

Safe Sport for Whom?: Are National Sport Organizations Addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action for Sport through Safe Sport Policies?

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## Abstract

The Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) outlined 94 Calls to Action (CTA) that are essential to address reconciliation in Canada (TRC, 2015). Five (Calls 87-91) of those CTA were related to sport. One of those Calls, Call 90, emphasized the need for national sport organizations (NSOs) in Canada to create inclusive policies and programming with an emphasis on anti-racism awareness and training. Similarly, safe sport in Canada was created as an initiative to address maltreatment, discrimination, and harassment in sport. In 2019, the federal government mandated NSOs to create safe sport policies and programming. However, there has been no such mandate to implement the TRC's CTA. The TRC's CTA 90 and safe sport have been treated as separate issues and there has been no effort to see how these two initiatives could inform each other. Through the use of Bacchi's (2012) "What's the Problem Represented to be" approach and applying a settler colonial lens to my analysis, I investigated how NSO staff and safe sport policymakers are constructing safe sport in Canada and if that included addressing anti-Indigenous racism. Through 10 semi-structured interviews from participants representing a total of eight NSOs as well as archival research of safe sport and equity, diversity, and inclusion policies, I found that the participants and the policies produced three discourses: 1) Anti-Indigenous racism does not require a separate policy; 2) policies alone are insufficient: Safe sport education and resources are needed to address anti-Indigenous racism; 3) the TRC's CTA are not being treated as a priority by Sport Canada but NSOs want to act in consultation with Indigenous organizations. These discourses provide insights into how NSOs are constructing safe sport in Canada, leaving anti-Indigenous racism unproblematized, and thus furthering settler colonialism.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my Grandma Nuala. I wish you could have been here to see me finish this journey, but I know you're still with me today and always. I will always miss you. I would also like to dedicate my thesis research to my amazing and phenomenal parents Jim and Sheena and my equally as amazing and phenomenal sister Erin who have been so important and supportive. Through all of my highs and lows you have all been there and provided me with enduring love and overwhelming confidence in my abilities as a researcher and writer even when I did not have any myself. Thank you for everything.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

In June of 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada was created and organized by the parties of the Indian Residential School Settlements Agreement (IRSSA) (Government of Canada, 2021). The intent of the TRC was to facilitate reconciliation between former students of the Indian Residential School (IRS) system as well as their families, communities, and settlers in Canada (Government of Canada, 2021). The TRC emphasized that reconciliation is concerned with “establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in this country” (TRC, 2015a, p. 6). From 2008 to 2015, the TRC travelled across Canada to listen to stories from over 6500 former students of the IRS system as well as host events in which they could disseminate their findings and educate the public on the ongoing legacy of the IRS system while sharing stories from survivors (Government of Canada, 2021).

In June 2015, the TRC in its *Final Report* released 94 Calls to Action that were outlined as being essential to address reconciliation in Canada (TRC, 2015a). Five of those Calls to Action (Call 87, 88, 89, 90, and 91) were related to sport thus identifying sport as being an important site for reconciliation. Sport for reconciliation (SFR) can be understood as sport being used as a tool to promote reconciliation between settler and Indigenous peoples in Canada. There have been some studies that have been focused on studying SFR in Canada as well as addressing the TRC’s Calls to Action, notably Call 87 (Paraschak, 2019), and Call 90 (Rajwani et al., 2021). Of particular interest to my research, the TRC’s (2015b) Call 90 specifically called upon federally funded sport organizations such as National Sport Organizations (NSOs) in Canada:

to ensure inclusive policies, procedures, and programs for Indigenous peoples as well as an emphasis on anti-racism awareness and training. to ensure that national sport policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited

to, establishing: 1) In collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, stable funding for, and access to, community sport programs that reflect diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of Aboriginal peoples, 2) An elite athlete development program for Aboriginal athletes, 3) Programs for coaches, trainers, and sport officials that are culturally relevant for Aboriginal peoples, and 4) Anti-racism awareness and training programs. (p. 10)

To date, there has been little academic research that has examined Call 90's emphasis on anti-Indigenous racism awareness and training and how NSOs could be addressing anti-Indigenous racism in sport in Canada (Szto et al., 2020). The federal government of Canada promised to address this Call to Action as well as all others (McSheffrey, 2015).

In a somewhat similar move, in February of 2019, the federal government mandated the implementation of safe sport training and improvement of safe sport policies to address incidents of discrimination, harassment, and abuse in sport (Canadian Heritage, 2019). In recent years, there have been several high-profile cases of abuse in sport in Canada that have resulted in sport organizations creating and committing to developing safe sport programs, policies, and procedures (Gurgis & Kerr, 2021). The Coaching Association of Canada (CAC), which created Canada's *Safe Sport Training* (CAC, 2020a), emphasized that safe sport is focused on the elimination of all forms of maltreatment as well as help coaches, sport administrators, and sport stakeholders "make decisions that promote athletes' physical and mental wellbeing and empowers sporting organizations to foster a culture that contributes to athlete success" (CAC, 2020a, para. 6). In general, the definition of safe sport in Canada emphasizes and prioritizes athletes' well-being and uses a human rights-based approach to creating an inclusive environment where all athletes can thrive and succeed (Kerr, 2021). To promote safe sport in

Canada and prioritize the safety of athletes, the federal government mandated that sport organizations, including NSOs, create safe sport policies, procedures, and programs to address maltreatment in sport (Canadian Heritage, 2019). There have been a number of recent studies that have investigated safe sport and its effectiveness and shortcomings in addressing maltreatment in sport in Canada (Gurgis et al., 2022; Gurgis & Kerr, 2021; Kerr et al., 2020). To date, however, there has been no research on NSOs' safe sport policies and procedures and how safe sport could be used as a method of addressing anti-Indigenous racism in sport.

Through my Master's of Arts research, I sought to explore the ways in which these two initiatives, safe sport and the TRC's (2015b) sport-related Calls to Action, could inform each other, as to date they have been treated as separate. To investigate how these two issues can inform each other, in the stand-alone, publishable paper of my thesis (Chapter 2), I used Bacchi's (2012) "What's the Problem Represented to Be" (WPR) approach to address two research questions: 1) How do NSO staff members and safe sport policymakers problematize safe sport?; and 2) How are NSO staff members and safe sport policymakers addressing anti-Indigenous racism and the TRC's sport-related Calls to Action through safe sport policies? The basis of the WPR approach is that by analyzing policies they will reveal the underlying problems that organizations are intending to address through their policies (Bacchi, 2012). I used this approach and critical discourse analysis (CDA) to analyze the responses from semi-structured interviews with 10 representatives from eight NSOs as well as the NSOs' safe sport policies.

Based on my CDA and analysis, I found that the participants and the policies produced three discourses: 1) Anti-Indigenous racism does not require a separate policy; 2) Policies alone are insufficient: Safe sport education and resources are needed to address anti-Indigenous racism;

3) TRC's Calls to Action are not being treated as a priority by Sport Canada but NSOs want to act in consultation with Indigenous organizations.

In this introductory chapter, I will provide the context for my thesis by outlining the scholarly literature surrounding SFR, the TRC's Calls to Action, safe sport policies and procedures in Canada and other international safe sport initiatives, and finally anti-racism policies, procedures, and initiatives. Then I will outline the main tenets of settler colonialism as well as Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach that I used for my methodology. Then I will describe the methods of semi-structured interviews and archival research I used for my thesis research, and finally, I will provide an overview of CDA, its strengths, weaknesses, and how I used it to analyze participants responses and archival research of safe sport policies.

### **Literature Review**

In the following section, I define and provide an overview of sport for reconciliation in Canada as well as the TRC's (2015b) Calls to Action in sport. To be clear, throughout the thesis, I use the terms "Indigenous peoples" (an umbrella term for First Nations, Metis, and Inuit) whenever possible – acknowledging that is it now the preferred term - and use the term "Aboriginal peoples" when authors used that term. Next, I discuss the development of safe sport in Canada and the literature on how safe sport can be advanced to address maltreatment in sport. Finally, I discuss anti-racism policies, procedures, and initiatives that have been created by NSOs, PSOs, TSOs, and other sporting bodies.

### **Sport for Reconciliation (SFR) in Canada**

Many sport organizations, including governmental and non-governmental agencies, have created sport for development focused on providing positive outcomes in areas such as addressing reconciliation (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2012; Sherry et al., 2015). As a subfield of

sport for development, sport for social change programs have used sport as a “hook” or “catalyst” to build social capacity and social cohesion between socially, politically or ethnically divided communities (Sherry et al., 2015, p. 1). These sport for social change programs have been used primarily as a method of promoting reconciliation with the goal of transforming conflict (Rookwood, 2008). Sport has historically been a part of the colonizing process of non-Western cultures, including Indigenous peoples in Canada. Giulianotti (2004) emphasized that Western sport institutions have “been directly implicated in the acts of cultural genocide” (p. 358), through the “destruction and displacement of Indigenous sports” (Coalter, 2010, p. 297). Understandings of reconciliation and SFR have been associated with promoting peace between divided communities (Schulenkorf, 2010), and there has been a dearth of research focused on how sport could be used to promote reconciliation between settlers and Indigenous peoples in Canada.

To explain the lack of focus on reconciliation between settlers and Indigenous peoples, it is important to provide an overview of settler influence on Indigenous peoples’ participation in sport. As noted previously, sport has been used as a part of the colonization and assimilation process of Indigenous peoples into Euro-Canadian society (Forsyth, 2007; Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006). With the establishment of the residential school system, sport and games were used to assimilate Indigenous peoples with the ultimate goal being to entirely erase Indigenous culture (Forsyth, 2007; Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006; Norman et al., 2019). Norman and colleagues (2019) argued that this was done by instilling a logic of containment rooted in Western relationships with the self through the separation of mind and body, instilling hierarchical relations, and separation from land. By instilling Western ways of thinking and through the assimilation of

Euro-Canadian ideals, sport has been a space dominated by settlers, which has resulted in Indigenous peoples being disadvantaged in sport (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006).

The TRC (2015b) included the five Calls to Action that related directly to sport because its Commissioners recognized that sport can be used as a tool for reconciliation and decolonization. Sport is an integral component of Indigenous culture. Sport and traditional cultural activities have the power to reconnect Indigenous peoples to traditional knowledge and activities, such as the power of the traditional medicine wheel (Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013). Scholars have advocated for culturally relevant activities to be incorporated into sport and physical activity programs so that Indigenous peoples can “begin to reclaim what was taken through colonization” (Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013, p. 223). Sport and culturally relevant activities have special significance in enabling Indigenous peoples to re-connect to Indigenous cultures as well as aid in the process of resurgence, decolonization, and reconciliation (Arellano & Downey, 2019; Arellano et al., 2019; McGuire-Adams & Giles, 2018; Phillips et al., 2019).

Anti-Indigenous racism continues to be a problem in sport which in turn adversely affects their participation rates of Indigenous peoples in sport from the amateur level all the way to professional sport (Ferguson & Philipenko, 2016; Forsyth, 2015). Experiencing racism within the sport system, and sport in general is perceived as a racist space which adversely affects Indigenous peoples’ participation and reinforces the notion that racism is still prevalent in society (Ferguson & Philipenko, 2016; Forsyth, 2015). Mason and colleagues (2019) attributed Indigenous youths’ lack of participation in sport to racism, discrimination, and alienation, especially when it was from coaches, other teammates, and opponents. In addition, Mason et al. also identified from Indigenous participants that a particular problem with feelings of belongingness is that mainstream sport uses Western ways of coaching and teaching. To increase

participation and feelings of belongingness, culturally relevant sport programming and cultural safety has been noted as essential, as are its effects in decreasing negative attitudes towards physical activity and sport (Mason et al., 2019). Culturally relevant programming and the creation of an environment that is free from discrimination should be a priority of safe sport training initiatives. As the CAC (2020a) stated, “creating a culture where everyone can thrive is a shared responsibility” (para. 3). Sport organizations must ensure a safe environment for Indigenous athletes, coaches, officials, and by extension, their communities, and they must also implement more preventative measures to mitigate racist behaviour rather than being exclusively reactive. To date, very little has been done in terms of preventing anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination in sport.

### **The TRC and Calls to Action**

The TRC was created as a component of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) (Marshall, 2013). The IRSSA was the result of a class-action lawsuit brought forward by former students of the Indian residential school system (IRS). Approximately 4,600 former students were plaintiffs in the lawsuit, but the larger context was that all remaining survivors would hopefully be beneficiaries of the IRSSA (Marshall, 2013). There were approximately 150,000 First Nation, Inuit, and Metis children who attended residential schools in Canada (Miller, 2020). Created in 2008, the TRC had a five-year mandate and was supported by the IRSSA with a \$60 million budget (Moran, 2015). The TRC’s mandate was to inform Canadians and the general public about what happened in the residential school system by providing documentation outlining the personal stories of residential school survivors (TRC, n.d.). Along with providing personal testimonies from survivors, it also made several recommendations on how Canada can promote reconciliation in its *Final Report* (TRC, 2015b).

Based on the TRC's findings and the harrowing stories from residential school survivors, 94 Calls to Action were included in the TRC's (2015a) *Final Report*, which was released in December 2015. The Calls to Action were identified as being crucial for reconciliation to occur between settlers and Indigenous peoples in Canada (Marshall, 2013). As noted above, Calls to Action 87-91 specifically address sport and reconciliation (TRC, 2015b). Call #87 calls for all levels of government to provide public education of the national story of Indigenous athletes in the sports hall of fame in collaboration with Indigenous peoples (TRC, 2015b). Call #88 focuses on athlete long-term development and continued support for North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host (TRC, 2015b). Call #89 advises the federal government to amend the Physical Activity and Sport Act to support reconciliation through policies to promote physical activity and reduce barriers (TRC, 2015b). Of particular interest for my proposed research is Call #90, which calls upon the federal government:

to ensure that national sport policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to, establishing: 1) In collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, stable funding for, and access to, community sport programs that reflect diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of Aboriginal peoples, 2) An elite athlete development program for Aboriginal athletes, 3) Programs for coaches, trainers, and sport officials that are culturally relevant for Aboriginal peoples, and 4) Anti-racism awareness and training programs. (p. 10)

Finally Call #91 called upon the federal government to ensure that officials and host countries of international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan-American, and Commonwealth Games guarantee that Indigenous peoples treaties are respected and they are involved in every aspect of the planning process.

There have been a handful of studies that have focused on the TRC's Calls to Action. Paraschak (2019) outlined the absence of Indigenous athletes' history and the lack of entries in mainstream media such as Wikipedia. This absence of public education on Wikipedia has "reproduced the public impression that Indigenous elite athletes did not exist and/or were not notable in ways their non-Indigenous counterparts were, as evident through the entries that did exist on Wikipedia" (Paraschak, 2019, p. 212). Paraschak's study contributed to the TRC's (2015b) Call to Action #87 in promoting reconciliation. Rajwani and colleagues (2021) found that only a very small number of NSOs in Canada had indicated on their websites that they were making efforts to create inclusive programming for Indigenous athletes. This study made contributions to the TRC's Call 90; however, there has been no research on Call 90's emphasis on anti-racism awareness and how safe sport could be a method of addressing this.

### **Safe Sport in Canada**

In response to high profile cases of abuse in sport, there have been several initiatives in Canada to eliminate abuse in sport. In the late 1990s, Sport Canada and the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS; now called Canadian Women and Sport) worked with several national sport organizations (NSOs) to establish policies and procedures to address and eliminate abuse in sport (Kerr et al., 2020). With these policies, funding for NSOs became linked to their implementation of a publicly accessible harassment policy as well as having an independent officer to handle complaints of abuse and harassment (Kerr et al., 2020). In 2016, Donnelly and colleagues found that these policies were not followed, and of particular concern Sport Canada did not make NSOs accountable or ensure that these requirements were met or enforced. The researchers revealed that 86% of NSOs had harassment policies that focused primarily on sexual maltreatment rather than other forms of

maltreatment including psychological and physical maltreatment, neglect, bullying, harassment, and hazing; however, fewer than half of the organizations had their policies publicly accessible (Donnelly et al., 2016). Further, only 39% of NSOs policies mentioned an independent officer; however, further investigation revealed that none of them had an at arm's length/independent officer – they instead assigned that role to a member of staff (Donnelly et al., 2016). They also found that Sport Canada did not withhold funding to the NSOs that did not have policies or officers in place (Donnelly et al., 2016). According to Donnelly et al. (2016), sport organizations in Canada cited that at the time they could not meet Sport Canada's requirement due to lack of capacity and resources.

Safe sport initiatives continue to be at the forefront of interventions for addressing maltreatment in sport. In February of 2019, there was a joint investigation by CBC News and CBC Sports that found that “at least 222 coaches who were involved in amateur sport in Canada have been convicted of sexual offences in the past 20 years, involving more than 600 victims under the age of 18” (Ramlakhan, 2019, para. 3). Prior to this CBC investigation, there were various government level actions taken to address maltreatment in sport. For example, in June of 2018, the Canadian Minister of Science and Sport Kirsty Duncan announced further measures to address maltreatment in sport prior to the CBC investigation (Canadian Heritage, 2019). The Minister emphasized that NSOs must commit to creating a safe sport environment, disclose to the public all complaints and incidents of abuse and discrimination immediately, employ at independent (third party) officers to investigate these incidents, and implement training on abuse in sport in April 2020 (Canadian Heritage, 2019). All of these recommendations were to be implemented or the federal government would withhold funding to NSOs if they did not meet these requirements (Canadian Heritage, 2019). These recommendations were presented at the

Conference of Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation in February 2019 (Canadian Heritage, 2018), and this conference also included the inception of the “Red Deer Declaration for the Prevention of Harassment, Abuse and Discrimination in Sport” that was signed by all levels of government to eliminate all forms of abuse, harassment, and discrimination in sport (Canadian Heritage, 2019). During this time, the Minister of Science and Sport also announced funding of \$209,000 to the CAC to create a national code of conduct of sport (Canadian Heritage, 2019). The “Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS)” was created at the National Safe Sport summit in May 2019 and is now the code of conduct for sport in Canada (CAC, 2020b).

In April 2020, the CAC’s developed Safe Sport Training to provide training on abuse, discrimination, and harassment in sport for all Sport Canada-funded organizations (CAC, 2020a). The training is offered by the CAC, and NSOs may direct their members to take the training to comply with their organizations’ safe sport policies (CAC, 2020a). In line with the UCCMS, Safe Sport Training provides lessons on acknowledgment, awareness, and action (CAC, 2020a). “Acknowledgment” emphasizes the role everyone plays in making sport safe, how power imbalance between a coach and an athlete or between athletes can lead to abuse, and the principles of the UCCMS (CAC, 2020a). “Awareness” focuses on providing the public with information on the different types of maltreatment, the conditions that allow maltreatment to occur, and how to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse (CAC, 2020a). Finally, “Action” outlines information on how maltreatment can be reported and ultimately, how everyone can contribute to creating a safe sport culture (CAC, 2020a).

### **Equity-Deserving Groups and Safe Sport**

Traditionally marginalized groups, which are now often referred to as equity-deserving groups, have reported different forms of harm in sport (Gurgis et al., 2022). Equity-deserving groups can be defined as “communities that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities, and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination, and actively seek social justice and reparation” (Canadian Kinesiology Alliance, n.d., para. 9). The term equity-deserving groups is used to “shift attention towards Black people, Indigenous people, People of colour, Women, People with (dis)abilities, and LGBTQ2+ Peoples as deserving of representation and belonging” (Global Water Futures, 2021, p. 4). Equity-deserving athletes, including Indigenous athletes, continue to face discrimination in sport (Gurgis et al., 2022; Joseph et al., 2021; Kirby et al., 2008; Vertommen et al., 2016; Willson et al., 2021). Safe sport has been described as an “idealistic and improbable concept” because athletes who identify in equity-deserving groups continue to experience verbal and behavioural microaggressions as well as systemic barriers in sport, which ultimately influence perceptions of feeling unsafe within the sport environment (Gurgis et al., 2022, p. 9).

Willson and colleagues (2021) examined factors such as gender, race, sexual orientation, Indigeneity, and disability status alongside the prevalence of maltreatment in sport. Women reported higher rates of all forms of maltreatment; athletes who identified as racialized experienced higher rates of physical harm than non-racialized athletes; and LGBTQ2I+ identifying athletes experienced higher rates of sexual harm than non-LGBTQ2I+ athletes (Willson et al., 2021). Of particular note, in this study, Indigenous athletes experienced lower rates of psychological harm than non-Indigenous athletes. Willson and colleagues (2021) argued that this particular finding was difficult to interpret but noted they had a low sample size of Indigenous athletes, which could explain this apparent incongruity.

In a study conducted by Gurgis and Kerr (2021), sport administrators in leadership positions in national and international sport and coaching organizations expressed their perspectives on safe sport and how it could be advanced. Their recommendations included constructing a universal framework of safe sport, developing safe sport education as well as policy implementation and enforcement, establishing an independent complaint mechanism and emphasized the need for ongoing research and refinement of safe sport policies and procedures. The participants also emphasized that within safe sport there must be much more focus on addressing the needs of athletes who identify as members of equity-deserving groups, including Indigenous athletes, who continue to experience discrimination in sport (Gurgis & Kerr, 2021).

This finding was echoed in a similar study by Willson et al. (2022) that focused on national team athletes' perspectives on safe sport and emphasized that sport organizations such as NSOs in Canada lack attention towards equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives and equity-deserving groups. The authors noted that social movements such as the Black Lives Matter movement and initiatives such as the TRC in Canada brought attention towards the structures of oppression and high rates of violence experienced by Black and Indigenous individuals and has heightened the need for attention on safety and inclusion within sport. Both Gurgis and Kerr's (2021) and Willson et al.'s (2022) studies highlighted the need for future research on perspectives from sport administrators and athletes in equity-deserving groups on how safe sport could be advanced to be safer and more inclusive for all participants. However, there has been a lack of research on how sport administrators such as NSO staff and safe sport policymakers are addressing racism in their safe sport initiatives, including those in settler nation states. In Canada, the need for this is apparent due to the TRC's Calls to Action (2015b).

### **Anti-Racism Policies, Procedures, and Initiatives**

There has been increasing attention on anti-racism education and training in sporting bodies. NSOs such as Skate Canada and other sporting organizations such as the Canadian Olympic Committee offer online anti-racism resources. Little is known about how NSOs are addressing anti-racism through policies and procedures. In February of 2020, Szto and colleagues (2020) published a policy paper in which they made recommendations to address the main components of racialized inequality, including power, privilege, and access in hockey. Their main recommendations were to diversify recruitment and hiring practices; ensure that the media are representing racism as systemic and use the words racist and racism to describe incidents; ensure prevention and accountability when incidents occur to ensure the burden of dealing with racist incidents does not solely fall on the racialized participants who experience it; and collect data on racial demographics. The authors also advocated for a global cultural change within hockey to reflect anti-racism through mandatory workshops and training, consistency of enforcement and a zero-tolerance policy, and the promotion of diversity and inclusion. Despite the recommendations from Szto and colleagues, Hockey Canada did not act on implementing anti-racism policies, procedures, and programs.

At the PSO level of hockey, there has been some research on hockey leagues and how they are addressing anti-Indigenous discrimination through policies. Noce-Saporito (2021) found that out of the five local minor hockey associations in Alberta, none had any policies addressing anti-Indigenous discrimination and none of their current policies mentioned anti-Indigenous discrimination in their policies or procedures. Noce-Saporito concluded that this is problematic because it does not acknowledge the past and present inequalities and injustices experienced by Indigenous peoples and colonialism in Canada. Without a specific anti-discrimination policy, there are no clear procedures or disciplinary actions that dictate how these incidents of anti-

Indigenous discrimination would be handled. They also found that none of the minor hockey associations in the study had any form of training on colonialism and Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Recently, anti-racism policies and procedures have been implemented by staff at some sport organizations to challenge racism within sport environments. At the Canadian university level, in December 2020, Ontario University Athletics (OUA), the governing body for Ontario university sports, launched an anti-racism in sport project (OUA, 2020). Through the use of questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups, about 5000 OUA members, including student-athletes, coaches, and administrators, detailed their experiences of racism in the sport setting (Joseph et al., 2021). Joseph and colleagues (2021) found that the most common forms of racism were implicit racism and microaggressions, explicit and overt racism, differential treatment, assumptions of athlete wealth and poverty, player (non-)recruitment, lack of support for athletes and administrators, athlete additional labour, discriminatory hiring practices, and coach stressors. The authors identified four areas in which immediate attention was needed: education on what racism looks like and how to address it; recruitment of qualified Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) candidates in sport; supports such as hiring an individual devoted to anti-racism for programming and implementing mental health resources; and accountability to ensure there is a zero-tolerance policy and changes are made to address racism in the sport setting (Joseph et al., 2021).

Many sport organizations in Canada have been called upon to implement anti-racism policies and practices; however, there has been little research on their implementation, especially on those implemented by NSOs. Within the literature, anti-racism education and training have been focused on physical education (Flintoff & Dowling, 2019; Flintoff et al., 2015), as well as

on fan behaviour, hooliganism, and racism in English football (Dixon et al., 2016; Garland & Rowe, 2014; Kassimeris, 2009; Penfold & Cleland, 2022). In the Canadian context, less is known about the implementation of anti-racism training and education, even with the TRC (2015b) Call to Action #90 emphasizing the need for anti-Indigenous racism awareness and training. As such, my research is both timely and necessary.

### **Epistemology**

I used a constructionist epistemology to explore safe sport policymakers and NSO staff members' constructions and problem representations of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism. In brief, constructionists assume that all knowledge is "contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Constructionists argue that all knowledge is "constructed" through interaction with others. By using a constructionist epistemology, I explored if and how past (n=1) and present (n=9) NSO staff members' and safe sport policymakers' current constructions of safe sport included anti-Indigenous racism. I specifically focused on whether current safe sport policies and programs were constructed as a method to only address sexual and physical maltreatment in sport, or if safe sport was constructed as an initiative that can also address anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination, and therefore also address the TRC's (2015b) Calls to Action. With Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, I used a constructionist epistemology to investigate how current constructions of safe sport policies represented certain problems and what these policies proposed to change.

### **Theoretical Framework**

My thesis research was informed by settler colonial studies. Settler colonialism can be defined as "an ongoing system of power that perpetuates the genocide and repression of

Indigenous peoples and cultures” (Cox, 2017, para. 1). Wolfe (2006) emphasised that settler colonialism is an ongoing structure that works under a “logic of elimination,” which refers to the eliminatory aspects as well as the genocidal aspects of settler colonialism. Once eliminated for standing in the way of settler sovereignty (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Wolfe, 2006), Indigenous peoples are then replaced with a settler colonial society that is then normalized (Cox, 2017; Wolfe, 2006). This theoretical framework enabled me to evaluate if/how NSO staff members used a settler colonial logic of elimination to construct understandings of safe sport and the implementation of the TRC’s Call 90 emphasis on inclusive policies and programming, as well as the promotion of anti-racism awareness and training.

The TRC and broader discourses surrounding reconciliation in Canada have been critiqued for serving as a “settler moves to innocence” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 35), which refers to strategies that help relieve settlers of guilt and responsibility without fundamentally changing the injustices that contributed to the guilt they experience (Jung, 2018). Tuck and Yang (2012) argued that reconciliation is concerned with “rescuing settler normalcy, about recuing a settler future” (p. 35). Writing about this notion of settler normalcy and settler futurity, Jung (2018) noted that reconciliation ends up being about “building a stronger and more cohesive national identity, a more legitimate settler sovereignty, and a more settled Canadian moral high ground” (p. 261). Discussions surrounding reconciliation in Canada promote and support nationalism, top-down government initiatives, and recolonization (Freeman, 2014).

Another critique of reconciliation is that the term reconciliation implies that there is a mutual relationship that is in need of reconciling between two parties to make a relationship whole again (Jung, 2018; Stanton, 2011). Importantly, there was never a whole or respectful relationship between settler and Indigenous peoples in Canada (Stanton, 2011). The TRC by

itself cannot reconcile a relationship between Indigenous peoples and settlers in Canada (Stanton, 2011). The relationship between Indigenous peoples and settlers in Canada has been wrought with land dispossession, forcible removal of Indigenous peoples from their land, as well as the Canadian government and churches forcing Indigenous children into residential school system in which there were attempts to assimilate them into Euro-Canadian values and ways of life (Jung, 2018). Jung (2018) ultimately concluded that framing reconciliation as a restoration of a mutual relationship could allow the Canadian government to choose what part of this relationship would be restored. Reconciliation and specifically the TRC have also been critiqued as attempting to posit settler colonialism an event in the past rather than a structure that continues to operate today (Jung, 2018; Wolfe, 2006). As Jung (2018) outlined, many Indigenous peoples insist that the impacts of past events are still being experienced in the present, including “the effects of land dispossession, living on reserves, and restrictions on traditional Indigenous livelihood and cultural practices” (p. 258).

As a non-Indigenous settler scholar, recognizing my own social position as a settler of Irish and Scottish descent was extremely important in conducting my thesis research. Being a settler who has their education and research at an institution that has been implicated in the training of perpetrators of cultural genocide (University of Ottawa, 2020), it is important to recognize I have not been innocent but complicit in perpetuating elements of settler colonialism (Regan, 2010). In the process of reconciliation in Canada, it is important for settlers like me to realize that there is nothing we can do that will fully restore what has been destroyed through colonialism (Freeman, 2014). However, as settlers and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada we have a responsibility to acknowledge that not only did colonialism occur, but it continues today, and we have benefited and continue to benefit from colonialism and its ongoing effects

(Freeman, 2014). With the guidance from my thesis committee and the members of the research group for the larger project of which my research is a part, which included Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, I continuously reflected on the ways in which my social position influenced my interpretations and worked on ensuring I was educating myself and taking up the responsibility of addressing reconciliation throughout my work, which I carried out through Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach.

### **Methodology**

I employed Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach to outline and evaluate the problem representations from semi-structured interviews I conducted with 10 participants from eight Canadian NSOs, as well as my review of the safe sport policies of said NSOs. The WPR approach was originally designed as a method for analyzing public policies. Bacchi (2012) theorized that policies reveal what one deems to be problematic within their organizations; in other words, "problem representations" (Bacchi, 2012). This approach can also be used to analyze interview transcripts with policymakers (Bonham & Bacchi, 2017). In the WPR approach, Bonham and Bacchi (2017) contended that in interviews it is important to focus on "*what* someone says" rather than "what *someone* says" (p. 690). In the context of my thesis research, I used Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach to identify the participants' problem representations of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism as well as the problem representations underpinning the safe sport policies of the participants' respective NSOs. I analyzed the responses to questions asked in the semi-structured interviews in terms of the assumptions made about safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism, the problem representations of safe sport's and anti-Indigenous racism's evolution and impact, and how these problem representations have been produced and disseminated (Bacchi, 2012) to the NSOs' audiences. In the section that follows, I

explain the main tenets of the WPR approach, some of its strengths and limitations, as well as provide an overview of how I used the approach.

Grounded in feminist and poststructural theories as well as Foucault's concepts of governance, subjectivity, and discourse, the WPR approach is especially useful for investigating underlying power systems. Specifically, Bacchi (2010) contended that we are all governed by problem representations and, more specifically, policies that are enacted as rules and procedures that govern people to follow said rules through regulating behaviours. Drawing on Foucault's concept of subjectivity, Bacchi (2010) also contended that problem representations produce certain types of truths and knowledge. Goodwin (2012) described policies themselves as discourse, because policies through their problem representations contain implicit meanings based on their social, political, or cultural contexts. All of these concepts allowed me to critically examine how safe sport is constructed by NSO staff and safe sport policymakers. By prompting participants to share their perspectives on safe sport and what it encompasses, I was able to evaluate their underlying and underexamined problem representations. Along with utilizing a settler colonial lens, I was able to understand what NSO staff deemed to be problematic in their safe sport policies and if that included addressing anti-Indigenous racism and promoting culturally relevant sport programming for Indigenous athletes, coaches, and officials, as mandated in the TRC's (2015b) Calls to Action.

To guide my analysis, I used Bacchi's (2012) six guiding questions of the WPR approach to analyze the responses from 10 NSO staff and safe sport policymakers and the safe sport policies of the eight included NSOs. I specifically tailored my interview guide to be reflective of each guiding question so I could easily identify and evaluate the participants' problem

representations. I adapted the guiding questions to be specific to my research goals. The modified questions are as follows:

1. What is/are the underlying problem(s) in safe sport policies?
2. What assumptions underlie this representation of the problem of safe sport policies and anti-Indigenous racism within sport?
3. How has this representation come about; what is the history of safe sport policies and anti-Indigenous racism within sport?
4. What is left unproblematic? Where are the silences within safe sport policies? What words are used within the policies, and which are left out? For example, is anti-Indigenous racism mentioned within the policies? Is reconciliation mentioned?
5. What are the effects produced by problem representations underpinning safe sport policies? How does the construction of safe sport policies affect other people and how does it shape people's perspectives of what safe sport is and what it covers?
6. How have the problem representations of safe sport policies been produced and disseminated and how can they be challenged? (adapted from Bacchi, 2012)

The above questions outline how the WPR approach can be used to help researchers to reveal what problems policies are representing. According to Bacchi (2012), the first question is used as a clarification question to outline the underlying problem representation within a policy. When identifying problem representations, Bacchi (2009) suggested that there could be more than one problem representation within a policy. In applying this question, I paid particular attention to different problem representations and how they may influence one another. To address the first question I asked for specific details such as, "Did the TRC play any role in the formulation of the safe sport policies?" and "Has your NSO created policies specifically addressing anti-Indigenous

racism?”, to understand if addressing anti-Indigenous racism was included in their construction of their safe sport policies.

Question two allows for a reflection on the underlying assumptions in the problem representations. This question is used to understand the taken for granted knowledge that underpins policies. Bacchi (2009) outlined several tools that researchers can use to identify any discursive aspects that reinforces problem representations which includes binaries, key concepts, and categories. I asked questions such as, “What does safe sport mean to you?” and “Do you think the policies that have been put in place are doing enough to ensure a safe environment?” These questions helped me to explore the participants’ assumptions of safe sport and how safe sport has shaped policymakers’ perspectives. I also asked a follow-up question, “Do you think the policies that have been put in place by your organization do enough to ensure a safe environment, especially in addressing anti-Indigenous racism?”, to explore participants’ assumptions of anti-Indigenous racism and if addressing anti-Indigenous racism is included within safe sport.

Question three calls for a consideration of the processes through which the problem representation has been understood. Specifically, this question is used to identify and evaluate the historical development and power dynamics of problem representations (Bacchi, 2015). I asked, “Can you outline for me the process of formulating policies addressing anti-Indigenous racism?” and “What considerations did you make or would you make in creating policies addressing anti-Indigenous racism?” By reviewing their responses, I was able to understand how problem representations have been produced by participants and how their problem representations have expanded over time. I compared the answers of questions asked related to the formulation and processes of creating safe sport policies as opposed to anti-Indigenous

racism policies. For example, I would ask if participants could outline for me the process of formulating the safe sport policies or what considerations they made in creating said policies. If NSOs had not created policies addressing anti-Indigenous racism, I added an extra question: “Why has there not been policies made to address anti-Indigenous racism within your organization?” By understanding the background as to why organizations have not created policies addressing anti-Indigenous racism, the answers were indicative of the silences that existed when they created safe sport policies.

The fourth question is used to determine any possible limitations in the problem representation along with potential solutions as to how the problem can be represented differently (Bacchi, 2012). This question is also used to identify and reflect on what is not being problematized and what is not focused on within the current problem representations (Bacchi, 2012). For question four, I asked “Were there any differences in how you approached creating safe sport policies as opposed to other policies in your organization?”, and “Would there be any differences with how you would approach creating policies addressing anti-Indigenous racism as opposed to your other policies?” By questioning the differences between the creation of safe sport policies and other policies such as anti-Indigenous racism policies, this would inform how the problem can be represented differently and if there are any silences in those differences.

The fifth question allows for a critical reflection of how the representation of the problem affects people’s lives and consequently how it shapes people’s perspectives and understanding of the representation of the problem (Bacchi, 2012). I focused on asking questions related to background information on the participants, which included questions such as “How did you get involved with the NSO you are working for?”, and “Can you tell me about your role and responsibilities at your NSO?” This line of questioning was derived from Bacchi’s (2012)

original question five, which called for a critical reflection of how policymakers' perspectives shape their problem representations and how these problems create certain types of knowledge through subjectivity.

The sixth question allows for a researcher to reflect on how these problem representations have been constructed and communicated (Bacchi, 2012). This question also is used to reflect on how problem representations can be challenged and disrupted. For question six, I asked "Do you think the policies you currently have in place by your organization do enough to not only ensure a safe and supportive sport environment but also to address anti-Indigenous racism?" The answers that were provided by participants helped me to understand their perspectives and whether they believed they were/are adequately addressing anti-Indigenous racism through their safe sport policies.

Despite its strengths, the WPR approach has been critiqued for being subject to bias. Certainly, as a researcher, I have my own set of beliefs and biases that may influence my interpretations of policy meanings and problem representations. Importantly, Bacchi held that in the WPR approach, policies must be recognized as a cultural- and context-specific product (Goodwin, 2012). To address this, I used Bacchi and Goodwin's (2016) seventh step and questioned my own problem representations and how they may have influenced how I identified the participants' problem representations. Self-problematization involves making a researcher think of themselves as "located subjects, immersed in particular ways of seeing the world" (Bacchi, 2015, p. 133). It involves a "*practice of the self, an exercise in which one subjects one's own recommendations and proposals to a WPR analysis*" (Bacchi, 2018a, p. 10). I applied this seventh step throughout my analysis to ensure I was being critically reflexive. I then employed

the guiding questions to understand what was being problematized through participants' perspectives of their NSOs' safe sport policies and procedures.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

To investigate how safe sport policies are constructed by NSO staff and safe sport policymakers, I conducted 10 semi-structured interviews with participants in addition to archival research of the safe sport policies of the eight NSOs that the participants represent. Before commencing my research, I received ethics clearance for my proposed research from the University of Ottawa's Research Ethics Board (H-10-21-7456) (See Appendix A).

### **Inclusion Criteria**

Initially, I had planned to recruit NSO safe sport staff from five winter NSOs and five summer NSOs to gain a diversity of responses. However, the onset of the Beijing Winter Olympics in February 2022 coincided with my recruitment period, so many of the representatives from the winter NSOs were either unavailable or did not respond to my requests. I therefore changed my inclusion criteria to allow for any NSO safe sport staff member or policymaker from any NSO (either winter or summer sports) to participate. This posed a limitation to my data collection because at the conclusion of my recruitment period I was only able to recruit two winter-sport NSOs and six summer-sport NSOs. The inclusion criteria for the study were that participants needed to understand English and be an existing or past NSO staff member who had knowledge of the safe sport policies and procedures or be a safe sport policymaker.

### **Participant Recruitment**

I recruited participants by using purposive and snowball sampling (DeCarlo, 2018). First, I decided to recruit five summer NSOs and five winter NSOs. I started with the summer NSOs. I

searched the staff directory of the selected NSOs and identified their safe sport representative. I then contacted each of them by email. If an NSO did not have a safe sport representative identified on its website or if its representative was unavailable, I contacted the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Executive Director (ED). I attempted to recruit representatives from NSOs that are known to have or have had Indigenous participants or identified on their websites that they had modules related to Indigenous peoples and their development in sport or related initiative (e.g., Aboriginal coaching modules). Of those initial five, only four participants from three NSOs agreed to participate. I then used snowball sampling (DeCarlo, 2018) to recruit two more summer NSO representatives by asking if participants knew anybody from other NSOs who might be interested in the study. After applying the same process to winter NSOs, only two agreed to participate. From one of those NSOs, an additional NSO staff safe sport policymaker also volunteered to participate. A lack of further responses from the other initial winter or summer NSOs led me to Canada's list of federally funded sport organizations, and I was able to recruit one further (summer) NSO. Due to thesis time constraints, I decided to end the recruitment phase and move forward with the six summer and two winter NSOs that had agreed to participate.

### **Semi-Structured Interviews**

I selected semi-structured interviews for my research because they allowed me to gain insights into participants' perspectives (Schostak, 2006) on safe sport policies and how they construct the meaning safe sport and if that included addressing anti-Indigenous racism. There are three main types of interviews: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. Structured interviews involve asking pre-established questions to all participants, but there is little room for variety and probing (Fontana & Frey, 2005). In unstructured interviews, one engages in open-

ended, in-depth interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The purpose of this type of interviewing is the exploration of participants' experiences without a set of pre-established questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I chose semi-structured interviews because this method involves the creation of pre-established questions, which allowed me to be able to probe the responses asked in the interviews to gain further information (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). With probing and open-ended questions, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of how participants constructed safe sport and whether that construction included anti-Indigenous racism and, in doing so, acknowledged and attempted to address the TRC's Calls to Action.

I completed all 10 of the semi-structured interviews using Zoom. The interviews lasted between 30-65 minutes in length. The interview guide (see Appendix B) was divided into three sections and tailored specifically to reflect Bacchi's (2012) guiding questions for policy analysis. Notably, the questions found in both the second and third sections were purposefully designed to be similar so that I could carefully compare the responses between these two sections during my data analysis phase. Overall, I included specific questions within my interview guide to reflect Bacchi's (2012) guiding questions. In the first section of the interview, I asked questions pertaining to their roles and responsibilities in the NSO they currently represent or previously represented to understand how their experiences may influence how they take up discourses of safe sport, anti-Indigenous racism, and reconciliation. In the second section of the interview, I discussed the NSO staff member's safe sport policies and used this section of the interview to understand how safe sport policies are constructed. The second section included questions on their NSO's safe sport policies and how they were created, which helped me understand their representations of the problems in their organizations, how they constructed safe sport, and how their problem representations came about. Finally, in the third section, I asked questions related

to the TRC's Calls to Action and anti-Indigenous racism to gain an understanding whether their problem representations of safe sport included anti-Indigenous racism. All interviews were transcribed verbatim and sent back to participants for approval. Four of the participants made alterations to their transcripts by providing additional information.

**Table 1. Participant and Safe Sport Policy Information (anonymized)**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Years at NSO</u>	<u>NSO</u>	<u>Type of NSO (Summer or Winter Sport)</u>	<u>EDI included in Safe Sport Policies (Y/N)</u>	<u>Where are EDI policies located on website?</u>	<u>Mention of Anti-Indigenous racism in Safe Sport Policies (Y/N)</u>
Taylor	Woman	6 years	1	Summer	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Madeline	Woman	4 years	2	Winter	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Thomas	Man	5 years	3	Winter	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Allison	Woman	Less than 1 year	3	Winter	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Connor	Man	1 year	4	Summer	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Ben	Man	7 years	4	Summer	Y	Safe sport webpage	N

Katherine	Woman	1 year	5	Summer	N	General Policies	N
Jane	Woman	2 years	6	Summer	N	General Policies	N
Daniel	Man	9 years	7	Summer	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Peter	Man	30 years	8	Summer	N	N/A	N

### Archival Research

I conducted archival research to identify the safe sport policies of each of the participants' respective NSOs to better understand the construction of the policies. Compatible with Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, archival research is extremely useful to help understand the phenomenon of study (Caseñas & Kalsbeek, 2006). In addition, according to Caseñas and Kalsbeek (2006), there are two types of resources for archival research: primary and secondary. I chose to use primary resources, with these being the safe sport policies posted on the NSOs' websites. In the context of my research, using archival research helped me understand the problem representation in terms of how the safe sport policies were created and what types of words or language were included or neglected in the construction of the policies (e.g., words and phrases such as anti-Indigenous racism, reconciliation, or the TRC's Calls to Action).

There are many strengths as well as limitations to archival research. In terms of strengths, archives reflect the historical and sociopolitical contexts in which they were created (Galletta, 2013). This is a notable strength because it helped me understand the historical and sociopolitical contexts at the time when the NSOs would have constructed their safe sport

policies and the problem representations of said policies. As for limitations, the biggest problem I faced was that I did not have access to physical records and had to rely on the information published on the NSO websites. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was not able to go to the NSOs' offices, most of which are located in Ottawa, to gain access to the original safe sport policies. Fortunately, all of the NSOs have their safe sport policies easily accessible on their websites so this limitation was quickly addressed. In addition, most of these safe sport policies were also revised or created within the past two years so the potential problem of out-of-date information was alleviated.

To identify the safe sport policies from the eight NSOs that were represented among those who agreed to participate, I searched through their safe sport policies under their "safe sport" (or equivalent) webpage. There were a wide range of policies under safe sport such as discipline and complaints policy, appeal policies, screening policies, code of conducts, whistleblower policies, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policies, concussion protocols, etcetera. I examined each policy and focused on those that were directly related to abuse policies, code of conduct policies, and EDI policies. As I searched through these particular policies, I used key search terms such as "racism," "abuse," "harassment," "discrimination," "anti-Indigenous racism," and any mention of "race" to identify the extent to which each NSO was addressing anti-Indigenous racism. I read and analyzed each policy in the NSOs' safe sport policy suites and paid particular attention to any definitions of and/or references to the words listed above and applied Bacchi's (2012) seven guiding questions. For the archival research, I retrieved and analyzed documents including the policies and website searches from December 2021-September 2022.

## Data Analysis

Compatible with Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, I employed a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the responses from participants from the semi-structured interviews and from my archival research. Bacchi (2009) noted that the definition of a discourse is difficult to understand because it is defined differently in many forms of analysis. In brief, Fairclough and colleagues (2011) emphasized that the familiar premise among all of the approaches to discourse analysis is, "a shared interest in the semiotic dimensions of power, injustice, abuse, and political-economic or cultural change in society" (Fairclough et al., 2011, p. 2). Building on Foucault's definition of a discourse, Bacchi (2009) described discourse as "forms of social knowledge that make it difficult to speak outside the terms of reference they establish for thinking about people and social relations" (p. 35). Bacchi (2018b) contended that in WPR, discourse refers to knowledges rather than language or language use. In terms of policy as discourse, Goodwin (2011) emphasized that the conceptualization of a discourse focuses on how policies shape social problems and provide government solutions as well as the construction of concepts and subject positions. Similar to CDA, policy as discourse analysis "involves exploring the processes of meaning construction," of commonly accepted truths (Goodwin, 2011, p. 170). Dominant discourses within society advantage certain groups of people over others as discourses legitimize existing power relations (Willig, 2008). Further, compared with other forms of analysis, CDA openly takes the side of the oppressed groups (groups who experience marginalization) and goes against dominating groups (Fairclough et al., 2011).

Bringing together two complementary forms of analysis, the WPR policy problematization approach and CDA, policy problematization is beneficial "to identify and problematize policy constructions" and, in particular CDA, "adds other social, cultural and

cognitive dimensions” (Van Aswegen, et al., 2019, p. 186). Further, Van Aswegen and colleagues (2019) emphasized that this combined approach provides “a comprehensive, symbiotic framework” to critically analyze policies (p. 186). For my thesis, CDA was the most useful form of analysis to identify the discourses of safe sport policies and also NSO staff members’ and safe sport policymakers’ perspectives of safe sport, anti-Indigenous racism, and the TRC’s Calls to Action. It was also useful to understand and critically evaluate how those discourses were rooted in settler colonialism.

There are many strengths to using CDA as a form of analysis. The most notable strength of CDA in the context of my research is that it allowed me to critically examine the underlying power relations that produced dominant discourses of safe sport, anti-Indigenous racism, and reconciliation in Canada. At the NSO level, identifying the discourses allowed me to challenge discourses that are often taken for granted as truth and critically evaluate how existing power relations are at work (Cheek, 2004; McGannon, 2016). It was important to question the dominant discourses of safe sport and whether anti-Indigenous racism was addressed in the construction of safe sport policies and protocols. If NSOs constructed safe sport to include specific actions to address anti-Indigenous racism and other forms of racism experienced by groups that traditionally experience marginalization, then this would advantage Indigenous peoples in Canada and other racial or ethnic groups who also experience racism.

While there are notable strengths of using CDA for my analysis, there were also limitations. According to Cheek (2004), a limitation of CDA is that a researcher has a certain amount of power to “impose meanings on another’s text” (p. 1146). Although I was interpreting the interview transcripts and safe sport policies subjectively, I continuously reflected on how my own biases and beliefs may influence my interpretations of the discourses that participants and

documents constructed. The process and outcomes of my research were cultural- and context-specific products that were specific to me. In a discourse analysis, texts are viewed as being produced and shaped by social, historical, political, and cultural contexts (Cheek, 2004). I paid particular attention to the contexts specific to my own research which is pertinent to CDA (Cheek, 2004). The contexts specific to my research include the TRC's (2015b) Calls to Action that provide insight on the socio-political context, specifically Call #90 that calls for anti-Indigenous racism awareness and training in sport as something that is essential for reconciliation. Being an initiative that is committed to ending all forms of abuse, harassment, and discrimination, Safe Sport in Canada is also another context that must be considered in my research. Another important context is Canada being a settler colonial state. By analyzing how these contexts shape discourses, I will gain insights into how discourses of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism are produced and disseminated by NSOs.

To analyze the data and how participants constructed the discourses from the interview transcripts and archival research, I used Willig's (2008) six-stage approach to CDA, which I embedded in the WPR approach. In the first stage, "discursive constructions" (Willig, 2008), I identified any discursive constructions of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism by reading the interview transcripts, listening to the audio recordings, and reading the NSOs' safe sport policies. For Willig's (2008) second stage, I placed the three discourses I identified from participants responses within the context of the TRC's Calls to Action and reconciliation in Canada. In the third stage, "action orientation," (Willig, 2008) I paid particular attention to the specific contexts noted above (i.e., safe sport in Canada, reconciliation and the TRC's Calls to Action, and Canada being a settler colonial state) and how these social contexts may influence NSO staff members' and safe sport policymakers' constructions of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism. In the fourth

stage, “subject positions,” (Willig, 2008) I reflected on the subject positions of participants and how their subjectivity may influence their constructions of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism. In the fifth stage, I paid particular attention to the relationship between the discourses the participants constructed, and what actions they have taken or their organization has taken to address anti-Indigenous racism (Willig, 2008). Asking specific questions on the creation and revision of safe sport policies as well as how they were addressing the TRC’s Calls to Action helped me understand what participants have or have not done to address anti-Indigenous racism within their organizations. Finally, in the sixth stage, I reflected on how participants lived experiences may influence how they constructed discourses (Willig, 2008).

Using CDA and Bacchi’s (2012) WPR approach, I analyzed the transcripts and how the participants constructed three discourses: 1) Anti-Indigenous racism does not require a separate policy; 2) Policies alone are insufficient: Safe sport education and resources are needed to address anti-Indigenous racism; and 3) TRC’s Calls to Action are not being treated as a priority by Sport Canada but NSOs want to act in consultation with Indigenous organizations.

### **Thesis Format**

I wrote my thesis in the “publishable paper format.” In the second chapter of my thesis, which comprises my publishable paper, I describe and explain the results of 10 semi-structured with NSO staff members and safe sport policymakers from eight NSOs. I also discuss the findings from my archival research of the eight NSOs that were represented among those who agreed to participate in my study. I sought to answer two main research questions: 1) How do NSO staff members and safe sport policymakers understand safe sport?; and 2) If and how are they addressing anti-Indigenous racism and the TRC’s Calls to Action for sport through safe sport policies? In the third chapter of my thesis, the conclusion, I outline and describe the

theoretical, methodological, research, policy, and procedural implications of my research, as well as limitations and recommendations for future policymaking and research.

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**Chapter Two: Safe Sport for Whom?: Are National Sport Organizations Addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls To Action for Sport through Safe Sport Policies?**

### **Abstract**

Using Bacchi's (2012) "What's the problem represented to be" approach and a critical settler colonial studies lens, I investigated if National Sport Organization (NSO) staff members and safe sport policymakers see safe sport policies as addressing anti-Indigenous racism and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (CTA) for sport through safe sport policies. To do this, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 participants from eight NSOs and examined these NSOs' safe sport policies, including equity, diversity, and inclusion policies. The participants and the documents produced three main discourses: 1) Anti-Indigenous racism does not require a separate policy; 2) policies alone are insufficient: Safe sport education and resources are needed to address anti-Indigenous racism; 3) the TRC's CTA are not being treated as a priority by Sport Canada but NSOs want to act in consultation with Indigenous organizations. Taken together, these discourses reflect that NSOs are exercising power by leaving anti-Indigenous racism out of safe sport policies and by deciding if, when, and how the TRC's CTAs such as Call 90 are taken up.

**Keywords:** Truth and Reconciliation; Calls to Action; Indigenous; Canada; Sport policy

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was officially established in 2008 as a component of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, which resulted from a class-action lawsuit brought forward by former students of the Indian residential school system (Marshall, 2013). TRC was mandated to compile and present the stories of residential school survivors, explore and explain the ongoing legacy of the residential school system, and guide a process of healing within Indigenous communities and between settlers and Indigenous peoples in Canada (TRC, 2015a). The TRC's *Final Report* highlighted 94 Calls to Action (CTA) that the TRC's Commissioners identified as being essential for reconciliation between settlers and Indigenous peoples in Canada (TRC, 2015b). Five of these Calls addressed sport. In December 2015, the federal government committed to addressing all the CTA (Government of Canada, 2015). To date, however, national sport organizations (NSOs) have not been mandated by Sport Canada, the federal government sporting body that provides sport leadership and support at the national level (Canadian Heritage, 2020), to implement these CTA. This stands in sharp contrast to the ways in which NSOs have been mandated by the federal government to develop and implement safe sport policies.

In the mainstream Canadian context, safe sport can be broadly understood as an initiative is used to create an environment free from all forms of maltreatment, harassment, and discrimination in sport (CAC, 2020a). This definition has expanded in recent years to refer to a holistic, human rights-based approach to creating a safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport environment (Kerr, 2021). In Canada, Indigenous peoples have experienced and continue to experience discrimination deeply rooted in a history of colonization, cultural assimilation through the residential school system, and government policies, which has resulted in historical trauma and loss of cultural cohesion (Brascoupe & Waters, 2009). As such, safe sport is of

particular importance for Indigenous peoples. Since 2019, there have been successive federal government actions in Canada to address maltreatment in sport, including the strengthening of safe sport policies, programs, and training to address issues of maltreatment, discrimination, and harassment in sport, which have since been mandated by the federal government (Canadian Heritage, 2019). Although safe sport and the TRC's CTA have been studied separately, there has been no research to date that has discussed how these two initiatives could inform each other or on how Call 90's emphasis on anti-racism awareness and training can be addressed through safe sport policies and programming.

Using Bacchi's (2012) "What's the problem represented to be" approach and a critical settler colonial studies lens, I investigated if NSO staff members and safe sport policymakers see safe sport policies as being inclusive of Indigenous peoples and addressing anti-Indigenous racism and the TRC's CTA for sport through safe sport policies. I conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 participants who were NSO staff and/or safe sport policymakers from eight NSOs, and I also examined these NSOs' safe sport policies, including equity, diversity, and inclusion policies. The participants and the documents produced three discourses: 1) Anti-Indigenous racism does not require a separate policy; 2) policies alone are insufficient: Safe sport education and resources are needed to address anti-Indigenous racism; 3) TRC's CTA are not being treated as a priority by Sport Canada but NSOs want to act in consultation with Indigenous organizations. Taken together, these discourses reflect that NSOs are exercising power by excluding anti-Indigenous racism from safe sport policies and thereby not addressing the TRC's CTA 90. As a result, I demonstrate that NSOs perpetuate settler colonialism and that there are clear tensions in the notion that safe sport is for everyone.

## **Literature Review**

In the following section, I define and describe the role of sport within reconciliation as well the TRC's (2015b) CTA and their emphasis on anti-racism awareness and training. I use the preferred term "Indigenous peoples," which refers to First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples, and in some cases the less accepted term "Aboriginal peoples" as it appeared in scholarly literature and archival materials. I then discuss the inception and evolution of safe sport in Canada. Finally, I discuss anti-racism in sport and the actions that have been taken to address anti-Indigenous racism in sport organizations at the NSO level, Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO) and Territorial Sport Organizations (TSO) levels, and through research.

### **Sport for Reconciliation (SFR) in Canada**

The establishment of the Indian residential school system, a form of cultural genocide in which Indigenous children were forcibly removed from the homes and communities, enabled Euro-Canadians style sport and games to become a central component of the assimilation process (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006). The goal of this style of sport was to completely erase Indigenous culture, including traditional Indigenous physical practices (Forsyth, 2007; Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006). Importantly, despite the damage the residential school system has wrought on Indigenous peoples, their families, and communities, several scholars have noted the importance of sport and land-based learning within Indigenous cultures and communities, and its power to enhance Indigenous resurgence, regeneration, and reconciliation (Arellano et al., 2019; McGuire-Adams & Giles, 2018; Phillips et al., 2019).

Although sport can be a tool for reconciliation and cultural resurgence, Indigenous peoples continue to face racism within sport. Indigenous youth in sport have experienced overt forms of racism, alienation, slurs, and other forms of institutional racism and discrimination (Mason et al., 2019; Robidoux, 2006). The historical discrimination of Indigenous peoples in

sport and a lack of culturally relevant policy and programming continues to affect their participation (Paraschak, 2007). Unfortunately, very little has been done to address anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination in sport in Canada, and there has been no investigation of how safe sport could be used as an avenue to address anti-Indigenous racism.

### **TRC and CTA**

In the TRC's (2015a) *Final Report*, of the 94 CTA, five related to sport. Call #90 is of particular relevance to my research. It called for all levels of government to work in collaboration,

to ensure that national sport policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to, establishing: 1) In collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, stable funding for, and access to, community sport programs that reflect diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of Aboriginal peoples, 2) An elite athlete development program for Aboriginal athletes, 3) Programs for coaches, trainers, and sport officials that are culturally relevant for Aboriginal peoples, and 4) Anti-racism awareness and training programs. (TRC, 2015b, p. 10)

There has been some research that has focused on the TRC's sport-related CTA (Paraschak, 2019; Rajwani et al., 2021); however, there has been little research to date on TRC's Call #90 with its emphasis on anti-racism awareness and training (Szto et al., 2020). Research to date on how/if the mechanism of safe sport could be used as a tool to address the inequities and abuse that Indigenous athletes continue to face in sport has escaped scholarly attention.

Discourses surrounding the TRC and reconciliation in Canada have been critiqued by Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars. Some have argued the concept of reconciliation aims to restore a positive relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples; nevertheless,

that relationship has been fraught with land dispossession, assimilation, and cultural genocide (Daigle, 2019; Jung, 2018; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Further, language and discourses surrounding reconciliation, including that within the TRC, position colonialism in the past and attempt to paint a relationship between settler colonial state and Indigenous peoples that is “amicable, cooperative, and mutually beneficial” (Daigle, 2019, p. 707). By highlighting events of the past, discourses of reconciliatory responsibility have positioned non-Indigenous peoples and settler organizations as being aware of past historical traumas and as being supportive of addressing responsibility and reconciliation (Brooks-Cleator & Giles, 2020; Gebhard, 2017). Jung (2018) argued that by distinguishing between past and present, reconciliation masks the subtle forms of racism and cultural bias without fully addressing power relations that continue to exist between Indigenous peoples and settlers in Canada. Anti-Indigenous racism continues to exist, which warrants an investigation into how or if anti-Indigenous racism is addressed through safe sport policies and procedures.

### **Safe Sport in Canada**

Several high-profile athlete abuse cases have incited safe sport initiatives to address maltreatment in sport. In Canada, several NSOs including Hockey Canada, Bobsleigh Canada, Artistic Swimming Canada, and Gymnastics Canada are among numerous NSOs that are being investigated because of allegations of various forms of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse (Barnes, 2022). Minister of Sport Pascale St. Onge has called abuse in sport a “crisis” in Canada and has committed to addressing athletes’ concerns (Barnes, 2022, para. 2).

To date, there have been several government initiatives to address maltreatment in sport. In 1996, all NSOs were mandated by Sport Canada to create a publicly accessible harassment policy, appoint third-party harassment officers to deal with complaints, and provide annual

reports to Sport Canada on their actions (Kerr et al., 2020). Unfortunately, Donnelly and colleagues (2016) found that those requirements were not met, and Sport Canada did not ensure NSOs' compliance. In June of 2018, then Minister of Sport and Science Kirsty Duncan announced the withholding of funding if NSOs did not create an environment free of maltreatment, disclose complaints and disciplinary actions, employ third-party officers, and implement safe sport training by April 1, 2020 (Canadian Heritage, 2019). In February 2019, all levels of government signed the "Red Deer Declaration for the Prevention of Harassment, Abuse and Discrimination in Sport" to eliminate abuse and discrimination in sport (Canadian Heritage, 2019). In May 2019, the "Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS)" [Coaching Association of Canada (CAC), 2020b] was created by NSOs, multisport service organizations (MSOs), and Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute (COPSI) Network members at the national safe sport summit (Sport Information Resource Centre, n.d.).

In April 2020, the CAC was tasked with creating training to educate the sport population on abuse, discrimination, and harassment for all Sport Canada funded organizations (CAC, 2020a). The CAC created its Safe Sport training to provide lessons on the principle of the UCCMS and to highlight each participant's role and responsibility in ensuring a safe sporting environment (CAC, 2020a). Information on the different types of maltreatment, how they can continue to occur, and how to recognize the signs and symptoms are included, along with education on how to report maltreatment and how to create a safe sport culture (CAC, 2020a). To create a better mechanism for reporting maltreatment, it was announced in July 2021 that the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre would implement the new independent, safe sport mechanism through which complaints and disciplinary actions would be handled (Canadian Heritage, 2021).

There is a large body of literature on safe sport education and even more literature on maltreatment and its different forms. As defined in the CAC's Safe Sport Training (2020c), the word "maltreatment" refers to "deliberate acts that result in harm or the potential for physical or psychological harm" (slide 21). Maltreatment includes all types of sexual, physical, and psychological abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment, and discrimination (Kerr et al., 2020). In particular and pertinent to this research, discrimination is defined as "an outlook, action or treatment based on prejudice.... Discrimination is a deliberate act of maltreatment. Individuals who identify with traditionally marginalized groups may be more vulnerable to misuse of power" (CAC, 2020c, slide 28). Many authors have noted that discrimination as a form of maltreatment is a prevalent issue in sport and that equity-deserving groups are more susceptible to maltreatment (Gurgis et al., 2022; Willson et al., 2021).

Safe sport is mainly defined as an initiative to prevent harassment and abuse, including the promotion of physical and psychological well-being (Kerr et al., 2020); however, there has been a growing body of literature that has emphasized the need for *cultural safety* (Papps & Ramsden, 1996) in the sport and physical activity settings (Brooks-Cleator & Giles, 2016; Giles & Darroch, 2014). Cultural safety was originally conceptualized as acknowledging power relations between healthcare providers and recipients of care who have different racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds (Brascoupé & Waters, 2009; Papps & Ramsden, 1996), but it has been expanded beyond healthcare settings. Understandings of safe sport in the mainstream context have mostly focused on prevention of maltreatment; however, recent literature has emphasized the need for safe sport training focused on addressing the social and cultural needs of racialized as well as other equity-deserving athletes (Gurgis & Kerr, 2021; Gurgis et al., 2022).

Recent literature on safe sport has focused on understanding sport administrators' perspectives of safe sport. Gurgis and Kerr (2021) found that sport administrators emphasized that safe sport policies without enforcement strategies are ineffective. Sport administrators emphasized the need for a cultural shift in safe sport to better address historical discrimination and systemic barriers in sport, especially given the oppressive culture towards individuals who identify as members of equity deserving groups such as racialized athletes, women, and LGBTQ athletes as well as others (Gurgis & Kerr, 2021). To date, there has been little research on how equity-deserving athletes may or may not experience safe sport despite that they are more susceptible to maltreatment including Indigenous athletes, coaches, and officials (Gurgis et al., 2022). There has also been little research on how sport administrators could be addressing different forms of racism, homophobia, ableism, and other forms of discrimination through safe sport policies and initiatives (Gurgis et al., 2022). As such, research that focuses on sport administrators' understanding of intersections of safe sport, anti-Indigenous racism, and the TRC's (2015b) sport-related CTA is both timely and necessary.

### **Methodology**

I used Bacchi's (2012) "What's the Problem Represented to Be" approach to analyze and identify the perspectives of 10 NSO staff and safe sport policymakers from eight Canadian NSOs concerning their safe sport policies and procedures, anti-Indigenous racism, and the TRC's CTA. I also used this methodology to analyze the safe sport policies of the eight NSOs who agreed to participate in the study. The premise of the WPR approach is that policies will reveal underlying problem representations and what is in need of change (Bacchi, 2012). This approach has traditionally been used to critically analyze public policies; however, it can also be used to analyze how policies, such as those related to safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism, are

represented in interviews with stakeholders (Bacchi, 2012). Bonham and Bacchi (2017) contended that interviews act as, “sites that interact with many other sites within a discursive practice, participate in the continual *formation* of ‘objects’, ‘subjects’, concepts and strategies” (p. 691).

Settler colonialism can be understood as an ongoing system of power that continues to operate and emphasizes that settlers seek to eliminate Indigenous peoples, land, and culture, and resources while replacing it with a settler colonial society (Wolfe, 2006). Using settler colonialism as a guiding lens to engage and apply Bacchi’s (2012) WPR approach enabled an examination of if/how settler structures continue to attempt to eliminate and discriminate against Indigenous peoples (Rowe & Tuck, 2017). In recent literature, sport has been studied as an institution in which settler structures continue to marginalize and exclude Indigenous peoples (Phillips et al., 2019; Rajwani et al., 2021). Ultimately, using a critical settler colonial framework allows for an analysis of the power relations between settlers and Indigenous peoples and how sport structures continue to reflect the erasure of Indigenous culture, rights, and resources (Rowe & Tuck, 2017).

I used Bacchi’s (2012) six guiding questions with an additional seventh question to guide my WPR analysis. The first question, “What’s the problem represented to be?” (Bacchi, 2012), is used to identify the underlying problem representations. I used this question to identify the problem representations and to understand what NSO staff thought about safe sport, and whether their definitions of safe sport included addressing anti-Indigenous racism, or if it only included physical, mental, and sexual maltreatment. Through my archival research, I also used this guiding question to understand what the safe sport policies proposed to change and whether that included addressing anti-Indigenous racism.

Bacchi's (2009) second question, "What assumptions underlie this representation of the problem?", is used to explore the assumptions that exist in the problem representations; in other words, the background knowledge that is taken for granted within problem representations. I used this question to identify the underlying assumptions of problem representations of the safe sport policies. I asked specific questions of interviewees such as, "What does safe sport mean to you?" and "Do you think the policies that have been put in place by your organization do enough to ensure a safe environment, especially in addressing anti-Indigenous racism?" to understand the perspectives of NSO staff of what safe sport encompasses and the taken-for-granted truths that have enabled that definition of safe sport.

The third question, "How has this representation of the problem come about?" (Bacchi, 2012), is used primarily to understand the historical development of the problem representations and the underlying power dynamics involved in the development of policies and, in the case of this research, the use of those policies in the traumas of colonialism. The question is used to not only understand the origins of problem representations but also the current practices and institutions, the way in which problems are understood, and their evolution over time (Bacchi, 2009). By asking NSO staff about the history of safe sport policies and the processes and considerations that were made in creating them, as well as the underlying power dynamics between settler sport organizations (NSOs) and Indigenous peoples, I was able to analyze how the problem representations of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism have come about. This allowed me to compare and contrast the differences between how safe sport has been historically constructed, if it included anti-Indigenous racism, and how their organizations have contributed to addressing anti-Indigenous racism and the TRC's CTA.

Bacchi's (2012) fourth question in the WPR framework, "What is left unproblematic and where are the silences?", is used to identify what is not being problematized and what problems are being ignored by policymakers. Bacchi (2009) emphasized that with this question it is essential to ask, "What fails to be problematized?" (p. 12). During the interviews, I asked specific questions so to identify what was not being problematized: "Did the TRC play any role in the formulation of the safe sport policies?" and "Has your NSO created specific policies to address anti-Indigenous racism?" among others. Asking these questions allowed me to understand NSO staff members' and policymakers' perspectives of their safe sport policies, how they constructed them, and if anti-Indigenous racism was being left unproblematic by NSOs.

I used Bacchi's (2012) fifth question, "What effects are produced by this representation of the problem?", to understand how policymakers and NSO staff members' problematizations may be influenced by their own lived experiences. I paid particular attention to subjectification (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). There are three types of effects that are explored within this question: discursive effects, subjectification effects, and lived effects (Bacchi, 2009). Informed by Bacchi and Goodwin (2016), I thus asked the following questions: "What is safe sport?" "Who may be harmed by this policy approach?", and "Who may benefit from this representation of the problem?" These questions allowed me to identify and critically analyze policies as "sites of enunciation" by asking who are the agents of knowledge, who they speak for, where are the silences in policy formulation, and ultimately who is being empowered and benefiting from the problem representation and who is not (Slater & Bell, 2002, p. 339). This helped me understand how safe sport is constructed (i.e., as a method of addressing physical, sexual, and emotional maltreatment and/or as a method of also addressing anti-Indigenous racism), how this

construction may harm others (i.e., Indigenous peoples), and how this construction of safe sport benefits certain groups (i.e., settler sport organizations).

I used the sixth question, “How has this representation of the ‘problem’ been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted, and replaced?” (Bacchi, 2012), to understand how the problem representations have been produced and disseminated, and how can these dominant discourses be challenged. To answer this question, I attended to the problem representations of safe sport policies and how certain discourses of safe sport, anti-Indigenous racism, and the TRC’s CTA are dominant and, ultimately, how these discourses can be challenged, disrupted, and replaced.

Throughout this process, I questioned my own problem representations, which is an additional seventh question that can be employed in the WPR approach (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). Bacchi (2012) contended that it is crucial for researchers to question their own positionalities on their interpretations of a WPR analysis. I continuously interrogated the ways in which my position as a settler of Irish and Scottish descent influenced the ways in which I understood safe sport policies, the TRC’s CTA (2015b), and anti-Indigenous racism. This involved engaging with my social position and location, as well as using reflexivity throughout my research, which is imperative to the WPR approach (Bacchi, 2012). By acting as an accomplice (Whitinui, 2021), I continuously reflected on my own problematizations and took it upon myself to engage in readings and educational materials as well as had continuous rounds of reflection by having regular meetings with my supervisors as well as being guided by a research group comprised of Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars. As a settler I have a responsibility and role to play to critique other settler sport organizations and their efforts in addressing reconciliation in Canada and how they continue to exercise power.

## Methods

### Inclusion Criteria and Participant Recruitment

My inclusion criterion for NSO selection was any NSO that had staff members who had knowledge of safe sport policies or who are safe sport policymakers. I required participants to understand English, be an original safe sport policymaker or have knowledge of safe sport policies. I selected participants from winter NSOs and summer NSOs specifically because as federally funded sport organizations, NSOs hold a unique position to critically investigate how settler sport organizations are addressing anti-Indigenous racism and the TRC's CTA.

For summer and winter NSOs, I used purposive sampling (DeCarlo, 2018). Initially, I selected five Summer and five Winter NSOs that were all information rich cases due to them having either having a large number of Indigenous participants or having initiatives that were specific to Indigenous athlete development or a related initiative. I searched through the staff directory on the summer and winter NSO websites and attempted to contact each safe sport representative. If that person was unavailable or the NSO did not indicate who their safe sport representative was, I contacted the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Executive Director (ED) and asked if they wished to participate or if they could direct me towards the person that was the most appropriate participant (i.e., their safe sport representative). Of the five initial summer NSOs, three agreed to participate in the study. I used snowball sampling to recruit a further two representatives from two different NSOs. Due to time constraints and lack of responses, I had to revise my initial conditions to include any summer NSO representative who agreed to participate. I then used Sport Canada's list of federally funded sport organizations was able to recruit one additional summer NSO. I contacted a total of 28 different participants from 24 summer NSOs. Six summer NSOs agreed to participate, with a total of seven participants from

these organizations agreeing to be interviewed. For winter NSOs, I attempted to recruit the initial five information rich cases. Of the initial five winter NSOs, two of the NSOs responded and agreed to participate, with a total of three participants. I continued to try to recruit more but received either refusals or no responses due primarily to the commencement of the Beijing Winter Olympics, which coincided with my recruitment period. I contacted a total of 12 different representatives from Winter NSOs but was unable to recruit additional winter NSOs.

### **Semi-Structured Interviews**

I used semi-structured interviews because they are helpful in gaining an understanding of participants' perspectives, experiences, and knowledge (Schostak, 2006). This is compatible with Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach and helped me to answer all of Bacchi's (2012) guiding questions specifically questions two, four, and five. For two of the NSOs, I interviewed two individuals because the individuals I interviewed suggested I interview another person in their organization who was able to provide additional knowledge on their safe sport policies. Of the 10 participants, three had created the NSO's original safe sport policies. The remaining participants were currently in the role of safe sport policymaker but were not in that role when the safe sport policies were created, or they had knowledge of the safe sport policies in their NSO (see Table 1). All interviews were conducted over Zoom (n=10) and lasted 30-65 minutes. I transcribed each interview verbatim and returned the transcripts to the participants and asked them to add, delete, or clarify text as desired. Four of the participants returned the transcripts with additional information and edits. All participants were given pseudonyms.

<b>Table 1. Participant and Safe Sport Policy Information (anonymized)</b>							
<u>Name</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Years at NSO</u>	<u>NSO</u>	<u>Type of NSO (Summer or Winter Sport)</u>	<u>EDI included in Safe Sport Policies (Y/N)</u>	<u>Where are EDI policies located on website?</u>	<u>Mention of Anti-Indigenous racism in Safe Sport Policies (Y/N)</u>
Taylor	Woman	6 years	1	Summer	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Madeline	Woman	4 years	2	Winter	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Thomas	Man	5 years	3	Winter	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Allison	Woman	Less than 1 year	3	Winter	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Connor	Man	1 year	4	Summer	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Ben	Man	7 years	4	Summer	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Katherine	Woman	1 year	5	Summer	N	General Policies	N
Jane	Woman	2 years	6	Summer	N	General Policies	N

Daniel	Man	9 years	7	Summer	Y	Safe sport webpage	N
Peter	Man	30 years	8	Summer	N	N/A	N

### Archival Research

I used archival research to locate and analyze the safe sport policies of the eight participating NSOs. Archival research is used to understand how documents are constructed, which helped me gain an understanding of the socio-political and historical context of the institutions themselves (Galletta, 2013). This is compatible with Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach and specifically helps to answer Bacchi's question three: "How has this representation of the problem come about?"

To identify the safe sport policies, I searched through the safe sport policies, resources, and general policies sections of each NSO's website. I read each policy under the umbrella of "safe sport." I also examined abuse, code of conduct, and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) policies, and I sought to investigate if anti-Indigenous racism was included within those policies or if it was being treated as a separate issue (if at all). Once I identified the safe sport policies, I analyzed each policy using Bacchi's (2012) seven guiding steps. To ensure anonymity of the NSOs, I was limited to providing summaries of information from the archival documents rather than quotations, as quotations could have led to the identification through online searches of the participating NSOs. I conducted the archival research and document search intermittently from December 2021-September 2022.

## **Data Analysis**

Consistent with Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, and with the assistance of NVivo – a qualitative software management application – I used Willig's (2008) six stage approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA) to analyze the discursive constructions of safe sport policies and the TRC's CTA. CDA is compatible with the WPR approach because the problem representations reveal certain policy discourses as well as how dominant discourses can be challenged (Lucas & O'Connor, 2021).

For the first stage of Willig's (2008) approach, I read and analyzed the transcripts from the semi-structured interviews as well as the archives and identified any discursive constructions. In the second stage, I looked for differences between constructions of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada and located them within the broader discourses of reconciliation in Canada. In the third stage, "action orientation" (Willig, 2008), I examined the social contexts in which these discourses were being produced (i.e., TRC's CTA and Canada being a settler colonial state). In the fourth stage, I focused on subject positions of each of the participants and how they influenced how they took up discourses concerning safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism. In the fifth stage, I examined the relationships between discourses of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism and the actions or inactions taken by the organizations the participants represent. Finally, in stage six, I explored the relationship between the identified discourses and subjectivity in how the participants' subjective experiences influenced how they took up discourses of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism.

## **Results**

The participants and documents produced three discourses: 1) Anti-Indigenous racism does not require a separate policy; 2) Policies alone are insufficient: Safe sport education and

resources are needed to address anti-Indigenous racism; and 3) TRC's CTA are not being treated as a priority by Sport Canada but NSOs want to act in consultation with Indigenous organizations.

### **Discourse 1**

The first discourse was that anti-Indigenous racism policies are not required because their safe sport policies are inclusive of everyone, including Indigenous peoples. Importantly, while five of the eight NSOs positioned EDI within safe sport policies, none of the NSOs mentioned anti-Indigenous racism or the CTA in their safe sport policies. The EDI policies did not indicate how incidents of discrimination would be handled, and only one NSO (NSO 4) referenced its code of conduct within its EDI policy, which outlined how such incidents are handled. The remaining NSOs had details of how incidents of discrimination would be handled in their code of conduct or some form of discipline, complaints, investigations, or dispute resolution policy, but this connection between the EDI policies and the sanctions for incidents of discrimination was not made clear.

When asked if their NSOs had policies specifically addressing anti-Indigenous racism, all ten of the participants said they did not have such policies. Speaking directly to this, Taylor said, "I don't think we specifically address it anywhere necessarily. It's a more broad, anti-racism... And I think it's probably in our equity and diversity inclusion policy, rather than something specific." Similarly, Thomas of NSO 3 stated that his NSO's policies, including safe sport and EDI, are broadly defined: "[EDI policy] may not specifically refer to Indigenous people. I know in [the] safe sport [policy]...we don't specifically identify any one group of people, whether they're new Canadians, Indigenous, [or] people of colour." Connor of NSO 4 said that his NSO's policies are also broadly defined: "Do we specifically say we want you to be inclusive to

Indigenous peoples? No. But we say that you need to be inclusive of all peoples.” This finding was supported by my archival research. Five of the NSOs’ websites included EDI policies within the safe sport webpage. Of the remaining three NSOs, one had a suite of safe sport policies that included abuse policies, dispute resolution policies, discipline and complaints policy, as well as others, but they did not have an easily identifiable EDI policy. The remaining two NSOs had many different safe sport policies but did not include EDI policies within the safe sport webpage or safe sport policy suite, but it was included in their general policies. Importantly, none had anti-Indigenous racism policies on their websites.

When asked if NSO staff saw an opportunity to create a policy specifically addressing anti-Indigenous racism, many participants spoke of the challenges of creating such a policy. Katherine of NSO 5 stated, “having to name everybody is challenging, because then you may not be inclusive, because it may not name everybody...I would hate for somebody to not feel included.” Jane of NSO 6 expressed the difficulty of having to create a policy specifically addressing anti-Indigenous racism:

We have this kind of generic diversity and inclusion...because if we make one for Indigenous [peoples], then we'll have to make one for Black people, then we'll have to make one for Asian [people] and then, you know, where do we draw the line? At what point do we stop?

These findings were supported by my archival research. Five of the NSOs included definitions within their EDI policies that mentioned Indigenous peoples along with other equity deserving groups. Two of the NSOs had EDI policies but did not specifically refer to any group of people, and one did not have an EDI policy on its website. Of particular note, one NSO had many EDI resources as well as anti-racism education resources and had an EDI statement that committed to

an anti-racism movement. No specific group was identified in any of the NSOs' safe sport or abuse policies.

## **Discourse 2**

The second discourse was, "Policies alone are insufficient: Safe sport education and resources are needed to address anti-Indigenous racism." When asked how anti-Indigenous racism could be addressed by their NSOs, many of the participants questioned if policies would be effective. Thomas from NSO 3 expressed, "the failing could be, it's [the policy] just something on a piece of paper, and no one ever looks at it." Connor of NSO 4 questioned the effectiveness of a policy addressing anti-Indigenous racism and ensuring a safe and supportive environment: "So, I really don't think policies are going to do much because I don't think people read them. Even if someone read them, I'm not sure...their actions necessarily will change." Concerning the TRC's CTA regarding anti-Indigenous racism, Ben of NSO 4 stated, "When I read through a lot of the specific sport recommendations, in my personal view, it's more of operational recommendations than it is policy."

The participants noted the enforcement and development of policies, broader education, and resources were needed to address anti-Indigenous racism in sport. Taylor of NSO 1 highlighted the importance of having policies, adequate action, and enforcement: "You can have the policy, but if there's no concrete action behind it...[it's] just a piece of paper." Some of the participants argued that education and resources would be the best method of addressing anti-Indigenous racism. Madeline of NSO 2 emphasized that training and education are needed much more than a policy addressing anti-Indigenous racism: "I see a problem in creating a policy that's just for anti-Indigenous racism...because what we need to do is the proper training in certain areas." Madeline noted, "We may have to look at training and education as augmenting the

policies that we have in place.” Allison of NSO 3 highlighted the importance of education and training and emphasized that policies are a great foundational tool, but that: “It's not just... The policies can be there, and it can still be a bad environment if no one applies what's listed or if no one knows how to benefit out of the policy.”

My archival research showed that all of the NSOs participating in my research had resources and training with the Respect in the Workplace and/or the Respect in Sport Program on their websites. Within the *Respect in Workplace* program, it includes main program elements: Power dynamics in the workplace, Defining, Dealing with and Reporting Bullying, Abuse, Harassment and Discrimination (BAHD), Empowering the Bystander as well as other related elements (Respect Group Inc., n.d.a). The *Respect in Sport for Activity Leaders* program includes similar components as well as legal responsibility and “duty of care”, hazing, physical development, preventing BAHD – the leaders in Safe Sport Canada among others (Respect Group Inc., n.d.b). None of the Respect in Sport programs had any specific education on anti-Indigenous racism. Four NSOs had specific reference to the CAC’s Safe Sport Training but it was unclear if it was mandatory; only three of those NSOs made it clear that it was mandatory. One NSO had additional safe sport resources and educational videos concerning instances of harassment and abuse and how to deal with them, including the third-party investigation and complaint process, though they were not specific to any group of peoples.

Under their safe sport webpages, five NSOs had EDI resources with links to educational resources from different organizations such as the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) or the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS – now rebranded as Canadian Women and Sport), which focused on improving participation of girls, 2SLGBTQ athletes, and also on inclusion working groups. However, none

of these EDI resources were specific resources on anti-Indigenous racism. Three of those NSOs had modules focused on Indigenous peoples within their EDI or safe sport resources that included the Aboriginal Coaching Modules, which were developed by the Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC) and CAC, and other modules focused on Indigenous culture training, specifically the Sport for Life E-learning Indigenous culture training. Within the ASC's (n.d.) Aboriginal Coaching Modules there are three different learning modules included in an eight hour workshop: 1) Holistic Approach to Coaching, which includes information on creating a positive coach environment, knowledge on the Medicine Wheel, the Four Pillars Value System, and how to create constructive coach-to-community relationships; 2) Dealing with Racism in Sport which includes lessons on defining racism, risk monitoring, assessment analysis, and mitigation, as well as situational learning and application; and 3) Individual and community health and wellness which includes education on understanding the community you coach, mental health and sport, personal and community health practices, diet and nutrition, health conditions and diseases and influencing change. The Sport for E-Life training, designed by the Indigenous Leadership Development Institute of Canada, includes information on the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations (Sport For Life, n.d.). This training includes specific education on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's CTA; nevertheless, it was unclear if any of these trainings were mandatory.

### **Discourse 3**

The third discourse was that “the TRC’s CTA are not being treated as a priority by Sport Canada but NSOs want to act in consultation with Indigenous organizations.” When asked what could be done to address anti-Indigenous racism, the participants noted that they need more

funding, expertise, and resources. In a statement that was echoed by others, Daniel of NSO 7 asserted, “While I don't think you'll find anybody in my shoes who would disagree [with] the importance [of addressing anti-Indigenous racism], we're under-resourced.” In a similar vein, Connor of NSO 4 emphasized that to truly address the TRC’s CTA there needs to be more support from Sport Canada: “To really actually do this justice, and rather than just pay lip service, I think we really need to see that extra support come from Sport Canada, and to see a real and true partnership with the ASC [Aboriginal Sport Circle].” Jane of NSO 6 emphasized on-going difficulties surrounding funding from Sport Canada:

This is where our conundrum is: we could give back to the Indigenous community but then the funding has to come from somewhere and right now, unfortunately, our women's team just had their funding cut yet again. So, it's really hard sometimes to justify giving to those communities when one of our own programs is suffering...

Overall, the participants highlighted that the TRC’s CTA need to be treated as a priority by Sport Canada so NSOs can address them. Connor expressed that the TRC’s CTA have not been implemented as they should be:

If we look at the TRC’s Call to Action, they haven’t really been followed through...Sport Canada’s level, which is really who it’s designed for... But, you know, we’re keen to do our part, because it’s going to take everybody to really see some meaningful change...

We need to see that investment in sport.

Daniel noted, “If that's not a priority, then it's a ‘nice to do’ and so a lot of the ‘nice to dos’ don't get done, because...we're struggling to do the [other] requirements.”

Some participants emphasized that they would need instruction and direction from Sport Canada to implement specific actions surrounding the TRC. Daniel stated, “we need a direct

directive from our funding partners and our stakeholders.” Some participants referred to the directive and mandate from Sport Canada in relation to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) and safe sport policies and the difference in how the TRC’s CTA are being treated. Connor stated that he did not think NSO 4’s safe sport policies were created with the TRC’s CTA in mind:

I point to like the UCCMS where an NSO is mandated to adopt [the UCCMS], you know, we didn’t really have a lot of options there. And so that’s where we point to Sport Canada and say... there needs to be something specific there around the TRC that needs to be embedded at the top level, and then we can implement it.

When asked what considerations NSO staff or safe sport policymakers would make if they were to create policy addressing anti-Indigenous racism, many participants stated these policies would need to be created in collaboration with Indigenous sporting bodies or Indigenous NSO members. Allison from NSO 3 stated that such a policy should be ultimately written by someone who is Indigenous or has a background in anti-Indigenous racism policy making:

I would say I'm a person that doesn't believe in creating policies... using the words of someone that doesn't have the experience, right? So, I don't think that I would be the best person to create that policy because I don't have the experience. I don't have the background.

Jane of NSO 6 argued,

I really do think it would be beneficial to have someone within the Indigenous community to help us create some of this policy ... I can't just create this policy... I'm not from that community. I would love to work more with someone from the Indigenous community...and that's what we're trying to do.

Many of the participants expressed they were already or would be taking the approach of listening and collaborating closely with Indigenous peoples to deliver programming, and they would need to do this as well if they were to create a policy addressing anti-Indigenous racism.

Madeline of NSO 2 noted,

We will listen and learn from our Indigenous leaders. And we will ask for their guidance in how to work to be able to deliver training or to be able to educate people. We won't walk in and assume that we have the answers because we don't.

To address anti-Indigenous racism, the participants emphasized the need for resources and a mandate from Sport Canada to address reconciliation in Canada. The participants also emphasized the need for collaboration to create any policy addressing anti-Indigenous racism and representation on committees that create policy. I will discuss each of these discourses and their implications in the following section.

### **Discussion**

Through my analysis, I found that the participants did not construct anti-Indigenous racism as a safe sport issue in Canada. By applying the WPR approach and a critical settler colonial lens, below I discuss the problem with excluding addressing anti-Indigenous racism from safe sport policies. I will also discuss the problem of how discourses surrounding reconciliatory responsibility (Brooks-Cleator & Giles, 2020) are being constructed. My analysis of the three discourses provides valuable insights into the perspectives of NSO staff and policymakers and how they continue to exercise power in deciding if and how the TRC's (2015b) CTAs are addressed within their organizations. I argue that by deciding not to fully address Call 90, these NSOs perpetuate settler colonialism.

### **Anti-Indigenous Racism and a One Size Fits All Approach to Safe Sport Policies**

The first discourse constructed anti-Indigenous racism policies as unnecessary because existing safe sport policies and EDI policies are supposedly already inclusive of everyone, including Indigenous peoples. Many of the participants asserted that their organization's EDI policies were created to be very broad to ensure they address all equity-deserving members. The participants also asserted that the biggest challenge with creating a policy addressing anti-Indigenous racism was that they would then need to make a policy for every other category of racialized athlete.

Drawing on Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, the NSOs' EDI policies reveal that while equity-deserving members including athletes, coaches, and officials experience significant problems within sport environments, the experiences of Indigenous athletes are not problematized as being different from any other groups - despite the TRC's demand they be addressed separately. The broad, colour-blind approach to the construction of EDI policies does not address the root causes of anti-Indigenous racism. The TRC (2015a) explained the many barriers and unique experiences that Indigenous peoples have faced. A one size fits all approach to safe sport policies promotes the assimilation of Indigenous peoples into a settler colonial sport system rather than creating safe spaces for them to participate in sport (Paraschak, 2007).

By not acknowledging the historical discrimination and continued systemic racial bias against Indigenous peoples, EDI approaches do not fully commit to an anti-racism movement (Morris, 2020), thereby reinforcing settler colonial sporting structures (Forsyth, 2020). Further, by adding Indigenous peoples into the broad category of EDI, NSOs are eliminating the specific need for attention towards the TRC's CTA and Indigenous peoples' experiences in sport (Rajwani et al., 2021). The effect produced by this representation is that it alleviates the pressure on NSOs to fully address anti-Indigenous racism and as a result there is no consideration of how

safe sport and EDI policies could be altered to ensure that the unique challenges and barriers to sport that Indigenous athletes faced could be addressed. One of those barriers is a lack of cultural sensitivity in coaching and programming, which affects Indigenous youth participation (Mason et al., 2019). Other challenges include a lack of resources and opportunities, including a lack of transportation for rural Indigenous youth as well as the large costs to pursue elite sport (Mason et al., 2019). Safe sport policies and programming should be altered to ensure Indigenous athletes can meaningfully participate in sport.

Bacchi (2009) emphasized that it is important to consider what fails to be problematized in policies. In this case, anti-Indigenous racism is not problematized as a part of safe sport. To advance safe sport policies, there has been advocacy for clearer definitions of the different types of abuse in sport as well as specific consequences for these behaviours (Gurgis & Kerr, 2021; Mountjoy et al., 2015). Scholars have advocated for the implementation and evaluation of culturally relevant safe sport policies and adequate procedures, as well as education and disciplinary enforcement strategies (e.g., Mountjoy et al., 2016). In addition to these efforts, I advocate for more clearly stated definitions of different forms of racism, including anti-Indigenous racism, in NSOs' safe sport policies, as well as clearly defining how such incidents should be handled.

### **How Can Anti-Indigenous Racism Be Addressed?**

The second discourse the participants and documents constructed was that policies alone are insufficient, and that education, training, and resources are needed to address anti-Indigenous racism in sport. Drawing on Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, not having specific policies that address anti-Indigenous racism indicates that the NSOs believe that anti-Indigenous racism is not

an issue. However, based on my analysis, NSOs did recognize it is a problem in Canadian sport but that policy might not be the best method to address the issue.

Drawing on Bacchi's (2012) approach, the NSO staff and policymakers represented the problem as being as a lack of education and training on anti-Indigenous racism. With the exception of three NSOs, there is a profound silence produced by having education and training on safe sport but not specific education on anti-Indigenous racism as part of safe sport. There is once again not a consideration by most NSOs that anti-Indigenous racism is different from other forms of abuse. Anti-Indigenous racism needs to be understood as a specific form of harm and must be addressed separately from other forms of abuse as it is ongoing race-based discrimination experienced by Indigenous peoples (Government of Ontario, n.d.). In Canada, structural racism, including an ongoing legacy of colonialism, land dispossession, as well as discriminatory federal policy practices such as the Indian Act and residential school system, has continued to influence the social, political, and cultural circumstances of Indigenous peoples, which has informed a clear social hierarchy that leaves Indigenous peoples disadvantaged and denied resources and with settlers maintaining power (Loppie, Reading & de Leeuw, 2014). Not having specific anti-Indigenous racism training and education perpetuates the assumption to the public that anti-Indigenous racism is not an ongoing problem.

I advocate for specific, consistent, and mandatory training for NSOs on the historical traumas of colonialism and its persistent effects as well as its implications on Indigenous peoples feeling unsafe and unsupported in sport. Consistent with other scholars' recommendations, this curriculum should include anti-colonial education (Joseph et al., 2021; Noce-Saporito, 2021; Szto et al., 2020). For example, Szto et al. (2020) advocated for Hockey Canada to fully adopt the TRC's CTA, including implementing anti-Indigenous racism education and training and

changing hockey culture to re-distribute power to racialized athletes including Indigenous athletes, coaches, officials, and administrative staff. Following such an approach will require all sport administrators to take up the responsibility of education and ensure that there is a consistent effort to address anti-Indigenous racism.

### **A Shared Responsibility to Address Anti-Indigenous Racism: Challenging Settler Silence**

The third discourse was that Sport Canada is not treating reconciliation as a priority; however, NSOs are willing to act and want to do more through consultation with Indigenous communities. By failing to allocate funds, resources, and support to NSOs to address the TRC's (2015b) CTA, Sport Canada reinforces settler colonialism and through settler silence. It is also a settler silence when NSOs pass off this responsibility to Sport Canada. The participant from NSO 6's conundrum of not wanting to/being able to allocate funding towards Indigenous communities when its women's team had had its funding cut provides a clear hierarchy with how funding is allocated by NSOs, with Indigenous peoples falling beneath other equity-deserving groups. Importantly, there was a willingness and desire from NSO staff and safe sport policymakers to address the TRC's (2015b) CTA, which was a very positive takeaway from my research. Many participants also explained that they felt a sense of responsibility to address the TRC's (2015b) CTA and that anti-Indigenous racism was a significant issue. However, there was a lack of clarity on *how* they could address the TRC's (2015b) CTA and anti-Indigenous racism without a directive from Sport Canada. While, certainly, Sport Canada ought to issue a directive to treat the TRC's (2015b) CTA as a priority and allocate more funding, resources, and support, NSOs must also recognize their responsibility to address the TRC's (2015b) CTA, and in particular Call 90.

Interviews with some participants like Ben, who explained how he thought the TRC's (2015b) CTA were "operational recommendations" rather than policies, and Daniel, who noted that addressing the TRC's (2015b) CTA are "nice to dos," illustrated a profound misunderstanding of the intent of the CTA. Daniel noted that "nice to dos" usually do not get done without proper funding and directives. This demonstrates that government – and thus NSO - priorities tend to shift in response to public opinion. The problem representation of safe sport as being worthy of a large allocation of funds and a firm mandate from the federal government (Woolf, 2022) and the lack of a similar allocation of funds to implement the sport-related CTA reinforces the CTA as mere recommendations and anti-Indigenous racism as being unproblematic – or at least less problematic than other safe sport issues. This speaks to the discursive construction of categories of maltreatment, with physical, sexual, and emotional maltreatment being constructed as top priorities while relegating anti-Indigenous racism to being less of a priority. Ultimately, if NSOs and Sport Canada want to make concerted efforts towards addressing reconciliation in Canada, then the TRC's (2015b) CTA cannot be treated as recommendations or "nice to dos"; instead, the CTA related to sport must be fully resourced through a mandate from Sport Canada. It is essential for NSOs and Sport Canada to continuously reflect on the ways in which they can address reconciliation in sport, as they were called upon to do, while not solely relying on Indigenous sport organizations and their limited resources to do that work for them.

### **Limitations**

This study was limited by the type of NSOs that were included. I was able to interview seven participants from six summer NSOs and three participants from two winter NSOs. A more diverse representation of winter NSOs would have enabled me to have broader perspectives and

perhaps identify different discourses. Another limitation was that this study focused on the perspectives of NSO staff and safe sport policymakers. Although this was the population I wanted to interview, it would be beneficial to gain perspectives from participants in all levels of sport, from top stakeholders and sport administrators to athletes. In addition, future research is needed on different levels of sport such as provincial and territorial sport organizations and local sport organizations in Canada to examine how/if they deliver anti-racism policies and programs. There should also be more research conducted on how anti-Indigenous racism policies and programming can be designed and implemented. Most importantly, there is a need for research on the perspectives of Indigenous athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, and sport administrators on how they experience (or do not experience) safe sport.

### **Conclusion**

Using Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, I demonstrated that anti-Indigenous racism is not viewed by NSO staff and policymakers as a safe sport problem but instead as an EDI problem. However, within the EDI policies of the NSOs I analyzed, anti-Indigenous racism was not perceived as being a unique problem and was thus left unproblematized. These practices contribute to settler colonialism via the erasure of Indigenous peoples' experiences. By not considering these experiences, NSOs are exercising power by deciding who is worthy of having a safe sport experience. Resolving this issue will require Sport Canada, NSOs, and all settler sport organizations to take up this responsibility to address anti-Indigenous racism and reconciliation in Canada. By highlighting the dominant discourses of safe sport and anti-Indigenous racism and how they are being constructed by NSO safe sport staff and policymakers, this research can give valuable insight into how these issues can be addressed

together rather than separately. Creating a safe sport culture in which everyone can thrive and succeed in sport includes addressing the TRC's CTA, and it is everyone's responsibility to do so.

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### **Chapter Three: Conclusion**

For my Master's of Arts research, I investigated national sport organizations' (NSOs) staff members' and safe sport policymakers' perspectives on their organizations' safe sport policies and procedures and if they included addressing anti-Indigenous racism and thus addressed the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action. Guided by a settler colonial lens and my application of Bacchi's (2012) "What's the Problem Represented to Be" (WPR) and critical discourse analysis (CDA), I was able to analyze the data how participants constructed the discourses that uphold understandings of safe sport and how NSOs are addressing the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action and reconciliation in Canada.

In this the final chapter of my thesis, my conclusion, I discuss the contributions that my research makes to the constructions of safe sport in Canada and to addressing gaps in scholarly literature as well as safe sport policy development. I then discuss the methodological contributions as well as the theoretical contributions that I made through this research. I also describe the limitations of my research and future opportunities for research. Finally, I end this chapter with some concluding thoughts.

### **Contributions**

Through this research and based on responses from semi-structured interviews I was able to examine the three main discourses that participants produced. In the first discourse, I identified that participants produced anti-Indigenous racism policy as not being required because existing safe sport policies are already inclusive of everyone, which includes Indigenous peoples. This in turn left anti-Indigenous racism being unproblematized and not constructed as a safe sport issue. My analysis showed that not fully addressing anti-Indigenous racism in the ways that the TRC's (2015) Call 90 emphasized contributes to the erasure of Indigenous peoples and, by consequence, reinforces a settler colonial agenda. In the second discourse, I showed that

participants produced policies alone as being insufficient in addressing anti-Indigenous racism; Participants constructed safe sport education and training as being needed to address anti-Indigenous racism. This was re-iterated through my archival research as I found that all NSOs had some form of safe sport training but only three NSOs had anti-racism educational resources that specifically referenced Indigenous peoples. Finally, in the third discourse I illuminated that the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action and reconciliation in Canada are not being treated as priorities by Sport Canada, but participants would like to act in consultation with Indigenous peoples to create policies that address anti-Indigenous racism. I discuss these findings and their implications below.

The participants in my research believed that Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and safe sport policies are already inclusive of every athlete, including Indigenous athletes. Interview participants identified that safe sport encompasses many different areas such as EDI, injury prevention, mental health, and maltreatment prevention. This was re-iterated in my archival research, as I found that five out of the eight NSOs had EDI policies and resources within their safe sport webpage or policy suite; however, there was no specific mention of anti-Indigenous racism within the NSOs' policies. Only one NSO had an EDI policy that explained how incidents of discrimination would be handled. Others had details of how incidents of discrimination would be handled in their code of conduct, and others still had details of how these incidents are handled in their discipline, complaints, or investigations policy. This is an important finding because other scholars have emphasized the need for safe sport policies to have clearly defined measures for accountability, and that these policies must be specific rather than broad (Gurgis et al., 2022; Joseph et al., 2021; Noce-Saporito, 2021).

Many of the participants emphasized that they created their policies, including safe sport and EDI, to be very broad to ensure they addressed the needs of every equity-deserving athlete, which was re-iterated through my archival research. I found that five out of the eight NSOs mentioned Indigenous peoples in the definition of under-represented groups or equity deserving groups. Two NSOs did not specifically refer to any group of people in the EDI policy, and one did not have an EDI policy. This is another important finding as I found that EDI and safe sport policies are consciously made to be very broad to address the problems faced by equity-deserving athletes. However, the underlying assumption was that all athletes experience the *same* forms of discrimination, despite the specific TRC's (2015) Calls to Action that emphasized that Indigenous peoples have unique experiences that must be addressed. The TRC (2015) specifically outlined in Call 89 that the federal government must ensure policies are inclusive, promote physical activity, reduce barriers, increase excellence, and build capacity. In mainstream sport, Indigenous peoples continue to face barriers such as culture shock, new languages, and experiences of racism (Carpenter, 2022). Using Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, I found that, overall, anti-Indigenous racism is unproblematized within safe sport. The lack of specific reference to anti-Indigenous racism results in a lack of attention in treating anti-Indigenous racism as a problem that is different from those faced by other equity-deserving athletes. For NSOs to full address the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action 90 call for anti-Indigenous racism awareness and training, policies and programming must include specific measures to identify, combat, and prevent anti-Indigenous racism, as well as adequate procedures to disrupt settler colonial attitudes.

My second contribution is that I found that the participants produced policies alone as being insufficient in addressing anti-Indigenous racism; in addition, they identified a need for

education and training on anti-Indigenous racism. Through archival research, I found that only three NSOs had resources about Indigenous peoples and anti-Indigenous racism; these were found under their safe sport umbrella. In contrast, all the NSOs had some type of safe sport training or education that was *not* specific to anti-Indigenous racism. The participants identified that there is a need for education and training to address anti-Indigenous racism, and the assumption underlying this problem is that the existing policies and training are insufficient. By not having specific anti-Indigenous racism training or education, anti-Indigenous racism is being left out of current safe sport curricula and therefore is often left unproblematized. Currently, training and education on safe sport such as the CAC's (2020) Safe Sport training and Respect in Sport series are not specific to different forms of racism. Future safe sport policy and education must be focused on providing specific definitions of the different forms of abuse, including anti-Indigenous racism, and policies must be created with adequate procedures and sanctions. Specific curricula for NSOs are needed to ensure that anti-Indigenous racism is being addressed rather than only focusing on broad anti-discrimination education.

One of the biggest takeaways from the third discourse is that the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action are not being treated as a priority while there continues to be initiatives being created and funding and resources allocated for safe sport policies and procedures. The specific language used by interviewees, such as the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action being "recommendations" or "nice to do's" as opposed to the mandatory addressing of safe sport issues, demonstrated the differences in how both of these concepts are being treated. Participants did, however, express having a sense of responsibility and willingness to address the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action. Nevertheless, the participants pointed out that it is up to Sport Canada to provide funding, resources, and enforce a directive so that NSOs can adequately address anti-Indigenous racism

and the other Calls to Action. At the same time, there was also a clear lack of knowledge on how to address reconciliation in their organizations. Overall, by not addressing the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action, Sport Canada as well as NSOs are contributing to settler colonialism, and NSOs redirecting much of this responsibility to Sport Canada serves as a settler silence. NSOs must assume the responsibility of addressing reconciliation within their own organizations and work in (paid) consultation with Indigenous organizations to create anti-Indigenous racism policies and education; importantly, this partnership must be mutual and respectful and not one of tokenism.

Taken together, my research demonstrates the need for NSOs and Sport Canada to fully support the implementation of the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action. I argue that there are three things that must occur for this to be accomplished. First, Sport Canada must clearly, and in concrete terms, identify anti-Indigenous racism as being a problem. Second, Sport Canada needs to accept that anti-Indigenous racism is a problem that differs from other forms of maltreatment and thus requires different resources. Third, Sport Canada needs to mandate NSOs to address all the TRC's (2015) sport-related Calls to Action and provide education and training resources that have been developed in paid partnership with Indigenous peoples, as well as necessary financial resources, to ensure that this occurs.

## **Research Implications**

### **Methodological Implications**

Using Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, I was able to understand the underlying problem representations of safe sport policies and thoroughly investigate what is being problematized within the context of safe sport in Canada, and if that included anti-Indigenous racism. Framing my interview guide to address Bacchi's (2012) six guiding steps to policy analysis as well as an additional seventh step allowed me to fully analyze the participants' problem representations as

well as their underlying assumptions. In addition, I was able to explore the historical constructions, the silences, the effects, and how problem representations of safe sport, anti-Indigenous racism, and the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action have been produced and disseminated to the NSOs' audiences in Canada.

Using the WPR approach, I was able to uncover that Indigenous peoples were constructed as being the same as all other equity-deserving athletes, which was exemplified in the first discourse the participants constructed. I found that participants left anti-Indigenous racism unproblematized and that they saw broad approaches to policy making in the form of EDI as sufficient - despite the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action specifically referencing the need for specific anti-racism training and programming. Given the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action demanding inclusive policies and programming for Indigenous peoples as well as the overall advocacy for more specific policies addressing anti-Indigenous racism (Noce-Saporito, 2021), ensuring Indigenous athletes, coaches, and officials are safe and supported with the sport environment will require more targeted approaches. Through my archival research and using the WPR approach, this fact was re-iterated as only three NSOs out of eight had some form of anti-Indigenous racism resources. Understanding what was being problematized and what was not helped me to realize the silences within the safe sport policies and procedures as well as EDI policies.

Similar to the first discourse in which I found that anti-Indigenous racism is not problematized as being different from other forms of discrimination, the WPR approach helped me to examine the participants' assertion that more safe sport education and training was needed to address anti-Indigenous racism. By questioning what was being left out of the current safe sport curriculum, I was able to uncover a silence with five NSOs not having any training on anti-

colonial or anti-racism training specifically related to Indigenous peoples. If NSOs would like to fully address anti-Indigenous racism, all of them must have specific training and education as well as policies and procedures.

In the third discourse, I used the WPR approach to understand that the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action and reconciliation is not being problematized in comparison to safe sport. Participants constructed the discourse that the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action are not being treated as a priority and is therefore settler silence. To summarize, I found that anti-Indigenous racism is not problematized in the context of safe sport and the effect produced by this problem representation is that the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action and reconciliation are currently not being addressed to extent that they should be.

The biggest finding of my research was that there was a discrepancy with the amount of effort put into the safe sport policies and education, with no comparable effort to address the TRC's (2015) Call for Action #90, which calls for anti-Indigenous racism training and awareness. Using the WPR approach, I was able to gain insight into discursive construction of a hierarchy of different forms of maltreatment within safe sport in Canada. Through interviews with participants, many highlighted that the prevention of maltreatment is the main focus of safe sport. Through the language used within the safe sport policies and resources themselves, sexual, physical, and emotional maltreatment were the main focus, while anti-Indigenous racism was left out of those policies. This leaves anti-Indigenous racism unproblematized and thereby implies that no change is needed. These silences speak to a hierarchy of maltreatment – with addressing anti-Indigenous racism is the bottom.

### **Theoretical Implications**

Overall, by applying a settler colonial lens to engage with the WPR approach, I was able to investigate the power relations between Indigenous peoples and eight settler sport organizations, that is, NSOs in Canada, and how these settler sport organizations continue to contribute to the discrimination of Indigenous peoples. I found that NSOs as well as Sport Canada are actively exercising power by the current construction of safe sport. By leaving anti-Indigenous racism out of safe sport policies and curricula, Sport Canada is not treating the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action as a priority in comparison to safe sport, which contributes to an ongoing settler colonial agenda. Using settler colonial studies in concert with the WPR approach allowed me to critically investigate the settler silences within the current construction of safe sport and current safe sport policies and programming. By investigating how NSOs were constructing their policies and programming as well as their perspectives of what the problem of safe sport is represented to be, I was able to understand that the current construction of safe sport does not include addressing anti-Indigenous racism with any resolve or concrete actions.

### **Policy Implications**

My thesis research has highlighted areas of improvement in further advancing safe sport policies and education to address anti-Indigenous racism that the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action has highlighted. My recommendations are three-fold. First, NSOs should be developing and implementing a policy addressing anti-Indigenous racism within the safe sport policy suite or safe sport umbrella. Within policies, there must be a specific definition of anti-Indigenous racism as well as clearly stated enforcement procedures. Overall, this would be a step in ensuring that anti-Indigenous racism is acknowledged as a problem within sport. Second, alongside a specific policy or policies addressing anti-Indigenous racism there must be further education on how settler colonialism and its ongoing effects contribute to inequalities and to the discrimination of

Indigenous peoples in Canada, including in sport. There must also be mandatory and specific curriculum for NSOs, as well as at all levels of sport, on how to recognize incidents of anti-Indigenous racism and how they can be dealt with by all parties. Finally, Sport Canada and NSOs as settler sport organizations need to be accountable and take responsibility for addressing reconciliation in Canada and all of the TRC's (2015) sport-related Calls to Action in the same ways in which they are currently being forced to deal with safe sport. These organizations must also ensure they are not relying on already underfunded Indigenous organizations and their limited resources to address reconciliation. Instead, they must work in consultation with Indigenous organizations and their members, who must receive adequate compensation and recognition for this work.

### **Limitations**

There were three major limitations to my research. One of the major limitations was that I had originally wanted to recruit representatives from five winter NSOs and five summer NSOs to ensure a diverse representation of NSOs in Canada. By the end of the recruitment period (which lasted three months), I was able to recruit seven participants from six summer NSOs and three participants from two winter NSOs. Making successful contact with winter NSO representatives posed a significant limitation as many of the representatives from the winter NSOs I contacted did not respond or indicated they were too busy to participate because the 2022 Winter Olympics were underway. Having a more diverse representation of winter NSOs may have enabled me to gain further perspectives on how safe sport is constructed by those NSO staff and policymakers and if it includes measures to address anti-Indigenous racism. A critical examination of how *all* NSOs are addressing reconciliation in Canada, specifically Call 90, is extremely important in my view, though it would be an enormous project. This is a project that Sport Canada should fund.

Another limitation was that I recruited only NSO staff and safe sport policymakers. This posed a limitation because many of them did not have much information on the programming provided at the different levels of sport. Many of the participants pointed to their provincial sport organizations (PSO) and territorial sport organizations (TSO) as-being the main developers and contributors to any form of training or education. It would have been beneficial to gain perspectives from participants from other levels of the sport hierarchy since the NSO level handles more of the high-performance aspects of the sport, while PSO and TSO staff are more involved with grassroots development.

Finally, the last major limitation was that I did not interview any Indigenous participants. This posed a limitation as I investigated only how NSOs are addressing the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action through their safe sport policies, and specifically the call for anti-Indigenous racism training. Gaining the perspectives of Indigenous participants in the sports represented by the NSOs involved in my research would have been beneficial to understand how a lack of anti-Indigenous racism policies and programs informed their lived experiences.

### **Future Research**

For future research, the most important recommendation is that Indigenous participants in sport must be involved in addressing anti-Indigenous racism in sport. There must be research conducted on how Indigenous participants, including athletes, coaches, officials, and sport administrators, can experience safe sport. Culturally safe research must be conducted to explore the perspectives of Indigenous participants on the development and implementation of policies and programming to address anti-Indigenous racism.

To truly advance safe sport and address anti-Indigenous racism, perspectives from different types of participants at every level of sport is needed. A critical evaluation of each level

of sport, including but not limited to NSOs, PSOs, and TSOs and Sport Canada, is needed to investigate how sport organizations in Canada are addressing anti-Indigenous racism and thereby addressing the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action and reconciliation in Canada. Existing and future efforts should then be evaluated.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

It is my hope that this research helps with future understandings of safe sport, anti-Indigenous racism, and the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action. I demonstrated through this research that, currently, anti-Indigenous racism is being left out of understandings of safe policies and programming, but that it could be addressed in tandem with safe sport. This could be accomplished by developing specific policies that identify and address anti-Indigenous racism more clearly with adequate enforcement procedures and specific training on settler colonialism and its ongoing effects. I hope that my research also provides an opportunity for Sport Canada and all sport organizations to reflect on and fully address anti-Indigenous racism and the TRC's (2015) Calls to Action.

Through my research, I was able to speak and learn from many different people who have difficult jobs in the realm of safe sport and who feel a strong desire to be fully committed to ensuring that all participants feel safe and supported in sport. I am very grateful to all the participants who participated in this study. They were very honest about not only their NSOs' strengths and advancements but also their shortfalls and areas of improvement. I had many moments during this thesis where I contemplated if I as a settler had any right to be conducting research on how NSOs are addressing anti-Indigenous racism through their policies and programming. However, I believe that as a settler in Canada who has benefited from living on this land that does not belong to me, I have a responsibility to explore how settler sport

organizations are addressing reconciliation in Canada. That is our responsibility as settlers - and in my daily life as well as future career endeavours, I hope that I have the opportunity to continue doing such work.

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## Appendix A – Ethics Certificate

09/12/2021

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### CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE | CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

<b>Numéro du dossier / Ethics File Number</b>	H-10-21-7456
<b>Titre du projet / Project Title</b>	Safe Sport for Whom?: Addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action for Sport through Safe Sport Policies
<b>Type de projet / Project Type</b>	Thèse de maîtrise / Master's thesis
<b>Statut du projet / Project Status</b>	Approuvé / Approved
<b>Date d'approbation (jj/mm/aaaa) / Approval Date (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	09/12/2021
<b>Date d'expiration (jj/mm/aaaa) / Expiry Date (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	08/12/2022

#### Équipe de recherche / Research Team

<b>Chercheur / Researcher</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Role</b>
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Audrey GILES	École des sciences de l'activité physique / School of Human Kinetics	Superviseur / Supervisor
Lyndsay HAYHURST		Co-superviseur / Co-supervisor

#### Conditions spéciales ou commentaires / Special conditions or comments

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09/12/2021

## Université d'Ottawa

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

## University of Ottawa

Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche (CÉR) de l'Université d'Ottawa, opérant conformément à l'*Énoncé de politique des Trois conseils* (2014) et toutes autres lois et tous règlements applicables, a examiné et approuvé la demande d'éthique du projet de recherche ci-nommé.

L'approbation est valide pour la durée indiquée plus haut et est sujette aux conditions énumérées dans la section intitulée "Conditions Spéciales ou Commentaires". Le formulaire « Renouvellement ou Fermeture de Projet » doit être complété quatre semaines avant la date d'échéance indiquée ci-haut afin de demander un renouvellement de cette approbation éthique ou afin de fermer le dossier.

Toutes modifications apportées au projet doivent être approuvées par le CÉR avant leur mise en place, sauf si le participant doit être retiré en raison d'un danger immédiat ou s'il s'agit d'un changement ayant trait à des éléments administratifs ou logistiques du projet. Les chercheurs doivent aviser le CÉR dans les plus brefs délais de tout changement pouvant augmenter le niveau de risque aux participants ou pouvant affecter considérablement le déroulement du projet, rapporter tout événement imprévu ou indésirable et soumettre toute nouvelle information pouvant nuire à la conduite du projet ou à la sécurité des participants.

The University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board, which operates in accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (2014) and other applicable laws and regulations, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above-named research project.

Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and is subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions or Comments". The "Renewal/Project Closure" form must be completed four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval or closure of the file.

Any changes made to the project must be approved by the REB before being implemented, except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) only pertain to administrative or logistical components of the project. Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes that increase the risk to participant(s), any changes that considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project or the safety of the participant(s).

Germain ZONGO

Responsable d'éthique en recherche / Protocol Officer

Pour/For **Daniel LAGAREC** Président(e) du/ Chair of the **Comité d'éthique de la recherche en sciences de la santé et sciences / Health Sciences and Sciences Research Ethics Board**

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## **Appendix B – Semi-Structured Interview Guide**

### **Introduction**

1. Introducing myself (uOttawa researcher in Human Kinetics)
2. Purpose of the research and research questions (to understand the perspectives of NSO policymakers of safe sport and if/how they are addressing the TRC's Calls to Action i.e. anti-Indigenous racism through their safe sport policies)
3. Reminder of the procedure of the semi-structured interview: This interview will be recorded, and everything will remain confidential
4. Brief disclosure that I will be discussing potentially sensitive topics such as racism, abuse etc. (assurance that participants may choose to not answer questions and they may take a break or end the interview at any point)

### **Interview: Part 1 (Background Info)**

1. Can you tell me about yourself? (Age, gender, ethnicity, etc.)
2. How did you get involved with the NSO you are working for?
  - a. How long have you been working for this NSO?
  - b. Have you been involved in any other sport organizations outside of this NSO?
3. Can you tell me about your role at your NSO?
  - a. What are your responsibilities and duties at the NSO?

### **Interview: Part 2 (Safe sport)**

#### **\*\* NSO safe sport policies will be used for probing**

1. When did your NSO create safe sport policies and why?
2. Can you outline for me the process of formulating the safe sport policies?
3. Did you encounter any challenges in formulating and delivering your NSOs safe sport policies?
  - a. If so, what was done, if anything, to address these challenges?
4. What considerations did you make in creating safe sport policies? (i.e., in deciding what language was to be used, how they would be formulated etc.)
  - a. Were there any differences in how you approached creating these safe sport policies as opposed to other policies in your organization?
5. What are some challenges you've experienced in creating policies vs. challenges in implementing policies?
  - a. If so, what are they?
  - b. If not, do you foresee any challenges in future creation of policies and implementation of said policies?
6. What does safe sport mean to you? What would a safe and supportive environment in sport look like to you? Do you think the policies that have been put in place by your organization do enough to ensure this environment?

**Interview: Part 3 (TRC's Calls to Action, reconciliation, and anti-Indigenous racism)**

**\*\* NSO safe sport policies will be used for probing**

1. Are you aware of the TRC?
  - a. If not, I will outline and explain the TRC's Calls to Action concerning sport
2. Did the TRC play any role in the formulation of the safe sport policies?
3. One of the Calls to Action, Call 90 emphasizes inclusive and culturally relevant sport programming with an emphasis of anti-racism awareness and training. Has your NSO created policies specifically addressing anti-Indigenous racism?
  - a. If so, when did your NSO create anti-Indigenous racism policies and why?
  - b. If not, in your view what do you think could be done in your organization? (If the answer is no, see Part 3 section B below)
4. Can you outline for me the process of formulating policies addressing anti-Indigenous racism?
5. Did you encounter any challenges in formulating and delivering your NSOs policies concerning anti-Indigenous racism?
  - a. If so, what was done, if anything, to address these challenges?
6. What considerations did you make in creating anti-Indigenous racism policies? (i.e., in deciding what language was to be used, how they would be formulated etc.)
  - a. Were there any differences in how you approached creating these anti-Indigenous racism policies as opposed to other policies in your organization?
7. What are some challenges you've experienced in creating anti-Indigenous racism policies vs. challenges in implementing anti-Indigenous racism policies?
  - a. If so, what are they?
  - b. If not, do you foresee any challenges in future creation of policies and implementation of said policies?
8. Do you think the policies you currently have in place addressing anti-Indigenous racism by your organization do enough to ensure a safe and supportive sport environment?

**Interview: Part 3 Section B (TRC's Calls to Action, reconciliation, and anti-Indigenous racism)**

**\*\* NSO safe sport policies will be used for probing**

1. Are you aware of the TRC?
  - a. If not, I will outline and explain the TRC's Calls to Action concerning sport
2. Did the TRC play any role in the formulation of the safe sport policies?
3. One of the Calls to Action, Call 90 emphasizes inclusive and culturally relevant sport programming with an emphasis of anti-racism awareness and training. Has your NSO created policies specifically addressing anti-Indigenous racism?
  - a. If not, in your view what do you think could be done in your organization?
4. Why has there not been policies made to address anti-Indigenous racism within your organization?
5. If there were policies in place that address anti-Indigenous racism, do you foresee any challenges in formulating and delivering NSO policies concerning anti-Indigenous racism?
  - a. If so, what would you do to address these challenges?

6. What considerations would you make in creating anti-Indigenous racism policies? (i.e., in deciding what language was to be used, how they would be formulated etc.)
  - a. Would there be any significant differences in how you would approach creating anti-Indigenous racism policies as opposed to other policies in your organization?
7. Do you foresee any challenges in future creation of anti-Indigenous policies vs. challenges in implementing anti-Indigenous racism policies?
  - a. If so, what are they?
8. Do you think the policies you currently have in place by your organization do enough to ensure a safe and supportive sport environment?

## **Conclusion**

1. Do you have anything to add to our discussion today? Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

### **Appendix C – Contributions**

This thesis research was designed and developed by Nora McRae who completed the data collection, analysis, and thesis report writing. Dr. Audrey Giles as well as Dr. Lyndsay Hayhurst assisted the development of this research including supporting the design process including theory and analysis, editing and revisions, as well as overall support and feedback to create the final thesis product. The paper in Chapter Two will be published with McRae as first author, Giles as second, and Hayhurst as third author.