation (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994; Pfeffer, 1981; Suchman, 1995), it has implied they were methods to build active support; in Kerzner International's controversial industry context, they instead served to minimize opposition throughout the process and ensure stakeholders' neutrality or passive acquiescence.

For the construing strategy, we find few explicit indications of long-term dialogue or interactions in prior literature. The adoption of a socially conscious stance and initiative, at the core of the earning strategy, appeared difficult to exploit advantageously for legitimacy seeking by organizations operating in controversial industries (Du and Vieira, 2012; Moerman and Van Der Laan, 2005; Palazzo and Richter, 2005). As is often the case in the attempts to influence moral legitimacy (see Palazzo and Scherer, 2006), our case study showed that perceptions of manipulation almost inevitably persist among opposing stakeholders, who refuse to be convinced by seemingly reasonable, socially conscious arguments advanced by the organization. Although Kerzner International's CSR-related initiatives thus represented a risky way to achieve passive support and were likely to result in backlash, it seems almost impossible to separate business strategy and CSR practices when it comes to understanding how organizations operating in controversial industries endeavor to achieve legitimacy.

Kerzner International also aimed to gain supplementary legitimacy through bargaining and capturing strategies. In its attempts to capture legitimacy from other stakeholder partners, Kerzner International used co-opting and endeavored to alter perceptions of its appearance and identity (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975; Oliver, 1991; Palazzo and Richter, 2005; Suchman, 1995). Co-opting management boards of organizations—such as by including organizations active in controversial industries—as a legitimacy-seeking tactic appear in prior research (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975), as have certain notions of collaboration (Oliver, 1991; Palazzo and Richter, 2005). But Kerzner International undertook its co-opting and collaboration efforts more deeply and in a far more sophisticated manner. Notably, it instituted long-term relationships with several powerful partners to ensure that a broad base of actively supportive stakeholders was fighting for the project with Kerzner International.

Ultimately, the failure of the casino project reaffirms that despite intensive efforts, “legitimacy cannot be taken, rather, it must be granted by influential stakeholders” (Rutherford and Buller, 2007, p. 79). In particular, cognitive legitimacy “generally lies beyond the reach of all but the most fortunate managers” (Suchman, 1995, p. 583). Thus, even as Kerzner International strategically engaged in objectified, intense legitimacy-seeking initiatives, it still failed to achieve taken-for-granted status. In line with institutionalist arguments (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Zucker, 1987) and previous sectorial analyses (Miller and Michelson, 2012), we find that Kerzner International confronted certain organizational and sector-wide dynamics that were partly beyond the purposive control of any single organization. The dynamics underlying a controversial industry can represent barely surmountable barriers for an organization’s legitimacy-seeking initiatives and efforts to overturn moral and cognitive legitimacy challenges to the industrial context.

However, the line between failure and success appeared thin, so Kerzner International’s casino project also reveals that an organization does not need the passive support of all stakeholders to achieve legitimacy. Organizations, including those in controversial industries, can be endorsed by a segment of society large enough to ensure its persistence, even in the face of opposing efforts from some stakeholder groups. Unlike Kerzner International’s, a controversial business proposal can diverge from powerful values but still achieve sufficient levels of legitimacy, because its deviation does not draw enough societal disapproval (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978).

Managerial and stakeholder insights

Our rich case material draws on the three-year legitimacy-seeking process of Kerzner International and its proposed project. The case illustrates that the legitimacy-seeking process can be particularly complex in controversial industries and that an individual organization easily can be overshadowed by an industry halo. Therefore, it needs to distance itself from

overall industry evaluations or prior organizational transgressions by involving various stakeholders with different perspectives and by using different bases of legitimacy. For some stakeholders, active support through auxiliary strategies may be possible; for others, passive support through threshold strategies might be the best that can be expected (Suchman, 1995), though still potentially difficult to secure.

The case also illustrates the power of stakeholders and the opportunities they might seize to oppose organizations or industries and their legitimacy-seeking behaviors. Lobbying politicians, briefing and enlisting the support of the media, and raising a campaign against initiatives all represent powerful, public tools for opposing legitimacy-seeking activities. This area thus far has not been examined sufficiently by organizational legitimacy literature.

Our study informs organizations functioning in controversial industries about possible strategies they could adopt to achieve their legitimacy-seeking objectives. As we show, managers must clearly understand the perspective of different stakeholder groups and their relative power positions and stance toward the organization's legitimacy seeking. After mapping the many key stakeholder groups that might be involved (local, national, or international), managers should ensure that they are appropriately addressed through the organization's legitimacy-seeking strategies. The organization also needs to understand which type or combination of legitimacy (pragmatic, moral, cognitive) is relevant to each stakeholder and thus which generic strategy or combination is most appropriate.

This study and framework also have the potential to inform stakeholders (opposing and supporting) about the legitimacy-seeking strategies of organizations. Stakeholders might try to identify which other groups are likely to align with their perspective and then work together to support or oppose an organization. Kerzner International and its partners put significant efforts into winning the battle for legitimacy at the local level, but they lost the overall war for legitimacy by failing to engage adequately at the national level. In this sense,

this case offers a strong example of success for opposing stakeholder groups, who, despite the potential economic benefits of casino developments, fruitfully mounted a campaign against the regional casino plans. Whether stakeholders oppose or support the legitimacy-seeking organization, understanding the alternative strategies available to it can help them work more effectively for their side.

Overall, our findings reveal that however carefully a legitimacy-seeking strategic campaign is conducted, it cannot guarantee organizations' and their supporting stakeholders' success in securing legitimacy. The efforts of individuals and groups aimed at defeating corporate activities they consider illegitimate or harmful will succeed if they can manage to secure the mobilization and support of powerful stakeholders to their side.

Limitations and further research

This case study, though in-depth and inclusive of contributions from various key stakeholders, relates specifically to the casino gambling industry in the United Kingdom. It contributes to a better understanding of legitimacy-seeking processes for an organization in this particular sector, but because the extent of legitimacy likely varies by industry, organization, and country (culture), our findings might not be applicable in other settings. Detailed research on the legitimacy-seeking strategies of other organizations in other industries and countries (where different norms apply) could shed further light on the problems of legitimacy for organizations in controversial industries. For example, in less developed economies or in harsh economic times, pragmatic legitimacy likely gains importance relative to moral or cognitive legitimacy, such that economic (bargaining) imperatives may be valued more highly. The context-dependent nature of legitimacy seeking thus should be investigated further.

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Figure 1: Legitimacy-Seeking Strategies Framework

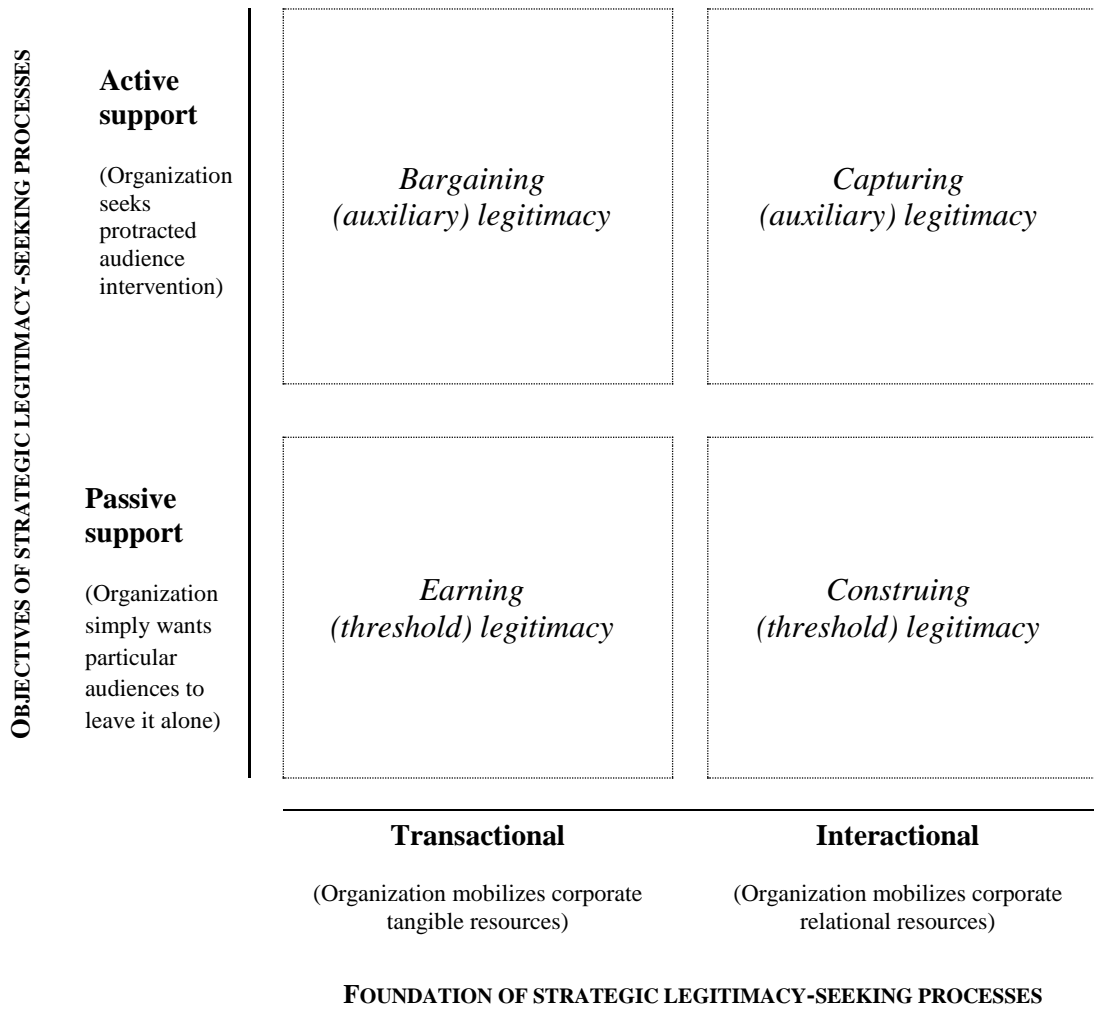


Table 1: Interviewed respondents and organizations

Organization; Respondent	Mission (general)	Role in Proposed Regional Super Casino	Reason(s) for Inclusion in Study
<i>Organizational Stakeholders</i>			
Kerzner Consortium; Tobin Prior , CEO, Private consortium investors (casino operator and local developer, Ask Developments): Private	To seek legitimacy for providing gambling and leisure services which profit the organization and benefit others in the process.	Private sector casino resort developer. The profit-based element of the project. Key investor of £260m for the project.	Lead private sector organization. Legitimacy-seeking strategies employed. Sat on the panel proposing the project, key proposer.
<i>Community Stakeholders</i>			
East Manchester Residents' Forum; Steve Green , chair and representative on NEM board: Nonprofit community group	To develop and enhance the East Manchester area for the benefit of its residents; to negotiate to provide sustainable jobs and enhance infrastructure and services.	People living around the development site would be impacted by the construction and the running of a major casino resort. Ensure the best deal for local residents	A nonprofit stakeholder, directly representing the views of the community in which the project would be located. Attended many meetings representing community and sat on the panel representing project.
Greater Manchester Faith and Community Group; Reverend Stephen Williams : Non-profit Community group	To ensure that the interests of faith groups are represented; to protect the vulnerable from the development of gambling.	Critical voice toward the proposal. Opposed to casinos, but working to minimize any damage resulting from the development.	A nonprofit stakeholder. Attended many key meetings and helped develop the CSR framework for the project.
Manchester Joint Health Unit (City Council and NHS Manchester); Ged Devereux , Senior Strategy Manager (JHU): Public	To develop initiatives to improve the health of residents in the Manchester area and reduce deprivation and inequality.	Public sector organization with a stake in some potential social costs of a casino: increased crime, gambling addiction, and associated problems.	Key advisor regarding CSR unit developed to support Kerzner casino development.
New East Manchester Ltd.; Tom Russell , former chief executive; Ian McCormack , project executive (NEM): Public/nonprofit	To develop innovative and sustainable regeneration approaches that become recognized as best practices	A hybrid governance, nonprofit organization developed in 1999 to manage to the development of East Manchester. A lead organization alongside the City Council.	Implementation arm of the Manchester City Council, though still partner governed. Involved in many interactions with partners.
Paul Bellringer , OBE Responsibility in Gambling Trust: Nonprofit charity	To ensure that the industry develops legitimacy by using the best guidance regarding issues of CSR and protecting vulnerable populations	Expert government and private sector advisor on social responsibility issues associated with problem gambling. Led development of Kerzner CSR package to support casino	A nonprofit organization involved in funding research and providing support for people with gambling problems. Attended many meetings and sat on the panel proposing the project.
Professor Peter Collins , director, Centre for the Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming, University of Salford: Public, academic	To undertake research relating to the gambling industry and guide CSR and problem gambling related issues	Expert advisor regarding gambling legislation and the social impacts of gambling.	An academic and expert assessor involved in project meetings regarding social responsibility.
<i>Regulatory Stakeholders</i>			
Greater Manchester Police; Commander Justine Curran (now Chief Constable, Tayside Police): Public	To ensure the development of East Manchester and minimize any issues related to crime and disorder.	Supporter of regeneration of Manchester while providing guidance regarding law and order issues.	Attended many meetings regarding the project and sat on the panel representing the project.
Manchester City Council; Sir Howard Bernstein , chief executive (MCC): Public	To develop innovative and sustainable regeneration approaches that become recognized as best practice; to establish an engagement infrastructure and long-term relationships with partners	The key co-developer of the proposal with Kerzner. Land owner of the proposed site.	Manchester City Council is a focal organization with Kerzner in driving the project. Kerzner is able to use MCC's network of historical relationships and communication infrastructure to gain legitimacy and support. Led panel.

Table 2: CSR and Responsible Gambling Unit (RGU)

Focal Area	Implementation Plans
<i>Remedial</i> (treatment)	Planning and commissioning services for counseling, face to face, telephone, and at community outreach points. Providing family support programs and coordination of cross-referral from other services. Using behavioral change models in conjunction with psychiatric services, addiction services, and public health services. There would be different categories of treatment for different degrees of problem gambling.
<i>Remedial and prevention</i> (gambling policies)	Working with casino to limit floor space given to slot machines versus gaming tables. Setting restrictions regarding public entry. Ensuring restricted access from other parts of the leisure facility operated by Kerzner. Casino agreed to operate a discrete register of known problem gamblers to help these individuals manage their addiction. This approach is part of the behavioral change model management, as part of the treatment process. Gamblers can choose to put themselves on a self-exclude list.
<i>Prevention</i> (education and public relations)	Publicizing the issue of problem gambling. Getting the Manchester population to take the matter seriously. Targeting not only vulnerable groups but also friends and families to recognize the risks, the signs of problems. and the treatment options for problem gambling. Publicize help points.
<i>Future plans</i> (monitoring prevalence)	Baseline level for problem gambling in Manchester established as approximately 20,000 people (prior to opening of planned casino). Unit to monitor increases in prevalence in problem gambling. Conducting longitudinal study of problem gambling in the area. Prevalence assessed through various metrics, including number of people presenting for treatment and completion of questionnaires at various local authority contact points around the city.
<i>Future plans</i> (ongoing research)	Undertaking and tracking regular audits, gathering and sharing best practices on problem gambling prevention; consulting the best available research on problem gambling treatment options, sharing experience within Manchester and nationally, and monitoring the effectiveness of its education, prevention, and treatment strategies.